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Postcolonial Studies Association Newsletter

Image: Aerial photo of the University of Stirling Campus

Special Issue : Crossing

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PSA postgraduate conference **Networking the Globe: Information Technologies and the Postcolonial** **May 21-22, University of Stirling**

The PSA's postgraduate conference 'Networking the Globe: Information Technologies and the Postcolonial' will take place at the University of Stirling in Scotland on 21-22 May. The conference follows on from the PSA's inaugural conference which was held at the Waterford Institute of Technology in May 2009. Organised by members of the PSA's Postgraduate Committee and supported by the PSA, the University of Stirling, the Open University and Birkbeck College, University of London, this conference considers the cultural, political, and practical effects of information and communication technologies on postcolonial peoples and spaces. Papers from a wide range of disciplines will examine, for example, transnational social networking sites, the effect of technologies on censorship and on freedom of information, how technologies operate as tools of surveillance or resistance, and the creation of new forms of digital media. There will be two keynote presentations during the conference: Dr Rajinder Dudrah (University of Manchester) will give a paper titled 'Postcolonial Methodologies? Thinking Film and New Media through Haptic Urban Ethnoscapes' while Dr David Herbert (University of Groningen) will present on 'A Global Conversation? Researching Discussions of Religion and Politics on BBC World Service Online Forums'. Additionally, the conference will host training workshops in professional and research skills led by both established and early career scholars. These will include a question and answer session with Prof. Stephanie Newell (University of Sussex) on her career path in the field of postcolonial studies. The winner of the PSA /JPW 2010 Postgraduate Essay Prize will be announced during the conference, and the PSA's AGM will take place on the evening of 21 May. The conference committee warmly invites members of the PSA to attend this event. The deadline for registration is 15 May. You can download the registration form as well as accommodation and travel information from the PSA's website. If you have any queries about the conference, do not hesitate to contact **Brian Rock** at brian.rock@stir.ac.uk.

Brian Rock (Chair of Postgraduate Committee)

Crossing

The Editors would like to thank all those who contributed to this issue on 'Crossing'. We are very encouraged by the many enthusiastic responses to our call for contributions, which indeed attests that the theme is at the heart of postcolonial studies.

Various forms of crossing are explored in this issue. First of all, the theme is closely tied up with the topic of the forthcoming PSA postgraduate conference [Networking the Globe](#) (21-22 May). That technologies are the indispensable means of crossing, which determine what and in which ways we communicate, is also the topic of [Anindita Sengupta's](#) article, which gives an interesting insight into the use of cyberspace by Indian poets writing in English. [David Stirrup](#) tells us of the issues surrounding the Canada-US Border, and of an emerging international research network to explore them. [Donna Landry](#), following in the footsteps of Evliya Çelebi on horseback, proposes historical re-enactment as an alternative way of crossing between East and West. We also feature a report on ['Making Britain'](#), which uncovers networks and affiliations formed between South Asians and Britons.

While crossing can be a creative and transformative power, taking many forms as translation, transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, and interdisciplinarity etc., it also draws our attention to what is not allowed to pass at the border, and the politics thereof. [David Farrier's](#) piece addresses this question as well as the relationship between asylum issues and postcolonialism. Also, [Clare Barker and Stuart Murray's](#) article sheds light on disability's 'metaphorical function as a symbol of absence, helplessness, disempowerment or deviance', which can be seen as 'metaphors' for migrants and asylum seekers; this would make the sites of crossing an interesting intersection between Postcolonialism and Disability studies, which this article explores. We are also delighted to include information about the new journal, [Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture](#) and the forthcoming conference at Glasgow, ['Bonds and Borders: Identity, Imagination, Transformation'](#), both of which, just like the present issue, place the act of crossing at the centre of their investigations.

That a lot of work is being done in this area is evident from the book reviews we received. Hannah Kilduff's review of [New Approaches to Crime in French Literature, Culture and Film](#) fascinatingly situates crime as a site of postcolonial crossing. Breda O'Hara-Davies's review of [Translating Lives](#) draws our attention to the 'monolingualism' of the supposedly multilingual and multicultural Australia, and to the act of translation as a strategy for crossing to bring together different cultures. James Graham's review of [State of the Nation: Contemporary Zimbabwean Poetry](#) places hope in 'the emergence of transnational, cosmopolitan networks' to reclaim the Zimbabwean nation. Indeed, reading must be a form of crossing, and we whole-heartedly support Ranka Primorac's project of acquiring books for the UNZA library in Zambia.

Derrida, in his lecture problematising the border between Man and Animals, talks about 'what sprouts or grows at the limit' as well as 'what feeds the limit'. The border is a site where various cultural constructions take shape, while it tends to perpetuate the 'rupture or abyss' which it represents.¹ To cross, then, is to challenge such borders as institutions, as well as to scrutinise the workings of 'what feeds the limit', including the very act of crossing itself. We hope that this issue will stimulate further discussions on crossing in the postcolonial field, and that you will enjoy reading it.

We wish you all an enjoyable summer.

Kaori Nagai and Lucienne Loh (Newsletter Editors)

Postcolonial Asylum?

David Farrier

Postcolonial studies, conceptually and by praxis, occupies shifting ground. From its origins in post-war literature of decolonisation and the study of colonial rhetoric, through the discipline-busting reincarnations of the theoretical turn in the 1980s, postcolonial studies has (some might say necessarily) been serially invested in questioning its own form and function as it endeavours to speak truth to power. Today, the field is no less kinetic. The titles of several recent works (*Rerouting the Postcolonial*; *Postcolonial Ecocriticism*; *Terror and the Postcolonial*) attest to this drive to seek out new applications, and contemporary provinces of enquiry.

Among these new, emerging postcolonial vistas, there are compelling reasons for describing the reception and representation of asylum seekers in Western nations as among the most significant. Asylum seekers can plausibly be thought of as Spivak's new subalterns: insistent presences hovering on the margins of society but effectively silenced within both popular and academic discourse.

In some crucial respects, however (such as the tension between anti-nationalist postcolonial sentiments and the asylum seeker's desire for shelter from a nation-state), many aspects of asylum are counter-intuitive to the concerns of postcolonial studies. The challenge, then, is how postcolonial studies can engage with the particular kinds of crossing involved in claiming asylum.

To do so, I believe, involves postcolonial scholars in a number of different acts of crossing of our own. Given the spread of deterritorialised borders as a common feature of Western asylum regimes, such as off-shore processing centres and 'white lists' of safe third countries, the concept of the border as a site of resistance and incipient migrant presence needs to be re-thought; the situation also requires a new disciplinary framing of postcolonial studies, following the cultural turn, in the direction of legal and ethical criticism. These are not minor intellectual challenges, but they are essential if postcolonial scholars are to continue to describe the topography of the neo-colonial world.

Indeed, fantastic work is already going on here. The AHRC's Migrations, Diasporas and Identities network has facilitated some excellent research into asylum issues, such as the East Midlands-based 'Making the Connections' network, led by Maggie O'Neill and Phil Hubbard; Helen Gilbert and Sophie Nield of Royal Holloway hosted a conference in 2008 on Asylum and Performance, which led to a special issue of the journal *Research in Drama Education*; papers on asylum are becoming an increasingly frequent feature of postcolonial conferences.

What links all this work is a willingness to work across disciplines. As I write this the General Election is still a week away, and fractious political debates around immigration rumble on. A consensus on how to process asylum claims and to treat people during the claims process seems to be still a distant prospect, but whatever the constitution of the government is as you are reading this, they will be faced with an asylum system that employs unlimited detention as a form of administrative convenience and uses destitution as a tool of policy (in the words of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights). The primary role of the postcolonial critic, to speak truth to power, will be as important as ever.

David Farrier is the author of *Postcolonial Asylum: Seeking Sanctuary Before the Law*, which is forthcoming in Liverpool University Press's *Postcolonialism Across the Disciplines* series.

1. J. Derrida, *The Animal Than Therefore I am*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham UP, 2008), 31-32.

Culture and the Canada-US Border

David Stirrup

'Culture and the Canada-US Border' is an emerging international research network, being established by Dr. Gillian Roberts (University of Nottingham) and Dr. David Stirrup (University of Kent), and building on an international conference held at the University of Kent in June 2009 under the same title. Grounded in long-standing discussions across the multiple disciplinary boundaries of Canadian and American Studies, and in relation to repeated calls to acknowledge a 'new' American Studies located in postnational, transnational, and most recently, hemispheric models, this dialogue focuses on a range of questions, from how we understand the challenge to national borders and the nation state posed by indigenous self-determination or Quebec nationalism, to how cultural products that emerge in specific relation to the border site develop, engender, or conflict with, local, regional, national, and/or international matrices.

Writing about his people's persistence in the borderlands of the Great Lakes regions, Phil Bellfy remarks:

While a border implies 'division,' the border, and its association with the land and its people, may also be viewed as a strong link that has served to maintain unity among the Anishinaabeg [...] the unity achieved through common political struggle – struggling *against* the border – is a significant factor in their sense of nationhood.¹

The *imaginative importance* of the border as Bellfy describes it here, which stands in tense relation to, and indeed in spite of, the territorial, economic, and political impositions the nation state boundary commonly represents, underlines our efforts to address the compelling need for site-specific border discourse at the 49th parallel. Border studies, as it has developed in North America, has focused primarily on the US-Mexico border, the point at which, Gloria Anzaldúa has noted, 'the Third World grates against the first and bleeds'.² But if the US-Mexico border effects a brutal juxtaposition of national economic prosperity and deprivation, operating alongside a generally perceived linguistic and ethnic divide, what functions do we attribute to the Canada-US border, traditionally celebrated as the longest undefended border in the world?

Figuratively challenging a dialectic of insider-outsider, as the discourse that has grown around the US-Mexico border profoundly demonstrates, the borderlands accommodate deeply complex networks of multiple identities, ideologies, affinities and affiliations. Far from the common assumption that Canadians require the border to distinguish themselves from US-Americans, for whom the border is 'invisible', examination of cultural production in the various borderland regions, and focusing on the border as a whole, reveals a highly nuanced and multiply constituted 'negotiation' over common heritage and between common and competing national and local interests.

