

Literary and Cultural Disability Studies: An Exploration
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Lecture – 11
Conversations with Prof. Ato Quayson
Aesthetic Nervousness and Disability

Prof Hemachandran Karah: Welcome all. This is a moment of privilege for me, I am going to speak to professor Ato Quayson. To begin with he is my teacher. He introduced me to the field of disability studies. He was a supervisor for my doctoral work at Cambridge. Now professor Ato Quayson is at Stanford. Well, he is one of the founding key figures in disability studies, but he is also in African studies, Postcolonial studies and so many other areas. It is a privilege to have you here Ato.

Prof Ato Quayson: Oh, it is an honor to see you again Hema.

HK: Thank you. Ato I was preparing for this conversation and one of the things that moved me so much is your profess to aesthetic nervousness where you cite your nana - grandpa, and father and how they formed the crux of your inner self which prompted you to move to disability studies. 'His Africa we shall go, we fear nobody.' I am sure I am saying it wrong, it should be chanting inside you this.

AQ: Yes, definitely.

HK: Can you say more Ato?

AQ: Well, my grandfather was blind at the time when I must have been around 9 years old and my father brought my grandfather to come and live with us. He was blind, but at the time he also suffered what I only much later came to recognize as a post-traumatic stress disorder. It was not clear at the time, I did not know why, what the problem was but he was very apprehensive that the soldiers or people were coming to kill him and so my father used to play a trick on him. And

he used to tell us anytime that he got panicky that we should tell him that he had posted soldiers at the four corners of the house so that calmed him down a little bit. And he used to gather us, there were three of us and teach us drills. We thought it was really funny and he teaches us some of the songs that they sang as soldiers in the Second World War. So “East Africa we shall go, we fear nobody East Africa”, we will be marching you know ‘left, right, left, right’ just all fun. And then you know after I do not know how long it was that he stayed with us, might have been upward of 6 months and then he went back to the village. Several months later word came back that he had committed suicide, he had hung himself and this was a big shock. Obviously, my father was much shaken. For us children we were shocked but in a different kind of way. It was hard to understand why our nana would take his own life - he hung himself. It was many years later about two decades later that I came to understand that his paranoia was due to the fact that he had fought in the war. And at the time the British did not have medical and psychological support for demobilized soldiers. He had been a soldier in the British forces fighting in East Africa and they did not have any support for the demobilized soldiers. So obviously he had been returned and like many people who are going to fight in their war he was just returned back home. So, the post-traumatic stress disorder of the war just stayed with him. So by the time he came to live with us he must have been in his 70s, you know late 70s and as I said it was much later I came to realize that his mind had been populated with images of the war which he could never cope with. And so remembering my grandfather was a big impetus, a push for me to try to understand disability from multiple angles. So thanks for reminding me of him.

HK: And even your adventures in Postcolonial Studies and African Studies would have been prompted by this I suppose because you have done extensive work on orature, oral cultures and the postcolonial condition and so on.

AQ: My interest in orality comes from my father and not so much my grandfather because my father was a great storyteller and he used to tell us lots of folk tales. He was a very fantastic storyteller and so I grew up with lots of oral storytelling at home. So often Saturday evening he would gather all the children in the neighborhood and he would tell us that. It did not matter that

he repeated the story, it was always new. So I grew up with this sense of oral storytelling as fundamental. My mother also told stories, but her stories were different. Her stories were stories of the marketplace, happenings at the market. She was a trader at the market. So, her stories were more everyday life kind of stories about who was doing what at the market and so on, bargaining and so on, bargaining and people trying to rip her off and so on and so forth. But my father was a folklorist, so that in fact that was fundamental for me, not just African studies but literature. The study of literature came from that idea that stories and anecdotes were fundamental to the structuring of how we understood life.

HK: I think you do mention it because you fondly remember how he was ecumenical in his reading habit from Shakespeare to refrigerator manuals.

AQ: Yeah, you remember all that. Yeah, my father was an avid reader of anything printed, anything was printed he would read it. So, every morning my job was to go and buy the daily newspapers, about 6 dailies!. He would gather them all. He would try and read half of them before going to work and then half after work. But he read everything. He read novels. Whatever it was that was printed was reading it and as I said he read Shakespeare. When he was desperate you would find him reading refrigerator manuals. You never knew what it was. If it was printed, he would read it. So, I also got a taste for it by reading his library. So, I used to read his books and much of which I did not understand at the time, but it was also a form of identity. He was an avid-avid reader.

