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RE-MARKINGS

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Charles Johnson

Nibir K. Ghosh

Walter Kefuoe Chakela

Jonah Raskin

E. Ethelbert Miller

Anuradha Sen

Navleen Multani

Shrikant Singh

Nar Deo Sharma

Parimala Kulkarni

Tariq Faraz

R. P. Singh

Avantika Gaur

Pooja Yadav

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EDITORIAL

If two of our Advisory Board members – Harvard University Professor Sugata Bose, distinguished Historian, Lok Sabha M.P., and Sonoma State University, California Professor Jonah Raskin – made 2017 a very special year with their gracious presence at events organized by *Re-Markings* at Agra, 2018 has been rendered exquisitely memorable by the visit of Dr. Charles Richard Johnson.

My acquaintance with Dr. Johnson began way back in 2001 when the Public Affairs Section of U.S. Embassy, New Delhi invited me to accompany him on his lecture tour of India. I was thrilled but my enthusiasm was short-lived as the visit had to be called off at the last moment on account of the Iraq war. Perhaps Fate had ordained that we would meet not in Agra, the city of *Sulahakul*, but in Bill Gates' town, Seattle, from where Dr. Johnson proclaims to the world the imperatives of amalgamation of multidisciplinary and multicultural perspectives.

The opportunity to meet this celebrity came during my Senior Fulbright Fellowship (2003-04) at the University of Washington, Seattle where Dr. Johnson was Professor of the Creative Writing Program. We (my wife, Sunita, and I) arrived in Seattle on September 5, 2003. Around 6.00 p.m. the next day, we were pleasantly surprised to see at our Lake Avenue dwelling none but the famed Charles Johnson himself, accompanied by his daughter Elizabeth. I warmly welcomed him by wrapping a shawl around him as we honor scholars in India. Guess how he reciprocated! He gave me a huge packet he had brought for us. When I untied the fancy ribbons and opened the packet I couldn't believe my eyes. There lay in front of us over two score books—novels, essays, interviews, photo-autobiography, and so much more—all of which he had authored. His precious gifts, with his endearing inscription on each one of them, revealed his innate magnanimity and generosity that we enjoyed for the entire period of our stay in Seattle.

The imprints that my constant association with Dr. Johnson left on my heart and soul only increased with the passage of time. If he had dreamed of visiting India since his childhood, I too had often imagined and explored the possibilities of meeting him in India and of talking to him at length in the lyrical precincts of Emperor Shahjahan's dream in marble. It was nothing short of providential, therefore, when I learnt of his visit to India and of his desire to be with us in Agra in February 2018.

It was a privilege to Chair Dr. Johnson's keynote address on "Why Buddhism for Black America Now" at the Three-Day national seminar on "Buddhist Education and Universal Responsibility" organized by the Ministry of Culture at Nav Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda from 15-17 February, 2018. During his visit to Agra from 24-26 February, it was a rare pleasure for us all to hear him talk on "Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr." at an event organized by *Re-Markings* in association with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University, Agra to felicitate Dr. Johnson for his exemplary role as a cultural ambassador of the world. Dr. Arvind Kumar Dixit, Vice Chancellor of the University, chaired the event held at Basic Science Institute.

The two 'Conversations' with Dr. Johnson and a review of his latest collection of stories entitled *Night Hawks*, included in this issue, bring into bold relief his engagement as a writer and activist to formulate a better world. Jonah Raskin's tribute to Stephen Hawking tells us of a mortal who had the ability and the courage to challenge and defy death in order to re-write the history of Time. Walter Kefoue Chakela's essay in this volume has its own story to tell. It stems from a post he put on facebook, a couple of months ago, showcasing the inclusion of his poems in *A World Assembly of Poets* (*Re-Markings'* special number, November 2017). In the post he regrets not seeing any woman poet from South Africa in the wonderful collection. Reacting to his post, I immediately requested him to initiate an effort to bring together women poets from South Africa in an article for *Re-Markings*. He accepted the challenge right away and sent me the essay in record time.

I deem it a pleasure to thank each one of the contributors for enriching this volume with erudite critiques of literary renderings from different parts of the globe from the viewpoint of issues and concerns seminal to the crisis-ridden world we inhabit. It is not insignificant that time and again we receive articles, essays, poems and stories from writers, academics, scholars and critics articulating the anguish and agony of being a woman in an essentially patriarchal society, be it in India or U.S. or Middle-East. The song of the caged bird may seem to evoke no compassion or concern from any quarter but I am optimistic that a day will dawn when women will come together to proclaim with vehemence and dignity: "Women of the World Unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to win."