In a sense, this kind of description plays into the models mentioned already, taking full account of the constructedness of the nation-state. At the same time, however, close scrutiny of the specific impacts and implications that the border has on the peoples and communities that live in and around it, through the cultural production on both sides, offers valuable testing-ground for the examination of literature, film, and so



on within all of the various contexts that contribute to, and are enlarged by, its production. Bryce Traister, for instance, notes:

It may yet be worth our while to risk the perils of literary critical nationalism, if only because the theorization of a postnationalist critical history proposes a critical scope that unwittingly restores the U.S.'s centripetal power in the service of an ostensibly antihegemonic agenda.³

Automatically displaced as single actors in a multiple drama, nation-state frameworks are necessarily complicated *and* reinforced through the specific focus on borders and borderlands. The explicit intervention into border studies, and into studies of the Americas specifically conceived relative to paradigms of nationhood and sovereignty, are the primary aims of the network as we envision it. Individual members are engaging with these and other related issues through diverse methodologies and from a range of differing political and geographical perspectives, following Traister's call for a 'critical borderlands practice'⁴, with enough space for diverging, even discrepant or incompatible, perspectives.

The network aims to organize at least one further international conference at the University of Nottingham, and to run a series of workshops in both the UK and North America, as well as to encourage 'intervention' panels at a variety of major conferences in the USA, Canada, and Europe. If you are interested in being included in our mailing list, please contact either Gillian (Gillian.Roberts@nottingham.ac.uk) or David (d.f.stirrup@kent.ac.uk) for further information. A special edition of the *American Review of Canadian Studies* is due out later this summer featuring a range of political and historical essays that develop material presented at the Kent conference. We are also working on an edited volume of essays that will focus on the vital work on literature, art, and film with which members of the provisional network are engaged. The first steps, we hope, of many more to come.

Notes

1. Phil Bellfy, 'Cross-border Treaty-signers: The Anishinaabeg of the Lake Huron Borderlands', in Karl S. Hele (ed.), *Lines Drawn Upon the Water: First Nations and the Great Lakes Borders and Borderlands* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2008), 21-42, 25.
2. Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: the New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987), 3.
3. Bryce Traister, 'Risking Nationalism: NAFTA and the Limits of the New American Studies', *Canadian Review of American Studies* 27:3 (1997): 191-204, 193.
4. Bryce Traister, 'Border Shopping: American Studies and the Anti-Nation', in Claudia Sadowski-Smith (ed.), *Globalization on the Line: Culture, Capital, and Citizenship at U.S. Borders* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 31-52, 34.

Chameleonic: Cyberspace, Poetry 'Friends' and Instant Feedback

Anindita Sengupta

An Indian poet, Anindita Sengupta, reflects upon the relationship between cyberspace and poetry.

Poet Jim Behrle's recent piece titled 'The 24/7 Relentless Careerism' in *Poetry Magazine* satirises the relentless self-promotion that American poets engage in, mostly via the Internet. I doubt Indian poets writing in English have enough at stake to become 24/7 careerists – or careerists of any sort – but I felt moments of resonance while reading, and was reminded of niggling questions about the growing importance of the Internet.

That the Internet should become important to us is, perhaps, inevitable. Poet Jeet Thayil points out in his foreword to *The Bloodaxe Book of Contemporary Indian Poets* (2008): 'poets receive no advances; their books are usually out of print; even the best-known among them have trouble finding publishers and are virtually unknown outside India'. Add to this the fact that even when poets do manage to publish, distribution is abysmal. The book will rarely be available in major bookshops. Nobody will know of it, or where they can buy it. Reviews will be rare because newspaper editors don't think readers are interested, or worse, because they themselves are not interested. For poets, there is the satisfaction of holding a book in their hands. But there isn't much more.

Amidst this bleakness, cyberspace provides succour in the form of cheap publishing devices which let poets reach readers directly in several ways. Print journals are difficult and costly to run and there are only a handful in India. Poets have addressed this gap by starting online journals, which are increasingly becoming not just alternatives to print journals but preferred alternatives. They are easier to access, usually free, and they accept email submissions. *Pratilipi* (pratilipi.in), a bilingual journal that carries non-fiction, fiction and poetry in English and Hindi has come to be quite esteemed in a short period of time. *Almost Island* (almostisland.com) which aims to be international in scope, has published poetry by stalwarts like Adil Jussawala as well as relative newcomers. Then, for Indian poets writing in English, the conception of 'readers' is always ambiguous – readers of English in India certainly, but also readers of English everywhere. Better access to international journals has helped widen the arena. Poets are now able to read a journal's archives or submission guidelines online and decide if they want to publish in it. Besides this, poets reach out to readers through personal blogs and social networking sites like Facebook. Koyaparambanath Satchidanandan, one of Kerala's leading writers, often publishes English translations of his poems on Facebook. The networking site becomes a bridge between him and readers who would otherwise find it difficult to access his work. Nitoo Das, a poet whose first book *Boki* was published in 2008, started sharing her work with readers much earlier on her blog (<http://riversblueelephants.blogspot.com/>). She continues to publish new poems there. She finds this easier than submitting to journals, she says, but also remarks that it gives her 'a high'.

Those wary of actually publishing poems on blogs or Facebook strike tentative and tender negotiations. Some discuss poetics. Others provide links to poems that appear in journals. Almost all keep readers apprised of important news such as



Anindita Sengupta's full-length collection of poems *City of Water* was published by Sahitya Akademi in Feb 2010. Her work has previously been published in several journals including *Eclectica*, *Nth Position*, *Yellow Medicine Review*, *Origami Condom*, *Pratilipi*, *Cha: An Asian Journal*, *Kritya*, and *Muse India*. It has also appeared in the anthologies

Mosaic (Unisun, 2008), *Not A Muse* (Haven Books, 2009), and *Poetry with Prakriti* (Prakriti Foundation, 2010). In 2008, she received the Toto Funds the Arts Award for Creative Writing, annually given to two writers under thirty in India. Sengupta is a freelance writer and journalist and contributes articles to *The Guardian* (UK), *The Hindu*, *Outlook Traveler* and *Bangalore Mirror*. She is also founder-editor of *Ultra Violet*, a site for contemporary feminism in India and her website is at <http://aninditasengupta.com>.

the launch of a new book. Such activities become vital in a place where the discussion of poetry or poetics in mainstream media is not just rare, but mostly absent. Only a small minority access the Internet, but these are likely to be the same people who can afford English education and, therefore, are writers and readers of English poetry. The blog or Facebook page is therefore a marketing device and intimate talk rolled into one. The persona of the poet in this space is multilayered, chameleonic.

At one time, the 'mushaira', a type of poetry gathering, was a common feature in some parts of India. Poets gathered to recite and listen to poetry. When listeners liked a line, they burst into appreciative 'Wahs' or repeated it. The charge in the room was palpable and the occasion, a heady mix of seriousness, intimacy and celebration. In contrast, modern English poetry events in India are drab and polite, a dribble of an experience. Often the events take place in bookshops which also sell CDs, toys, computer games, stationery and sports goods. The poet competes with ambient noise. Listeners struggle to enter the moment. They close their eyes. They listen deep. They try to block out the sounds of a child running or a Hindi film song playing somewhere. It is a difficult setting for the exchange of energy.

Even such events are usually rare. Also, poets writing in English are spread out across the country and can rarely meet to share work or thoughts. There are no academic settings where poetry is discussed often. Poets can sometimes feel isolated, bereft of stimulation or dialogue. The virtual life provides ways to interact. A poet who publishes a poem as a Facebook 'note' is assured of some readers and, more importantly, some enthusiastic feedback. The disembodied voices at the other end are both appealing and addictive. A blog post on poetics is likely to be read at least by a few other poets who one knows are on the Internet. It might even generate some discussion.

But the free, instant feedback that makes the Internet so appealing is not without its aches: a heightened sense of vulnerability, a worry about the personal and public becoming enmeshed, a tendency toward vanity. Poets are human creatures, flawed and usually insecure. Publishing a poem on a blog or Facebook secures the immediate rush of comments. This can lead to a trigger-happy typing finger, first drafts floating around in cyberspace, and the constant worry that follows a poem let out too soon.

Also, a slew of positive comments can be misleading about actual merit. It becomes harder to look at work critically when it receives several swooning comments ('*That is so beautiful. You are a great talent!*'). The tendency to obsess over feed-

back is also likely. Bloggers tend to watch site 'stats', check comments often and respond promptly. Facebookers spend a lot of cyber-breath thanking every person for their kind words. All this energy might be better used elsewhere, like in writing.

Most writers are aware of these problems, if not always mindful of solving them. Between the persona and the public, somewhere poetry must happen. They know this.

But the warmth of community of any sort is such a welcome draught in aridity that they find ways to navigate tricky terrain. It is too early to tell how successful these attempts will be, how much smoothness, how many wrecks, how much honesty we will compromise in these rooms of ether, and most importantly, how that will affect our poetry.

Making Britain South Asian Visions of Home and Abroad, 1870-1950

The major AHRC-funded research project 'Making Britain South Asian Visions of Home and Abroad, 1870-1950' is entering its final phase. Over the past three years, the project's aim has been to highlight the manifold ways in which South Asians contributed to Britain's cultural, economic, political and social life. Based at the Open University and working in collaboration with Oxford University and King's College, London, the project has uncovered rich new source materials from numerous archives in Britain, India, Sri Lanka and the United States on the relationships, connections and networks of South Asians in Britain in this period.

Since 2007, the project has run a number of successful seminars and workshops. Recent events have included a workshop on South Asian Representation at the October Gallery, London, which looked closely at filmic, artistic and legal representations of and by South Asians. In March, the first 'Making Britain' exhibition, 'Indian Traces in Oxford', was launched at the Bodleian Library accompanied by a day seminar featuring contributions from writer Amitav Ghosh, Prof. Richard Sorabji discussing his new biography of Cornelia Sorabji, and Professor Humayun Ansari on the correspondence between Muhammad Iqbal and E. J. Thompson. Both exhibition and seminar focussed on the interactions between South Asians and Britons in Oxford.

