



Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies

E-NEWSLETTER

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June, 2019

Issue guest edited by:

M Asaduddin on behalf of IACLALS

Editorial Team: Subhendu Mund, Rina Ramdev, Angelie Multani, GJV Prasad and Kalyanee Rajan

EDITORIAL

In my editorial in the issue#2 of the IACLALS newsletter (2015) I had written about how places and habitats act as inspiration and catalysts to creative writers. I dealt with four writers who wrote evocatively about Shillong. Since then, writings from the Northeast of India have grown in corpus and have become part of syllabi in many colleges and universities. Following are excerpts from some random thoughts that I had shared with a group of scholars in a seminar that took place in IIAS, Shimla, in the first week of May, 2019.

Any book, article or conference on India's Northeast begins with a preamble that highlights its immense diversity and the inability of an umbrella term, however capacious and inclusive, to encompass that diversity. Literature is no exception. How to define literature(s) from the Northeast as a category has remained a question as tantalising as how to define Indian Literature (s) as a category. It was asserted, in the early days of our independence, and with the establishment of the Central Sahitya Akademi, that Indian literature was one though written in many languages. We gradually discovered the utter inadequacy of such a definition. The anthologies that endeavoured to showcase Indian literature, whether it is by K M George, Salman Rushdie & Elizabeth West or Amit Choudhury have always been found awfully inadequate because they had left out large segments of many literary traditions. Scholars and anthologists have had the same experience when they try to represent or showcase writings from India's northeast.

Writers and literary historians from the North-east have often tried to define literatures produced in this space in opposition to what they perceived as mainland Indian literature, as though they were not a part of Indian literature. A binary was and is sought to be established in which the 'mainland' Indian literature, which itself is an amorphous and uncertain category, is seen as the centre and literatures produced in the North-east as the periphery. I am not sure, if such an oppositional binary is helpful. One should certainly ask questions about representation, but one should also move on to discover connections and lineages with other linguistic and literary traditions of India which, I think, is the direction towards which we are slowly moving.

Let us look at the problem of terminology, the nomenclature itself. I have looked at several syllabi that seek to showcase writings from the Northeast, looked at CFPs of several conferences and seminars, looked at the websites of publishers who have special programmes of publishing writings from the Northeast, looked at the blog run by Northeast Writer's Forum, looked the Ministry of DONER's website to see how they try to name this regions and writings emanating from this region. What I found is a terminological confusion, or at least instability. In The North East writers Forum (NEWF), the way it's written, North and East are two separate words, whereas the journal they publish, *Northeast Review* spells Northeast as a single word; the publishing house Zubaan which has a flagship programme for publishing literatures from the Northeast which it calls 'Northeast Literature' whereas Sage has a similar category which they call 'Sage Studies on India's North East'. Speaking Tiger that has a substantial programme of this kind designates this region in a still different way. Sometime ago, D M

College of Arts, Imphal, organised a conference on the topic 'North East Indian Literature and its Future Vision', In 2016, Sikkim University held an international conference on the topic, 'Reframing India's North-East: People, Power and Perspectives'. In February this year Gauhati University held a conference on 'Cultural Self-Fashioning in North-East India: Interplay of the Oral, the Written and the Performative Arts.' The Centre for North East studies of my own university held a conference in March this year on the topic, 'Exploring Literature and Culture from India's North East.' Clarity of thinking comes from terminological clarity. I myself confronted it when the first comprehensive anthology of writings from the Northeast was conceived. It was, *Oxford Anthology of Writings from North-East India (2011)*, edited by Tilottama Misra. I was the publisher's referee and we had rigorous brainstorming for days, agonising about the title and the wordings of the title. Later on, Margaret Zama, formerly of Mizoram University, edited a very good collection of essays which she titled, *Emerging Literatures from Northeast India (2013)*. We can escape essentialism and reductionism if we can avoid monolithic singularities and signal the pluralistic, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic heritage of literatures coming from this region. We should take a little more care about how to spell the compound word when we use it as a noun to designate a geographical entity and when we use it as a qualifier.

It needs be stressed again and again that North-east is just a descriptive term to encompass diverse languages, literatures and cultural traditions, that sometimes grew and developed not only totally independent of each other, but even hostile to each other. The languages and literatures have very uneven chronologies and trajectories of development, sometimes through collaboration, sometimes through confrontation. If the first literary journal in Asomiya, *Arunudo* appeared in 1846, the first literary journal in Boro appeared almost a century later. If *Arunudo* borrowed heavily and translated prolifically from Bangla in the early stages of the development of Asamiya literature, Boro did the same from Asomiya. Self-assertion by Asomiya and the desire to shake off Bangla hegemony would be repeated in case of Asomiya and Boro relationship. Manipuri literature developed much earlier than Boro, again borrowing and translating from Bangla. For the stream of Bangla Literature in the Barak valley, the main inspiration and influence came from Calcutta and mainstream Bangla literature without any reference to what was happening in the Brahmaputra valley. In fact, there was severe opposition when Asomiya was sought to be imposed on the Barak Valley, leading to a bloody confrontation in Silchar on 19 May, 1961, in which 11 people (commemorated as 'language martyrs') died, a day which still evokes intense emotion and is observed every year. Similar is the trajectory of literature from Tripura. They are a part of the history of Bangla literature and also part of the history of writings from Assam.

There are hegemonies within hegemonies. Just as Bangla literature hegemonised Asomiya. Asomiya itself hegemonised Arunachali, Boro, Karbi and many others. The other side of the picture is that the use of the Asomiya language by writers of different communities for creative writing enriched the language by bringing in elements peculiar to these indigenous cultures. However, the preponderance of ethnic and identity politics in the region since the turn of the century has halted the production of writings in Asomiya by writers from other ethnic communities of the region. Tilottama Misra alludes to a tendency discernible in recent times amongst the people of the hill states: of denying their knowledge of any language other than

English or their mother tongue. She holds up the tragic case of Lummer Dai who is recorded to have shared his grief with fellow writer, Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi: ‘Writers like you and me have no place in Arunachal Pradesh. In fact, people ridicule us because we write in Asomiya. When I sit down to write, these thoughts trouble me and I say to myself, for whom should I write and what? Is there any use in writing? And then my pen stands still, my words dry up.’... In brief, there are multiple histories and multiple traditions, multiple legacies and multiple belongings. The literary and cultural histories are enmeshed and tangled and intertwined with one another.

When such a diverse body of writings is sought to be studied in a certain structured format under the umbrella of ‘Writings from the Northeast’, sought to be translated and transmitted and ‘packaged’ in a coherent way, the challenges are enormous. Such challenges should be met in an inventive and imaginative way, taking care of the complex histories and sensitivities that are involved. We are at a historical juncture when there is openness and curiosity about literatures from the Northeast. English and MIL departments throughout the country have expanded their canons to embrace writings from the North-east. Publishers are more ready than ever before to publish literatures from the North-east. I would say both the politics and economics, along with the trend in the academia are conducive to the growth and dissemination of this body of literature. Writers and translators from the region should seize this moment to make the most of it

June 2019

M. Asaduddin



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- 1) “Violence in the Postcolonial/Neocolonial World”
15th& 16th February 2018
Centre for Teaching and Research on Postcolonial Studies, University of Leige
~Simran Chadha

- 2) The American Comparative Literature Association Conference ACLA 2018
March 29th – April 1st 2018
University of California, Los Angeles Campus
~Simran Chadha

- 3) Formation of Children’s Literature Research Centre
23rd November 2018
Sahitya Adda (Literary Rendezvous), Tripura
~Bhaskar Roy Barman

- 4) Release of Second Annual Issue 2019 of Sahayog
20th January 2019
Bharat Vikas Parishad, Tripura Prant, Tripura
~Bhaskar Roy Barman

5) “Region/Nation/Trans-Nation: Literature-Cinema Interface” Conference

31 January–2 February 2019

BITS Pilani, K. K. Birla Goa Campus

~Amitendu Bhattacharya

6) “Myth and Archetypes and their Workings in Drama”

27th February, 2019

Zakir Husain Delhi College (Morning) in collaboration with

Zakir Husain Delhi College (Evening)

~Shubhra Dubey, Mehak, Deeksha

7) IACLALS Annual Conference 2019

“Literature, Culture, and Society in the Age of Post-Truth”

February 6 – 8, 2019

Pondicherry University

~Rina Ramdev

8) “Transitions in Policy, Resilience and Identity: New Challenges in Indo-Canadian Studies”

6th-8th February 2019

Centre for Canadian Studies, Jadavpur University

~Manjari Thakur

9) Writers Festival

14th February 2019

Janki Devi Memorial College, University of Delhi

~Sanjukta Naskar

10) “Emerging Trends in Indian Literatures: A National Seminar”

15th and 16th February, 2019

Ahmednagar College, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

~Kamalakar Bhat

11) Seminar Report

19th-20th February 2019

Dyal Singh College, University of Delhi

~Ayesha Irfan

12) “(Re)Defining Marginalities: A One Day National Conference”

16th March 2019

Zakir Husain Delhi College (Evening), University of Delhi

~Sanjib Kumar Baishya

13) “Cultural Self-Fashioning in North-East India: Interplay of the Oral, the Written and the Performative Arts”

22-23 March 2019

Dept of MIL & Literary Studies, Gauhati University, Assam

~Dhurjjati Sarma

14) “Rethinking Tribal Identity”

28th and 29th March 2019

Mizoram University

~Nandini Saha

15) “Translating Identity: Assimilations, Assertions, Affiliations, Aversions”

29th and 30th March 2019

Department of English, AMU

~ Siddhartha Chakraborti

16) “Literature from Northeast India: Texts and Contexts”

6th-7th May 2019

Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla

~Anjali Daimari

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TRIBUTES/ OBITUARIES

GEOFFREY V. DAVIS



Monday, November 26, 2018 7:25 AM

Dear Chairs of ACLALS branches,
Vale Geoffrey V. Davis.

You will be shocked and saddened learning of the passing of our dear and valued colleague and friend, Geoffrey V. Davis this week – just a few days before his 75th birthday - in Aachen, North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany). Geoff was the Chair of the European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (EACLALS) 2002-2005; 2005-2008; 2011-2014; and the International Chair of ACLALS 2008- 2011.

As Isabel Carrera Suárez, Chair of EACLALS, says, all who attended academic gatherings during these periods, or in the previous decades, when he was a loyal and enthusiastic participant, will have had the chance to benefit from his knowledge in a number of areas, notably African literatures, but also from his cheerful generosity, his keen welcoming of young members into the field and his endless energy and creativity. Geoff's vast contribution to our field is also found in his own publications and through his editing, of journals such as *Matatu*, and of the critical series *Cross/Cultures. Readings in the Post/Colonial Literatures and Cultures in English*, which he co-edited with Gordon Collier from 1990 and which holds such significant work for postcolonial studies.

Geoff's good friend and Chair of SPACLALS, Russell McDougall, shares these thoughts: Generosity and kindness were the watchwords of Geoff's personality. He travelled widely and worked tirelessly for the causes in which he believed, including ACLALS, and he gave of both his time and knowledge unstintingly, always working toward the greater good.. He was a man of great modesty and good humour. His literary knowledge and understanding was deep but also so broad that it would seem somehow churlish to tie him down to a specialism. He started his career with the literature of the German Democratic Republic but a visit to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in the mid-1970s set him on a newpath. It's hard now to think of anyone who was better versed in the arts of Zimbabwe. His knowledge of the complexities of South African

literature was inspirational. He also contributed really significant work on Australian, Canadian and Indian Literatures. He published in German as well as English. The Cross/Cultures series (Brill/Rodopi), of which Geoff was one of the founding and continuing co-editors, has - since its inception in 1990 - produced more than two hundred books! They span the literatures of all the English-speaking world, and many non-anglophone countries and regions besides. Matatu, the journal that Geoff co-edited – devoted to African (including Afro-Caribbean) Culture and Society – also started life as a book series. It has so far produced 50 volumes. The fruits of his collaboration in recent years with Ganesh Devy and Kalyan Chakravarty are startling:

2009 Indigeneity: Culture and Representation (Orient BlackSwan)

2011 Voice and Memory: Indigenous Imagination and Expression (Orient BlackSwan)

2013 Narrating Nomadism: Tales of Recovery and Resistance (Routledge)

2013 Knowing Differently: The Challenge of the Indigenous (Routledge)

2014 Performing Identities: The Celebration of Indigeneity in the Arts (Routledge)

2016 The Language Loss of the Indigenous (Routledge)

Geoff was working on a number of projects at the time of his death: an edited book devoted to African literary autobiography; a single-author monograph on Literature and Activism; a history of ACLALS (with Russell McDougall); and a co-authored study of Doris Lessing (with Anne Fuchs).

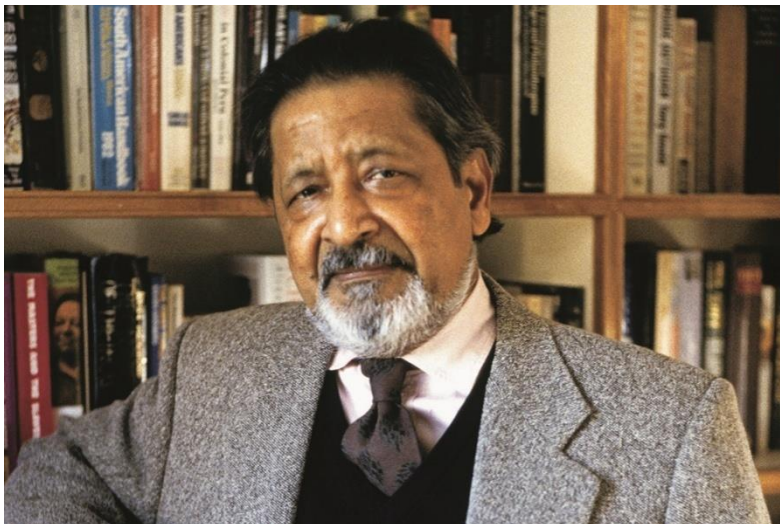
As current chair of ACLALS, and long-time participant in triennial and branch conferences, I can only add that Geoff's passing is a terrible loss on every level. Personally, meeting up with him again at triennial and branch conferences was a highlight I always looked forward to, and his cheerful and positive presence radiated. I have many happy memories of meals with Geoff in the different conference locations around the world – a ferry ride and exploring markets followed by lunch in Istanbul, a biryani in a little Indian restaurant in Innsbruck, convivial dinner in Stellenbosch, and the same more recently in Sydney, where he was keynote speaker at the "Two Canaries of Climate Change" conference, just to name a few. The conversation was always marvellous, and I revelled in his wit, knowledge, insight, and sheer enthusiasm for literature and the arts. He was my 'rock' for ACLALS, so often attending meetings in London on our behalf, sharing our activities and promoting ACLALS with the Commonwealth Secretariat and other Civil Society Organisation representatives, especially the Commonwealth Consortium for Education, relaying news and potential links and activities back and forth. Despite always seeming to have more on the go, in his work and his life, than virtually anyone I know, he was always at the other end of an email seeking his advice over issues, quickly and thoughtfully offering his deep knowledge and wisdom, and often helping enormously with Commonwealth documentation for ACLALS. We were in constant exchange through Christmas and New Year last year in the process of applying (unsuccessfully, alas) for Commonwealth project funding for ACLALS, in between family and travel commitments. It was a genuine collaboration, and Geoff, typically, gave so fully of himself and his time. I know he was looking forward to coming with Ingrid to New Zealand for the next triennial. He will be there in our hearts and memories.

Geoff will be widely mourned and sorely missed.

Chris
(Chair, ACLALS)
Associate Professor
Chris Prenticechris.prentice@otago.ac.nz

Dept English and Linguistics
Te Tari Akoranga Ingarihi me te Mātauranga Wetereo
University of Otago/Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo
P.O. Box 56
Dunedin 9054
Ph. (0064) 3 479 8920

V S NAIPAUL



Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul, novelist, travel writer and essayist died in London on 11 August 2018, a giant in all he achieved, and surrounded by those striving as they did, to live a life characterized by creativity fanned by endeavour. His death created a void in the literary world, well-nigh difficult to fill. Many literary luminaries all over the world paid tributes to him on his death, among them being Salman Rushdie and Amitav Ghosh.

VS Naipal was born on 17 August 1932 in Chaguanas, Trinidad, the eldest son of a second generation Indian. In the eighties of the nineteenth century his grandparents emigrated from India to enlist as an indentured labourer on the sugar plantations in Trnidad. Naipaul's father presented himself as an English-language journalist in the Indian immigrant community in Trinidad and took to contributing articles to the Trinidad Guardian in 1929, in preparation for joining the staff as Chaguanas correspondent. VS Naipaul acknowledges with gratitude in 'A Prologue to an autobiography', published in 1983 to his father's reverence for writers and the writing life which sparked off his aspirations to be a writer. His younger brother, Shiva Naipaul was also a writer of repute.

VS Naipaul was educated at Queen's Royal College, Trinidad and, having bagged a government scholarship, moved to University College, Oxford in England. He got associated for a brief while with the BBC as a writer and editor for the 'Caribbean Voices' programme. His first three books delineate the Trinidadian society. His novel *The Mystic Masseur* written in 1955 was awarded in 1958 Mail on Sunday/John Llewellyn Rhys Prize. This novel was adapted into a screenplay by Caryl Phillips for a film shown in 2001. In 1961, three years following the conferment of this prize, *Miguel Street*, a collection of short stories, written in 1959, bagged the Somerset Maugham Award, the award Somerset Maugham himself approved, because it was being the first time conferred upon a non-European writer. The third of the trilogy, delineating the Trinidadian society, is the much-acclaimed novel *A House for Mr Biswas*, published in 1961. This novel is based and nourished on Naipaul's memory of his childhood and of his father in Trinidad. *Mr Stone and the Knights Companion* (1963), his first novel set in England, bagged the Hawthornden Prize. He wrote this novel when he was in India. He was then invited to write monthly letters for *The Illustrated Weekly of India*. His subsequent novels expatiating with political overtones on multifaceted colonial and post-colonial societies include *The Mimic Men* (1967), winning the 1968 WH Smith Literary Award, *In a Free State* (1971), winning the Booker Prize for Fiction, *Guerrillas* (1975) and *A Bend in the River* (1979), set in Africa. *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987) mirrors his life in England. *A Way in the World* (1994) is a narrative trying out a combination of fiction and non-fiction in a historical portraiture of the Caribbean. *Half a Life*, published in 2001, keeps up with the adventures of Indian Willie Chandran in the post-war Britain, a new life started off by a chance meeting of his father and the novelist W. Somerset Maugham. *Magic Seeds* (2004) carries on with his story.

