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Editorial

I am very happy to share the fact that the October 2015 issue of *GNOSIS* was appreciated by the world of Academia from all over the world for its richness and versatility; the credit for which goes to the entire team of *GNOSIS*.

We encourage writings from both experienced professors as well as young scholars. In this endeavour we hope to carry the torch of research as well as writing forward.

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.

There are nineteen research/critical articles, three poems of three poets, and four book reviews in this issue. Before concluding I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my reverend Associate Editor, Dr. Indira Nityanandam without whose critical insights this issue wouldn't have been a reality. Warm regards to our esteemed Board of Advisors and Review Editors for their tiresome efforts in reviewing the articles very sincerely and enriching each and every article with their valuable remarks resulting in the shaping up of this issue.

I am also grateful to my revered contributors who have made this issue an enriching reality.

Happy Mental feast!

Saikat Banerjee

Postcolonial Poetry and the Angst of Blackness: Trauma and Protest in Selected Poems of Claude McKay

Blossom N. Fondo

Abstract: The question of race continues to occupy an important place within postcolonial criticism. This is because race has served as a platform for the conceptualizations of power and powerlessness; a major trope within postcolonialism. Throughout human history, the non-white races of the world have experienced different forms of oppression. This has been particularly more grievous for black peoples whose blackness has served as a justification for some of the worst crimes against them. This situation has informed the creative imagination of many postcolonial writers. This paper seeks to uncover the angst of blackness as expressed in the poetry of Jamaican poet Claude McKay. Through a postcolonial reading of his poems, it is seen how throughout history the black man has stayed the underdog of the society, excluded from the centre of power and even denied his basic rights and humanity. The result is a poetry that expresses the profound pain of blackness as well as sounds a note of protest.

Keywords: Postcolonial criticism, Jamaican poetry, Race, Oppression, Trauma, Nostalgia.

Introduction

In times of great tragedy, pain and loss, humanity has often turned to poetry to express their angst. This is usually the case with natural disasters, national tragedies and collective trauma amongst others. This is because the spontaneity generally attributed to the poetic muse usually provides an outlet for deep overflowing sentiments. This has placed poetry as the literary genre best adapted to the expression of deep human pain and tragedy. Within the context of postcolonialism, the colonial encounter remains the major tragedy that has befallen the colonized. Similarly for the blacks of the West Indies, the slave trade and slavery have been the defining tragedies of their existence. Poetry has therefore been for them a powerful vent for the pain of their subjugation, humiliation and oppression under the sieges of slavery and colonialism. This falls in line with Antonio Jimenez Munoz's (2014)

stance that “poetry can thus serve as a weapon; it can be thrown at leaders, officials and people in an attempt to change their attitudes, to raise awareness, to denounce injustice” (34).

Celebrated Jamaican Poet Claude McKay is one poet who has singularly painted very effectively the pain of the black man faced with an unfeeling, exploitative and dominating white world. McKay’s poems are able to do this because he composes them from personal experience of racism. His encounter with racism has led him to state how “It was the first time I had ever come face to face with such manifest, implacable hate of my race and the feelings were indescribable” (Introduction Claude McKay: Selected Poems vii). Drawing from this, he is able to showcase through his poetry what the black man goes through at the hands of the white man whether in the era of slavery, colonialism or neo-colonialism. The plethora of problems faced by the black man is what prompted eminent African-American scholar W.E.B. Du Bois (1903) to opine that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour-line” (3). The result is a poetry that unveils the wounded soul of the black man as well as protest against this continued mistreatment. In this McKay fulfils the role of the authentic poet which Diana Greene describes as one who “works against all forms of injustice and destruction” (15).

This paper investigates McKay’s portrayal of the trauma of blackness through a reading of ten of his poems from the collection *Claude McKay: Selected Poems*. The main argument is that the black man has perpetually been the underdog of the society and his oppression from his first contact with the white man has produced trauma which McKay artfully illustrates through a poetics of pain, protest, loss and nostalgia. Read through the lenses of postcolonialism, this paper further intimates that blackness has served as a platform for the oppression and near annihilation of a people. Bill Ashcroft *et al.* (2005) have further noted that it is hard to think of a significant debate within the field of postcolonial cultural studies without feeling the impact of race (211). This study will especially be guided by Bart Moore-Gilbert’s (1997) proposal of what postcolonial criticism entails. He notes that:

Postcolonial criticism can be understood as primarily preoccupied with forms which mediate, challenge or reflect upon the relations of domination and subordination – economic, cultural and political—between (and often within) nations, races or cultures

Emergence of the ‘New Woman’ of the East: A Cinematic Portrayal in Satyajit Ray’s *Aranyer Din Ratri* (‘Days and Nights in the Forest’)

Mousumi Guha Banerjee

Abstract: When we talk about New Social Movements (NSMs) that evolved in the 1980s in Europe, the need to speculate the scope of Indian ‘art’ (or, ‘parallel’) cinema scholarship, that has its incipience as a remarkable treasure house of textual signification and that can today be scarcely differentiated from the domain of literary critical studies and concerned discursive practices, becomes essential. Film as a literary genre is a widely acknowledged interdisciplinary approach which is gradually gaining a lot of ground in the academic parlance today. It has immensely contributed to the advent of the present era of mass culture, where the distinction between ‘high’ culture and ‘low’ culture has gradually eroded. Critical theories of art, aesthetics and literature, when applied to this popular medium, it achieves a new height of novelty. The perception of a film as a text depends on the credulity of the viewers, in the manner in which a literary text is endearing to the readers for its own virtues. It is an art, and indeed a popular art form. Popularity, also readability, and hence reachability as a consequence, if not the sole criterion, may be considered as a reason behind its flourish. While achieving this, a chiaroscuro of a multiplicity of moving images is given birth to in a bid to convey meanings. The role of a film-maker is like that of an author who always looks for new possibilities of significance, either through artistic subtleties in the script or in the nuances of a scene or by way of several creative symbols, motifs, montage and detours. The present study shall focus on bringing out the voice of the ‘New Woman’ of the East in Satyajit Ray’s *Aranyer Din Ratri* (“Days and Nights in the Forest”), in sharp contrast to the ‘New Woman of the West’, a concept that has strongly sought to colonize the former by representing her as the ‘Third World woman’ who is generally categorized as, even if she is not, ‘ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domesticated, family-oriented, victimised’ as opposed to the more ‘educated, modern’ woman of the West who enjoys the “‘freedom’ to make her own decisions”. In an era

when the post-colonial subject has had her/his position increasingly retrieved by the resurgent 'Third Eorld' (a conventional epithet perhaps used in an attempt to differentiate the supposedly more privileged texts of the so-called 'First World') texts, both literary and cinematic, the contributions of film-makers, like Satyajit Ray, constitute a socio-cultural movement, that is intellectually profound, significantly novel and conspicuously marked by a plethora of possibilities of subtle interpretations, whereby all forms of social, political, economic, cultural and linguistic hegemony of the dominant nineteenth-century colonial powers and representatives of sovereignty have come under an indomitable form of resistance.

Keywords: Cinema, Culture, Filmography, New Woman, Post-coloniality, Interpretation.

When we talk about New Social Movements (NSMs) that evolved in the 1980s in Europe, the need to speculate the scope of Indian 'art' cinema (also referred to as 'parallel' or 'alternative' or 'independent' cinema) scholarship, that has its incipience as a remarkable treasure house of textual signification and that can today be scarcely differentiated from the domain of literary critical studies and concerned discursive practices, becomes essential. Film as a literary genre is a widely acknowledged interdisciplinary approach which is gradually gaining a lot of ground in the academic parlance today. It has immensely contributed to the advent of the present era of mass culture, where the distinction between 'high' culture and 'low' culture has gradually eroded. Critical theories of art, aesthetics and literature, when applied to this popular medium, it achieves a new height of novelty. The perception of a film as a text depends on the credulity of the viewers, in the manner in which a literary text is endearing to the readers for its own virtues. It is an art, and indeed a popular art form. Popularity, also readability, and hence reachability as a consequence, if not the sole criterion, may be considered as an important reason behind its flourish. While achieving this, a chiaroscuro of a multiplicity of moving images is given birth to in a bid to convey meanings. The role of a film-maker is like that of an author who always looks for new possibilities of significance, either through artistic subtleties in the script or in the nuances of a scene or by way of several creative symbols, motifs, montage and detours.

Before taking up the issue of the New Woman, let me enunciate a little on the post-colonial discourse, from which the concept has

Contextualizing Transgression: Dynamics of Gender and Ethnicity in Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*

Amitayu Chakraborty

Abstract: This article concerns itself with *A Grain of Wheat* (1967), a post-Independence novel by Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1938—), a contemporary African (Kenyan) post-colonial ideologue. Drawing upon the concept of moral ethnicity developed by Professor John Lonsdale of Cambridge University, a contemporary scholar of Kenyan/African history, my reading centres on the woman named Mumbi, one of the central characters of the novel. Through an exploration of the transgressive in Mumbi, I explore the ways in which Ngugi's text engages in a post-colonial, dynamic discursive interaction between ethnicity and gender. In so doing, I would argue, the novel problematizes the traditional male-female power relations in Gikuyu society. Contextualizing the transgressive elements in Mumbi, the aim of this article is to show the ways in which the novel upholds a hitherto inadequately explored radical post-colonial discourse which emphasizes the politically subversive dimension of Ngugi's literary work. The research represented in the article gains its significance from the fact that instead of resorting to armchair feminist and/or Marxist post-colonial theorizing, the article adopts a historical/anthropological praxis-oriented, gender-sensitive post-colonial approach.

