

Book Proposal

Narratology and Ideology: Encounters between Narrative Theory and Postcolonial Criticism

Edited by Divya Dwivedi, Henrik Skov Nielsen & Richard Walsh

Overview

The proposed volume attempts to bring the methods and theories of narratology to bear on ideological dimensions of literature while simultaneously elaborating them and demonstrating their usefulness. Specifically it stages an encounter between narrative theory and postcolonialist questions, texts and theories, with a special view to the Indian subcontinent.

Most analysis of subcontinental and other postcolonial literatures is preoccupied with ideological concerns and is conducted predominantly through thematic analysis, to the neglect of narratological observations and insights. But these literatures also need to be studied in terms of their form, style, techniques and strategies, without which thematic analysis in the name of contextual specificity risks being at best imprecise, at worst erroneous. The proposed volume initiates the attempt to remedy this lacuna in subcontinental literary studies by introducing the methods and elaborating the theories of narratology, as well as reflecting on the relation between the narratological and ideological dimensions of the study of narrative/literature.

Ideological analysis of narrative, and the literary criticism based on it, has often assumed the irrelevance of narratological analysis. Despite growing references to the unreliable narrator or the metalepsis in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, classics by Premchand, G. V. Desani, Raja Rao, O. V. Vijayan, Anita Desai, Rahi Masoom Raza, and Sa'adat Hasan Manto, as well as more recent works by such authors as Amitav Ghosh, Monica Ali, Mohsin Hamid or Tabish Khair, are not generally analysed for narrative voice and how it is generated; nor for the type of the narration and how its construction or the narrative situation affects the meanings and themes of the novel; nor for the frames and paratexts that orient the narrative; nor for the respects in which it challenges received wisdom regarding narrative temporality and spatiality. Rather, the prevailing critical perspective assumes that the paradigms and categories associated with narratology—for example, the concepts of authorship, characterhood, narrative coherence, narrative grammar and plot—are ahistorical generalizations or abstractions in contrast to the empirical contingency of its own concerns (ethnicity, national belonging, gender, caste, race, and coloniality). Bill Ashcroft conveys this implicit approach when he summarises the postcolonialist discomfort with a eurocentric conception of history as in fact a "narrativity" that entails a sequential story in which the idea of a telos of order is implicated: "from out of the notions of contiguity and temporal sequence emerges the principle of *cause*, which can in turn be seen to be a product of narrative structures once the world is considered as a text" (2001, pp131-2). On occasion, theoretical approaches such as structuralism have been viewed as themselves complicit with the ethnocentric ideology of the West. Simon Gikandi sums up the way critiques of logocentrism and meta-narratives enabled postcolonialism to reject the universalism of structuralism, considered as a disguised eurocentrism which (despite its anti-

humanist anthropology) constructed a figure of the primitive, and privileged speech over writing (ed. Neil Lazarus 2004, pp112-5). However, the contextualization of narratology has for some time been underway, engaging the predominant (postcolonial and neo-imperialist) issues of what is called the globalized South, of third-world and new literatures and the respects in which they pose specific problems that can extend the theorization of contextualism itself.

The encounter this volume stages is a prompt to more strenuous and critical research into the place of fictional and non-fictional narrative within ideological and thematic analyses. Such analyses often use “narrative” with disarming simplicity (given that from an ideological perspective every narrative is propaganda), whereas narratology demonstrates, in its burgeoning and branching theoretical paradigms and continuous redefinition and refinement of classical concepts, the inexhaustible complexity of narrative. Its tools can be used to scrutinize cultural, historical and political concepts as they are employed in the study of narrative; conversely, narratology can itself benefit from the meditation on ideology that such a project entails, and that this volume attempts.

The condition of postcoloniality has been variously comprehended through metanarratives of fall and decline, progress, enlightenment, and the attainment of civilization and democracy; the narratives produced in the historical phase that it purports to describe include, apart from works of fiction, travelogues and autobiographical accounts of conversion, of trauma, of political awakening, of liberation among others. Narratological analysis of this literature would be invaluable, and recent narratological discussions touching on postcolonialism have been accompanied by calls for a “postcolonial narratology”. This is a significant step and prompts several important questions that a volume such as this would be well positioned to explore. For example, are “postcolonial narratives” analogous to, say, “prison narratives,” “folk narratives,” or “mythic narratives”? Can we meaningfully speak of “prison narratology”? The reciprocity of postcolonialism and narratology is constrained by the fact that one is an –ity or –ism, and the other a –logy. Postcolonial theory provides a set of concepts that both posit and analyse the condition of postcoloniality, and insofar as the latter involves specific productions of knowledge of and for the colonized, it also addresses literature. Some postcolonialist critics would align universalist and formalist narratology with colonial discursivity, while postcolonial criticism’s own concepts for the study of literature may rub uncomfortably against narratological concepts. And yet, we are no longer looking at a puzzle where contextualism and universalism, ideology and narratology stand face to face as binaries. Thanks to contextualist interventions, narrative theory has embraced narratological criticism, as a result of which formal narrative poetics has been rescued from ideological inconsequence, and has proven to be indispensable for ideological analysis; for example, to show how texts may be marked, overtly or covertly, by gender, or may be gender-blind. Often such efforts have in turn born narratological fruit, giving us new concepts like “communal voice” (focusing on second person narration), “narrative competence” (focusing on the reader), and an emphasis upon the interrelation between narrative, rhetoric and ethics in general etc.