VS Naipaul wrote three books about India, namely, *An Area of Darkness* (1964), *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977), *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990), two books about Islamic societies, namely, *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981) and *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions* (1998), and two books about the Caribbean, namely, *The Middle Passage: Impressions of Five Societies - British, French and Dutch in the West Indies and South America* (1962) and *The Loss of El Dorado: A History* (1969). He has also got published three essay collections, namely, *The Overcrowded Barracoon and Other Articles* (1972), *The Return of Eva Peron* (1980) and *The Writer and the World: Essays*. His latest book is *The Masque of Africa: Glimpses of African Belief*, published in 2010.

V. S. Naipaul was knighted in 1989 and in 1993 decorated with the David Cohen British Literature Prize by the Arts Council of England. It was in 2001 that he got the Nobel Prize for Literature. He held honorary doctorates from Cambridge University and Columbia University in New York and was gifted with honorary degrees by the universities of Cambridge, London and Oxford.

Bhaskar Roy Barman

P.C. <https://daily.jstor.org/v-s-naipauls-defense-civilization/>

MEENA ALEXANDER



THE PASSING OF MEENA ALEXANDER, February 17, 1951- November 21, 2018*

A rude shock to the Indo-American world of poetry, memoir, creative non-fiction, scholarship, teaching, lecturing, and mentorship. A legend, a dear friend, has transitioned to the other side, but her writings will be with us for generations. In her writings in many genres, Meena attempted to make sense for herself and for the rest of us the meanings of her identity in process forever, her many lives across continents. She expanded our sense of how our own identity in historical specificity has the capacity to link with, morph into, other larger interwoven identities to form coalitions that are transformative. Folks who breezily dismiss “identity politics” have much to learn from Meena Alexander!

An esteemed and well-loved figure among South Asians, Asian Americans, and beyond, Meena fought bravely but lost her second bout with cancer and passed away peacefully at 8.30am on Wednesday, November 21, 2018. She had stopped her chemo treatment four days ago and was getting ready to move to a hospice. But she passed away before that move could take place.

On October 31, Meena had posted the “Krishna 3.29am” poem on her FB page, with a prefatory note that mentioned her illness. Looking back, that prose fragment and poem comprised her good-bye message to her friends and readers across the globe. I was deeply moved and also frightened by the tenor of that message. I was especially struck by this sentence, “Will I ever write another? I do not know but I keep open to the voices that speak to me even in this illness.” I responded, “This is a beautiful poem about you as Krishna and Krishna as you! And I know there are many more poems where this one came from. You will trounce the illness, your poetry will. We love you and send you strength. ♥🌸🕊️”

Meena’s passing is huge loss to the world of literature and to thousands of people whose lives were touched by her, but it is also a deeply personal loss for me. Meena and I go back to 1975, when she moved from Delhi to Hyderabad, where I had already arrived in June 1974 at ASRC (American Studies Research Centre). On June 1, 1977, we became colleagues in the brand-new

English Department at the U of Hyderabad. She would often talk and laugh about my help with the “joining report” on that day.

In my essay for “Passage to Manhattan” edited by Lopa Basu and Cynthia Leenerts, this is how I captured Meena’s arrival in Hyderabad (Meena loved my description): “In 1975, we heard about the arrival [in Hyderabad] of a bright young woman, a new Ph.D. from the UK, at one of the many major educational institutions there. Clearly, in this world of energetic cultural and intellectual activity, Meena’s arrival, almost like a new individual talent entering T.S. Eliot’s imagined “tradition,” had sent incredible waves. The existing order of talent was probably far from “ideal,” but it still faced the possibility of being altered by the introduction of a new personality that showed no Eliotian inclination for extinction. Everyone who had not met Meena yet was curious about this smart, attractive, mysterious 24-year-old woman, who was astutely cosmopolitan in a variety of ways. Among other things, Meena could talk fluently about phenomenology and structuralism in both English and French, and if one failed to follow the subtle argument she was making at a seminar (which was often the case), one could still be transfixed by her gestures, the rich scholarly flourish of her hands, which also navigated the graceful movements of her Malayali sari’s pallu. Many men saw Meena as a dark-bodied female Krishna (Meena’s ishtadev!) without the flute, and like their counterparts in Jean Toomer’s ‘Karintha,’ craved secretly to become male gopis that might form her circle. Women were no less susceptible to Meena’s charm, possibly because they knew intuitively that despite her apparent vulnerability, Meena was capable of defying the invisible ‘law of the threshold’ that controlled their own lives.”

When I was in N.Y. for SALA/MLA in Jan 2018, she insisted I come and spend an evening with her at her home in Upper Manhattan. It is a meeting I will always treasure. My long-time friendship with Meena is populated by many fond memories of personal and professional visits with each other in many locations, meals, coffees, and ongoing conversations.

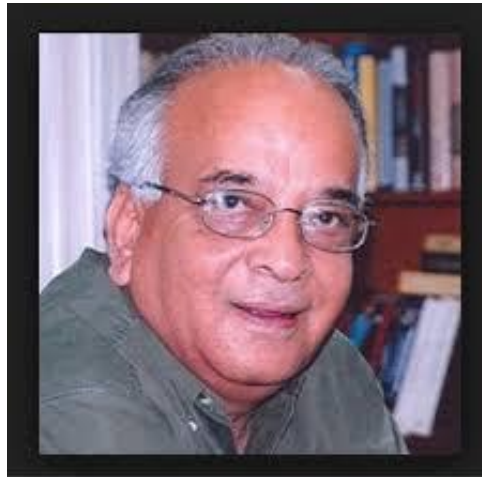
Rest in peace, dear Meena!

Amritjit Singh

**Langston Hughes Professor of English and African American Studies
College of Arts and Sciences, Ohio University**

P.C. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/meena-alexander>

MUSHIRUL HASAN



With the passing away of Mushirul Hasan on December 10, 2018, India has lost one of its finest historians and institution builders. His works on Modern Indian History, Partition History and North Indian Muslim cultural history are known for their depth and insights. He was also a connoisseur of literature and often drew on literature to broaden and deepen his understanding of some momentous events of history.

Born in Aligarh in 1949 Mushirul Hasan was educated in Aligarh Muslim University and Cambridge. The history department at AMU was known for its pathbreaking work, and he received the right training there. He was also fairly active in student politics and the cultural life of the university. The Progressive Writers Movement and IPTA were great influences in his life. He knew many of the writers associated with them personally and interacted with them... His literary and aesthetic sensibilities were evident in his writings and in the cultural life of Jamia, where his speeches were punctuated with poetry, where each building, each structure, each gate and each patch of green was given an evocative name and assumed a character of its own— Ghalib, Mir Taqi Mir, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Rabindrath Tagore, S. Ramanujan, Edward Said, Yasser Arafat, Noam Chomsky, Fidel Castro, Qurratulain Hyder, M.F. Husain ... Taking a tour of the campus became like taking a lesson on the personalities who enriched world culture and civilization. He had a lofty concept of the very idea of the university and he tried to actualise it in Jamia, working for it selflessly and tirelessly, sometimes to the detriment of his own health and personal interests.

Hasan was the most definitive historian of India's partition and the composite culture of India. His books *Legacy of a Divided Nation: Indian Muslims Since Independence*, *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization*, and *India Partitioned: The Other Face of Freedom* are landmarks in partition scholarship. *Nationalist Conscience: M A Ansari* is a fine example of biographical history while *Partners in Freedom: Jamia Millia Islamia* (with Rakhshanda Jalil) is a fine example of institutional history. His other books such as *Islam in the Subcontinent: Muslims in a Plural Society*, *From Pluralism to Separatism: Qasbas in Colonial Awadh*; *A Moral Reckoning: Muslim Intellectuals in 19th Century Delhi*, *The Nehrus: The Personal Histories*; *Images and Representations: Stories of Muslim Lives in India* (with M Asaduddin) demonstrate the extraordinary range and sweep of his scholarship.

He went out of his way to encourage talents. He had a special quality of establishing rapport with younger scholars. He collaborated with many younger colleagues, lending his name and the weight of his scholarship to give them exposure and breakthrough and getting them published by reputed publishing houses and international journals.

Mushirul Hasan was a fine and rare combination of an extraordinary scholar and institution builder. During his tenure as Jamia's Vice Chancellor, the university witnessed unprecedented growth and development. Apart from expanding and strengthening existing Faculties and Centres, he was instrumental in establishing a new Faculty (of Dentistry) and more than a dozen centres of higher learning and research, certainly a lifetime's work for any ordinary human being. Having established them, he closely monitored their progress and often expressed impatience at the pace of progress and disappointment with the quality of work produced. His greatest anxiety was that the centres established with so much thought and hard work would fall into a rut and stagnate, consumed by mediocrity and banality. No one can deny the fact that many of those occupying prominent positions in the Faculty and centres established by him would have languished in obscurity and spent their lives in lesser jobs but for the opportunities created for them by this visionary Vice Chancellor. The least they can do now is to relentlessly strive for excellence in their specific domains and bring honour and prestige to the university that he so much cherished.

Whatever his faults or imperfections (no human being is perfect) what stands out, loud and clear, is his undying love for Jamia and his total commitment to its development and his efforts to make it a coveted destination for scholars and students for all over the world. He was a warm and friendly person with a great sense of humour, who carried his scholarship lightly, with extraordinary grace and elegance. As the milling crowd of mourners who had gathered in Jamia to pay their last respects gradually receded and quiet descended on Jamia graveyard, the following lines (by Auden on Yeats, with slight variation) resonated in many a heart:

Earth, receive an honoured guest
Today, Mushirul Hasan is laid to rest ...

M Asaduddin, Professor in English, Jamia Millia Islamia

KRISHNA SOBTI



Krishna Sobti (1925-2019): The fearless writer who always put her relationship with herself on trial

A pathbreaking figure in Hindi literature, Krishna Sobti died on January 25 at the age of 93.

Jan 26, 2019

“Creation, sometimes intentionally and sometimes unintentionally in some blessed moment knocks at the inner being of the writer...A writer’s insight searches immortality for human existence in the eternity of this world...”

— *Krishna Sobti*

Deeply rooted in each of the many universes of her diverse novels, Krishna Sobti soared high in her metaphysics. Today her spirit has soared even higher to merge into “creation” in the final chapter of the astoundingly narrative of life and death. The inevitable has happened. Krishna Sobti is no more with us, physically. But she lies throbbing in *Ay Ladki*, in *Mitro Marjani*, *Dilo Danish*, *Dar Se Bichdi*, in *Zindaginama* and other fictional worlds she created with a keen eye on detail, as well as in the specific vision encapsulated within each of her novels.

Ironically, her last published novel, *Channa*, which came out just a few weeks ago, was in fact her first novel, written more than six decades ago, which she had withdrawn from the publisher on discovering that they had tried to change her language here and there. Sobti put away the novel, locking it in a trunk for decades while publishing her other works over the years. But she had always wanted to get back to *Channa* for a fresh look before giving it to a new publisher – she was clearly a perfectionist as also an extremely patient reader and editor of her own work. No one, absolutely no one, could challenge her writerly decisions, not even her own self when not in the creative mode.

Relationship with self

Dressed in her self-designed and self-tailored ghararas and usually behind dark glasses, Krishna Sobti guarded her self and identity, mentally and psychologically, from disconcerting words or scenes, and exercised her choices of personal relationships carefully and sharply. The respect and love that she commanded speak for her tenacious grip over the values and standards that she nourished, so rare in today’s day and age. As Sobti said somewhere: “How a writer accepts her ancients by not merely focussing their vision on her own self, how she forms relationships with her contemporaries and how she casts and moulds the old and new in this thoughts – all these literary behaviours limit and control a writer’s own relationship with her own self.”

This is what Sobti believed in as a writer. Her relationship with her own self was always under trial by her own witnessing self. How could she then allow anybody to disturb that self of hers? I have had an unlimited number of conversations with her, at home as well as during several of her stays in the hospital. She recalled, bit by bit, her past experiences, not so much those recorded in her novels as those from her life which informed her insights and narration. Sometimes her brother Jagdish – “Mamaji” to us – joined her in recalling childhood incidents

they had shared. The naughty child-like twinkle in her eyes stayed till the end – the spark that triggered a fire in others.

Sobti grieved intensely and suffered moral anger during the past few years over the gradual loss of compassion and the growth of the spirit of intolerance in society. In her magnum opus, a novel of epic stature, *Zindaginama*, Krishna Sobti wove a past with a futuristic vision, one that meticulously and artfully demonstrated the wholesome life of an integrated, composite society with many characters who are individually distinctive and yet cohere together despite the occasional conflict and skirmish amongst themselves. She often remarked that this novel was dated and would not be acceptable now, but she also knew that it has tremendous relevance today. Thanks to translators, *Zindaginama* is also available in English and some other languages now. Sobti fought a famous legal battle against Amrita Pritam over this title for more than two decades with characteristic grit and perseverance. Indeed, she held on to her well-thought out beliefs and concerns against all odds, irrespective of material or any other kind of loss.

Working by night

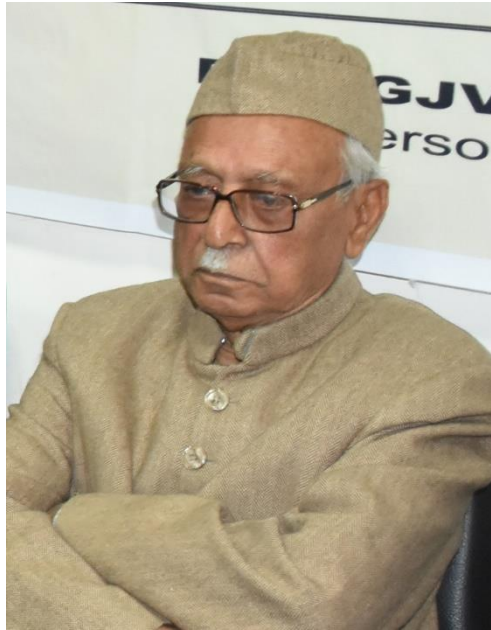
Krishna Sobti, you were indeed an entire bundle of creative contradictions! Never wishing to be clubbed in the category of “women writers”, questioning feminists on many stances, she has in fact been the most effective feminist in deed and thought. In several volumes of *Hum Hashmat*, a series of portrait-essays, she wrote in the male voice, defying the shackles of gender. She laboured to work out her autonomy in her own way with utmost courage and great art. That is why her oeuvre is distinctive and rare.

Her Mitro had to have her own desires and life...The mother and the daughter in *Ay Ladki* – even though in dialogue with each other – had to each have their own distinctive voice. Sobti’s inner voice mattered, and this she could hear most clearly in the darkness of the night. Sleeping through the daytime and fully awake at night, totally receptive to the knock of “creation” on the inner being, Krishna Sobti spent her nights at her desk, the desk that remained sacred to her. And now, as a poet at my own desk, I shall always intently wait to hear her “shabaash”, without which, for years now, I have not sent a single poem of mine for publication. The flame of Krishna Sobti’s creativity will stay alive for generations, to keep us aflame as writers, poets and sensitive readers, and members of our beautifully diverse society.

**Sukrita Paul Kumar, Aruna Asaf Ali Chair (Fmr), Cluster Innovation Centre
University of Delhi**

Courtesy: <https://scroll.in/article/910850/krishna-sobti-1925-2019-the-fearless-writer-who-always-put-her-relationship-with-herself-on-trial>

MASOODUL HASAN



The Curtain Falls: Professor Masoodul Hasan

Masoodul Hasan (1928-2019), formerly a professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University, a polymath, and a public speaker par excellence died on 9 March 2018 in Aligarh. His encyclopaedic knowledge of different languages and literatures, his sincere concern for the well-being of his students and friends, and his self-deprecating wit were defining features of his personality.

“Wit beyond measure is man’s greatest treasure”, wrote J. K. Rowling. Masoodul Hasan’s unsparing wit, an aspect of his honesty and straightforwardness, and sharp one- liners, delivered with a deadpan face, could be acerbic and entertaining in equal measure. Like conceits in metaphysical poetry or in Ghalib’s that he discussed with relish, his wit encompassed different fields and reflected his wide learning and mercurial intelligence. It was Masoodism, all his own, distinct, original, unfailing, always manifested in his speech but not absent in his writings.

His work falls into three distinct phases, with his post- retirement phase being the most productive and illuminating. Deeply devoted to teaching, and not wary of taking administrative responsibilities which sometimes included taking the bullies and the rogues in the University head on, and being a bit publication-shy-factors which can inhibit writing - his publications in the first phase of his career are still quite impressive.

“Donne’s Imagery”, published in 1958, made the argument that images were integral to Donne’s cognitive universe and they constitute “the texture of his thought.” Systematically organized into sections, Hasan’s book gives equal attention to Donne’s images drawn from chemistry, geography, law, war and death and convincingly concludes that “The study of his imagery reveals the untold story of the man”.

Another early work, his doctoral thesis submitted to the University of Liverpool in 1964, was published as *Francis Quarles: A Study of His Life and Poetry* (1966). This book is an

assessment of Francis Quarles, a lesser known seventeenth century English poet, “with special reference to the English heritage of the genres in which he worked and ...his likely influence on some later writers”. Hasan takes up both Quarles’ divine and secular poems and is especially attentive to Quarles’s use of rhetorical devices, repetition of words and phrases, his debt to “the better pilots” and his use of epigram and emblem writing.

His middle phase, devoted to bibliographical research, involved a lot of travel and typed-written letters to librarians across the country. He prepared *Rare English Books in India: A Select Bibliography* (1970) which contained a list of books published before 1800 and available in about forty-five different libraries of India. Another book *19th Century English Literary Works: A Bibliography of Rare Books Available in India* (1978) followed which focused on literary works published or reprinted between 1800 and 1899.

His third venture *Miltoniana in India: A Select Bibliography Including Translations of Milton’s Works in Indian and Other Language* (1986) mentions 500 books, 400 articles and about 360 translations including Milton’s translations in many Indian languages like Hindi and Urdu.