The project team, led by Principal Investigator Prof. Susheila Nasta, is now busy preparing the conference 'Bharat Britain: South Asians Making Britain, 1870-1950'. The conference marks the end of the first phase of the project. It will be held at the British Library Conference Centre on 13-14 September 2010. Invited speakers include: Humayun Ansari, Elleke Boehmer, Antoinette Burton, Mukti Jain Campion, Dominiek Dendooven, Chandani Lokuge, Susheila Nasta, Nayantara Sahgal, Meera Syal and Rozina Visram.

The conference will showcase new research from an impressive range of distinguished scholars, curators and writers worldwide. 'Bharat Britain' will highlight the range of networks and affiliations South Asians and Britons formed across boundaries of 'race', 'nation', 'culture' and 'class', setting up connections which were to anticipate the diverse cultural make up of contemporary British society. This is reflected in different areas of British cultural and political life in this period, such as the elitist literary and artistic circles of Bloomsbury where friendships were forged between poets and painters, the anticolonial organisations which brought South Asian and British activists together in the lead up to Independence, or the battlefields of the two world wars where Indian sepoys and volunteers fought alongside British soldiers. Yet these encounters were also, at times, marked by hierarchies and dissent. Whether through protest, strike or petition, South Asians struggled for their rights as citizens of Empire, shifting ideas of 'Britishness' in the process.

At the conference, the team will also launch the project's



Presenters at the day seminar at Oxford, March 2010, from left to right: (Front Row) Humayun Ansari, Anshuman Mondal, Elleke Boehmer, Amitav Ghosh; (Back Row) Sumita Mukherjee, Rupert Richard Arrowsmith, Richard Sorabji [Photo: Chris Smith]

About the Project: **Making Britain** is led by Prof. Susheila Nasta (Open University), in collaboration with Prof. Elleke Boehmer (University of Oxford) and Dr Ruvani Ranasinha (King's College London), and research associates Dr Rehana Ahmed (Open), Dr Sumita Mukherjee (Oxford) and Dr Florian Stadler (Open). The team is working in partnership with the British Library and SALIDAA, and in consultation with leading scholars Dr Rozina Visram, Prof. Lyn Innes, Prof. Partha Mitter, Dr Deborah Swallow and Penny Brook, Head of India Office Records, British Library.

Further information: www.open.ac.uk/arts/southasians-making-britain
E-mail: arts-making-britain@open.ac.uk

unique online database. It contains several hundred entries on South Asian artists, activists, intellectuals and writers and highlights organisations they were associated with in Britain, their networks, as well as key events they participated in. Designed as an interactive research tool, it features a number of different search and browsing functions and contains biographical and bibliographical data to aid future research in this ground-breaking area of study. The database will be hosted by the Open University. It will be accessible to the general public free of charge and can be reached through search engines. It will also be available through the British Library web pages.

'Bharat Britain' will also see the launch of the project's main exhibition 'South Asians Making Britain, 1858-1950'. Jointly curated by the Making Britain project team in collaboration with Penny Brook, Head of India Office Records, and partnered by the British Library, the exhibition will tour across Britain to local libraries, universities and other educational institutions throughout 2010-11. Plans are underway to tour the exhibition in India from 2011-12.

Forthcoming are a number of publications based on the findings of the project, these include an essay collection on South Asian Resistances, an annotated sourcebook of original materials, a special issue of the journal *Wasafiri*, and two monographs. For further details and to register for the conference, please visit our website: <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/south-asians-making-britain/conference.htm>.

Florian Stadler with the Making Britain project team

Crossings with Evliya Çelebi (1611-c.1683): The Evliya Çelebi Ride and Way

Donna Landry

'This project is about de-Orientalisation', I said. The ferry bucked. We were about to dock on the southern shore of the Gulf of Izmit, south of Istanbul. In the old days, travellers would load their horses onto small boats to cross here, at Hersek, the gulf's narrowest point. In May 1671, Evliya Çelebi, age 60, set out from Istanbul with eight servants, three companions, and fifteen horses, to make the *haj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca, by a roundabout route, crossing here. In September 2009, six riders with seven horses set out from Hersek to pick up Evliya's trail along the 'Silk Road', the road of commerce, war and pilgrimage, through his ancestral town of Kütahya and beyond. Composed of Turks, a Scot who lives mainly in Turkey, an Anglo-Scots Canadian living in the UK, an American living in the UK, a German born in South Africa and now living in the United States, and a French Canadian, this expeditionary team would later be joined by two English people and various Turkish supporters. Interdisciplinary as well as international, the team included literary, Ottoman, and oral historians, postcolonialists, botanists, photographers, and filmmakers.

Why follow Evliya on horseback? Evliya Çelebi, the 'Ottoman Ibn Battuta', or 'Muslim Marco Polo', was the greatest of Ottoman travellers, whose ten-volume *Seyahatname*, or 'Book of Travels', remains the single most-cited source for Ottoman history. Hardly any of it has been translated into English. Evliya's time has now come: UNESCO has named 2011 'the Year of Evliya'. Evliya travelled for over forty years throughout the Ottoman empire and beyond, from Tabriz to Vienna, and from the Sea of Azov to the Sudan. After the *haj*, he settled in Cairo and composed his manuscript treatise from notes. Wearing a ring inscribed 'The world-traveller Evliya', he set about a



Donna Landry and her travel companion Titiz at Kestel
[photo : Gerald MacLean]



Donna on horseback [photo:Mehmet Çam]

project of empirical knowledge-gathering on a grand scale. Yet the terms 'empiricism' and 'eye-witness account', understood in a purely Western sense of what is probable, although they apply to his text in some ways, do not begin to capture the nature of his storytelling and reporting. He was also incorrigibly sociable, describing himself as 'of a vagabond Dervish-like nature, ready to sacrifice my soul for my friends', and a 'boon companion to mankind'. In his insatiable curiosity and desire to record everything he saw and heard, Evliya might stand as a figure for an alternative Enlightenment.

Seeking an alternative modernity in his wake, we tried to find what remains of otherwise vanished worlds, and to lose as much of our usual ways of seeing and judging as we could. We were border-crossing in time as well as space, becoming nomad, becoming Ottoman, trying to shed the Orientalist baggage of the Western travellers and tourists who had preceded us. We crossed Anatolia for a legendary forty days and forty nights, covering some 1000 kilometres, sleeping in tents, provisioning ourselves and our horses, attempting to return the generous hospitality we received by ex-

changing food and gifts, and talking to everyone we met about Evliya, whose name is widely known. Villagers and townspeople are proud that Evliya visited their environs, often citing observations he ostensibly made that we have yet to track down textually. Our proposal – that where we had ridden there should be a sustainable tourism route, an Evliya Çelebi Way, for riders, walkers, and mountain bikers – was greeted with universal enthusiasm.

I received a Study Abroad Fellowship from the Leverhulme Trust for my part in the expedition and the subsequent books it would engender – guidebook to the route; multi-authored book on historical reenactment as a research method; eventual monograph on travellers who crossed cultures, providing alternative visions of East-West relations to the usual one of political conflict. Following Evliya, mysterious yet material traces revealed themselves at every turn of a perpetual East-West exchange that was in play long before the emergence of European imperialism.

The project's blog and website addresses are: www.hoofprinting.blogspot.com and www.kent.ac.uk/english/evliya/index.html

Journal and Conference Announcement

Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture
[Intellect Books]

and

Crossings: The Nexus of Migration and Culture

1-2 July 2010, Laws G.4, Law Building,
Queen Mary, University of London



Prof. Parvati Nair, Principal Editor of *Crossings*

Given this Newsletter's theme, it seems timely to announce the launch of a new journal, *Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture*, the first issue of which will be published by Intellect Books in June 2010. This interdisciplinary journal seeks to explore the dynamic nexus of migration and culture. Established by scholars at Queen Mary, University of London, the project's Principal Editor is Professor Parvati Nair, who holds a Chair in Hispanic Cultural Studies and is Director of the Centre for the Study of Migration, with her colleagues Dr. Omar Garcia-Obregón as Associate Editor and Tendayi Bloom as Reviews Editor.

The journal's purview is global, with a predominant focus on migration and culture from the latter half of the twentieth century to the present-day. It aims to encourage greater dialogue between the fields of migration and cultural studies, as the former is currently dominated by questions of policy and the law, while the latter tends to focus on less tangible debates about multiculturalism and postcoloniality. Contributions are solicited from academics and cultural practitioners on topics related to migration and culture in such media as films, music, photography, art, literature, and material culture. Individuals working in these fields are also likely to make up the target audience, and annual subscription costs £22 for individuals and £75 for institutions (for more information, see http://www.intellectbooks.co.uk/journals/view-Journal_id=173/view.page=3/).* *Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture* also publishes extended reviews of books, exhibitions, films, etc., and interviews with artists and practitioners. For example, an interview I conducted with the Faber poet, Daljit Nagra, is due to appear in the first issue; he discusses such issues as his categorization as an English, British-Asian writer, or Punjabi-Sikh poet, his poetic descriptions of British migrant histories, and notions of hybridity. I've subsequently been invited to join the journal's advisory board for *Crossings* alongside such scholars as Paul Gilroy, Tariq Ali, Avtar Brah and Mieke Bal.

