

contours of translation. He feels, 'it... cannot be done in an essentialist or universalist manner' (101) He confines his essay "Author as Translator: Paradigms and Possibilities in the Indian Context", to indigenising of Indian theories of translation,' he also trusts that 'translation in India is as old as the history of various Indian languages.' It is also felt that in contemporary times Indian translators are influenced by Western/Eurocentric theories/ideas of translation, which have affected their imagination and sensibility. Nayar is not entirely innocent of it for instance in his essay "Bhisham Sahni's *Tamas: Multiple Historical Perspectives and Literary Art*", he in order to prove his stance he concedes to Hayden White's, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe*, Fernand Braudel's *On History*, Dominick La Capra's *History and Criticism*, Keith Jenkins' *Postmodern History Reader* and Michael Bentley's *Modern Historiography: An Introduction*. Moreover, putting side by side Sahni's *Tamas* with Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* is too exploratory an endeavour. Sahni and Brecht were addressing to entirely different times and contexts and their discernments too were chopped in time and space.

The 'Epilogue' of *Inter-sections* perpetuates a critical juncture in our history because the world we live in is fast changing and the change leaves the people in 'a whirlpool' (262) gasping for breath. As such a critical point in time of history it is time for "Rediscovering Humanities in Life and Literature", according to Nayar, 'crisis in humanities' is the result of both 'external and internal factors'. He believes that in order to overcome such crisis it is inevitable to prefer relativistic approach instead of absolutist one. That is to say 'humanism'(or even liberal humanism) as stipulated in ancient Indian epics such as *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* in which it occurs as a "normative principle" of philosophical system in contrast to Eurocentric notion of human knowledge and thought or existential philosophical dualism. Therefore, Indian humanism according to Nayar has characteristics like, 'inclusivity, catholicity and comprehensiveness'. He drives home the argument that '*dharma*' or 'the path of righteousness' is the essence of humanism for us in India. Sceptically he questions, 'Are there any solutions to this state of affairs, this absence of *dharma* and the consequent threat to our humanity, our very existence?' (269). He champions insistently that Indian humanism lies in Sufi traditions of Punjabi Sufi poets and others such as Jalal al Din Rumi for they invigorated curiosity in 'dialogic tradition' and 'composite culture'. The present decade has witnessed intense debate on the status of humanities in India and its skirmishes with pure sciences and to an

extent with social sciences. It is felt by academia that the time has come when policy makers in higher education sector sitting in their ivory towers should think on the lines that like the Indian Institutes of Technology across the country we should have Indian Institutes of Humanities where even the pure science can be given space. Nayar adds a new component to look at the understanding of humanism, but it may be true 'generally speaking' but if one has to make critical evaluation one would expect and welcome more sophisticated analysis of the reception of what Nayar terms as 'Indian Humanism' the one which takes into account the more comprehensive view of literatures of India and also development of other prevalent sciences in the society as well as 'marginalising' influence of practitioners of liberal humanities across the country. What is certain- and this is made clear in Nayar's volume- is that range of issues related to literary genres in India is beguiling and exigent, to both the general reader and the academia.

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*Voice and Memory: Indigenous Imagination and Expression*, edited by G.N. Devy, G. V. Davis and K.K. Chakravarty, New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2011, Pp. xxvi + 341, ₹ 575.

*Voice and Memory* is a volume of papers presented at the Chotro Conference (devoted to languages and literatures, the cultures and histories of the indigenous peoples of the post-colonial world). The Conference was held in Delhi in 2008. The volume consists of 26 papers by scholars from diverse fields, with an introduction by K. K. Chakravarty.

The papers included in the volume deal with various themes which collectively 'provide a critique of the post colonial theory about the indigenous situation from the indigenous point of view' [p.xvi]. The papers show how the indigenes use various mediums ranging from folk poetry, literature and internet to the use of museums and films to voice their views and bring forth various elements of their culture and daily life to the readers. The volume stresses the importance of *emic* over *etic*, something which anthropologists have done over the ages, and this furthers the anthropological perspective to the study and analysis of society or cultural elements from the indigenous perspectives.