Nibir K. Ghosh
Chief Editor

CONTENTS

'Buddhism - Creative and Spiritual Gift': A Conversation
with Charles Johnson
Nibir K. Ghosh / 7

Clutching the Knife on the Cutting Edge: The Voice of the
Woman in South African Poetry
Walter Kefuoe Chakela / 15

Stephen Hawking (1942-2018):
A Tribute to the Visionary Scientist
Jonah Raskin / 24

Letter to Re-Markings from
A Distant Land No Longer Distant
E. Ethelbert Miller / 27

An Endangered World:
Literary Art, Activism and Environment
Anuradha Sen / 29

Veiled Identities and Literary Imagination in Azar Nafisi's
Reading Lolita in Tehran
Navleen Multani / 37

A Talk with Charles Johnson at Nalanda
Shrikant Singh / 47

Formulaic Style in Robert Browning's
A Grammarian's Funeral
Nar Deo Sharma / 50

South Asian Gender Stereotypes in
Chitra Divakaruni's *Arranged Marriage*
Parimala Kulkarni / 58

Resistance, Fear Psychosis and 'OneSelf' in
Virtual Carnavalesque
Tariq Faraz / 66

Shylock as Shailaksha: Indian Vernacular
Appropriation of Shakespeare
R. P. Singh / 73

Pervading Silence in Ida Fink's *A Scrap of Time*
Avantika Gaur / 82

Mute Revolt: An Aberrant Life History of Rashsundari Debi
Pooja Yadav / 90

Problematics of Acculturation in
Anita Desai's *Bye-Bye Black Bird*
Shilpa Saxena / 96

Nigerian Women Representation in Buchi Emecheta's
The Joys of Motherhood, Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple
Hibiscus* and Flora Nwapa's *Women are Different*
Neha Singh / 101

POETRY

The Man
Shweta Awasthi / 104

Poems by Rajiv Khandelwal
My First Memory of You / 104, A New Dawn / 105

REVIEW ESSAYS

A Master Storyteller and His Inspired Nocturnes
Robin Lindley / 106

Orchestration of Universal Harmony and Prayer
Gopikrishnan Kottoor / 109

Of Lessons Learnt by Heart
Urvashi Sabu / 111

**‘BUDDHISM - CREATIVE AND SPIRITUAL GIFT’:
A CONVERSATION WITH CHARLES JOHNSON**

Nibir K. Ghosh

Dr. Charles Johnson, University of Washington (Seattle) professor emeritus and the author of 23 books, is a novelist, philosopher, essayist, literary scholar, short-story writer, cartoonist and illustrator, an author of children’s literature, and a screen-and-teleplay writer. A MacArthur fellow, Johnson has received a 2002 American Academy of Arts and Letters Award for Literature, a 1990 National Book Award for his novel *Middle Passage*, a 1985 Writers Guild award for his PBS teleplay “Booker,” the 2016 W.E.B. Du Bois Award at the National Black Writers Conference, and many other awards. The Charles Johnson Society at the American Literature Association was founded in 2003. In November, 2016, Pegasus Theater in Chicago debuted its play adaptation of *Middle Passage*, titled “Rutherford’s Travels.” His most recent publications are *The Way of the Writer: Reflections on the Art and Craft of Storytelling*, and his fourth short story collection, *Night Hawks*. He has adorned the Editorial Advisory Board of *Re-Markings* since its inception in March 2002. The November 2017 Special Number of the journal – *A World Assembly of Poets* – that carried the following endorsement reflects his faith in the transformative potential of art: “For sixteen years *Re-Markings* has been an important journal of international literature and culture with an ever-expanding critical range and creative reach. This new, special issue devoted exclusively to the world’s best poetry proves that it is a visionary publication crucial for understanding the complexity of our world, our humanity, and our lives at this watershed moment in the 21st century.” The current conversation emerged out of Dr. Johnson’s recent India visit wherein we spent quality time together, at both Nalanda and Agra, talking of issues seminal to his engagement with Buddhism as a writer, philosopher and practitioner.

Ghosh: Many years ago, during one of our conversations in Seattle, you had remarked, “I often dream, naturally, of India – its beauty, antiquity, breath-taking art and remarkable people, the peace I feel instantly when my mind drifts to the Buddhist Dharma or Hinduism, that great democracy of Being.” Please recount your most significant thoughts and emotions in visiting the land you dreamt of.

