

SERIES ON LITERATURE & SOCIETY

July-November 2004

Synopsis

Literature is one of the best vehicles for expressing and documenting human styles of thinking, emotions, values and actions. From literature we could uncover human frailties and strengths, his prejudices and altruisms, his benevolence and aggression, his perfection and perversion, and the like. Reading literature is an engagement *with* and *for* life.

Though it may be cliché to say that literature should never be associated alone with aesthetic appreciation and refinement, it is nevertheless the dominant approach of reading. To avoid such regression of literacy, it would be commendable if we could engage a reading to understand and confront all sorts of authorities and ideologies as found *within* and *without* the texts.

Reading literature certainly promises the pleasures of comprehending human intricacies and emotions. Reading literature can also help to build up our critical consciousness. It is from literature that we could understand the portrayal of man on his life. Through literary creation too (be it fictive, autobiographical or realism), we could imagine human perplexities and propensities towards production and destruction.

An appreciation of literature, informed substantively by perspectives of diagnostic social sciences and the will to question all forms of dogmatism, is an approach that deserves attention and development. Our will to read, is the will to understand and the will to act. Indeed, the celebration of reading, an act only *to* and *for* human, is only meaningful if it is also a celebration of reason and criticism *for* humanity.

Topics Presented

- **Ambivalence of National Identity in *Tagore & Yeats*' Poems**
by Nazry Bahrawi
- **'*Atheis*': Crisis of Traditionalism in Contemporary Society**
by Mohamed Imran Mohamed Taib
- ***Naipul's* Views of Muslim Societies**
by Nur Amali Ibrahim
- ***Idrus* and Humanism**
by Azhar Ibrahim Alwee
- **'*Gadis Pantai*': A Feminist Discourse**
by Azizah Zakaria

- **The Idea of Friendship in Hamka's '*Di Bawah Lindungan Ka'abah*'**
by Mohd. Rafiz Mohyi Hapipi
- **'*Robohnya Surau Kami*': A Discussion on the Role of Religion in Society**
by Mohamed Imran Mohamed Taib
- **'*Salah Pimpin*' & The Idea of Development Amongst the Malays**
by Syed Ad'ha Aljunied
- **The Issue of Poverty in '*Memburu Tahun Baru*'**
by Asmizar Abu