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# RE-MARKINGS

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# **RE-MARKINGS**

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Re-Markings, a biannual refereed international journal of English Letters, aims at providing a healthy forum for scholarly and authoritative views on broad sociopolitical and cultural issues of human import as evidenced in literature, art, television, cinema and journalism with special emphasis on New Literatures in English including translations and creative excursions.

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## EDITORIAL

At the dawn of the year 2020, it gives me immense pleasure to place in your hands this 41<sup>st</sup> edition of Re-Markings that celebrates a harmonious coming together of sensitive minds engaged in the common quest for a better world to live in. Like most moments in the chequered history of human civilization, these are tumultuous times fraught with adversities and challenges of all kinds wherein we are constrained to lament “What man has made of man!”

In the endless continuum of time, as one year replaces another, we are often reminded of Alfred Tennyson’s lyrical masterpiece entitled “Ring Out, Wild Bells” that he composed in 1850. 170 years later, vacillating between time past and time future, Tennyson’s poem reminds us that despite immeasurable scientific advancement, technological development supplemented by the incredible digital revolution, the gulf between the false and true, rich and poor, hope and despair, want and affluence, right and wrong, sin and righteousness, strife and peace, freedom and captivity, fear and security etc. continues to remain insurmountable in not only underdeveloped and developing nations but also in what is known as the First World. Tennyson’s belief in “the common love of good” eludes us as much as his optimism in “the thousand years of peace.”

Notwithstanding the current dismal and grave global scenario, we must not forget that what has kept us and will keep us marching ever forward is our innate belief in humanity and universal brotherhood that we have always cherished as thinking and feeling individual members of the human race. Albert Camus had so aptly pointed out:

Great ideas come into the world as gently as doves. Perhaps then, if we listen attentively, we shall hear amid the uproar of empires and nations, a faint flutter of wings, the gentle stirring of life and hope. Some will say that this hope lies in a nation; others in a man. I believe rather that it is awakened, revived, nourished, by millions of solitary individuals whose deeds and works every day negate frontiers and the crudest implications of history. As a result, there shines forth fleetingly the ever-threatened truth that each and every man, on the foundation of his own sufferings and joys, builds for all.

History of civilizations reveals to us how the ideas, ideals and selfless actions of exalted individuals have fired the imagination and enthusiasm of ordinary mortals to challenge the *status quo* for the sake of nobler

causes. The knowledge and collective wisdom that comes to us from our association with sublime literature from the Vedic and Greek times to our very own fortifies us against all odds and provides us the much-needed inspiration to work out our own strategy of survival and meaningful existence in cataclysmic and apocalyptic situations.

An essential aspect of this discourse will remain incomplete if I do not dwell upon the impact of our own writings in shaping what we ultimately tend to become in terms of our responsibilities towards the society that we inhabit. Ever since Re-Markings began its journey in March 2002, our contributors have time and again highlighted – with missionary zeal and conviction, through critical and creative renderings – issues and concerns related to religion, class, caste, race, colour, gender, child abuse, rape, censorship, human rights violation and pervasive abuse of power. Many of you may remember that in my Editorial of the March 2013 issue I had stated in no ambiguous terms how the spontaneous outrage of virtually unknown citizens against the brutal gangrape of young Nirbhaya on the night of December 16, 2012 in the heart of the nation's capital made us “realize once and for all that even in democratic political spaces it is incumbent on all of us as individual citizens to exercise our solidarity in compelling the powers that be to answer whether they are the powers that *ought to be*.” Justice has ultimately been done and the perpetrators of the gruesome crime have received what they truly deserved. It will not bring back the valiant Nirbhaya but we may take solace from the adage that “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” We pray that her bruised soul may rest in eternal peace and that her sad saga may continue to inspire posterity to raise their voice against injustice and falsehood to awaken us from our slumber of inertia.

In this age of anxiety, crises, upheavals and post-truth, wherein the world is sharply divided into rigid ideological camps, it becomes imperative for all of us to continue with our mission of doing whatever little we can to keep reminding ourselves as well as others of the inherent danger of remaining mute spectators to whatever is essentially wrong and unjust. Let us, therefore, make judicious use of our reading and writing to ensure that the “ever-threatened truth” (that Camus talked of) does not entirely lose its sheen.

With warmest good wishes to one and all for the very best of everything in 2020 and beyond,

**Nibir K. Ghosh**

Chief Editor

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**AMERICAN STUDIES AND  
EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES:  
A CONVERSATION WITH WALTER HOELBLING**

*Nibir K. Ghosh*

Professor Walter W. Hoelbling is retired professor and former chair of the American Studies Department at Graz University, Austria. After 40+ years of research, teaching & administration he now has more time to write poetry and pay occasional visits to members of his global patchwork family in the USA, Europe, and Australia. With Gaby Pötscher he published two books of poetry, *Love Lust Loss* (2003) and *Think Twice* (2006); his poems are also included in *Vienna Views* (2006), *Aesthetica 22* (2008), *A World Assembly of Poets: Contemporary Poems* (2017), several other print collections, as well as in 9 issues of *gangan.at/mags/lit-mag*. In 2018 he published his first collection of poems in German, *Gemischter Satz. Gedichte*. In this conversation Walter Hoelbling talks about his interests and concerns as an academic, a poet and an American Studies activist in Austria.

**Ghosh:** Warm and cordial greetings from Re-Markings. How did you feel being a part of *A World Assembly of Poets*, an anthology of poems published by Re-Markings as a special number in November 2017? What do you think of such a harmonious coming-together of poets from all continents and fifty-six countries in our crises-ridden times?

