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# **RE-MARKINGS**

**Vol. 10 No. 1 March 2011**

**William Shakespeare**

**Salman Rushdie**

**J.M. Coetzee**

**Ernest Hemingway**

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**Women Empowerment**

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# **RE-MARKINGS**

**Vol. 10 No. 1 March 2011**

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Re-Markings, a biannual journal of English Letters aims at providing a healthy forum for scholarly and authoritative views on broad socio-political 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

One fine afternoon, nearly a quarter century ago, I received a packet from Mr. Bhupendra Hooja, the esteemed Chief Editor of the book review journal, *Indian Book Chronicle*. I was pleasantly surprised to find inside the packet three books, each slim in shape and elegantly handbound with sari cloth from handlooms with exquisitely beautiful calligraphy on the title pages. A letter from Mr. Hooja accompanying the packet asked me to take a look at the three volumes and see if I would be interested in reviewing them for *IBC*. I was intrigued. They were poetry collections by authors whose names I had never heard of. One common element that connected the three volumes, besides their beautiful exteriors, was that they were all published by the Writers Workshop in Calcutta. I picked up one book and browsed through the poems. Here and there a line or two caught my attention: "I have smelt deer-musk in my dreams,/ But if an everyday meal has to be woven into a dream/ Then show me how to keep on living"...."That girl standing on the street.../ Examine her closely, pay the price and take her./ Want to see her body? Don't ever do that even by the mistake that your eyes might make.../ She is the Sundarbans forest wrapped in twilight." I learnt from the Preface written by Sunil Gangopadhyay that it was an unknown poet's (aged 63 and suffering from a terminal illness) maiden attempt in the realm of poetry.

What overwhelmed me, however, was the manifesto of the Writers Workshop that appeared at the end of each book. It stated in no uncertain terms how the Writers Workshop, founded in 1958, comprised a group of writers who "agree in principle that English has proved its ability, as a language, to play a creative role in Indian literature, through original writing and transcreation. That was something indeed! If the despair arising from the rejection of the manuscript of *Swamy and Friends* by many publishers could drive R.K. Narayan to contemplate throwing it into the river Thames, it was significant indeed that the Writers Workshop was playing such a stupendous role in providing the much-needed platform to new comers and upcoming poets writing in English so that they were not constrained to blush unseen and waste their latent sweetness on the desert air. Consequently, I not only readily agreed to review the books but also decided to get an update on the epicenter of the Writers Workshop, its venerable Founder and Director, Professor P. Lal. I soon learnt that the inspiration to start the Writers Workshop came from his own experiences. Since, in 1958, no one was interested in publishing

his writings, he set out to undertake the job himself. What may have appeared a small step for him then paved the way for a giant leap for Indian Writing in English with hundreds of writers falling in line to bring their creative renderings in English into the clear light of the day. He was very forthright in articulating the mindset of publishers who were wary of publishing the works of new writers in English: “English book publishing in India was governed by a “nexus” of high-profile PR-conscious book publishers, semi-literate booksellers, moribund public and state libraries, poorly informed and nepotistic underlings in charge of book review pages...and biased bulk purchases of near worthless books by bureaucratic institutions.”

Though his agenda included the breaking of such a “nexus” and encouraging raw talent, it is not insignificant that the Writers Workshop was instrumental, to a large extent, in launching the creative careers of the likes of Vikram Seth, Nissim Ezekiel, Meena Alexander, A.K. Ramanujan, Vikram Seth, Jayanta Mahapatra, Kamala Das, Adil Jussawalla, Agha Shahid Ali, Keki Daruwalla, Mani Nair and many others whose works are distinguished signatures in the pantheon of Indian Writing in English today. From the vantage point of the twenty-first century when Indian Writing in English has begun to merit a place alongside the most flourishing literatures in the world what with top publishers like Penguin, Picador, Harper Collins etc. camping in India to discover and market emerging talent in the sphere of IWE, it may not be inappropriate to see a veritable connection between the dazzling lights of the present era and the little lamp that was lit more than a half-century ago by that great soul. If the lake districts in England could usher in the famed Romantic Age in English Literature, it may be proudly accepted that the Writers Workshop - located in the Lake Gardens, Calcutta - did no less for Indian Writing in English.

