

RE-MARKINGS

Vol.2 No.1 March 2003

Toni Morrison

Don DeLillo

R.K. Narayan

Chinua Achebe

Arthur Miller

V.S. Naipaul

Ethelbert Miller

James Baldwin

M.G. Vassanji

Yasmine Gooneratne

Discourse Translation

Literature & Film

Rasa Theory

Partition Fiction &

Women Narrators

Modern Sanskrit Poetry

Fiction:

The Dolphin Life

&

Special Section on

Racism

CHIEF EDITOR : NIBIR K. GHOSH
EDITOR : A. KARUNAKER

Vol.2 No.1 March 2003

ISSN 0972-611X

Re-Markings, a biannual journal of English Letters aims at providing a healthy forum for scholarly and authoritative views on broad socio-political and cultural issues of human import as evidenced in literature, art, television, cinema and journalism with special emphasis on New Literatures in English including translations and creative excursions

Chief Editor
Nibir K. Ghosh

Editor
A. Karunaker

ISSN 0972-611X

Articles and research papers for publication in *Re-Markings* must conform to the M.L.A. style sheet and should not exceed 3000 words. Manuscripts should preferably be sent on floppy disk in text format along with a hard copy to the Chief Editor or through e-mail attachment to remarkings@hotmail.com.

Published by :
Nibir K. Ghosh,
e-mail : ghoshnk@hotmail.com

Cover design : Sundeep Arora
e-mail : sundeep_arora@hotmail.com

Printed at : Aydee Offset, Agra

Copyright © : Nibir K. Ghosh

Subscription Rates:

Single Copy : Rs.100 US \$15 UK £10
Annual (2 Issues) : Rs.200 US \$30 UK £20
Three Years (6 Issues) : Rs.500 US \$75 UK £50
(postage extra for registered Book-Post.)

Subscription may be sent by Money Order/ Demand Draft to

Nibir K. Ghosh,
68 New Idgah Colony,
Agra-282001, U.P. (INDIA).
Telephone : +91 562 2364015, 2267533.

or

A. Karunaker,
Flat No. D-3 III Floor,
Padmavati Paradise,
Street No. 8, Taranaka,
Secunderabad-500017.
Tel: +91 40 27001349
e-mail : karunakeredrem@hotmail.com

EDITORIAL

In the complex equation of power relations the factor which seems to have remained constant is man's inhumanity to man. The ever onward march of human civilization has revealed, among other things, man's ingenuity to invent a dependable database to justify and account for oppression and exploitation in various forms. The narratives of empowerment emanating from the corridors of power have constantly provided the much needed rationale to keep the 'wretched of the earth' in their designated places. The vast proliferation of knowledge in every sphere has strongly foregrounded ideologies to support the ones at the apex of the superstructure of power, be they gods or mortals. Scriptures too have been found very handy in justifying what man has made of man.

In this grim scenario the only redeeming feature seems to lie in the hope generated by the flux of counter-narratives provided, from time to time, by the 'hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration' -- the writers, poets and intellectuals. These narratives, emanating from the fertile soil of human compassion, sing in profuse strains of deeply meditated verse songs not only of distress but also of man's capacity to survive with courage and dignity in a hostile world. The latter part of the twentieth century has especially shown how passivity towards the fate of the downtrodden is no longer a matter of intellectual luxury.

The ongoing debate concerning the variables in the power equation has necessitated a virtual remaking of history where Caliban is no longer content with merely abusing Prospero in the language he has appropriated from the latter but shows instead the insidious intent of appropriating his place and position in the hierarchy of power. Likewise, Sisyphus is no longer a hapless victim of the wrath of the gods but a veritable epitome of steadfast determination endowed with the ability to confront his fate with the gleaming smile of scorn. The euphemisms of the Orwellian doublespeak are no more the exclusive prerogative of the oppressor. The conflict between 'freedom' and 'fear' awaits new visions and revisions from contending camps.

What is so very heartening about the emergence of such narratives is the role they have assumed in promoting a profound understanding of the age in which we live. And it is equally satisfying to view with humility the small but decisive imprints *Re-Markings* has made in offering its enthusiastic readers a wide spectrum of divergent ideas from the viewpoint of multi-cultural perspectives.

