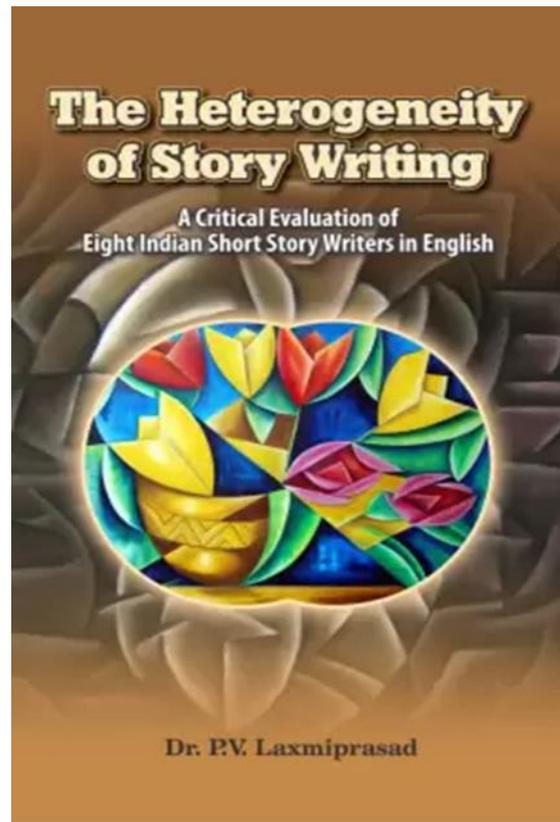


***The Heterogeneity of Story Writing* Edited by P. V. Laxmiprasad Published by Authors Press, New Delhi, ISBN: 978-9352070381 2015, 469 pp, Price Rs. 1900/-**

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*The Heterogeneity of Story Writing* is a Herculean venture undertaken by none other than the literary stalwart adorning the English literary firmament- Dr. P.V. Laxmi Prasad, a prolific writer, an academician and a researcher from Karimnagar, Telangana who has written with superb ease on almost all the genres of literature. With a rich haul of more than 300 publications in different journals he has enriched the glory and image of Indian English literature. The title of this excellent book may sound mind boggling to many, but it certainly speaks volumes about its significant contents. This extra ordinary long needed book has seen the light of the day owing to the tremendous zeal of its author. Having done



an extensive research and creative endeavour in the field of modern story writing in English, its various themes, and styles he has accomplished an uphill task of bringing this Herculean project to fruition. Suffice to say that this remarkable book will serve as a beacon to all the teachers, students and aspirants of story writing floating aimlessly in the unknown waters. Apart from that it will be very handy as a ready reference.

*The Heterogeneity of Story Writing* is a critical evaluation of Eight Modern Indian short story writers in English. There are 46 papers by 32 critics whose sustained interest and cooperation resulted in the production of this book. It is truly heterogenic in themes and settings and typically Indian in different flavours. The writers included in this book are- P. Raja, Nalini Sharma, Basavraj Naikar, P.C.K. Prem, Rita Nath Keshari, Pronab Kumar Majumdar, Anil K.

Sharma and Aju Mukhopadyay who have proved that Indian story writers are remarkably creative at improvisation in style and making. They have emerged as the brand ambassadors of Indian tradition, culture and modernity. There are ten articles on the stories of P. Raja, nine on Nalini Sharma, seven on Anil Sharma, five articles on Basavraj Naikar, five articles on P.C.K. Prem, four articles on Rita Nath Keshari, four articles on Pronab Kumar Majumadar and two articles on the stories of Aju Mukhopadhyay.

Their works evaluated are – P. Raja- *My father's Bicycle*, Kozhi Grandpa's *Chicken*, *The Blood and other Stories*, *The Black Bitch and other Stories*, Nalini Sharma- *The Unwed Mother*, Miscellaneous stories [Published stories in Mgazines], Basavraj Naikar- *The Golden Servant and other stories*, *The Thief of Nagarahalli and other Stories*. P.C.K. Prem- *Shadows at Dawn*, *A Singling Bag and other Stories* Rita Nath Kesari- *The Transplanted Wife* Pronab Kumar Majumdar- *Bouquet of Stories*, *Stories Today* Anil K. Sharma- *Candid Confessions* Aju Mukhopadhyay- *The Moments of Life*.