Keywords: Moral Ethnicity, Gender, Nationalism, Mumbi, Gikonyo, *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Post-colonial.

I. Introduction: The Emergence of Moral Ethnicity

Of late, anthropologists urged for replacement of 'tribe' with 'ethnic group' or 'ethnie'; they opine that the use of the word 'tribe' perpetuates the racist politics embedded in the dichotomy between 'the civilized' and 'the tribal' (Jenkins 17-27). Ethnicity, "like other identity categories such as gender, race, caste and class, is discursively produced, consumed, regulated and represented" (Chakraborty 163). It is predicated upon a sense of group membership in which there "are no implications of homogeneity, definite boundaries, or, crucially, coordination of collective action" (Jenkins 25). Rather, they are informed

by varied perceptions and idiosyncrasies, and collectivised through divergent signifying practices. In Africa, ethnicity was considered to be a detriment to nationalism by many political leaders (Radithhalo 82). This contention has been challenged in the recent anthropological research on ethnicity (Smith 18; Eriksen 119-20; Jenkins 12). The eminent anthropologist Thomas Hylland Eriksen emphasizes the intersection between the politico-scientific theories of nationalism and anthropological theories of ethnicity in his analysis of the most renowned theorists of nationalism like Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner (Chakraborty 164). Eriksen argues that like “ethnic ideologies, nationalism stresses the cultural similarity of its adherents and, by implication, it draws boundaries vis-à-vis others, who thereby become outsiders” (Eriksen 10).

In the pre-colonial Africa, ethnic groups had not been as self-conscious and competitive as they were during the slave-raiding and colonial era; in fact, as many researchers argue, some of them were formed during the colonial period (Osaghae 11; Lonsdale 137-38; Southall 86; Thomson 63). Each ethnic group had its set of codes of civic virtue surfacing as ethnic differences; constantly ethnic groups were “formed and reformed by fission and fusion, like silvers of glass in a kaleidoscope” (Lonsdale 137). In “Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism” John Lonsdale, a Professor of Cambridge University and an eminent scholar of Kenyan/African history, offers a radical analysis of the abovementioned situation where volatile ethnicities in Africa emerged as one of the dominant phenomena such as the anticolonial nationalisms. According to Lonsdale, we must understand ethnicity in terms of nationalism and/or the formation of the nation-state: due to several factors of colonial administration, such as lopsided delegation of authority to the Africans within the state mechanism, introduction of literacy along with the creation of standardized vernaculars, and promotion of local dialects in place of consolidation of the *lingua franca* of a nation, ethnicity prevailed as a phenomenon, “a creative response to industrialization, urbanization and intensification of state power”, in Africa (137). In this context, Lonsdale conceptualizes the discourse of ‘moral ethnicity’ (138-41). He argues that colonial capitalism ushered in moral ethnicity, a highly contested discursive field in which formerly established moral economy or evaluation criteria for civic virtue for a community began to be questioned, subverted, modified or distorted. Colonial capitalism changed the social roles of men and

Power-politics in Mahesh Dattani's *Seven Steps Around the Fire*

Anju Bala Agrawal

Abstract: Mahesh Dattani through his plays makes efforts to articulate the voice of the invisible communities of societies on the stage. Dattani tries to decode the shame and sufferings of those who are the victims of discrimination in society. According to him, only women are not subalterns. It occupies a vast sphere of tribes, gays, eunuchs, poor section of society, slaves, victims of gender discrimination. In the play, *Seven Steps Around the Fire*, he presents the subaltern status of transgender of society, who are humiliated by so-called powerful persons of the society. The play also focuses how the powerful handles the law and order in their favour. This paper studies the role of power politics played in the play.

Keywords: Eunuchs, Marginalized, Power, Politics, Subjugation.

Mahesh Dattani has not delineated conventional marginalized classes like untouchables. He has touched the hearts of marginalized people residing in urban areas who have their own anxieties, insecurity and unrest. His plays are marked with humanistic approach. The distinction of Dattani lies in the fact that he has tried to provide a true Indian identity to Indian English drama. He makes emotional appeal through his dramas. The representation of subalterns and socially neglected sections of society has made his plays, a voice of common man. Mahesh Dattani appeared on the scene of Indian drama with his own ideology to fill the gap of page and stage. He felt the suffering of the marginalized sections of the society and made them the central theme of his plays.

The sympathy for the marginalized has been a major concern in Dattani's plays. The concept of marginalization denotes the idea of discrimination in society. For Dattani, marginalization is not a static principal of social injustice but it is closely linked with the question of power structure in the society. The centre-margin relationship changes from place to place, person to person and situation to situation. Dattani in his plays has identified new types of marginalized sections of society who are dragged behind the veil of shame and invisible

identity. They are forced to lead miserable life, tolerating the injustice and influences of so-called powerful figures of society.

The play *Seven Steps Around the Fire* presents a new voice of marginalized, that is eunuchs. Eunuchs are marginalized because of their physical deficiency but their sufferings multiply when 'power-politics' enter into their lives. The present paper focuses on the role of power politics in deteriorating the lives of eunuchs and Dattani's attempt to draw our attention towards this dirty game.

Power-politics may be defined as politics based primarily on the use of power (as military and economic strength) as a coercive force rather than on ethical precepts. Some plays of Dattani show the use of power politics. *Seven Steps Around the Fire* is one of such plays. It does hold up a mirror of the society. What it reveals is something unusual. Uma, the wife of the superintendent of Police is doing a research work on "Class and Gender Related Violence." Power-politics is hidden in this topic. Powerful persons can exploit the weaker persons. Her motto is to investigate the limit that is at what extent the weak can be tortured without any crime. During her research, she meets transgender community specifically eunuchs. Somehow she comes to know that Anarkali, a *hijra*, has been charged with murder and she is in prison. With the help of her husband, she manages to meet Anarkali. She is escorted by a constable Munswamy. In the beginning, Anarkali does not like Uma. She does not want to share any information but Uma's humanitarian approach moves her to speak. In her first meeting with Anarkali, Uma believed that Anarkali had murdered Kamla, another *hijra* but after talking to Anarkali and gathering some more information from another sources, her belief has shaken. Let's quote a dialogue:

Uma: Anarkali! (pause) If you loved your sister Kamla, why did you scar her face with a butcher's knife?

Pause

Anarkali: I would do it you also. If it will save your life.

Uma: What do you mean?

Pause.

Anarkali: She was beautiful. Very beautiful.

Footsteps.

That is why Salim's wife put fire to her beautiful skin and burned her to the other world. (Dattani 15)

Rereading Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka: A Critical Analysis of African Postcolonial Literature

Ariful Islam

Abstract: Behind the backdrop of today's Africa and its history of struggle against colonial discourses that have mythologized Africa as 'dark' and 'savage' set against Western 'civilization,' the readers of African postcolonial literary works shall always find religion in different forms and modes of operation. Far from being naïve, religions have always been the door to get out of and/or get into another world with different values, beliefs and practices. Cultural, historical, and theoretical readings of African postcolonial literature are good to explore and identify what and how of Africa and the Africans. This paper argues that the study of religion, a kind of study which is often overlooked, in African postcolonial literatures may answer to many whys as it deconstructs Enlightenment-influenced reasoning because, the Gods of Africa are always there to confront the other God(s) for power, authority and knowledge. Developed through a library research, the present paper reads representation of religion in some select post-colonial novels including Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood* and Wole Soyinka's *The Trials of Brother Jero*. The paper shows that postcolonial writers treat religion not simply as a spiritual gateway to and thus an agent to revive indigenous belief system but also as a geopolitical force to strengthen or withstand cultural and political aggression.

Keywords: Post-colonialism/post-colonialism, Religiosity, Power, Politics, Hegemony, Colonial discourses.

What is Literature?

In fact I have formed this word—for the first time in English—to refer to: the literary works that include religion and/or religious aspects implicitly and/or explicitly; the study of the politics of different religions in the context of different literatures in regard of different times, places and individuals; the representation of religion/s in literature/s; and the harmony as well as the conflict between religion and literature. Basically,

I used the term first in my M.A. Dissertation entitled “Representation of Religion in African Postcolonial Literature.”

Introduction

This paper intends to throw light on the reasons that have reasoned its focus on the representation of religion in African post-colonial literature. Cultural, historical, and theoretical readings of African postcolonial literature are good to explore and identify *what* and *how* of Africa and the Africans. This paper argues that the study of religion in African postcolonial literatures may answer to many *whys* as it deconstructs Enlightenment-influenced reasoning because, the Gods of Africa are always there to confront the *other* God(s) for power, authority and knowledge. The paper shows that postcolonial writers treat religion not simply as a spiritual gateway to and thus an agent to revive indigenous belief system but also as a geopolitical force to strengthen or withstand cultural and political aggression.

The Whys and Wherefores

The whys and wherefores behind such disturbing step of exploring the critical study of religion in African postcolonial literature echo with the primary functions of literature, i.e., presentation, representation, suggestions and approaches, that is to say, the way a piece of literature communicates with the readers indeed.

Regarding the ‘Whys and Wherefores’, Achebe has defined his role as a writer “to help [his] society regain belief in itself” (O’Reilly 32) through voicing the experience of Africans whereas Wole Soyinka, according to Christopher O’Reilly, makes his choice to glorify and idealize traditional African culture and experiences, and to explore fundamental spiritual and historical issues with/through the use of elements of religious rituals. On the other hand, Ngugi’s exertion is for a new world under the rule of true gods, where all will be equally served and taken care of along with the equal distribution of money, wealth and land. The representation of religion in his writings helps himself to depict African traditional customs along with the analysis of colonial impact after the independence to reflect the experiences of Kenyans. His approach stays between literature and politics.