Hasan’s career took a very productive turn almost two decades after his retirement, all that vast reading of a lifetime crystallizing into cogent ideas and arguments in a number of books. Never one to take himself seriously Hasan, when asked to explain his passion for reading and writing, despite his old age, failing health and personal tragedies like the death of his daughter, shrugged it off with his characteristic self-deprecating wit “I am trying to justify the hefty amount of pension that the government has been giving me for three decades”.

During this phase he edited, with long and thoroughly-footnoted introductions, a series of anthologies of rare English poems and also progressed from his study of individual poets like Donne and Quarles to his broad-based, longitudinal and ambitious study of English literature in Sufic perspective in his book “Sufism and English Literature”(2007).

There are three clear threads in this potentially ground-breaking book. First, there is a discussion of direct or indirect borrowings of Sufic ideas in English literature. Hasan discusses how Marlowe and Donne could have been aware of the writings of Ibne Arabi or how the influence of Persian mystic poets Sa’di and Hafiz can be seen on the poetry of Thomas Herbert.

Secondly, Hasan traces parallelisms, images, and echoes of Sufi thought in the works of English writers. The most original contribution of Hasan is to offer a poetic of Sufic interpretations and Sufic readings of a number of English texts and opening a novel line of inquiry. His Sufic readings are a result of his love of humanity, his awareness of living in a world marked by conflict and discord, and his own effort to do some damage control as a humanist scholar of literature.

“Epithalamiums: An Anthology of Modern Poems from Chaucer to the Present” (2013), edited with Naqi Husain Jafri, offers a selection of nuptial poetry and “English Poems on Prophet Mohammad”(2015) puts together biographical, devotional, laudatory, as also some uncomplimentary poems, about the Prophet through a very exhaustive selection beginning from 14th century poets like Langland and John Lydgate to the present. The historical introduction written by the author places the poems and the attitudes they display about the Prophet in context.

“Anthology of Spousal Elegies” (2018), his last book in English, is a remarkable attempt at the macro level anthology of the subgenre of spousal elegies. A long introduction to the subject charts out the period- wise journey, provenance and popularity of the form of elegy not only in its Classical and English context, but also the scope and practice of Sanskrit, Sino-Japanese and Perso-Arabic elegy.

Masoodul Hasan also has a small but significant body of writings in Urdu, posthumously published as *Maya-e- Khewesh* (ed. Haris Mansoor, 2019), which includes his informed and perceptive book reviews, articles and a witty and creative piece on his experience in an ICU.

With Masoodul Hasan’s demise the curtain has fallen on a glorious chapter of Aligarh tahzeeb (culture) and wazadari (social grace).

Mohammad Asim Siddiqui, Professor, Department of English, AMU



AWARDS & RECOGNITION

AMRITJIT SINGH



Dr. Amritjit Singh Presented with the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award by Marquis Who's Who

ATHENS, OH, August 14, 2018 /24-7Press Release/ -- Marquis Who's Who, the world's premier publisher of biographical profiles, is proud to present Dr. Amritjit Singh with the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award. An accomplished listee, Dr. Singh celebrates many years' experience in his professional network, and has been noted for achievements, leadership qualities, and the credentials and successes he has accrued in his field. As in all Marquis Who's Who biographical volumes, individuals profiled are selected on the basis of current reference value. Factors such as position, noteworthy accomplishments, visibility, and prominence in a field are all taken into account during the selection process.

With more than 50 years of varied academic experience in three continents to his credit, Dr. Singh has worked at Ohio University as the Langston Hughes Professor of English and African American Studies since 2006. Prior to this appointment, he was a senior faculty member in English and African American Studies at Rhode Island College from 1986 to 2006, the Mary Tucker Thorp distinguished professor of arts and sciences at Rhode Island College from 1991 to 1992, an associate professor of English at Hofstra University from 1984 to 1986, and professor of English at the University of Rajasthan from 1978 to 1983. Previously, he served the University of Hyderabad as an associate professor from 1977 to 1978, the American Studies Research Centre (ASRC) in Hyderabad, India, as a research associate and Deputy Director from 1974 to 1977, Herbert H. Lehman College of CUNY as a lecturer and assistant professor between 1970 and 1974, and New York University as an instructor in English from 1971 to 1972. Dr. Singh began his career at the University of Delhi as a lecturer in English from 1965 to 1968.

Before embarking on his professional path, Dr. Singh pursued an education at Panjab University, earning a Bachelor of Arts in 1963. He continued his graduate studies with a Master

of Arts at Kurukshetra University in 1965. Following these accomplishments, he obtained a Master of Arts at New York University in 1970. Dr. Singh concluded his studies at New York University in 1973, graduating with a Doctor of Philosophy. He wrote his doctoral dissertation on Harlem Renaissance fiction under the supervision of Professor William M. Gibson, Professor James W. Tuttleton, and novelist Ralph Ellison. In 1976, Penn State Press published the book based on his doctoral work and the book, *The Novels of the Harlem Renaissance*, remains in print.

Courtesy: <https://www.24-7pressrelease.com/press-release/455538/dr-amritjit-singh-presented-with-the-albert-nelson-marquis-lifetime-achievement-award-by-marquis-whos-who>

*P.C. <https://www.ohio-forum.com/2017/12/singh-interviewed-pakistani-television-book-published-honor/>

FATIMA RIZVI



2019 Jawad memorial prize winners*

The second Jawad Memorial Prize goes to **Fatima Rizvi** for her translation of 'Hajiyani', a khaka originally written by Javed Siddiqui and published in his collection, Raushan Daan.

This year's prize was limited to non-fiction texts, either a literary essay or a khaka (pen portrait) in Urdu. The khaka in particular has had a brisk tradition and several writers have written about their contemporaries in invigorating and memorable ways. The winning entry is a charming, moving portrait of a woman who works for a family of zamindars that has fallen upon hard

times. The translator shows a strong grasp of both the Urdu and English idiom and she has done justice to the character and the memory of Hajiyani through her translation.

The submissions were judged blind.

Winner

FATIMA RIZVI

Fatima Rizvi teaches literature at the University of Lucknow. Her areas of interest include literature in translation and postcolonial literature. Her research papers have been published in journals of national and international repute and in anthologies of criticism. She translates Urdu and Hindi.

PRIZE WINNING ENTRY: <https://scroll.in/article/919121/hajiyani-read-the-piece-that-won-the-jawad-memorial-prize-for-urdu-to-english-translation>

*<https://www.alijawadzaidi.com/jmp-info>

SUBHENDU MUND



'Saraswat Samman' was conferred to Dr. Subhendu Mund by Chetabani Sahitya Samsad, Kesinga for 2017 for lifetime contribution to Odia literature, especially poetry, in the State Level Writers' Meet on 27 January 2019. The earlier recipients of the Samman include Jayanta Mahapatra among others. Dr Mund has been felicitated by several other literary and cultural organisations with similar prestigious awards in the past.



About Dr. Subhendu Mund:

Dr Subhendu Mund is a well-known Odia poet, critic, lyricist, story writer, translator and lexicographer. He is also an internationally renowned scholar in Indian English literature. He is internationally acknowledged as an authority in the early phase of Indian writing in English. He started his teaching career in 1973 as a Lecturer in English, and has held positions both as a teacher, Head of English Department and as an educational administrator, finally retiring as Principal, BJB Autonomous College in 2009. He has been a Visiting Professor, School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Management, IIT Bhubaneswar. He is the Chief Editor: Indian Journal of World Literature and Culture, **Vice-President: Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (IACLALS)** and Chairman: Association for Studies in Literature and Culture. He is also a Member of the Senate of IIT Bhubaneswar.



EVENTS AND REPORTS

Violence in the Postcolonial/Neocolonial World

15th & 16th February 2018

Centre for Teaching and Research on Postcolonial Studies, University of Leige

‘Violence in the Postcolonial/Neocolonial World’ conference, organised by the Centre for Teaching and Research on Postcolonial Studies, University of Leige, drew attention to idea that the “postcolonial”, may be better addressed as the “neo colonial” as the latter term expressed the present-day reality of nations that were former colonies - such as, Africa, the Caribbean and the subcontinent. Considering the political and economic trajectory of formerly colonial territories, “neo-colonial”, would be more appropriate. What was also a matter of interest were the aesthetic norms deployed in the literature depicting/critiquing this contemporary reality. Sessions and speakers were divided on the basis of the region being addressed. Violence, as the determining state of humankind today was discussed and debated with emphasis on types of violence – political, virtual, state violence, violence as a mode of resistance, violence as spectacle and its subsequent effects, such as the resulting refugee crisis faced by European nations.

The conference was attended by academics, activists, authors and student researchers from across universities of Europe, England and also the U.S. Papers, particularly those from the Continent leaned heavily on research in the fields of sociology and politics with minimalist theory thrown in which remained largely within the Saidian/Foucauldian paradigm. The keynote speakers lined up by the organisers proved to be an invigorating mix of activist, author and academic respectively:

- Dyab Abou Jahjah – Belgian writer and activist of Lebanese origin also the founder the Arab European League for Immigrants Rights and the Belgium Movement X for civil rights. Presently the founder head of a political party for radical equality
- Merle Collins – Professor of Comparative literature at the University of Maryland
- Fatou Diona – French-Senegalese writer living in France, and a well-known cultural figure in France

Hospitality was gracious. Working lunches were served in elegant disposable containers. Self-service was the order of the day apart from professors and students lending a helping hand. Tea/coffee breaks were spiked with specialty chocolates courtesy faculty members. Professors, formerly associated with the university, now retired also read papers and engaged vigorously with the discussion. Poetry readings/dramatisations and the post-conference regalia were memorably rendered.

Simran Chadha, Department of English, Dyal Singh College, Delhi University

The American Comparative Literature Association Conference

ACLA 2018

March 29th – April 1st 2018

University of California, Los Angeles Campus

ACLA 2018 (March 29th – April 1st). The American Comparative Literature Association, an extremely prestigious three day gathering of thinkers and innovators from across the global academia meets annually at the campus of a US university. This much feted event was convened in 2018 at the Los Angeles campus of the University of California wherein the gender neutral washrooms struck a radical cord for this researcher from the conservative Indian academia. The programme featured 217 streams as well as several pre-conference workshops and non-stream events, such as - early morning surfing on Venice beach. Typically, each stream is allocated two hours each day and three to four speakers per session. This enables one to take in the intellectually rich and diverse multiplicity of subjects being addressed during the course of the conference. Literature ranging from the Far-East to south-Asia, Latin America, Britain, America; film and media, art and sculpture all found space and voices here. The energy on campus, closed for the Easter break, was electric. I presented on a panel entitled Comparative Militarisms wherein militant resistance in south Asia was compared with its counterpart in the United States.

The keynote was delivered by Emily Apter. This was followed by an Awards ceremony for outstanding candidates and a welcoming reception in the Quad with DJ Raul Campers striking a merry note. Coffee and tea were provided across the three days at various spots around campus. The plenary session featured distinguished professor Josephina Saldana Portillo and LAXART Executive Director Hamza Walker. Poetry readings by Jennifer Scappettae and Kesten Sutherland enlivened the evenings as did post panel get-togethers at Westwood village and the Santa Monica Pier.

These two conferences that I was fortunate to have attended drew attention to the different ways in which south Asian literature and politics were being addressed by the West. The conference at Liege posited a perspective rendered by former colonisers while the one at California showed more of a neo-liberal rendering. With the former, ground realities, linguistic usage and sociological detail were paramount as were the present violence in territories they once governed. With the second it was more a matter of theorising – theorising violence, theorising militancy, resistance, and that too for territories that were remote from the reality of life in the United States. One of the probable reasons for this, apart from academic curiosity is the fact that a large chunk of the US academia hails from the sub-continent which makes the Homeland always a matter of concern/nostalgia. The theory inevitably provided a model wherein the researcher would either fit in the text or use it to refute the theory and in turn form new theoretical models. Both perspectives were wide apart and for a south Asian postcolonial/neo-colonial individual it is the complicity of both regarding the present state of affairs that is more a matter of concern.

Simran Chadha, Department of English, Dyal Singh College, Delhi University

Formation of Children's Literature Research Centre

23rd November 2018

Sahitya Adda (Literary Rendezvous), Tripura

It was on 23rd November 2018 at 1.30 pm that an organization of international significance was set up under the name of 'Children's Literature Research Centre' under the aegis of Sahitya Adda (Literary Rendezvous) at the house of Dr Bhaskar Roy Barman, Patron at Banamalipur (Middle), Agartala, West Tripura, Tripura. It has been decided at the meeting that Dr Bhaskar Roy Barman's house will act as the headquarters of the Centre.

Children's Literature Research Centre will have the following wings: 1. Children's Literature Studies; 2) Children's Film Studies; 3. Readers Club; 4. City Library; 5. Mobile Library; 6. Public Library Network on bus, at Motor Stand, Rail Station, Airport and other places of public interest and 7) Children's Book Society, Publication Division.

The centre will conduct Children's Book Fairs, Children's film festivals, seminars, workshops and so on in association with a) World Literature Society; b) Agartala Folklore Society; and c) Sahitya Adda (Literary Rendezvous) and will publish a) Children's Magazine (Biannual) and CLRC (Biannual Journal) and CLFS (Quarterly newsletter).

Bhaskar Roy Barman

Release of Second Annual Issue 2019 of Sahayog

20th January 2019

Bharat Vikas Parishad, Tripura Prant, Tripura

The second annual issue 2019 of 'Sahayog', the mouthpiece of Bharat Vikas Parishad, Tripura Prant, edited by Dr Bhaskar Roy Barman under the advice of Jaba Bhattacharjee (Dhar) and Ajit Kumar Shyam was officially released at the women's conference held on 20 January 2019 at the North-East zone of Tripura University under the auspices of Bharat Vikas Parishad, Tripura Prant and in collaboration with the Women Study Centre, Tripura University. On the editorial board are also Ranju Ray as the convener and Asim Shil as the joint convener. In fact, publication of this trilingual magazine is linked to annual events or conferences.

This annual issue encompasses eighteen articles out of which two articles are written in Hindi, ten in Bengali and the remaining six in English and they are interspersed with four poems. This issue starts its journey with two Hindi articles, the first by Vijay Laxmikant Dharurkar, Vice-Chancellor, Tripura Central University, dealing in detail with woman empowerment and the other by Dr Milan Rani Jamatia, expatiating on Kokborok poetry. After that comes Birchandra Manikya Bahadur's famous poem 'Devi' translated by Bhaskar Roy Barman. In the article 'Matrishakti Jagaran' Manjulika Debbarman deals with the motherhood enshrined in every Indian woman and draws a comparison between an Indian woman and a Western woman. The author brings in Mother Sarada, the pivotal power behind the Ramkrishna Mission to exemplify the true Indian Womanhood. In his article 'Uttar Purvanchaler Narisamaj' Sajal Acharjee discusses the societies of women in North-East India. Ajit Kumar Shyam discusses the female character of the Mahabharata, Amba in his article 'Pratibadini Amba'. Dr Rabindra

Kumar Datta in his article 'Noakhali O Chattagrami Loksahitye Nari Jivan' talks about the female life in the folk-literature peculiar to Noakhali and Chattogram. Pijush Kanti Bhattacharjee in his article '1857 Sale Pratham Swadinata Samgram' strives to bring the true history of the first freedom struggle out of the cobweb of the British misinterpretation.. In her article 'Bharater Nari Shiksha o Bhagini Nivedita' Shubhra Saha deals with Sister Nivedita's contribution to popularizing woman education in India. Shrila Datta Gupta in her article 'Panchawrin' discusses the five-fold debts we owe to saints, gods, our fathers and so on. The article 'Uttar-puva Bharater Narider Abadan' by Barnali Ghosh treats of the contributions of the women of North-East India. In 'Shricharaneshu Maa', a letter addressed to her mother, Souravi Chakraborty compares old and new in the concept of rearing children. This article is followed by a poem 'Masir Puja' by Savita Paul. In his article 'Swami Vivekananda: A Socialist Non-pareil' Swami Suparnananda deals with the socialism of Swami Vivekananda, as distinct from the socialism advocated by other monks, alienated from social life. Daya Dissanayake in his article 'Swami Vivekananda –A Reading from Sri Lanka' tells of how Swami Vivekananda's disciples and admirers of Sri Lanka reacted to his visits to Sri Lanka in 1893. The article 'Swami Vivekananda's Vision of Art and Aesthetics' by Dr Santi Nath Chattopadhyay examines Swami Vivekananda's philosophy of creative man. This article is followed by Anangamohini Devi's poem 'Submission' translated by Bhaskar Roy Barman. Prof. Chandrika Basu Majumdar deals in her article 'Economic Participation of Women in Tripura: Issues and Challenges' with woman empowerment and Arghya Saha in his article 'Decolonising the Indian Mind' with how Indian mind was decolonized. Bhaskar Roy Barman in his article 'Myth and Legend in Sri Aurobindo's Savitri' deals with the Savitri and Satyavan legend modernized in Sri Aurobindo's Savitri. This article is followed by Tagore's poem 'Come into my Room' translated by Bhaskar Roy Barman.

Bhaskar Roy Barman

“Region/Nation/Trans-Nation: Literature-Cinema Interface” Conference

31 January–2 February 2019

BITS Pilani, K. K. Birla Goa Campus

Coordinated by Parichay Patra and Amitendu Bhattacharya, the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, BITS Pilani, K. K. Birla Goa Campus, organized and hosted the international conference 'Region/Nation/Trans-Nation: Literature-Cinema Interface' on 31st January–2nd February 2019. Supported by the Indian Council of Social Science Research and the Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, and interested in offering a discursive space for a transnational dialogue between literary and cinema studies, the conference had more than a hundred presenters and participants from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Australia, and USA.



Plenary speakers included Mariano Mestman (Universided de Buenos Aires & CONICET, Argentina), Javier Campo (UNICEN & CONICET, Argentina), Fakrul Alam (East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh), Kanchuka Dharmasiri (University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka), Supriya Chaudhuri (Jadavpur University, Kolkata), M. Asaduddin (Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi), Ravi S. Vasudevan (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi), Moinak Biswas (Jadavpur University, Kolkata), Kaushik Bhaumik (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi), Brinda Bose (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi), and Asha Kuthari Chaudhuri (Gauhati University, Guwahati).