The current issue of *Re-Markings* marks the first anniversary of its birth. Committed to issue-specific analysis and treatment of a wide range of narratives and counter-narratives which transcend the barriers and boundaries of time, clime and space, the journal has become a receptacle for the 'thinking man' in a relatively short span of time. Thanks to its avid readers and contributors, this journal has found effective sustenance in what it has to offer. While unqualified appreciation and praise from host of statesmen, academics, writers and intellectuals like His Excellency Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Charles Richard Johnson, Jayanta Mahapatra and others from different parts of the globe offer exhilaration and encouragement, the advice and guidance of critics will continue to play a seminal role in making *Re-Markings* move closer to the essential concerns of the human predicament. Light can only show reality. I am optimistic that *Re-Markings* will take you along the unlighted road to the yet unrealised.

Nibir K.Ghosh
Chief Editor

CONTENTS

READING DELILLO AFTER 9/11
Jonathan Little / 7

FROM PAGE TO SCREEN:
ADAPTING LITERATURE TO FILM
S. Ramaswamy / 15

FROM RESISTANCE TO RECONCILIATION:
NARRATIVIZING COLONIALISM IN VASSANJI'S
THE BOOK OF SECRETS & GOONERATNE'S *THE*
PLEASURES OF CONQUEST
Urbashi Barat / 23

RECEPTION THEORY AND
THE THEORY OF RASA
E. Suresh Kumar / 30

RECENT TRENDS IN MODERN SANSKRIT LITERATURE
WITH PARTICULAR
REFERENCE TO POETRY
S. Ranganath / 34

FOREGROUNDING THE MARGINAL:
NARRATIVE STRATEGIES IN PARTITION
FICTION BY WOMEN NARRATORS
Seema Malik / 43

SHAPING OF A GENRE: V.S. NAIPAUL'S NON-
FICTION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
AN AREA OF DARKNESS
B. Yadava Raju / 51

PRIVILEGING TRADITION: A STUDY OF
R.K. NARAYAN'S *THE MAN-EATER OF MALGUDI*
G. Thirupathi Kumar / 56

TRANSLATING DISCOURSE:
FOREGROUNDING PROBLEMS THROUGH
THE STUDY OF "SHERLOCK" & "ANDERN ORTS"
D. Himalayanath / 64

THE AMERICAN DRAMATIC TRADITION: IDEA AND
TECHNIQUE IN THE PLAYS OF ARTHUR MILLER
R. Saraswathi / 71

CREATIVE WRITING SECTION

THE DOLPHIN LIFE
Jonathan Little / 81

RITUAL / THE PLEASURE GARDEN
Nandini Sahu / 97

GETTING MUTED
Siva K. Reddy / 98

KEEPER OF THE KINGS
Ritu Bali / 100

SPECIAL SECTION ON RACISM

AN EPISTOLARY INTERVIEW WITH
ETHELBERT MILLER
A. Karunaker / 101

QUEST FOR IDENTITY IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S
THE AFRICAN TRILOGY
Smita Jha / 106

FROM INNOCENCE TO EXPERIENCE:
A STUDY OF JAMES BALDWIN'S ESSAYS
THE FIRE NEXT TIME &
NO NAME IN THE STREET
Melva Pope / 113

MARGINS TO CENTRE: TONI MORRISON'S
REWRITING OF BLACK WOMEN'S HISTORY
B. Devaki & S. Kannammal / 119

READING DELILLO AFTER 9/11

Jonathan Little

I picked up one of DeLillo's novel's shortly after the September eleventh attacks, hoping to find some kind of explanation for this mass murder not circulating in the media. No writer I know, including Pynchon, taps into the shadowy conspiratorial world of international terrorism better than DeLillo. I have read all of his novels before, but I wanted to listen to what he had to say in light of the atrocities that had transpired. Perhaps he had some understanding that I had not previously recognized or had forgotten. How did what happened comment on his work? How did his work comment on what happened?

DeLillo has always been interested in terrorism. One could argue that nearly all of his novels deal with the subject, whether directly or indirectly. In *Players* (1977) DeLillo approaches the matter head on. The novel concerns an evasive group of terrorists who plan to detonate a bomb on Wall Street for symbolic reasons, to, as one of the terrorists says, "disrupt their system, the idea of worldwide money. It's this system that we believe is their secret power." In *Players* the central character, Lyle Wynant becomes increasingly involved in this terrorist cell as their inside plant, seeing his involvement as a way to counter his sense of disaffection and his disintegrating marriage, to act out the white collar's dream of being double agent. He is attracted to the cell for its sense of ontological play.