In mourning the passing away of the legendary Professor Purushottama Lal (28 August 1929-3 November 2010), it is an honour to offer, on behalf of the *Re-Markings* fraternity, a humble tribute to the work and memory of the one-man army who could firmly entrench in the colonial mindset that English too is an Indian language.

**Nibir K. Ghosh**  
**Chief Editor**

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## CREATING DESIRES AND CHANGING MINDSETS: CONVERSATION WITH OMKAR SANE

*Nibir K. Ghosh*

In this conversation, Omkar Sane - author of *Welcome to Advertising! Now, Get Lost* and *Coming Soon. The End* - illumines his sojourns in the glamorous worlds of Advertising and Television.

**Nibir:** It's a pleasure to greet and welcome you to the city of the Taj!

**Omkar:** Thank you! I am delighted.

**Nibir:** Omkar is another name of Lord Ganesha. People with this name tend to be very logical thinkers. What kind of logic can one see from the way you have been changing professions at a rapid pace?

**Omkar:** This is the part where I quote Shakespeare – “what's in a name?” I am a restless person and I switched jobs because I did not enjoy them. I believe if I am not enjoying making it, the audience won't enjoy taking it. So, to be fair to the audience and self, I moved on each time.

**Nibir:** What inspired you to join the Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art?

**Omkar:** I never liked textbooks and academics. I wanted to do a course where I could do away with both. I always used to copy from comics, and had given my intermediate exam in school with no particular goal in mind. Thinking I was good at it, I applied for the course because I knew that was one way to graduate without having to attend lectures, without having to sift through thick textbooks and memorise what someone said in the seventeenth century. In a nutshell, I wanted to learn, not study. And J.J. fit the bill perfectly.

**Nibir:** What were your experiences as an art student?

**Omkar:** Being an art student broke the cliches - about how an artist dresses, about how he behaves. In college, I realised we weren't that. Being an art student did introduce me to all things mom said no to, and some I picked up and are habits now. It also opened up my mind, the way I looked at things. My perception changed, I started looking at things beyond what met the eye - right from an apple to a movie. It made me take the step from seeing to observing.

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**PLAYING WITH HISTORICAL SHAPES:  
SALMAN RUSHDIE'S *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN***

*Jitendra Narayan Patnaik*

Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* textualizes history in terms of the interfusion of personal and national identities. In the process of historicizing, reality is refracted through an individual's perception and memory. Rushdie clarifies that "Saleem Sinai's story is not history, but it plays with historical shapes" and readers who look for reliable history in the book are "judging the book not as a novel, but as some sort of inadequate reference book or encyclopedia" (*Imaginary Homelands* 25). Rushdie confesses that "*Midnight's Children* is far from being an authoritative guide to the history of post-Independence India" (*IH* 22-23), and yet Saleem Sinai is inextricably "handcuffed to history" (*MC* 4) in terms of his ancestry and growing up into adulthood through more than a quarter of a century.

In the introduction to the Vintage Books edition of *Midnight's Children*, Rushdie says, "In the West people tended to read *Midnight's Children* as a fantasy, while in India, people thought of it as pretty realistic, almost a history book" (9). Interestingly, the Western readers, too, tend to look at the novel as "a pocket overview of twentieth-century Indian history" (Piciucco 232). *Midnight's Children* is nevertheless not a historical novel because Saleem Sinai's personal involvement with historical events and situations transcends the factuality of history into the textuality of historical narrative. As Shelby Foote aptly comments, "The historian attempts this by communicating facts, whereas the novelist would communicate sensation. The one stresses action, the other reaction" (Foote 440). It is in this sense that *Midnight's Children* is both textualized history and historicized text.

*Midnight's Children* begins chronologically in 1915, thirty-two years before the birth of Saleem, when Adam Aziz returns from Germany to his native Kashmir with a medical degree and feels "as though the old place resented his educated, stethoscoped return" (5).

- **Dr. Jitendra Narayan Patnaik** worked as Professor of English in Ravenshaw University, Utkal University and Sanaa University, Yemen. He was Senior Fellow, Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India during 2007-2009. At present, he is UGC Emeritus Fellow, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack.

