

Introduction

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Against the background of a brief reappraisal of the politics - literary production interface in the twentieth century, Adebayo Williams argues for a recuperation of the personal dimension to cultural production. Seeing it as both an epistemological and historical necessity in Third World literatures, he shows that 'the particular artist becomes the bearer of the national burden, a vehicle for inarticulate societal aspirations or disaffections' if not the bearer of a new ideology. He then seeks to reposition Thomas Mofolo within the cultural politics of a pan-colonial society, attempts to re-examine his literary strategy in terms of societal constraints and reappraises the legacy of this 'misunderstood patriot and indisputable moral genius'

Emeka Nwabueze's article examines some of the peculiarities inherent in African American and black South African literature. It posits valid general relationships between the literatures arising from general similarities in 'environment', without assuming the existence of uniformity over the entire area of discussion. Pertinent references are made to particular texts either to exemplify a point, or to place it in comparison with other artistic works under discussion.

Isidore Diala focuses on André Brink's frequent depiction of the characteristic Afrikaner reduction of the Bible to a white mythology that complemented the materiality of apartheid. Pointing to the way in which the Bible was read 'in the self-regarding gaze of Afrikaner consciousness, severely hampered and narrowed by its morbid obsession with its tribulations and even threats of extinction in a heathen land', he argues that the Bible was distorted to justify racist ideology. In the same ways that historiography and cartography can be used for purposes of myth-making, this approach was used in the apartheid machinery to empower the Afrikaner Establishment by providing it with an authorised version of reality.

Pointing to the glaring omissions in colonial and post-colonial studies, Lekan Oyegoke says that they indicate an uneasiness about 'strident radical voices'. He sees this phenomenon as a strategy of 'quietening things down through a selective exclusion of radical perspectives'. The subject of his article, then, is the ideological implication of some of these omissions from works devoted to postcoloniality.

In his critical assessment of Kofi Awoonor's *This Earth, My Brother*, Kwame Ayivor focuses attention on the environmental determinism which shapes and informs its hero and characters. Further, he investigates how the 'corrosive fictional wasteland—Awoonor's bleak landscape—affects the protagonist's existential quest for selfhood and racial identity. How Amamu, the prodigal hero, 'became a stranger to his tribe, to his religion, to his traditions, and to himself' is the central concern.

Pointing to the autobiographical tone of his writing and the recurrence of self-portraits in his pictorial art, Marilet Sienaert shows how the issue of identity and self-representation has always been foregrounded and problematised in the work of Breyten Breytenbach. The main argument in the article is that, linked to place, there is a strong relationship between Africa and the sense of self constituted in his work. As such, the research examines and questions the way critics place his oeuvre within a purely European tradition of writing and painting.

In his 'Breyten Breytenbach's *Memory of Snow and of Dust*—A Postmodern Story of Identity(es)', Erhard Reckwitz discusses a variety of elements which inform the view that his oeuvre derives from the same autobiography. Even so, he argues that *Memory of Snow and of Dust* must not be reduced to yet another poetic or narrative reworking of his obsessive preoccupation with exile and imprisonment respectively. As a mediator steeped in the knowledge of two cultures, Breytenbach's achievement is that he brought about a mutually enriching dialogue between South Africa and Europe by expressing the schizophrenia of postmodern South Africa in European deconstructivist terms—or vice versa.

In the light of the unprecedented theoretical developments in postcolonial studies, Cleopas Thosago points to the fact that, apart from two articles, not much of such reflection has been brought to bear on African language literature. His article focuses on the possibilities and challenges of realising 'the multilingual national concept of South African literature'. He probes the dialectic between multilingualism and globalisation and the extent to which it impacts on African-language literatures in South Africa. His observations and yet tentative conclusions, could perhaps be helpful in the attempt to re-position as well as re-orient African-language literatures in the ongoing local and global discussions and debates on postcoloniality, he argues.

Andrew Foley points to the hiatus in scholarship concerning not only a precise account of the actual nature of the Christian perspective which underpins Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country*, but also how his liberalism informs his religious thinking and gives shape to a Christian perspective which is actively and intimately concerned with matters

of social and political justice. His article attempts to fill this gap in scholarship by examining in some detail the nature and significance of Paton's synthesis of liberalism and Christianity.