He'd never felt so intelligent before. His involvement was beginning to elicit an acute response. They had no visible organization or leadership. They had no apparent plan. They came from nowhere and might be gone tomorrow. Lyle believed it was these freeform currents that he found so stimulating, mentally.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**FROM RESISTANCE TO RECONCILIATION:
NARRATIVIZING COLONIALISM IN VASSANJI'S
THE BOOK OF SECRETS & GOONERATNE'S
*THE PLEASURES OF CONQUEST***

Urbashi Barat

"The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting." Milan Kundera's famous epigram in *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (3) explains why history and historiography have always been the site of the fiercest contests about nation, narration and identity; it is the recovery and the retelling of the past that fuels Caliban's rage, and when this anger is expressed in the colonizer's own language the subaltern speaks and spivaks -- in Harish Trivedi's somewhat facetious phrase (Trivedi 47) -- most audibly to the centre. To repudiate the victim's role by looking back in anger alone, however, is to lock oneself in a "servitude" that can produce little more than what Derek Walcott describes as "a literature of recrimination and despair, a literature of revenge written by the descendants of slaves or a literature of remorse written by the descendants of masters" (Walcott 37). But, as South Africa has recently seen, the act of narration itself, of retrieving and retelling the past, not only assimilates and reconstructs on the shards of alternative stories that have been buried within the dominant discourse, by renegotiating the complex relationships between past and present it can also lead beyond anger towards reconciliation, to what Margaret Atwood calls creative non-victimization, in which "Victor/Victim games" become "obsolete" (Atwood 38-9). Narrativizing colonialism through the counterculture of the imagination can blur the boundaries between colonizer and colonized, underscore the complex bonds between them, and transform the discourse of discontent into one of regeneration. South Asian, whose double perspective, engendered by the double filter of time and migrancy, remakes the past not as a single closed chronological story but as a polyphonic,...

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

RECEPTION THEORY AND THE THEORY OF RASA

E. Suresh Kumar

The purpose of this paper is twofold : to understand the basic assumptions of the Rezeption Aesthetik (Reception Theory); and to examine its correspondence with the theory of Rasa as proposed in classical Indian poetics. Accordingly, this paper will present the argument in four sections: I. Introduction, II. Rezeption Aesthetik, III. The Theory of Rasa and IV. Conclusion.

I

It is a well-known fact now that in the Western critical tradition, there have been periodical shifts of focus in the interpretation of literature. For instance much of what goes in the name of traditional or historical criticism concerned itself with the historical background or the biography of an author in the interpretation of the “signification” of a literary text. In the early 20th century the critical focus shifted from the author to the text as illustrated by a long range of critics from I.A. Richards to Roland Barthes. Such critical theories and methodologies as Formalism, Structuralism and Hermeneutics fall in between. An important post-structuralist trend in literary criticism is Rezeption Aesthetik (Reception Theory) wherein the focus centres around the reader.

II

Rezeption-aesthetik was strongly influenced by the philosophical tradition of phenomenology proposed by Husserl (1996), the aesthetic approach of Roman Ingarden (1968) and the Hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1960). All these approaches emphasize the central role of consciousness in the investigation and interpretation of meaning. The most important exponents of this critical theory are Wolfgang Iser and Hans Robert Jauss.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**RECENT TRENDS IN
MODERN SANSKRIT LITERATURE
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO POETRY**

S. Ranganath

Contrary to popular belief, there is an astounding quantity of creative upsurge of writing in Sanskrit today which is qualitatively of such high order that it can easily compare with Sanskrit writing in any century not excluding the golden age of Sanskrit. The sheer amount of published work in all fields of literary activity is truly mindboggling. Sanskrit being a pan-Indian language, the writers are spread out along the entire length and breadth of the country as in ancient days from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Mumbai to Kolkata. A large number of extremely talented writers have been practising the art of creating great literature in the Sanskrit language.

Whether it is epics, drama, champu, prose, gitikavyas, dootakavyas, stories, lyrics, stotrakavyas, travelogues, chitrakavyas, sastraic works or scientific works, works on linguistics or those pertaining to sports, there are more than three thousand works available which are of a very high standard. Out of this vast panorama, an attempt is made in this article to acquaint ourselves with the recent trends which have been successfully adopted by some of the leading poets with their vibrant pen.

TRENDS

1. *Historical Kavyas* :

One of the criticisms levelled against Sanskrit poets is that they lack historical sense and they don't keep pace with the current affairs. As an exception to this, we have a number of works being written on religious leaders and national leaders which creates a fervour of nationalism and patriotism and paves the way for national unity and integration. Pandita Kshama Rao's *Tukarama Charitam* (1954), Satyavrat Sastry's *Indira Gandhi Charitam* (1976), Ogeti Parikshit Sharma's *Srimat Pratapa Ranayanam* (1989), -- an epic in eighty cantos on the life of Rana Pratap which got him the..

