

EDITORIAL

Happy New Year to the well wishers of ELTAI!

It is quite a pleasure for me to present before you certain worthy papers on diverse topics related to literary and language studies. The studies centre on children's literature, war and terror with their ideological underpinnings, use of literary text for teaching language, and Eco-consciousness in Indian English Poetry.

Dr. B. Krishnamurthy and Smt. Abirami Balakumar have attempted to analyse T.S. Eliot's short extract 'A Dog is a Dog' from his poem 'The Ad-Dressing of Cats'. They are of the opinion that the "text remains neglected as a jocular children's poem. But in depth analysis reveals that as an animal fable the poem is not without its significance." Eliot for reasons we all know remain a "difficult poet". The amount of allusiveness, the richness of narrative, the subversion of cultural texts, the representation of ennui of the post war generation all make the poet's utterances a sure slippery ground for critics. B.Krishnamurthy and Smt. Abirami Balakumar have shown wonderful insight by stating that "the cat poems seem to be more serious than what these assessments concede. The fact remains that they are highly readable but they are fathomless."

The paper written by Dr. Shaju Nalkara Ouseph entitled "Mapping Ideologies to Childhood: Jamila Gavin's *Coram Boy* and *The Surya Trilogy*" makes an attempt to examine the implicit/explicit ideologies in the creative space of children's literature. Jamila Gavin contrasts between the city life and that of country life, the affluent and the poverty stricken in her narrative. The critic Shaju Nalkara states that 'childhood is not represented as homogenous' but there is a 'deliberate attempt to produce children's literature specifying gender'. The novel *Coram Boy* focuses on rediscovering the hidden stories of invisible children- the illegitimate, the orphans, the black, the poor and the enslaved. Further, in *The Surya Trilogy*, the narrative exposes the ethnicity, gender, and identity of all vital elements in the fiction. The history is thus not just one naïve, clean, unidirectional flow of happenings, but they contain all discontinuities, discords and diametrical opposites. The child in the narrative is only but a pretext to unearth the unheard.

Dr. J. Ravindranath's paper entitled "War is Politics of Mass Hysteria: A Study of Shaw's *Arms and Man*" tries to link the modern notions of war and the context in which Shaw wrote the play *Arms and the Man*. Much has been written these days about War and Terrorism. International politics these days contain discourses of possible war between nations and the rhetoric build around the hype of patriotism and nationalism often prompts us to re-read Shaw's very important thesis about war. There is a clear evolution of ideas in the paper by summoning the key concepts of Freud, Tolstoy, Einstein and Chomsky. The arguments presented by Dr. Ravindranath assume all the more importance in this context.

Ammar Rezaei's paper "Developing writing skills through literature" underscores the need and importance of literary texts for a comprehensive attainment of higher levels of language skills. The discourse that whether literature can be helpful in the learning of foreign language has evoked divergent views. It is widely believed that the study of language has to be in accordance with and with special reference to the needs of the

language learners. There have been different points of views about the place of literature or literary texts in the foreign language or second language curriculum. Ammar Rezaei has listed certain good reasons for using literature in the classroom. He considers literature as 'a model for writing' and as a 'subject matter for writing'.

Ashima Pandey and Dr. A Pandey discuss about Eco-consciousness in Indian English Poetry, by outlining the fundamental tenets regarding eco-criticism. Such studies point to the fact that the purpose is to restore the Earth's health, which was lost owing to man's wrong doing. They hint at the two phases of eco-criticism: The first wave eco-criticism and the second wave ecocriticism or the "revisionist eco-criticism". In the first wave the eco-critics focused on such genre as 'nature writing, nature poetry and wilderness fiction' and The second wave eco-critics inclined towards environmental injustice as a "social eco-criticism" that takes degraded landscapes just as seriously as the "natural landscapes". The paper attempts to find out the eco consciousness in Indian English poetry and trace the conservationist attitude of Indians towards nature. They state the fact that Eco-criticism is not just studying nature as represented in Literature. This kind of study existed very early even before William Rueckert coined the word eco-criticism. Eco-criticism helps the human beings have a broader view of nature. It urges humans to have a bio-centric view despite their apparently incorrigible anthropocentrism due to their selfish nature.

Hope this would provide a key to the papers taken up for discussion and that would enable you to probe further into new horizons of research and writing. Happy reading!

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