This volume seeks not merely to make narratology adequate to postcoloniality, or any other ideology, but rather to inaugurate an inquiry into whether narratology has neglected the ideological dimension of literature, and conversely whether ideological analysis, in the guise of postcolonialism, is by itself a sufficient basis for literary analysis. We envisage that the structure of the volume will consist of an initial section comprising essays that open the question by problematizing narrative in the context of postcolonialist readings; followed sections grouping essays according to the type of

narratological issue they address; and concluding with a section examining the significance of narrative theory in ideological contexts.

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Introduction

Divya Dwivedi, Henrik Skov Nielsen & Richard Walsh

The introduction to the volume will address three general tasks. Firstly, it will examine the theoretical challenge of conceiving a meaningful dialogue between the concerns of narrative theory and those of ideological criticism. Secondly, it will survey the issues in narrative theory that may have a significant impact upon situated, contextualist and specifically postcolonialist critical concerns (issues such as narrator, fictionality, author, agency, focalization etc.); it suggests the scope of potential interest, for postcolonial study, of narratological approaches to fictional and non-fictional narrative. Thirdly, it will consider the extent to which narratological insights have been assimilated into postcolonialist criticism of narrative, and especially into the criticism of subcontinental literature. By and large it is the analysis of literary realism and certain modernist styles that predominates in both postcolonial literature and its study. While the term “narrative” is central to postcolonial literary studies, conceptual debate is restricted to terms generated by Lyotard, Barthes and Hayden White. The poststructuralist underpinnings of much work in postcolonialism have oriented its analysis of narrative form towards the working of trope, allegory, irony and the metonymic gap; there is much in recent narratological investigation (on unnatural voice, disnarration and blending, to name a few) that could fruitfully inform it. Further, the postcolonialist quandry of orality versus writing can be clarified in new ways by recent debates on natural narratology, mimetic reductionism and narratorial function. The explorations of postcolonial geography and the study of map-making in fiction (for instance in Amitav Ghosh) would benefit enormously from contemporary theorisations of narrative space, especially within cognitivist narratology and discourse analysis. The introduction will conclude by providing an overview of the individual contributions to follow, to aid the reader’s navigation of the volume.

1. Fractured Tales and Colonial Traumas: The Disfiguring of Story Prototypes in Kashmiri Short Fiction

Patrick Colm Hogan

One main argument of *Understanding Nationalism* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2009) is that group identity is not simply a matter of beliefs. It is inseparable from the cognitive models and narrative structures that shape our understanding of the world and orient our feelings toward it. The narrative structures prominently include the cross-cultural prototypes of heroic, sacrificial, and romantic tragi-comedy, as well as family separation and reunion, and other less frequent genres. (The specific properties of these prototypes will be summarized in the full essay.) The heroic prototype is the default form of emplotment for national identification. However, in some cases, the conditions of the home society are such that a heroic emplotment is impossible. These are conditions

of extreme subjugation and social devastation. In such conditions, a sacrificial emplotment becomes more likely. We see cases of this in the anti-colonial movements in India and Ireland.

In the cases treated in *Understanding Nationalism*, the sense of social impotence was widespread. But the experience of devastation was limited and often indirect (e.g., the famine in Ireland was not experienced directly by the poets and revolutionaries of 1916). In contrast, there are societies in which devastation is widespread and immediate. This has not only material, but also emotional consequences. These consequences are bound up with the usual functioning of emotion systems, particularly the way emotional memories serve to allow us to prepare for dangers and opportunities. (The full essay will explain some relevant principles of current affective science. It will not be following the common literary trend of drawing on psychoanalysis.) In trauma, the usual functionality of emotion systems is partially lost. Emotional memories no longer prepare trauma victims for danger, enabling adaptive actional responses; rather, the dangers are felt to be random or unpredictable.

In such traumatic conditions, the usual functions of emplotment—particularly its organizational and predictive qualities—seem to be lost as well. In consequence, the use of story prototypes is often highly distorted, their functions sometimes entirely reversed. We find this in many Kashmiri short stories. Kashmir is the victim of what might be called “derivative colonialism.” When the European colonial powers left their colonies, they did so in response to nationalist movements that had their own social hierarchies and geographical ambitions. In a wide range of the new states, the national aspirations of the majority succeeded at the cost of the national aspirations of minorities. This gave rise to lingering conflicts. Kashmir is one of the most violent and globally consequential of those conflicts.