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

FOREGROUNDING THE MARGINAL: NARRATIVE STRATEGIES IN PARTITION FICTION BY WOMEN NARRATORS

Seema Malik

The present paper aims to show how through the presence, absence and the precise location of women characters, the women novelists focus on women in their narratives. These novelists use narrative as a mode of implicit argumentation through which they retrieve women to the subject position. In their aesthetic endeavour they try to reinstate women to their stature by appropriating a much wider space for them. Besides portraying the Partition experience in general, they also specifically record women's experiences, thereby presenting a gendered perspective of Partition. By doing so they not only add a critical, differential dimension to the impact of Partition on men and women but also throw substantial light on the reality of the relation between gender and socio-historical processes – how a woman's body is the receptacle of a community's history, that she is not merely an individual but a bearer of the community's/patriarchal honour which needs to be protected at every cost and also, how during Partition, her body became the sign through which "the violent dialogue between rival men was conducted" (Das 1995 : 186).

Since these aspects do not get adequate attention in the nationalist patriarchal versions of history, women narrators in their Partition novels strategically open them up at their critical erasures and exclusions. Jyotirmoyee Devi in the Preface to her Partition novel, *The River Churning*, refers to the chapter *Stree Parva* in the *Mahabharata* and points out that the chapter hardly deserves the name : "...even Vedavyasa could not bear to write the real *Stree Parva*... Cowards do not write history. There are no great poets among women, and even if there were, they could not have written about the violation..."

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**SHAPING OF A GENRE : V.S. NAIPAUL'S
NON-FICTION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
*AN AREA OF DARKNESS***

B. Yadava Raju

Of late, travel writing along with non-fiction has come to be an important genre. The usual generic words like epic, novel, romance, story, novella, memoir, sonnet, sermon, essay have become inadequate concepts in the light of the variety of contemporary writings. Hence, there is an urgent need to identify the variety of writings invoking compound words like war-memoir, black-autobiography, picture-book, travel-book, fictional-biography etc.

By the same analogy, travelogue is a younger genre and in many ways a postwar phenomenon. Traditionally, travelogue covers such writings which express a desire and curiosity to know the unknown territories and peoples. It is an exploration of the unseen territories of time and space. The traveller's aim is to gain both pleasure and knowledge. His search for the new and the fresh may begin in delight and end in wisdom.

Travel writing emerges as a special genre in the wake of postcolonial literatures. It originates out of an encounter of the self with the external world. In the hands of writers like Shanta Rama Rau, Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, V.S. Naipaul, Shiva Naipaul, Nirad C. Chaudhury and several others, travel writing appears to have acquired newer dimensions than their counterparts in the western world of letters. In their travel accounts, these writers seem to have subverted and broadened the scope of the traditional idea of a travelogue.

Paul Fussell in his book *Abroad : British Literary Traveling Between the Wars* seeks to understand and define the scope of a travel book. According to him a travel book is an encounter with distant or unfamiliar data, and the narrative claims literal validity by constant reference to actuality. The ideal book of this kind "invites the reader to undertake three

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**PRIVILEGING TRADITION :
A STUDY OF R.K.NARAYAN'S
THE MAN-EATER OF MALGUDI**

G. Thirupathi Kumar

R.K. Narayan, like Raja Rao, hails from a Brahmanical background. He is also proud of his caste, though he does not, like Rao, blatantly exhibit it in his works. He believes in the sacredness of Bhramanical traditions. He has frankly admitted that his daily routine consists of meditation, reading of Puranas or the Indian classics and recitation of the Gayatri Mantra.¹ In an interview, talking about his skills, he tells Ved Mehta of the factors that contributed to his success: "To be a good writer anywhere, you must have roots — both in religion and in family. I have these things."²

Narayan's *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*, published in 1961, is considered by several critics to be his *magnum opus*. The story is told in a straightforward manner, and it maintains its comic note throughout. It is set in Narayan's enchanting creation, the imaginary South-Indian town of Malgudi. It tells the story of the printer Nataraj and the problems he faced — in an otherwise serene life — by the intrusion of Vasu, a taxidermist who has come to hunt out animals for his trade from the surrounding Memphi jungle and who eventually becomes the victim of his own aggressiveness. The novel presents Narayan's favourite theme "Order, Disorder, Order"³ in a very subtle manner. His preoccupation with this traditional theme is so intense that it allows critics like Haydn Moor Williams to comment that he "...tends to write the same book over and over."⁴ Narayan has borrowed this concept from the Hindu *Puranas* and it is present in almost all his works.