There will also be an inaugural conference to celebrate the launch of the journal, which will be held on July 1-2, 2010 at Queen Mary, University of London. Entitled *Crossings: The Nexus of Migration and Culture*, the conference will examine key thematic and theoretical areas highlighted in the intersection between migratory flows and cultural production. Topics to be discussed include borders, diaspora, cultural difference and cultural memory, transnational connections and hybridity from disciplines as diverse as Law, Medicine, Politics, English, Development Studies, Museum Studies, Film Studies, Gender Studies and Anthropology. The conference also engages with those working creatively in the culture industry on aspects of migration, so as to foment dialogue between the latter and the academy. Keynote speakers include Professor Robin

Cohen (University of Oxford), Dr. Anne Kershen (Queen Mary, University of London) and Professor Yosefa Loshitzky (University of East London), while invited artists include the poets Choman Hardi, John Siddique and others, as well as the photographer/artist/curator Shahidul Alam, whose short film on migration, *Under the Shade of the Banyan Tree*, will be shown and discussed. The conference will end with a Poetry Fest, where the invited poets will offer readings and discussions of their work. The conference will be free on both days to all those wishing to attend. To reserve a place, please contact Queen Mary's Events Office (events@qmul.ac.uk)

To conclude, the semi-autobiographical narrator of Amitav Ghosh's celebrated text *In an Antique Land* (1992) realizes that the Egyptian *fellaheen* with whom he is conducting anthropological fieldwork see the material circumstances of their lives in 'exactly the same way that a university economist would'. Looking at their culture from the outside, and having internalized Western ideas about linear 'Development' and progress, the *fellaheen* view their situation as pitifully anachronistic and flimsy in comparison with the wealthier lifestyles of other, more developed countries. In her Editorial to the first issue of *Crossings*, Professor Parvati Nair formulates a similar argument, suggesting that a 'sense of alterity that global inequalities and histories of domination impose on the local' causes alienation amongst underprivileged subjects in 'third world' countries, 'displacing [them] from themselves [...] and propelling them instead onto the long road to "a better life elsewhere"'. As such, ideas of culture – whether this is taken to denote material, 'high' or 'popular' culture – are a crucial contributory factor in the impulse towards economic migration. The journal and conference promise exciting and original contributions to scholarship on the interplay between cultural practice and migratory movements.

Claire Chambers (Leeds Metropolitan University)

* Please note that PSA members are entitled to a discount for *Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture* and some other Intellect journals. For details, see 'PSA Membership and Journal Discount' by Melanie Murray in this issue (page 17) [Editors]

Postcolonialism today

Inspired by Robert Young's definition of Postcolonial Studies as 'developing the driving ideas of a political practice morally committed to transforming the conditions of exploitation and poverty in which large sections of the world's population live out their daily lives' [*Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2003), p. 6], 'Postcolonialism Today' aims to create a forum to situate postcolonial studies – both as intellectual and political endeavours – within contemporary contexts. In this issue, **Clare Barker and Stuart Murray** offer new directions for interdisciplinary work in postcolonial studies through refracting the term 'disability' both as postcolonial metaphor and condition, bridging the body and the body politic, the family of nations and international bodies.

'Disabling' Postcolonialism: Global Disability and Interdisciplinary Methodologies

Clare Barker and Stuart Murray

In many contemporary societies, the production and frequency of disability is intimately connected with the legacy of colonialism. Eighty percent of the world's disabled population lives in developing countries; physically disabling phenomena such as war, population displacement, disaster mismanagement and chronic poverty are often bound up in the social and political fallout from colonial relations, while the traumatic effects of postcolonial experience are increasingly discussed under the label of 'postcolonial stress disorder'. In the conditions of social and political disenfranchisement that often characterise postcolonial societies, disability may be 'as much about national and cultural power differentials as it is a matter of medicine and bodies'.¹

While people with disabilities constitute a significant material presence within many postcolonial populations, representations of postcoloniality often draw upon disability as a trope. Ripe with allegorical potential – and typically representing some form of 'damage' – disability and illness are frequently linked to public or social narratives, especially those associated with ideas of *national* health. 'Wounded' bodies symbolise colonial dysfunction; nations and communities are 'dismembered'; economies 'crippled' by debt. Humanitarian aid discourses construct the 'Third World' as sick, disordered, and in need of emergency intervention. Achille Mbembe opens *On the Postcolony* with a description of 'Africa, a headless figure threatened with madness', 'a great, soft, fantastic body' that is 'mutilated' and characterised by 'convulsive movements'; 'political imagination' on the continent is 'incomprehensible, pathological, and abnormal'.² Postcolonial identities are consistently constructed as *disabled identities*, and we might term these tropes of pathology, dysfunction and disorder the grand disability narratives of postcolonial representation.

We can see the potency of disability metaphors in any number of canonical postcolonial texts. In *Midnight's Children*, for example, not only is Pakistan described as 'a stain on the face of India' with reference to Saleem Sinai's birthmarked face,³ but Saleem's disintegrating body reflects the perceived collapse of Nehru's vision of a secular, democratic nation. In his next book, Rushdie embodies the 'shame' of Pakistan's unfulfilled promise in the intellectually disabled figure of Sufiya Zinobia Shakil. Representing Sufiya as 'disorder's avatar',⁴ there is, within this conflation of the country with notions of disability and monstrosity, a definite pathologisation of the postcolonial nation. Disability is persistently used as a central postcolonial analogy, symbolising the perceived deviance of those political formations which are born out of colonial relations and histo-

*The Nation as
a Body:
Bharat Mata
(Mother India)*



ries. And yet, surprisingly, disability is rarely talked about by postcolonial critics and theorists. Typically treated in exclusively metaphorical terms, disability remains under-theorised and dematerialised in much postcolonial literary and cultural criticism.

With this in mind, we would argue that there is a pressing need for interdisciplinary engagements between postcolonialism and the emerging field of disability studies. Developing from a social science base established in the 1980s, disability studies now has a vibrant and progressive branch within the humanities, which can provide postcolonial scholarship with concepts and methodologies that will advance our analysis of the disability representations that we frequently encounter. Disability's metaphorical function as a symbol of absence, helplessness, disempowerment or deviance, for example, has become a commonplace observation within literary disability criticism. In a process termed 'narrative prosthesis' by disability theorists David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder, disability functions as a storytelling 'crutch'; we rely on disability for our narratives but read *through* it in order to reach the more significant 'meaning' of the text (narratives of nation, culture or ethnicity, in many postcolonial representations).⁵ Disability as metaphor might 'provide [...] a means through which literature performs its social critique' of 'the workings of dominant ideology' as they take effect elsewhere in society,⁶ but typically the politics of disability itself may remain obscured. Disability theorists draw important attention to how metaphors result in stereotypes and stigmatisation, which then extend into discriminatory social practices and policies.

If disability metaphors are ubiquitous in postcolonial literatures, many postcolonial theories also mobilise conceptions of 'damaged' or 'vulnerable' bodies and minds. Spivak's focus on the subaltern, Fanon's theories of the pathological, and Memmi's work on dependency are all heavily invested in the analysis of marginalised subject and community positions that

suggest clear overlaps with disability theory's similar concerns. Equally, the calls within disability studies for the field to, as Snyder and Mitchell put it, 'grow more international in its critique (and less Eurocentric in its models)'⁷ prompts obvious points of contact with postcolonial methodologies that have long sought to destabilise European (and American) assumptions about the normative nature of criticism. If there is still too much silence on both sides about the *explicit* connections between postcolonialism and disability, there are many clear – and urgent – intersections between the two fields. While there is the desire within disability studies to internationalise its methods, it is a desire that remains largely at the present time a wished-for position, lacking a proper sense of rigorous application. As Robert McRuer has noted, 'there is no guarantee that even the most foundational disability studies theses will function in the same way when we talk about global bodies'.⁸ The materiality of postcolonial locations offers clear challenges for any grand theory of disability, something equally true when considering postcolonial theory itself, which has had sustained similar interrogation because of a perception of its totalising methods.

It is our contention, however, that the dual lenses of disability and post-colonial theorising offer methods by which a situated and material criticism can profitably talk to the interplay between various social, cultural, political and economic histories and the forms of representations they take. The best postcolonial criticism is that which attends to the detail of cultural specificity and refuses to over-generalise its conclusions, even as it works with an *appropriate* sense of globalised colonial relations and their aftermaths; disability mobilises similar local-global paradigms since it 'occupies a dual status as the most insular and also the most transcultural of phenomena'.⁹ The difference that disability brings can both be recognised by, and provide a platform for, critical postcolonial methods that learn from their strategies, while, reciprocally, this kind of critical work exemplifies the kind of global reach to which disability theorising aspires. In the same way that specific cultural logics – for example, Indigenous understandings of the issues of postcolonial encounter and settlement – unravel the assumed normativity of a European narrative of events, a more complex understanding of postcolonial disability representations would combine disability theory's activism and critical strategies with postcolonialism's engagement with local epistemologies and conditions of production. Interdisciplinary and cultural crossings will enable us to revise what we think the 'grand narratives' of disability might be, to 'depathologise' the postcolonial, and to increase awareness of the politics of disability as a lived experience throughout the postcolonial world.

Notes

1. Michael Davidson, *Concerto for the Left Hand: Disability and the Defamiliar Body* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 175.
2. Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2001), 1-8.
3. Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (London: Vintage, 1995), 232.
4. Salman Rushdie, *Shame* (London: Vintage, 1995), 200.
5. David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000).
6. David T. Mitchell, 'Narrative Prosthesis and the Materiality of Metaphor', in *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*, ed. Sharon L. Snyder, Brenda Jo Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2002), 15-30, 24; 17.
7. Sharon L. Snyder and David T. Mitchell, *Cultural Locations of Disability* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 198.
8. Robert McRuer, *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability* (New York & London: New York UP, 2006), 201.
9. Snyder and Mitchell 2006: 103.

Clare Barker is Lecturer in English at the University of Birmingham, and is working on a manuscript entitled *Exceptional Children: Postcolonial Fiction and the Materiality of Disability*. **Stuart Murray** is Professor of Contemporary Literatures and Film at the University of Leeds, and has published on a number of postcolonial and disability topics. Together, they are co-editing a special issue of the *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies* entitled 'Disabling Postcolonialism', which will be published later in 2010.

Bonds and Borders: Identity, Imagination, Transformation

8th Annual Conference of the
Graduate School of Arts and
Humanities of the University of
Glasgow, 4 June 2010



As the Italian playwright Dario Fo said: 'It is extremely dangerous to talk about limits or borders. It is vital, instead, that we remain completely open, that we are always involved, and that we aim to contribute personally in social events'. 'Bonds and Borders: Identity, Imagination, Transformation' aims to explore the challenges and opportunities created by migration and mobility across national, cultural, and geographical boundaries. By addressing bonds and borders in an international postgraduate context, we hope to create an awareness of limitations in our daily context, inside as well as outside Europe.