This essay considers a half-dozen works of Kashmiri short fiction, focusing in particular on distortions of the sacrificial prototype. For example, Abdul Gani Beg Athar’s “The Enemy” embeds the sacrificial prototype in the family separation and reunion prototype. Specifically, it presents a man as reviving his dying brother with his own blood. The story is clearly an allegory for the salvation of Pakistani Kashmir by the blood sacrifices in Indian Kashmir. But it turns out that this is only a dream. The brother dies (with no saving results). The hero is arrested by the Pakistani military. In a Kafkaesque ending, no one has the authority even to allow him to see his dead brother’s face. In short, both the sacrificial and the family reunion prototypes lead to the opposite of their usual nationalist goals—not new life and reunion, but death and absolute separation. Like many Kashmiri stories, alteration of the standard prototypes in “The Enemy” suggests a profound social and political despair of people in the valley.

2. No Centre and No Margins: Narrativizing Postcolonial Migration and Travel in Works by Michael Ondaatje, Rohinton Mistry and M. G. Vassanji

Martin Löschnigg

The aim of my paper is to analyze the ideological implications of ‘return journeys’, and the narrative strategies employed to convey these implications in the works of three writers of South Asian origin who now live in Canada, Michael Ondaatje, Rohinton Mistry and M. G. Vassanji. Born into a family of Sri Lankan Burghers, Ondaatje explores his descent in an imaginative and highly experimental manner in *Running in the Family* (1981), while his most recent *The Cat’s Table* (2011) draws on the

author's emigrant voyage, first to Britain, as a child. Mistry, who was born into the Zoroastrian community of Mumbai and has lived in Toronto since 1975, connects both cities in *Tales From Firozsha Baag* (1987) through the device of a fictional alter ego who emerges as the extra-diegetic author of the stories. Vassanji's *A Place Within* (2008), significantly sub-titled "Rediscovering India", describes the author's first visit to India, the land of his ancestors (Vassanji comes from the Ismaili community of East Africa), providing an exploration of what had been unknown and intimately known to him, through family traditions, at the same time. Representing various genres (fictionalized memoir, novel, short story cycle, travelogue) and different degrees of the fictionalizing of actual experience, these narratives enable their authors to explore alternative versions of 'self' and 'other' and to construct (migrant) identities. What characterizes these identities is a trans-cultural dimension which renders identity simultaneously in terms of the protagonist's old and new worlds. Using concepts of narrative identity, and of fictional(ized) spaces/worlds and borders, the essay will try to show how these writers revise notions of centre and margin by making their own migratory experience central to a multicultural 'world' literature in English.

3. Communicative and Cultural Memories in Anita Rau Badami's *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*

Jarmila Mildorf

Anita Rau Badami's novel *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?* (2006) tells the life stories of three women whose personal experiences are juxtaposed and intermingled with one another but are also intertwined with historical events such as the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, the emigration of many Indians to Canada and the explosion of an Air India flight in 1985. In this paper I first explore the interplay between "communicative" (i.e. individual and informal) and "cultural" (i.e. collective and ceremonial) memories (J. Assmann 1992: 56) as presented on the level of the novel's plot. Close cognitive-narratological analyses of the women's and other characters' (partially fragmented and sometimes even imagined) memories of the past will be at the centre of this part of the paper. More specifically, I look at the linguistic creation of the characters' mental functioning (cf. Palmer 2004; and Herman's (2009, 2012) notion of "world-making") and how the presented memories are embedded in the overall narrative flow of the novel (e.g. by means of contrasts and correspondences, irony or pathos). These analyses are then extended to a discussion of the ways in which the two kinds of memory also intersect on the metafictional level of the novel. Ultimately, I argue, the novel foregrounds the very processes involved in remembering and thus problematizes both communicative and cultural memories. Especially the influence of life in the diaspora on people's ways of remembering is brought into sharper relief. Finally, since the novel is inscribed in and refers to a 'real' historical framework it can be viewed as a medium and artefact of cultural memory in its own right (A. Assmann 1999, Erll 2011, Erll and Nünning 2005).

4. The Legibility of Things: Objects and Public Histories in N. S. Madhavan's *Litanies of the Dutch Battery*

Udaya Kumar

Transactions between objects and forms of fictional narration have increasingly become an important concern in recent scholarship on the novel. Scholars such as Eileen Freedgood, John Plotz and Bill Brown have brought extratextual histories and non-allegorical approaches to objects into a reading of the literary texts in which they appear. Jacques Ranciere has linked the new modes of