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**CLUTCHING THE KNIFE ON THE CUTTING EDGE:
THE VOICE OF THE WOMAN IN
SOUTH AFRICAN POETRY**

Walter Kefuoe Chakela

South African literature comes from a history of a multiplicity of voices, reflecting the reality of our various human experiences. Some voices sang the praises of our landscape, sunny and aesthetically enchanting to those who beheld it. The Buffalo, antelope, springbok, and the crocodile were the main beings that populated the imagination of creators of this literature. Then there were other voices, no less appreciative of the beauty of our land but more concerned about the human tragedy playing out in this space, ugly and beastly. This demanded the urgent attention of the writer because, in the words of the Ghanain woman of letters, Ama Ata Aido, "there was no sweetness here." This concern elicited other voices, steeped in agony and pain and constrained to sing a more melancholy song bemoaning the country's vexatious human rights culture of racial abuse and apartheid brutality. Let us consider for a bit the poetry of Adelaide Charles Dube, relative of the founding president of the African National Congress:

How beautiful are thy hills and thy dales!
I love thy very atmosphere so sweet,
Thy trees adorn the landscape rough and steep
No other country in the whole world
could with thee compare.

It is here where our noble ancestors
Experienced the joys of dear ones and of home
Where great and glorious kingdoms rose and fell
Where blood was shed to save thee, thou
dearest land ever known.

- **Walter Kefuoe Chakela** is a practicing playwright, poet, theatre director and television producer. He is also President of the National Writers Association of South Africa.

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**STEPHEN HAWKING (1942-2018):
A TRIBUTE TO THE VISIONARY SCIENTIST**

Jonah Raskin

We are just an advanced breed of monkeys on a minor planet of a very average star. But we can understand the universe. That makes us something very special. - Stephen Hawking

Readers of *Re-Markings* might wonder why the journal should publish an obituary for the physicist, Stephen Hawking, who died at the age of 76, in Cambridge, England on March 14, 2018. I have asked myself that same question. The short answer is that Nibir Ghosh invited me to write an obituary, once again proving his global and cosmic reach and his sense that everything and everyone is connected.

The longer answer isn't as simple. In fact, there is no one single reason why it makes sense that *Re-Markings* should publish an obituary for the physicist who was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis when he was twenty-one-years-old, and who spent much of his life in a wheelchair, even while his mind knew no boundaries and no limits.

His personal life and his times are depicted in the feature film, *The Theory of Everything*, starring Eddie Redmayne. Part romance, part comedy, and part melodrama, *The Theory of Everything* suggests that one can indeed travel backward as well as forward in time. The film provides that illusion. At the end, the picture returns to the beginning of the narrative when Hawking is a healthy young man who falls in love, then gets married, has children, raises a family and proves himself to be a genius. *The Theory of Everything* is very English in a proper kind of way and very academic, too. It might persuade students, both male and female, to become scientists, let nothing deter them and to be guided not only by the intellect but also by the heart. Hawking was a poet as well as a physicist. He could not help but think metaphorically and express himself imaginatively and creatively in phrases like "black holes" and the "Arrow of Time."

- **Jonah Raskin** is a contributing editor at *Re-Markings* and the author of 14 books, including literary criticism, reporting, memoir, and biography. He has taught journalism, media law and the theory of communication at Sonoma State University, U.S.A.

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LETTER TO RE-MARKINGS FROM A DISTANT LAND NO LONGER DISTANT

E. Ethelbert Miller

Lately the sadness of the world has begun to suffocate me. I now live in a country where leaders want to build walls, where difference is a way to divide neighbors, where fear has married suspicion. Yes, if you see something, you must say something. I once wrote the ear is an organ made for love. I also believe the eye at times must become a heart. I need to see my feelings. I need to become emotional when I see oppression, censorship, or the waste and garbage that comes from racism and sexism. Like the poet Langston Hughes, I still dream of a world filled with the harvest of beauty. When the word is spoken it is a beautiful thing. When we discover how to speak a common language we will no longer need walls or even boundaries. I dream of poems without borders.

Geography has a way of clouding the imagination, this is why every generation must give birth to explorers. Often it's faith that guides the explorer to embrace the unknown, to return with the evidence of things unseen.

For many years Nibir K. Ghosh has been a writer and editor not only bringing people together but also helping us undertake the journey into tomorrow. His journal *Re-Markings* is bread for the hungry, water for those who continue to thirst for information and knowledge. In every issue one can find a constellation of literary stars, producing essays that provide insight into the present and an understanding of the past.

