

“Plants have a will of their own”:

the construction of botanical metaphors and symbols in the literary garden of (postcolonial) India

Esterino Adami

This article offers a preliminary investigation of figurative, metaphorical and linguistic aspects of the garden in Indian English fiction. After providing a short introduction to the symbolism of gardens in the colonial and postcolonial periods, and to the image of the garden in Anglophone Indian literature, the focus will be on the novel *The Solitude of Emperors* by David Davidar (2007), in order to stress the relevance of both specific phytonyms and common names of plants as important linguistic, cultural and textual indicators employed to construct and convey meanings, often in the form of cognitive metaphors. In this light, the postcolonial garden emerges as a cultural site of hybridity and connection with the past. The examination is undertaken through an interdisciplinary approach that follows and adapts the theories and methods of postcolonial studies, stylistics and narratology (e.g. Kövecses 2002; Jeffries and McIntyre 2010; Sorlin 2014).

1. Introduction

In this article I aim to tease out the metaphorical and symbolic construction of the garden as a significant trope in the literary context of postcolonial India. Rather than merely serving a function of realist description or embellishment, gardens may work as important expressive devices to convey meaning in the development of the plot and thus they can generate particular stylistic effects in the reader's comprehension. In the English frame of mind, gardens and the world of plants and nature at large have always been considered as significant elements to mediate the relationship between nature and culture, civilisation and the environment, and this type of attitude has been extended from Britain (and somehow adapted) to other parts of the world, in particular during the colonial period. As a result, the colonial and postcolonial literary representations of gardens and plants display a plethora of symbols, images and values.

To investigate this type of imagery, I will focus on a specific case study concerning the narrative treatment of the botanical world in a recent Indian novel, *The Solitude of Emperors*, by David Davidar (2007), which chiefly deals with the theme of religious intolerance and its social repercussions, but which I will here mine to examine the impact of textual examples of English and Indian gardens, both at a micro and at a macro level, thus not only considering the phytonyms and their equivalent common names, but also the stylistic and meaning-making contribution they play within a discursive

perspective. Considering the complexity of the theme, the investigation will be undertaken through an interdisciplinary approach that follows and adapts the theories and methods of postcolonial studies, stylistics and narratology (e.g. Kövecses 2002; Jeffries and McIntyre 2010; Sorlin 2014). In order to understand how Davidar linguistically portrays and culturally connotes gardens and their symbols in his text, I will briefly provide some background information to the historical typologies of garden used across the Indian subcontinent, also considering the heritage to which they belong and the beliefs that they mirror.

2. Past and present gardens of India

Essentially it is possible to identify two main garden patterns used in the Indian subcontinent: one related to and celebrated by the Mughal tradition and another imported and implemented by the British colonisers, especially during the 19th century. The former is known with the Persian term *charbagh*, which refers to the convention of dividing quadrilateral gardens into four harmonious parts by means of walkways or flowing water, and whose origins date back to ancient times, probably to Achaemenid Persia. The concept of *charbagh* was close to the ‘paradise garden’ introduced in India by the Mughals, and examples of the *charbagh* style can be found in the imperial mausoleums and tombs built by the Mughal dynasty in various parts of northern India. These formal gardens were very popular before the advent of the Raj in the Delhi area, whose imperial palace included two luxuriant gardens, the Hayat Baksh (Life-giving) and Mahtab Bagh (Moonlit garden) (Krishen 2006, 27). Typically, *charbagh* gardens feature various arboreal species, such as fruit trees, which signify life, but exogenous plants too, such as Italian cypresses “planted for formal effect” (Krishen 2006, 163) and associated with death. The various plants also attract birds, which are regarded as another characteristic of this kind of garden.

Introduced during the colonial period, the English landscape garden, which tries to reproduce an idealised and romantic vision of nature, without formal flowerbeds or other elements, constitutes the other important variant of ornamental cultivated ground in India. Not only did it serve a decorative purpose but, more importantly, it had a cultural function in providing the English community with symbolic support, reminiscent of bonds with their mother country. As Roberts (1998, 115) affirms,

The desire to create an ‘English’ garden is the central theme of the gardening activities of the British in India. This was, in part, a response to the changing patterns of landscape and garden design at home, but the creation of an English garden was also important for

the psychological and physical survival of those living a temporary existence in an alien country and in a hostile climate.