Panel topics include the quest for identity as formed by geographical, social, and historical borders. Examples of this include the situation of migrants and immigrants as a result of 21st century mobility; limitations and taboos within literary contexts, for example, women's writing or postcolonial literature; restrictions through religion; and anthropological approaches.

The goal of this one-day international postgraduate symposium is not only to discuss the consequences of restrictions and boundaries, but also to actively counter them by focussing especially on interdisciplinary approaches which include visual and creative contributions. The conference will conclude with the documentary 'Thru' Dutch Eyes' by the photojournalist Pieter van der Houwen. The keynote speech will be given by Mike Gonzalez, historian and literary critic at the Hispanics Department of the University of Glasgow. His areas of research include Latin America in the context of revolutionary and Socialist movements. For further information and registration forms, please visit our website <http://www.gla.ac.uk/faculties/arts/graduateschool/events/bondsandborders/> or contact us at bondsandborders@gla.ac.uk

Conference Reports

Dialogues across Boundaries: Debating Local Cosmopolitanism

21-22 November 2009, University of Southampton

Organised by Ranka Primorac, and hosted by the University of Southampton, the 'Dialogues across Boundaries: Debating Local Cosmopolitanism' conference brought together 20 delegates from around the world, who embraced the challenge 'to think cosmopolitanism differently'. Ranka's timely, and politically urgent, call to approach cosmopolitanism against the grain of Imperial and colonial hermeneutics, generated a vibrant space of dialogue and debate that facilitated the rethinking and theorisation of cosmopolitanism, not only as a historical phenomenon, but as a conceptual and political tool entrenched in discursive, cultural and social fields that interweave theory and praxis; the local and the global; the private and the public; knowledge and action; texts and the world.

The conference was launched by John Thieme with a fascinating keynote address that traced the complexity of the term 'cosmopolitanism', both in terms of the ways it has evolved over the years, but also of the geopolitical and ethical significance it has acquired in the present. This was followed by Neil Lazarus's position paper on 'Literary Studies and Local Universalisms', which articulated the need to reconfigure post-colonial studies through the prism of 'World Literature'. Lazarus' rigorously critical approach was complemented by his readings of a plethora of 'peripheral' texts that traced, and unveiled, the ways in which they document the injustices, and unevenness, of capitalist modernity. Finally, Stephanie Newell's position paper "'Local Cosmopolitans" in Colonial West Africa', on the second day, attended to the complexity, and political significance, of cosmopolitanism by raising the question of gender. Drawing critically on Kwame Anthony Appiah's account of cosmopolitanism and Homi Bhabha's theorisation of colonial mimics, Newell provided a persuasive juxtaposition between negative representations of mimic-men as narrated by men and narratives of Sierra Leonean women, who bring a feminist perspective into any attempt to theorise 'citizens of the world'.

The papers that followed fanned out in thematic profusion to include literary, cultural and political instances and histories that beg the critical rethinking of cosmopolitanism. Particularly noteworthy was the session on 'Modes of displacement and distance'. Caroline Rooney offered a compelling critical reading that paired Hannah Arendt's concept of the conscious pariah and Jacques Derrida's formulation of cosmopolitanism in an attempt to theorise local cosmopolitanism, and articulated a crucial critical position on 'living-with' and 'living-in-difference' that could cater to the complex demands of a global, yet asymmetrical, present. Ross Hair discussed the inclusion of provincial/peripheral poets like Thomas A. Clark and Lorine Niedecker in Jonathan William's Jargon society, raising important questions about the articulation of the provincial within transnational/transatlantic contexts and readerships, while Anna Bernard's paper investigated media and activist films to consider, and question, the construction of national/post-national imaginaries as it is deployed in hegemonic Euro-U.S. representations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The second session on 'Text and reception' opened with



Deon Meyer, Ranka Primorac and Brian Chikwava
[photo : Asia Zgadzaj]

Sharae Deckard's powerful consideration of cosmopolitanism as a cultural strategy of reading and as a theory of reception that could strive towards a comparativist approach. Her reading of Angolan Pepetela's and Congolese Alain Mabanckou's texts had a two-fold effect: to expose the injustices and unevenness of a rapidly growing globality and to trace a constellation of possible resistant peripheral communities. The concept of peripheral community was taken on, and extended in its scope, by James Graham's consideration of the heterogeneity of 'communities of readership' that call for new methodological approaches contingent upon the politics of reception of postcolonial literary narratives 'across-borders'. The first day of the conference came to an end with a rather stimulating event that brought together the novelists Brian Chikwava and Deon Meyer. In the discussion that followed with Ranka the two authors shared their different, yet related, perspectives on a number of issues, including local cosmopolitanism, and responded to questions from the wider audience.

The second day of the conference opened with a vibrant 'round-table' discussion on 'offshore', where the linked papers of Stephanie Jones, Nicky Marsh, and Liam Connell drew on an impressive gamut of narratives (from novels and films to insurance documents and UN conventions and trial transcripts) to address modes of cosmopolitanism from three different angles: the material, the conceptual and imaginative offshore. This was followed by the panel on 'African Crossings' which opened with Chris Warnes' exploration of cosmopolitan aesthetics and politics in the works of South African novelist Niq Mhlongo. According to Warnes' argument, rather than embracing euphoric promises of the 'new democracy' in post-apartheid Johannesburg, those texts raise important questions about the condition of 'living-with' in difference and asymmetries. Ranka Primorac's presentation on Zambian detective novels in English investigated the ways through which local discourses that emanate from those texts speak

to transnational spaces, and reflect social change through the tension between the national 'inside' and 'outside', while Georgia Axiotou read Buchi Emecheta's texts through Mignolo's 'critical cosmopolitanism' in an attempt to consider the gendered subaltern as a site of resistance that critiques, and articulates, its presence in the matrix of a global world.

The last panel of the conference, titled 'Ex-patriot locations', opened with Ben Grant and Kaori Nagai's critical reading of Rudyard Kipling's writings, which offered a thought-provoking account of the colonial roots of modern day 'expatriatism' that problematised the relationship between the local and the universal. Will May suggested a consideration of the 'Operatic' as a place where the world is not simply represented, but meets, affording the possibility of both provincial and international representations; and Chu-Cheng's paper on Kazuo Ishiguro's *Nocturnes* unveiled the uncomfortable co-existence of the local in the global, by attending to Ishiguro's critique of a global/hegemonic/corporate culture that sanctions difference.

Overall, the conference was extremely successful in bringing together scholars from a variety of disciplines who extended the scope of discussion within the wider fields of literary and cultural studies. Also, it has to be noted that the event vastly benefited from Ranka's deliberate choice of having no parallel sessions, so that discussion was shared and focused; this offered to the speakers the opportunity to respond critically to each other's papers by reconfiguring and reevaluating their strategies, analyses and conceptualizations of cosmopolitanism. The conference's aim to re-think cosmopolitanism (and its bordering terms) was met in the most satisfactory and effective way, in that, instead of providing answers, it generated more questions and room for future research in the field. Ranka is currently in conversation with journals for publication of some papers and we all wish her the best of luck; we also owe her warm thanks for the organization of the event.

Georgia Axiotou (University of Edinburgh)

Trauma, Memory, and Narrative in the Contemporary South African Novel

9-11 April 2010, University of Vienna

As guests and participants from all over the world arrived in Vienna to unseasonably glorious weather, the mood seemed altogether too sunny for a conference addressing issues of trauma, memory and narrative in the contemporary South African novel. However, by the time the crowd dispersed after the final paper, many of us felt that we had been reminded of something scholars in the field are perhaps too quick to forget: the immense social, political, and cultural achievements of South Africa's transition to democracy, and the optimism that this trend will continue.

The conference began in earnest after several welcoming speeches by the Dean of Faculty, Prof. Franz Römer; the University of Vienna's Pro-Vice Chancellor, Prof. Arthur Mettinger; the South African Embassy's Ms TDG Molaba; and conference convenor Prof. Ewald Mengel of the Institute for English and American Studies at the University. Noted academic and novelist Prof. Elleke Boehmer of Oxford University gave the first paper, which addressed the 'structural impacts of reiterated crisis' on contemporary South African writing.

Boehmer's thought-provoking paper and interdisciplinary outlook set the tone for the conference as a whole. After a quick reshuffle due to the unfortunate absence of psychologist and author Pumla Gobodo Madikizela, we heard from the acclaimed novelist Susan Mann (on the narratives of children in South African fiction) and Dr. Achille Mbembe. Mbembe, a figurehead of the innovative Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, regaled his audience with an impassioned call for renewed engagement with the wreckage left by the end of apartheid and its impact upon South Africa's 'imaginative capacity for futurity'.

Mbembe's emphasis on the need for a radical rethinking of established paradigms echoed around the conference, from Prof. Ruth Leys's critique of affect theory to Yazier Henry's analysis of silence, testimony and the 'ethics of abuse' in Antjie Krog's account of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Country of My Skull* (1998). This was, however, only one of several themes that emerged from the conference. Juxtaposed against these grand gestures could be found a series of papers that focused on the subtleties of specific texts. Close readings of this sort characterized the contributions of Professors Derek Attridge, David Attwell, Geoffrey Davis, Annie Gagiano, Chris van der Merwe, and Anne Whitehead. Their papers engaged with the work of a range of South African authors: J. M. Coetzee, Etienne van Heerden, Sindiwe Magona, Mongane Wally Serote, Gillian Slovo, and Jann Turner.

The role of literature in the expression of personal trauma formed yet another thematic strand. Henry's paper drew on this, as did Mandla Langa's emotive paper, which, due to Langa's absence, was sympathetically read by Henry. The award-winning author Sindiwe Magona gave a memorable performance, in which readings from her recently published poetry collection, *Please, Take Photographs* (2009), complemented an incisive analysis of structural trauma in the lives of impoverished South Africans.