A post-conference theatre workshop for the students of BITS Goa was organized on 4th February 2019 with Kanchuka Dharmasiri as the resource person.

Amitendu Bhattacharya

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, BITS Pilani, K. K. Birla Goa Campus

**International Students' Seminar on
'Myth and Archetypes and their Workings in Drama'
27th February, 2019
Zakir Husain Delhi College (Morning) in collaboration with
Zakir Husain Delhi College (Evening)**



The near ubiquitous occurrence of seminars for graduate students at the college level in University of Delhi is a clear indication that we have begun to affirm and encourage the key role such platforms play in the overall academic experience of a college student. There is something to be said for a roomful of teeming, curious young adults learning the ropes of academic engagement from watching, listening and engaging with ideas and works of people who are around their own age and experience, especially when the conversations are mediated by teachers, scholars and thinkers with various research interests and belonging to various ages and backgrounds. It is with this view in mind that the Department of English, Zakir Husain Delhi College first began hosting seminars on issues of academic and social relevance.

This academic year too, the English Literary Society, Department of English, Zakir Husain Delhi College (Morning) in collaboration with Department of English, Zakir Husain Delhi College (Evening) organised the *International Students' Seminar on Myth and Archetypes and their Workings in Drama* on 27 February, 2019. Myths and archetypes have always fascinated humankind because of their potential to awaken us to the pre-eminence of signs and symbols. The aim of the seminar was to explore the potential of drama as a powerful mode of change, whilst focusing on the special role myths and archetypes play in actualising it. The abstracts received proposed to explore myth and archetypes in the participatory art of drama and critically engaged with their transformative role in social discourses of gender, class, and caste as well as within the realm of popular culture. The received abstracts reflected the growing urgency in young scholars to bridge the gap between activism and academics.

The seminar began with a plenary session for which the Department had invited two speakers- Michelle Hensley, a visiting Fulbright specialist and the founding artistic director of the Theatre Company, 'Ten Thousand Things' and Kira Obolensky, an award-winning playwright as well as a lecturer at the University of Minnesota's MFA Programme. Both spoke about their shared joy in collaborating over 'Ten Thousand Things' a professional theatre group working to make theatre accessible and to bring its joy and intelligence to communities on the margin. The conversation in the session revolved around issues of representation and reception for such an initiative.



The plenary session was followed by the performance of *Liaqat*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear* by the Aman Theatre Society, Zakir Husain Delhi College (Morning). The script of the play was written by Dansishmand Khan and was directed by Zeeshan Amir Khan. Students from the college as well as teachers from across departments turned up in huge numbers to attend it.



The post lunch session comprised of paper presentations that were thematically divided into three panels. The first panel chaired by Mr. Vinod Verma, Associate Professor, Maharaja Agrasen College, DU, included the 'Thematic Explorations' of myths and archetypes. The presenters spoke about the varied range of myths existing in the selected plays of Wole Soyinka and Nabaneeta Sen and the archetype of transposed heads and the reincarnation of Kaliyankattu Neeli. Issues of caste, class as well as race were brought up by presenters and discussed during the audience interaction session.

The second panel entitled 'Working with Gender' was chaired by Dr. Payal Nagpal, Associate Professor, Janki Devi Memorial College, DU. The presenters engaged with topics such as mythological recreation of *Medea* and *Draupadi*, the femininity of dancing bodies, myth regarding Buddhism and Theatre of Subversion.

The third panel focused on 'Interface with Technology and the Contemporary World'. Dr. Arjun Ghosh, Associate Professor, IIT Delhi chaired the panel. The Indian science Fiction myth, the performative myth of *SriKrishnaParijatha* and the stereotype of the Muslim in apocalyptic myth in post 9/11 TV drama were the topics that were covered in this panel.

The seminar concluded with the valedictory function where best papers awards were given in two categories- the Graduate/Postgraduate level and the Research level. Iqra Raza (MA), St. Stephens College, University of Delhi and Sneha Roy Chowdhary (PhD), Jawaharlal Nehru University won the best paper awards respectively. The entire event was live streamed on various digital platforms to ensure maximum viewership and participation.



Shubhra Dubey, Mehak Burza, Deeksha Yadav (Assistant Professors, ZHDC)

IACLALS Annual Conference 2019
Literature, Culture, and Society in the Age of Post-Truth
February 6 – 8, 2019
Pondicherry University

The IACLALS Annual Conference 2019 "Literature, Culture, and Society in the Age of Post-Truth" held from the 6th to the 8th of February at the University of Pondicherry, was efficiently and warmly steered by Professor Kalpana and her team. For a large contingent of us, traveling from an unusually freezing February in the North, Puducherry's balmy, sea side beauty was just the perfect conference getaway. And yet the three conferencing days were anything but quiet retreats. Powerful papers in packed halls jostled with post truth's many hydra heads.



The keynote address by eminent writer and public intellectual G.N. Devy, had a ruminative precision, as he spoke of the current political climate and the urgency of the times and the need to desegregate literature, teaching and all academic liaising from their ivory tower luxuries. Stephanos Stephanides, Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Cyprus, also author, poet, translator, critic, ethnographer, and documentary film maker, read from his poems on the final day and also delivered the Valedictory address. Summing up the

deliberations of the conference he spoke of Post-truth's theoretical confrontations and impasses.



The Meenakshi Mukherjee Memorial Prize 2019, went to Avishek Parui, IIT Madras for his article, "What's the use of stories that aren't even true?" Agency, Fabulation and the Epistemology of the Storytelling Self in Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* published in *South Asian Review*. The jury this year had Prof M. Sridhar, Prof Geetha Ganapathy-Doré, and Prof Angelie Multani who judged the entries.



The CDN Prize finalists this year were, Ritwick Bhattacharya, Sania Hashmi, Srishti Gupta and Srinjoyee Dutta. The entries in the first round, prior to the Conference were marked by our judges, Prof Jatin Nayak and Prof Srilata Krishnan, and in the final round read at the CDN Panel, the jury comprised Dr. H. Kalpana, Prof. Stephanos Stephanides and Prof Asaduddin. The winner in a closely fought contest was, Srinjoyee Dutta for her paper, "Fractious Truths and Factional Genres: Reading Haruki Murakami's *Kafka on the Shore* in the Post-Truth Age".



Angelie Multani, Debaditya Bhattacharya and Arjun Ghosh had new books published this year and they were in conversation with GJV Prasad, Rina Ramdev and Subhendu Mund. Our conference hosts organised evening trips to the Aurobindo Ashram and a post-conference trip to Chidambaram.



And then of course there is that very important conference marker - food, which we are happy to report was judged a winner all the way! At every lunch our Conference Director, Kalpana was there with her solicitous hospitality checking on everyone with that particular warmth which was appreciated by all. At the Conference this year, IACLALS also released a statement

condemning the stifling of political dissent, in light of the charges against Hiren Gohain, Anand Teltumbde, the JNU students and others.



Our thanks once again to all our members who joined us this year and our deep gratitude to Professor Kalpana for a memorable conference.

Rina Ramdev, Secretary, IACLALS

Transitions in Policy, Resilience and Identity: New Challenges in Indo-Canadian Studies

6th-8th February 2019

Centre for Canadian Studies, Jadavpur University

A three-day International Conference on “Transitions in Policy, Resilience and Identity: New Challenges in Indo-Canadian Studies” was organized by the Centre for Canadian Studies on 6th-8th February 2019.

The nation building process of Canada has been fraught with politics of exclusions, marginalization and discrimination since her emergence as a European settler colony. Identifying the disjunctions within her ‘multicultural mosaic’ as one of the major ramifications of the differential equations of power between her Euro-Canadian, diasporic and indigenous population, is perhaps the first step towards combating such situations of conflict and contradictions. In the light of these contemporary realities, the conference sought to address the relevance and effectiveness of Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations in the Canadian context, in its major themes and academic concerns. The conference aimed to adopt a dynamic and interdisciplinary approach towards interrogating the effectiveness of the UN mandated SDGs in Canada, with special reference to its impact on Indo-Canadian relations. More importantly, the conference explored the crucial relationship between sustainability and the humanities, which in turn facilitated a much-needed conversation on the intellectual and moral aspects of sustainable development in the Indo-Canadian context. The conference also

contributed towards a better understanding of the role of cultural policy in achieving sustainability.

The international conference was conducted over eleven academic sessions in the span of three days. The conference began with a welcome address by Professor Suchorita Chattopadhyay, which was followed by an inaugural address by Professor Samantak Das, Head, Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University. The keynote address titled “Is Canadian Identity and Multiculturalism mutually exclusive?” was delivered by Dr. Julie B. Mehta where she spoke at length about Canadian multiculturalism, the white Canadian identity, sustainable development goals and the different centres for liberal learning in Canada. In the sessions that followed over the course of the next two days, fifty five participants from over nine universities in Canada, India and Bangladesh engaged in an interdisciplinary dialogue in relation to new challenges in Indo-Canadian studies and recent developments in the politics of reconciliation. The idea of Canadian nationhood, negotiation between indigenous cultures, cultural hybridity, and domestic implementation of SDGs, the diasporic subject, all of them formed a part of the panel discussions.

An exclusive academic session focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the Governments of Canada and India, aimed at commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, was also part of the conference. Professor Sugata Hazra, Director, School of Oceanographic Studies, Jadavpur University, Dr. Dheeman Bhattacharyya, Centre for Comparative Literature, Visva Bharati, and Dr. Debashree Dattaray engaged in a panel discussion on climate change, SDGS and the impact on Indigenous communities in Canada and India.

The Conference also included a Skype outreach session with Ms. Reshma Rana Verma of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (India office) related to the various scholarships, internships, exchange programmes, job opportunities and funding programmes for students, teachers and professors through the Shastri Indo – Canadian Institute. This session was attended by a good number of faculty members and students from across disciplines.

Since 2017, the Centre for Canadian Studies, JU has been awarding the Victor J. Ramraj Memorial Award for the best paper in Canadian Diaspora Studies and the Renate Eigenbrod Memorial Award for the best paper in Indigenous Canadian Studies. These awards have been initiated by CCS with an aim to encourage the research endeavours of young scholars are being sponsored by the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (India Office). All papers were subject to blind peer review by an Inter-Institutional committee, which included a member nominated by SICI as well. This year’s conference saw the third Victor J. Ramraj Memorial Prize being awarded to Ms. Sriyanka Basak (MPhil Scholar, Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University) for her paper titled “Cracked Earth and Choked Voices: Exploring the Dynamics of Sustainability in the Narratives of Native Canadians”, while the third Renate Eigenbrod Memorial Prize was awarded to Adrishkhar Chowdhury (M.A. Student, Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University) for his paper titled “*Ajana uranta bostu, durikoroner upai hishebe Anamorphic prabhab*”. Apart from the prize sponsored by

SICI, the two winners received messages on behalf of the late Dr. Victor J Ramraj and the late Dr. Renate Eigenbrod sent by Professor Ruby Ramraj (Department of English, University of Calgary, Canada), and Dr. Peter Kulchyski (Department of Native Studies, University of Manitoba, Canada) respectively, stating how the departed scholars would have been deeply honoured to know that they are (and will be) remembered through attachment of their names to the best student papers in the respective field of research.

The three day interactive and interdisciplinary conference ended with a vote of thanks from Ms. Urmi Sengupta, Research Scholar, Centre for Canadian Studies, Jadavpur University.

Manjari Thakur, Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University

Writers Festival

14th February 2019

Janki Devi Memorial College, University of Delhi

The Writers Festival was organised by the English Department in collaboration with Iridescent (Creative Writing Society) of Janki Devi Memorial College on 14th February 2019. The theme for the festival's panel discussion was Speaking Truth to Power. Post the discussion, the panellists engaged in interactive workshops with students. The distinguished panellists were from a wide range of fields known for their artistic and creative potential.

Mr Amitesh Grover (Theatre) is a performance artist based in New Delhi and faculty member at the National School of Drama. His recent works include *Back to Work* series (2017), *Mourning* series (2014). He was nominated for Arte Laguna Prize (Italy 2018) and Forecast Award at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Germany 2015)

Mr Anant Nath (Journalism) is the editor of *The Caravan* which is India's first magazine dedicated to narrative journalism. He is also the Executive Director of the Delhi Press Group.

Ms Arpita Das (Publishing) runs the award winning Yoda Press publishing house. She is also a visiting faculty at Ashoka University. She writes regularly on book culture, publishing, gender and popular culture.

Mr Arunava Sinha (Translation) is a noted translator of Bengali literature. He has won the Crossword Translation Award for Sankar's *Chowringhee* and is the winner of the Muse India translation award for Buddhadev Bose's *When the Time is Right*.

Ms Devapriya Roy (Author) is best known for her books *The Heat and Dust Project* and *Indira*, the latter being a graphic novel.

Ms Himajali Sankar (Author) is the author of *The Stupendous Timetelling Superdog* and *Talking of Muskaan*; both books have been shortlisted for the Crossword Award for Children's Literature. She is also the Editorial Director of Simon and Schuster Publishing House.

Ms Nitoo Das (Poet) published her first collection of poems titled *Boki* in 2008 (Virtual Artists Collective, Chicago). She is a birder, caricaturist and teacher.

Ms Parvati Sharma (Author) is a prolific author. She is the author of *Jahangir: An Intimate Portrait of a Great Mughal* (2018), *The Story of Babur* (2016), *Close to Home* (2014) and *The Dead Camel and Other Stories* (2010).

Mr Shantanu Ray Chaudhuri (Editor/Author) is the Executive Editor of Penguin Random House and the author of *Whims and Icons from Bollywood*. Two of his books have won National Awards for the best book on cinema.

Mr Siddharta Sarma (Writer/Journalist) is a versatile author and journalist based in Delhi. His novel *Year of the Weeds* (2018) is a fictionalised re-telling of the Niyamgiri agitation in Odisha. He has recently published *Carpenters and Kings* (2019). Some of his earlier works are *The Grasshopper's Run* (2009) and *East of the Sun: A Nearly Stoned Walk Down the Road in a Different Land* (2010)

Public Lecture Series

The English Department of Janki Devi Memorial College conducted a public lecture series on Defining the Urban and Urbanity. The speakers were:

1. Dr Sambuddha Sen (Prof and Head, Department of English, Shiv Nadar University) gave a lecture on *Hootum Pyanchar Naksha* and the Modern Novel form on 26th February 2019.
2. Dr Debdatta Choudhury (Assistant professor in Gender Studies, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences) gave a presentation titled: 'Urban Centres across the Indo-Bangladesh Borders' on 5th March 2019.
3. Dr Maidul Islam (Assistant Professor, Political Science, Centre for Studies in Social Science) on his book *Indian Muslim(s) After Liberalisation* on 11th March 2019.

Sanjukta Naskar, Dept of English, Janki Devi Memorial College

Emerging Trends in Indian Literatures: A National Seminar

15th and 16th February, 2019

Ahmednagar College, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

Department of English, Ahmednagar College, Ahmednagar conducted a national seminar on *Emerging Trends in Indian Literatures* on 15th and 16th February, 2019. This National Seminar aimed at sharing insights, experiences and speculations about diverse aspects of Indian literatures in many languages and through comparison, theorization and analysis arriving at a newer understanding of the field in the new millennium. It was sponsored by Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune. The seminar was inaugurated by former Vice Chancellor of Gujarat Central University, Gandhinagar Dr. EV Ramkrishnan.



In his key note address, Dr. E V Ramakrishnan stressed the need to unpack the implications of such binaries as unity vs. diversity, nation vs. region, major vs. minor, colonial vs. postcolonial, Bhasha vs. English etc used in the context of framing Indian literatures. He pointed out that to evolve a viable approach to the study of Indian literatures it is important to go beyond the ideological baggage of the ‘modern’ derived from the print and the coming of the book. He stressed on the cultural mobility as reflected in inter-textual circulation of ideas to be an essential feature of the pluralistic ethos of Indian literatures. He felt that we need to develop new critical idioms that will stress the importance of translation, mediation and circulation to recover “Indian” and “literatures” as fragments that are on the move, not as homogenized wholes that are static.

Scholars from various parts of India made presentations on various issues of the theme. Eminent scholars like Dr. VB Tharakeshwar (EFLU, Hyderabad) in his paper tried to account for the current boom in the translation activities mainly focusing on translations from and into Indian languages, as it constitutes what is considered as Indian literatures in the academia, to reflect on the role played by this constitutive block in the current scenario, which is variously described as post-nationalist, post-colonialist and postmodernist phase. Dr. Sachin Ketkar (MS University, Baroda) showed that there are continuities and striking discontinuities, not only in terms of attitudes, but also in terms of literary production where veteran writers share the space with new emergent voices. He concluded that the contemporary period is heterogeneous in terms of locations of the writers, their generations and their attitudes.



Miss. Kalyanee Rajan (Shaheed Bhagat Singh Evening College, New Delhi), argued that given the Indian society's history of exclusions, disenfranchisements and constraints of female narratives, it is vital to map the growing number of distinct and eminent female voices in the contemporary milieu of literary interventions. She discussed some contemporary female exemplars of fiction writing to unravel the concerns that inform their literary oeuvre. Dr. Chandrani Chatterjee (SPPU, Pune) in her paper "Situating Literatures in Bengali", briefly tracing the genealogy of 'types' of literatures in Bengali, read selected works of Swapnamoy Chakraborty, a contemporary fiction writer based in Kolkata, to raise questions related to pedagogy and the teaching and learning of the humanities and the role of reading in making interventions in an otherwise market driven homogenizing world. Dr. Anand Ubale (Dr. BAMU, Aurangabad) explored the socio-cultural and politico-anthropological contexts which compel Dalit poets to radically interrogate and critique the hegemonic strategies and myths perpetuated through dominant narratives. Dr. Madhuri Dixit from Pemraj Sarda College, Ahmednagar in her paper "Questioning Trends: The case of Indian Drama and Theatre" explored what constitute trends in Indian drama and what role do they play in the evolution of the art form. In the technical sessions, more than thirty participants presented their research papers on various issues of the theme. More than hundred faculty, research scholars and students participated in the seminar.