In trying to reproduce large expanses of parkland, sometimes with fountains or ruins, the English garden is imaginatively constructed as a place of order, civilisation and relaxation, standing in diametrical opposition to the surrounding landscape of the colony, considered the realm of wilderness, contamination and degradation. In this sense, the English garden can be regarded as one of the many ideological tools of representation that underlie British expansionist policies across the subcontinent. In a critical prospective, Herbert (2011) elaborates the notion of ‘garden imperialism’ to designate the imposing attitude of the British colonisers not only in exporting their own plants, flowers and gardening styles, but also in building gardens as symbolic sites to encode values of the white man’s superiority, power and conquest, or in other words to tame, control and categorise any forms of diversity and alterity, including the often unknown tropical vegetation: gardens thus represented “a means of keeping the ‘other’ world at bay, of creating an oasis of Britishness in an alien if not a potentially hostile land” (Herbert 2011).

However, both Roberts (1998) and Herbert (2011) extensively document the birth of new types of garden in India during the Victorian period, in which different plants and styles are employed, with the result of hybrid compositions with both English and indigenous species. In Herbert’s (2011) words, “even colonials most intent on surrounding their bungalows with English gardens as a *cordon sanitaire* against the outside world acknowledged in the end that, realistically, they must include tropical plantings”. The implementation of ‘syncretic’ gardens, used for villas, bungalows or estates, constitutes another cultural product of the Anglo-Indian period, and juxtaposes the use of bamboo, mango, peepul, teak with water lilies, roses, marigolds, carnations, but it also presented decorative elements such as columns, statues, or ponds, often in a gothic design. This process of transformation was even applied to Mughal gardens and tombs, which after the 1857 Mutiny were craftily readapted for the British communities.

As a general premise, I argue that the gardens and plants of the subcontinent, considered as metaphorical indicators, are relevant from a linguistic and literary perspective (Adami 2011), as they are used by various authors in orchestrating narrative discourse. However, the symbols underlying the two types of garden mentioned above cannot be simply reduced to the binary opposition of precolonial and colonial periods, but rather they suggest a range of various factors at work that mirror a system of cultural references and values, in particular changing power relations and hybrid social positioning. In the novel here under consideration, only the English landscaped gardens are linguistically described, but the absence of the traditional Mughal gardens seems to refer not only to

a different geographical location (the south of the Indian subcontinent rather than the north of the country) but also to an interconnected new system of political and social agencies at play in the current postcolonial scenario as the outcome of a complex historical period, initially driven by domination and then reshaped by independence.

3. Garden imagery in *The Solitude of Emperors*

Davidar’s novel is frequently viewed as a textual denunciation of sectarian violence generated by communal episodes, with fierce riots striking the Hindu and Muslim (and other) communities of India, as well as a broader reflection on the construction of dialogue, secularism and respect against the backdrop of a culturally diverse country. Neelambaram (2013, 52) for example defines this work as “an argument that redeems an India ravaged by the extremities of religion”. The text follows the viewpoint of Vijay, a journalist from Tamil Nadu, who is sent to the Nilgiri Mountains to report on some cases of religious fanaticism. The autodiegetic narrator, namely, with the first-person narrating protagonist (Wales 1995: 124), is temporally located twelve years after the events described, with the character now settled and living in Canada. However, in this article I shall concentrate on the rich symbolic depiction of gardens and plants elaborated by the author, who holds a B.Sc. degree in Botany from Madras Christian College and thus extensively knows the world of nature, as rhetorical devices to enhance the progress of the story and its inner discourses.

The entire text in fact is particularly rich in botanical references, expressed as either specific phytonyms or common names, and they often function as metaphorical vehicles for conveying and structuring meaning. Botanical elements abound throughout the novel, in descriptive parts or in the characters’ dialogues, but sometimes they even resonate in tandem with locative expressions: for example, when Vijay moves to Meham, a town famous for its tea plantations (typically called ‘tea gardens’ in the local register), he is lodged at an old colonial estate, previously known as the Englishman’s House and now renamed Cypress Manor. Through the textual practice of evocative naming, readers construct the garden schemas of this place, imagined as a kind of colonial bungalow, of which of course the garden is a significant constituent:

I am an urban creature through and through, without the least bit of interest in gardens and nature, but even my jaded city eye was momentarily diverted by the beauty that was laid out before me. About half of the garden was given over to flower beds, and the rest was planted with fruit trees. A line of poinsettia bushes, exuberantly coloured, marked the farthest boundary. Paths of beaten red earth laced the garden, and I took one of them. I recognized a few of the flowers – roses of pink and gold, thrusting their petals

out for inspection, a blaze of yellow marigolds near the garage, hibiscus bushes lining the driveway, and a multitude of other plants and blooms, each individual leaf, petal and sepal distinct and perfect in the relentless clarity of the light. As I walked among the flower beds, my eye was caught by a row of short stumpy shrubs slathered with flowers in arresting colours. They looked like the cheap gaudy earrings a common whore would wear, but despite their seeming tawdriness, they were quite extraordinary to behold. I wondered what they were called and looked around to see if there was a gardener I could ask. (Davidar 2007, 79-80)

This quotation operates in a double fashion: on the one hand it exhibits lexical items drawn from the specialised vocabulary of botany, and on the other it activates foregrounding resources. Various botanical lexemes are here employed, for example the technical term ‘poinsettia’, which indicates a type of Christmas rose or Christmas star (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) along with other more generic words like roses, marigolds and hibiscus, or bush and shrub. But it can also be argued that a process of chromatic metaphorisation is applied to the plants via the use of adverbs (exuberantly) or nouns (blaze), or suggestive phrases constructed as similes by which the showy flowers are compared with insignificant but untamed prostitutes. Here, and in many other parts of the text, botanical references testify to the author’s genuine interest in this specific domain, but they also have a rhetorical function, since gardens and plants are peculiarly associated with Noah and the Brigadier, two important characters in the story that convey different, nearly opposite viewpoints and values.

In his exploration of the area, the protagonist meets an outlandish and enigmatic figure: Noah, a well-educated and bizarre man, who detaches himself from society and looks after a garden that surrounds an old cemetery. In praising his garden as the most beautiful all over the region, Noah quotes some lines by the nature poet Alberto Caeiro, in reality one of the many heteronyms invented by Fernando Pessoa, “Poor flowers in the flower beds of manicured gardens, they look like they’re afraid of the police” (p. 102). What emerges from these verses is a metaphorical vision of freedom and independence against restriction and subjugation: the flowers cultivated by men are in some sense artificial, unreal and eventually fearful, since they are totally controlled or modelled by someone powerful (here cryptically identified as ‘the police’). They are radically dissimilar from those that grow spontaneously, and hence Noah’s decision to adopt a different guiding paradigm for his garden to “grow wild” (p. 102), with a sort of return to the natural environment.

This type of attitude is linguistically rendered through processes of personification (Wales 1995, 349) by which the conceptualisation of plants is recast in a vision of bio-sphere that reconsiders the elements of the world as well as the relations between humanity and nature. Commenting on his garden, which he does not hesitate to define as the finest in the entire region, Noah affirms:

The thing is, you can't simply follow a gardening manual or copy what someone else is doing. Plants have a will of their own, you've got to understand each one of them, empathise with them, know when to coax them, when to be stern, when to be patient [...]. You just can't blunder in and hope for the best, but if you get it right, the results can be astonishing. (Davidar 2007, 103)

A striking feature that stands out from this passage concerns the emphasis laid on the use of cognition or willingness-related items, which somehow mirror or bring to the fore the workings of the mind in considering and reinterpreting the world of plants. Modal nouns like 'will', cognitive process verbs like 'understand, empathise, coax, hope' or evaluative adjectives like 'stern, patient' pertain to mental elaborations or states, and linguistically they tend to collocate with human references or agents (Jeffries 2010), whilst it is quite rare to find them used in connection with vegetation. Here, in a defamiliarising manner, they relate to the plants looked after by Noah, and therefore they seem to suggest an alternative 'eco-friendly' approach to life and the world. In a parallel fashion, they might also carry a sense of plurality, of freedom, of independence, because a rigid, formal type of cultivation and gardening can metaphorically be associated with the action of suffocating, taming and colonising subjects, and so it thematically links with the novel's discussion of religious intolerance, fundamentalism and sectarianism.