The novel begins with Order, *Dharma* being prevalent in the little town Malgudi. Within the first few pages the first person narrative of Nataraj establishes the subtle but all pervasive force of tradition on the lives of people. On the first page of chapter one itself we come across the term tradition: "She kept the pantry well-stocked and our kitchen fire aglow,...

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**TRANSLATING DISCOURSE:
FOREGROUNDING PROBLEMS THROUGH THE
STUDY OF “SHERLOCK” & “ANDERN ORTS”**

D. Himalayanath

Every piece of write-up or a representation in symbols is a text. Every text is potentially a discourse. It depends on its intended meaning and also on the perceiver's receptivity to read it in accordance with his hermeneutic conditions. When discourse is translated through word etymology, the meaning transfer is incomplete. Certain meanings are rooted in culture. In certain cases meanings cannot be separated from their cultural environments and transported into the target language. If at all translation has to be total, then the word of the source language along with its culture-specific meaning has to be ferried into the target language. Each discourse is specific to its context. We will examine this by taking certain texts in translations.

First, "Sherlock", a short story by M.T.Vasudevan Nair written in Malayalam. It has been translated into English by Sachi Madhavan.¹ This story deals with the “assurance that somebody is there for me”. It is a story which deals with the problems of loneliness, helplessness - What is that I can do or what is that I should be doing. In this story, the main character is Sherlock who is a Pet cat in Chechi's house (elder sister) at USA. Balu, Chechi's brother goes there for higher studies in mass communications. Chechi goes out for work, and he is left alone in the house with Sherlock. It is an extremely lucid depiction of how Balu and Sherlock come to terms with each other, beginning with Sherlock observing Balu all the time and Balu all the time holding contempt for Sherlock, in between Chechi discussing Balu's fellowship problem and reassuring him that some breakthrough will happen and disclosing, unintentionally, her earlier divorce with Kumarettan (Kumar, brother-in-law) and subsequently her marriage with Jayant Shinde and its problems.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

**THE AMERICAN DRAMATIC TRADITION:
IDEA AND TECHNIQUE IN THE PLAYS OF
ARTHUR MILLER**

R. Saraswathi

Arthur Miller has stated that his first concern, when writing a play, is dramaturgical: "I ask of a play, first, the dramatic question...What is its ultimate force? How can that force be released? Second, the human question – What is its ultimate relevance to the survival of the race? Society is inside of man and man is inside society, and you cannot even create a truthfully drawn psychological entity on the stage until you understand his social relations and their power to make him what he is and to prevent him from being what he is not."¹

Miller's works are studies of the individual in relationship to his society, the common man and his never-ending battle to gain stature, however erroneous his means and however corrupt the values to which he adheres. This thematic focus can be found in Miller's *Death of A Salesman* which embodies the tragedy of the common man who has believed in and lived by the perverted values of a materialistic society. The play illustrates the corruption of the American Dream, of that facile availability of "the good life" for all. In a sense, the play shows not a tragedy in the making, but the replay of a tragedy which has already occurred. The thematic focus, then, is directed towards criticism, not of the individual who lives, or tries to live, by society's perverted values, but of a society which promoted values that ultimately destroy the individual. The social message of the play is the tragic action² which rises out of the plot – the arrangement of events in a particular sequence.

The atmosphere of the play is created through a combination of realistic and expressionistic devices. The setting and dialogue can be labelled realistic because many scenes reflect a "slice of life" situation where the audience seems to be watching a normal, middle-class family go through the routine of daily existence. The expressionistic element is ...

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

THE DOLPHIN LIFE

Jonathan Little

These excerpts are taken from a novel called *The Dolphin Life* which is a spiritual allegory told from the perspective of a young dolphin. To reach a kind of Buddhist spiritual contentment the dolphin must practice the art of "listening"-- his version of meditation taught to him by his father. He must also overcome many external and internal obstacles to contentment including escaping from a marine park and attempting to rescue his love and child from a volcano paradise that is ready to explode. The excerpts that follow show First Dolphin in the middle of his journey after he has been captured by a marine park (Sea Land) where he is forced to perform. Then we follow his escape into the deep waters of the ocean where he must decide whether he wants to live or die. Enjoy!

EXCERPTS

Their passion and Tanya's plan worked all too well. Soon Tanya was pregnant and when the humans became aware of it she was separated from First Dolphin and from the others in her private pool so she could be more closely observed and studied. The humans at Sea Land were very pleased. This would give the nearby University the chance to study inter-uterine dolphin development with their costly new technology and pay them for the opportunity. Also, if everything were successful, it would add to their stable of dolphins. Everyone loved a baby too, especially the crowds, whose oohs and aahs resembled the soft pleasing folds of paper money.