In *Re-Markings* (Vol.13, No.1) published in January 2014, Ghosh published my poem "Hughes in Reno, 1934." Here was a poem in which I imagined the poet Langston Hughes far away from the streets of Harlem. I wanted Hughes to be surrounded by nature, to be connected to everything that reminds one how to breathe and live. I wanted to think of Hughes living beyond the blues:

- **E. Ethelbert Miller** is a writer and literary activist. He is board chair of the Institute for Policy Studies, an inductee of the 2015 Washington, DC Hall of Fame.

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AN ENDANGERED WORLD: LITERARY ART, ACTIVISM AND ENVIRONMENT

Anuradha Sen

The environmentalist or ecological movement is a distinctly contemporary agenda. It represents the kind of local or single issue politics described in more theoretical contexts as belonging to the Postmodern¹ rather than the modern era. There has certainly been an increased public awareness during the 1990s and 2000s of issues such as acid rain, pollution, pesticides in the food chain, the extinction of species, and, above all, global warming. There has been a long history of ecological thinking and agitation on behalf of the environment and animal or plant life. French Enlightenment philosophers, English Romantic poets, and American Transcendentalists have joined natural philosophers, geologists and botanists, including, most notably, Charles Darwin. This entire tradition shares disenchantment with the priorities of a society that seeks to master nature in the interests of increased growth, expanded markets and profit.

In the wake of the global environmental crisis today, cutting across the Sciences and Arts, various discourses are writing and foregrounding the 'green' agenda. This paper has selected for study four different discourses, four texts, with four different governing agenda but a common concern – the fast degenerating Indian environment.

Ecology and Equity (1995) by Madhav Gadgil and Ramchandra Guha is seminal academic text which gives a bird's-eye view of the environmental crisis in the Indian context. Amitabh Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* (2004) maps the environmental history of the mangrove jungles of the Sundarbans, as well as the plight of the displaced indigenous people in the aftermath of the Project Tiger and other global environmental movements.

From eco-fiction to eco-facts, Arundhati Roy, the Booker award winning novelist's essay, "The Greater Common Good" (1999) will be examined. It is a piece of activist writing strongly supporting Medha Patkar's Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA). What motivates a creative artist like Roy or Mahashweta Devi to turn from writing fiction to activist writing?

- **Dr. Anuradha Sen** is Associate Professor in the Department of English at A.N. College, Patna.

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**VEILED IDENTITIES AND LITERARY
IMAGINATION IN AZAR NAFISI'S
*READING LOLITA IN TEHRAN***

Navleen Multani

Narratives and stories define and reconstruct society. The interminable recitation of stories fosters beliefs in people that have the potential to change the configuration of the established order. Writing removes the "excessive, diseased or unaesthetic" things from the order by articulation of the real and narration of stories. Such narratives make people believe in change, promote *will-to-do*, to progress and reconstruct the unjust order (Certeau 96, 144-148). The scriptural project, according to Michel de Certeau, marches through the territory of the enemy/dominant order to reconstruct a lexicon that composes a space which envisions the future. The narratives of modern Iran exhibit the patriarchal values, cultural mores, issues of censorship, gender segregation and various constraints on Iranian women. According to Farzaneh Milani, the female body is being used as a battlefield, a metaphor, an emblem by the Iranian government in the name of Islam or nationalism. With the symbol of the ideal woman – who adheres to a mandatory dress code, religious and cultural values – Iran imposes a theological ideology to perpetuate the archetype of a silent and submissive woman. The dominant discourses of Iranian literature reduce women to silent, passive and veiled protesters. The enlightened Iranian women writers address various issues of the veiled identities, resist repression and grapple with tyranny to reform identities and selves through their writings.

The Islamic veil restricts freedom and rights of women. An assault on individual freedom which parades under the name of religion becomes the main concern of writers like Azar Nafisi (Birnbau "Interview"). Azar Nafisi, a teacher in the University of Tehran who is expelled for refusing to wear the Islamic veil in the classroom, relies on everyday practices¹ – writing, reading and teaching of literary texts – to reconstruct Iranian realities as well as redefine imagination. She employs imagination to reform fictive reality by understanding the imagination of the oppressors/Islam-State.

- **Dr. Navleen Multani** is Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law Punjab, Patiala.