The deliberations at the seminar highlighted the need for newer engagement with the framing of the category of Indian literatures. The papers presented generated discussions regarding why the field seems under-defined, how literary scholarship in India, therein, literary scholarship about India, doesn't sufficiently reflect the linguistic diversity of India. It was observed by participants that familiarity with the literary traditions of so many parts of India, so many parts of even some of the states in India, is so restricted that something called Indian literatures remains a severely delimited concept. The presentations made at the seminar illustrated how Indian literatures exist as an intersectional space across multiple languages, multiple traditions and multiple textualities. Participants at the seminar suggested that global literatures provide a broader context today for engaging with this "national" literature and that some of the fruitful ways of examining Indian literatures may emerge from close attention to the texts, textual practices, cultures of producing and consuming literary products. Closer attention to the traffic between interactions and transactions between the elite and the popular, the private and the public, the lyric and the narrative, the oral and the written, the printed and the digital, it was noted, may all add to the complex reading of a familiar field. It was also noted that though,

today, fields such as comparative literature, translation studies, dalit literature, and women's literature are some of the areas that are enriching our understanding of the rich treasure of literatures in India, there are yet so few frameworks to approach Indian literatures that there is scope for greater academic exploration of the pertinent issues.

Kamalakar Bhat, Vice Principal, Ahmednagar College, Ahmednagar

Seminar Report
19th-20th February 2019
Dyal Singh College, University of Delhi

The Department of English, Dyal Singh College held a two day seminar, on 19th and 20th February, a two day lecture series, in which the first day dealt with the theme of partition literature. 20th February focused on a series of lectures on the courses that are currently being taught at the undergraduate level. The seminar opened with an introductory note by Dr Ayesha Irfan, the convenor of this seminar.



Remembering Partition through the Prism of Partition Stories

During the course of the two-day seminar, two major films on partition were screened: *Garam Hawa*, a film by M.S. Sathyu and *Manto* by Nandita Das.

The key note speaker of this seminar was Urvashi Butalia, she spoke on “A sense of the past: looking back at the partition of India”. Urvashi Butalia is a pioneering feminist and critic who along with Ritu Menon founded the publishing houses Kali for women and later Zubaan books. Her work *The other side of Silence* is a product of more than seventy interviews that Butalia conducted with the partition survivors and emphasized the role of violence against women. She talked about how several women were forced to conceal sexual violence and trauma during partition. One should be finding a new language and vocabulary for the articulation of sexual violence. She referred to her book on partition, *The other side of silence*, how she reconciled with the strain of remembering the past, and at the same time responsibly talking about this past in a way that we do not exacerbate the cycle of violence.

Sukrita Paul Kumar spoke on “*Remembering Women: some partition stories*”. She began her lecture on attentive scanning of fictional and personal partition narratives with a conscious focus on the women protagonists, which effectively helps in a sensitive mapping of the terrain of female psyche. Further elaborating upon this she said how traumatic violence effected the lives of numberless women at the time of partition demolished all the sense of social self, granted to them by constrictive patriarchy. Citing from the various partition stories, Ismat Chughtai, Joginder Paul, Krishna Sobti etc, Paul said if victim protagonists die a physical death, they die many a psychological death. Her talk covered several tropes of literature such as forgetting, discontinuity, exclusion and silence leading to invisibility.

M. Asaduddin spoke on “*The Representation(s) of Partition in Indian Literature(s)*”: he discussed the challenges of narrating violence, while raising several questions like how can violence can be narrated without revisiting it, how do we narrate the sense of loss and trauma that people had faced, and how far can it be narrativized, how do we narrate violence which haunted them and governed their lives forever. He pointed out how black humour as a literary trope has been used to counter the pain, suffering and the fragility of the scarred lives. Further, he spoke about how such traumatic experiences shape and are shaped by language. He emphasized the role of memory and silence in shaping traumatic narratives. He reiterated the need to memorialize the collective experience in the form of partition archives or museums, like the holocaust museums located across the world. Asaduddin also pointed out that religion was not a good enough basis for partition which became apparent with the formation of Bangladesh. Language, in fact, can be a more effective and cohesive factor than religion. He alluded to the monumental works of Urdu Literature on partition like *Udaas Naslen* and *Aag Ka Dariya*. Except for Manto, all other Urdu writers wrote about partition retrospectively.

Novy Kapadia spoke on the Politics of Partition in Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow lines*. He focused on the Jethamoshoi incident, the reactions of Thamma and the use of rumour in the spread of communal riots. The recollected stories are narrated within various geographical locations. They draw heavily on the oral narratives. Partition and its aftermath play a role in weaving the plot of the novel. He talked how the trauma of partition lingers, and how the communal riots are reproduced, novel shows that political situation is not possible through nationalism. The Novel analyses Thamma going to Dhaka and being unable to bring Gretamishai back. Kapadia also talked of various stereotypes associated with the minorities like the Muslims as aggressors, and the Parsi’s as the collaborators.

There was a two-day exhibition held by the “1947 Partition Archive” outside the seminar room. The archive is a non-profit oral history organization in Berkley, California, and a registered trust in Delhi, India, that collects preserves and shares firsthand accounts of the partition of India in 1947. The creation of the 1947 Partition Archive was inspired by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial and the work of various Holocaust memorials. The 1947 Partition Archive crowd-sources the collection of partition witnesses interviews and conducts free classes, in the form of an online oral history workshop to train volunteers in the story collection and interviewing techniques

On 20th February the opening lecture was delivered by Anand Prakash. Prakash in his talk on the age of Elizabeth focused primarily on Shakespeare’s genius of presenting the contradictions

of his age. Shakespeare being a humanist was able to understand the extraordinary dialectic between the demands of the newly emergent social groups and the values of a declining feudal era.

Savita Singh, a bilingual poet and critic laid out the domain of Feminist aesthetics. Women writers are “writing out our own ontological reality.” Women writers have the responsibility to write of the existence of women as women and not as individuals. Singh made the point that patriarchy is tied to global capital whose secret empire feeds on the oppression of women. Taking from the work of Amartya Sen’s, *The Principles of Justice*, Singh spoke about the opportunities and rights that can take the most disadvantaged to being the most advantaged in the society. According to Singh, Feminism demands real equality which can only come about with the dismantling of global capital.

The participants got an opportunity to listen to some of Savita Singh’s remarkable poetry. She imbues her poetry with the power of the political imagination that beckons women to a future of dignity, strength and laughter. Singh’s advocacy of sisterhood and bonding between women irrespective of other differences will definitely go a long way in women’s fight for equality, dignity and survival.

Tapan Basu spoke On *Mahatma Gandhi: Representations and Self Representations*. He referred to Gandhi’s insistence that moment should be led by passive resistance and foregrounded the suffering, and a benchmark to measure other people’s greatness that had a transformative influence upon him. Gandhi ji earned the title of the Mahatma very early in life and he considered himself as a role model. He also did not oppose the title of the Mahatma. His quest for truth constituted experiences and temptations which he must avoid.

Rina Ramdev spoke on *The Ciphered Knot: A Reading of a Chronicle of a Death Foretold* by Marquez, it’s a blend of literature and journalism and how the novel consists of a detailed history of the circumstances of the murder. She emphasized on how this death foretold in the novel is presented through Marquez’s journalistic extravaganza.

Ayesha Irfan, Department of English, Dyal Singh College, University of Delhi

(Re)Defining Marginalities: A One Day National Conference

16th March 2019

Zakir Husain Delhi College (Evening), University of Delhi

Zakir Husain Delhi College (Evening) organized a one day National conference on (Re)Defining Marginalities on 16th March, 2019. Eminent scholars, academicians and students from major universities and institutions in India participated in the conference, making it a successful endeavour. The conference sought to address how the definition of Marginality in contemporary times has undergone a paradigm shift, and how one needs to renegotiate the very enterprise of meaning making when it comes to the understanding of what margins mean and imply. With prejudice, neglect and exclusion still defining aspects of marginality, this task of

redefining marginality and assessing its impact in our lives remains a curious task. The Department of English, Zakir Husain Delhi College (Evening) took up this challenge of exploring the dynamic of this multifaceted and layered concept and sought to provide a pulpit for the articulations of scholars and academic stalwarts alike.

The organizing committee consisted of the Principal of Zakir Husain Delhi college (Evening)



who was also the Conference Patron- Dr. Masroor Ahmad Beg, Convenor Dr. Sanjib Kumar Baishya, Co Convenor Dr. Anas Tabraiz, Organizing Secretary Dr. Madhumita Chakraborty and Treasurer Dr. Hari Prasad. The dedicated editorial team, consisting of Ms Nahid Sana Khan, Ms. Poulomi Bose, Mr. Vikas Jain, Dr. Simi Rizvi and Ms Tina Das worked laboriously to come up with a concept note that attracted more than a hundred responses, out of which the final set of papers to be presented was accepted. The other members of the team, including Ms Poonam Kaul, Dr. Tejaswini Deo, Ms. Al Moohshina Muzammil and Ms. Yashika Munjal worked efficiently to take care of the finer details that went into organising the conference.

The conference began with the Keynote address by Dr. Raj Kumar, Head, Department of English, University of Delhi, who provided a cogent overview of the topic and outlined its historical and theoretical contexts, paving way for the discussions and tenets that were to follow in the day. He suggested new approaches and directions regarding a possible reassessment of the very notion of what it entails to be marginal, and what are the continuing implications of marginality in the modern times, along with the shift in the semantic nature of marginality. The eclectic mix of papers compelled the editorial team to categorize them into a widely ranging spectrum of sessions like– ‘The Grotesque Body Disabilities and Disfigurements’ chaired by Someshwar Sati and Roomy Naqvy, that included papers focussed on reading the diseased/monstrous body as marginal, ‘Media Narratives’ chaired by Vinod Verma, which focussed on various marginal discourses in media, ‘Renegotiating The Marginal’ chaired by Milindh Awadh, which hosted papers on community based marginal locales, ‘Narratives of Confinement’ chaired by Anas Tabraiz, delineating the experience of marginality entailed by concentration camps, prisons and refugee colonies etc, ‘Gendered Spaces’ chaired by Payal Nagpal, reading marginality within the context of gender, ‘Literatures of the Diaspora’ chaired by Prem Kumari Srivastava, initiating a conversation around the marginality of diasporic identities, ‘Marginal Spaces in the Indian Context’ chaired by Praveen Priyadarshi, which focussed on north eastern, tribal and caste based marginality within the country, ‘Socio Political Resistances’ chaired by Debjani Sengupta, where presenters brought to fore a study of radical cultural tools of resisting the marginalia, ‘Folklores and Myth’ chaired by Walunir, which hosted a discussion of the relationship between marginality and folklores and the mythical.

All these presentations were held parallelly in different panels, which ensured maximum participation from students and scholars alike. The day culminated with a fruitful exchange of research, ideas, and ideologies across a plethora of topics ranging from discussions on disabled children in cinema, drug addiction and war veterans, monsters and myths, to Prison writings and dreamscapes to name a few, highlighting the range of topics the conference contained within its scope. The Valedictory session included a speech by Dr. A. Bimol Akoijam from the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, JNU. He discussed how civilization is at war with culture, and how the diversion of labour, increase in empirical knowledge along with the complex machinery of modern state has facilitated a rigorous distinction between classes which have all conspired to divide humanity, hence there is a need for understanding and launching new inquiries into the term marginality which has acquired a diversity of meanings, thus giving the conference a befitting conclusion. All the participants received certificates of participation as a memorabilia of the conference, followed by a sumptuous dinner.



The conference was merely a small effort to highlight the questions that shifting thresholds of Marginality has raised in our times and lives. While it's important to keep in mind the changes it has incurred in its very basic constitution, one must also keep in mind its historical contexts and cultural past. Only then can we set a course towards a more inclusive experience as cultural, communal beings as well as free minded individuals.

Sanjib Kumar Baishya, Department of English, Zakir Husain Delhi College (Evening)

**Cultural Self-Fashioning in North-East India:
Interplay of the Oral, the Written and the Performative Arts
22-23 March 2019**

Dept of MIL & Literary Studies, Gauhati University, Assam

A two-day national seminar on "Cultural Self-Fashioning In North-East India: Interplay of the Oral, the Written and the Performing Arts" was organized by Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literary Studies, Gauhati University and North East India Association for Human Sciences (NEIAHS) in association with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS) on 22th & 23th of March, 2019 at Gauhati University.



The inaugural session took place at the Auditorium hall of the Department of MIL & LS, Gauhati University. The inaugural session began at 10:05 AM with the speaker welcoming the guests on the stage. The guest lighted the lamp along with the performance of University Anthem. It was followed by the felicitation ceremony of the guests with a *fulam gamosa*. The guests were Prof. Kailash C. Baral (Vice-Chairman of MAKAIAS and Professor, Dept of Comparative Literature and India Studies, EFL University), Prof. T.S. Satyanath (Dept. of MIL & Literary Studies, Delhi University), Prof. Bijay K. Danta (Dept of English and Foreign Languages, Tezpur University), and Prof. Mohd. Asaduddin (Dept of English, Jamia Millia Islamia).

Prof. Mukul Chakravarty, head of the department, chaired the session. He marked the official beginning of the event with his welcoming note to the dignitaries and other guests present. Prof. Dilip Borah, coordinator of the seminar, explained the theme of the seminar.

Inaugural Speech

Prof. Kailash C. Baral: He greeted everyone present there and briefed everyone about the seminar with his enlightening words. He emphasized how culture is a very difficult term to explain as well as very complex phenomena. We have lots of cultural aspects. Everyday life is a cultural life. Now-a-days people ignore to maintain so-called tradition. He further said that this seminar will help all present to know about what kind of tradition prevailed in the past and how it will be established in future. He explained it with an example of Bihu and how its style has been changed.

Keynote Address

Prof. Venkat Rao: He delivered the keynote address and spoke about “Paralogies of the Self: A Mnemocultural Inquiry”.

Plenary Lecture 1

The lecture was delivered by Prof. Bijay K. Danta (Dept. of English and Foreign Languages, Tezpur University) on the topic of “Reclaiming a common Ancestry; or, What We Know, and Need to Know (And Do), about Sankardeva in Puri (1481, 1550), Bezbaroa in Sambalpur (1917-1937)”. It was followed by a series of parallel sessions from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM.

Plenary Lecture 2

After a short break the 2nd Plenary lecture was delivered by Prof. T. S. Satyanath (Dept. of MIL&LS, Delhi University) on “Spatiality in Mahabharata Narratives: Mapping the North-East”. Arjuna’s pilgrimage as an ascetic in the versions of the Mahabharata creates a spatiality in which the hero wanders in different parts of India. Taking the spatiality of Arjuna’s pilgrimage in the versions of Mahabharata, Satyanath in his lecture tried to map the significance of the spatiality involved in his itinerary and attempted to understand the processes of ‘transgressive itinerary spatiality’ in terms of public spheres, in which the professional practices and ideological structures are grounded.

DAY 2: Saturday, 23rd March, 2019

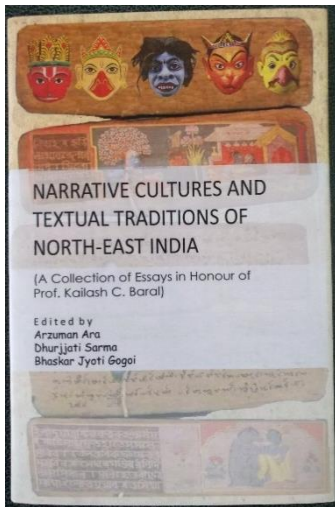
The second day of the National Seminar began at around 8:50 AM on 23rd March, 2019 in the Auditorium of the Department of MIL and Literary Studies, Gauhati University. It started with the 3rd Plenary lecture of the two-day seminar delivered by Prof. Mohd. Asaduddin (Dept. of English, Jamia Millia Islamia). Prof. D. Venkat Rao chaired the session. Prof. Mohd. Asaduddin delivered the lecture on the topic of “Literature and Self- fashioning in India’s North-East”. He addressed the question of how literature is important for self-image and self-fashioning. Literature produced by people over a certain period of time bears important markers and signposts to understand how the group or the community looks at itself and fashion its self-image. He stated that the role of literature to enhance our sense of self-image and self-fashioning is not just true for the literature of North-East but literature all over the world and to support this idea he quoted from Matthew Arnold’s series of lecture delivered in 1874 that, “Literature is nothing less than the autobiography of the nation”. He further moved on to say how the various languages of North-East have grown and developed often independent of each other and even hostile to each other. There is an awful lack of awareness even among the people of the Northeast about each other’s culture. He focused on how translated works are being taught as if they were written in English itself. He emphasized that one must strive to bring multi-lingual or multi-modal input into the classroom which makes it far more exciting and informative. He concluded his speech by sharing his own experience of how while teaching the English version of *Umrao Ujaan* to his students he places the Urdu version side by side and read from both the versions and tries to make connections.

Prof. D. Venkat Rao then reflected on the lecture delivered by Prof. Mohd. Asaduddin and presented a gist of it, emphasizing on the very issue addressed to in the lecture, as to how self-fashioning is a complex and dynamic process and depends on several factors that impinge on the collective consciousness of the people in a given moment. Hence, with this the chair concluded the session. It was then followed by a series of parallel sessions.

Valedictory Session

The session began at 3 P.M. after the lunch break. Mitra Phukan (notable writer and translator from Assam) was the chief guest of this session. The session was chaired by Prof. Jyotirmoy Prodhani and Prof. D. Venkat Rao, Prof. Bijay. K. Danta, Prof. Kailash. C. Baral was among the speakers of the session. Mitra Phukan gave her speech on the topic “North East as a literary

and cultural geography”. She spoke as a creative writer. Prof. Kailash C. Baral: He narrated his personal experience of staying in North East for 4 decades. He talked about his journey and how he was destined to be here.



As a part of the Valedictory session a book entitled *Narrative Cultures and Textual Traditions of North-East India* jointly edited by Arzuman Ara, Dhurjjati Sarma, and Bhaskar Jyoti Gogoi was also released. The logo of NEIAHS was also released.

The two-day seminar came to an end with the vote of thanks delivered by Dhurjjati Sarma.

