

A Report on a Two day International Conference
on
Fourth World Literature & Culture

Organised by



Higher Education & Research Society

(An Educational Society under Govt.'s Registration of Society Act; Registration No.Maha/651/2013/Thane)

**NL6/5/13, Sector-10 Nerul,
Navi Mumbai-400706, Maharashtra (India)**

on
12th & 13th September 2014

Venue

**Government of Maharashtra's
Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex
Mahalunge-Balewadi, Pune, Maharashtra, India**

Dr.MadhaviNikam
Convenor

Dr.SudhirNikam
Organising Secretary

Report

Higher Education and Research Society, Navi Mumbai organized an *International Conference on 'Fourth World Literature and Culture'* from 12th to 13th September 2014 at Government of Maharashtra's Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex, Mhalunge-Balewadi, Pune, Maharashtra. This Conference registered an incredibly huge response of the delegates hailing from almost all states of India and from the several parts of the world. The number of participants went upto four hundred plus including both the pre-registered and the spot registrations. The participants included writers, renowned critics, research scholars, academics and students. The conference was international in a true sense and turned out to be a magnificent success.

Day # 1 (12/09/2014)

The conference began with registrations at 8 o'clock sharp at two separate counters for pre-registered participants and spot registrations which were facilitated for the people who could not register beforehand. The delegates were provided with eco-friendly kits containing a beautiful bag made up of hessian fabric, a pen, a notepad, and the schedules of the conference and paper presentations. After the process of registration, the delegates were served the breakfast.

Inaugural Function and Keynote Address

The inaugural function started at the scheduled time with the welcome remarks from the host. As part of Indian tradition, by lighting the lamp the conference was inaugurated at the auspicious hands of the Chief Guest, Prof. Jaydeepsinh Dodiya, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Saurashtra University, Rajkot and President of Indian Association for Canadian Studies, the Keynote Speaker, Prof John Thieme, Professor, School of Literature and Creative Writing, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, and Dr D. R. More, Principal of Shri Shahaji Chhatrapati Mahavidyalaya, Kolhapur who presided over the function. Dr Sudhir Nikam, President of Higher Education and Research Society and Dr Madhavi Nikam, Convenor of the conference felicitated the guests by presenting bouquets and mementos on this occasion. Among those who were present for the inaugural function were the eminent scholars, writers, critics, translators and academicians.

Dr Madhavi Nikam, the convenor of the conference, welcomed the guests and the delegates and made introductory remarks about the Society. She mentioned the purpose behind the establishment of the society and a need of such society in the field of education and research. She also mentioned the aims and objectives of the society as to give a platform to budding research aspirants and young teachers. However, the research cannot be only thing in the society, but has to be coupled with Education and a lot of other considerations such as environmental awareness. The Society aims to be

the leading international organisation in the field as to both the support and the dissemination of research and education. It commits sustainable development and focuses on the solutions to the spread of scientific attitude in academicians and citizens, practical and solution based approach to the higher education in general, introduction of applied education, social inequality, awareness of literature and language, climate change and many more.

Further she added that the Society intends to play a role of catalyst to enable researchers in different regions and disciplines to exchange information, share discussions on professional and theoretical issues, and initiate and co-ordinate research. Purely committed to the cause of academics in a 'top-down pattern', the prime goal of the society is to encourage and foster research by providing a platform to showcase the innate research aptitude of the academician. Promoting academic research and scholarship into Language and Literature, Humanities, Basic Sciences, Technology and Management streams, the society is determined to bring about a scholarly get-together of the intellectuals. At last Dr Madhavi Nikam candidly admitted the fact that the great response in the first International conference inspired them to conduct this Conference. She congratulated the delegates and wished them the best.

While talking about the conference, at the very beginning Dr Sudhir Nikam affirmed that they really felt amazed and grateful for the tremendous response they received for this conference. At the same time he stated that there was a profound feeling in them for the fourth world which also motivated them to hold this international conference. They deliberately chose this theme of '*Fourth World Literature and Culture*' with an aim to deliberate upon the state policies and human endeavours to bridge the digital divide between the Fourth World and rest of the globe. The conference could rationalize reality of the ongoing marginalization of the Fourth World Nations by the imperial power under the banner of 'modernization', 'progress' and 'development'. It intends to initiate the investigation that accounts for both the process of integration on global scale and the process of self-identification on the local indigenous level. The distinct literary representation of the indigenous people is quite rare. Rather, it becomes their appropriation in the fold of mainstream culture eliminating their uniqueness. The conference not only encourages but makes a strong plea for voicing the silenced ethnic marginal. The Mainstream writers' literary representation of these ethnic minority groups often tends to be a romanticization, objectification or mere stereotyping. Hence there is an urgent need of a separate niche of the Fourth World Literature to be carved on the Literary Canon. Similarly he further added that it has become essential to free the marginalized cultural war prisoners through their literature.