4. Plants and cognitive metaphors

It is worth remarking that metaphors and figurative language do not simply constitute textual decoration for the general lexical or euphonic embellishment of the narrative, but rather they deeply reflect the inner discursal organisation and the articulation of meaning, in particular in the case of conceptual metaphors, namely those “cognitive structures that underpin our metaphorical use of language” (Jeffries and McIntyre 2010, 139), or in other words those rooted linguistic expressions that we employ to describe or verbalise complex, abstract notions starting from more direct, bodily or sensorial experiences. In this light, the paradigms governing the extract cited above can be regarded as examples of cognitive metaphors, for instance shaped as *PEOPLE ARE PLANTS* or *THE WORLD IS A GARDEN*, in which a network of systematic correspondences, technically defined as mappings, connect the target domain (respectively, *PEOPLE* and *THE WORLD*) with the source domain (respectively, *PLANTS* and *A GARDEN*) to speculate on and emphasise possible analogies. Cognitive metaphors constitute mental schemas used to interpret reality, and for Sorlin (2014, 193) “c'est-à-dire des représentations mentales de relations basiques, permettant de rendre le monde environnant cohérent”.

In the metaphor, the botanical diversity is compared with the heterogeneous composition of human civilisation, and this frames the character's viewpoint as to the parallelism of the sensitivity and delicacy of gardens and plants along with the contradictory complexities and negotiations of human relationships. Kövecses (2002) underscores the figurative potentiality of the botanical field and holds that “in our metaphorical use, we distinguish various parts of plants; we are aware of the many actions we perform in relation to plants; and we recognize the many different stages of growth that plants go through” (2002: 17). Linguistic evidence for this includes phrases and expressions such as ‘budding beauty’, ‘to cultivate a friendship’, ‘a friendship in full flower’, ‘their relation blossomed’, ‘the fruit of our love’ and so forth. With regard to the cognitive metaphors PEOPLE ARE PLANTS and THE WORLD IS A GARDEN, a range of various mappings can unfold in order to link the target and the domain components of this type of structure:

The whole society	→	The entire plant
A part of society	→	A part of the plant
Growth of society	→	Growth of the plant
The system of society	→	The system of the plant
The best phase of society	→	The flowering
Dealing with members of society	→	Cultivating/looking after plants

Botanical references, including gardening, can serve as an important source domain for these metaphorical realisations, and Kövecses (2002) convincingly develops this argument by putting forward specific illustrations of the subtype ABSTRACT COMPLEX SYSTEMS ARE PLANTS (2002: 133-134).

In the novel, the other significant character associated with the world of plants is N.P. Sharma, a retired brigadier with a penchant for flowers and head of the Fuchsia Club of Meham. An anglophile widower who lives in a colonial bungalow furnished with “the stuffed heads of tiger, gaur, sambhar and leopard” (p. 170), the old man may to a certain extent play the role of the Anglo-Indian landlord, that rare, now extinguishing and anachronistic figure who nostalgically remembers the Raj, according to the writer Shobhaa Dé (2008, 155). The man's attitude towards the botanical field is diametrically different from Noah's and reflects his rigid background: “the Brigadier had always been an obsessive man, but beneath his obsessiveness lay a methodical mind, which was why he had been such a good soldier and officer, and latterly a gardener” (p. 167). In this light, taking care of gardens and plants becomes a way of controlling, organising and disciplining nature, or in figurative terms a social action of manipulation and imposition of order. If the area of the Nilgiris and the town of

Meham are known for their tea plantations, locally called tea gardens, in reality the flower that passionately animates disputes and substantiates a kind of rivalry is the fuchsia (genus *Fuchsia*, family *Onagraceae*, with more than one hundred species), which is at the heart of the so-called ‘fuchsia wars’, as the local upper class tries in every possible manner, including illegal behaviour, to reach levels of excellence in their gardens. Noah, for example, defines a friend of his as “the only specialist flower thief I’ve ever heard of, a sort of cut-rate Kingdon-Ward without the scruples” (p. 104). Intertextually, his speech embeds a reference to Francis Kingdon-Ward (1885-1958), an English botanist and taxonomist who conducted research expeditions across Tibet, China, Assam and Burma. A particular species (*Rhododendron Rhododendron wardii* var. *puralbum*) is named after him and suggests the emergence of colonial naming procedures, including for flora and fauna, which reshaped non western territories and cultures in a deeply orientalist way.