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A TALK WITH CHARLES JOHNSON

Shrikant Singh

This interview was conducted during Dr. Charles Johnson's visit to the national seminar on "Buddhist Education & Universal Responsibility" organized by the Ministry of Culture at Nav Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda (Bihar) from 15-17 February, 2018. Dr. Johnson, as Guest of Honour, delivered a 'Special Lecture' on "Why Buddhism for Black America Now" at a session chaired by Prof. Nibir K. Ghosh.

Shrikant Singh: Where do you get your ideas for writing?

Charles Johnson: Ideas for stories and novels come from many sources—I might be inspired by a news story or a work of fiction by another author. Or an idea might arise from my daily experience or the experiences on someone I know.

Shrikant Singh: What is your writing process like?

Charles Johnson: I explain my writing process in a recent book, *The Way of The Writer: Reflections on The Arts and Craft of Storytelling*. In a word, my process is based on much rewriting because 90% of good writing is rewriting or re-envisioning your material. Sometimes my ratio of throwaway to keep pages can be 20 to 1.

Shrikant Singh: What advice do you have for writers?

Charles Johnson: My advice for writers is that they read widely, stay curious about everything in this mysterious universe we inhabit, and remember that the creative process can be described by two things—the love of discovery and problem-solving.

Shrikant Singh: What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

Charles Johnson: I don't know exactly what you mean by a "literary pilgrimage," but when I did my novel *Dreamer*, I did two years of research before writing a single word, and traveled to places like his birth home in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee where he was assassinated in 1968.

Shrikant Singh: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

- **Dr. Shrikant Singh** is Head, Department of English & Dean Academics, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara (Deemed University under Ministry of Culture, Government of India), Nalanda, Bihar.

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FORMULAIC STYLE IN ROBERT BROWNING'S *A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL*

Nar Deo Sharma

INTRODUCTION

The dramatic monologue, also known as a persona poem, is a literary construct of speech of an individual persona (the spokesperson) that explores the distinctive devotion of a scholarly protagonist – the Grammarian. To put the poetic theme in a nutshell, an erudite Grammarian passes away and his disciples determine to bury him in an extraordinary place that exists at the peak of a mountain beyond the reach of illiterate villagers. The persona narrates the quenchless quest of the grammarian for mastering infinite knowledge in Greek grammar at the cost of deterioration of health. 'Exposition' may be defined as a clear and wholesome interpretation of ideas or salient standpoints. Various concepts, feelings, thoughts, activities are appraised by exposition. Exposition as a significant, creative tool of inventive writing entails defining, sequencing, categorizing, contrasting, arguing, visualizing and elaboration of thought process.

DEICTIC EXPRESSIONS

There is an abundance of deictic words in this poem. In connection with the analysis of narration, M.H. Abrams (2005:181) clarifies that "One focus of such analysis is the special play of deictics, also known as indexicals or shifters – that is, words and phrases such as "now," "then," "here," "there," "today," "last week," as well as personal pronouns ("I," "you") and some tenses of verbs – whose reference depends on the particular speaker and his or her position in place and time." The word deictic is derived from the Greek word "deiktikos" which means 'able to show'. A related word is termed as 'deixis' which is used in pragmatics and linguistics. Evolved in the late 1970s, pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics which explores how people interpret and convey a speech act in concrete circumstances. As a matter of fact, pragmatics analyses the intertextuality of deictic words in context of their situational, temporal, spatial and social perspectives. Levinson (1995: 10) points out that, "Deixis is an important field studied in pragmatics, semantics and linguistics.

- **Dr. Nar Deo Sharma**, Professor & Head, Department of English, NIET College, Alwar (Rajasthan).

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SOUTH ASIAN GENDER STEREOTYPES IN CHITRA DIVAKARUNI'S *ARRANGED MARRIAGE*