**Hoelbling:** I was pleasantly surprised and happy to contribute. Even though poets and writers usually have an above-average international awareness and point of view, being together between the covers of an anthology creates a special sense of belonging together. Looking at the current tendencies of reawakening nationalism in many countries, in my opinion any action that promotes mutual tolerance and understanding is in high demand and much appreciated.

**Ghosh:** In your most recent poem, "Happy News Year," you have expressed the wish for 2020 to be a year where the "news" becomes "more elevating" by foregrounding "the positive" rather than what is "sensational/ alarmist/ frightening." Is your optimism centred around a possible change-in-heart among politicians or those engaged in perpetuating a clash of civilizations as Samuel Huntington had visualised?

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## GANDHI: 150 YEARS AFTER HIS BIRTH

*Jonah Raskin*

On the same day that Nibir Ghosh invited me to write an essay about Gandhi for *Re-Markings* I read online that Gandhi's ashes had been "removed" from a memorial in Bapu Bhawan where they had been for 71 years. The "thieves," as they have been called in the media, "robbed" the ashes on the 150th anniversary of Gandhi's birth. The "vandals" (that word seems appropriate) also wrote "traitor" in green paint across photographs of the man dubbed "the father of the nation," as the *London Daily Telegraph* put it.

The *Times of India* reported that it was the word "*deshdrohi*" not "traitor" which was written on the photos. Rewa City Congress chief Gurmeet Singh Mangu reported to the police that an urn with Gandhi's ashes was stolen. A police officer was quoted in *The Times of India* as saying, "We are not probing it." By now, nearly everyone in India and in much of the world surely knows about the incident which has also drawn attention to the 150th anniversary of Gandhi's birth in 1869 in Gujarat. Now we all have the opportunity to look back at his life. I have the opportunity to reexamine my own evolving views of Gandhi.

My first reaction to the theft of his ashes was shock. My first coherent, or perhaps not so coherent, thought was that "no one is safe in our world today, not even the dead." If Gandhi's memorial could be vandalized and his ashes taken, then it seemed to me that the memorial for any historical figure could be vandalized. Also, it occurred to me that some issues never die. As the American novelist William Faulkner observed, "The past is never dead. Actually, it's not even past." Faulkner's observation is certainly true of the American South where slavery, the Civil War (1861-1865) and the period known as Reconstruction (1863-1877)—which tried to right wrongs—have never gone away.

- **Jonah Raskin**, former chair of the Communication Studies Department at Sonoma State University, U.S.A., is the author of fourteen major books.

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## ARTLESS IN HIS ART: THE CASE OF NIDA FAZLI

*Anisur Rahman*

“Nida” is an Arabic word which means “call” or “voice.” It is a proper name for both the genders but it also implies a voice from the heavens. It is surely a counter of expression that has several other connotations than these. There must be something providential about it that someone who was named Muqtaqa Hasan at birth chose Nida as his pen name to which he added Fazli to establish his connection with his ancestral place called Fazila in Kashmir. In doing this, the person who became Nida Fazli (1938-2016) sent a message around that he was rooted in his soil and wrote a kind of poetry that had an amazingly individual tone and tenor. Not quite aware of how far his voice would reach, he kept writing till he found that it had reached out indeed and had given him a definite identity during his own lifetime. This voice has stayed on with us even after his passing away. He beckons, as if, to remember the departed ones of whom he too is one.

*Jaane waalon se raabta rakhna*

*Dosto rasm-e fatiha rakhna*

[Friends, keep in touch with those gone by/ Friends, keep praying for those gone by]

*Safar mein dhoop to hogi jo chal sako to chalo*

*Sabhi hain bheed mein tum bhi nikal sako to chalo*

[The sun will keep company but move if you may/ All move in this crowd, you too move if you may]

Born in Delhi, Nida Fazli received his education in Gwalior but moved to the then Bombay in the early 60s where he was destined to earn his livelihood. After working with two well-known publications of those days--*Blitz* and *Dharmyug*—the poet in him looked towards the so-called Bollywood in the 80s and found a break to write lyrics for films. Carrying on with this new professional engagement to earn his living, he also continued writing his poetry that sustained him in every other way.

- **Dr. Anisur Rahman** is a literary critic, translator, and poet. Formerly a Professor of English at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. He is currently Senior Advisor at Rekhta Foundation.

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## **SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE: PRISON REFLECTIONS ON ART, LIFE AND HUMANITY**

*Sanjay Kumar Misra*

I have no idea what Einstein said or thought about Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose; but what he said about Mahatma Gandhi is equally true of Subhas Chandra Bose. Einstein said of Gandhiji: "Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth" ([www.saada.org](http://www.saada.org)). The personality, exploits and achievements of Netaji were such that he too seems to have been an improbable figure from history. The whole world recognizes Netaji as a man of action, a supreme warrior, a military strategist of the highest order, indefatigable freedom fighter and extraordinary leader of Azad Hind Fauz. The heroism of Netaji is legendary and it is more than enough to merit him such a noble thought as that of Einstein about Gandhiji. But not just action, Netaji was a man given to a great deal of deep thinking and sensitivity. He was an extremely intelligent man with a great sense of learning and reflection. Here I want to talk about certain views of Netaji on art, music, literature, philosophy and the like with a view to focus on his softer side, which he had in ample measure considering his love for and conjugality with Emilie Schenk.