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## THE RENAISSANCE CONCEPT OF TIME IN SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

*Sharad Rajimwale*

Awareness of Time had grown into a peculiar pre-occupation with Renaissance artists, probably the result of the fast pace at which events suddenly began moving in the last stages of the Middle Ages. The general pace of life before that, as has recurrently been brought to notice by researches, was slow which went well with the general outlook of a stable and serene life within defined limitations. In the opinion of Ricardo J. Quinones, "For the Middle Ages time could be abundant, because behind the chances and changes of events man could sense a higher directing order. His life still had religious associations with the universe, his beginnings and his ends were in the hands of a providential and concerned divinity. Because of his faith he could then exist in an attitude of temporal ease. Neither time nor change appear to be critical; hence there is no great worry about controlling the future" (Quinones 7).

In this context it would be appropriate to observe that among several distinguishing factors separating the new era of Renaissance and the preceding one is this attitude toward time, the dawning consciousness that "The tyme itself continually is fleeting like a brooke./ For neyther brooke nor lygthsomme tyme can tarrye still." This was written by Ovid but the words could well have been written by Shakespeare or Dante. But Ovid was not overburdened with the notion of time as something formidable and relentlessly sweeping all in its wake, as Petrarch's following lines express: "O time, O turning heavens which/ fleeing deceive blind and miserable mortals./ O days faster than wind or arrow, now from/ experience I understand your fraud" (Sonnet 355).

As the Renaissance focus turned more and more upon terrestrial matters, the hiatus between God's Time and social hours that hustle one another out grew into a truth. For Alfred Von Martin (*Sociology of the Renaissance*) the feudal character of society in medieval times turned both money and time as centrifugal forces for whose mastery the tussle relentlessly continued.

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## THE WHITE DILEMMA IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA: J.M. COETZEE'S *DISGRACE*

*Simmi Gurwara*

J.M. Coetzee in his Booker winning book *Disgrace* presents a bleak picture of anarchy, annihilation and unrest in post-apartheid South Africa that rests heavy on the central characters that belong to the white community. The whites, being the practitioners of apartheid that resulted in racial segregation and subsequent marginalization of blacks, recoil and reconcile refusing to take a stand against the brazenness and savagery that looms large on their precarious survival. *Disgrace* won an unprecedented second Booker Prize for J.M. Coetzee in 1999, almost a decade after the release of Nelson Mandela and the beginning of the dismantling of apartheid. The book finds a respectable place within the genre of post-apartheid literature. Writers like Nadine Gordimer, Alan Paton and J.M. Coetzee himself, played a prominent role in bringing apartheid to global attention decades earlier. They were no less responsible for drawing global attention towards the condition of South Africa after apartheid as well.

The exploitative past makes a heady comeback in the present with a horrendous countenance that destroys the self esteem of the protagonists who try hard to come to terms with the developments to stay put. The false credentials of democracy are exposed as thuggery and lunacy of the underdogs come to the fore to haunt the whites for their past misdemeanors of depriving the blacks of their rightful place. The white men who brace themselves and build security fences are expected to get a bullet in the back eventually, and solitary white women are brutalized. The adage "What goes around comes around" seems to get clearly defined and demonstrated as the erstwhile privileged Whites come under heat. The perpetrators take pride in the brutality that they inflict on their counterparts to settle scores for their past grievances. The victims turn the victors, but sadly the resultant happenings are visibly against the tenets of a civil society that drives its sustenance from equality and respect for the individual, irrespective of caste, creed and color.