HK: I get that. I get that. So that makes me take to your seminal contribution to disability studies which is aesthetic nervousness. What is nervousness Ato, can we start there?

AQ: Let us start there. Well, my proposition at the time and I still hold on to this is that on the appearance of disability either physically (a physically disabled person) or cognitively (cognitive disability) there are different degrees to which the standard protocols of representation and by standard protocols of representation I mean what the said text has itself established. So the text

has established certain ways of seeing or knowing but around the disabled character there will be a small tension and that tension is a sign that the disabled character or figure unsettles the protocol of representation and so that unsettling I call the 'aesthetic nervousness'. And often of course as you know I try to illustrate it across a whole range, in so many ways, in literature, filmic texts and so on.

HK: I like the word nervousness because of its visceral suggestion and viscosity in terms of text and the world.

AQ: Yes exactly. Yes, the nervousness is a kind of visceral response but the text itself is struggling to accommodate the disability.

HK: See what it opens up also is the process of writing, the process of reading and the ways in which things unfold such as character, plot, imagery, moral themes and everything else unfold. But as they unfold because of the presence of disability there is a disruption, there is a 'short circuiting'. It does not go full blown.

AQ: Actually, there is an example that I often give to make this idea of the short circuiting of the aesthetic nervousness, to make it clear. Now for people who are familiar with children's Disney movies. Because of my kids as you know I used to watch lots of Disney and then later Pixar movies. So, I have watched that and because you know children like repetition because of the repetitiveness and me having to watch a lot of these movies I began to just pay more serious attention to them. Now, Disney's Finding Nemo provides a really good and handy example for aesthetic nervousness. Now the Finding Nemo story people who have seen it know is about a fish called Marlin.

Marlin loses his son Nemo and he is distraught. Nemo has been captured and taken as it turns out, to Sydney Harbour and sold to a really wicked young girl who puts him in a fish tank. So, Marlin is on a quest to go and find his son. And he is a very scared fish because he is very

paranoid because his wife had been eaten up by a bigger fish. Anyway, in the course of his quest for his son he bumps into another fish who is blue. Marlin is orange but the other fish is blue and her name is Dory. Now Dory has a disability which is that she suffers from short-term amnesia. Because she suffers from short-term amnesia Dory does not know, she does not retain the idea of danger. So she goes through danger because she has short-term amnesia, she cannot remember it. But because of the short-term amnesia she is also very brave and courageous.

Because she cannot remember what is dangerous and so the two of them pair up inadvertently and they go on this quest looking for Nemo and in fact she helps him through all kinds of escapades and so on. The point that I am interested in is when they join a shoal of turtles swimming in the East Australian current heading towards Sydney Harbour and the little turtles among the shoal of turtles gather around for Marlin to tell his story.

Now this is where the aesthetic nervousness is coming in. The story that Marlin tells is the story that we viewers have seen up to that point in the film. So, we have seen everything that Marlin is telling these little turtles we have seen it, so all the adventures and so on and as he reveals them the story is revealed throughout the ocean floor, swordfish hear of it and dolphins hear of it and so on and so forth.

So the story that he is telling becomes a kind of oral memory of what we have already seen except for one small detail. In the story that Marlin tells he does not mention Dory. Now this is the point of aesthetic nervousness in the film because the oral narration of what we have just seen suffers a short-term amnesia on behalf of the character who has short-term amnesia. So that is a good example of aesthetic nervousness.

HK: So the plot gets cut short, the theme gets diverted and there is an expectation of the readers - or in this case the audience - gets disrupted.

AQ: What that scene has done is that it has elevated Marlin through the status of a legend in his own time. But he could not have been a legend without the assistance of Dori, but the story that the legendary accounts give out is almost like the film has paused to give us its own memory.

But in giving us its own memory of what we have seen it forgets the brave fish that suffers from short-term amnesia. So at that particular point there is a short circuiting and the short circuiting is to remove Dori, the short-term amnesiac fish from the legendary account. I mean you could also read it in a gender framework because it is a 'she' versus a 'he'.

HK: But you also say that this short circuiting happens between the domains of aesthetic and the ethical. Can you elaborate on that based on this story?

AQ: Okay, now the objective of the aesthetic domain is to postpone judgment so the aesthetic domain does not want you to decide anything, that is not its job. Its job is to defer the question of judgment and subsume it under the exploration of beauty.