The correspondence between Dilip Kumar Roy and Subhas Chandra Bose offers us a glimpse into the literary and artistic side of Bose. The writings and speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose have been presented in *Netaji: Collected Works*, volumes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, edited by Sisir Kumar Bose and Sugata Bose, and published by the Netaji Research Bureau, Kolkata. The volume 3 entitled *In Burmese Prisons* containing Netaji's correspondence from May 1923 to July 1926 has epistolary communication between Roy and Bose in regard to art, philosophy and literature. Netaji was exiled in Burma (now called Myanmar) in 1924 at the age of 27 and lived in a prison in Mandalay till 1927. He was a voracious reader and a prolific writer of letters. He wrote countless letters to his kith and kin, friends, colleagues, cohorts, political leaders, national and international in his relatively short span of life while struggling and fighting for India's freedom from all over.

- **Dr. Sanjay Kumar Misra** is Associate Professor in the Department of English at R.B.S. College, Agra.

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**THE SICKNESS OF DESPAIR:  
A STUDY OF SNOWMAN'S DILEMMA IN  
MARGARET ATWOOD'S *ORYX AND CRAKE***

*Tanu Gupta & Pooja Singal*

Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*, first published in 2003, was shortlisted for the 2003 Man Booker Prize for Fiction and for the 2004 Orange Prize for Fiction. The novel has been described as speculative fiction and adventure romance rather than science fiction because it deals with things that we already know and have already started doing. In dystopian and post apocalyptic fiction, the human race is ensnared in the web of hope. Human beings keep oscillating between different opinions, damned by the sense of spiritual barrenness. Moreover, literary dystopias deal with the theme of failure of the attempt to attain the earthly ideal. *Oryx and Crake* is a meditation on the degraded human condition. Margaret Atwood, being a visionary artist, sketches a brave new world, predicting civilization's collapse and succinctly capturing the shift from hope to desperation. She illustrates the ultimate apocalyptic disaster when Crake uses both his scientific genius and his apparent moral depravity to attempt wiping off, and then recreating, the entire human race. In contrast, the narrative voice of Snowman or Jimmy, the protagonist, gradually reveals a world of seclusion and alienation for the compassionate readers. Distinctly bleak picture of the future is illustrated through acute characteristics like: class divisions through gated communities, total discharge of humanitarian concerns, undue genetic engineering, and unashamed disrespect for morality with acceptance of child pornography and sexual slavery.

*The novel* opens with Snowman waking up to the desolate world and identifying his own place in this post-Apocalyptic world as the "Abominable Snowman—existing and not existing, flickering at the edges of blizzards, ape-like man or manlike ape, stealthy, elusive, known only through rumors and through its backward-pointing footprints" (8).

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## SUBALTERN READING OF MARATHI NEW WAVE CINEMA

*Melwyn S. Pinto*

### 1. Introduction

Film as an art may not have been a subaltern medium *per se*. But the medium largely attracted working class and blue-collared audience in the initial years 'transforming cinema into a site of mass entertainment' (Grainge, et al. 22). During its beginning years, film was considered a path of the menials, not to be trodden by the cultured. Traditionally the film actors were not people of high status. Acting in films was considered very cheap as the medium was perceived as 'low art' as against the theatre which was seen as 'legitimate' art (Ibid. 94). In the Indian context, in the early stages men impersonated as women to play female roles. Film as a medium had a humble origin and there were serious doubts if the medium would survive at all. But, today, the medium has not only survived, it is thriving to be perhaps the most effective visual medium entertaining, educating and informing masses.

If one traces the history of Indian cinema, especially post-Independence, one cannot miss the evolution of this medium corresponding with the evolution of India as a democratic nation itself. Just after the Independence, when the nation was trying hard to put its resources together to rise as a nation under the leadership of Nehru having a socialist outlook, there emerged films attuning to and vibrating with this phenomenon. Thus, the angst of the poor and the rural masses and their struggle for survival are portrayed in the early films of Raj Kapoor, Bimal Roy, Guru Dutt, Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, among others.

However, with the steady growth in Indian economy, urbanisation and progress in literacy we see cinema too keeping its date with the urban, the industrial and the middleclass phenomenon. These are the decades of films of the likes of Dev Anand, Amitabh Bachchan, Rajesh Khanna, and others. However, it is also true that the subaltern frustrations were never to be missed on the visual canvas of these films.

- **Melwyn S. Pinto** teaches in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at St. Aloysius College, Mangalore.

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**DIASPORIC DISPLACEMENT IN  
M. G. VASSANJI'S *NO NEW LAND***

***Krupa Sophia Jeyachandran & Urvashi Kaushal***

Moyez Gulamhussein Vassanji was born in Nairobi, Kenya on May 30, 1950 to parents of Gujarati descent. His ancestry can be traced to Gir Gadhada, Jam Jodhpur and Porbandar in the Gujarat state of India. His ancestors had moved to Kenya in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and both his parents were born in East Africa. Having taken a scholarship to the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States of America in 1970, he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1974. In 1978, he obtained a Ph.D. in theoretical nuclear physics from the University of Pennsylvania. In 1978, Vassanji moved to Canada and presently writes from there. Diaspora is one of the major themes in Vassanji's works. In fact, he is known as a diaspora writer. He himself lived in double diaspora and has vaulted across three continents.

