CROSSING BOUNDARIES

Musings on Language, Literature and Culture

Edited by Md. Mahmudul Hasan

IIUM Press
Crossing Boundaries
Musings on Language, Literature and Culture

Edited By
Md. Mahmudul Hasan

Department of English Language and Literature
International Islamic University Malaysia

IIUM Press
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA
Acknowledgements 03

01 Introduction: Crossing Boundaries and Celebrating Diversity
    Md. Mahmudul Hasan 09

02 The Almost Enforced Mingling of Cultures: Anthony Burgess’ Depiction of Races and Race-Relations in Pre-Independence Malaya
    Ghulam-Sarwar Yousaf 17

03 Quest for Spiritual Guidance and Illumination in Namangi’s Imfiri and Kemala’s Ayn
    Umar Abdurrahman 31

04. Awareness of Gender-sensitive Expressions in the Print Media: A Study of Malaysian English Dailies
    Haja Mohideen Bin Mohamed Ali 47

05 A Malay-English Cross-linguistic Study of Present Time Forms
    Makanah Mohammad Loffie 53

06 Mirza Ghalib as a Mystical Poet: Introducing Two Urdu Ghazals
    Ghulam-Sarwar Yousaf 61

07 “Narrating 1Malaysia”: Nationalism in Malaysian Literature in English
    Aimiilia Mohd Ramli 73

08 On membership of the class of articles in English
    Ridwan Wahid 83

09 “Why Poetry?” Why Not: Relevant-sing Poetry at IIUM
    Nur Sheena Baharudin 97

Afterword 113

Notes on Contributors 115
CHAPTER 1
Introduction: Crossing Boundaries and Celebrating Diversity

Md. Mahmudul Hasan
International Islamic University Malaysia

In Crisis in Muslim Education, Syed Sajjad Husain and Syed Ali Ashraf (1979) state that human history "is replete with examples of social change, technological improvement and deliberate or involuntary transformation. From time immemorial the instruments of civilization have been improved and hence its social organization has become more and more complex" (p. 8). Extrinsic and extraneous changes in human society with the variations in time and space are obvious, and this sometimes results in external behavioral changes in people's life. However, although inner feelings and abilities and external behaviors at times overlap and are closely related to each other, there are some fundamental elements of human nature which never undergo any change with the alteration in social situations. The human spirit of various historical periods and spatiotemporal locations has remained unchanged and will never be changed. In this regard, Husain and Ashraf (1979) refer to the inherent, perennial human ability to appreciate "the drawings of cave-men or the epics of Homer, Firdausi and Valkini" and argue: "Had man's nature been changed by nurture, had social organization been able to transform the basic nature of man, it would have been impossible for a modern man to appreciate Shakespeare or the Noh plays of Japan" (p. 8).

Literature deals with our individual and collective selves, experiences and preoccupations, and thus creates a beautiful and harmonious whole of human knowledge. It talks about truth and falsehood, love and hatred, mercy and cruelty, justice and injustice, beauty and ugliness, compassion and indifference and all other fundamental human passions. Our admiration and support for one group of these passions is instinctive, while the contrary passions invariably evoke our spontaneous censure and disapproval. We may encounter language barriers to understand literary pieces from other cultures, but once that obstacle is overcome and removed, poets and writers become our common friends and our shared story tellers and are celebrated across various cultural communities.

This shared experience of humanity is perhaps because of our common origin. As the Qur'an states, despite all our apparent and superficial differences, we have come from the same parenthood: "O people! be mindful of (your duty to) your Lord Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind) and spread from these two, many men and women [...]" (4:1). "And humankind is nothing but a single community [...]" (10: 19). So we all belong to one human family and all our stories are essentially of similar nature.

Failure to appreciate this essential commonality and excessive emphasis on differences have caused the human race many troubles and calamities. Many wars and devastations and exploitations of fellow human beings have been driven by this