Gisela Feurle gives an overview of an interdisciplinary course focused on Shaka, she developed with a colleague from the history department. The course had a curricular, didactic as well as an 'intercultural learning' dynamics built into it. Some of the central elements of the course were the contradictory representations of Shaka, the reasons why and the ways in which traditions and ethnic identities emerge, and the possible importance Shaka has for nationbuilding or ethnic identity in South Africa. In general, the course also focused on the interpretation of literary texts and historical sources, the studying of theoretical concepts, the study of the current political situation in South Africa using newspapers and films, and required reflection upon own points of view and perspectives.

Erhard Reckwitz addresses the problematic related to the supremacy of the political over the aesthetic in South African but also Third World literatures. He does so by providing an overview of the debate within South African scholarship but also how it relates to views on literature from elsewhere. The main point is that this binary leads to a too easy and fallacious mimetic distinction. If mimetic literature constitutes a first phase and magic realism - especially as it also derives from 'the ordinary' - a second, then a third stage would be literature's entering a more 'mature' symbolic.

In her article, S. Pather calls for equal treatment of the sexes not only as presented in the sections dealing with gender in the South African Constitution, but also in actual practice in society. Her main focus is on legal discourse which is still determined by a gender discriminatory tradition. As such, her analysis and argument accesses a discussion of the judgement of O'Regan J in *Brink v Kitshoff* NO 1996 (4) SA 197 (cc).

Gina Buijs examines the notion of power as a crucial variable in the disappearance of caste among the descendants of indentured labourers from India in Natal and the ways in which the process of migration to Natal from India enabled migrants to construct a different ethnic identity to that of their ancestors on the subcontinent. This is done against the background of the fact that, in India, it is generally agreed that most social values and relations are connected to a pure-and-impure pattern of hierarchy which constitutes the basis of the caste system.

In her linguistic study of South African Telugu surnames, Varijakshi Prabhakaran focuses on the gap in the study of the linguistic aspects of onomastics in South Africa. She gives a history of Telugu surnames in South Africa, puts forward a

methodology for data collection and then analyses the data collected. The linguistic analysis shows variations and changes that occurred due to the Telugu language's contact with 'in-group' and 'out-group' languages, viz. Tamil and English.

Against the background of an earlier argument concerning the conditions literary studies has to meet in order to participate in 'disciplinarity', Rory Ryan argues that despite its weak legitimation for disciplinarity, literary studies performs significant functions on cultural meaning and value. However, in order to answer the question, 'What operations are performed?', wider and logically prior questions within the human symbolic - which in turn requires a move into the attendant discipline of symbolic anthropology - have to be asked. Following his argument is an attempt to apply these anthropological observations to the literary phenomenon and its secondary productions.

Pointing to the complexity of bilingualism, Lawrie Barnes analyses the phenomenon in the South African context from a variety of perspectives. Various aspects of bilingualism such as the definition and typologisation of bilingualism, the measurement and acquisition of bilingualism, the effects of bilingualism on the individual and the configuration of bilingualism in society are examined. Some implications of research on bilingualism for education and language planning in South Africa are advanced.

Rembrandt Klopper has written and brought together five articles within the theoretical framework of an emerging comprehensive discipline known as Cognitive Rhetoric. The specialist contributions by Mark Turner and Gilles Fauconnier's, Elsa Klopper, and his own, focus on particular aspects of Cognitive Rhetoric without really giving a systematic overview of this approach. For this reason, the first article in the series, provides a concise overview of Cognitive Rhetoric as backdrop against which readers can read the other contributions. Here he shows that an individual's subjective perceptions of the universe differ significantly from how science objectively reveals the universe to be, and that Cognitive Rhetoric provides a coherent framework for understanding how humans subjectively perceive the universe to be.

In his review of Owomoyela's *The African Difference*, Mabogo P. More untangles some of the most important questions and issues relevant to all those concerned with the relationship between African intellectuals and the culture from which they come.