Parimala Kulkarni

As a poet, short story writer, novelist and essayist, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has gained wide national and international recognition. Her first short story collection, *Arranged Marriage*, has been highly acclaimed; in 1995 it received an American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation, the Bay Area Book Reviewers award for fiction, and the PEN Oakland/Josephine Miles prize for fiction. The short story collection has become a canonical South Asian American text and is prescribed in most courses on South Asian Literature. Most reviewers and critics of her work have praised Divakaruni's literary creativity and sensitivity in dealing with the complexities of identity, family relationships, cultural and community values. She is applauded for her continuing concern with the experiences of Indian and Indian American women. Divakaruni's stories primarily revolve around the relationships between Indian men and women, focusing on themes such as abuse, adultery and indifference. Her stories in this collection are seen as depicting and representing South Asian culture. Undoubtedly, Divakaruni explores several themes that are relevant to many Indian (especially Hindu) women's lives. However, her stories trap Indian women into an undifferentiated, monolithic Indian Woman stereotype. As the writer and critic Uma Parameswaran observes, "Chitra Divakaruni, the most recent star in the Diaspora sky, delves into the darker dreams and nightmares of womanscape and has an appreciative readership among feminists, but since her women characters are mainly Indo-American, there is a tendency to see them not as individuals so much as representative of the Diaspora, and we are back on square one perception of negative stereotypes that the average north American reader has of Indian life and culture" (34). Hence it is imperative to examine the 'representation' of Indian/South Asian culture in these stories. This paper interrogates the literary representation of India and Indian culture by focusing on the images of Indian men and women as they emerge in these stories. This paper argues that most stories in the collection depict women in India as victimised, passive, oppressed, encompassed by tradition, trapped in loveless marriages with barely any scope to express agency.

- **Dr. Parimala Kulkarni** is Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

RESISTANCE, FEAR PSYCHOSIS AND ‘ONESELPH’ IN VIRTUAL CARNIVALESQUE

Tariq Faraz

Before Copernicus, the earth *ipso facto* was the only home and center of all the other planets in the continuous cosmic orchestra. Generally, the historical and fictional narratives would talk of ‘Empires’ and ‘Nations’. The earth was extremely large and wide—it was like a balloon that one could pump up as much air as he could. It was as big as one could imagine—a mat as large as one could unfold in the false notions of Christendom and narrow views of the orthodox Medieval Islamic Scholarship—all ignoring the justful hermeneutics and the deeper understandings of the scriptures. Eventually the assumptions were broken in the ‘60s of the previous century—very recently in 1962-64 by Marshall McLuhan when he unintentionally wrapped-up all the speculations by begetting the idea of Global Village—a Globage in fact. Since then, the words i.e. ‘Empire’ or ‘Nation’ in all their literary significance seem to have vanished, and now in today’s language they are only used as live metaphors. This is no hidden truth that the patriotic feelings have flagged off all around, at least I am sure as it is seen in India people appear to be happier on 26th of January and 15th of August because it’s a holiday!

After 1962-64, in 1968 the old empirical author is also declared dead by Barthes, and hence, the last bricks of foundationalism and traditionalism got demolished and diminished. As a result, a culture evolves, very fond of private and personal spaces which are projected in chick-lits and clit-lits etc. So fond of pornography that the community of creative writers made it necessary to reflect and showcase it in the modern narratives explicitly calling it ‘fuction’. The modern-day feminist theoretical item-terms e.g. the element of *chora* mechanism, *semantic chora* or *language of fluidity* in Kristeva’s words, the other *female vertical lips* silenced by male sexual organs—adding erotic metaphors to strengthen the feminist approaches against patriarchal antagonism.

- **Mohammad Tariq** (Tariq Faraz) is Assistant Professor of English in the Department of Languages, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Integral University, Lucknow.

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SHYLOCK AS SHAILAKSHA: INDIAN VERNACULAR APPROPRIATION OF SHAKESPEARE

R. P. Singh

Vishnu Moreshwar Mahajani's Marathi translation of *Cymbeline* as *Tara* was perhaps the first Indian translation of a Shakespearean play. It was staged in Baroda (now Vadodara) in 1880 before an audience of about five hundred that largely spoke Gujarati and Marathi. The occasion was the royal marriages of the then Gaekwar ruler of Baroda to a Tanjore princess, and of his sister, Tara Bai, to the prince of Sawantwari. *The Macmillan's* magazine of the time reported it as '*Cymbeline* in a Hindu Playhouse'. To get a feel of the Indianisation of Shakespeare, here it is worthwhile to quote from that report on the staging in some detail:

The stage, 'a whitewashed sandbank forming an oval about three feet in height, twenty feet in breadth, and forty feet in depth, was partly concealed behind a drop-curtain on which an elephant and tiger fight was depicted, and by a proscenium of canvas adorned with full length portraits of three-headed gods and mythic heroes in strange attire. Three uprights – one of them a growing tree on either side of the stage, sustained the 'footlights' – some twenty kerosene lamps.... The *sutradhara* (stage manager) introduced the play along with the "god Ganpati, a vermilion-faced, elephant-trunked monster, with golden turban, blue and gold tunic, and white legs, seated on a very terrestrial-looking, cane-bottomed chair, in front of an Indian house" (Littledale 65-68).