Prof John Thieme delivered his Keynote Address to the scholarly gathering of the delegates on *'Text and Testimonio: Cosmopolitanism and the Fourth World'*. In his address he touched upon several delicate issues relating to the Fourth World. The fourth world literature deals with fourth world communities and their experiences in the first place. The fourth world is neither domestic nor local but is a global issue. It began with the writings of native Canadian writers representing their experience of the native fourth world in the 1960s and 70s. Prof Thieme also defined and distinguished the three terms-the first world, the second world and the third world-in relation to the fourth world. The third world is a blanket term applied to the voices which may or may not have been heard through literature. However the fourth world specifically refers to those citizens who have been excluded from the mainstream in any manner. So the term 'fourth world' was used to refer to only the indigenous people in the 1970s. In addition, he shed some light on the Indian condition as far the fourth world is concerned. In India tribal groupings and the people who are socially excluded from the global consumerist world and deprived of political power belong to the fourth world. He made references to the novel, *In An Antique Land* by Amitav Ghosh and to the stories, *'The One About Coyote Going West'* and *'This Is a Story'*. Furthermore he also read his own poem, *'The Slaughter'* to illustrate his point. Prof Thieme concluded his address by thanking Dr Sudhir and MadhaviNikam for giving him an opportunity to be part of this International Conference.

Prof. Jaydeepsinh Dodiya as Chief Guest of the function spoke on this occasion. At the very beginning he congratulated Dr Sudhir and MadhaviNikam for organizing this conference in order to make some platform available to the budding research scholars and academics. Similarly he appreciated the organizers for their efforts to do whatever was possible to make this conference a grand success. He stressed the need to bring the fourth world literature in focus and this conference, he asserted, was an outstanding effort in this direction and would be the first of its own kind.

In his Presidential speech, Prin. Dr D. R. More acknowledged that the fourth world was there long back but the mainstream of our society kept it oppressed for centuries together. The fourth world literature is about those people who have been marginalized on the grounds of race, caste, religion, tribal nature. To elaborate his point, he provided the best illustration in the Indian context of the novel, *Untouchability* by Mulk Raj Anand. He made concluding remarks by thanking the organizers and congratulating the delegates for participating in this event.

The inauguration ended with Mr Santosh Rade expressing the vote of thanks for the guests and delegates on behalf of the Society.

Plenary Session # 1

In the first plenary session, Dr Chetan Deshmane, Associate Professor, PG and Research Centre, HPT College, Nashik delivered a talk on *Conceptual Framework of the Fourth World*. In his talk he traced the history of the fourth world and fourth world literature. He tried to define the terms, first, second, third and fourth world. He averred that the fourth world literature belongs to the marginalized and the marginalization was a deliberate process from the first world as well as the third world mainstream people. Dr Ratan Bhattacharjee, Chairperson, PG Department of English, Dum Dum Motijheel College, Kolkata chaired this session and made his observations on Dr Deshmane's talk.

Plenary Session # 2

Dr Vijay Sheshadri, Professor of English, University of Mysore, spoke in the plenary session on *Re/locating the Cultural Space of the Myasabedas*. Considering the gravity of the area of translation, he affirmed that translation enables a culture to be introduced into a new geographical and psychic space avoiding effacement of a culture, reflecting the hegemonic relationship between the two cultures. He suggested that fourth world people should put into practice the term, 'first nation literature' rather than fourth world literature. This first nation literature should reach all people as it appears to be social salvation for them. Having chaired this session, Dr Dnyanesh Naik, Chairperson of Board of Studies in English, RTM Nagpur University, reviewed it and noted that the points regarding translation made by Dr Sheshadri were very insightful and self-explanatory.

These two sessions were followed by lunch.

Paper Presentations

Since more than 360 papers were received for the conference, parallel paper presentations were conducted in order that every paper presenter would get an opportunity to make a presentation. The organizing Society made arrangements for these parallel sessions at Dnyansagar Institute of Management & Research, Pune, which were conducted from 2.30 pm to 7 pm on the first day of the conference. Several experts coming from across the country for the conference chaired these sessions.

Day # 2 (12/09/2014)

Open Discussion

After breakfast, the second day of the conference began with open discussion wherein participants and delegates expressed their views and opinion concerning the fourth world literature and culture. In the open discussion issues regarding race, culture, language, caste, religion, gender, aboriginals, dalit literature and tribes sprang up and participants expressed, affirmed, supported and refuted various spontaneous reactions in respect of these aspects of the fourth world. Dr Nidhi Shrivastava and Dr Rimika Singhvi chaired and refereed this open discussion. Mr Pandurang Barkale coordinated the Open Discussion Session.