The critical study of religion in African post-colonial literature created a meeting place for the past with pagan belief and the present with zealous Christian belief in order to defend the attack and to offend the misrepresentation about their essence of existence, everyday life and experiences.

Cultural Diversity: Reading Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*

Arun Kumar Yadav

Abstract: Cultural diversity is a group of diverse individuals from different cultures or societies. Generally, cultural diversity takes into description language, religion, race, sexual orientation, gender, age and ethnicity; it is identified as multiculturalism. Monica Ali is a Bangladeshi-born British novelist. Her novel *Brick Lane* examines the current international problems stemming from globalization, the conflict between different ethnic groups, and resistance to cultural difference, in psychological terms. Today's world is getting closer with the effects of globalization; distances between countries and communities have become smaller, and states have become far more heterogeneous than in the past. Critics have therefore read Ali's novel as an interrogation of the effects of globalization. This paper is an attempt to explore cultural diversity in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003).

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Culture, Ethnicity, Globalization, Monica Ali, *Brick Lane*.

Multiculturalism denotes a society in which several cultures exist. Culture plays a central role in the dissuasion of multiculturalism. Culture refers to a shared system of meaning in terms of which people understand themselves and the world and organize their individual and collective lives. It includes views about the nature of the self, its relations to others, man's place in the world, the meaning and significance of human activities, relations and the human life in general, moral values and ideals, etc., and provides a framework, an intellectual and moral compass, in terms of which human beings navigate their way through life. *The Oxford Dictionary* defines culture as, 'the customs, institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people or group'. It is a fundamental thing that none of us can run away from it. We shall start thinking what we can do with our culture.

However, culture is dynamic. It is in a constant state of flux; we recreate ourselves on daily basis. If a very large component of our society such as the media, literature, especially the genre of novels and

short stories which provide us a diverse culture of different parts of the world is somehow frozen and imprisoned in the anthropological understanding of culture then we are losing a lot. The impact of such a diverse literature can be seen in our society; we become familiar with different cultures by simply reading the novels and short stories by writers from different parts of the world. For instance, if one reads the novels of Amit Chaudhuri involuntarily he will get familiar with the Bengali culture and way of living life. Translated literature has also played a larger role in the unity and diversity of our culture. Imagine, I do not know the Tamil language, if a novel written in the Tamil language is translated into English then we can easily read, understand it, and get familiar with the Tamil culture.

Literature is a reflection of society. Literature always deals with the derivation and complex things. Literature written in any society can never escape itself from being affected. Literature plays a very significant role in framing culture. Culture sometimes adapts the literature, media in at all, because they do not want it to interfere or change the way their own culture is. Most of the time when we hear culture we probably think of the way different people around the world; live, dress, food habits, and the ways they celebrate their religious ceremony, rituals, festivals, etc. This is definitely culture, but it could have many more meanings as well. The culture of a society is embodied in its beliefs, practices, rituals, literature, moral vocabulary, proverbs, jokes, sense of humour, body language, and ways of organizing different areas of life. In the case of the multicultural society, different groups of people do not share a common vision, conceptual vocabulary and organizing principles. Their structures of beliefs and practices vary, and so do their values, literature, historical memories, etc., in which their cultures are articulated. Thus, Literature is a mode of discovery. It is the culture of the senses. Literature humanizes us. It makes us a good human being. It makes us sensitive. Literature was written to warn the society.

Cultural communities are generally conscious of their boundaries and know who does and does not belong to them, their differences acquire a degree of importance in their own and others' eyes that intercultural do not. When members of a society subscribe to different organizing principles and moral vocabularies, understand, and disagree about significant areas of life, the society concerned is multicultural. Multiculturalism does not mean the blending of cultures leading to a

‘Chronicles of a Young Woman in Wartime’: Women and Liberation in Tahmima Anam’s Works

Debarati Maity

Abstract: The paper titled “‘Chronicles of a Young Woman in Wartime’: Women and Liberation in Tahmima Anam’s Works” engages in gynocriticism of the novels *A Golden Age* (2007) and *The Good Muslim* (2011). Anam’s novels differ from the existing ones in her effort to rewrite the history of the creation of Bangladesh from women’s perspective. Through the act of re-telling stories of women of her country, their contribution in the sustenance of the country and their unfortunate maltreatment, Anam has critiqued the whole concept of liberation. Anam depends upon memoirs, testimonials, oral narratives for her plot. She tries to create space for marginalized women and their heroism in the historical and nationalist narratives. The concept of home is also problematized and the subjects therefore seek comfort in transferring their anxieties for anchorage and control to their imaginary conceptions of home. Anam herself being a Bangladeshi born, US educated, and London resident, suffers from a sense of ‘tri-country longing’. Through the act of scripting, she participates in the larger struggle for women’s liberation, and engages in forming a secular form of nationalism.

Keywords: Bangladesh, Women’s heroism, Memories, Liberation, Nationalism.

“My name is Sheherezade Haque Maya. I was named after a famous storyteller”. (Tahmima Anam, *The Golden Age* 52)

In 1971, for nine months, the people of East Pakistan fought against the armies and government of West Pakistan to form an independent country named Bangladesh. But the price they had to pay for their liberation was huge. Hundreds of villages were burnt, thousands of women were raped, and the revolutionaries were subjected to inhuman tortures. The horror of those modes of ‘discipline and punish’ is succinctly captured in the following instance:

‘They beat him [a revolutionary], broke his ribs.

‘They made him stare at the sun for hours, days.

‘They burned cigarette holes on his back.

‘They hung him upside down.

‘They made him drink salt water until his lips cracked.

‘And they tore out his fingernails.

‘...They would have made him dig his own grave and buried him.’

(Anam, *A Golden Age* 248-49)¹

While there have been many historical and cultural representations of the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, otherwise known as *Muktijuddha*, Tahmima Anam (born in 1975), the writer of two critically acclaimed novels *A Golden Age* (2007) and *The Good Muslim* (2011), has tried to look at the War from a different perspective. Both these novels, a third one yet to be published, are part of a trilogy on the same War and its aftermath. The novels are certainly a living record of the horror of that War, and the lines cited above (*A Golden Age* 248-49) are enough to prove the point. However, what strikes one the most about Anam’s literary representation of the history of 1971-war is her unique emphasis on the women protagonists of the War, their condition in the post-war Bangladesh, and their critique of the whole concept of liberation. This paper is an attempt to make sense of these aspects of her writings. Anam had been in close touch with many war victims and freedom fighters (her uncle himself was a *muktijoddha*). As a social anthropologist she had also done exhaustive research on the subject at hand. Her accounts of the war, especially from the perspective of women, become a proper and significant subject for investigation.

I. Revisiting History: Women in the Liberation War

The *Birangonas*

The worst victims of any war are women. However, Bangladesh stands out in this respect since it has witnessed the worst form of sexual violence. The university students were the first targets of unprovoked violence. After their family members were killed or their houses were burnt down by the enemy soldiers, many women were abducted and then were kept as sex slaves in the army camps. Many of them died in course of violence and atrocity. Others who survived the war were found six or seven months pregnant. Tahmima Anam’s narratives are replete with such women victims. Here is one instance where a victim, Piya Islam, narrates what happened to her:

Birth of Subject in Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*

Bahareh Bahmanpour

Abstract: Theories of Subjectivity have undergone a complete radical change since liberal Humanism, which foregrounded the subject as a fixed all-knowing being in control of what they say or do. According to postmodern theorists of subjectivity, subject is by no means a coherent perceptive structure and is rather an effect of such forces as language, power and ideology. The present paper reads Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* (1958) in the light of this postmodern view of the subject. Offering a new view of the function of language in Pinter's play, it focuses on Stanley, the protagonist of the play, as an embodiment of the postmodern notion of the subject and, accordingly, suggests that the events of the play, as a whole, can be taken as a concrete dramatization of the abstract process of the subject-formation. The theoretical framework upon which the present essay is built owes a great deal to Louis Althusser's post-Marxist notions of ideology, Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA), and interpellation, in the light of which Pinter's *The Birthday Party* is read as an allegory of the birth of the subject of/to ideology.

Keywords: Subject, Ideology, Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA), Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA), Interpellation, Louis Althusser.

Introduction: Pinter and the Function of Language

GOLDBERG. Wrong! It's only necessarily necessary! We admit possibility only after we grant necessity. It is possible because necessary but by no means necessary through possibility. The possibility can only be assumed after the proof of necessity.

MCCANN. Right!

GOLDBERG. Right? Of course right! We're right and you're wrong, Webber, all along the line. (2, 50-51)

In Pinter's plays, a lot of issues including the state of the family, identity, power, violence, marginalization, and sexuality lead one to the question, if not problem, of language—an observation consolidated by Richard Gilman's apt pronouncement that in the dramatic world of

Pinter "language is the play" (Silverstein 25). Like almost all works of Pinter, *The Birthday Party* (1958) has also appealed to most critics due to the apparently aimless quality of its peculiar language and dialogues (Jacobus 1338). Unfortunately though, as Silverstein admits, most of such critiques and commentaries have as their basis some "impressionistic accounts of the function of language" (25). The present essay, however, sets itself against such an established tradition and proposes, instead, to offer a new formulation of the operation of language in Pinter's plays, in general, and *Birthday Party*, in particular—a formulation which hinges on the relation between language and subjectivity within an ideological field.