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**DETERRITORIALISING DESIRE:  
MANJU KAPUR'S A MARRIED WOMAN**

*Pooja Sharma*

Lesbianism, by implication, gets a broader and less laconic a definition than that of a mere sexual practice, as a riposte to the acknowledgement of women centred power, energy and solidarity, a determination to disentangle the mandatory yoke of moral respectability and institutionalised heterosexuality, as well as to change the complexion of power relations between the two sexes. Women's politically conscious choice of women as allies and companions corresponds closely with the eponymous state of a 'lesbian continuum' as suggested by Adrienne Rich:

*I mean a lesbian continuum to include a range through each woman's life and through history of women identified experience; not simply the fact that a woman has had or consciously desired genital sexual experience with another woman. If we expand it to embrace many forms of primary intensity between and among women, including the sharing of a rich inner life, the bonding against male tyranny, the giving and receiving of practical and political support - we begin to grasp breadths of female history and psychology which have lain out of reach as a consequence of limited, mostly clinical, definitions of 'lesbianism' (Rich 637).*

In contemporary India however, homoerotic love has a precarious status, as actual practise, as a conceptual issue and a subject of representation. The issue in question, however remains the same - that of righteousness of an outrageously overt physical-sexual act, morally, socially and genetically prohibited, in cultured and so called traditional society. This sojourn examines Kapur's representation of lesbian and bisexual love with their implied transcultural and lesbian imaginative spaces while seeking to disclose discursive homophobic notions. Constant negotiation and fashioning of a woman's impression and expression of space and female identity comes into play at all times in living the life of a woman.

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## CONFLICT OF TWO SELVES IN *SURFACING*

*Seema Shekhar*

*Surfacing* by Margaret Atwood is the reflection of a talented woman artist who goes in search of her missing father on a remote island in northern Quebec. The isolated landscape makes her its victim at the very outset though she is accompanied by her lover and another young couple. Moral chaos prevails in her heart and she is painfully conscious of divorce, violence and death as sex becomes a catalyst for conflict and dangerous choice. The novel is partly psychological and partly detective, a work embedded with mystery, complex with layered meanings, and written in subtle prose. The novel stands at the dichotomy of thesis and antithesis between two literary movements, with one foot anchored firmly in modernism and the other in post-modernism. It partakes of both the modern and post-modern characteristics of form but it is neither a strictly modern nor post-modern novel. Its form demands that *Surfacing* be read as both. It constitutes a *rite de passage* from which the nameless narrator emerges a newly integrated and realized self that Atwood calls, "some kind of harmony with the world."<sup>1</sup> Catherine McLay, for instance, sees the novel as an exploration "of a contemporary problem, the search for unity in a self which has become divided," claiming that the conclusion is "Ultimately. . . an affirmation of the self in its two faces of mind and body."<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Sherill Grace maintains that the narrator achieves "a new and more hopeful wholeness in the final section of the book,"<sup>3</sup> specifying that "by the end of *Surfacing*, the narrator has succeeded in her quest; she has found what she needs to begin a new, complete, and free life."<sup>4</sup> John Moss gives the most forceful statement by saying that the narrator "has achieved the integration of head and body, resolving the amorphous parts of herself into a single coherent identity."<sup>5</sup>

In the context of the debate of modernism and postmodernism, Eli Mandel says: "At the end nothing is resolved."<sup>6</sup> Rosemary Sullivan specifies that the narrator achieves no spiritual regeneration because she is unable to integrate the insights she gains from her descent into a mystical world with normal consciousness.

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## MICHAEL FRAYN'S *COPENHAGEN*: A NOTE

*Sanjeewani Deshpande*

During the earlier half of the twentieth century a number of scientists and researchers from all over the world got engaged in a fresh, adventurous and a continuous process of theoretical analyses and experimental studies which led to exciting and fascinating new knowledge with regards to the interior structure of the atom. The times were indeed intellectually stimulating. Such was the prevailing mood that physicists, ignoring all man-made barriers, appreciating and respecting each other, shared information with each other. Almost all of them seemed electrified and thrilled: it was as though a uniform culture permeated amongst them who proudly claimed to belong to one "international family of physicists" in the era that also came to be known as "the golden age of physics." Among these, some of whom were also Nobel Prize winners, there were two specially distinguished personalities - Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg.

Bohr and Heisenberg were so impressed with each other in their very first meeting that for three years, between 1924 to 1927, both gladly decided to pursue their passion together. Bohr who had already presented his theory on the structure of an atom was much appreciated by others around and was often fondly referred to as the Pope. He had established his "principle of complementarity" and Heisenberg brought forth the "principle of uncertainty." Scientists needed a fresh interpretation to their most unexpected, fascinating findings and stimulating explorations in Quantum Mechanics. Bohr and Heisenberg together synthesized and consolidated all the studies under a common banner which is now referred to as the "Copenhagen Interpretation." Bohr's loyal and loving wife Margrethe helped him type and retype the perfectionist's drafts and was always readily willing to offer cake and coffee, welcoming his students, colleagues and friends even in their home.