Most of the members of the club pursue the aim of cultivating the “hottest fuchsia in all the Nilgiris, the Wally Yendell, to sprout in their gardens” (p. 173), but in reality this particular type of plant is present only in Noah’s cemetery garden. When Vijay sees the flower for the first time, his description is suggestively and stylistically rich:

The flower he was pointing to was extraordinarily striking, looking like an exotic dancer with her flounced skirts thrown back from long white legs. It had the same delicacy and blazing colour of the other fuchsias but where most of them had straight, elongated blooms, this one’s petals were flounced, crinkled and coloured a flagrant pink with flared white and pink sepals and a pure white tube. (Davidar 2007, 104)

In the extract, the narrator blends a range of stereotypical images and motifs, such as the beauty of the flower as representing the sensuality of a woman, and triggers a series of schemas by using specific textual practices such as evaluative or even hyperbolic terms (extraordinarily striking, pure white), unusual collocation (flagrant pink), specialised jargon with suggestive overtones (sepals, tube), lexical repetition and chromatic opposition (flagrant pink, pink sepals, white tube). All in all, these rhetorical resources, here and in many other parts of the novel as well, in a certain measure testify to the power of heteroglossia, an umbrella notion of Bakhtinian derivation that refers to “language’s ability to contain within it many voices, one’s own *and* other voices” (Allen 2000, 29, emphasis in the original).

It is interesting to notice that the brigadier’s relation with the botanical domain is, very often, not presented directly, but rather filtered through the focalisation of others, for example Vijay or even more Noah, who provide different linguistic descriptions of the old man’s bungalow and

gardens. With the former, the textual representation of the plants pursues aesthetic and descriptive aims, whilst with the latter botanical references are interwoven with social considerations, given the passion for gardening that many in the area feel and nurture. Vijay's depiction of the brigadier's house and surrounding fields is worth quoting at length:

For half a kilometre, I walked through forest, soaring eucalyptus and jacaranda trees and a mix of conifers and other species. There was birdsong, and once a small greyish-brown animal that stood about a foot high scurried into the undergrowth. The road crested a small rise, and abruptly the forest gave way to a smooth lawn that unrolled all the way down to the enormous bungalow that stood at the centre of the property. Brightly coloured flower beds encircled the house like a necklace, its clasp provided by two enormous monkey puzzle trees that grew in front of the building. Everywhere I looked vivid splashes of colour and imposing trees punctuated the green swell of the lawns. An army of gardeners, tiny figures in that immensity of space, toiled diligently in the strong afternoon light, nipping, pruning, weeding, heightening the perfection of the garden. (Davidar 2007, 221-2)

Various items from the semi-specialised lexical field of botany are present in this account, for example common plant names such as jacaranda (family *Begoniaceae*) and the evergreen monkey puzzle tree (*Araucaria araucana*), but in symbolic terms the garden stands as an affirmation of order, power and authority. The narrator's linguistic choices lend support to such vision by virtue of constructions like 'an army of gardeners' (which seems to recall and emphasise the landlord's military past) or verb phrases such as 'toiled diligently'. Likewise, the intensifying expression 'heightening the perfection' signals the will to manage and organise the natural landscape in an extremely scrupulous way, thus with a sense of subjugating and manipulating the surrounding landscape. In other words, the brigadier appears to have some forms of revised garden imperialism, in his maniacal attention to plants and flowers, and therefore is depicted as a self-centred, authoritative character, a collector of (botanical) beauty, who boasts the material aspect of his welfare through the garden and its plants.

Along with the development of the metaphors of the garden and its plants, indeed, the novel spotlights the figure of the gardener, nearly seen as a special agent operating in human activities, and in this it validates the discourse of charismatic leaders, to which the text allegorically alludes by mentioning the three 'emperors' of the title, Ashoka, Akbar and Gandhi. Key figures in Indian and world history, these three (differently) powerful men are in reality messengers of peace and tolerance in their promotion of dialogue, rather than holders of monolithic power. Both the brigadier and Noah draw the reader's attention to the role of the gardener as one endowed with a unique

perceptual capacity, although their words might have different implications. The former officer highlights this aspect in a conversation with Vijay, and makes a distinction between the superficial beauty of the flowers that laymen can enjoy and the gardener’s meticulous work, commitment and passion, which often cannot be seen: ““Yes, yes, they are beautiful to look at no doubt, but only when you become a true gardener do you realize that they can become an obsession”” (Davidar, 2007, 229). Noah too stresses the sensitivity and precision of the gardener, but his gaze seems to be anchored to a pragmatic dimension that respects and praises the environmental milieu, and implicitly its sacredness:

The true gardener, Noah once said to me, sees the world very differently from the rest of us. Where you or I might remark upon the beauty of a rose or be captivated by the riotous colour of a bed of geraniums, the gardener will focus on a mottled leaf that might be the first sign of disease, or pick up a clod of earth and crumble it in his fingers to gauge its porosity and alkaline content, or read the clouds or the behaviour of birds and other strange portents which are incomprehensible to non-gardeners. I had never so much as uprooted a weed, so the mysterious world of the gardener was, I suspected, forever shut to me. (Davidar 2007, 163)

Unlike what emerges from Sharma’s considerations, the interpretation of the gardener’s bizarre character is not only an echo of some romantic view of the world, but a reconfiguration of a revitalised approach to nature, as it seems to invite a meditation on the surrounding landscape and life in general, which ultimately is the thematic backbone of the entire novel, although the main motif, i.e. the relation between fundamentalism and tolerance, is expressed via other figures and devices.