Drawing on the Althusserian notion of ideology and his theory of the subject, the present study brings Pinter's language and its relation to ideology and subjectivity, as its locus, into focus. Within the post-structuralist conceptual paradigm, the subject (the subject of an utterance, the so-called 'I') is born as soon as it is forced to plunge headlong into the Lacanian Symbolic Order—the linguistic space maintained by the operation of ideological apparatuses and marked by a non-negotiable otherness. From this outset then, the subject is thrust into a series of self/other "relationships that form the human context"—a context whose texture is linguistic (Mansfield 52). Such relationships, however, are marked by power struggles which need to be explored within the cultural space in which they are fought—and not in the personal spheres where the question is simply who controls the relationship. This means that, for example, familial relationships need to be discussed, not for their own sake, but as social institutions operating within ideological networks. If applied to Pinter's plays, such a view can lead to a more functional attitude towards the exploitation of language in his characteristic absurdist dialogues: language as a means to instigate power and not, necessarily, as a means to mean. In Pinter's dialogues then what matters most is what the characters are doing to each other through language in their battle for power, rather than what they are actually saying to one another. For example, the quoted lines in the beginning of this introduction bear an eloquent testimony to the functional role of language in the play. In fact, the position of power Goldberg buys or gains for himself through manipulation of language is so strong that even on the part of the reader its effect is surprisingly that of acceptance and amusement towards the knowledge of the speaker. The reader, feeling as powerless as Mccann, has no way but to nod and say "right!"

Cultural Re-location in Transnational Narratives: Analyzing Buchi Emecheta's *Kehinde*

Sujarani Mathew

Abstract: The transnational context in migrant narratives depict the culture conflict deeply ingrained in diasporic lives. Buchi Emecheta's *Kehinde* is a stark depiction of the male/female difference in occupying the liminal spaces in settler communities. The cultural adaptation and subsequent hybrid identities formed in such transnational lives become the focal point of this work by Emecheta. The African female subjectivity of the protagonist, fighting polygamy and the intervention of her 'chi' in guiding her to locate her autonomy is analyzed in the paper.

Keywords: Migration, Race/class/gender, Polygamy, Dual identity, Chi.

Diasporic fiction which delineates migrant lives deals with the post-colonial psychosis caused by alienation and dislocation which is often mitigated by hybridity. Buchi Emecheta's *Kehinde* is a microcosm of such a diasporic community that describes the account of the self-awakening of a First World immigrant and her transformation into a woman of unique identity. The cultural studies pertaining to the post-colonial relations noted the gradual inter-linking between physical and psychological contact zones. It is in these cultural borders that the syncretization of cultures takes place in a mutual exchange of traditions, giving rise to the phenomenon of hybridity in the post-colonial world. Bhabha uses the concept of the 'hybridity' of the colonized to "stress the mutuality of cultures in the colonial and post-colonial process in expressions of syncreticity, cultural synergy and transculturation" (Ashcroft *et al.* 119).

Buchi Emecheta's work, *Kehinde*, is a story of a Nigerian immigrant family in London; it portrays the variations in a settler's conscience. The loyalty to one's motherland and the relative autonomy accredited to women in the adopted land bring on a conflicting situation in the experience of the people belonging to the settler community. *Kehinde* is about a diasporic woman, a First World aspirant who looks towards the economic freedom of the First World to liberate her from the claustrophobic

traditionality of her native land. The dilemma of the modern African woman, torn between two worlds, is clearly depicted in Emecheta's novels.

The temporal and local background of the novel may be noted: the time presented is the 1970s or 80s which was the period of large scale immigration to England. The local setting is a typical east London terraced house. As it is recorded that it was ten years since their migration, the setting of the plot can be fixed in the late 80s (1). The protagonist is pictured as the proud wife of a first world immigrant, enjoying her status as a well paid employee in the white world. But she loses her job and peace of mind because of the whim of her husband to become an African Chief. After a brief interlude in the old country Africa, she returns to England, and ends up tasting the bitter experiences of the black woman of lower economic strata, as she struggles to pick up the pieces of her shattered life. Thus *Kehinde* could be considered a study of the middle class black woman of the diasporic community whose fortunes constantly ebb and flow.

The postcolonial situation existing in the society is also given through snatches of conversation in the novel. The sudden oil boom and the plethora of work as well as the Nigerian mania for loads of certificates and indifference to experience, leave Kehinde and Albert without a job. The low pay in Nigeria which led to much brain-drain, and the hope that "maybe in the future things may change, there'll be fewer corrupt leaders in our part of the world,... which will stop our best brains run away to work for the white man" (124), gives an accurate picture of postcolonial Nigeria. Such a political situation in the native land led to the Nigerian emigration into England. The large scale immigration during the 1960s and 70s constitutes a part of the multicultural ethnicity in England. In the novel, the Okolo family functions as the microcosm of such a new cultural mixture formed in the Britain of the late 1970s. The novel opens with a considerable time lapse after Albert Okolo and his wife Kehinde settle in the colonialist country and form part of the settler generation. Their son Joshua and daughter Bimpe form the second generation immigrants, another distinct race in cultural history.

The racial, gender and class problems they encounter as the story unfolds represent the African consciousness of the age. As *Kehinde* has a plot built on First World immigrant blacks in the white world, it sets off typical questions of race that preoccupy the culture critics of the century. The two major characters—Albert and Kehinde, could be considered examples of the people who migrated to England in the 60s and 70s and

Inequality in the Midst of Diversity is the Cry of the Voiceless

G. Immanuel

Abstract: Marginalization refers to the reduction in power and importance of certain people in our country. Marginalization entails segregation, division, exemption, exclusion, separation and declination. Marginality is an experience that affects millions of people throughout the world. People who are marginalized have relatively little control over their lives, and the resources available to them. This results in making them handicapped in delving contribution to society. A vicious circle is set up whereby their lack of positive and supportive relationships mean that they are prevented from participating in local life, which in turn leads to further isolation. Dalits does not refer to a caste, but suggests a group who are in a state of oppression, social disability and who are helpless and poor. Literacy rates among Dalits are very low. They have meagre purchasing power and have poor housing conditions as well as have low access to resources and entitlements. Basudev Sunani is an Oriyan poet of growing reputation who has written 5 poems portraying Dalit sensibilities. Sunani is very clear and strong in expressing the aspects of marginalization of dalits through his poems "Seek Him Out", and "Smell of Untouchability". This paper envisages all the aspects that make a Dalit feel marginalized through the roles they are supposed to play in the society. The poems of Sunani serves to be strong proof to the fact how the society views and treats them and also highlights how they are marginalized and prevented from becoming one among the mainstream.

Keywords: Marginalization, Dalits, Power, Reputation, Expression.

Inequality is the existence of unequal opportunities and rewards, unequal treatments and favour, unequal prominence for different social positions or statuses within a group or society. India is a country known for the say "Equality in the midst of diversity" irrespective of its credentiality and accountability. India is a diversified nation accepting and accommodating people of various sects, colour, caste and religion. Are such diversified people given equal opportunities, privileges, prominence and rights? Is a notable question to be reckoned? Why

marginalization plays a major role if India is known for its equality? Why people are socially, economically, physically, psychologically and emotionally marginalized at large? These are the few important questions for which the oppressed, suppressed, depressed and marginalized expect an answer. Diversification is one of the main prospects for a growing nation. Managing these diversifications really needs hearts and minds free from inhibitions and prejudices.

Society is a place where social interactions take place between people, organizations and institutions. It is clear that a society comprises large and small groups, rich and poor groups and categories of all castes and tribes. The very segregation as large-small, rich—poor and majority-minority highlight how discrimination creeps into society normally that leads to disparity. In the current scenario, the ‘Large’ dominates the ‘Small’, ‘Rich’ dominates the ‘Poor’ and ‘Majority’ the ‘Minority’. This domination is the cause for social exclusions in the society at large.

Marginalization refers to the reduction in power and importance of certain people in our country. Marginalization entails segregation, division, exemption, exclusion, separation and declination. Marginality is an experience that affects millions of people throughout the world. People who are marginalized have relatively little control over their lives, and the resources available to them. This results in making them handicapped in delving contribution to society. A vicious circle is set up whereby their lack of positive and supportive relationships mean that they are prevented from participating in local life, which in turn leads to further isolation. Dalits does not refer to a caste, but suggests a group who are in a state of oppression, social disability and who are helpless and poor. Literacy rates among Dalits are very low. They have meagre purchasing power and have poor housing conditions as well as have low access to resources and entitlements. The *Encyclopaedia of Public Health* defines marginalized groups as, “To be marginalized is to be placed in the margins, and thus excluded from the privilege and power found at the centre.” To further clarify the meaning and concept let us discuss certain characteristics of marginalized groups. Usually a minority group has the following characteristics:

1. It suffers from discrimination and subordination.
2. They have physical and/or cultural traits that set them apart.
3. They share a sense of collective identity and common burdens.

The Yoke and the Flight: A Study of Women's Role in Timothy Findley's *The Butterfly Plague*

S. Muthu Kumaravel

Abstract: The paper proposes to make a socio-feminist study of Findley's *The Butterfly Plague*. At the preliminary level it is proposed to analyze the women of *The Butterfly Plague* from the perspective of the sociological concept of role play. The twin aspects of fulfilling the roles assigned and playing role(s) for aspiration fulfilment form the ground analysis at this level. Attitudes ranging from unquestioning submissiveness of women to the demands of their counterparts, to their barrier-breaking manipulative play of situations will be the next plane of analysis. The implications inherent in such attitudes will be analyzed from the perspectives of social and interpersonal relationships. It is also proposed to examine how they repressed materials of the women in the novel seek outlet through indulgence in factual rigorousness and/or fantasy visions which take in historical and racial aspects. The paper also proposes to turn its focus on the dialectic between professional aspirations of women in the novel and the real world contingencies and the kind of resolution achieved in *The Butterfly Plague* from the perspective of the exterior and the interior in the conditions of existence.