The volume begins with a paper that critiques the

postcolonial theory and stresses upon understanding the indigenous struggles. According to the authors the postcolonial theory distorts one's understanding of 'race and racism, disconnecting race from colonialism in a manner that is quite artificial' (26) and does not bring forth the indigenous reality but instead undermines indigenous existence and struggles. The next paper depicts contra acculturative and revivalist attempts among the Urhobo of Niger Delta who use various endangered traditions during death rituals and Christian ceremonies in an attempt to object to the vices of slavery and administrative atrocities.

The loss and shift of indigenous language due to colonialism and dominance of the 'Greater Traditions' and its revitalisation is brought out in three chapters of the book. In this direction, the Irish, Maori, Beta Kurumbar and Rathwa Barela languages have been considered. The authors strongly feel that unless concrete efforts are made to revive and revitalise these indigenous languages by its speakers, not only the languages but also the culture and the world-view embodied by them will be in danger of extinction.

The much neglected patterns of confluence and interpretation taking place in various forms to bring forth the contemporary situation of reconciliation contrary to the idea of there being an unbridgeable gulf between the colonial influences and indigenous ways of life is also brought out in the volume. Schlote speaks of how Zapotec folk songs, Spanish Georgian chant, Hopi and Aztec creation stories have been fused by the Coatlicue theatre to depict Mexican indigenous history while Balogun shows how 'instead of tradition being modernised, modernity is being traditionalised' (79) in the contemporary Yoruba funeral rites where acrobatics and ritual music, negotiations and gifts blend into the catholic mass. Loimeier, similarly brings out how post apartheid South African poetry is merging almost all the local languages and expressions into English (which is the *lingua franca*) and Afrikaans (considered the language of apartheid) to serve as a mirror to contemporary society

The role and effectiveness of literature as a medium of expression to counteract colonialism, to showcase mixed cultural heritage, both indigenous and colonial, and as a means of cross cultural understanding is brought out in chapters 7 and 14. Mercanti's paper which analyses *Kanthapura* and *Fontamara* discusses strategies of resistance using truth, non-violence and social Christianity to counter the dominance of repressive forces while Reif-Huesler's paper analyses three autobiographical texts which 'cover almost all of the twentieth century and lead the reader through the turbulent history of a nation whose cultural and political

goal was to gather together all South African peoples under the umbrella of the "Rainbow Nation"' (110). Reif-Huesler goes on to show how 'reiteration, reinterpretation, and re-evaluation of the past in fiction is suggested as more effective than the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, for remembering history and redeeming wrongs in South Africa'.

The importance of folklore, folk arts, folksongs and folktales as a source of information cannot be overlooked while attempting to understand the indigenous perceptions or worldview and therefore from the very beginning it has been an inseparable part of Cultural Anthropology. The volume adequately testified the same. Mwanzi in her paper rightly states, 'The critical place of the folk tale in a changing society is based on the assumption that in the folk tale is stored the wisdom of the people, such wisdom as has taken the people through years of storm, tribulations as well as pleasure.' (138) In her paper, Mwanzi examines the role of folk tales in preserving and perpetuating values such as honesty, fair play and kindness in a 'society that is becoming increasingly complex and impervious to values and etiquette' (*ibid*). Keeping the Haida mythical Raven at the centre, Alexander effortlessly brings out the difference between knowledge and wisdom and presents 'wisdom as a concept beyond, yet touching on literary studies, which links the individual with collective and even universal perspectives' (p.162). The chapter goes on to 'instigate an approximation between literature and myth' and brings forth the 'different themes, forms of discussion and modes of thinking and expression that expose some of the limiting habits of the disciplines concerned' (*ibid*).

The paper by Chellaperumal and Vijayraghavan discusses seven of the popular Irular ballades which depict the plight suffered by women of the tribe at various stages and in various forms with the only means of avenging these atrocities by the victim being 'her entry into death either by choice as a matter of honour or by violence' (187). Aikant in his paper further clarifies the importance and role of folk songs while analyzing *jagar* (Garhwali folklore). According to Aikant, the *jagar* not only play the social role in educating and consolidating group identity, but also reflect the prevailing attitudes and institutional practices. Thus, while on one hand the *jagar* tell stories of the pain suffered by women in a mismatched marriage (as she is not consulted on such matters in a strongly patriarchal society), on the other hand it also tells us of the heroic role played by these very women in social movements such as the Chipko movement.