This professional compatibility between Bohr and Heisenberg generously spilt over and extended into their personal relationship which became almost proverbial as Father-and-son and much coveted by the rest.

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## **KHUSHWANT SINGH'S *TRAIN TO PAKISTAN* AND ITS SCREEN ADAPTATION BY PAMELA ROOKS**

***Subhash K. Shinde & Pandit B. Nirmal***

*The Novel is a narrative that organizes itself in the world, while the cinema is a world that organizes itself into a narrative. -- Jean Mitry, French Filmmaker*

Literature and film are basically two different mediums but they have a symbiotic relationship. Literature offers infinite sources of ready plots and stories for the film makers. Adapting a work of art for the film is a well-known phenomenon in film industry. Hollywood and Bollywood have adapted many works of art for their films. The present paper is an endeavour to highlight the interface between literature and film with special reference to Pamela Rooks' Screen adaptation of Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*.

Films like *Devdas*, *Chemmen*, *Pathar Panchali*, *Umrao Jaan*, *Guide*, *Rudali*, *Shatranj Ke Khiladi*, *Sadgati*, *Shyamchi Aai* are notable examples in this regard. Recently, the novel *Q & A* (2005) by Vikas Swarup had been adapted successfully for the screen as *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008), a movie that got eight Oscars.

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956) has depicted in a very effective manner the partition and the communal violence which followed it. It has described the bloody violence in a heartrending manner which numbs the sensation of the readers. It presents a moving tragic tale of the partition period of Indian history. In its background there is the great human catastrophe of the partition of India and the establishment of an independent state Pakistan and the inhuman events that followed. The novelist succeeds in asserting the value and dignity of a man's sacrifice for a woman. By focusing on a micro-level (the village: Mano Majra), the novel depicts what was happening at macro-level (the country) during the partition period. Four decades later, in the 50th year of the partition, Pamela Rooks directed Khushwant Singh's masterpiece *Train to Pakistan* for the National Film Development Corporation to coincide with 50 years of Independence.

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## **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN BIHAR**

### *Swayam Prabha*

The concern for women's political equality in India first emerged as a political issue during the national movement in which women were active participants. Women's participation in politics is not a new thing. An examination of women's political participation in India since 1930s, when for the first time women were enfranchised, reveals contradictory trends. They have participated in various mass-based protest movements ranging from the sporadic armed struggles of peasants, tribals and workers in Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala to the non-violent 'narmada bachao andolan' and 'Chipko' movement (Poonacha 17).

As early as 1917, Indian women raised the issue of representation in politics, which at the time meant a demand for universal adult franchise. By 1929 women had the right to vote on the basis of wifehood, property and education (Kapur 229). After Independence, in the 1952 election, many women contested and were given positions in the central and state cabinets or were appointed as ambassadors and governors. But soon a reverse trend set in. Almost every election since Independence is a testimony of the declining political participation of women. Women's involvement in politics is very important for their progress in all spheres of life. Political participation of women moves them towards empowerment. It's a center for women to achieve the goals of equality, development and peace. Women's political empowerment is premised on three fundamental and non-negotiable principles: a) The equality between men and women. b) Women's right to the full development of their potentials. c) women's right to self-representation and self-determination (Kapur 223-224). The political participation of women gives them power to access, control and make informed choices. Their inclusion in politics reduces gender inequality and violence.

Bihar is one of the poorest states of India where participation of women in politics is less visible among other states. Bihar's women legislators of the early Independence period were well educated and some had brilliant academic careers.

- **Dr. Swayam Prabha** is Lecturer in the Department of History, Patna University, Patna.