Though they all deal with Indian themes but it is quite interesting to note that they are quite different from each other in the choice of their subjects and have their own distinct style of writing and approach in dealing with various topics. The book is quite voluminous – a result of long sustained effort. The most prominent feature of this book is that the writer has done extensive research on the stories of these eight short story writers and brought them all together on the same platform.

In India, storytelling has its roots in the remote past often used as a means to teach some moral. But with the passage of time it has undergone tremendous change. Now moral teaching has taken a back seat. It is not the be-all and end-all of the stories. It is for the readers to draw message by using their own imaginative power. A story writer cannot ignore the prevailing political condition and upheavals, social customs, beliefs and prejudices that affect human life. The complicated world of human nature, behaviour and relationships are the basis of all the stories of these eight short story writers. Every piece of fiction presents a view of life. Skillful portrayal of characters taken from different walks of life – their lives, day to day problems, happenings, manners of dealing or adjusting with them have gone in the making of their stories.

I perceive a very thin line of demarcation between fact and fiction. Facts are often found to be stranger than the fiction. Unimaginable unbelievable mind-boggling facts often shock us. Where angel of imagination fears to tread horrendous facts gleefully wallows and spring surprises at the unsuspecting humanity. Moreover, a writer's imagination cannot run unbridled

wild because it is conditioned by his upbringing and the moral values instilled in his mind by his parents, teachers, relations and above all imbibed by him through the environment. The plots for stories abound in real life with unexpected twists and turns. These eight fiction writers have their own way of perceiving things and have used their own imaginative power to create a world of characters and emotive happenings revolving round the plots.

It is believed that man is the architect of his own life. But it doesn't happen always. Man proposes and God disposes. Circumstances control his destiny. There are many factors that are beyond his control. Nature, social and political forces command his life. He may strive hard to achieve something, but fruit is denied to him. Under the impact of nature's fury, in a fraction of a second his dream castle collapses like a pack of cards that he builds with his lifetime savings. He is a mere puppet in the hands of fate. More or less all the story writers have interwoven all these factors predominating human life.

This book by Dr. P.V. Laxmiprasad is a rare tribute to these eight short story writers to show to the literary world that they too are true devotees of the Muse and are capable of accomplishing the remarkable feat of capturing the incidents and characters in varying moods and emotions so meticulously. These story writers have proved that they are not less than the old trend-setters in any way in the field of story writing. I congratulate Dr. P. V. Laxmi Prasad who has highlighted the works of these eight story writers who have secured an enviable place in this book coveted by many. These short story writers must celebrate that they have been proffered on a platter – a rare platform to come into limelight that hardly comes in one's life. Many a flowers bloom unseen! Credit goes to the learned critics for without their dedication this impossible task would not have been possible. They have slogged hard to study and evaluate the works of these story writers figured in this book.

Now it is the bounden duty of story lovers to light other lamps from the candle that Dr. P.V. Laxmiprasad has lit. To achieve this all, have to strive hard to get this book prescribed at graduate and postgraduate syllabi in all the universities. I take my hat off to the writer of this treasure trove for his unique idea of highlighting the present day 8 Indian story writers. Kudos for his tremendous achievements in this regard. No mean feat indeed! This outstanding book contains 469 pages.

A must for every college library this treasure trove of knowledge should be preserved with utmost care for the posterity. Keeping in mind its immense educative value and utility this priceless book has been reasonably priced which is quite affordable.

Belated is my response but not without justified reason. This precious book is not meant for a quick cursory glance. One has to dive deep into the ocean of words in search of pearls of wisdom. The glass of nectar needs not be emptied at a gulp but enjoyed sip by sip at leisure.

To pay tribute to this book it will be apt to quote the words of Bacon, “Some books are to be chewed and digested”.