The reporting is very harshly colonialist in its tone and wording as we see in its representation of Lord Ganesha as a 'monster' rather than a god; but the cultural stamp of Indianness on *Tara* is quite explicitly inescapable. And this is important in our present context of viewing the Indian translations of Shakespeare, from the very moment of inauguration, as tilted heavily toward appropriation rather than simple transference from English to our vernaculars. The context shifted from Britain to Suvarnapuri (golden city) and from Italy to Vijaipur (land of victory). The dramatis personae and their costumes were Indianised.

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**PERVADING SILENCE IN
IDA FINK'S *A SCRAP OF TIME***

Avantika Gaur

Learning to Know
Learning to Know
To learn the meaning
Of the world (but not
Getting answers) I stopped
Asking questions such as:
What am I here for?
What am I to do?
And started to listen
to crack on a ceiling
the motion of a hand
a ripple on a pond
the soar of a crow
melting snow
a crimped skirt
a teapot on a table
a circle, a square
(things common, nothing
novel or especially
interesting) and gather
the meaning of the world
fragment by fragment.

- Yala Korwin, *To Tell The Story*

Introduction

Holocaust has been one of the most influential processes in human history that continues to have residual effects even today. The Nazis had an overt policy of rooting out the Jews from their homeland with special slaughtering of the 'inferiors' (Berenbaum 98). The 'inferiors' included the women, children, the elderly, the physical and the mental handicaps, the disabled of the Slavic peoples, the Roman Gypsies and various Communists and Socialists.

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MUTE REVOLT: LIFE OF RASHSUNDARI DEBI

Pooja Yadav

Social and Religious History of Bengal

In colonial times India underwent innumerable changes in the religious, social, economic, political and cultural spheres. One is cognizant of the fact that eighteenth and twentieth century were set in juxtaposition. As J.T.F Jordens says, the eighteenth century had a “stagnating traditional culture and society at very low ebb” and the twentieth century had “a still traditional society in the throes and the creative excitement of modernizing itself, of emerging as a new nation.... The nineteenth century was the pivotal century that saw the initiation of this process which brought about an enormous transformation in the religious, social, economic, political and cultural spheres” (365).

According to Jordens, Bengal was the first to undergo significant British influence and to produce the new English educated group (366). This reform movement questioned existing orthodoxies particularly with respect to women, marriage, caste system and religion. The British Raj influenced the Indian culture in different ways through the initiatives of educators and missionaries. The reformers of the times welcomed these new changes and advocated gradual adaptation.

Social reform began with the flow of English education in India and gave birth to a new awakening. The reformers wanted to reconstruct their society according to new values and ideas which they had discovered from western education. Gradually a group of elite reform-ers emerged who played the key role in enlightening the life of the people of Indian society. Bengal witnessed many reformists from Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Rabindranath Tagore but we will witness here some of the contemporary reformers of Rashsundari Debi.

Earliest among them was Raja Ram Mohan Roy who was a strong advocate of western education and believed it to be a major instrument for spread of modern ideas in the society. He has been known as the father of modern India or the father of the Indian renaissance. His efforts came out with the result that government declared sati as illegal act in 1829.

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PROBLEMATICS OF ACCULTURATION IN ANITA DESAI'S *BYE-BYE BLACK BIRD*

Shilpa Saxena

Acculturation is a sociological term in which two cultures meet together and try to assimilate with each other. It is a process of cultural and psychological change. To understand acculturation, it is required first to understand Culture. Culture is a total way of lifestyle. It is a basic unit of one's identity. Culture leads us how to live, how to act, common faith, beliefs, values etc. This is acknowledging that when two cultures meet together, it creates the same reaction as hot and cold streams mix together. The main drawback of acculturation is to lead a life of marginal man, a concept given by Everett Stonequist, as an individual trying to adopt a new culture which is totally different from the previous one. In this situation an individual leaves his basic culture and the reference culture is not ready to accept him, thereby marginalizing him. This paper is about this basic problem of immigrants who encounter two cultures and try to assimilate. This is a time of a Globalization where acculturation is helpful in trade and commerce. It is also helpful in cultural sensitivity when the relationship is between a secondary group but the feel of Ethnocentrism comes when the relationship is in the primary group.