Dhurjjati Sarma, Assistant Professor, Dept of MIL & Literary Studies, Gauhati University

Rethinking Tribal Identity
28th and 29th March 2019
Mizoram University



On the 28 and 29 of March 2019, the Department of English, Mizoram University, organized a National Conference under its UGC SAP DRS II program, titled “Rethinking Tribal Identity”. The program was inaugurated in the presence of dignitaries and with a welcome address by Dr Thongam Dhanajit Singh, the Convener of the Seminar and music by the students. The keynote was delivered by Professor GJV Prasad, Centre for English Studies, JNU. Prof Prasad’s speech

set the tone for the seminar by referring to the connotations of term 'tribe' and then addressing the various issues related to tribal identity and its revaluation in contemporary times, by discussing Temsula Aao's poetry. Due to cancellation of flights the two plenary sessions were rescheduled for the second day. The first Plenary was delivered by Prof Simi Malhotra, Director, Centre of North East Studies and Policy Research, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Prof Malhotra's talk was titled "The Lok-al in a Global World: Rethinking Tribal Culture Studies as a Means to a Cosmopolitics of the Future". Prof Nandini Saha, Head, Department of English, Jadavpur University in Kolkata delivered the second plenary titled "Tribal Life and Cultural Identity in West Bengal". Both Plenaries helped to widen and at the same time enrich the scope of the seminar by addressing several issues related to tribal identity in a changing world scenario.

The seminar had a number of very interesting and varied papers on tribal identities of several tribes from not only the North Eastern states but also of other States of India, as well the Native American tribes. Paper presenters ranged from students, research scholars and faculty members. There were parallel sessions on both days to accommodate the large number of paper presenters. Not only were several aspects about tribal life discussed but the anxiety of loss of indigenous identity was also evident. Irrespective of the tight schedule, everything went off smoothly without much delay.

The organisers should be applauded for the wonderfully packed academic sessions and the warm hospitality and great food. It is always a pleasure to be able to visit the beautiful campus surrounded by lush greenery and the mountains in the distance. It is also a department that has always organized seminars on indigenous ways of Indian life and culture. And yet again the Department of English, Mizoram University scored highly for organizing a seminar that is so relevant in India today, yet so rarely discussed.

Nandini Saha, Department of English, Jadavpur University

**UGC SAP DRS-II National Seminar on
'Translating Identity: Assimilations, Assertions, Affiliations, Aversions'
29th – 30th March, 2019
Department of English, AMU**

A National Seminar on 'Translating Identity: Assimilations, Assertions, Affiliations, Aversions' was organised by the Department of English, at Aligarh Muslim University under UGC SAP DRS-II on 29th – 30th March, 2019. The seminar was convened in order to create a space for scholars to engage in a new dialogue on translation, identity and their sister terms.

The seminar was inaugurated with the welcome speech and introductory remarks by Prof. M. Rizwan Khan, Chairperson, Department of English, AMU, where he explained the need for translations by tracing how books, as a record of history, act as carriers of civilisations that

need translations. He shared with the audience about the efforts that have been underway in the DRS-II in locating and obtaining texts from various libraries such as Rampur Raza Library, Maulana Azad Library (AMU) and National Library (Kolkata) and Khuda Bakhsh Library (Patna).

Prof Tariq Mansoor, the Vice-Chancellor, Aligarh Muslim University in his address spoke that translations should not be done in isolation but with reference to a context. He highlighted how British East India Company, in order to rule India effectively, translated many manuscripts from the Mughal period and studied them in order to understand the thinking of the Indian masses.



In his keynote address titled “Translation and Identities: Some Reflections”, Prof. M Asaduddin, Jamia Millia Islamia, reflected on the idea of identity as being a complex phenomenon that resists definition in simplistic terms. He propounded that identity should be expounded in pluralistic terms because identity/ identities “can never be singular or essentialist but are always multiple and hybrid, negotiated through translation”. In his rich and lucid address he spoke at length on the refugee crises in the world and how translation becomes an important agency in their discourse. He said, “We are witnessing an unprecedented amount of human movement and migration, both nationally and internationally, in modern times. Refugees and asylum seekers constitute a considerable amount of world population. When people leave their traditional habitats and endeavour to make a home elsewhere, their identities are redefined and renegotiated. Translation plays a seminal role in these processes of redefinition and renegotiations”.

As the first Plenary Speaker, Prof. Tharakeshwar V.B, elaborated upon the need for translation in modern time in his lecture on “Translating India: The Politics of Merging, De-merging and Emerging Identities”. Hinged on Partha Chatterjee’s postulations on the formation of anti-colonial nationalism, Prof. Tharakeshwar argued that “translation was not a mere tool in the constitution of Indian identity during the colonial rule but it was a constitutive element in the identity of India as a nation and its competing discourses during the colonial rule”. He tried to

thrash out the issue of identity formation in the colonial era, where new identities were emerging; old ones were getting split or merged to form new identities.

Keeping up with the theme of the DRS project, the first day of the seminar witnessed papers on a variety of topics including 'Translating for an Awadh Canon', 'Translating Marginality', 'Translating Historicity and 'Cultural Reception of Translation'. The second day of the seminar was equally informative comprising sessions on 'Translating Fiction', 'Cultural Aversions and Assertions in Translation' and 'Politics of Culture in Translation'. The papers called into question the very conviction that we need to translate not just to revisit what has already been written but to rethink and redefine the notion of 'identity'.

On the second day, there were two plenary lectures first by Prof. Asha Kuthari Chaudhari, Head, Department of English, Gauhati University and second by Prof. Harish Trivedi, University of Delhi. Professor Chaudhuri in her lecture titled: "Appropriations through Performance: Postcoloniality, History and Translation" said, "When we take up a dramatic text in a given language and translate it into another, there are distinctly different manifestations of the 'new' text – as it proliferates across the page unto the stage; across languages, spectators, histories and societies ... The early examples of translations of western classics to suit Indian performance situations – such as those of Shakespeare, for example, threw up radical appropriations of those texts even in the colonial era, challenging structures of power through enactment. What happens when the same processes are at play in the postcolonial space?" She discussed these issues while analysing Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Brecht's *Mother Courage* and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and Arun Sarma's *Napolean Aru Desiree*.

Professor Harish Trivedi, in his plenary lecture titled "Translation and Identity: Divergent Trajectories" said, "Over the last few decades, Translation has become more and more visible while Identity has truly come into its own. The correlation between these two practices, however, may be argued to be deeply problematic. To the extent that Identity is premised on an assumption of difference and uniqueness, it would not seem amenable to the protocols of translation. Translation, on the other hand, has for its primary function an erasure of the Identity of a text, i.e., its uniqueness, and seeks to convert it into another Identity altogether. It may, of course, still be possible to argue that despite its constitutive claim to uniqueness, there is at the heart of Identity a broad commonality which is precisely what makes Translation possible". Prof. Trivedi enthralled the participants with his lucid lecture that had a fair sprinkling of indigenous story-telling style.

The seminar concluded with the valedictory session in which Professor Mohd. Rizwan Khan, Coordinator DRS-II and Chairperson Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University, addressed the audience and extended his gratitude to the guests. He reiterated the need to revisit the issue of identity with open-mindedness and without reticence.

Siddhartha Chakraborti, Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University

National Seminar on Literature from Northeast India: Texts and Contexts

6th-7th May 2019

Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla

A two-day National Seminar on “Literature from Northeast: Texts and Contexts” was held in the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies on 6 and 7 May 2019. This Convenor of the Seminar was Dr. KM Baharul Islam, Dean, Indian Institute of Management, Kashipur. Prof. Makarand Paranjape, the Director of the Institute delivered the inaugural address. In his address while pointing out the intra Northeast differences he wondered if there was a tendency to essentialize the Northeast. He hoped that the Seminar would add to the contribution of knowledge and would be a departure from the homogenizing and essentializing discourses of the Northeast.

The keynote speaker for the National Seminar was Prof. M Asaduddin, Professor of English, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi who spoke on “Writings from India’s Northeast: Towards Making of a Category and a Canon”. In his keynote address, Prof. Asaduddin very succinctly tried to give a very detailed overview of writings in Northeast India. He started his deliberation by problematizing the category called ‘Northeast Literature’ and what is included and excluded in this category. He dwelt at length on questions of representation and on how a binary is sought to be established in opposition to the mainland India. He wondered whether such an oppositional binary was helpful. He then went on to discuss issues of publication and at length discussed the works of some seminal writers from the Northeast and emerging new writings by young writers. Prof. Baharul Islam, the convenor of the Seminar in his address spoke about the need of organizing a Seminar on the Northeast and how perspectives that would emerge from the diverse presentations would go on to build a body of work on Northeast studies.



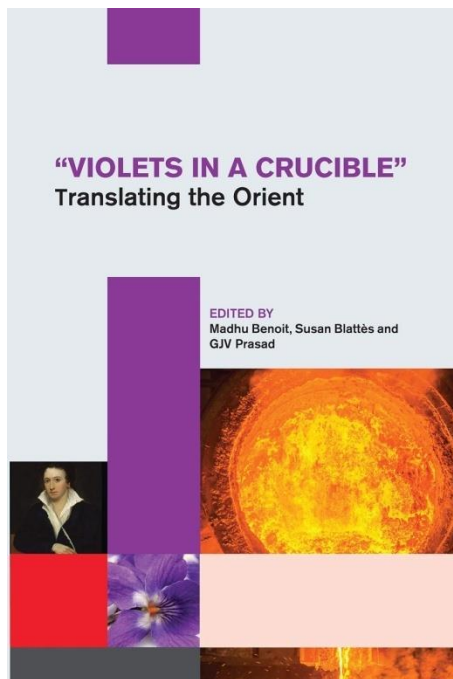
In all there were six technical sessions where as many as twenty one papers were presented. The overall thematic divisions of the sessions were: Literature from Northeast India, Cultural

Expressions in the Writings from the Periphery, Peripheral voices, Contextualizing 'Marginal' Experiences, Revisiting the Subaltern: Critical Approaches to the Literature from the Northeast and Literature as Social expression. The presentations covered a wide range of areas, and were inclusive of literature written not just in English but in the regional languages as well like Assamese, Bodo, Naga, Paitei, Mizo, to mention a few. A few papers looked into the folk forms and performances in literatures from the Northeast. A session on 'Miyah' poetry generated discussion on this emerging discourse in Northeast Literature. The Seminar was attended by the resident research associates and the fellows of the Institute who engaged in the discussions that followed each paper. The technical sessions were chaired by Prof. Jagdish Lal Dawar, Prof. KM Baharul Islam, Prof. Dambarudhar Nath, Prof. Biplab Loho Choudhury, Prof. Himadri Roy and Pro. Anjali Daimari. The Concluding session was chaired by Prof. Jaiwanti Dimri where Prof. Biplab Loho Choudhury spoke on "Border Diaspora and Literature from the Northeast." Prof. KM Baharul Islam, the convenor gave the closing remarks and the Seminar ended with the Director of IAS, Prof. Makarand Paranjape's Director's Dinner.

Anjali Daimari, Professor in English, Gauhati University



BOOK REVIEWS



"Violets in a Crucible: Translating the Orient"

Edited by Madhu Benoit, Susan Blattès and GJV Prasad

Delhi: Pencraft International, Pp. 215, Rs.800/- ISBN 978-93-82178-28-6

Books on translation and Translation Studies are aplenty. From a trickle two decades ago, it is a veritable avalanche now. Most of them seem to be repetitive and lacking in insight and wisdom that come from practice and an informed historical view. The volume under review is an honourable exception. Focussing mainly on the representation of the Orient through translation, the essays in the volume cover a vast ground, from India to Egypt, Sri Lanka to Persia and France, they engage with the translation traditions of a vast swath of literary Geography and show how translation remained at the forefront of representation of the Orient in the early stages of literary development in many countries. I was reading the volume alongside Raymond Schwab's *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of the East*, which made me value the essays all the more. However, this is just one facet of the volume. The other facet consists of translation of European texts into the languages of the Orient. Thus, the volume truly addresses the phenomenon of East-West encounter through translation.

The opening essay by Madhu Benoit, one of the editors, "The Raj and Translating the *Manavadharma Shastra*" gives a comprehensive, almost exhaustive, account of how one of the foundational texts of Hinduism, i.e. *Manavadharma Shastra*, popularly known as *Manusmriti* was translated into English and canonized because of the exigencies of the British East India Company administration. When East India Company assumed direct responsibility for the administration of civil justice in Bengal, Europeans were frequently called upon to act as judges in cases to be decided according to Hindu law. Warren Hastings found it necessary to provide a corpus of law which would replace conflicting sources and rival interpretations by pundits

and maulvis. To this effect William Jones undertook the massive project of translating ancient legal texts from Sanskrit to English. What the essay eloquently points out is that Jones' project was deeply flawed because, *Manavdharma Shastra*, a Brahminical text, could not be said to represent all castes of Hindus and those outside the pale. The other flaw was – as Said pointed out in *Orientalism* – how could an ancient text contain all the laws to govern a modern society? Thus, the writer makes the valid argument that “The East India Company's interest in locating and codifying Hindu law gave legal form to what was essentially social observances and customary law.” (13)

The next essay “Chares Wilkin's *Bhagvat-Geeta* and the problems and politics of Translating the Language(s) of Oriental Gods and Men” by Dhananjay Singh engages mainly with Wilkin's translation of Bhagwat Geeta which made this work available to the Western world and helped it gain immense popularity. What Singh explores is the deeper impulse behind translating this and other similar Oriental texts, which is, the colonial enterprise of accessing native texts in order to entrench native subjection and enhance governability. Singh explores the translation strategy undertaken by Wilkins to make a broader comment on colonial translation:

In colonial translation of this sort, the relation between the Sanskrit original and the English translation is not merely about a linguistic or cultural equivalence. The target text appropriates the Sanskrit text into the image of the culture and religion of the mother country. What gets reproduced as translation is an ambivalent relation between the colonized Sanskrit and the colonialist English. (35)

One of the highlights of this volume is that in as many as four essays the writers discuss multiple translations of the same text, and all of them are fine examples of translation criticism. In a delightful essay, “Kamasutra in English: Four Versions” Harish Trivedi discusses how the Sanskrit work was amplified with graphic illustrations in the English versions, so much so that its considerable reputation in the West and in India is due to its fame as a how-to-do manual of sex and the illustrations of coital postures rather than the cryptic text that accompanies them. This is a case where the translation takes a life (or, ‘afterlife’ as Trivedi characterises, taking off from Walter Benjamin) of its own and almost supplants the original. Trivedi traces the history of its collaborative and clandestine translation for private circulation by Richard Burton *et al* to its most current and public translation by the translator duo, Wendy Doniger and Sudhir Kakar. I find Trivedi's following reflections insightful for students of Translation Studies:

Thus, due to all kinds of extrinsic and even accidental circumstances, the *Kama Sutra* has succeeded in English translation far better than it ever did either in the original Sanskrit or in translation in any of the modern Indian languages. Such alternative canon formation is often an unpredictable and random part of the process of translation, through which a translated text assumes dimensions it never possessed in its first and original life, and which may not be found elsewhere even within the target language. (53)

Another fascinating essay about multiple translation of the same text is Sonia Farid's “Translating Literature, Allegory, or Taboo?: The case of Naguib Mahfouz's *Awlad Hartima*”. This novel nearly cost Mahfouz his life. He was permanently maimed by the assassin who wanted to kill him because of the novel's alleged blasphemous intent. The essay highlights how

challenging it can be to translate a deeply allegorical text where several possible layers of meaning cohere, and which shares the borderline between the sacred and the profane and could be interpreted as blasphemous. Arabic language, Sonia Farid argues, steeped in Islamic culture, has developed nuances and connotations accessible to the native speakers of the language, that cannot be conveyed adequately in English. So, any English translation of a piece of Arabic literature, particularly of writers like Mahfouz who was a skilled master of the language, looks like a partial translation, being unable to capture the full import of the original. In this context, one remembers Edward Said's comment about Mahfouz's translators that in English Mahfouz sounds like each of his translators, and not as the undisputed master of the language in which he wrote. The inadequacy and opacity of the English versions of *Awlad Hartima* offer Sonia Farid the occasion to engage with the concept of 'transparency' in translation which, again, is a very limited concept.

The third essay on multiple translation is by Nadia Fayidh Mohammed who discusses two Arabic translations of Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself", one by an Iraqi translator and the other by a Syrian. The writer points out how the translation of Whitman's poem was inflected by his reception in the Arab world in two different historical epochs. She shows how a poet-translator and a scholar translator bring their own individual poetics to bear on their strategy of translation of this classic American poem. In the fourth essay on multiple translation, "Poetry, Phoenix of Translation: Perspectives and Views on the Translation of *Tirukkural*" Kumarasamy Pugazhendhi makes a detailed comparison of three translations of this ancient Tamil epic written in the third century BC. Besides this study, there are two more essays that explore Tamil-French connection. "Translating Sangam Tamil poems into French: Motives and Manners of Connection" by Geetha Ganapathy-Doré explores the circumstances that led to the translation of ancient Tamil poems into French, while Shoba Sivasankaran's essay, "Cultural Exchange between Tamil and French: What Facets of the Two Worlds Are We Translating?" focuses mainly on the translation of fictional literature between Tamil and French.

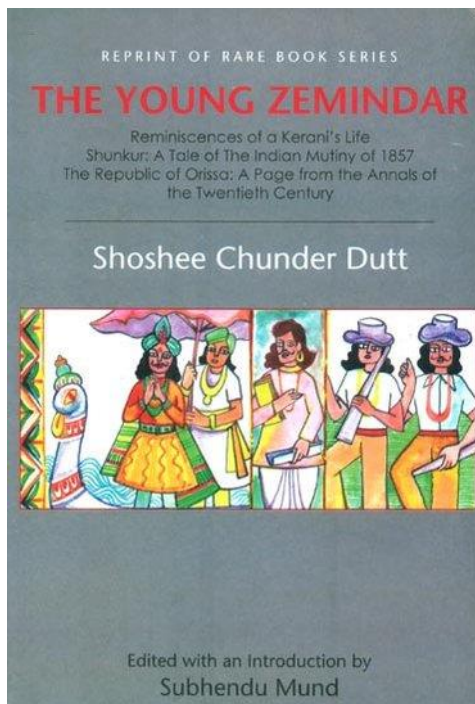
Another interesting essay in the collection is "In Search of the translator: *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* by James Morier" which explores the curious case of this text written originally in English and considered very derogatory to the Persian and was banned there. The essay traces its many translations/transformations through French into Persian when it finally became acceptable to the people of Iran. The essay "*Quand refleuriront les lilacs blancs* vs. When the Violets Bloom: An Intercultural discourse of translating French chanson into Japanese" analyses the way French chansons were 'adjusted both to the Japanese language and culture through subtle shifts in lyrics, tempo, rhythm and melody.'