Gender issues continue to be addressed in other chapters of the volume. Fazilleau through her analysis

of the works of Memmi, Nowra and Wright reveals the poignant plight of Australian aboriginal women who have continuously been subjected to severe violence, rape, alcoholism and substance abuse at the hands of both white and aboriginal men. This silent suffering continues from the colonial times till date due to the connivance of the white and aboriginal men who ignore human rights/women rights in a bid to further their personal lust, ego and political ambitions.

The role of women in the national cause and the dilemma of government and civil society in Kenyan post independence which have been dealt with in the indigenous Gikuyu writing of Ngugi are the concern of the paper by McLaren, who opines that 'Portraying women as central to African fiction can help to sustain a necessary gender consciousness' (205). Thomas on the other hand, through his study of the works of two tribal writers, namely Narayan and Janu, spells out some of the differences between post colonialism and eco-centrism while attempting to 'search for grounds that allow a productive overlap between them and define "green postcolonialism"' (224).

Kerry-Jane Wallart discusses Walcott's *Collected Poems* in an attempt to explore the modes of 'spectral tribal identity and to read it as the symptom not of a (post)modern loss of meaning, but much rather of a strategy of superimposition' (235). Like several other indigenous languages, the Carib too is fast disappearing and along with it is dying an entire culture. Walcott, through his poems 'retrieves the Amerindian voice, by collapsing the chasm of signifier and signified, and by using English in a palimpsestual layering of languages' (xviii). The conflict with the 'other' and with the 'other' within 'oneself' is expressed through an examination of Danticat's *Dew Breaker* which is a narration of the henchmen who during the Haitian dictatorship 'arrested, imprisoned, tortured and killed fellow Haitians believed to be political opponents or disloyal citizens' (244) thus fracturing the unity of the island and becoming a traitor to the commoners since he is also 'one of them' [*ibid*].

The positive role that a museum can play in helping indigenous cultures survive and grow is brought out through the case study of Vacha, the Museum of Voice, Gujrat where the Ratha Bhill and other tribal groups are made socially aware about the 'richness of their own cultures to generate social interaction' (257). On similar lines, there is a study of the 'Train the Teacher' programme started at the Royal Melbourne University of Technology where non-indigenous teachers/trainers are taught by indigenous community members. This new

approach is aimed at teaching the non indigenous trainers about 'listening to communities, respecting their culture and ways of working' (261) and thus 'challenging the "unconscious colonial voice" within themselves and their workplace' [*ibid*].

The volume provides us a glimpse of the tribal life as depicted in various literary works. While Prakash shows how Mahasweta Devi's novel *Chotti Munda and His Arrow* reveals the image of a non violent tribal, contrary to the stereotype, who raises his arrow only to convert opponents by moderation, negotiation and moral pressure; Jacobs through her analysis of three Malayali novels namely *Mavelimantism*, *Kocharethi* and *Ooralikkudi* attempts to compare and contrast the patterns of tribal life and their sufferings as depicted in these works. Mudgal similarly through her interpretation of Maracle's *Sundogs* while making an effort to 'question certain post colonial assumptions and develop a method of reading native cultural productions' [p. 300] vividly portrays the plight of native Canadians in their resistance against encroachment of their ancestral land and their community's marginalisation.

The use of films as a medium of creating and altering viewpoints and conveying facts is brought out in Gehlawat and Starrs's papers. Thus, while Gahlawat in his paper aims at demonstrating how the Hindi film experience can play an integral role in the process of "reorientation" (315) of the subaltern which is the first step to enlightenment; Starrs shows how de Heer, an Australian film maker, patronises and show cases aboriginal culture as it is 'without dubbing and haunting, dreamtime tales and ballads, stories wrapped in stories, and strident diegetic sounds to reproduce Aboriginal acoustic sensibility and eco spirituality'(xviii) thus, elevating the status of Aboriginal culture and giving it the respect it deserves.

Covering wide range of themes and dealing with the indigenous in every part of the world, the volume clearly indicates towards the revivalist tendency fast developing among the native communities and a growing awareness and acceptance of the alternative theories of development and progress as against the colonial/western view. The book being inter-disciplinary in nature will certainly prove useful to students and scholars interested in researching on the tribal/indigenous communities besides being of interest to the common reader.

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