appearance of objects in the novel as central to a new 'aesthetic regime' and to the emergence of the institution of literature. This paper will put these inquiries into conversation with postcolonial studies through a reading of *Litanies of the Dutch Battery* (Lanthanbatheriyile Luthiniyakal, 2003), a novel by the well-known Malayalam novelist N. S. Madhavan. Set in the 1950s, this novel invokes the amplitude of varied colonial histories – Portuguese, Dutch and English – of Fort Cochin in Kerala and juxtaposes them to a postcolonial present, conjured up through a plethora of things from the times. The appearance of these objects is often accompanied by a historical gloss – almost in the future anterior – which anticipates the time of the novel's composition when the fictional world has slid into a recent, affectively charged past. Interestingly, the relationship foregrounded in *Litanies* between the legibility of objects and public histories has the effect of anchoring the novel in a sense of the local and at the same time eroding the specificities of the place by assimilating them into larger narratives of circulation: of things, ideas and people. The paper will attempt to understand the implications of the peculiar life of things in this novel for contemporary postcolonial fiction.

5. Metanarrative Signs in Ousmane Sembène's *God's Bits of Wood* and Emancipation

Gerald Prince

Metanarrative signs abound in Ousmane Sembène's *God's Bits of Wood* (*Les Bouts de bois de Dieu*). There are, for example, over one hundred metalinguistic glosses in the novel, that is, more than one every four pages. There are also numerous metaproairetic, metahermeneutic, and metacultural glosses. Apart from affecting the distance between narrator, narratee, and characters in Sembène's novel and apart from impacting its narrative speed, its modes, and its characterization (who provides these glosses, for whom, how frequently, how effectively, in what circumstances?), metanarrative signs occupy an important place in its thematic fabric. The paper will discuss how metanarrative signs not only underline the good will and didactic determination of the narrator or the composite identity of the protagonists but also emphasize the intercultural and intracommunitarian accommodations needed on the road to emancipation. More generally, the paper will show how they convey the possibility of achieving unity in diversity and, through their translational dimension, they suggest that, just as texts translate themselves, human beings are beings in translation.

6. Protection and Patronage? Highjacking and Interception? Preface-Text and Author-Reader Relations in Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* and E. M. Forster's Preface

Sarah Copland

My essay establishes a bidirectional dialogue between narrative theory and postcolonial theory on the subject of relation between prefaces and texts. There is a long-standing assumption in both paratext studies and postcolonial studies that prefaces by Western writers for colonial-era and postcolonial texts are "inseparable from the routines of protection and patronage as well as— sometimes— . . . those of highjacking and interception" (Genette, *Paratexts* 293). Identifying multiple readerships in Forster's preface to Anand's novel, and attending to the contextual circumstances of the novel's publication, I argue that these unidirectional "routines of protection and patronage[,] . . . highjacking and interception" are not present in the Forster-Anand preface-text relation. On the contrary, I demonstrate the bidirectionality of the Forster-Anand preface-text relation in order to argue for a new conception of preface-text relations in paratext studies and in postcolonial studies. At the same time, I acknowledge the relative inattention to the relation between text and paratext

(specifically the preface) in rhetorical approaches to narrative theory. Analyzing the relations between real author and audience, and implied author and audience, in both Forster's preface and Anand's novel, I propose revisions to recent versions of the rhetorical communication model. Throughout my essay, I work in two directions: I establish a bidirectional dialogue between narrative theory and postcolonial theory on subject of relation between prefaces and texts in order to demonstrate the bidirectionality of the preface-text relation, and I demonstrate the bidirectionality of the preface-text relation in order to present a relationship between narrative theory and postcolonial theory that is bidirectional.

7. Minds and Narration in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*

Brian Richardson

Salman Rushdie offers a number of original kinds of narration in *Midnight's Children*. By focusing on the ways in which he defies conventional practices of narration, I will trace out the ways in which he creates a number of unnatural acts of narration. Saleem wishes for grammatical options that exceed the normal three persons: "I have been so-many too-many persons, life unlike syntax allows one more than three" (533). Saleem's actual practice of narration is in fact much more complex than his lament would suggest. He employs a visually centered, cinematic style of narration "Close-up of my grandfather's right hand: nails knuckles fingers all somehow bigger than you'd expect" (30), uses de-narration to rewrite his story, and developed an "anti-I" or "pseudo-third person" form of narration to represent a self devoid of its customary sensibility: "I insist: not I. He. He, the Buddha. Who . . . would remain not-Saleem" (414).

Other original aspects of the narration include Saleem's unusually diacritical narrative situation, in which he reads aloud the narrative he is composing to Padma, and then incorporates her comments into the narrative. I'll also comment on the metafictional implications of his assertion that he is starting to expire as his narration ends, and note possible allusions to other narrators that employ the same figure (Scheherazade, Beckett's Molloy).