Vassanji's characters demonstrate the angst of being in a state of diaspora. Nurdin Lalani in *No New Land*, Vikram Lall in *The In-Between World of Vikram Lall*, Kamal Punja in *The Magic of Saida*, Karsan Dargawalla in *The Assassin's Song* and Ramji in *Amriika* possess a liminal state and are mercilessly caught in the web of diaspora. Dealing with identity crises in an unfamiliar territory, their standing is limited as they are first, second or third generation migrants. Salman Rushdie, Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha and many other postcolonial critics employ the term hybridity to point to the emergence of new, dynamic, mixed cultures and identities. Many of Vassanji's characters too are hybrid and live in a transnational, cosmopolitan liminality. The hyphenated space deposits a sense of displacement and alienation

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**NARRATING HISTORY AND  
HISTORICISING PERFORMANCE:  
ARTHUR MILLER'S *THE CRUCIBLE***

*Tanya Mander*

A work of art and literature challenges the rigidity and dogmatic perceptions which settle like fine dust on a society. It subtly yet effectively offers a perspective (deep and different) and contests the constructs of our society that we usually experience as cultural entities. Great philosophers (Aristotle, Hegel, Marx) considered “art” in any of its forms as “way of transmitting knowledge” (Boal et al. 1). The perspective, social standing and economic conditions of an artist have re-defined over the centuries this knowledge. ‘Art’ is a problematic territory; with its ability to influence, provoke and state all that is uncomfortable and reflect all that is not acknowledged. The constructs of artistic, scientific, philosophical knowledge with its subsets of being subjective or objective; abstract or concrete; social or individual have helped the powerful to maintain power and have facilitated the growth of a sphere of knowledge that fosters a parallel view. The dialectics around knowledge has highlighted the role that ‘art’ plays in deciphering the truth of our world with its systems, ideologies and discourses.

Greek drama is considered to be to be the starting point of the idea of instructions to the public at large. The stage became an arena for dissemination of ideas, introduction of great debates and information on religion and morality. For Greeks, theatre, stage and drama stood as metaphor for ‘Public Space’, several studies “demonstrate that the theatre – like the agora, the assembly of the citizen (Ecclesia) and tribunal (Eliea) – was founded by the polis to guarantee the process of self-acknowledgement of the individuals as members of the community” (Zappulla112). It was theatre that facilitated the transposition of debates, contentious issues and the dialectics of vision (which were otherwise political) onto the stage. It functioned both as an institution of education and political learning; and also of artistic explanation.

- **Dr. Tanya Mander** is Assistant Professor of English at Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab.

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## REFLECTION OF MYTHICAL AND CULTURAL MILIEU IN AMISH TRIPATHI'S SHIVA TRILOGY

*Shalini Bhargava*

An amalgam of myth, cultural milieu and tradition has been the foundation of various mythological tales and folklores which reflect the progress of civilization and culture. The mythical stories narrated by various writers depict the culture, psychology, philosophy, fantasy, values and beliefs of the people of a nation and bring forth their interests. "Myth, says Devdutt Patnaik, "is truth which is subjective, intuitive, cultural and grounded in faith.... It is a cultural construct, a common understanding of the world that binds the individuals and communities together" (Patnaik 13-15).

India is a land where there is a culmination of diversified culture and traditions. One of the richest elements of Indian culture is Indian mythology and the new age writers are approaching mythology with a new perspective using the themes and mythical characters with their charisma to appeal to the senses of the readers. These narratives have passed from one generation to another in the form of inherited scriptures. The earliest works were the four Vedas and the gods that emerged as the powerful 'Trimurti' included 'Brahma' – The Creator, 'Vishnu' – The Preserver and 'Shiva' – The Destroyer. The contemporary writers of the era reflect the Indianness in their writings by depicting customs, traditions, culture and mythology of this land of deities and kings. The magical realm of mythology blended with culture and religious ethos along with the creativity and fantasy of the writers brings out interesting tales which are popular amongst the masses. According to Romila Thapar, "In many ways narrative art provides a bridge whether it be stories relating to the life of the Buddha or the mythology surrounding the deities. At one level these are representations of reality, but are not merely that, and their other meanings also have to be read. Similarly, there remains the perennial question of whether icon of a deity is to be viewed primarily as an aesthetic object or a religious representation or both or much more" (Thapar xxix).

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**WALKING TO (W)REST THE REAL:  
ROUSSEAU’S FIRST AND TENTH WALK IN HIS  
*REVERIES OF THE SOLITARY WALKER***

*Satvir Singh*

Walking, the act of putting one foot in front of another to move forward, is usually supposed to be an activity ordinary enough to be regarded unworthy of any serious thought. However, the ordinary act of walking may be hiding the unknown extraordinary facts about the human mind and body. Bill Levant asks why legs are neglected for hands, as there is enough literature on hands but not much on legs, feet and their primary job walking, which can give an altogether new orientation to the way we think about ourselves and the world. He further observes that human destination is not to be reached in thinking alone; hence, the need to “start with the walking body” (415). Not only has walking played a key role in the rise of hominids or “great apes”, it keeps hidden in it some other deepest secrets about the human evolutionary journey as well. It was but obvious for such a universal human act to have played some kind of important role in one of the greatest human aesthetic achievements – literature. As readers what we receive is the finished product of literature, be that a novel, a short story, a drama, a poem or an epic. The common reader hardly ever inquires into the conditions of its making. However, it is here that walking often plays an anonymous but vital role; it has usually been an activity behind the scenes, with barely any presence visible clearly in the text. But certain works of literature have represented walking in so prominent a way that walking not only appears in the text as such but also becomes a structure, a motif and a conduit, so much so that there emerges a pattern that deserves in-depth study. Representations of the experience of walking in the world and the way the world is experienced while walking have undergone dramatic transformations down the ages. It should be, therefore, interesting and significant to study the historical trajectory of the practice of walking as it has appeared and often shaped several works of important writers from around the world in the last two centuries. Some of these works are Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (1782),

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## MODERN THEATRE: A DRAMATIST'S EVOLUTION THROUGH ANGST, EXHAUSTION AND HOPE

*Rakhi Vyas*

Drama, like all other literary and artistic genres, is in a perennial state of flux, working to resonate the spectrum of human actions in the very cultural milieu of its special origin. It imitates human subsistence in all its hues and shades. What and how we live is vivified in the writer's magical design. The times of men are no better recorded but in a literary work that comes to represent a whole compendium of manners and customs and the very sign of the reigning intellect of that time. The fabric of the play and the pulse of the contemporary society are inextricably synthesized with each other as the playwright himself becomes a progeny of his times who does not dwell in some vacuum but in an ever-changing kaleidoscope of our human society. The very impulses and experiences of the society become the raw material of his plays and he becomes the most contextually efficacious when he seeks to dramatise the essential thoughts and feelings ruling the psyche of his immediate society. The present paper is an effort to delve into the landscape of modern drama with its ever-universal strain of existential predicaments and an entirely innovative theatrical space – where anger and ennui do not don a hysterical soul but become a quiescent morass of cynicism born out of the grimness and impossibility of life.