Keywords: Twin-aspects, Aspiration-fulfilment, Repressed, Factual rigorousness, Fantasy, Visions, World contingencies.

That "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman"...it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature. (Simon De Beauvoir 301)

Traditionally, the role of a woman is to perform supportive tasks and to appear submissive and subordinate. Not free to choose, they are expected to play the role assigned to them. Their aspirations that are deviant from or opposed to role-expectations could only be partially fulfilled or not at all.

The socio-biologist's deterministic principle that 'anatomy is destiny' looks both operative and non-operative in the case of the women in *The Butterfly Plague*. Naomi and Ruth, the mother and the daughter, Letitia Virden, Myra and B.J. Trelford seem to play roles 'destined' to them by their gender. But at the same time some of them show a tendency, in

different degrees, to break beyond their assigned role-limits. In choice of career, of conjugal roles and in encountering problems in these spheres, the women in the novel seem both to abide by role expectations and to go beyond or violate such expectations.

Ruth, a female hero of *The Butterfly Plague* has chosen to be a competitive swimmer, an activity that requires both physical strenuousness and mental toughness. She displays a high degree of both, by winning medals in German Olympics. In that, she may be considered to have moved out of traditional conception of woman as someone who cannot withstand the strenuous culturing of the body. This exceptional departure from the gentle notion of woman has been counterpoised by Ruth in another domain of experience. She falls in love with Bruno, her coach, which might be explained as a result of the dependant's viewing of the other as a surrogate figure. But her love is strangely initiated. Bruno cuts-off her braid—the braid which she loves. It is an act of violation on her femininity, her cherished hair biers an index of her feminine nature. Done against her will, the rape of her lock may be construed as an attempt by Bruno to degender her. Like Samson, who loses his never shaved 'seven braids' were sheaved off, Ruth loses her gender index when Bruno debraids her. This is the first of a series of act of Bruno to vitiate her female identity.

Bruno's making her wear the breast-truss is another instance. When she wears the over tight truss, her breasts become deformed and she feels great physical discomfort. She accounts this as a major factor in debilitating her health and mind. With the shoven hair, the deformedly flattened breast takes away her biological identity. To Bruno, whom she loves, she is not a woman, not a human being, but a thing, a guinea pig necessary for testing his strange physiological theories or in his long process to formulate a training method that will maximize all swimmers efficiency, not simply Ruth's. Initially, it is this experimental attitude of Bruno, which reduces his wife to a mere object to be acted upon that catches the fancy of the NAZIS. But Ruth plays her role as a wife perfectly. Her faith in conjugality enables her to bear any kind of torture—psychological or biological, imposed on her by Bruno, her husband. She loves Bruno to love her as much as she loves him. She is the traditional submissive wife who is ready to give up her distinct identity and her country for the man she loves. She is the Biblical Ruth, who finds finally Bruno and Germany alien to her spirit.

As one in love and as wife, Ruth is submissively traditional. But Bruno abuses her personally and exploits her for Nazi political ends. Her

“Scribe, Move On!”—Repetition, Digression and Association in the Songs of *The Mwindo Epic*

Sambuddha Ghosh

Abstract: In a literate society that we now live in, it is difficult in itself, to find out the ‘psychodynamics’ of even a residual orality, as Ong has put it in his work, using conventional theoretical tools such as narratological reading practices that deal with the inherent ‘textuality’ of a work. Using Ong’s, Ruth Finnegan’s, and Jan Vansina’s general methodological apparatuses to read the phenomenon of orality closest to its most uncorrupted form, the following paper examines a few songs from the *Mwindo Epic* from the Banyaga (erstwhile Congo, now Zaire) as explications of orality in pre-modern societies. Finally, having identified three features, viz., repetition, digression and association that connect the peculiarities of the epic form to the pre-requisites of orality, this paper explores the ‘meta-narratological’ elements which connect the ‘text’s’ inherent relationship to the immediacy of a performance- nexus.

Keywords: African Literature, Orality, Literacy, Epic.

The “psychodynamics of orality”, as they were called by Walter J. Ong (Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*), were identified at the beginning of the last century due the pioneering work of scholars such as Parry and Lord, Jack Goody, Ruth Finnegan and many such others (not to exclude Ong himself). These patterns, in which the mind of a member of an oral community is accustomed to work, have been seen as different from the workings of a mind exposed to varying degrees of literacy across cultures. Yet, there is a further problem of oversimplifying matters by presupposing such radical differences between the workings of an oral and literate consciousness. As both Finnegan and Bruce A. Rosenberg (Rosenberg) argue, there has been an inherent continuity, not a dichotomy, between oral and literate cultures for thousands of years. However, even if we accept that purely ‘oral folk’ can nowhere be identified today or studied, a fair amount of inductive reasoning can be used to arrive at what would have been the features of a model, supposedly ‘uncorrupted’ orality.

The object of the present paper is a study of *The Mwindo Epic* from the Banyanga in order to examine some of its most prominent features that would help us ascertain the oral nature of its composition. I have surmised that there are three features in the epic which are most extensive, these being repetition, digression and association. The examples chosen from the text to illustrate each of these features which are not so prominently distinct and often they overlap with each other. Sometimes repetition leads to digression and digression to association, but this is not a fixed order which can be demonstrated in entirety throughout the text. For economy's sake, I have kept myself limited to the songs of the epic, for these, to me are most illustrative of these features. However, this is not to say that they do not occur at other parts of the prose narrative. Finally, I intend to proceed to an analysis of what functions these features can perform at the level of narrative.

I. Repetition

The Mwindo Epic, as performed by the griot Mr. *Shé-kári'si'* Candi Rureke could be classified as a *kári'si'*-text or an epic narrative. As in other Nyanga epics, the central hero here is Mwindo and the events narrated are mostly his diverse exploits, displays of bravado and courage.

Repetition is a recurring feature of *The Mwindo Epic*, both at the level of epithets or formulaic phrases and at the level of narrative progression. However, this feature is most succinctly observable in the songs of the epic. There are, for instance a number of stock phrases used as epithets for various dramatis personae. Mwindo is designated by the Nyanga epithet *Kábutwa-kénda* ("the Little-one-just-born-he-walked"), a number of times in the epic. As in other epics, epithets and stereotyped expressions are attached to important figures and these are repeated, churned out and re-used by the *griot* while narrating similar situations and episodes.

However, the most prominent examples of repetition are elsewhere. An important episode in the epic is when of Mwindo's father Shemwindo throws him into the river to ensure his death and he sings during his underwater journey to the realm of Mukiti:

Mungai, get out of my way!

For Ikukuhi shall I go out of my way?

You are impotent against Mwindo,

Mwindo is the Little-one-just-born-he-walked

Translation as Negotiation: A Study of Mahasweta Devi's Story "Rudali" in English Translation

Arun Pramanik

Abstract: Translation of a literary text is not only a transaction between two languages, but a kind of complex negotiation between two cultures. Problems of translation are the problems of languages and cultures as translation is both a linguistic and cultural activity and considered with the communication of meaning. No two languages are ever quite similar in representing the same social reality. Language is always culture-oriented, and each language has its own cultural specificities. So translating those cultural intricacies into a different language pose huge difficulties for a translator. Hence translators are to negotiate not only between the Source and Target languages, but also the cultures too. The translators are to sweat a lot in finding the equivalent words in the Target Language. And sometimes, the equivalents are not available too. At this point the translation depends solely on the creativity of the translator who has to negotiate in the act of recreating the Source Text for the target readers. As a result mistranslation, undertranslation and overtranslation leading to misrepresentations of the Source Text are sometimes noticed in the Target Text. In this paper, attempts have been made to analyse this complex act of translational negotiation in the act of translating Mahasweta Devi's Bangla story "Rudali" into English by Anjum Katyal.

Keywords: Translation, Negotiation, Mistranslation, Mahasweta Devi.

Translation is not merely the transfer of texts from one language into another; rather it is a process of complex negotiation between two cultures. It is almost a kind of 'negotiation' (Umberto Eco). A translator performs the role of a mediator and this process of mediation is not always easy since many problems arise in this very act of negotiation. Problems of translation primarily relate to the problems of languages and cultures. No language is ever pure. And no culture is ever monolithic. Words have different meanings in different cultural contexts. Since language is culture-oriented,

translators are to face enormous problems in translating culture-based words into another language with a different cultural context. Differences between a source culture and target culture cause more severe complications for a translator than do differences in the language structure. The Indian customs, food and clothes, flora and fauna, festivals and rituals widely differ from that of English and other cultures. Kinship terms, culture specific words, geographical words, religious terms are really very difficult to translate from any Source Language into a Target Language. And sometimes, the equivalents are not available too. Hence the translators are to negotiate not only between the Source and Target languages, but also the cultures too. The result is translation depends on the creativity of the translator who has to negotiate in the act of recreating the Source Text for the target readers. Hence mistranslation, undertranslation and overtranslation leading to misrepresentations of the Source Text are sometimes noticed in the Target Text. Now let us analyze this complex act of translational negotiation in the act of translating Mahasweta Devi's Bangla story "Rudali" into English by Anjum Katyal.