That is the job of the aesthetic domain. The ethical domain is the opposite of the aesthetic domain because the ethical domain requires you to establish ethical choices. For example, if you are reading a book or you are watching a film in which a man is beating up a woman it is inviting you to make a judgment against the man, for the weaker person. So that is what the ethical domain does.

The aesthetic domain does the opposite. It is trying to prevent you from closing off the aesthetic domain. What aesthetic nervousness of disability studies does is that it forces us to think about ethics and aesthetics at the same time. The disability does not allow us to ever ignore the ethical domain because we know unlike let us say a description of fruits in a novel- I am just talking at random. The description of a disabled person has correlatives in reality.

HK: Yeah it refers to things outside the text.

AQ: Exactly, and those correlatives indicate that there is something not quite right in the world that produces disability. So, when you see it reflected in the novel and you recognize the short circuiting it is forcing you to look outside the aesthetic domain and wonder what is happening in the real world and the forms of disablement.

HK: So in a way the path between the reader and the text is always predetermined by the tropes that float around them, not necessarily from the text. The tropology and the discourse that inform disability shape the pact of the reader and the text and therefore aesthetic nervousness.

AQ: Actually you have put it in a very good way. The tropology of disability outside the text, it is always pressing upon the reading experience.

Now there are other tropologies that impact upon our reading, of course nature is one of them, natural disasters and so on. But disability is different because every culture has codifications for disability as either extraordinary or debased. So, there is always this polarity either the disabled person is extraordinary considered to have extraordinary powers or they are debased humans.

Now that tropology always impinges upon the way we read disabled characters. The point of my notion of aesthetic nervousness is the requirement not to forget that tropology. It is perfectly possible to read it and just ignore it, to treat the disabled character in the literary text like a piece of furniture. what does it mean? let us go and so forth.. but you are not supposed to forget it.

HK: Well you also delve deeply into the notion of sublime because it is the notion of sublime that take us there into nervousness. Because when you are in the sublime, in the subliminal moment, the connect between abstract and the real collapses. That is when aesthetic nervousness happens. That is my understanding, Ato correct me if I am wrong.

AQ: Well, the part of the sublime that I took was only one part. The part that I took for what I was doing. And the reason why I say one part is that in Kant's discussion of the sublime, it has a tripartite structure. So first is what he calls the mathematical sublime. So, there is the mathematical in the energetic sublime. The mathematical sublime is say, a large mountain would be mathematical sublime whereas the energetic sublime would be a hurricane.

The point of either of them - the mountain or the hurricane - is that this magnitude of them shows us humans are somehow inadequate in the face of magnitude. But the sublime either mathematical or energetic also elicits a compulsion to explain. So that elicitation that "oh my God the mountain is so huge, so I need to talk about it or try to explain it somehow", that is phase two. Phase two is almost the compulsion to explain but it comes with a failure. Because the sublime transcends our capacity to explain the third part of Kant's discussion of the sublime - that is the part that I suspend, I did not add it to my account - and which is that for Kant there is an ultimate victory of reason because he is really writing for the sake of Reason.

And once Reason takes over, Reason understands that the skill or the magnitude can be subjected to a reasonable accounting that is the part that I left out. The part that I was interested in is the elicitation of our attempts to explain and our failure to explain it because often in first time encounters not in... So what I am going to say now does not apply if you have known a disabled person for all your life. But if you encounter them for the first time, so you never met this person before, you first encounter them and they have a very bad scar across their right eye. The subliminal moment is that your first impulse is to ask "why, what happened to your face?". But the protocols of civil behavior disallow you from asking. It is not polite to ask but the tension "shall I ask, I wish I could ask", but you cannot ask. This produces sometimes even anxiety because at the back of your mind you are trying to understand why does this person have such a bad gash on their left eye. I am talking of first-time encounters. So I hived off the third part of the Kantian sublime and focus on the first two parts, that is to say something that is of a certain magnitude that elicits interpretation, but our attempts to interpret flounders and fails.

HK: I am trying to understand this, because we also have now Rosemary Garland-Thomson's stare, feminist understanding of disciplinary gaze and all kinds of sentiments and affects coming from disciplines such as aesthetics, sentiment such as disgust, and so on. So does aesthetic nervousness collapse all these notions or is it a development or a logical consequence of these notions or ideas or sentiments?