The rewarding academic environment of the conference was matched only by the hospitality of Prof. Mengel and his assistants, who ensured that no query went unanswered and no glass remained empty. Dankie, enkosi, and thank you for making this extraordinary event happen.

Sarah Pett (University of York)



Elleke Boehmer and Achille Mbembe
[photo: Steffi Sabathy]



Sindiwe Magona reading from her poetry collection *Please, Take Photographs* [photo: Alice Calabrese]

Caribbean Enlightenment

An Interdisciplinary Caribbean Studies Conference

8-9 April 2010, Glasgow University

The Caribbean Enlightenment conference grew out of the interdisciplinary Caribbean Discussion Group set up in 2009 to facilitate inter-faculty dialogue on the Caribbean and the Atlantic in Scotland. Organised by Lorna Burns and Michael Morris, it aimed to interrogate adaptations, disseminations and creolizations of Enlightenment discourses in the Caribbean.

The conference gathered about forty delegates from the UK, Europe and North America to discuss the engagement with universality and the Enlightenment in Caribbean thought. In line with the avowed pan-Caribbean perspective of the conference, papers on the Francophone and Anglophone Caribbean were well-represented, with some welcome interventions on the literature and cinema of the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. There were also events of interest to the wider public: an informative exhibition on the place of the slave trade in Glasgow's history and a reading by a novelist and poet based in Glasgow. In the first plenary session Kei Miller, editor of the Carcanet anthology *New Caribbean Poetry*, read from his poetry collection *A Light Song of Light* and his novel *The Last Warner Woman*, both published in July 2010. Diverse Caribbean voices came through in this reading, in particular a voice taking on British Enlightenment rationality in the striking poem 'The Law Concerning Mermaids', which was much appreciated by the audience.

The other plenary sessions returned to the conference's central concerns, among which were the San Domingo revolution and the birth of Haiti. Nick Nesbitt (Aberdeen), characterized the Haiti revolution as a distinctive radicalization of the radical Enlightenment identified by Jonathan Israel. The process of following through the principles of the declaration of emancipation, he argued, constituted a qualitative leap bringing the revolution beyond other slave revolts and giving it universal import. Situating this move in the tradition of dissent inaugurated by Masoch (as interpreted by Deleuze), Nesbitt concluded by identifying Haiti as 'the traumatic core' of the 'democratic fantasy' of the USA and France. In discussing 'The Dialectics of Freedom in the Haitian Revolution', Doris Garraway (Northwestern) made a further claim for its distinctiveness, warning that to situate Haiti alongside the Enlightenment and later liberation movements is to risk losing sight of its specificities, which resist assimilation into the discourses of Human Rights and postcolonialism. The tension between universal freedom and political authoritarianism at the heart of this revolution is a paradox rather than a contradiction. Charles Forsdick (Liverpool) discussed the differential reception of the Haiti revolution in the USA before and after C.L.R. James's seminal study, in particular its role for African Americans and in the Harlem Renaissance: he identified Langston Hughes as 'a key *porteur*' of this history and analysed twentieth-century texts moving beyond merely exoticist representations in their reception of the revolution.

Critiques and appropriations of the Enlightenment in twentieth-century Caribbean thought were another major focus, and C.L.R. James, Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire were privileged figures for discussion alongside Depestre and Glissant in several panels. Paget Henry (Brown), whose keynote concluded the conference, made a strong case for a more sustained inclusion of the work of Sylvia Wynter in considerations of Caribbean Enlightenment and its legacy. Mapping the interplay between nationalist, Marxist and poststructuralist thought in Wynter's work onto three phases culminating in a reconsideration of the human and a theory of creative realism, Henry argued that Wynter is a prominent figure in challenging the blind spots of Enlightenment.

The conference presented an exciting choice of panels beyond the indispensable sessions on Caliban, Toussaint L'Ouverture and C.L.R. James. Papers by Kevin Barker (UL) and Anne Gulick (South Carolina) in the panel on 'Law and Reason' mobilised the thought of Edouard Glissant to consider properly Caribbean and creolized approaches to law that might resist impositions from elsewhere. The panel on Scotland and the Caribbean presented new research on the understudied cross-influences created by Scottish experience in the Caribbean and its repercussions in the homeland, and fertile discussion followed the panel on 'Expressions of Caribbean Surrealism'. The panel on 'Gendering the Enlightenment' unfortunately seemed to consign considerations of gender to a ghetto, when such issues as the patriarchal constituents of the North American attitude to the Caribbean (Brandi Kellet on Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby*) and the disavowal of connections and rivalries between the feminist and Anti-slavery movements (Jeannette Ehrmann) deserve to be fully integrated in wider discussions.

The use of postgraduate round-table discussions with responses from the keynote speakers provided a valuable forum for young researchers to benefit from the insights of established scholars, but the entire conference was the occasion of stimulating intellectual exchange. A vibrant dialogue interrogating the relationship of the Caribbean to the universal and arguing for its centrality and influence for developments in and critiques of Enlightenment discourses emerged in the Q&A sessions, carrying from one panel to the next and through the four keynote speeches over both days, making this a very successful conference.



Doris Garraway and David Murphy [photo: Lorna Burns]



Charles Forsdick
[photo: Lorna Burns]

Abdulrazak Gurnah at NUI Maynooth, February 2010

The Department of English at NUI Maynooth had the great pleasure of hosting a visit to campus by Abdulrazak Gurnah for two days on February 23-24. On an unexpectedly snowy evening, Gurnah read from his latest novel *Desertion* to a captivated audience; his reading was followed by a short interview as well as questions and answers from the audience during which he spoke about his colonial education in Zanzibar; his adherence to Islamic traditions; his experiences under the Revolutionary Council in Zanzibar 1964-68; his reasons for exile and life in Britain; his response to the critical and public celebration of his fiction; and the value of stories. A video of the reading and conversation will be posted shortly on the departmental website at: <http://english.nuim.ie/index.shtml>.

The next day, Gurnah addressed a group of undergraduate creative writers affiliated with the university's Literary and Debating Society and, in the afternoon, postgraduate students and faculty from NUI Maynooth, NUI Galway and UCD Dublin participated in a half-day symposium entitled 'By the Sea: The "Local" and "Global" Contexts of Abdulrazak Gurnah's Fiction'. Dr. Sharae Deckard's talk entitled 'Traversing the Local and the Global: Abdulrazak Gurnah and the Swahili Word' proved to be a highlight of the afternoon. She positioned Gurnah's fiction in terms of postcolonial formulations of the Indian Ocean as a world system or inter-regional-arena and of theories of the local, global, diasporic and transnational. Gurnah concluded the day by stressing the politics of refusal in his fiction. He said that while he does not seek to proffer an 'alternative' narrative, he hopes that his fictions may emphasize the moments in a conflict when some reprieve temporarily occurs so that opposing parties may recognize their mutual humanity.

When in Ireland, Prof. Gurnah was also interviewed for *Politico.ie* by Shane Creevy, an alumnus of the MA in Culture, Empire and Postcolonialism at NUIM. The interview is available at this site: http://www.politico.ie/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6406:interview-with-abdulrazak-gurnah&catid=239:books&Itemid=884. Any questions about the event may be directed to Dr. Íde Corley at ide.corley@nuim.ie.



Abdulrazak Gurnah addresses an audience at NUI Maynooth [photo: Edel Maher]

Íde Corley (National University of Ireland, Maynooth)

Book Reviews

New Approaches to Crime in French Literature, Culture and Film

Edited by Louise Hardwick

Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Wien, 2009. VIII, 229 pp. ISBN 978-3-03911-850-2 pb.

The twelve essays that constitute this edited volume, taken in part from the 2007 Oxford French Graduate Conference, offer new perspectives for addressing and defining crime within a French context. The collection examines a wide range of literary texts, visual media and theoretical frameworks, spanning, in turn, a number of different centuries. This diversity of exposition confirms itself as perfectly suited to the book's exploration of crime which, as the introduction affirms, 'reveals a sophisticated web of interdisciplinary influences' (7), thereby meriting consideration above and beyond any one generic boundary. Indeed, the notion of boundaries and their definitions, through acceptance, resistance and hybridization, are inherent to the notion of 'crossing'; and this volume juxtaposes different generic, medial, geographical, cultural and moral models, highlighting the fertile crossings to be found between them. Moreover, as is made swiftly clear, the volume's focus is not restricted to metropolitan France but encompasses, both Francophone (the Caribbean) and other postcolonial texts (Algeria). That this study moves beyond the Anglophone-Francophone dyad that has for so long characterised discussion of crime, to encompass Francophone writing - itself often considered separately from mainstream French production - further corroborates the aptness of the figure of crime, criminality and transgression for the exploration of postcolonial issues.

In Louise Hardwick's beautifully persuasive contextualisation of the issues and traditions surrounding the writing and reading of crime, she cites Charles Forsdick's work on the 'particular ties between crime fiction and fiction concerned with uncovering subaltern histories' (9). Taking as a starting point the idea of the rehabilitation of 'silenced criminal aspects of the contemporary postcolonial world' (9), the articles focusing on postcolonial issues address the reworking and the rewriting of memory in colonial and postcolonial times. Whether this takes the form of memory laws and the literary explorations of amnesia (Aurélien

(Continue on next page)

Modern French Identities
85

Louise Hardwick (ed.)

New Approaches
to Crime in French
Literature, Culture
and Film



Peter Lang

L'Hostis), the specificities of gendered responses to crime and of crimes against women (Jennifer Jahm) or the re-writing of racist crime to centre on the experience and identity of the victim (Deborah S Reisinger), the contributions focus on the discrepancies that lie between official records or discourses and the creative reworkings and rehabilitation of the past that art allows. In particular, the 'double crime' (57) of colonialism and its legacy, and the silencing or occlusion of the lived experience of its victims. That artistic expression enables the voices of those silenced to cross over into a position from where they can become at last audible is a thesis supported throughout the four sections of the book.