In the second part of this essay, I delve into the question of other minds, and will explore the range of minds depicted in this novel as I take up the debate about the disclosure of the contents of others' consciousness as signposts of fictionality as advocated by Dorrit Cohn and recently denied by David Herman. What does it mean that Saleem's mother can eavesdrop on her daughter's dreams? Saleem can literally read the minds of others born on the same day through a mental form of "All India Radio," though not in the way of more conventional mind readers. Lastly, I'll explore the unusual case of Saleem's self-critique of his own unusual abilities: "Why did Saleem need an accident to acquire his powers? Most of the other children [born the same day] didn't." He points out that sometimes "Saleem appears to have known too little, at other times, too much" (530). This final postmodern critique of his own preternatural powers will be discussed in the larger context of unnatural narrative strategies.

8. Focalisation: Silent and Silenced Ideology

Mieke Bal

Focalisation, the orientation of perception within the telling as well as the diegesis of narratives, has been my primary interest from the beginning of my scholarly work, because it is where ideology can

be both hidden and conveyed. The concept makes the case for the ideological impact of narrative; it takes away its innocence. The primary purpose, in the deployment in narratological analysis of the concept of focalisation is to bring out the ideological self-evidences that the narratorial voice does not express. Hence, without focalisation, any analysis of ideological strands and manipulations remains hollow. Indeed, such silenced ideological positions can even contradict and overrule, the "official" narratological stances. My article will begin with a firm defence of focalisation as the heart of narrative and its social importance.

On the other hand, focalisation is also a subtle tool for writers and artists to convey a sense of the complexity and multiplicity of visions. Focalisation can, I would like to argue, convey the vision of the underdog, the unimportant-seeming "subaltern" who, as Spivak argued, cannot speak. The relevance of this potential for postcolonial scholarship is obvious. Also, it is in focalisation that multiple visions can appear at the same time, as what linguistic analysis has termed "free indirect discourse", but then on the murky realm of perception – murky because less definitely visible, hence more insidious but also more influential and powerful. This, too, can be useful in a postcolonial perspective.

Moreover – and this is even more relevant – focalisation enables story-telling to merge past and present and even to engage an implicit dialogue between past and present. This makes it potentially into a unique tool to address the difficulties of post-coloniality, where – to invoke Spivak once more – there is a lot of neo-coloniality to be found. Since focalisation concerns perception – real or imagined – I would like to look at narrative visual art where this potential is exploited, and consider how the creation of ethically responsible images is facilitated with the help of focalisation. I would like to discuss three examples: one from my own film work, one from the work of Nalini Malani where Partition is both absent and present, and a sculpture by Bharti Kerr, *The Hot Winds that Blow From the West* from 2011; a work that, to all intents and purposes, is not narrative at all, but once we look at focalisation, becomes utterly narrative.

9. Narrative Voices and the Negotiation of Power Structures in Indra Sinha's *The Death of Mr Love* and *Animal's People*

Marion Gymnich

At first sight, Indra Sinha's novels *The Death of Mr Love* (2002) and *Animal's People* (2007) differ enormously in terms of their subject matter, their overall tone and their implications for the study of the ideological dimension of narrative texts. What Sinha's two novels have in common, however, is that they feature homodiegetic narrators that are very much aware of the possibilities offered by the process of narration. In both novels the narrators seek to manipulate the narratee in ways that lend themselves to a (re)negotiation of power structures. The narrator in *The Death of Mr Love* attempts to unravel mysteries related to the history of his family as well as to Indian history, while implicitly addressing the relationship between (postcolonial) India and the former colonizer by means of various cultural references that inform his narrative. *Animal's People* is a novel that is based on the catastrophic consequences of the release of toxic gases in a pesticide factory owned by a multinational company in Bhopal (central India) in 1984. This novel arguably features one of the most memorable narrators in contemporary literature: Animal, an orphaned victim of gas exposure who is unable to walk or even stand upright due to damage caused by the toxic gases. He lives in the slums of Khaufpur (the fictional equivalent of Bhopal) and presents an aggressive, bawdy and defiant account of his situation, which is likely to evoke both sympathy and shame on the part of the reader.

The strategies employed in *Animal's People* to create a distinctive and memorable narrative voice and to present the narrator's relationship to the community invite us to reconsider the issue of narrative authority, which was for instance addressed by Susan Sniader Lanser in her influential study *Fictions of Authority* (1992). Moreover, the construction of the narratee in *Animal's People*, which appears to be both engaging and alienating, plays a crucial role for the question of authority as well as for ideological issues addressed in this novel.