The novel *Bye-Bye Black Bird* is in three parts: (a) Arrival, (b) Discovery, (c) Recognition and Departure. In this novel, Anita Desai moves out of the familiar cities of Delhi and Calcutta. Through the three characters Adit, Dev and Sarah, Anita Desai depicts the conflict in the minds of immigrants who can neither completely serve their cultural roots of the country of origin nor identify themselves completely with the alien culture and acquire new roots.

In *Bye-Bye Black Bird*, Anita Desai portrays the plight of immigrants. The novel deals with the problem of alienation of an English lady, Sarah who marries Adit, an Indian immigrant. Adit's financial condition does not allow him to go back to India immediately after getting married. Having a job and wife, Adit leads a happy life here. After some time, Adit's friend Dev comes to England for higher education but he does not like the pomp and show of England. He comes here only to be an England-returned teacher in India.

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**NIGERIAN WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN BUCHI
EMECHETA'S *THE JOYS OF MOTHERHOOD*,
CHIMAMANDA ADICHIE'S *PURPLE HIBISCUS*
AND FLORA NWAPA'S *WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT***

Neha Singh

Women are always marginalized in every society in every country. Marginalization can be in the form of under-representation in both historical and political terms. Several basic human rights have been denied to women by various ruling parties. As far as Nigeria is considered, this country has seen military rule for decades. The sociological perception of the country has witnessed depleting and devastating effect on the condition of women in historical political and literary representation. Women are considered as a medium for child-bearing and caring with the purpose of household and kitchen work. This kind of perception is highlighted in the above mentioned literary pieces. Nigeria, which was under the dominance of Britain, is a country of diverse ethnic groups and assimilating them is a big task. Women in Nigeria participated in every activity varying from household to agriculture work resulting in bumper harvest boosting their economy. In spite of all the contribution by the women, they remained on the margins. Nigerian literature written by women writers proves to be a catalyst in changing the social scenario in the society.

Buchi Emecheta's *The Joy of Motherhood* presents a picture of the main protagonist Nnu Ego who suffers hardships and humiliations at the hands of society which believes that only being a mother is the criteria of being a woman. Bearing children is the ultimate goal of a woman's life. She is ill treated and is married second time and becomes a complete woman. Later on, she realizes that she is a mere tool in the hands of her husband and once her usefulness comes to an end, she will be discarded by her husband. *The Joy of Motherhood* establishes the imperial view of objectification of women. Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* presents the scenario of a conservative family. The main protagonist's mother suffers at the hands of her husband. She lost her child due to physical abuse by her husband.

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Poetry

THE MAN

Shweta Awasthi

You always had the power
Power to reduce me to a non-entity,
You chopped shupnakha's nose
and sustained your dharma,
you banished Sita
and became Purushottam.
Yu were the hands
That stripped Draupadi's Sari,
You were the one
Who laughed at her helplessness
You only cursed Ahilya,
Turned her to a stone,
And left her at the mercy
Of Rama's feet.
Centuries have passed
But you are still there,
Powerful, invincible, the Man
And I, helpless, vulnerable,
A Nirbhaya, a Damini, a Woman.

- **Dr. Shweta Awasthi** is Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Modern studies, Uttarakhand Sanskrit University, Haridwar.



Poems by *Rajiv Khandelwal*

MY FIRST MEMORY OF YOU

My first memory
Starts with the party
At your house
In the room
With wall-to-wall carpet
Velvet upholstery
Toss up pillows
Braided drapes
Ancestral portrait
Over the carved table
A tiered, what-not-shelf

And on its top
A stack of books
From the likes of
John Keats
John Donne
Robert Burns
Elizabeth Barrett Browning
Carl Sandburg
Pablo Neruda
Running to complete length
In decorated focus
And I
Flush with romantic slush
Recall Leigh Hunt's "Jenny Kissed Me"
And Walter Savage's "Whoever Felt Like It!"
And in the midst of all chaos
You sitting
Unaffected
Like Beatrice Portinari
And I
Standing
Like Dante in church.

A NEW DAWN

Though aware of the cyclone
Blowing away her mud-thatched hut
Aware of the tidal wave
Swallowing her field
Enveloped in acrid odour of funeral

She sits atop the debris heap
As if in trance
Inhaling security
Emanating from her mother's *saree*
Draped around her legs.

- **Rajiv Khandelwal** has published four collections of poetry that include *A Monument to Pigeons*, *Love is a Lot of Work* etc. An Electrical Engineer by training, he is engaged in manufacturing and exporting automotive components.



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- *Abraham Lincoln*

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