The structure of the book addresses in turn embedded definitions of criminality, textual crimes, the genre of crime, and the interactions between crime and dominant visual representations or media discourse. Throughout, the authors seek to challenge traditional narration and interpretations of crime and its actors, and it is this that means that despite the apparent diversity of texts and contexts, the volume's contributions can be read coherently as a product of the crossings and transgressions of the boundaries and parameters both implicit in the crimes themselves and in their representations and analysis.

Hannah Kilduff (University of Cambridge)

Translating lives : Living with Two Languages and Cultures

Edited by Mary Besemeres and Anna Wierzbicka

Queensland, Australia: University of Queensland Press, 2007, 181 pp.

Australia has long cultivated a reputation as a land where multiculturalism and diversity thrive and are celebrated. This could be regarded as somewhat ironic in the face of its ongoing political status as a 'self-governing colony': a dominion of the United Kingdom that recognises the British Queen as its Head of State.

Thus a lingering 'Britishness' that permeates society at institutional as well as other levels is hardly surprising. Part of this legacy is the dominance of a monolingual English language norm that expresses an Anglo-centric perspective. Combined, these strongly impact the daily lives of all those who reside there.

Translating lives: Living with two languages and cultures compiles the personal stories of twelve individuals in modern-day Australia who find themselves negotiating the linguistic and cultural minefields that exist between their own first languages and cultures and those of mainstream society. The editors, a mother and daughter team, each contribute a chapter. In addition they co-author the introduction in which they highlight the yawning gap that remains to be bridged between Australia's image as a multilinguistic, multicultural haven and the realities of monolingualism and Anglo-centricity that continue to hold sway.

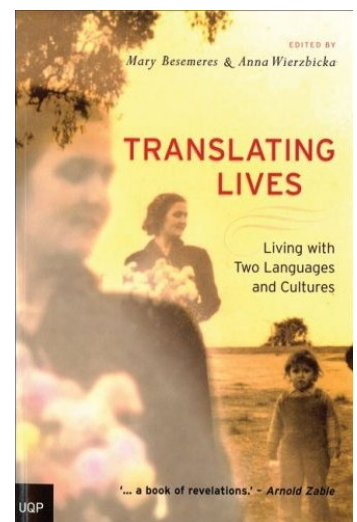
The other ten contributors chosen have been selected to enable coverage of a range of languages and cultural backgrounds giving the reader insights into the interlanguage worlds of speakers of Arabic, Chinese, Indo-Fijian, Korean, Noongar as well as German, Polish and Russian. Their experiential accounts are undergirded by a tendency towards Sapir's belief in the crucial role that language plays in the construction of social reality and that the world lived through each language is unique and 'not merely the same world with different labels attached' (p. xvii). It is only when two (or more) worldviews collide that conflicts arise and need to be resolved.

Such resolution may involve translation. The problems associated with this process are elucidated and brought vividly into life in Chapters 8, 9 and 11. For example in Chapter 9, Kyung-Joo Yoon reveals how his native Korean fulfils his expressive needs in terms of pain in a way that English never can. Although translations may inevitably result in such losses, this does not render them any less distressing for those who feel robbed of their true voices.

The forces of assimilation and a tendency to neglect or worse still dismiss other languages as inferior come to the fore in Chapter 1 as Kim Scott recounts his efforts to learn Noongar, his endangered first language. This theme continues throughout the second chapter with Michael Clyne recalling his childhood as an Austrian immigrant. He asserts that he needs 'at least two languages to *be myself*' (p. 25, emphasis added). In Chapter 3 Brij V Lal shares the pain of a childhood in which he was made to feel ashamed of his Fijian language and culture.

Other themes explored in the book include those of belonging versus feeling different or excluded and the ways in which discursive patterns can vary greatly from one language to another.

Translating lives has wide appeal due to its anecdotal style and great accessibility. Many important issues relating to language, culture and identity are raised and in this book they leave the realm of theory and are brought to life in the personal narratives. Overall, it is at once sensitising, entertaining and thought-provoking.

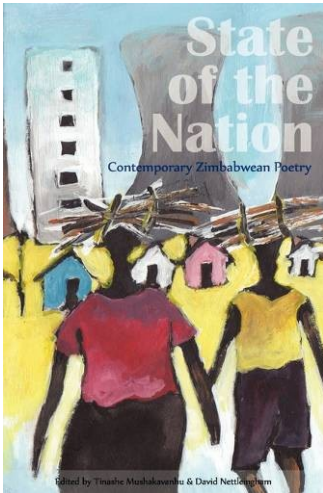


Breda O'Hara-Davies (University of Technology Sydney)

State of the Nation: Contemporary Zimbabwean Poetry

Edited by Tinashe Mushakavanhu and David Nettleingham

The Conversation Paperpress, 2009. 167 pp ISBN: 978-0-9563137-0-6



In his overview of this timely and powerful collection of verse and essays, Tinashe Mushakavanhu pulls no punches by declaring that 'most Zimbabwean poets are not so much interested in poetry as an 'artistic genre' but in poetry as a 'medium' to communicate a message.' Given the resolutely political nature of almost all the work featured in *State of the Nation*, this reads as more than a mere statement of fact – although it certainly is that. It is both a rallying cry and a shot

across the bows of Zimbabwe's state-controlled media – but also of those publishers who, Mushakavanhu argues, have too often overlooked Zimbabwe's poets in favour of its more marketable short story writers.

This collection showcases the work of thirty poets, ranging from established figures such as Charles Mungoshi and Chenjerai Hove to the talented newcomers Nhamo Mhiripiri, J.Tsutsi Mutiti and Christopher Mlalazi. Also present, however, are Dambudzo Marechera and Phillip Zhuwao, two voices from the grave for whom poetry – at least the examples selected for publication here – would seem to function as the most universal of literary media, yet is arguably irreducible to any specific 'message', political or otherwise. But these are the exceptions that prove the rule. The majority of poets featured here write with no little anger, and more often than not in a first person voice that urgently and affectingly conveys the daily humiliations meted out by Mugabe's ZANU PF dominated state and its vassals.

Indeed, there is a unity of tone to the majority of the poems that renders ironic the new government's pretensions to Unity. Writer and critic Memory Chirere, in an otherwise positive review of this collection, has drawn attention to the 'prevalence of melancholy'. 'Our poets have yet to find an idiom that

redeems', he writes, 'regardless of the well known woes'. But while he takes this book – not unreasonably – to be symptomatic of this trend, it is from those poems that do not sit so straightforwardly under the 'state of the nation' banner that this idiom looks most likely to emerge. I'm thinking in particular of the sketches of workaday life both in Zimbabwe and its diaspora by Munashakavanhu, Togara Muzananhamo and here, Julius Chingono:

My house is built
from plastic over cardboard
I found the plastic being blown by the wind
It's simple
I pick up my life
as I go

It is not that these poems ignore or refuse the imperative to communicate a message of resistance to Mugabe's regime; rather, that they reveal its grotesque power in a surrealist idiom of everyday experience that reclaims the humanity the regime so spectacularly denies. 'Dissonant and unpredictable daily events demand a constant footwork of the imagination', as Munashakavanhu puts it in his introduction, and it is the poems that move most adroitly between the damaged landscapes and 'mindscapes' of Zimbabwe that left the most powerful mark on this reader.

That Mushakavanhu and David Nettleingham, both still in their twenties, have managed to assemble such an impressive array of Zimbabwean voices from across the generations is in itself hugely commendable. But it is in the forms of conversation and collaboration that make this kind of project possible – as alluded to in numerous poems and essays – that the redemption, indeed the hope, Chirere calls for is perhaps to be most readily found: in the emergence of transnational, cosmopolitan networks that connect and channel these voices in their condemnation of injustice in a way that reclaims their nation from its deleterious state.

James Graham (Middlesex University)

Note : The PSA Newsletter would like to publicise the research publications of our members; please send details of your publication (up to 200 words) to the Editors. We also welcome short book reviews of postcolonial texts (novels, poems, movies etc), and academic publications (please keep your review under 500 words).

Pharmakon: Literature and Violence

20 May 2010, University of Kent, Postgraduate conference

Keynote speaker : Peter Morey

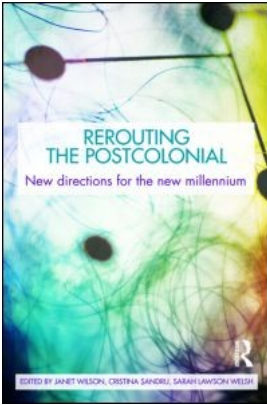
'medicine' and suggesting the fundamental ambiguity of the literary artefact with regard to violence and brutality in every part of the world or historical conjuncture. In particular, violence will be examined from many different perspectives: it will be understood as limit of representative possibilities – violence against writers, persecution, censorship, and ideological imposition. Or, violence will be related to the act of writing itself, considered as intrinsic part of the literary production, and it will be discussed in terms of its active presence in a written text, the violence towards language and the reader. Finally, literature will be interrogated as possible therapy or remedy for the experience of violence, as space of expression and articulation of meaning in contexts of pain and struggle. For further information, please contact the organisers at kent.pgconf@googlemail.com

This one-day conference will be addressing an extremely important issue concerning the worldly dimension of the literary text: the question of violence. The concept of pharmakon will provide an inspirational image – a Greek word meaning both 'poison' and

Recent Publications

**Rerouting the Postcolonial:
New directions for the new millennium**

Edited by Janet Wilson, Cristina Sandru,
Sarah Lawson Welsh



Routledge 2010, 250pp. ISBN: 978-0-415-54325-5.

Rerouting the Postcolonial demonstrates the transformation of postcolonial studies through the mobilizing of multiple lines of interaction among overlapping intellectual paradigms, such as cosmopolitanism, deterritorialisation, transnationalism, neoliberalism. The volume's 17 chapters are partly a response to neocolonial imbalances caused by the imperial formations and ideologies associated with globalization. In

line with current critical theory they also reconnect the ethical and political with the aesthetic aspect of postcolonial culture, define a 'turn to the affective' and a new strand of utopianism associated with spatiality, mobility and the imaginary, and demarcate ex-centric spaces, both relationally defined and globally networked, which offer new versions of the global. The spatial metaphor inherent in 'rerouting' points to the field's capacity to unravel apparently fixed boundaries.