All in all, *Violets in a Crucible* is an excellent collection of essays dealing with different aspects of translation. It would have been without blemish but for some printer's bloomers and editorial glitches. There are quite a few unnecessary definite articles that have escaped the proof reader's attention. On page 132, in the third line, there is a gaping hole, and then one finds several lines below, the Greek term written as a superscript dangling like a trishanku in a blank space without any word before or after. Words have got jumbled up at places ('aReadereds'p.26). Several inaccuracies have also crept in. William Jones has been turned to William James more than once (pp.28,34). In the same essay, Walt Whitman's poem has been referred to as "A Passage to India" (p.29), which is, in fact, the title of E.M. Forster's classic novel that drew inspiration

from Whitman's poem whose title is simply, "Passage to India" without the indefinite article 'A'. Lastly, I wonder why the editors forgot to mention that the essays originated from an international colloquium held at Grenoble, France, in 2016, although the Introduction to the volume quotes from the original CFP almost verbatim. Tracing the origins of the conversations that fructified in the form of the book would have made for historical continuity.

M Asaduddin, Professor in English, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

(*A fuller version of the review will appear in *ASIATIC*.)



Retrieved from History

THE YOUNG ZEMINDAR by Shoshee Chunder Dutt. Edited with an Introduction by Subhendu Mund, Sahitya Akademi, 2017. ISBN: 978-81-260-4618-8

The present volume includes four works of fiction by Shoshee Chunder Dutt (1824-85): *The Young Zemindar*, *Reminiscences of a Kerani's Life*, *Shunkur: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny of 1857* and *The Republic of Orissa: A Page from the Annals of the Twentieth Century*. Minutely edited by Subhendu Mund, the original scholar in the area of early Indian writing in English, the collection is a dedicated and sustained effort to bring out the pioneering works of the long-lost author. Belonging to the well-known Dutt Family of Bengal, Shoshee Chunder Dutt (1824-85) was an erudite reader, adept in Indian and English literatures, history and philosophy. Caught in the maelstrom of a colonized India, Dutt's works reflect his sense of solidarity with his country as well as his faith in the alien system. According to Mund, like the other writers of the last quarter of the century Dutt also apparently pleaded for a "meaningful assimilation of the two cultures" (Introduction xxv).

Dutt's works, which include fiction, poetry as well as non-fiction writings were published, mostly in periodicals, between 1845 and 1885. The author himself had published compilations of his works in *Begaliana: A Dish of Rice and Curry and Other Indigestible Ingredients* (1877) and *The Works of Shoshee Chunder Dutt* (in two series, of six volumes each, 1883-85). However, the present volume is a welcome publication because it is an omnibus of Dutt's fictional works. Incidentally, Dutt's *The Republic of Orissa: A Page from the Annals of the Twentieth Century* (1845), the second available fictional work in Indian English has also been included here. Living and working in an era of massive transformation and colonial collision, Dutt visualized "a nation emerging from the chaos of ignorance and slavery, and hastening to occupy its orbit on the grand system of civilization" (*The Republic of Orissa* 613). His imagination and narration compel the reader to be transported to Time-Future and dream of an independent and shining country. As one of the first writers of Indian Writing in English, Dutt has used the language of the colonial masters to assert his beliefs and reach out to the desired audience. By indianising his narratives, he sought to redefine patriotism and recreate the cultural identity of India by re-writing history. Mund rightly observes, Dutt "creates archetypes from Indian as well as western mythology and historical legends to metaphorize them in the contemporary Indian context." (Introduction xxiii)

The Young Zemindar narrates the story of Monohur, the young and inexperienced zemindar of a feudatory state in Bengal and Babajee Bissonath, his mentor and guide. As the protagonist moves towards a consolidation of the Indian princes and chieftains for a decisive armed invasion against the British, Dutt expresses the acceptance of the alien culture by the young minds. According to Mund, "Babajee Bissonath symbolizes the Eternal India, the undying spirit of freedom; whereas the young Monohur, who has reconciled to the inevitability, even the benignity of the British rule, represents the new generation of Indian youth" (Introduction xxvi).

Shunkur: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny of 1857 narrates the colonized brutality against the Indians. A singular attempt of a contemporary Indian writer in highlighting the first war of Indian independence, the author juxtaposes the dread of colonization with that of individual hatred which gave rise to a mutiny. Shunkur is a north Indian peasant who joins the mutiny to avenge the evils done to his wife. The moral courage and physical strength countered the warring forces. Incidentally, Dutt's autobiographical narrative *Reminiscences of a Kerani's Life* also chronicles the experience of the Mutiny and shows its impact on the common people, both Indians and Europeans.

The Republic of Orissa: A Page from the Annals of the Twentieth Century is a short fiction which fantasises the formation of the "Republic of Orissa" (read Odisha) through armed resistance. It is interesting to note that Dutt recreates the historic uprising of the eastern state of Odisha in the early nineteenth century.

Dutt's work succeeds in interweaving the themes of patriotism/nationalism vis-a-vis colonial/racial discrimination through his skilful handling of his subjects and his plots. These forgotten works reissued by Dr Mund usher in the poignant beginnings of Indian writing in English. Dr Mund has brought to light most of the Indian English writers through his intensive and extensive research and this volume brought out by Sahitya Akademi under the 'Reprint of

Rare Book Series' will prove to be a milestone in the studies of the early Indian English literature. He is justified in giving Dutt the status of "the Father of Indian English Literature". He also points out that "Dutt is perhaps the only Indian writer of his times to have interrogated the British presence in India, their interference in the time-honoured customs and practices of the country, the so-called divide-and-rule strategy they adopted to keep India divided and weak" (Introduction xlvi).

Dutt's aggressive stance of nationalism blends with Indian heroism, courage and ethical superiority which as Mund points out was a counter-narrative to the imperialist narrative of "effeminate Bengalis". Mund very aptly remarks: "What Dutt seems to be doing in his fiction as well as other writings was re-writing history to redefine national identity" (Introduction xiii).

The volume includes a long critical Introduction by Mund as well as bibliographical and biographical details which would be immensely helpful in understanding not only the author but also his times. This volume is indeed a valuable contribution to the studies in Indian English literature.

Prajna Paramita Panigrahi, Lecturer in English, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar

Odia Identity: History, Culture, Language, Literature

Subhendu Mund, Odisha Sahitya Akademi, 2017. ISBN: 81-936105-5-5

Subhendu Mund's *Odia Identity: History, Culture, Language, Literature* is the first worthwhile contribution on the exploration of Odia Identity written in English. Dr Mund, a renowned Odia poet and scholar, has presented in this volume very well researched essays on Odia literature, language, and culture and related them to the issues vexing Odia identity. Most of these essays were first presented in various conferences and seminars here and abroad and the revised, updated versions are compiled in this anthology.

Despite having a recorded history of thousands of years, and boasting of one of the oldest languages in the world with a respectable literary lineage and a rich cultural, architectural, archaeological heritage, and its own metaphysical traditions, the Odias have always been anxious over their identity. Dr Mund blames this state of affairs to a long reign of indifferent rulers and frequent political unrest: the ultimate blow being the British imperialist policy of divide and rule. Political and administrative centres of power were shifted to non-Odia locations. Odias were not allowed any administrative positions. English and Bengali were the medium of instruction in schools. Odia language was looked down upon and was considered a dialect of Bengali. Odia language and literature were treated as vulgar. For more than a century the general economic condition of the people kept on deteriorating. Severance from language, culture, tradition and wide-spread poverty, and the Great Famine called the *Na'anka Durbhiksha* of the late 1860s made the disintegration complete.

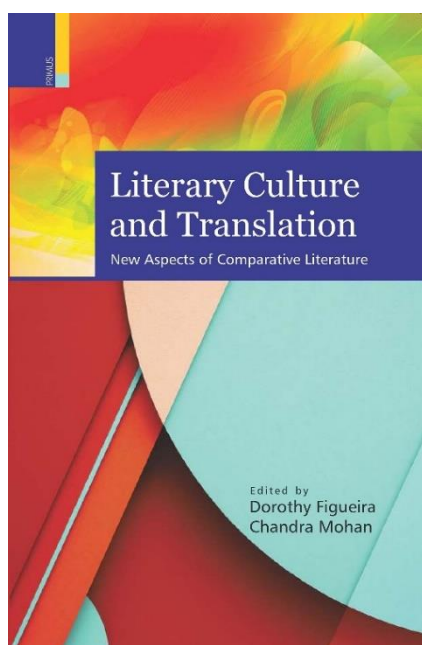
The last part of the nineteenth century saw an organised attempt of cultural consciousness among the Odias scattered under various administrative units. However, Odia, the shared language, the *Bhagavata* of Jagannath Das and the cult of Lord Jagannath kept the Odishan spirit alive. The assimilation led to the formation of a greater identity, rounder and whole, as Dr Mund avers, “But Odisha is not anonymous. May be unassuming. I like my Odisha that way” (24). Dr. Mund blames the inherent reticence, a likable(?) characteristic of the people of Odisha for the almost anonymity of Odisha.

The essays included in this anthology seek to explore the largely unknown essence of Odia identity through personalities, events and texts in the context of Odishan history and culture. Dr Mund embraces a very vast range of subjects to explore the anxieties in identity formation. He seeks to examine the crisis through the cultural conflict caused by English Education in colonial Odisha, Odia language movement, and rise of nationalism and subnationalism in colonial Odisha. His essays indeed cover a surprisingly wide range -- from performing arts, folk forms, myth and archetype, and the fusion of art forms to crisis in book publishing and readership.

The anthology talks about some of the relatively under-discussed topics in Odia literature and language. A critical study on the *Bhagabata*, and the challenges Dr Mund faced while translating the text into English makes one fascinating study. A comparative analysis of the two translations of Phakir Mohan Senapati’s autobiography provides valuable insight in the coloniser/colonised context. Dr Mund’s studies in the perception of myth and archetype in contemporary Odia literature, the interaction between performance and politics in colonial Odisha offer very interesting reading. Besides, his re-evaluation of such iconic poets and writers as Jagannath Das, Phakir Mohan Senapati, Gangadhar Meher, Baishnab Pani, Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi, as well as Odia songs of freedom movement, fusion of folk forms and drama and poetry, folk forms like *the jatra, suanga, pala and nata* open up new discourses on these subjects. His essay called “Postcolonialism and Odia Literature” is perhaps first of its kind and will prove a pathfinder for further exploration in this area of study. Special mention must be made of the essay, “Coloniser Colonised: Odisha’s Maritime History, Odia Collective Memory and Identity Politics” in which the author traces the “glorious” maritime history of the ancient Kalinga/Odisha and how it continues to influence and motivate Odias in their identity formation.

In short, Dr Mund’s book tries to discuss every aspect of the Odia life to visualise a *rounded and whole* Odia identity. I would have loved to see an essay on Lord Jagannath and the Odia literature in this anthology, but one can find references to Odisha’s reigning deity as an archetype in identity formation. There is no doubting the fact that Dr Subhendu Mund’s *Odia Identity: History, Culture, Language, Literature* is a glorious attempt on making Odisha and Odias a little bit more prominent in the global scenario. This is a work unique of its kind and would surely initiate learned discourses on the issues of Odia identity.

Prajna Paramita Panigrahi, Lecturer in English, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar



Hitting refresh on Comparative Literature and Translation

Literary Culture and Translation: New Aspects of Comparative Literature

Edited by Dorothy M. Figueira, Chandra Mohan

Primus Books, Delhi, 2017. Rs. 950/-

The fields of Comparative Literature and Translation Studies are assuming growing importance in these times of the global local. While these two fields have witnessed remarkable growth as disciplines in academia, their application in allied disciplines of Humanities has only grown, despite being written off for a number of times. Intended to be a follow-up and a contemporary retake on the landmark 1989 volume “Aspects of Comparative Literature”, Dorothy M Figueira and Chandra Mohan’s “Literary Culture and Translation: New Aspects of Comparative Literature” (2017), strives to clear the ground further with respect to the current practices and future prospects of Comparative Literature in India and elsewhere.

With the shift in focus in certain parts of the west towards Cultural Studies and World Literature, Spivak declared the death of the discipline of Comparative Literature, but as Figueira points out in her compact introduction, at the same time, ‘Comparative Literature was growing by leaps and bounds in India’, it was anything but dead! Figueira explains how Indian Comparative Literature now follows a paradigm of its own making, marking a decisive shift from the erstwhile focus on the American, British and French theory, and flourishing instead on movements or thoughts more central to Indian scenario viz. Colonial discourse analysis, postmodernism, Indian Expressions of psychoanalytic theory, feminism to name a few. Moreover, the renewed interest in Translation Studies has provided a ‘principal focus’ to Comparative Literature in India. While the Comparative Literature programs in US universities seem to be in constant search for ‘others’ or minority groups to give voice to, those in India are working towards studying and evaluating the categories within: the bhasha literatures, the Dalits, the Adivasis and the indigenous languages and literary cultures therein leading to a thriving and flourishing discipline of Comparative Literature, opines Figueira.

The volume is divided into four parts comprising in all of 21 scholarly essays: ‘Aspects of Comparative Literature’, ‘India and Elsewhere’, ‘General Translation Theory’ and ‘Case Studies’. Four of the essays have been reproduced from the 1989 volume, while some contributors from the previous volume have provided fresh insights into their analyses and practice, thirty-five years later. Several current and relatively new practitioners of Comparative Literature have been accorded space by the editors in this “improved and upgraded” version of the volume, in the parlance of software and cellphone models. Late Prof. Sisir Kumar Das’ crucial essay on “Comparative Literature in India: A Historical Perspective” is reproduced to once again reassert what Das postulated eloquently— the need to remember the hallowed Indian practice of studying its own traditions, when one conceives of an Indian Comparative Literature. Gerald Gillespie for instance, in the previous volume, had spoken about ‘Newer Trends of Comparative Studies in the west’ while in this volume, he strives to locate Indian Comparative Literature within the global consciousness through the four lenses of nation, Region, Culture and Civilization.

Speaking as both a poet and a critic, Juri Talvet’s essay makes a case for a ‘symbiosis of Comparative Literature and World Literature’ through a case study of pre— and post-independence Estonia, highlighting the fate of minor literatures and the problematic processes of Canon Formation. Ipshita Chanda’s insightful piece on ‘Comparative Literature in India: The State of the Play’ raises crucial questions about Comparative Literature and its practice in India highlighting the role of multilingualism in aiding the discipline. Subha Chakraborty Dasgupta and G N Devy talk about the role of oratures in the Indian context and the implications of loss of indigenous languages respectively. While Jasbir Jain underscores the plurality of India and the consequent necessity of translation as being the twin cores to Comparative Literature in India, and therefore the need for specifically Indian theoretical approaches, Sukrita Paul kumar offers insights into translating India as the other through a study of select texts of post-Partition literature.

Taken together, the essays work towards addressing the pivotal issues of identity and challenges for the discipline of Comparative Literature. Interweaving the interrelated areas of Comparative Literature, Translation Studies, Literary cultures across the globe, Cultural Studies and Interdisciplinary Studies, the volume works by picking up the threads from 1989, revisiting and delineating the key theoretical concerns in four parts through the voices of several leading and well-known practitioners in the field of Comparative Literature. The volume will prove to be an essential reading for all scholars and researchers in the field of Comparative Literature and Translation Studies, besides being a fitting successor to the 1989 volume.

Kalyanee Rajan, Assistant Professor of English, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Evening College, University of Delhi



CALL FOR PAPERS: CONFERENCES / VOLUMES

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Volume 7 of INDIALOGS

Guest edited by Antonia Navarro-Tejero,

Seeking contributions for a special issue dedicated to Gender and the Media

We invite work that investigates the cultural production of South Asian women in the visual arts. Across the wildly diverse landscape of South Asian visual arts — spanning countless genres and languages — women filmmakers, composers and authors are challenging the status quo, although female representation behind the camera remains dismally low, even by the still unequal international standards.

We welcome studies on films, documentaries, performances, plays, videoclips, artistic interventions, photography, sitcoms, etc, but also genres such as visual poetry, graphic novels and comics. Visual Art that uses technology as a means of activism is especially encouraged. We accept academic articles and shorter pieces, interviews, reviews or work in progress for the miscellanea section.

Topics include, but are not limited to:

- How South Asian women are transforming the visual arts;
- Multiple feminist representations of India;
- The battle with censorship;
- Fair representation in the visual art business;
- Challenging conservative sexual mores;
- Introducing experimentation in an industry dominated by men and often formulaic fare;
- South Asian women filmmakers in the art house, regional cinema, from within mainstream Bollywood and globally;
- The lens and prism through which we look at female characters/artists/actors;
- Commerce and patriarchy;
- Women-centric stories;
- Female composers and music producers;
- Serials directed by women in digital platforms such as Amazon Prime Video and Netflix;
- Feminist campaigns in social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram;
- Female leading roles in theatre;
- Activism in digital platforms;
- Artists and representations beyond the gender label: trans and hijra communities;
- Visual art production in South Asian vernacular languages.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: August 31st2019

All contributions, which must be in Microsoft Word, need to be submitted through the journal website.

Authors are kindly requested to consult the guidelines before submitting their work:

<https://revistes.uab.cat/indialogs/about/submissions#authorGuidelines>

Queries about content should be addressed to the guest editor: antonia.navarro@uco.es

and questions about the journal to the general editor: revista.indialogs@uab.cat

Thinking with the Sea: Histories of the Indian Ocean

24 June – 4 July, 2019

Jamia Millia Islamia

SPARC course on “Thinking with the Sea: Histories of the Indian Ocean”

Foreign Faculty: Dr Saarah Jappie (University of the Witwatersrand)

Host Faculty: Professor Nishat Zaidi, Professor Simi Malhotra

Duration: 2 weeks (24 June – 4 July, 2019)

Students interested in the course may register by writing to: ikhlan5667@gmail.com

The last date for registration for the courses is 10th June, 2019.

The course is open to Ph.D./M.Phil. and M.A. students. The details of the course are mentioned below. The list of the selected candidates will be notified on 15th June, 2019, thereafter, the selected candidates are expected to collect their readings.

COURSE OUTLINE

Course level: Advanced Undergraduate/ Postgraduate

Instructor: Dr Saarah Jappie (History Department, University of the Witwatersrand)

Contact details: saarah.jappie@wits.ac.za

Lecture hours: Week 1: Monday - Wednesday 10 am – 12 pm.

