

Sukumar Ray and the World of ‘Nonsense’

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(Abstract)

This paper seeks to look at popular literature vis-à-vis the canonical literature, with special reference to Nonsense Rhymes. The emphasis is on Sukumar Ray's *Aabol Taabol* (1923), which has recently become a part of the undergraduate syllabus in the University of Calcutta. The tradition of nonsense rhymes has been traced since Edward Lear and also through Lewis Carroll. The paper also seeks to take a peek at the problematic of teaching Ray's poems in their English translation and also analyses the feasibility of, at all, translating 'nonsense' keeping in mind Ray's rhymes, in particular. There is also an attempt to look critically into the history of the nineteenth and early twentieth century Bengal and thus to situate him in context, with respect to their family history and to contrast it with his peculiar and individual genius. The paper finally aims to apprehend the magnificently insular and opaque world that Ray has created in his poems.

155 words

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