Mahasweta Devi (1926 -) is a prolific writer, social activist and a journalist. Her writing is about the Lodhas and Shabars, the tribal communities of West Bengal, women and the Dalits. Through her writings she depicts the brutal oppression perpetuated on the tribal men and women by the omnipotent and cruel upper-caste landlords, money-lenders, and venal government officials. Poverty, hunger, oppression and the corruption in society are the recurrent themes of her writings. Her writings have been widely translated into English and other languages. The story "Rudali" is translated by Anjum Katyal, a noted translator, writer and an editor.

The story "Rudali" is about the poverty-stricken, helpless condition of the lower-caste women who are compelled to take mourning as their profession on the death of the rich people in order to sustain their livelihood. The action of the story revolves around the life of Sanichari, a ganju by caste, who has seen in her own eyes the successive deaths of her mother-in-law, her husband, her husband's elder brother and wife, and her only son in hunger and disease. The more ironic thing is that she even could not shed tears as she had to remain busy for their cremations in order to abide to the social norms. She has witnessed in her own eyes the

Anarchy and Post-independence India: A Reading of Chetan Bhagat's *What Young India Wants* and Arvind Kejriwal's *Swaraj*

Arup Ratan Basak

Abstract: It may seem really interesting to know that very recently, the honourable Prime Minister of India, spoke out in a public statement, that in a country like India, no politician of repute has ever been an anarchist. The Gandhian spectacles that has been rampantly used by the government in justifying their own policies, by relating those to the Mahatma, appears to be misinterpretations. A major attempt to be taken in this paper is to interpret the Gandhian form of anarchy in the right manner. Beginning the discussion from Gandhi himself and then coming to our contemporary times to find its developments in the prose works of two popular thinkers of this country, one is Arvind Kejriwal—a civil servant turned into a social activist and then a politician, and Chetan Bhagat, a foreign investment banker turned into a novelist and screenplay writer, then finally into a member of the civil society having deep concerns about the future of India. In this paper I shall attempt a threadbare analysis of Arvind Kejriwal's *Swaraj* vis-a-vis Chetan Bhagat's *What Young India Wants*, referring back from time to time to Gandhi and his followers and try to bring out that literature and politics/political philosophies are not detached from one another, but are complementary to each other. Politicians though radical and practical in their thought needs to be imaginative for the progress of the society, and thus starts dwelling in fiction. On the other hand, creative writers like Bhagat cannot only dwell upon imaginative dreamlands. For the public acceptance, his fictions need to be grounded into reality and that can only be done by incorporation of the real political or social issues.

Keywords: Swaraj, Anarchy, Politics, Corruption, Development.

One major problem of contemporary political philosophy is to define positively the term 'anarchy'. In the European tradition anarchy is highly ameliorated because it stands against the 'culture' of the powerful. In the context of post-independence India still bearing the traces of colonial power-politics in the post-colonial era, the tradition of anarchy begins with none other than Mohandas Karamchand

Gandhi perhaps. In his life and work, Gandhi always wanted to remain a non-conformist, though he had been only partially successful. It is however a very different issue that time and again he referred to anarchy and his position to that of an anarchist in order to define himself.

Anarchy does not mean in real-politic a complete freedom from state as a ruling organization. It is rather an ideal attempt to let the ordinary people free from their dependence on or in other words bondage of state or their governor. It can be stated that ‘anarchy’ is but a radical review of the social contract theory where it is mandatory for the ruler to look after the well-being of the community he or she rules. Probably in anarchy, the community of the ruled is invested with much more autonomy so that they may take care of themselves as a part of the ruling government and their government need not exercise any authority or take recourse to any other measure apart from having full faith on the intention of the ruled.

It may seem really interesting to know that very recently the honourable Prime Minister of India spoke out in a public statement, that in this country, no politician of repute has ever been an anarchist. The Gandhian spectacles that has been indiscriminately used by the present Indian government in justifying its own policies, by relating those to the Mahatma, therefore appears to be misinterpretations. An attempt to be taken in this paper is to interpret the Gandhian form of anarchy in the right manner. Beginning the discussion from Gandhi himself and then coming to our contemporary times to find its developments in the prose-works of two popular thinkers of this country. One is Arvind Kejriwal—a civil servant turned into a social activist and then a politician. And the other is Chetan Bhagat, a foreign-investment banker turned into a novelist and screenplay writer, then finally into a member of the civil society having deep concerns about the future of India. In this paper, I shall attempt a threadbare analysis of Arvind Kejriwal’s *Swaraj* vis-a-vis Chetan Bhagat’s *What Young India Wants*, referring back from time to time Gandhi and his followers like Jayaprakash Narayan, Vinoba Bhave and J.C. Kumarappa.

Arvind Kejriwal’s *Swaraj* comes out in the year 2012, under the banner of a leading multinational publishing house, and the author has dedicated this book to the common people of India, who have been waiting for *Swaraj*. On the other hand, Chetan Bhagat’s essays and journalistic writings are collected within the covers of *What Young*

‘Pottermania’: The Creation of Brand Harry Potter and a New ‘Culture Industry’

Somrita Misra

Abstract: In the year 1997 there arrived on the literary scene an orphan boy with a lightening shaped scar on his forehead. His name was Harry Potter, and over the next ten years this name would be associated with a brand which would have a monetary value of four million dollars. ‘Pottermania’ would furnish Warner Bros. with a range of products, collectibles, and characters that would generate huge profits. The present paper attempts to explore brand Harry Potter. The paper focuses on the ‘culture industry’ generated through the brand, and how this ‘industry’ transforms a creative work into a consumer product.

Keywords: Brand, Culture Industry, Consumer product, Pottermania, *Harry Potter* series, J.K. Rowling.

At the end of the twentieth century a storm swept the English reading public: the story of a wizard with a lightening shaped scar called Harry Potter. The *Harry Potter* novels have sold more than 400 million copies and have been translated into sixty seven languages, making J.K. Rowling the first billionaire author. Andrew Blake in his book *The Irresistible Rise of Harry Potter* writes: “Only the Bible has been translated into more [languages]” (7). In 2000 the People’s Literature Publishing House in China packaged the first three Chinese translated *Harry Potter* novels as a boxed set; which crossed the 6,00,000 printing order limit, making it the largest commercially successful book of the country.

The reading public’s enthusiasm for the novels gave rise to what is now called, idiomatically, ‘Pottermania’. Once started ‘Pottermania’ refused to subside. The films based on the books crossed all previous earning records. This kind of popular reception of the novels resulted in the creation of brand Harry Potter. A “brand”, according to *Cambridge Business Dictionary*, is “the process involved in creating a unique name and image for a product in the consumer’s mind, mainly through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme” (8-9). Brand is used to

retain loyal customers of the product, creating constant revenues. Sometimes brand names are popular enough to stand in as metonyms for the entire range of that product.

The name Harry Potter along with the names of all the characters, places, spells, and enchantments, of the *Harry Potter* series, has been trademarked by the owners of the film rights of the series, Warner Bros. Andrew Blake writes, “... everything that can be taken from the books are available in shops: from cheap chocolate frog collector’s cards¹ to Bertie Bott’s Every Flavour Beans², soft toy versions of Norbert, the baby dragon, Lego versions of Hogwarts School itself” (*The Irresistible Rise of Harry Potter* 88). Brand Harry Potter thus has generated an industry around a work of literature. Coca Cola, in 2001, paid 100 million dollars for using brand Harry Potter on its product surfaces. Brand Harry Potter is now part of the broader ‘culture industry’, which uses creative pleasure and entertainment of the people to earn never ending revenues.

The term ‘culture industry’ was coined by Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer in their work *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. The present paper does not use the ‘culture industry’ concept as a theoretical tool. It uses the term to describe the trade of merchandises of brand Harry Potter, and the process of creating consumer products using names and characters from a literary series. Pramod K. Nayar writes of ‘culture industry’: “Culture industry refers to mass culture where entertainment and its forms convert individuals into passive consumers. Pleasure and fun are ‘standardized’ market ‘products’ and individuals are obedient subjects who consume them” (*Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory* 143). Robert Witkins writes how ‘culture industry’ “even sucks the remnants of serious art into their mills....” (*Adorno on Popular Culture* 40). Brand Harry Potter results in the Harry Potter novels becoming part of such a ‘culture industry’.

The reading public ‘consumes’ the *Harry Potter* novels rather than enjoy them as works of literature. The publishing strategies surrounding the novels have resulted in Harry Potter being more a popular icon than a fictional character. We need to locate Rowling’s success within contemporary cultures of the book publishing industry which has perfected the art of production. While it cannot be denied that Rowling is an excellent storyteller, part of the Harry Potter ‘phenomena’ is due to the publicity machine of Bloomsbury and Warner Bros. In many ways Rowling’s novels have fallen prey to what Marxist critics term

A Monist Conflict in Dan Brown's *Angels and Demons*

Sourav Chatterjee

Abstract: In the paper I have endeavoured to bring together the theories of 'revenge', two branches of the monist philosophy—existence monism and priority monism, Pre-Socratic philosophy (especially their material monist outlook), and the politics of the historical skirmishes between the Roman Catholic Church and the Illuminati (as portrayed by Dan Brown in his fiction). The paper is divided into three parts; the first part is titled 'The Elements of the Conflict' in which I have foregrounded how the conflict between the Church and the Illuminati stems from an intrinsic philosophical difference beneath the tumultuous worldly veneer of politics and culture. The second part 'The Essence of the Conflict' focuses more on the violence of the Church directed against the Renaissance scientists and freethinkers in order to promote monopoly and absolute authority on 'truth'; while on the other hand, it also addresses the themes of punishment, revenge and justice for the Illuminati, and simultaneously their avant-garde codes, ethics and ideology deployed as a resistance to the Churches ubiquitous intervention. Finally, the third part 'The Politics of the Conflict: The Body of Camerlegno Carlo Ventresca' is a study in paradox, camouflage, invention through impersonation, and Empedoclean metempsychosis. Apart from the core ideas the theme of dialectical conflict (not necessarily in the sense of Plato or Hegel) runs like a fine thread weaving the three distinct sections of the paper together.