Week 2: Monday – Wednesday 10 am – 12pm; Thursday 10 am – 1pm.

Course Description:

This course explores the Indian Ocean world from early modern times until the mid-twentieth century, as a way to chart new histories of the Global South. By following histories of and through the ocean, the course works against nation-centred, terrestrial thinking on historical processes. It interrogates how littoral geographies, ‘islandness’ and the ocean itself have shaped understandings and experiences of the past. It further asks how we may think of Africa, the Middle East and Asia as connected through commerce, religion, the movement of unfree labour, and not least, the circulation of ideas. By charting these transoceanic flows, the course seeks to challenge the traditional pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periodization of histories of the Global South, instead thinking about connected histories that preceded, sat alongside and continue beyond the colonial and national. The course also aims to expose students, as budding researchers, to new ways of *doing* history, and consequently to begin to think about alternative frameworks and methods for their own research.

The course consists of approximately 15 contact hours, which run over two weeks (June 24-July 4, 2019). Instruction is based on an inclusive teaching model, in which students are active participants in the learning process. Each meeting will consist of a short lecture in which the instructor introduces the day’s topic, situating the readings within a broader bibliographic

landscape. The lecture will be followed by student-led discussion and, where applicable, group activities to stimulate close reading of selected texts.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course students will demonstrate:

- Comprehensive knowledge of major themes that have characterized Indian Ocean historical scholarship over the past 3 decades.
- Competence in the analysis of secondary sources, including identifying and evaluating their central arguments.
- Greater fluency and coherence in both oral and written communication.
- A basic ability to adapt historical methods and frameworks to original research.

Requirements:

Readings

Readings form the core learning materials and students are expected to come to class having engaged with the assigned literature and prepared to discuss the materials. Readings will be precirculated via a shared Dropbox folder in the weeks before the class.

Seminar presentations & response papers

Students are expected to choose one seminar theme, for which they are to provide a 5-10 minute presentation that draws out key themes and questions for class discussion. In addition to the presentation, students will submit a 500 – 750-word written response to the readings for that seminar. Responses should be submitted in hardcopy to the instructor. A roster will be pre-circulated for students to sign up for their seminar of choice.

Final Presentations

One of the aims of this course is to encourage students to think about how oceanic frameworks, methods and concepts might influence their own current or future research. On the final day of the course, students will give 10-15 minute presentations about their own research and how they might draw on the literature covered in this course to frame their work.

Meeting Schedule

The class meets for two-hour seminars three times a week, and an extended seminar on the 7th and final day of the course.

Day 1: Introducing the Ocean as Method

Readings

Karen Wigen, "Introduction," in Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal and Karen Wigen (eds.) *Seascapes: Maritime histories, littoral cultures and transoceanic exchanges* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), pp. 1 – 20.

Barbara Watson-Andaya, "Oceans Unbounded: Transversing Asia across "Area Studies," *Journal of Asian Studies* 65 (4) (2006): 669-690
Isabel Hofmeyr, "Universalizing the Indian Ocean", *PMLA*, 125, 3 (2010), pp. 1-17

Markus Vink, "Indian Ocean Studies and the 'new thalassology' in *Journal of Global History* 2:1 (2007), pp. 41-62

Pamila Gupta, "Island-ness in the Indian Ocean," in *Eyes Across the Water: Navigating the Indian Ocean*, edited by Pamila Gupta, Isabel Hofmeyr and Michael N. Pearson.. (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010) 275 – 285.

Michael N Pearson, "Littoral Society: The Concept and Problems," *Journal of World History* 17 (4) (2006): 353-373

Day 2: Merchants & Pirates: Networks of Trade

Readings

K.N. Chauduri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) [selections]

Fahad A. Bishara, *A Sea of Debt: Law and Economic Life in the Western Indian Ocean, 1780-1950* (Cambridge University Press, 2017) [selections]

Johan Mathew, *Margins of the Market: Trafficking and Capitalism across the Arabian Sea* (University of California Press, 2016) [selections]

Day 3: Forced Migration & Labour: Slavery, Exile and Indenture

Readings

Gwyn Campbell (ed.), 'Introduction' in *Abolition and its Aftermath in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

Pedro Machado 'A Forgotten Corner of the Indian Ocean: Gujarati Merchants, Portuguese India and the Mozambique Slave-Trade, c. 1730-1830' in *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia* ed. Gwyn Campbell (London & Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2004), pp. 17-32.

Clare Anderson, *Convicts in the Indian Ocean: Transportation from South Asia to Mauritius* (London, 2000) [selections]

Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge, 2008) [selections]

Day 4: Exploring Diasporic Worlds

Readings

Avtar Brah, "Introduction" in *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. Routledge: London and New York, 1996

Amrith, Sunil S. "Tamil Diasporas across the Bay of Bengal" *American Historical Review* 114, no. 3 (2009): 547-72.

Engseng Ho, "Empire through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 46.2 (2004): 210-247

Edward A. Alpers, "Recollecting Africa: Diasporic Memory in the Indian Ocean World," *African Studies Review*, 43.1 (2000), pp. 83-99

Francoise Verges and C Marimoutou, "Moorings: Indian Ocean Creolizations", *PORTAL: Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies*, 9, 1 (2012), pp. 1-39

Day 5: Twentieth Century Frameworks: The Global South and the "Third World"

Readings

Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: The New Press, 2007)

Anthony Angie, "Bandung and the Origins of Third World Sovereignty" in Luis Eslava, Michael Fakhri & Vasuki Nesiah (eds.) *Bandung, Global History, and International Law: critical pasts and pending futures* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 535-551.

Michael O. West, "An Anticolonial International? Indians, India and Africans in British Colonial Africa," in eds. Vasant Kaiwar and Sucheta Mazumdar *Antinomies of Modernity: essays on Race, Orient and Nation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 146-179.

Jean and John L. Comaroff, "Theory from the South Or, how Euro America is evolving toward Africa," *Anthropological Forum* Vol. 22 Issue 2 (July 2012), pp. 113- 131

Day 6: Cultural Geographies and Textual Networks

Readings

Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated: Literature, Conversion, and the Arabic Cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011) [selections]

Sheldon Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men* (Berkeley: U. California Press, 2006) , pp. 1-30

Sumit K. Mandal "Cultural Geographies of the Malay World: Textual Trajectories in the Indian Ocean" *Philological Encounters*. 1(1-4), 370-395

Nile Green, *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840–1915* (Cambridge University Press, 2011) pp. 1-89; 208-234.

Day 7: New Frontiers: The Field and Your Own Work

The final class will feature a short lecture on new directions in the field of Indian Ocean studies, focusing on the anthropocene. Optional readings to be assigned. The bulk of the seminar will consist of student presentations on potential new directions in their own work.

Cultural Translation and Gender: Performatory Ethics of a Translator III Annual International Conference of the Caesurae Collective Society (13 September - 15 September, 2019)

Venue: Lallgarh Palace, Bikaner, Rajasthan, India

Concept Note

Cultural Translation, as Bhabha defines it, is more of a process involving the movement of people (subjects and subjectivities) rather than the movement of texts (objects). The concept of cultural translation draws on several wide notions of translation in various fields such as social anthropology, "translation sociology", and sociologies which study communication between groups most often shaped by the processes of migration and groups in complex, fragmented societies. So the broad concept of Cultural Translation addresses problems in postmodern sociology, cultural hybridity and helps us to think about a globalizing world in which there is no start text and usually no fixed target text. The idea of cultural translation by the Indian Cultural theorist, Homi K Bhabha in the chapter titled: "How Newness Enters the World: Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Time and Trials of Cultural Translation" (in *The Location of Culture*, 1994/ 2004) offers the idea of negotiation in the "third space", which is the space for border crossing, hybridity, subversion, transgression, blasphemy, heresy and so on. According to Bhabha, the object of cultural translation is also "non-substantive translation" that comes from the position of a translator. The translator in question is an indeterminate cultural hybrid, being part of the ongoing cultural process. Bhabha also opines that translatorial movements traverse previously established borders and that the two-side borders figured by translators

produce illusory oppositions. Moreover, translation has a performatory function to play in cultural communication, between and within cultures. The cultures in question could be minority cultures and border crossings in feminist, gay, lesbian and gendered communities. Bhaba's "third space" thus opens up interesting avenues for the study of translation strategies used for gender which could be socio-cultural or interplay between biological and socio-cultural distinctions on the one hand and linguistic exponents of grammatical genders on the other. This notion of Cultural Translation has been widely used in the last two decades to understand the process of change across cultures.

In agreement with Bhabha's focus on the cultural process rather than on the materiality of the cultural product, Sherry Simon's (*Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Translation* 1996) and Luise Von Flotow's (*Translation and Gender: Translation in the Era of Feminism* 1997) monographs proclaimed a "cultural turn", to shift the focus of translation studies from linguistic/ textual analysis to a broader ideological/ cultural context using gender as an entry point. Ideas related to cultural translation and gender have become more complex and nuanced, paying more attention to political, historical, social circumstances and inequalities, ideological values, identities and individual choices. Ethics of translation translates itself to identity formation and cultural translation.

Bella Brodzki (*Can These Bones Live? Translation, Survival and Cultural Memory*, Stanford University Press, 2007), in her attempt to liberate Translation Studies which was more or less a closed discipline, and in introducing Memory Studies into translation, raises the issue of "translation as survival". Translation according to her is "a kind of critical and dynamic displacement", which attempts to voice the hitherto "unvoiced", in the original text(s) and allows the "survival text(s) to live better. It is through translation, that "what is dead, disappeared, forgotten, buried or suppressed" takes place across time, space and geography. This brings us to the ideas of postmemory, ethical responsibility of the translator or his/her (in) visibility/ gendered identity, areas of untranslatability, - all leading to cultural translations as cultural reformulations of history. To cite an example from music, there have been attempts in the contemporary times, in India and across the world to revive Dhrupad which was an almost forgotten genre, through vocal and instrumental presentations. Such an attempt has led the contemporary exponents not only to experiment with their voice modulations and instrumental re-modelling, but cultural translations leading to reformulations of the art, for its survival. Such cultural translation sparks off issues such as who should translate and how, and in what cultural context(s), and whether that could lead to corrosion / erosion of text(s) in the process of its translation for reception in the contemporary times.

This Conference of the Caesurae Collective Society thus, intends to address how cultural translation defines gender or gets defined by gender, based on the performatory ethics of the translator in a given socio-political-historical time-frame. While the Conference besides other things, would invite presentations on postmemory of events in history, asking for a fresh analysis and fresh understanding of gender and culture through "texts", it would invite presentations on contemporary history as well, addressing the socio-political mind-frame of who translates what "text (s)" and why? What ethical codes framed by his/her socio-political

context prompts the translator to such cultural translation, leading to a “cultural turn” in socio-cultural history of a nation? It would address issues of Cultural translation leading to the desirability of cultural reformulations, and question the translation of the translator, his/her visibility/invisibility and identity politics.

The broad sub-themes would include:

- ☐ Gender, Meaning and Cultural Negotiation
- ☐ Gendered Translation
- ☐ Translating Gender
- ☐ Migration, Gender and Cultural translation
- ☐ Indigenous communities in Translation and gender configurations
- ☐ Art and Gender
- ☐ Legal Verdicts and the Nation in performance
- ☐ Representation of Gender in Visuals and Multimedia
- ☐ Untranslatability of Gender
- ☐ The task of the Translator
- ☐ Linguistic Exponents of Gender
- ☐ Censorship and the Ethics of the Empowered
- ☐ Gender Representation and power politics
- ☐ Engendered Music and Language(s) in Cultural Translation
- ☐ Postmemory and Cultural Translation

Deadlines:

- ☐ Abstracts not exceeding 300 words should be sent to culturaltranslconf@gmail.com by 5th of June 2019.
 - ☐ Acceptance of Abstracts: by 10th of June 2019.
 - ☐ Early Bird Registration till 20th June: Rs 4000 + New Membership or Renewal of Annual Membership.
- (Note: Annual Membership expires on 1st of April and is Rs 500
Life Membership is Rs 5000)
- ☐ Late Registration: Rs 4500 + Rs 500 as Membership Fees for Non-Life Members
 - ☐ Local Participants (without accommodation) Rs. 2000+Rs. 500 as membership fees

*The Registration Fees would cover food, lodging for two nights, Conference Kit and Participation Certificate. The Conference participation is for registered members of the Caesurae Collective Society

Art Exhibition and a Music Workshop for local participants: Registration fees for these two events is Rs 500/- each. (details will be posted later)

Local Organizing Committee:

- ☐ Dr. Kiran Deep, Associate Professor of English, Ch. Balluram Godara Govt. Girls' College, Sriganganagar, Rajasthan
- ☐ Dr. Praveen Mirdha, Associate Professor of English, Govt. Girls College, Ajmer
- ☐ Purkaif Usta, Assistant Professor MITS, Bikaner and Usta artist.

Convener: Dr. Divya Joshi, Associate Professor of English, Govt. Dungar College, Bikaner, Rajasthan, Caesurae Life member.

Co-convener: Professor Jayita Sengupta, Chair, Dept. of English, Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University, W.B., Secretary, Caesurae Collective Society

**A One-Day National Seminar on
Gandhi and Literature: Exploring the Ideological Fronts
(Commemorating 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi)**

**Organized by
Department of English and Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow
17th August, 2019**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, undoubtedly remains a name that encapsulates more than a persona, but has rather transcended much beyond the ideological framework within which he once led the Indian national independence movement. As a man born out of the Indian soil and reared by the socio-political forces of colonial oppressions, Gandhi left the world with more than an independent nation that was yet to take its present shape. Being a guiding force with an inspirationally uplifting demeanor, Gandhi, as the 'Father of Our Nation', shall forever remain alive as an ideological front with innumerable dimensions to it.

Commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the Department of English and Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow, cordially invites Faculty Members and Research Scholars from various Departments, to 'A One Day National Seminar' that aims at an exploration of the multitude of ideological fronts that define 'Gandhi' today.

Papers are invited on, but not confined to, the following areas:

- ☐ Gandhi as an Ideology
- ☐ Gandhi and Education
- ☐ Gandhi and Literature
- ☐ Influence of Gandhi on Indian Writing in English
- ☐ Gandhi and Women Empowerment

Please send your Abstract with complete name and affiliation to the following email id:
ranuuniyalpant@gmail.com

Important Dates

Submission of Abstracts: 5th July 2019

Submission of final papers: 31st July, 2019

Registration Fee: Rs. 1000/- (To be deposited in Cash along with the duly filled Registration Form by 5th August 2019)

Onspot Registration Fee: Rs 1200/- No Accommodation will be provided.

Convener: Dr. Ranu Uniyal
Professor and Head

Department of English and M.E.L.
University of Lucknow

Advisory Committee:

1. Prof. Nishi Pandey
2. Prof. Maitreyi Priyadarshini
3. Prof. A.K. Lal
4. Prof. Madhu Singh
5. Prof. Onkar Nath Upadhyay
6. Prof. R.P. Singh

Organising Secretary Dr. Nazneen Khan

Professor

Department of English and M.E.L.

University of Lucknow

Email Id- nazneenkhanlu@gmail.com

Mobile- 9335090402



NEW PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS

BOOKS, CHAPTERS, ARTICLES etc. (In alphabetical order)

M Asaduddin (with M Umar Memon)

Chughtai & Manto: Essential Stories (flip book), Penguin Random House, 2019. 210 pages.

Sanjib Kumar Baishya

Truths in the Market. Poetry collection. Notion Press. 2019. 112 pages. ISBN: 1684664128.

Debaditya Bhattacharya

The Idea of the University: Histories and Contexts. Edited by Debaditya Bhattacharya. Taylor and Francis. 2018. 308 pages. ISBN: 0367194511.

The University Unthought: Notes for a Future. Edited by Debaditya Bhattacharya. Taylor and Francis. 2018. 298 pages. ISBN: 0367194457.

Vibha Singh Chauhan

Manto-Saheb: Friends and Enemies on the Great Maverick. Translated by Vibha Chauhan and Khalid Alvi. Speaking Tiger Publishing Private Limited. 2018. 296 pages. ISBN: 9388070259.

Eight Faces of Revenge: At the Interface / Probing the Boundaries. Edited by Vibha Singh Chauhan and Lily Halpert Zamir. Brill, The Netherlands. 2019. 144 pages. ISBN: 9004380256.

G N Devy

English and Other International Languages - Volume 37 – People's Linguistic Survey of India. Edited by G. N. Devy and T. Vijay Kumar. Orient BlackSwan. 2018. 232 pages. ISBN 978-93-5287-292-3.

People's Linguistic Survey of India, Volume 13, Part 2, The Languages of Jharkhand. Edited by G. N. Devy and Ramnika Gupta, Prabhat kumar Singh. Orient BlackSwan. 2018. 332 pages. ISBN: 978-93-5287-470-5.

The Languages of Mizoram - Volume 20, Part 2-People's Linguistic Survey of India. Edited by G. N. Devy and Lalnunthangi Chhangte. Orient BlackSwan. 2018. 260 pages. ISBN: 978-93-5287-194-0.

The Languages of Sikkim - Volume 26 - Part 2. Edited by G. N. Devy and Balaram Pandey. Orient BlackSwan. 2018. 304 pages. ISBN: 978-93-5287-253-4.

Arjun Ghosh

Nabanna of Famine and Resilience: A Play. Bijon Bhattacharya. Translated and introduced by Arjun Ghosh. Rupa Publications. 2018. 206 pages. ISBN: 9353040280.

Sukrita Paul Kumar

Country Drive. Poetry collection by Sukrita and Yasmin Ladha. Red River Press, New Delhi. 2018. 134 pages. ISBN: 819394030X.

Raj Kumar

Dalit Literature and Criticism (Literary/Cultural Theory). Orient BlackSwan. 2019. ISBN: 935287532X.

Ian H. Magedera

Indian Videshinis, European Women in India. Roli Books. 2018. 352 pages. ISBN: 9351941361.

Somdatta Mandal

The Persecuted or Dramatic Scenes Illustrative of Present State of Hindoo Society in Calcutta (1831) by Krishna Mohan Banerjee. Edited by Somdatta Mandal, Ebang Mushayera, Kolkata. 2018. 86 pages.

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