AQ: Okay part of that yes. Part of the nervousness also involves all kinds of panic. There is a spectrum. The word 'nervousness' covers a whole spectrum - panic, bewilderment, nausea (*la nausea*) because the disabled person depending on the context is a figure of bafflement. It represents a kind of epistemological question. Some, not all. Some disabled characters are written in literature in such a way as to be non-threatening, as to divulge a very fairly straightforward meaning. Others are not, others no matter how hard you think about them, you cannot understand them. The Greeks were very good at this, so Tiresias. Tiresias was a hermaphrodite. It means he had both male and female genitalia. And he was blind but was a prophet. You know so he crisscrosses and collapses all kinds of binaries and so as a disabled figure he confounds any attempt to understand. This is a blind person who can see the future. He has both male and female genitalia and always speaks truth to power and we see Tiresias appear in both the Oedipus Rex and in Antigone when he comes to confront Creon. Now the figure of Tiresias is recalcitrant to interpretation. You cannot reduce Tiresias to one thing. And he is also - in terms of the characters on stage interacting with him - a figure of awe. So, they are afraid of him. So this is different from the reader, the characters on stage do not know what to do with the Tiresias they are in awe of him and of course his function is to disrupt the smooth discourse of the sovereign.

So the sovereign's smooth discourse of ethics and power is disrupted by this disabled character. It is not in every text that you find this recalcitrance to interpretation. In some other texts the disabled character is easily reduced to the figure of evil. For example Long John Silver in Treasure Island. So contrasting Long John Silver to Tiresias is good example. Long John Silver is a very straightforward villain.

There is no complication to Long John Silver. So when you read as a young boy reading Treasure Island you are supposed to be scared of Long John Silver because he is an evil person,. Same with Captain Hook in Peter Pan. These are villains. So, these are examples of disabled characters in literary writing who are assimilable to simple moral codes, but not so others. Tiresias is a good example, but there are many disabled characters in literature that are Tiresias-like in that we cannot reduce them to good or bad or they resist our attempts at assimilation to simple dichotomies and paradigms.

HK: Right, see one of the things about aesthetic nervousness is it also takes into account individual encounters, disabled and non-disabled or disabled themselves. But what if disabled people are in a collective, like are those found in Jose Saramago and Planet of the Blind. Will the quality of aesthetic nervousness or the dimensions change?

AQ: That is a very good question. If there is a collective, so let us say in real life terms let us say a place or a land that is war-torn but that has a lot of landmines. So in fact what I am saying has a real correlative in Angola. So, there are many people in Angola whose limbs have been blown off and they have to have prosthetic limbs and so on and so forth.

HK: ..and there are leper colonies.

AQ: Yes, good example - leper colony. If you read in the history leper colonies or places where there is a proliferation of war, wounded and so on, there is always an interaction I mean indeed a relationship between the wounded and maimed, and the non-maimed. So the maimed versus the non-maimed, the leper versus the non-leper and so on and so forth. And also, there is an implicit idea of responsibility for healing. Right. That it is your task to try and do something. In fact the varying conditions that have produced the disability disallow any process of healing as such.

So, what we find in many instances - and I think Saramago's *Blindness* may also be made applicable to the blind - is that there will always be figures who are not maimed and misdemeaned. And those figures who are not maimed or misdemeaned, they become the focus of establishing value systems. Yeah, they become the focus of establishing the value systems and the value systems are not necessarily in favor of equity. Leper colony is a good example.

HK: Good example, yes. I think slightly moving on your deeper interest in postcolonial condition and literary domain connected to it. The novels like *Wizard of the Crow*.. we have examples where disability becomes potent metaphor, sometimes allegorical, sometimes about the postcolonial condition itself. Do you want to comment on these things?

AQ: Well, I am trying to think of a handy example. Okay, there is a good example in India - *Ice Candy Man* authored by Bapsi Sidhwa. Now in that novel the young girl who has a disability, I think she has a mobility impairment. But the girl who has a mobility impairment is supposed to be an allegory for Pakistan, which is born disabled. I am not so sure that it is a safe route from allegory to say nation. Bapsi Sidhwa's novel is a very problematic text, because it is a novel also of partition, it is about partition.

HK: You find the same thing in Rushdie also, the novel *Shame*, where character Sufiya's mental illness, I think brain fever, where she is delusional.

AQ: Exactly yeah, those allegories are actually highly problematic I find. Because they are simplifying what a highly complex question is. The objective of the allegory is to simplify, to make you feel that you can get the meaning divulged. So Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man*, where Lenny is a representative of Pakistan. Therefore, the equation is that Pakistan is born maimed. In such accounts there just is a problem.