The territory of modern theatre is suffused with the subjective angst, protest and a logical metaphysical revolt emanating from the playwright himself when he is confronted with the deplorable state of life at large. The rebel dramatist proceeds by dialogue and implies debate and conflict. August Strindberg, Eugene O'Neill, Henrik Ibsen and George Bernard Shaw identify themselves with their dramatic characters to a great extent. Masking his experiences in the plays, Bertolt Brecht speaks directly through the third person narrator while Pirandello, Jean Genet and Samuel Beckett can be seen devising their arts in terms of an almost solipsistic concept. In the later American and British theatrical scenes too we witness playwrights like Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Edward Albee, Jack Gelber, Harold Pinter, John Osborne, Tom Stoppard carving out an absurdist's view of the human condition.

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## QUEER DISCOURSE IN INDIC MYTHS: 'OTHER' STORIES FROM A GENDER-FLUID WORLD

*Seema Sinha & Kumar Sankar Bhattacharya*

Gender and sexuality in the Indic myths have long been a subject of academic research (Brodbeck and Black, 2007; Smith, 1985; Dumezil, 1988; Hildebeitl, 1980). Asexual reproduction has been referred to several times over in *The Mahabharata*. The celebrated Guru Dronacharya proudly proclaimed that he was born 'ayonija, i.e. not out of a womb (1:61). The fabled Guru of the Pandavas was born out of a 'water pot' (1.120). Guru Kripacharya took birth from a clump of reed (1.120). The commander-in chief of the army of the Devas, Kartikeyan, also called Skanda, was born when Fire met Fire, i.e. from the union of Lord Shiva and God Agni (1.60). The Epic recounts the haunting story of Shikhandi, the trans-gender, who was presented as Shikhandini the princess. In yet another instance of gender-bending *The Mahabharata* cites the example of King Yuvanashwa who drank the sacred water meant for his wife and gave birth to Mandhata, who in turn was wet-nursed by Lord Indra (3:126). Vashishtha, the great sage, was born of two Vedic Gods, Mitra and Varuna (1.59). The Epic makes Arjuna take up the role of Brihannala, the eunuch, who as a warrior saves the fortunes of the Matsya Empire (4: 2). The Epic casts Vishnu as Mohini, the enchantress, who saved the Devas by killing Rahu and Ketu (1:16). It reiterates the Upanishadic rendition of Shiva as the primal 'Purusha' who was one with Prakriti, lauding him as 'Ardhanarishwara'.

This study examines the gender-fluid characters who exist in Liminality and on the threshold of Celebration/Condemnation. It is intriguing that while *The Mahabharata* throws up several examples of positive role-models from amongst the gender-fluid characters, there are numerous references to trans-genders, each steeped with hatred, contempt and condescension. Bhishma is denounced by Shishupal for behaving like a eunuch (9:57). Yudhishtira is called a eunuch by Bhima for having resigned to the life of disgrace (2.38.2). Draupadi challenges her husbands to stop being eunuchs (4.15.21).

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## MULTICULTURAL OUTPOURINGS IN THE POETRY OF SYLVIA PLATH AND KAMALA DAS

*Rajan Lal*

The term “Indo-Anglian”, currently known as “Indian Writing in English,” is employed to denote the original literary creations in the English language by Indians. Today the bulk of Indian Writing in English has developed into a substantial body of literature and has captured the pulse of the Indian sensibility amidst the crossroads of multicultural outpourings and influences around us. The English Language is no more a monopoly of the British or their Allies. It is legitimate to view the Indo-Anglian literature as a curious native eruption and an expression of the Indian creative urges. However, the difference of cultural identity may force us to adopt a different status for different literatures. That’s why the Americans wielded their maximum efforts in establishing their cultural identity in the form of their literature in English. Matthew Arnold disregarded the difference between the English literature and the American literature and declared, “We on both sides of Atlantic are the contributors to one and the same literature” (Arnold 21). In this manner, the writings of the different nations and different communities written in English voice the cultural identity of their respective circumstances.

Almost a similar effort is needed to establish the identity of the Indian Writing in English. This is a matter of great interest in the present context because the Indian literary tradition is rich in itself but its flow through the English language produces a curious pattern and hybrid literature of unique beauty. K.R.S. Iyengar says in this connection, “The best Indo-Anglian poets have given us something which neither English poetry nor any other regional literatures can give; in other words, they have effected a true marriage of Indian processes of poetic experience with English formulae of verse expressions” (Iyengar 4).

There are a number of creative writers who have created Indian sensibility and hybridity through the English tongue and have established a station of rank in the long list of the creative artists like Toru Dutta, Ram Mohan Roy, Aurobindo, Tagore, Sarojini Naidu and Swami Vivekanand. Indian Writing in English basically falls into three phases: the imitative, the assimilative and the experimental.