Keywords: Monism, Illuminati, Pre-Socratic philosophy, Vengeance, Conflict.

what in me is dark

Illumine. (*Paradise Lost*, I. 22, John Milton)

The perpetual vendetta between the Roman Catholic Church and the Illuminati portrayed by Dan Brown in his *Angels and Demons* became a mass sensation, which triggered off numerous controversies and a renewed interest in European ecclesiastical history and the history of secret societies. The study of the secret societies is in vogue

among the historians, who try to penetrate further and speculate new origins and aftermaths of some of history's biggest cover-ups.

In this paper I have endeavoured to bring together the philosophical perspective of 'monism', Pre-Socratic philosophy and theories of 'revenge' to show how the dialectical movement between crime and punishment is played out over philosophical differences.

I. The Elements of the Conflict

The eternal conflict between the Church and the Illuminati in the novel is what I call—a 'monist' philosophical conflict. Monism is the philosophical view that promotes that the various existing things have a single reality or substance. History of the Church and the Illuminati is embedded in two different kinds of monism: Christianity is a monotheistic religion—the man-god Christ as the God incarnate and the logos (the word of god) is the highest authority on all subjects associated with the attainment of man's salvation. As a caveat we should keep in mind that Christian monotheism is different from Abrahamic monotheism, which shifted from a nationalistic and exclusive theology to a more inclusive one. Robert Wright called this a tribute to the 'malleability of God', which elevated the Israelites above their neighbours.

Christianity further believes in the idea of 'existence monism', which targets concrete objects, and believes that exactly one concrete object token exists—the One or God as mentioned in the Book of Acts 17:28.—“in whom we live and move and have our being.” This is the doctrine which promotes that there is one concretum. Existence monism is based on intuition and perception. If there are two objects A and B then for an existence monist it becomes the primary task to deny that any one of them exists, or that at least one of them is a concrete objector that they both are identical. The Illuminati, on the other hand, believed in 'priority monism'. They are pluralist about the number of tokens, but are monist about the number of basic tokens. In the novel the Illuminati is an underground organization of natural philosophers, scientists, poets, and empiricists. They believed that the entire universe was made up of these four substances—Earth, Air, Fire and Water (94). The Illuminati are pluralists insofar as they believed in more than one absolute and all-encompassing substance, but they are monists because they are fixed on their belief in these four basic tokens or elements.

Illuminati believed that there are many concrete objects unlike 'the One' fundamental whole. But these objects are all shards, pieces or

Inter-Linguistic Homonyms: A Semanto-Phonological Study of Select Indian Languages

Sumathi Shivakumar

Abstract: Inter-linguistic homonyms (ILH) are aural/visual puns, standing midway between two or more languages and cultures. Pronounced exactly the same in the concerned Indian languages but with unmistakably different meanings, they are potential hazards in communication leading to misunderstanding of the text / utterance. The Indo-European family of languages are scattered with a number of such words with identical spelling that are semantically different. But Indian languages possess a plethora of such words posing an even greater threat to interpretations, particularly in mixed language scenarios popularized by the electronic media. The word 'Pani'/pʌni/, for example, exists in Malayalam, Telugu and Tamil probably a few others with completely different meanings. Certain rules ordained to identify such words can come in handy to explain the concept. This article aims at identifying several such ILH that exist in many Indian languages and the challenges they pose to understanding in general and inter, cultural communication in particular.

Keywords: Inter Linguistic Homonyms, Indian English, Mixed language, Pronunciation and meaning, Interpretations, Cultural communication.

Introduction

Language learning has always haunted learners, while language learning theories have haunted researchers, so much that the obsession for the most ideal method has continued to be elusive. This is particularly true with Indian English as Kachru claims, where "linguistics interference and the Indian cultural context as essential for understanding and description of the Indianness of this variety of English" (5). Translation as a method of language learning has been explored immensely. However, translators and translation researchers do agree that the very act of translation is so culturally intertwined that as iterated by Catford (19-20), for instance, there

are several factors, such as textual, cultural and situational aspects, that demand consideration when translating, that learning or much less using a language through translation becomes an impossible ideal. Besides these there are several factors that have contributed over the years for language learning to be a very difficult accomplishment.

The present study looks at a complication that has not captured the attention of either language learners, researchers or teachers. If the English language claims to be one of the most complex with its exhaustive heterogeneity, Indian languages with their never ending similarities pose inexplicable challenges to learn and master. One such challenge is addressed in this paper.

Words can occur in two or more languages with exactly the same spelling and pronunciation but differ greatly in meaning. This means the words share the same IPA symbols for transcription but differ extensively in their meanings. Technically, therefore, they are phonemically similar but semantically different. This is thus a linguistic rarity.

Here is a classic example: It could throw more than just a shudder down the spine for anyone who can read English. This is an advertisement in Spanish. The words actually mean “Mommy, that one, that one, that one ...” “Please.”



(Source: DutchEnglishfalsefriend.png)

“die” in English and “die” in Spanish, we can observe, do not mean the same. In European contexts they are termed ‘False Friends’, as they are chiefly visual puns. Extensive research have been carried out in European languages in this area though not much has happened in Indian and other Asian languages.

In Search of Apt Methods in English Language Teaching

Paragkumar D. Dave

Abstract: Today, there has been an increased concern among teachers, researchers, educationalists, and evaluators (TREE) on the pragmatic area and efficacy of English language teaching. The ‘how’ of teaching is now being given as much weight as the ‘what’ and the ‘why’ in English language teaching. The ELT sphere has a range of methods, but the ELT teachers in India are unfledged in terms of theoretical insight and pragmatic ELT methods. Therefore, the present paper focuses on the three prime areas: (i) Searching the major ELT methods used internationally, (ii) Searching the methods used locally (at UG English major level in Veer Narmad South Gujarat State University, India), and (iii) Offering with an easily and apt ELT methods in terms of their theoretical and pragmatic bases, skill(s) to be mastered, projected activities, task of teachers and learners, and convenient methods at par with the levels of learners. As for the technique of data collection, document analysis execute as a means of source and while analysis of data was prepared with content study.

Keywords: TREE, ELT, Methods, Theoretical base, Levels, Activities and Role of T and L.

Introduction

English has not only become a *lingua franca* for us globally, but more prominently, it has become a language of progress or a key to success in every walk of life (Jha 2013). There is a momentous concern among the English language learners in India as well as among English teachers’ professional development, but still there is a gap between T (Teachers) and L (Learners). The present scenario in Gujarat state is that the PG students, from the English major, are neither competent to speak fluently nor hold dexterity on listening skill. Hence, the methods used by the teacher in the classroom play a very significance place in the teaching-learning process. Hence, it is an unmet need to focus on these concerns and issues immediately.

The history of language teaching in India, as we know, has a long tradition. Memorization of vocabulary and translation of sentences

often formed the major core of such learning process in the past. The ancient languages such as Sanskrit and Pali were mastered in India through the process of memorization of texts and vocabulary lists. But this tradition of language teaching has been subjected to a tremendous change, especially throughout the 20th century.

There are several linguistic and non-linguistic factors behind English language learning and teaching in India, which play major role for the poor state of ELT in India. English teaching in India is a big interrogation in India. David Graddol in his book *English Next India* argues that India has to keep pace with international development of English or it may lose its edge over other developing countries. According to him, the spread of the language is being hindered by a shortage of English language teaching in schools, colleges and Universities. His report says Indian universities fall far short of rival countries in the quality of teaching and research, and “poor English is one of the causes”. Hence, it clearly indicates about the unmet need of research in ELT in India.

However, this paper hypothesizes that unawareness of essential ELT methods and their proper execution is one of the chief causes of deteriorating state of ELT in India in general and Gujarat State in particular. Therefore, the present paper limits its scope by raising three research questions as follows:

1. What are the major ELT methods used internationally?
2. Which ELT methods are often used at the English major classrooms? (B.A. English major colleges, under the Veer Narmad South Gujarat University)
3. How to search the apt ELT methods and make them executable?

Significance of the Study

Although ELT world is flooded with exhaustive literature on ELT methods, but a prospective English teacher and learners often face disappointment due to unavailability of appropriate search of all the ELT methods. This study tries to fulfil that gap as a primary research. From global perspective, this study is the first attempt to search the ELT methods in a pragmatic and chronological order with respect to their focus on theoretical base, skill(s) to be mastered, expected activities, teacher's role, learner's role, and suitability of the methods for different levels of learners. From local perspective, this study is important as it will prove an eye-opener for the local English teachers

Integrating Authentic Materials into EAP Classroom

Charul Jain

Abstract: Students in this market driven world vie to learn English for its productive value or economic value. If a language can get the learners better jobs or better pay or more mobility in life, it has to be pursued. The learners seek to learn that language which fulfils their demands. The language that is taught in schools and in most of the curriculum at higher levels, unfortunately is adapted, refined and so polished that it serves limited needs of the students. The students pursuing professional courses in higher education need to learn that variety of English which helps them in their academics, in the near future and in the long run, in their career or profession. The need of the hour is to teach them the variety of language that they are likely to encounter in their real lives, inside the classroom and outside. Using language which is authentic is the key to ensure learner engagement, motivation and involvement. Authentic materials are the materials written by a specialist for a specialist in the specific field of study (Tomlinson, Jordan). This paper tries to evaluate the usefulness of authentic materials and goes on to present how authentic materials can be selected for use in an EAP classroom.

