

EDITORIAL

Not just the scientific mind, but the literary mind too yearns for harmony – an equipoised state of being – peaceful state where the author and the reader become one. True to the concept note of the current edition of *Ad Litteram Journal*, we bring forth a highly researched and nuanced collection of articles, book review(s) and poetry which promises to engage and widen the scope of the concept note i.e. “*Gospel of Equipoise: Searching Threads of Harmony*”. The theme of the research articles in the present volume promises to engage with and also problematize the concept-note even further with new insights.

Mr. Ravi Prakash Chaubey's essay 'Cognition of Religious and Cultural values in Barbara Stoler Miller's translation of *Abhijnanshakuntalam*', poses light on the world of translation - a field in literary studies which has gained much coinage recently. Analysing the much acclaimed Barbara Stoler Miller's translation of *Abhijnanshakuntalam*, the author tries to delineate the harmony and stability which is every translator's objective. The author of the essay describes whether this harmonious equilibrium is achieved in the translated text originally written in classical Sanskrit, or not.

Dr. Pradeep Kumar Srivastva in his essay, 'Credence of the East-West Spiritual Promulgation in the Lyrics of Emily Dickinson and Sarojini Naidu', attempts to corroborate the similarity between the East and the West through the poetry of two widely different yet similar poets. Dickinson was an American 18th-century poet and Naidu was an Indian poet and activist, who lived in the 20th-century, yet the manner in which they wrote brings to the fore issues of harmony. The author of the essay has attempted to trace the same through an in-depth analysis of the poems by the two poets.

Dr. Munir takes the much-debated field of feminist studies and feminist theory by studying Elaine Showalter and her gynocentric-feminist criticism to make sense of feminist theory. The essay tries to incite the theoretical storm in which feminist criticism finds itself in and attempts to provide a ground of balance and equilibrium through a gynocritic lens, in the much debated and much challenging field of feminist studies. This is attempted by reading multiple texts by Showalter such as *A Literature of Their Own* and *Criticism of Our Own*, and several other landmark texts by the acclaimed gynocritic.

Dr. Santosh Kumar analyses Asif Currimbhoy's play *Inquilab*. The play smacks of a Marxist approach to bring about a socialist society which is classless and egalitarian. But is the playwright and his ideology able to achieve the balance and stability that Marxist criticism strives for? Is this post-independence Indian English drama able to accomplish the balance of two of the most fundamental and characteristic forces in history, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie? The paper by Kumar is an attempt to enquire these two interrogations.

Harmony is achieved when a state of conflict culminates in concord and a state of equilibrium. From the vantage point of philosophy (both Indian and Western), as well as from the point of religion, Dr. Panchali Mukherjee, in her essay 'Breaking of a Wall as a Symbol of Discord Leading to Concord', tries to trace the attainment of harmony through the use of 'Wall' as a metaphor of the threshold beyond which discord finally leads to concord and harmony. To reach this conclusion, the author has not only analysed several landmark poems in world literature but also interrogated major world religions to find how this attainment of harmony works by demolishing and bringing down the several metaphorical 'Walls' beyond which lies peace, harmony and concord.

Lord of the Flies (1954) by William Golding is a piece of dystopic fiction which uses allegory, realism, fantasy and abstract ideas by the noble prize-winning author. The novel has a wide gamut of themes and ideas like rationality and emotional reactions, savagery and civilised behaviour, morality and immorality, old and the new, superficial and the deep. The novel is replete with such themes. Through a textual and critical reading of the novel, Dr. Vivekanand Rao, in the essay ‘*Lord of the Flies* as a Quest for Harmony’, has tried to highlight the harmony that exists between such diametrically opposite phenomena and entities. The novel ends on an unending note, with the quest for harmony still on.

Ms. Santosh Kumar Shekhawat in the essay, ‘Modern Maladies – The Folk Remedies’, attempts to sketch the various folktales and their prevalence in certain parts of India, predominantly from Rajasthan. These folk tales are instrumental in bringing about a sense of belongingness and harmony in tandem with nature and human civilisations. Various literary and folk forms are analysed in this essay, which adds a new dimension in the search for harmony in such societies, through an anthropological and literary reading of the same.

Not just religious minded men, but philosophers, acclaimed scientists, literary high-brows, great figures of history and leaders of peace have always found a state of oneness and balance in *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*. The *Gita* is much revered amongst the Hindus and is hailed as one of the most defining pieces of literature to attain oneness and equilibrium in today's fast paced world. The ultimate search for harmony can be found in the *Gita*. Through a historical, linguistic, religious and philosophical vantage point, Dr. Divya Gupta's essay ‘*Shrimad Bhagavad Gita: Source of Eternal Peace*’, tries to simplify the search for the threads of harmony, as manifested in the concept note of the journal.

The journal also consists of a book review by Dr. Nalini Gandhi Kapoor. The reviewer attempts to review *Aastik - Story of a Juvenile Mind and Divinity of Destiny* by Anubhav Sharma. True to the theme of the current edition of *Ad Litteram*, the protagonist of the novel is also in search for harmony in his life to recognise himself. The reviewer has lucidly explained the book through a balanced review which is true to the nature and theme of the novel.

The current edition of *Ad Litteram* also includes Purbasa Banarjee's highly evocative poem, ‘Threads of Equipoise’. It is a brilliantly crafted poem that vividly captures the sense of equipoise, equilibrium and quest for balance of forces that one yearns for in this post-truth era. Like any finely written piece of poetry, this poem engages the readers with multiple interpretations. The melancholic tone, intensity of feeling and the lyrical quality of the poem reminds us of a Percy Bysshe Shelley and the characteristic Shelleyan verse.

Hence, all the scholarly articles, poems and reviews in this edition of *Ad Litteram* is an attempt to put the concept note of the journal in perspective and aims to achieve new ideas, thoughts, and streams of knowledge in the desired area. The papers published in the volume are well-researched by experts in their own respective fields and attempts to provide new avenues in not just a historical and literary but also a philosophical sense. The contents of the journal are but sincere efforts on the part of the scholars in that direction.