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## **VILLAGE AS THE CENTRE: SPACE IN RAJA RAO'S *KANTHAPURA***

*Sarita Pareek*

Generally, village is considered to be at the periphery and cities form the nucleus of life. In Raja Rao's maiden novel *Kanthapura*, the narrative explores the consciousness of a small village in south India to establish the centrality of rural life in India. The political overtones in *Kanthapura* - the village; its active struggle under Gandhi's influence against the colonial power which exists in the form of Skeffington Coffee Estate situated outside the village and controlled by the "Sahib", - may force one to surmise that the center of this struggle is in the city (or cities) where Gandhi resides. True, the influence of Gandhi comes from cities and the village moves to its tune. However, we may surmise that Gandhi and his ideology is not the theme of the novel, rather, it is how people face the troubles and turmoil which befall them as a consequence of following this ideology that forms the core of the novel.

Scholars like K.K. Singh believe that "the theme is the impact of Gandhi's name and ideas on an obscure Indian village (Singh 56). Though this idea represents an aspect yet it appears to be a rather simplistic approach to this complex novel. In fact, the text presents a centre of struggle within a centre. The national movement is central to India during the pre-independence age, and *Kanthapura* becomes a miniature India with the national movement having the same impact on people's mind. Thus, the wider spectrum of freedom struggle is condensed into the fight of *Kanthapura* against the "Redman."

In this struggle all sections of society come together. Indian social life is divided along the lines of caste and *Kanthapura* too is caste-ridden where different castes occupy different areas of the village. These spatial details are vividly described. From the opening lines to the end we are given particulars not of persons but of places of the village, highlighting the importance of space in the novel.

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## MASS EXODUS OF KASHMIRI PANDITS: CONTENTIONS AND CONTESTATIONS

*Shaifta Ayoub*

The Hindus from Kashmir Valley, the Kashmiri Pandits (KPs), comprised the largest non-Muslim minority with a distinct religion and unique culture of their own. However, the armed insurgency in Kashmir post-1988 precipitated a mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits. “The 1990s saw Kashmir spiraling into a vortex of violence; large sections of the population, notably Kashmiri Hindus from the valley, were displaced and exiled” (Kaul 1996: 41). Almost 95% of the 160,000- 170,000 people left the Valley, which is often interpreted as a case of ethnic cleansing (Evans 2002:19).

As the uprising broke out across the Valley in early 1990, approximately one hundred thousand Pandits left their Valley home for Jammu city and Delhi in a few weeks in February and March, in one of the most controversial episodes of the war in Kashmir (Bose 2003:119- 120). However, history fails to chronicle the exact reason behind their exodus. Unfortunately, this uncertainty obscures the real facts and the writers, based on what favours their preexisting beliefs interpret the matter subjectively. As George Orwell rightly says, “What is peculiar to our age is the abandonment of the idea that history could be truthfully written” (qtd. in Ferns 1988:124).

### **Reality/Realities of the Pandit Exodus**

“Political language . . . is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind” (Orwell 2002:10). Contemporary world epitomizes a 'post-truth' era, which worships at the altar of deceit, lies, and self-centeredness. The knowledge proliferated in it offers multiple realities instead of a single 'Reality,' which does not inform but breeds confusion, ambiguity, doubt, and an anxious uncertain consciousness. The post-truth is a condition which is akin to Orwell's dystopia where “the very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world. Lies will pass into history” (qtd. in Ferns 1988:124).

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## **WOMEN, GENDER ROLES AND SOCIO-CULTURAL MATRIX IN ISMAT CHUGTAI'S SHORT STORIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO "LINGERING FRAGRANCE" AND "THE WEDDING SUIT"**

*Eram Shaheen Ansari*

Since time immemorial, the world is divided into male and female. Sex is the pivot based on which this division took place, and from this division emerged 'gender'— a social construct. Mitra Srijeeta quotes Anne Oakley's observation in an article:

Sex is a word that refers to the biological difference between male and female: the visible difference in genitalia, the related difference in procreative function. 'Gender,' however, is a matter of culture: it refers to the social classification into 'masculine' and 'feminine' (78).

It is society and culture that molds this gender construct and leads to the 'othering' of the female. Simone de Beauvoir, a French feminist, has used the term "subject" and the "other" (26) to highlight how women are determined and differentiated in relation to men. The "self" is the man who controls her and rules over her and "other" is the woman who has no identity of her own, yet she defines the "self." Such a notion gives rise to patriarchy, where the male becomes the instrument to wield power, and it is this power that defines their relationship to the "other" (Beauvoir 26). The present paper focuses on two stories of Ismat Chughtai namely "Badan ki Khushboo" translated into English as "Lingering Fragrance" by Tahira Naqvi and "Chauthi ka Jora" translated into English as "The Wedding Suit" by M. Asaduddin. The paper seeks to deal with issues of marriage, female sexuality, sexual abuse, gender discrimination, and exploitation of women against the backdrop of the patriarchal society in which women are marginalized. Evaluation and interpretation of Ismat Chughtai's select short stories from a gynocentric point of view seek to project the experiences of women in a hegemonic patriarchal society. In Indian society women are subordinates to men in the public and private sphere. Although not a minority, women's lives, experiences, and values have been kept at the periphery, whereas men's experiences are assumed to be central to society.