Sea Land was doubly blessed and Tanya and First Dolphin felt they had been robbed by being separated. This was a result they could not have foreseen. First Dolphin became an angry, belligerent dolphin after this and Tanya was surprised at the strong emotions she had to suppress, especially late at night. She worried that too much emotion would harm the baby.

Note: For complete article contact remarkings@hotmail.com

POETRY

RITUAL

My granny crossed the ritual of death
today, a long awaited comatose death,
not a spitting, shitting, urinating on the bed,
coughing, aching, unwilling death, but
a graceful, peaceful, angelic, silent, indifferent ritual,
indifferent to all the four corners of that
ancestral house where her three daughters and
foster son learnt the ritual of living.
Indifferent to her dissatisfied middle daughter
who made a hell of life marrying at forty.
Who emptied her of her jewels, policies, breadths,
thoughts and her daughters,
Who never let her sleep till she slept forever.
Indifferent to widowhood, my granny
had fought with life, had taught us life;
putting on starched white sarees, blouses,
sandals, unusual for widows
and now at eighty five
said naught to live.

My granny crossed the ritual of death
today to reach her cherished husband
dead forty years ago.
Our imperial, royal, oil-painted, photographed
grandpa, who would put on suits, ties, specs
in an age of Khaddar,
who lived as a proud smile on granny's
widowed lips all her life,
who had never had a 'no' to anything on earth,
who was the mightiest of all, the king of kings
granny would whisper.
Granny slept her last sleep
in that corner of her house
where grandpa had died once upon a time,
as if it were a space for royal deaths, these rituals.
Our granny's ritual emptied us of
every other ritual, of thinking of our
childhood fancies, hidden 'pakodas' in her saree,

of the fish and vegetable markets, roadside
lemon-soda, of sugarcane and toys
in her almost bursting handbag,
and of air, water, earth, fire.
Till now granny had been walking,
smiling in tearful eyes, cooking for
her daughter breathlessly though
for all these years since grandpa's historical death
her feet had been bleeding.

THE PLEASURE GARDEN

In this manoeuvre named Olympus
each moment I throb mysteriously,
I'm a woman.
Puff out everything that
may choke, strangle me.
I'm a moon in the faraway sky
seeming timid, shining, tired
From behind a thin sheet of fog.
Yet no one ever knows that
I love this odyssey
at times flying high in the mind's sky
I'm a woman.
I've abandoned the earth,
taken up exile in a self-fashioned cruel city.
I can't be slave to summer and rain and the
shameless chains hanging on the door.
The lazy winters fascinate me
my delusions hang like orchids
silently playing
'touch me', 'touch me,' if you can.
I'm very woman!

- *Nandini Sahu*

GETTING MUTED

Getting muted
Is not enjoyable, yet it becomes inevitable,
What lies behind the incessant
indiscriminate snowfall,
Except the inscrutable instrument

Chintamani¹, of mercilessly chopping thousand
heads fame!

Chopped off heads no longer appear again
Transplantations remain as they are--
Getting silenced, is not getting fettered,
Without any fetters
Getting silenced is indeed tragic!
In the midst of all these tragic situations
Remaining a monolith does not tantamount to
becoming inexcusable.

But what all is not unavoidable
Becomes unavoidable in this ruthless world.
Yes, there is no compassion,
No fluid expression descends
From the eyes of flint.

For a pollard in a butcher's enterprise,
What wings are there to extend?
All unwinged wondrous mountains
Drop dead on the highway,
what defiantly remains and follows faithfully
Is melancholy,
The mythical mongrel--
Getting muted is not desirable.

Yes, that's why I speak.
All inaudible expressions for you
Are indeed beauteous gardens
Of dreamlands unheard of!

- K. Siva Reddy

{Translated from the Telugu by T.S. Chandra Mouli}

¹*Chintamani a woman fabled to have killed one
thousand kings to satisfy her guru, a sanyasi.*

KEEPER OF THE KINGS

sunny morning,
a warm island
waits
a massive male
bird grasps
with its claws or outstretched hands
hunching, dips its head
rips a chunk of flesh
from the dead chicken
with imposing
razor-sharp bill
some blood spills.
swoops down
rests on the protective glove
of its charmer.
tense silence hopes for a reassuring roar
from you.
My eyes
two birds of prey
pray like too terrified deers
wander through every fibre of my being
or not being
i chew my present & dig my past...
"what happened doll ?" he asks
"My engines are out," I examine.