HK: The thing is the postcolonial condition things are different from western preoccupation with perfectionism by way of institutional structures bringing more legal control over disability. In the

third world global south things work differently: environment is toxic, there is institutional imperfection, there are wounds that do not heal at all. So in many ways disability topology is qualitatively different and it is evolving in a different direction. So you have a global vision, I mean what do you think is happening now as we speak Ato, between the narrative expectations that are set in the west and how it works in the global south?

AQ: Okay first of all you know disability in the west has a long way to go. The American Disability Act and so on, still a huge amount of work is to be done and this is because the acts or the legal frameworks do not necessarily change attitudes. Attitude changes really slowly. So the legal frameworks will allow if you are discriminated against as a disabled person you can get redress. But the act will not correct the negative attitudes that attend to disability, not necessarily. When it comes to the global south, certain I want to focus on Africa more than anything else. In Africa, unfortunately their attitudes - cultural attitude to disability - are really bad and so disabled people are considered to be the bearers of deficit, some forms of ethical deficit and even spiritual deficit.

For example mental illness. In traditional societies mental illness is very easily recorded as a witchcraft or spirit possession and so on and so forth when the problem is really psychological and they need care and treatment or the attribution of capability for getting a bad disabling impairment, I mean people are quick to say that it is something that you did in your previous life and so on.

I mean it is not the best. There have been moves in different countries, Ghana is one. In fact Ghana has introduced a disabilities act, it is more than a decade old, this is quite old, but listen to this. I have to give you this example because it is my country, I can say it without embarrassment. In the previous government, the president was John Mahama. He did something which was unthinkable before his time; he appointed a blind lawyer to be minister for Chieftaincy Affairs. The man was blind but very competent lawyer and so he became a minister for Chieftains Affairs. Now you cannot imagine a more traditional domain than Chieftaincy - we

are talking of chiefs. There was a big a hue and cry about why did the president appoint a blind person to be minister for Chieftaincy Affairs.

In the argument, it was not about his competence or otherwise. In the traditional world a person who is not whole, who has an impairment cannot lead his or her people. So the idea was that the guy is not whole, so that he should not lead them who are whole. The president ignored them and the guy did a great job, but that came out.

And we are talking of traditional authorities who have high risk where they are highly respected in the society. And this was their objection; they did not say that the guy was incompetent or were afraid of, they did not cite anything about competence. What they cited is that it is wrong for someone who is not whole to be in charge of the ministry. So unfortunately, I wish I could say something better, but the brutal truth is that there is a long way to go in disability rights and consciousness in many parts of Africa unfortunately. It is very bad.

HK: That is the same everywhere I guess Ato. India, other parts of Asia and west too. I mean because of the legal requirements people can indulge in tokenism, but not really cultural inclusion. In terms of accessibility, gadgetry and gizmos things may work. But when it comes to cultural inclusion access to sexuality, yeah it is a massive domain that is not talked about and it is still a taboo when it came to disability for sure.

AQ: Yeah. You are right. When it comes to technological support and so on there may be everything, but when a disabled person wants to marry into a non-disabled home then all hell break loose in the west.

HK: Yeah that is true and there is a huge domain left untold stories which probably need oral history project of an innovative kind that can unearth the untold stories about sexuality of orientation, expectations and so on.

AQ: Social reproduction. Social threats that the perceived threat of the disabled being engaged in any form of social reproduction because what are they going to produce and so on. And it is a mess.

HK: And eugenic impulse is still around if not openly but definitely in the background.

AQ: Yeah, they are couched. They are not counting their classic eugenicist discourse, I mean now people are wiser but then I mean it is very common to hear that a disabled person ought not to have children that they say that all the time in the west also. So, they will try and dissuade you from having because they want you to reproduce.

So for example there is someone who has a height deficiency or form of defect so there will be every means of persuasion to prevent you from trying to have progeny and so on. So it is unfortunate. I wish I came bearing better news but it is just not there.

HK: I just want to call this last ten minutes 'Disability Studies: past, present and future' because you have been working at a global context. I was having things like trans literary criticism in mind. Because when it came to intersectionality it is not always a smooth affair. Can you say something about that Ato?

AQ: Well that is a good question because it is you are posing it also after the killing of George Floyd in America. So the insistence on racial justice or forms of reading that will highlight and racial justice. However, my own take on the racial justice question which I think is really important is that we also need to pay attention to the struggles of different equity seeking groups.

What do I mean by equity seeking groups? Equity seeking groups are groups that have historically felt marginalized and that they have no representation. By representation I mean both political representation and representation in literature. Now these equity seeking groups have

historically prosecuted their struggles sometimes with success but sometimes with not so much success.