Keywords: Authentic materials, Criteria, EAP, ESP.

Introduction

Most of the courses being offered for teaching English in professional courses programme across the country have undergone a change from literature intensive to language extensive. Though, this move may be good but a lot more thinking I think, should be given to the language that is being taught to the students as well as to the end product that is expected from them. In the age of consumerist supremacy, it is vital that market demands and expectations are focuses and courses are tailored to suit the needs posed by the economy.

English courses which run under the label of English for specific purposes need a lot of introspection by the teachers conducting them for identifying the suitability and appropriateness of the course content.

While teaching English for Academic Purposes it becomes vital to look at the demands that teachers and students make on English during their academic careers. A tool that helps in satisfying this requirement is making a **Needs Analysis** of all the stakeholders in the administration of an English course, the institution, the teachers teaching English as well as other subject teachers and of course, the students who have to undergo learning in these classes.

Students in this market driven world vie to learn English for its productive value or economic value. If a language can get the students better jobs or better pay or more mobility in life, it has to be pursued. The learners seek to learn that language which fulfils their demands. The language that is taught in schools and in most of the curriculum at higher levels unfortunately is adapted, refined and so polished that it serves limited needs of the students. The students pursuing professional courses need to learn that variety of English which helps them in their academics in the near future and in the long run in their career or profession. The need of the hour is to teach them the variety of language that they are likely to encounter in their real lives, inside the classroom and outside. Using language which is **authentic** is the key to ensure learner engagement, motivation and involvement.

The purpose of this paper is to define authentic materials and highlight their value in teaching English to second language learners. The paper further aims to suggest criteria for their selection as materials for teaching in classroom and presents an analysis of the competencies that can be developed using such texts.

Authentic Materials

Text “which is normally used in students’ specialist subject area: written by specialists for specialists” is authentic material according to Jordan (1997: 113-14) in his article “English for Academic Purposes: A Guide and Resource for Teachers.” Jordan further adds that the material that “is not written for teaching purposes” is the most suitable for use in such classrooms. Another definition is given by Kilickaya (2004) “exposure to real language and use in its own community”. Nunan (1988) defines authentic materials as the materials “which have been produced for purposes other than to teach language”. All the definitions point to the fact that authentic materials are those that focus on real use of language in real situations and specifically meant for the audience in their own genre.

Poems

Days are like Clouds

Hemendra Chandalia

Days are like clouds!
Days are like birds
They said.
I looked at the sky
And waited, hoping
My dear beloved days
Will return to me,
As do birds,
To their nests in the evening.
Days came
Often, but were not the same
I hugged them
Like my dear ones
But they responded not
With the same warmth.
I waited
For warmer days.
But soon the days grew hot
Scorching questions
From every directions were shot
My emotions shriveled
In the heat of indifference.
I craved for the clouds,
A little shade of understanding
A drifting wave of sympathy

A little drizzle of love!

In a Crowd

Basudhara Roy

A crowd is faceless, they say.
Anonymous,
Homogeneous.
Like waters breaking from a dam
Or from the womb.

It tosses and turns like a mass of curls
From everywhere to everywhere,
And I, a random point in its unmapped space
Pull out from it strands
Of several half-remembered pasts.

A cyclist in a hurry rides by,
With the scowl of my long dead father
When he missed his morning daily
And suspected my mother of having
Absentmindedly wrapped chappatis in it.

My fifth form maths teacher,
Pillion riding on a decrepit scooter,
Peers at me from behind a steel-scraped helmet.
Same eyes, same hair, same taut skin
And the same incredulity at my stupidity.

He smiles a familiar tobacco-tinted smile,
And but for the gulf of the nearly twenty years
Stretching out between the then and now,

X'mas Spirit

Stephen Gill

I see the spirit resurrecting
in Christmas trees,
mistletoe and Santa Claus.

I see her appearing
within the decoration in churches,
homes and offices
in parties, family reunions
and drinks.

I see her
in the festive rush
that is tiring
and cards
which people have no time to send
but they do.

I see her
in the sounds of Joy
to the World
and Jingle Bells
cranked out of loudspeakers
in malls and street corners.

But
she is missing
from the victims of wars

Book Reviews

***Gujarati Dalit Short Stories* by Chandraben Shrimali Translated by Atul Kumar Parmar**

Indira Nityanandam

Gujarati Dalit Short Stories by Chandraben Shrimali Translated by Atul Kumar Parmar. Haryana: Shanti Prakashan (year not given): 151, Rs. 350. ISBN-978-93-5070-153-9

- Book Review: Indira Nityanandam, Ahmedabad – 380 009.

‘Lost in translation’ best describes a great deal of translation from and to Indian languages today. The belief that language skills in the source language is often the only test or qualification required for a translator seems to be gaining ground among translators. Consequently, the target language becomes secondary and hence the reader of the translator cannot grasp the depth of emotions, the cultural nuances or the feelings and emotions of the characters that is there in the original. And yet, as translations are the only way in which we can hope to read much of Indian literature today. We have to be content with the quality of translators and hope that this group will continue to work towards a better grasp of the target language.

With four collections of short stories to her credit, Ms. Chandraben Shrimali is an eminent Gujarati poet and short-story writer who espouses the cause of the down-trodden women, specially in Dalit society. The pain and agony of the Dalits in our country, with focus on Gujarat, even today are realistically portrayed with deep empathy.

The stories for this translation have been selected from two of Shrimali’s collections: *Chani Bora ne Beejee Vartao* and *Chaku no Var*. The stories veer from the autobiographical to the collective experience of the Dalits in our country today. Most of the stories capture the pathos of the untouchables as they come into contact with the outside world where they are reminded of their so-called ‘lower’ status. In the story “Dankh” translated as “Sting” a young woman is chastised by her mother-in-law for accepting a cardamom from a co-passenger who happens to be a Dalit woman. The irony is not lost on the reader as the same co-passenger had earlier saved the woman from

Of This Age and Obscurity and Other Poems

V.V.B. Rama Rao

Of This Age and Obscurity and Other Poems, PCK Prem.
Delhi: Gnosis, Authors Press Global Network, 2011: 106, Rs. 125
(Paperback).

• Book Review: V.V.B. Rama Rao, Noida - 201 307.

PCK Prem needs no fresh introduction for he has carved a niche for himself long ago in the Parthenon of Indian English Literature as a poet, fiction writer and a literary critic of eminence. This book is remarkably powerful for the poet depicts modernization as mere 'syphillization' bludgeoning values hoary and ancient. Our modern culture is broken into smithereens what with the flooding of money and the supremacy of men like Monto, Prem had already presented. There is no straight forward thinking in the powers vested with the murkiest of black money and moral turpitude. No wonder a morality sensitive intellectual is bothered by the fumes of cerebration. The agony of the right-minded was found in the *vyakulata* of Sage Vedavyasa who wrote the eighteen *puranas*. In the last century the long poem, *Wasteland* showed us degradation and degeneration powerfully.

Prem, the poet is so perturbed that he is tossed in turbulence. He titled the book without any poem called 'Of This Age.' There is, however a poem, "This Age". Later there is a very long poem "Of This Time" in ten sections. These poems make us think deep and look around and within with hearts kept firm in their right place.

This collection of poems has four parts: Of Summit and Culture, Fossilized Lores, Of This Time and True Memoirs. All the poems are about the sordid human condition in the modern age where cultures of the hoary times have been undergoing intense and not good change.

Here flinty hearts bloat today
With frigid whispering love
to depict psyche of times uncertain

Tapestry Poetry

V.V.B. Rama Rao

Tapestry Poetry, Avril Meallem and Shernaz Wadia. Pune: End 2 End, 2011: 110, Rs. 230 (Paperback), ISBN 978-965-91954-0-4

• Book Review: V.V.B. Rama Rao, Noida - 201 307.

Fusion of ideas, concepts and aspirations contributes to enrichment and progress. Two poems on the same theme by two who worked together to come up with a tapestry lacing the poems together into one is opening a new vista and inauguration of a new genre. And then there is femininity at the base.

I am reminded of the Sanskrit words of Mammata Bhatta, the ancient poet of 11th century A.D., who wrote *Kavyaprkaasha* in which he averred that Kavya—read poetry—is one with the gentility of a woman and her preaching (*kantaasammitayaupadesayuje*).

Tapestry Poetry is a product of imagination, labour and skill—beautiful to look at and sweet to ponder on, thoughtful, thought provoking replete with the basic tenet of femininity. The two poets of the work under review are unique in many ways. First, they are two nations, two faiths, and two professions. The first is a Briton, shifted to Israel, a Hebrew by faith and a therapist by profession. The second is an Indian, a Parsee and Zoroastrian by faith, a primary school teacher by profession.

Their themes are natural everyday ones: trees, flowers, rain, river, sound, silence, light, shadow, illusion, hatred, hope, understanding and peace. Their tropes and symbols—all display the basic tenet of femininity again.

Unknown may be the poet, and unseen by many a reader, the poem communicates, displays and reveals the poet's mind, imaginative conception and expression. Two minds working in the harmony of understanding and producing an artefact is a delight to look at appreciating their work. The two must have spent days in constant innovation, creativity and imaginative exuberance though living thousands of miles apart.

It is pleasantly surprising that the two are devout, imaginative and innovative. With fabulous femininity they unveiled it to the reader's

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