5. Concluding remarks

In this article I have tried to come to grips with some linguistic realisations of the garden imagery used by David Davidar in his novel *The Solitude of Emperors*. If superficially these references appear to be descriptive or decorative elements, a closer reading of the text reveals how they unfold various meanings that the reader has to decode in order to fully access the author’s literary project. In the novel plants and flowers are represented either in the format of common names or phytonimic labels, often organised in various textual practices such as listing and enumerating, which unconsciously suggest particular stylistic effects, like for example the sense of completeness or totality (Jeffries 2010, 72-4). But it is mainly through the expressive power of metaphor, considered as

a broad stylistic category, that the author draws from the botanical domain. Typically plants and flowers stand for their symbolic meaning of luxuriant beauty and sensitivity, but here they are invested with other connotations too, nearly participating in or at least alluding to the complexity of human relations. The narrating protagonist experiences different ways to conceptualise the symbolic sphere of plants, as Noah and the brigadier project opposing values and considerations, thus building up ideological systems, e.g. with the many implications lying behind their visions of total control vs. gentle respect.

It is hoped that the passages I have sketchily taken into account bring to light the novelist's effort to imaginatively reshape the narrative gardens of India, in balance between the heritage of the past, i.e. the colonial burden, which somehow still looms, and the challenges of the postcolonial modernity of a multicultural country that, to a certain degree, still has to come to terms with its contradictions and anxieties, for example with the question of communalism. By acknowledging that plants have a "will of their own", the novel, as a whole, points to the recognition of the self and the sense of freedom for human society, which are then poetically mapped onto a variety of gardening elements and botanical images. Against the brutality of religious division and sectarianism, Davidar seems to suggest a reconfiguration of nature seen as an ideal, but not completely utopian, model for social organisation and development.

References

- Adami, Esterino. 2011. "Botanical References in Some Anglophone Cultures: Reshaping Meaning in Literary Texts." In *To a Scholar Sahab: Essays and Writings in Honour of Alessandro Monti*, edited by Esterino Adami and Carole Rozzonelli, 5-20. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso.
- Allen, Graham. 2000. *Intertextuality*. London: Routledge.
- Davidar, David. 2008. *The Solitude of Emperors*. London: Phoenix.
- Dé, Shobhaa. 2008. *Superstar India: From Incredible to Unstoppable*. New Delhi: Penguin India.
- Herbert, Eugenia W. 2011. "Garden Imperialism". Accessed 18 December 2015. <http://www.berfrois.com/2011/12/eugenia-herbert-indias-colonial-gardens/>.
- Kövecses, Zóltan. 2002. *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jeffries, Leslie. 2010. *Critical Stylistics: The Power of English*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jeffries, Leslie and Dan McIntyre. 2010. *Stylistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Neelambaram, Bolleddu. 2013. "Germination of Communal Violence in David Davidar's *The Solitude of Emperors*." *Research Journal of English Language and Literature*, 1.4: 48-54.
- Roberts, Judith. 1998. "English Gardens in India." *Garden History*, 26.2: 115-135.
- Sorlin, Sandrine. 2014. *La Stylistique Anglaise*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.

Wales, Katie. 1995. *A Dictionary of Stylistics*. Harlow: Longman.

Esterino Adami, PhD, is a tenured researcher in English language and translation at the University of Turin. His main areas of interest include stylistics, sociolinguistics, varieties of English, postcolonial literatures, and the semiotics of graphic narratives. He has published on lexical and stylistic aspects of Indian English, the theme of identity in Anglophone cultures and language creativity in postcolonial settings. In 2012 he co-edited (with A. Martelli) the volume *Within and Across. Language and Construction of Shifting Identities in Post-Colonial Contexts*. His current research project is titled “Railway Cultures” and aims to examine metaphors, symbols and textualities of the railway imagery in the Anglophone world.