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## PAST SHAPING THE FUTURE: TAMIM ANSARY'S *GAMES WITHOUT RULES*

*Namita Chouhan*

The bomb was huge. It brought silence. The tanks took away people's voices and left. They even took Grandfather's voice away. Grandfather can't talk anymore, he can't tell me off...The child laughs and runs away..." (*Earth and Ashes 2*)

These lines by Atiq Rahimi, taken from his novella *Earth and Ashes*, sets the tone of the paper about the repercussions of Afghan war on people especially a child who lost his ability to speak and hear during Soviet's bombing of an Afghan village with an aim to depopulate them. The behavior of the child is indicative of the innocence of childhood where he is under the impression that it is the world which is being devastated due to bomb not him and he believes himself lucky for being spared by the enemies. In his innocence the child makes fun of the world around him which has become silent.

Afghanistan is a country which was intruded through several invasions by outsiders specially the first world countries like Britain, Russia, America. The war had a devastating impact on its populace including men, women and children. In present globalized world the instability in the country like Afghanistan is not only a threat to its neighbouring countries but to the world at large. There is a need to address this issue with a quick concern about the prevailing conditions of the life of common man in Afghanistan and a long felt need to bring peace and stability in the world.

Though Afghanistan has a long history of war and oppression, the events of 9/11 placed the country on the world map and people became interested about the happenings in Afghanistan. These events attracted the attention of the writers across the globe and a flood of literature came out which traced several socio-political issues and the day-to-day life of the people of Afghanistan.

There has been a universal tendency to accept history without questioning its authenticity.

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## **DANCE AS STRUCTURE OF FICTION: DONOVAN ROEBERT'S *THE ODISSI GIRL***

*Swayamshree Mishra*

*The Odissi Girl* is a different type of fiction written by Donovan Roebert in 2011. It is different because the novel is structured according to the structure of Odissi Dance. Even the Chapterisation is in a dancing form, like: "Chauka", "Mangalacharan", "Chauka", "Batu Nritya", "Chauka", "Pallavi", "Chauka", "Gita Abhinaya", "Chauka", "Abhinaya", "Chauka", "Tribhangi", "Moksha". Each chapter has a story to tell but the medium is a dance form. Roebert is an artist, a painter and a journalist. Although he was born in East London he migrated to South Africa with his parents. He was a devotee of Tibetan Mahajana Buddhism. Mahajana Buddhism believes in the totality of Bodhisattva: a total realization of the self through senses. He took interest in Indian dance, music and culture. The present fiction, *The Odissi Girl*, is semi-autobiographical in nature. However, he makes it a fictional autobiography. The novel deals with Ananya the Odissi dancer and Jay the photographer. Stream of Consciousness as a technique is successfully used by Donovan Roebert, which can be considered to be a series of zigzag lamps. The writer has used this technique in order to present multiple facets and layers of Jay's experiences in a single flux. It is not a straight narration, rather the novelist applies stream of consciousness as a technique to bring about a communion with past, present and future. The toil, which he has gone through in order to achieve Ananya's company, is well presented through this technique. The novel moves from different places following various times.

Jay in his consciousness remains at a particular place, whereas in his subconscious he moves from Africa to Lodhi Garden, New Delhi to Puri. In no time he takes wide space which is the beauty of the novel. The novel is almost Joycean in narration. The sequence of time and place has not been maintained. The novel is in a dance form and rhythmical. It is not a documentation of Odissi dance; it rather makes it lively and interesting by keeping it in a fictional form. It has some little similarity with *Tom Jones* by Henry Fielding. Tom Jones moves with Sophia in mind and "Jay" moves with "Ananya."

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## SOUL'S MUSINGS: CONFESSIONALISM IN THE POETRY OF KAMALA DAS AND ANNE SEXTON

*Roopali Khanna*

American poets reached a peak with the publications of two of the most influential volumes of poetry of the twentieth century, Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* (1956) and Robert Lowell's *Life Studies* (1959), which were soon followed by similarly revealing collections of poetry by W.D. Snodgrass, Anne Sexton, Sylvia Plath, John Berryman and others in America. It also inspired such poets as Karl Siro, Denise Levertov, Adrienne Rich, John Logan, Jerome Mazzaro, William Heyen, Barbara Harr, and Randall Jarrell and produced such stalwarts as Kamala Das, Nissim Ezekiel, Judith Wright, and Margret Atwood in the commonwealth countries.

However, the most representative poets of this genre are undoubtedly Anne Sexton and Kamala Das since their poetry embodies the most distinctive elements of the confessional mode. Their poetry illumined areas which were so far unexplored and uncharted. They both wrote poetry of confession adding to it their unique dimensions as women. But more significantly their poetry provided them with means to transcend their experiences of personal pain and perpetual suffering, helping them to attain a reconciling harmony in the greater accomplishment of their art, thereby making them fulfil their poetic destiny. When these confessional poets dealt with their own feelings and fears, their intention was the same as that expressed somewhere by Victor Hugo: "When I speak to you about myself, I am speaking to you about yourself. How is it you don't see that?" (Qtd. in Phillips 15).

Kamala Das has contributed a lot to Indian English literature by opening a new panorama of human nature, man-woman relationship, and socio-political consciousness. Her poetical collection includes her first collection which is titled *Summer in Calcutta* (1965). It has fifty poems with a few delightful poems of love and desire in it.

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## FILMS AND SELECT WORKS OF RUSKIN BOND

*Shri Kant Kulshrestha*

Literature and Cinema are interrelated to each other. They cannot be separated from each other. It has been rightly said that Literature is the mirror of society. Whatever the film producer goes through in literature, the same gets reflected and exhibited in his films. The laymen, children and, of course, the city life is greatly influenced by the movies and cinematic shows. It has become an integral part of one's life. Somewhat and somewhere a human being is highly impacted, motivated, inspired and even consoled by the present scenario cinema. The movies give pleasure in weal and consolation in woe to the spectators. The lives of the students are also much affected by the cinema and movies. That is why, in recent years, there has been growing interest and awareness of Indian cinema and, as such, many renowned universities, colleges and other educational institutions have developed and introduced innumerable courses on cinema and film. There are plethora of students and scholars who have been pursuing study and research on various facets of cinema leading to Bachelor, Master and Doctorate degrees.