- Ritu Bali



THE ARTIST AS WITNESS: AN EPISTOLARY INTERVIEW WITH ETHELBERT MILLER

A. Karunaker

*"It is the fusion of art and politics which gives rise to the political imagination. How one sees the world through the prism of art as well as the belief that art is a force by which one can alter reality, must be linked to what the artist holds dear. In other words, my early poems were written under the rubric that a new world was possible. My work today is a further confirmation that I still believe change is possible. My politics have expanded to include issues and concerns outside the Black experience." This expressive statement by America's most articulate contemporary poetic voice, E. Ethelbert Miller, indicates his life-long artistic quest for a truth which is 'colorless'. An extremely popular poet – In 1979, the Mayor of Washington D.C. proclaimed September 28, 1979 as E. Ethelbert Miller Day. In 2001, the Mayor of Jackson, Tennessee, proclaimed May 21, 2001 as E. Ethelbert Miller Day – Miller is the author of numerous poetry collections like *The Land of Smiles and the Land of No Smiles* (1974), *Migrant Worker* (1978), *Season of Hunger/Cry of Rain* (1982), *Where are the Love Poems of Dictators?* (1986), *Whispers, Secrets and Promises* (1998), and *Buddha Weeping In Winter* (2001). In this epistolary chat with A. Karunaker, which dates back to mid-nineteen nineties, Miller responds to questions related to James Baldwin and to the issues of abiding interest for scholars engaged in Afro-American studies.*

Karunaker: Has Afro-American Studies come of age ?

Miller: The last few years has seen a growing interest in Afro-American Studies. At Howard University, for example, we have witnessed a growth in the number of students majoring in our Department. It appears as if another generation is seeking answers to issues regarding race. The work of such scholars as Molefi Asante, Cornell West, Bell Hooks and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. has helped with increasing the attention given to the field.

Note: For complete conversation contact remarkings@hotmail.com

QUEST FOR IDENTITY IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S *THE AFRICAN TRILOGY*

Smita Jha

In his article entitled 'Beauty and the Beast' Wole Soyinka, the Nigerian Nobel Laureate, says, in a rather sad and angry vein, that because of the recent outbreak of violence in his country the very cohesiveness, the very pluralist character of Nigeria as a nation has been at stake. He expresses the view that a "society that tolerates the murder of innocents, or incitement to murder, as the interpretation of due and legitimate response is a society that is breaking apart beyond all remedy."¹ What Soyinka says here does, in a way, remind us almost immediately of Chinua Achebe. One of the most gifted among African novelists, Chinua Achebe shot into fame with his very first novel, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), and his subsequent novels, *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964), *A Man of the People* (1966) and *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), brought him greater distinction and glory as a writer.

Chinua Achebe belongs to the Ibo tribe of Nigeria, and though he is a Nigerian, he writes on behalf of the entire exploited and oppressed mass of Africans. As a writer and political activist, he is deeply involved in Nigeria's struggle for the retention of its socio-cultural image and identity. And it is in quest of this very identity, in order to reshape, redefine and revitalize it, that Chinua Achebe, has written his novels and short stories. The present paper is, therefore, an attempt to record how this quest manifests itself in *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *No Longer at Ease* (1960) and *Arrow of God* (1964), novels which constitute Achebe's *The African Trilogy*.

Achebe was shocked to see the picture of Africa that Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902), Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* (1939) and Greene's *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) had presented to the world, a picture painted in the darkest of colours. In particular, he was deeply hurt by Joyce Cary's depiction of the Nigerian situation, by his delineation of the Nigerian character, for Cary was one of the British administrators in Nigeria. In this context, in an

Note: For complete conversation contact remarkings@hotmail.com

FROM INNOCENCE TO EXPERIENCE :
A STUDY OF JAMES BALDWIN'S ESSAYS
THE FIRE NEXT TIME & NO NAME IN THE STREET

Melva Pope

The decade of the 1960s is particularly significant from the viewpoint of the black upsurge in America. In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, the period saw the emergence of James Baldwin as a primary force in America's literary life. This was the period that brought Baldwin worldwide success with prose works like *Nobody Knows My Name* (1961), *Another Country* (1962), *The Fire Next Time* (1963) and *No Name in the Street*(1972) – which, through open and direct discourse, contributed significantly to the shaping of a new black sensibility. Departing from the relatively soft and comfortable humanist stance, so evident in his novels, Baldwin emerged as spokesman, artist and prophet, to personify as well as articulate the outrage and anguish of Black Americans who had been struggling to put an end to racial oppression in order to achieve their long overdue civil and human rights.

The present paper is an effort to examine and analyze Baldwin's attitude to the racial problem as evidenced in his prose works entitled *The Fire Next Time*¹ and *No Name in the Street*²(1972). The paper shall also focus on the attitudinal changes in Baldwin as one journeys from *The Fire Next Time* to *No Name in the Street*.