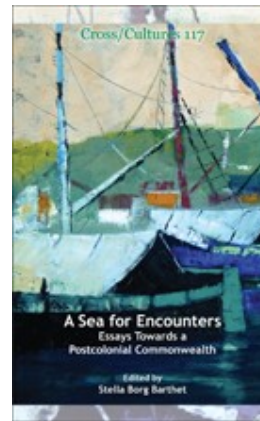
The volume consists of three sections each with a separate introduction: **I. Theoretical Reroutings:** cosmopolitanism, transnationality and the neo-liberal subject; **II. Remapping the postcolonial:** globalism, localism and diasporas; **III. Literary reroutings:** ethics, aesthetics and the postcolonial canon. Together they chart and challenge the diversity of postcolonial studies, including: new directions and growth areas from performance and autobiography to diaspora and transnationalism; new subject matters such as sexuality and queer theory, ecocriticism and discussions of areas of Europe as postcolonial spaces; new theoretical directions such as globalization, cosmopolitanism, and theories of 'affect'.

Contributors include established critics Bill Ashcroft, Elleke Boehmer, Diana Brydon, Simon Gikandi, Victor Li, Deborah L. Madsen, Patrick Williams; and new and emerging scholars, Anna Ball, Erin Goheen Glanville, James Graham, Dorota Kłodziejczyk, Nadia Louar, Jeffrey Maher, Nirmala Menon, Kaori Nagai, Jane Poyner, and Robert Spencer.

A Sea for Encounters **Essays Towards a Postcolonial Commonwealth** Edited by Stella Borg Barthet

Amsterdam/New York, 2009. XIV, 412 pp. (Cross/Cultures 117)
ISBN:978-90-420-2764-0 (bound) / 978-90-420-2765-7 (E-Book)

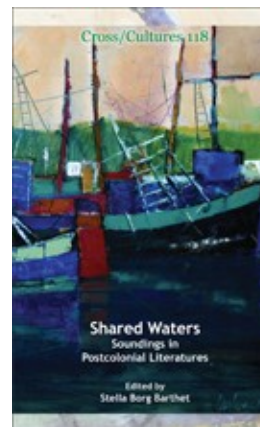
This book contains general essays on: the relevance of 'Commonwealth' literature; the treatment of Dalits in literature and culture; the teaching of African literature in the UK; 'sharing places' and Drum magazine in South Africa; black British book covers as primers for cultural contact; Christianity, imperialism, and conversion; Orang Pendek and Papuans in colonial Indonesia; Carnival and drama in the anglophone Caribbean; issues of choice between the Maltese language and Its Others; and patterns of interaction between married couples in Malta. As well as these, there are essays providing



close readings of works by the following authors: Chinua Achebe, André Aciman, Diran Adebayo, Monica Ali, Edward Atiyah, Margaret Atwood, Murray Bail, Peter Carey, Amit Chaudhuri, Austin Clarke, Sara Jeannette Duncan, Amitav Ghosh, Nadine Gordimer, Antjie Krog, Hanif Kureishi, Naguib Mahfouz, David Malouf, V.S. Naipaul, Michael Ondaatje, Tayeb Salih, Zadie Smith, Ahdaf Soueif, Yvonne Vera. Contributors: Jogamaya Bayer, Katrin Berndt, Sabrina Brancato, Monica Bungaro, Judith Lütge Coulli, Robert Cribb,

Natasha Distiller, Evelyne Hanquart-Turner, Marie Herbillon, Tuomas Huttunen, Gen'ichiro Itakura, Jacqueline Jondot, Karen King-Aribisala, Ursula Kluwick, Dorothy Lane, Ben Leb-dai, Lourdes López-Ropero, Amin Malak, Daniel Massa, Concepción Mengibar-Rico, Susanne Reichl, Brigitte Scheer-Schaezler, Lydia Sciriha, Jamie S. Scott, Andrea Strolz, Peter O. Stummer, Cynthia vanden Driesen, Clare Thake Vassallo.

Shared Waters **Soundings in Postcolonial Literatures** Edited by Stella Borg Barthet



Amsterdam/New York, NY 2009. XIII, 412 pp. (Cross/Cultures 118) ISBN: 978-90-420-2766-4 (Bound) / 978-90-420-2767-1 (E-Book)

Shared Waters contains general essays on: unequal African/Western academic exchange; the state and structure of postcolonial studies; representing male violence in Zimbabwe's wars; parihaka in the poetic imagination of Aotearoa New Zealand; Middle Eastern, Nigerian, Moroccan, and diasporic Indian women's writing; community in post-Independence Maltese poetry in

English; key novels of the Portuguese colonies; the TV series *The Kumars at No. 42*; fictional representations of India; the North in western Canadian writing; and a pedagogy of African-Canadian literature. As well as these, there is a selection of poems from Malta by Daniel Massa, Adrian Grima, Norbert Bugeja, Immanuel Mifsud, and Maria Grech Ganado, and essays providing close readings of works by the following authors and filmmakers: Thea Astley, George Elliott Clarke, Alan Duff, Francis Ebejer, Lorena Gale, Romesh Gunsekera, Sahar Khalifah, Anthony Minghella, Michael Ondaatje, Caryl Phillips, Edgar Allan Poe, Salman Rushdie, Ghādah al-Sammān, Meera Syal, Lee Tamahori. Contributors: Leila Abouzeid, Hoda Barakat, Amrit Biswas, Thomas Bonnici, Stella Borg Barthet, Ivan Callus, Devon Campbell-Hall, Saviour Catania, George Elliott Clarke, Brian Crow, Pilar Cuder-Domínguez, Bärbel Czennia, Hilary P. Dannenberg, Pauline Dodgson-Katiyo, Bernadette Falzon, Daphne Grace, Adrian Grima, Kifah Hanna, Janne Korkka, T. Vijay Kumar, Chantal Kwast-Greff, Maureen Lynch Pèrcopo, Kevin Stephen Magri, Isabel Moutinho, Melanie A. Murray, Taiwo Oloruntoba-Oju, Gerhard Stilz, Jesús Varela Zapata, Christine Vogt-William.

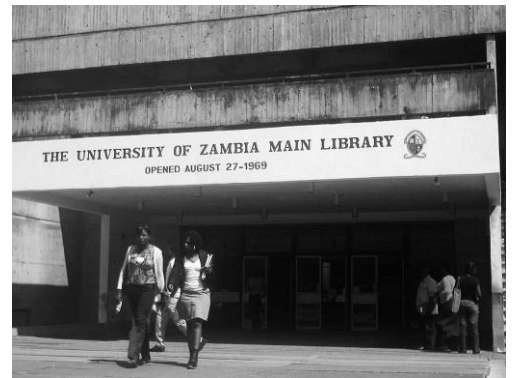
THE RECOMMENDED READING ISN'T IN THE LIBRARY – AGAIN!

(AND HASN'T BEEN IN THE LAST 20 YEARS...)

The University of Zambia Main Library is a vibrant intellectual site, full of students and researchers who love to discuss their work. But the library stock is badly out of date, especially in the inter-disciplinary field of Postcolonialism. PSA Vice-Chair Ranka Primorac is in direct contact with the UNZA librarians, and is arranging for a consignment of books to be shipped to the UNZA Library before the end of this calendar year.

LET UNZA HAVE YOUR SPARE BOOKS. LET UNZA HAVE COPIES OF BOOKS YOU HAVE WRITTEN. BE REPRESENTED IN THE CATALOGUES OF THE FAMOUS COSMOPOLITAN LIBRARY WHERE THE CADRES OF SOUTH AFRICA'S EXILED ANC STUDIED DURING THE LONG FIGHT AGAINST APARTHEID.

Send your book donations to Dr Ranka Primorac, Department of English, School of Humanities, Avenue Campus, University of Southampton, Southampton SO17 1BJ, UK. For more information, write to Ranka at R.Primorac@soton.ac.uk



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from Melanie Murray (Membership Secretary)

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Special Rate on Personal Subscriptions to the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* : We'd like to remind you of your eligibility as a PSA member for a 25% discount on the journal, which is affiliated to the PSA. This Journal is devoted to the study of literature written in English and published throughout the world. In particular it aims to explore the interface between the postcolonial writing of the modern global era and the economic forces of production which increasingly commodify culture. It is published by Routledge, from 2010 will have 5 issues a year, and is edited by an editorial team working with Professor Janet Wilson, of the University of Northampton, UK. Full details can be viewed at www.tandf.co.uk/journals/jpw. To take advantage of this special offer, you can order your subscription by filling out your details on the online form here:

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Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture
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The PSA has appointed a number of committees with the aim of diversifying our activities. If you are interested in getting involved with any of the committees, please contact the spokesperson (indicated by * on the list)

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Call for Contributions: PSA Newsletter

Post-Empire

The theme for the next PSA newsletter is 'Post-Empire'. The term 'empire' has been used in a wide variety of ways in postcolonial studies. Neo-Marxists, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, use it to describe contemporary biopolitical life. Historians such as Niall Ferguson suggest the term encapsulates the continuities between the power of the British empire and the new American empire. From a sociological stand-point, Paul Gilroy claims Britain is suffering from a 'post-imperial melancholia'. Indeed, Salman Rushdie has argued that, since the 1980s, contemporary Britain has explicitly been dealing with 'the new empire within' its shores. Within a global context, Arundhati Roy fervently accuses the Indian elite of participating in the 'New American Empire', with Democracy as its collective 'sly new war cry'.

Empire, then, effectively (and problematically) circulates through ideologies, objects, bodies and spaces. In addition to thinking about the terms 'post-imperial' or 'post-colonial', in what ways is postcolonial studies endeavouring to create a world that is 'post-empire'?

The Editors invite contributions to further discussion of this theme and welcome, as always, updates and articles on conferences, reading groups, courses, centres and new publications pertaining to postcolonial studies. The deadline for the next newsletter is **30 October**. We look forward to receiving your news and any comments, or suggestions for new sections or topics which you would like us to feature in the newsletter.

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