10. The Indirections of Reliable Narration: Voice and Migration in Jhumpa Lahiri's "The Third and Final Continent"

James Phelan

This essay will analyze the interplay between character narration and dialogue in "The Third and Final Continent," the last story in Jhumpa Lahiri's Pulitzer Prize winning collection, *The Interpreter of Maladies* (1999). According to the paratextual description on the book jacket, Lahiri tells "stories that travel from India to America and back again," and "Final Continent" stands out because it is the story of one man's immigration from India to the United States by way of England, and because it is a success story. Lahiri's purpose, however, as the context of the larger collection indicates, is not to celebrate this story as a representative example of Indian migration but rather to emphasize how remarkable and even wondrous that success was. In order to accomplish that purpose, Lahiri employs a reliable character narrator and invites her audience to see beyond that narrator's reports, interpretations, and evaluations by means of the way she juxtaposes his narration with characters' dialogue. In so doing, Lahiri offers a deeply textured, carefully nuanced, and affectively moving story of migration, one that invites the audience's active engagement with the difficulties faced by the character narrator and his wife by an arranged marriage, even as it celebrates the character narrator's success. At the same time, Lahiri also offers a narratological lesson in (a) the ways in which reliable narration, like its counterpart unreliable narration, can be productively used for indirect communication between author and audience; and (b) the ways in which that indirection also depends on the synergy between narration and dialogue. Ultimately, the essay will seek to demonstrate the interdependence of the story's powerful exploration of migration and Lahiri's mastery of the art of indirect reliable narration and of judiciously managed character-character dialogue.

11. The Legend of W. G. Karunasena: Nationalist Googlies and Drunken Narration in Shehan Karunatilaka's *Chinaman*

Claire Westall

This essay examines Postcolonial debates about nationalism and national imaginaries via Sri Lankan cricket (i.e. playing and writing back; creating/performing 'the nation' on the world stage and at home). It does so through the lens of unreliable narration – specifically through 'drunken', 'sobering' and 'sober' modes of self-narration, with explorations of the narrator's deployment of accusations of 'unreliability' (directed at those he encounters) despite his pursuit of the unreliable, the uncertain and the unknown (Pradeep Mathew). *Chinaman*, the first novel by Shehan Karunatilaka, is narrated by W.G. Karunasena, a sports writer whose alcoholic existence is coming to an end and whose obsession with an unknown spin bowler - Pradeep S. Mathew – leads him into a 'world of mystery' and an ironic exposure of the nationalist projects and prejudices behind Sri Lanka's cricketing

establishment. The novel mobilizes diagrams, photographs and cricketing commentary/citations within an alcoholic but increasingly sobering cricket-obsessed narrative voice.

12. Questioning the Ideology of Reliability in Moshin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*

Greta Olson

Narrative unreliability is typically diagnosed as a sign of mental instability or self-delusion on the part of personalized homodiegetic narrators. Yet in Moshin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) the unreliability that is provided by the narrator Changez' dramatic monologue, or you-narration, functions to uncover the ideological premises of his intra-textual listener and putative extra-textual reader's normative notions of credibility. The reader like the American listener is placed in a café in Lahore, listening to the story of a Pakistani man who was initially enamored of the American dream but then became increasingly alienated by the fundamentalism of the United States' global capitalist practices and Othering of anyone who looked Arab or Muslim in the post-attack period. The exclusion of other characters' perspectives or voices places the reader in the position of adjudging the narration solely on the basis of the narrator's utterances. This functions to reverse signification practices common to the US American media during the post-9/11 era by which identified terrorists have been presented in "binary terms – good versus evil, us versus them" (Westwell 2011: 816). *The Reluctant Fundamentalist's* narration thus provides the "seduction of a strange-shaped and oddly reflective mirror" (Hamid 2007); in this mirror, the American listener and the Western reader's paranoid fear of the identified terrorist is reflected and played back upon, thereby Othering that perspective and showing its assumption of ubiquitous "hyperterrorism" (Ward 2008: 249) to be potentially fallible. The authority of the West's monolithic construction of 'the' terrorist is questioned, and the listener/reader is shown to be the potential agent of violence.

13. Strategies of Criticizing and Subverting the Colonial Worldview in Selected Fiction by South Asian and British Authors

Monika Fludernik

The essay is meant to compare the narrative strategies of critique and subversion in colonial writings by Kipling, Paul Scott and G. J. Farrell with South Asian literature by lesser known Indian authors—NOT Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh and Arundhati Roy—i.e. lesser known by the general reader in the West. I wish to include Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, M.R. Anand's *Untouchable*, G.V. Desani's *All About M. Hatterr* as well as a novel by Vikram Chanda, short stories by Manjula Padmanabhan and perhaps work by more recent authors. I will focus on a variety of narrative strategies and try to determine whether colonial critics who are British by background employ the same kind of strategies as do native South Asians. Besides irony, which does not perhaps quite come into a narratological framework, one can e.g. look at the handling of perspective, especially multiperspectivism and the representation of indigenous consciousness; the dialogues; inversions of 'Western' plot constellations and characterizations.