The Fire Next Time was viewed as a passionate plea for reconciliation between the races and a manifesto for black liberation. It contains two essays, one entitled 'My Dungeon Shook' and the other 'Down at the Cross : Letter from a Region in my Mind'. The first essay is addressed to his fifteen year old nephew, James, whom he fondly warns against following the path adopted by his ancestors in living up to stereotyped images. He says: "You can only be destroyed by believing that you really are what the white ...

Note: For complete conversation contact remarkings@hotmail.com

MARGINS TO CENTRE : TONI MORRISON'S REWRITING OF BLACKWOMEN'S HISTORY

B. Devaki & S. Kannammal

Reading of Toni Morrison in the framework of New Historicism offers several insights that a traditional, critical mode would delimit. The present work attempts to look at Morrison's novel *Sula* (1974) as a text that fills the gaps in the history of Black women. The gaps appear as a result of marginalization. Revision and revisionism need to fill these gaps and Morrison does that in her work to bring the margins to centre vis-a-vis the women's contribution to Black survival. Therefore the protracted struggle of the Black women against oppression, segregation and discrimination perpetuated by Whites, naturally finds an expression in Morrison's writing.

The perception here is to consider the text of Morrison as a parallel history, thereby problematizing the divide between genres. The status of historical record is questioned and the stories that Morrison tells are the struggles of Black people, especially Black women. She has chosen to tell these stories for she believes that these stories have been left out in history and also in Black men's literary writing. These gaps need to be filled in through revisions.

In attempting to understand Afro-American women's literature, it is necessary to look at the images created by Whites for the Blacks in general and Black women in particular. In general, Blacks are treated as slaves and they have been exploited by White people. They have been attacked both physically and mentally. Richard Wright says how Black men suffered on account of racism in his, "Our Strange Birth": "*men whose blue and grey and brown eyes glistened with the light of the future, denied our human personalities, tore us from our native soil, weighted our legs with chains, stacked us like cord-wood in...*"

Note: For complete conversation contact remarkings@hotmail.com

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

- Dr. A. Karunaker is Senior Lecturer in the Dept. of English, Osmania University, Hyderabad.
- Ms. B. Devaki is a Research Scholar in the Dept. of English, Vellalar College for Women, Erode (Tamil Nadu).
- Dr. B. Yadava Raju is Associate Professor, Dept. of English, Osmania University, Hyderabad.
- Dr. D. Himalayanath is Associate Professor, Dept. of Philosophy, College for Women, Koti, Hyderabad.
- Dr. E. Suresh Kumar teaches English at Osmania University, Hyderabad.
- Dr. G. Thirupathi Kumar is Associate Professor of English, Osmania University, Hyderabad.
- Dr. Jonathan Little is Chairman, Dept. of English, Alverno College, Milwaukee, WI, U.S.A. He is the author of *The Dolphin Life* and *Charles Johnson's Spiritual Imagination*.
- K. Siva Reddy is a reputed poet in Telugu. He is the recipient of Sahitya Akademy award (1991).
- Dr. Melva Pope is Lecturer, Dept. Of English, St. Johns College, Agra.
- Dr. Nandini Sahu is Lecturer in English at IACR, Rayagada (Orissa).
- Dr. Ritu Bali is a poet with a Ph.D. on Dom Moraes.
- Dr. R. Saraswathi is Professor of English at Nagarjuna University, Nagarjunanagar, Guntur (A.P.).
- Dr. S. Chandra Mouli is Reader, Dept. of English, Railway Degree College, Hyderabad.
- Dr. Seema Malik is Associate Professor in the Dept. of English, M.L. Sukhadia University, Udaipur.
- Dr. S. Kannammal is Reader, Dept. of English, Vellalar College for Women, Erode. (Tamil Nadu).
- Dr. S. Ramaswamy, former Reader in the Dept. of English, Bangalore University, is Fellow, Silliman College, University of Yale, U.S.A.
- Dr. S. Ranganath is Reader in the Dept. of Sanskrit, NMKRV College, Bangalore.
- Dr. Smita Jha is in the Dept. of English, B.R.Ambedkar Bihar University, Muzaffarpur.
- Dr. Urbashi Barat is Reader, Department of English, Rani Durgavati University, Jabalpur.

RE-MARKINGS

The issue is the same.

Some uniforms are new,

Some have changed sides;

But the campaign continues:

Still unachieved is *Jen*,

The Truly Human.

W.H. AUDEN

ISSN 0972-611X