And if you were to assemble a list to put together a list of equity seeking groups we would have to list among them the women, disabled people, people of color, native Americans and aborigines and I am thinking here of situation in Canada, the United States and Australia would also have to think of categories like black folk everywhere in the world in the United States definitely but also in Europe.

HK: Dalits in India...

AQ: Yeah. We also have to add the cultural categories like Jews. Now the interesting thing about intersectionality is that if you pay attention closely to the struggles of different equity seeking groups, not just one group but different groups you see that actually many of the tools of struggle for representation coincide. Apart from “let us pay greater attention to disability” or “let us pay greater attention to women”, there is also the argument that by paying greater attention to women or disabled characters we actually enrich how we see. The quality of our attention is actually augmented when we pay attention to the perspectives of these equity seeking groups. Now the more intersectional you are reading that is to say disability, blackness, aboriginality and so on and even class the more you can pay attention to a variety of equity seeking perspectives, the richer the quality of your attention. I am talking of as a literary critic and so I myself think that it is important in reading for justice. If I will just start a discussion here, I will start with “how do we read for justice”, not just from postcolonial studies but from wherever you are standing. So whatever literature you are interested in it is possible to read for justice.

How do you read for justice without ignoring the different forms of marginalization that appear in literary texts? So for you and I our interest is disability and of course there is still a lot of work to be done, but if we want to think intersectionally we have to think from the perspective of conjoined equity seeking perspectives.

HK: I think equity seeking may get strengthened if we pay attention to the literal and the literary at the same time. Because what is knowledge and how one come about to acquire that knowledge. If they are put on the same plane then we can read for justice I think.

AQ: Yeah, I agree with you. So that is how I understand the value of intersectionality.

HK: And is predominance of English anyway preventing some form of equity seeking because the scholarship around the globe it is still not yet truly multilingual, it is anglicized. Is it anyway preventing equity seeking of some kind?

AQ: I do not think so really. The reason is that.. for example I speak six languages apart from English. Six languages and all of these six I speak fluently but they are 6 languages in my own country. But why I said I speak six languages is that monolingualism is actually completely abnormal in most parts of the world. In most parts of the world people grew up multilingual.

HK: So, it is always already multilingual in many ways?

AQ: Yeah, it is already multilingual like in India.

HK: Oh of course.

AQ: But in where I grew up playing in the streets with different kids from different backgrounds and you learnt their language to function around them. I speak fluently like five or six different languages. Monolingualism becomes normalized through educational systems whose interest is in imposing hierarchies.

HK: You are hundred percent right.

AQ: It is the objective of educational systems to impose hierarchies by imposing one language which then will help them to distinguish the competent versus the non-competent. So the education system, that is its objective. But if you step out of the classroom everywhere you go multilingualism is the norm.

So how will I answer this question? First of all English by itself is now being very much varied 'Englishes', but the second thing is that English no matter what it does it cannot quell the vitality of multilingual contexts. Because people speak English with the infusion just as code switching, with the infusion of the languages within their natural domains and habitats. And that is a good thing. It is education that tells us that you should only speak one language. In my culture we say that a person who speaks only one language has something to hide.

HK: I think as an aside I want to mention that the war against monolingualism is fought ably by deaf folks so well, which everybody can borrow from.

AQ: Deaf folks, yes of course. So, the dominance of monolingualism is a fiction and its objective is to create a complete artificial hierarchy. So there is no reason why we should submit ourselves to monolingualism as the norm. You speak English so you can go travel to Ghana, in Australia and so on and so forth and pass because you speak a language which is international. But you are also an Indian and so you are supposed to traverse your own cultural landscape with languages that are not English and it is a source of pride that you speak several of these languages well, there is no shame in it.

HK: Exactly. So wrapping back to the beginning. Material and the effective is something you are deeply interested thanks to your contribution through aesthetic nervousness and so on. And I do feel a greater attention to both the domains, the material and the effective can lead us to towards fulfilling disability studies adventures in the future. That is all, I want to conclude my conversation with you Ato. Thanks so much for spending an hour, it is a great privilege. It is a great honor for me.

AQ: It is so good to see you and it has been a very good, also I am very pleased that we managed to interact at such a high level. Your questions are very tough by the way, you are a rigorous interrogator. Your questions were pushing, they were forcing me to think clearly.

HK: Coming from my teacher I feel that it is a privilege. Thank you so much Ato.

AQ: Thank you. Bye.