Plenary Session # 3

Dr Sharad Srivastava, Professor and Head, Department of English, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur was the speaker of the third plenary session. He delivered his discourse on *Gender and Transgender: Some Issues* in which he traced the history of the term, 'transgender' and how the transgender are being accepted by the mainstream society. He also stated many countries across the globe have been forced to pass legislations granting them status at par with ordinary citizens and literature is no exception as a site of expressions. The community of transgender is very much a part of the first, second and the third world geographically. So his paper dwelled on the ideas of inclusion and assimilation covered under the term transgender. Dr Jagdish Joshi, Director, UGC-Academic Staff College, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad chaired the session and made his observations on this paper to the audience.

Plenary Session # 4

Outline: Conceptual Reflection of the Fourth World Literature and Culture was the issue of the fourth session narrated and deliberated on by Dr Neerja Gupta, Principal, Bhavan's Arts and Commerce College, Ahmedabad. At the outset she differentiated the term 'Fourth world' with the *First, Second* and *Third* worlds. She asserted that the *Fourth world* relates to those who have an ethnic identity even within first, second and third world. The ethnicity is not necessarily is that of the subject only. Any cultural issue starting from language, clothing, thought, race, rituals, religion, caste, gender, economic condition, social status, or politically ignored identities like Tribes and Red Indians may be the keepers of this definition. Themes of Ethos, Spirituality, Marriage and Gender Equations, Politics rule high in these writings. The fourth world writers have established an identity in style, culture and linguistic experimentation, through their works. The tradition is characterized by linguistic innovation which can be classified under the seven categories: Loan words, coinages, loan-blends, translation equivalents, semantic extension, and colloquialisms. Dr Arjun Jadhav, Associate Professor, PG Department of English, Fergusson College, Pune chaired this session

and reviewed this paper by offering some interesting remarks. This session was followed by a lunch break.

Valedictory Function

The conference reached its culminating point of valediction after thought provoking papers, presentations and considerably insightful discussion about its topic. Dr Abdullah Kadir Ayinde, Head, Department of English, Yobe State University, Damaturu, Nigeria was the Chief Guest whereas Dr G Thirupathi Kumar, Professor, Department of English Literature, EFLU, Hyderabad was the Valedictory Speaker for the function. Dr A P Khairnar, Chairperson of Board of Studies in English, North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon presided over the function. Prof John Thieme, Professor, University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK and Shri Ganpatraon Balwadkar, President, Khanderao Pratishtan, Pune also remained present for the function. Dr Uttam Patil who was coordinating the valedictory introduced the guests and the keynote speaker.

In his Valedictory Address Prof G Thirupathi Kumar took the overview of the fourth world literature from the Indian point of view and made references to *Kantapura* by Raja Rao. As Dr Abdullah Kadir Ayinde narrated his experience about how he could make it to the conference and enjoyed being with scholars from several parts of the world in the conference. Prof John Thieme also expressed his views about the conference and thanked Dr Sudhir and Madhavi Nikam for inviting him. Among some delegates from the gathering of the participants who spoke and shared their experience about the conference was Prin A N Mali, Former Professor of North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon. He remarked that the delegates would go away with golden memories of such a wonderful conference. Thereafter Dr. Sudhir Nikam, the Organizing Secretary, welcomed the delegates to valedictory function and presented the Seminar Report.

The valedictory function of the conference also witnessed the conferring of Dr Nandkumar Lavande Academic Excellence Award 2014 on Prof Jaydeepsingh Dodiya. Dr. Madhvi Nikam, the Secretary of the Society, spoke about the purpose of initiating this award and it's being conferred upon Prof Dodiya who is Dean, Faculty of Arts, Surashtra University, Rajkot and the President of Indian Association for Canadian Studies. She stated that Prof. Dodiya is a well-known powerful critic and an inspiration for the generations of research scholars. He has written several books of highest merit on Indian authors writing in English and played a crucial role in taking Indian English literature at the International level. She further added that in the way of this award, the Higher Education and Research Society acknowledges the contribution of Prof. Dodiya.

Thereafter, the Awards for best research papers published in different issues of international journals *Contemporary Discourse* and *Literary Insight* were conferred upon the contributors. At the end Dr.Madhvi Nikam on behalf of the Society expressed the vote of thanks for all the guests, delegates and for those who directly or indirectly contributed to the success of this conference.The conference came to an end with the national anthem.

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