14. The Apocalypse That Will Never Be: Decolonization and Satire

Baidik Bhattacharya

There is a broad agreement about the crisis of the postcolonial paradigm with the advent of globalization as a new overarching theoretical model. There are various versions of the “death” of the postcolonial theory, or even the radical promises of decolonization. In this paper I wish to interrogate this claim of death through close readings of a set of satires by the noted Bengali satirist Rajshekhar Basu (1880-1960) which were published around the time of India’s decolonization in 1947. In these satires Basu offers a new version of decolonization and the possibility of a distinct postcolonial history by envisioning the event of decolonization as projected apocalyptic event. These apocalypses are never realized within the text, but they are put on hold as looming possibilities, and under the long shadow such events unfold the new era of postcolonial history. I wish to specifically interrogate the narrative strategies employed by these satires, the citation of available history within the satirical world, the narrative organization of “alternative” history and the rationale for such organization. One of the central arguments I want to make is the alternative version of the postcolony as a territorial principle available in the “irrationality” of these texts, and how it allows one to revisit the crucial question of death in postcolonial politics.

These are political satires and they try to visualize decolonization as possible apocalyptic event (which includes mass destruction and death). I am interested in the ahistorical nature of satire; i.e. the way satire cites history (events, personalities etc) out of its strict chronological order, and through this ahistoricity how it opens up the possibility of critique. Satire, in other words, does not follow the Rankean principle, i.e. it does not provide a representational simulation of ‘what really happened’, rather offers alternative sequencing of history to expose an ethical dimension of politics. What is interesting for these satirical texts is the fact that they use death (through apocalyptic events) to launch this ethical re-ordering, to engage with postcolonial history. And hence the dialogue with current debates on postcoloniality and death (often inspired by Derrida’s work); I’ll try to concentrate on the specific narrative organization of these texts in order to see how satirical discourses engage with history, how they inflect history with a distinctly ethical position, and what happens to the issue of death in satirical representations.

15. A Cognitive Approach to Multiperspectivity as a Key to Ideology and Intersectional Identities in Meera Syal’s *Life isn’t all ha ha hee hee*

Vera Nünning & Ansgar Nünning

In his seminal book *The Novel*, Christoph Bode (2011: 199) observes that “despite its wide dissemination and great importance, barely more than first steps to a general theory of multiperspectival narration have been made until recently.” Proceeding from the assumption that content and narrative technique are more closely intertwined than structuralist narratologists have tried to make us believe, this essay attempts to show that the narratological concepts of multiperspectivity (see Nünning/Nünning 2000; Menhard 2009) and perspective structure (see Nünning 2000; Surkamp 2003) provide fruitful analytical tools and heuristic keys for coming to terms with ideological issues raised in narratives, and for analysing both the relations between the different perspectives delineated in a novel (cf. Hartner 2012) and the narrative construction of intersectional identities.

More specifically, the chapter will pursue three goals: first, it will outline a general theory and a narratological model of multiperspectival narration, providing definitions of such key terms as character perspective, narrator perspective, and perspective structure, and introducing concepts for analysing the relationships between the different narratorial and figural perspectives presented in a novel. Second, it will explore the interfaces between such a narratological model of the perspective structure of narrative texts and the ways in which ideological issues and intersectional identities are negotiated in narrative fiction, arguing that the analysis of the “perspective structure of a novel reveals above all – as a model, something in process, not laid down or fixed – how the novel envisages its handling of divergent viewpoints, of different subjectivities” (Bode 1999: 203). Third, analysing Meera Syal’s multiperspectival bildungsroman *Life isn’t all ha ha hee hee* (1999) as a paradigm example, the essay will turn theory into practice by showing how these narratological tools can be used for coming to terms with both the ideological issues entailed in every perspective and the perspective structure as a whole, and the narrative construction of intersectional identities that are shaped by age, class, ethnicity, gender, generation, and ideological norms and values.

16. What Might Narratology and the Brain Sciences Say About Postcolonial Theory?

Frederick Luis Aldama

In this paper I consider the ways in which narratology and advances in the brain sciences (developmental cognitive neuroscience especially) point to the short-comings of a postcolonial theory approach to the study of culture and its makers. While postcolonial theory had cleared a place in the academy—and only in the academy—for all variety of disciplinary approach (history, literary studies, geography, for instance) to understand better the world-wide oppression and exploitation of the many by the few, today we can look back and see that much of this was built on idealist precepts. After providing several examples from Spivak, Bhabha, and Said that contain different degrees of presence of this idealist approach to postcoloniality, I turn to the tools offered by narratology as a possible corrective. I don’t propose that the tools have a built-ideological valence—the second person voice, say, as postcolonial, communal, and resistant to a first person voice as that of the colonizer, say. Rather, I consider how devices in some instances can be and are used by authors such as Zadie Smith (*White Teeth*), Arundhati Roy (*God of Small Things*), and Fernando del Paso (*Palinuro of Mexico*) to convey to the reader a sense of communality that may or may reach out to questions of postcolonial politics. Here, too, I consider the pros and cons of work in cognitive literary studies (Patrick Hogan, for instance) that makes certain ontological confluences between the real world (postcolonial or otherwise identified) and mind/brain capacities and functions. Finally, I consider how an understanding of the development of our mind/brain can enrich our understanding of how we (postcolonial or otherwise) create and consume cultural products (postcolonial literature).