In this way the youth of the villages, towns and cities have been touched by the cinema to such an extent that they have started their learning in this direction. Cinema has become the prime source of attaining their bread and butter from various quarters of the film industry. Nowadays cinema is a popular means for the young generations to achieve the opportunity of white collar employment. In the present scenario the towering gates of employment are opened for the laymen too. Because of this the prominent writers began to pen down in such a way that their literary works may convert into films and movies. In addition to this the popular movies of all the ages have been solely based on the prolific literary writings of the authors.

In this context the monumental literary works of Ruskin Bond are matchless and unparalleled. Born in the natural surroundings of Kasauli in Himachal Pradesh on 19<sup>th</sup> May, 1934, he has been brought up and has a dwelling in the queen of the hills Mussoorie in Uttarakhand. Though Ruskin Bond has been the pioneer writer of children literature, still his insurmountable contributions for the conservation and preservation of environment cannot be denied.

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## POETRY

### **Shernavaz Buhariwala**

#### **ANTARTICA**

Somewhere beyond Here and Now  
Somewhere between Sky and Sea,  
A figured fluid Space dissembling  
The white radiance of Eternity.  
Nor clock, nor compass charts its course,  
Men ventured and were doomed  
As in its mighty crevasses  
Ages lie entombed.

A celestial city greeted  
Our blinkered mortal sight  
Pyramids of pleated ice  
And fortresses of marble white.  
Surreal shapes in gothic dance  
Their genesis I cannot know  
Or like some Michelangelo  
Carving his Sistine in the snow.

Swiftly do the visuals change  
Clouds merge and part in varying size.  
Sunbeams mingle with the mist  
As rainbows freeze upon the ice.  
Snow fleece veils the barren rocks.  
In silver grey the towers gleam.  
Lagoons erupt to deck the floor  
Like pearls in a translucent dream.

The air is pure, the place untouched  
By man's morals or his laws.  
Penguins and petrels, seals and whales  
Content in their appointed course  
Live out their span, their homes restored  
For days of disability.  
While we strut and fret and knock around  
In harrowing futility.

And I a simple mariner  
Doomed to forever roam

On the tossed tumultuous waves,  
A poet to atone.  
Like him I shot an albatross  
In my unthinking youth,  
Like him I came along these paths  
My guilty heart to soothe.

But Nature was in serenade  
Its creatures bright and free  
Intent on their escapades,  
At this season of fecundity.  
He guards the eggs his mistress lays,  
Time gone to bill and coo.  
She darts off to another site  
And returns without ado.

She doesn't tell him where she's been,  
He doesn't care to know.  
Adultery is obsolete  
And paternity a bore.  
Tomorrow starts another race,  
Today completes a sum;  
So penguins on their eggs are perched  
To await a life to come.

Now all fledglings flee their nests  
In search of distant springs.  
And overnight the sky becomes  
A silhouette of wings.  
The choir of creation  
Doth the Coleridgean truth install  
"He prayeth well who loveth well  
All things both great and small."

My little ship of Man turned round  
Its voyage almost done,  
Beyond us stood Infinity  
Draped in the radiant sun.  
Life stirred and sighed and stirred again  
In tune with Nature's daily call.  
Oh God! Thy Sea is so great  
And my boat so small.

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## **Wahajuddin Ahmad**

### **PROSTITUTE**

People respect women, let's see how far  
they roast only women who come to meet them in the car  
Outline the categories of girls but what about those  
who shower notes in a dance bar?  
People become totally emotional when the  
prostitute's role is played by any film star  
In reality no one is interested to clean this social tar  
Twilight only on women; no changes from time of sitar to time of guitar  
People understand everything but no one comes forward  
to end it with something bizarre  
Today's politicians are busy in spreading religious hate but  
Do not know how to end this poverty war  
O World ! Remember my words:  
if any girl becomes a prostitute, responsible truly we are.

### **WORLD OF HUNGER**

The World where food is free  
Of course, food is given to all by thee  
Respected humans destroy natural resources by cutting tree  
Love comes with emotions when actor acts hungry on TV  
Dear ones never feed empty stomach who show off like honey bee  
Affluent people dieting to burn fat prefer black coffee and green tea  
Strangely, the poor go dieting because they don't have a single *chapati*  
Never serve fresh food to the poor, that's today's reality  
Good if accepted, otherwise tell everyone the attitude of a poor *bhikari*  
Everyone loves to feed fresh food to their invitee  
Food which the hungry eat from waste bins after every fest or party.

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## **Manju**

### **MY BETTER HALF**

Whenever I cried, he went through the pain,  
His robes were wet when I cherished the rain.  
He had the dream when I closed my eyes,  
He anguished a lot, when I had few sighs.  
He always listened what I never said  
Ears in vain, heart replaced head.  
I was just to fall but his hand was there  
I committed a trivial sin, he said a thousand prayer.  
In my fret and fever, he had the chill  
For making me trained, he went through the drill.  
Though silent as wind, love was all around  
How pleasant the chains are! We keep ourselves bound.  
He stole the dark and gifted me light  
He knelt so low to make me feel on a height.  
I feel ecstasy for sharing his life,  
I was overpaid with him, the gift of my strife.  
Frolic I feel like Keats' Nightingale  
Amidst 'fret and fever' I found myself hale.

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to pieces  
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them  
together  
again in  
new shapes  
of your  
own  
choosing.

- *George Orwell*

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