17. Pedagogy and Narratological Laity: The Crisis of Teaching in the Novels of O. V. Vijayan

Divya Dwivedi

In several moments within narratology, a distinction is drawn between the lay reader and the critical reader, and between the reader’s level and the theoretical level. Although it is similar to the lay reader/professional reader distinction (whose gradations include the naïve, the specialist, the informed and the knowledgeable reader), there is an important difference. Unlike a profiling of kinds

of readers, here the difference is not just between what an enthusiast and a narratologists avers, but a difference which itself performs a theoretical work. For instance, it can be characterized as an illusion, leading to a theory of mimesis, upon which a narratological model can be built. Its task could then be to explain or theorise the illusionism. Is laity—the condition or state of being lay—working as a narratological concept?

In the case that the difference between reader's level and theoretical level is itself a theoretical one, this difference shows up as lopsided. In my paper I investigate the place that this distinction occupies in narratological inquiry, in order to address the ideological work it may or may not be performing. This ideological work is particularly significant in the context of postcolonialist theory where the gap between the lay and the theoretical has been located in the figure of the subaltern and colonial education. This has led to important interventions by theorists like Spivak, rethinking the idea of education and teaching. Narratology, among (perhaps) all literary research enterprises, is the one where pedagogy has been made a stake most explicitly. I would like to explore whether this pedagogical commitment does not alter the sense of the difference between the lay and the theoretical, and if so, how. I would like to do so through a comparative study of three early novels of O.V.Vijayan (1930-2005) each of which is (among other things) a variation on the theme of teaching. The last is even called *Gurusagaram* (the preceptor's ocean, 1987). The first, *Legends of Khasak* (1969), is about a young graduate moving to a remote village as primary school teacher, where many different and mutually incompatible ideas of teaching begin to surface. The second, *Saga of Dharmapuri* (1985) is partly a prophetic satire on the declaration of a State of Exception in India (written before the event, published after, and then banned) with a transversal narrative of the universal teacher Siddhartha (the young Buddha) in search of the secret of suffering.

Word Count

Essays 5 – 6,000 words each (including introduction) = 90-108,000 words in total

Market

The proposed volume has the advantage of addressing the relation between two fields generally considered distinct – narrative theory and postcolonial criticism – and will therefore appeal to readers in both areas. The reciprocally informing nature of the encounter these essays will explore means that the market is not confined to the intersection between these two fields, but has genuine implications of interest across their whole range. Indeed, by inaugurating important questions to both fields of inquiry, the book would speak to future audience by ushering these two fields themselves into their futures. This audience would include new generations of students concerned with new questions regarding the pertinence of literary studies to socio-political contexts developing in today's world. One such context that has taken center-stage in recent years is university education itself, and within it the role of the humanities (and further of English studies, and of literature), be it in the UK, Chile, or India. At the same time the key area for expansion and improvement in Indian universities is precisely the humanities, with the privatisation of Indian higher education and a proliferation of new universities in prospect, accompanied by a spurt in academic *and* literary publishing, and international publishers coming to India. In ways both explicit and implicit, this book marks the juncture at which critical humanities address the postcolonial location of this new readership and its special relationship to the study of literary narrative.

As a wide-ranging collection of critical and theoretical views, this volume will be able to attract readers from undergraduate level to advanced researchers; it will have considerable appeal as required reading for taught courses in narratology and in post-colonial studies at both undergraduate and graduate level; it is a potential core text wherever the emphasis is upon contextual approaches to narrative, or upon attention to literary form in postcolonialism; and it will have particular appeal for courses with an emphasis upon the Indian subcontinent. The international range of scholars contributing to the volume will enhance its marketability in America, Europe and India (indeed the initial impetus for this proposal was the identification of a particular need, in the specific context of the Indian academic scene, for a volume inaugurating a dialogue between narrative theory and postcolonialist criticism).

Competition

Within the broader context of the several readers available on narrative theory and on postcolonialism, there are two books which most immediately speak to the area of interest and the market identified by this volume. They are *The Indian Postcolonial: A Critical Reader*, ed. Elleke Boehmer and Rosinka Chaudhuri (Routledge, 2011); and *Analyzing World Fiction: New Horizons in Narrative Theory*, ed. Frederick Luis Aldama (University of Texas Press, 2011). Between them, these two volumes trace the edges of the space our proposal aims to fill. *The Indian Postcolonial* effectively situates the literary and cultural specifics of the Indian subcontinent in a critical dialogue with contemporary postcolonial studies, but with little recognition of the contribution narrative theory can bring to this debate. *Analyzing World Fiction*, on the other hand, offers readings in applied (and often cognitive) narrative theory within the general field of postcolonialist and multicultural criticism, but as a very broadly conceived exercise in contextualist narratology, and without allowing much scope to the potential in this encounter for reciprocal insight into narrative theory itself.

CVs: attached.