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## **INTRA-FAMILY COMMUNICATION IN 2 STATES: THE STORY OF MY MARRIAGE**

*Y.L. Srinivas*

One of the writers of best sellers in the recent years, Chetan Bhagat has brought about a paradigm shift in deploying an idiom of English which has swayed the Indian youth, especially those who are from the small towns of India imbued with English mania/phobia. Reportedly, ELT experts have been recommending his novels for improvement of communication skills. Media reports reveal that his novels are hot cakes specially in the small towns of India.

Chetan Bhagat is writing at a time when the people in the subcontinent, for that matter in entire Asia, have to come to the conclusion, given the globalization of the world and the colonization of minds, that English is the language for sustenance. Chetan Bhagat has cleverly responded to this need of the hour which is perhaps the reason for his success. He is seen as a creative writer with focus on imparting communication skills. Communication, therefore, is central to his novels.

Chetan Bhagat's novels emphasize the efficacy of communication not only for professional success at corporate level but for personal fulfillment at the familial level. While the commercial success unequivocally demonstrates how his novels are enabling people acquire better communication skills for their professional success, he seems to be unwittingly suggesting the imperative need for qualitative intra-family communication for individual gratification at the familial level.

The chief characters of *2 States: The Story Of My Marriage* - Ananya and Krish - suffer in their lives since they do not find ambience conducive to healthy intra-family communication. They fail to express their emotions freely in their family interaction zones. Silence thickens the plot but speech leads to solutions. At the end of it all no one feels hurt as familial harmony is reinforced. The novel, as is evident from the title itself, is about two states and love between a North Indian boy and a South Indian girl. Krish, a Punjabi boy meets Ananya at IIM, Ahmedabad.

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## SOCIAL CRITICISM IN ADIGA'S *THE WHITE TIGER*

*Shrikant Singh*

Critics and reviewers have accused Aravind Adiga for presenting a negative image of India in his novel *The White Tiger*. Amitav Kumar remarks that the novel presents the "cynical anthropologies to an audience that is not Indian."<sup>1</sup> Similarly Shobhan Saxena points out how "the West is once again using our poverty to humiliate us."<sup>2</sup> If we examine this novel, it appears that it is in the nature of a bold commentary on the social conditions of India arising from global economy. The novel provides samples of gross malpractices in Indian democracy. In fact it is a social criticism focusing on the misery and poverty of India and its socio-political-religious conflicts presented through humour and irony. The present paper attempts an analysis of the social and political resonances in the novel.

As a correspondent of *Time* Adiga had the opportunity to travel throughout India including its most backward parts. *The White Tiger* is an outcome of this experience as a reporter in India. The ordinary people in his narration are from Bihar who migrate to different cities for work. The image of two India is the consequence of globalisation. The protagonist is disturbed with the growth of two Indias: "India is two countries in one: An India of Light, and an India of Darkness. The ocean brings Light to my country. Every place on the map of India near the ocean is well-off. But the river brings darkness to India—the black river."<sup>3</sup> The river is the Ganga, once the holy river, a source of sustenance of human civilization and culture that stands polluted today with "straw, soggy parts of human bodies, buffalo, carrion and seven different kinds of industrial acids" (15).

In epistolary form of narration the novel presents the protagonist's journey from darkness to light. It begins in his native village, passes through Dhanbad and Delhi and ends in Bangalore. The narration calls it "The Autobiography of a Half-Baked Indian" (10). During the course of his journey the protagonist discovers the dismal reality of India—the ever widening gulf between the rich and the poor alike in rural as well as urban areas.

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## **DIASPORIC CONCERNS IN KAMALA MARKANDAYA'S *THE NOWHERE MAN***

*Sunita Siroha*

Kamala Markandaya has lent a new dimension to Indian English fiction. Through her fictional works she has graphically depicted the East-West cultural differences, diversified social life of India, the typical problems of Indians living in other parts of the world and the individual's craving for social relationship. The fact that Markandaya is a pioneer of the Indian diaspora has to be kept in mind while analysing the unprecedented predicament of her protagonists. At the same time her mixed critical sensibility keeps on oscillating between the Oriental and the Occidental values of life. She is an outsider by choice (she left India for England and spent her whole life in England) but her eyes, her mind, her thinking process remains Indian and it has been brilliantly projected in her novel *The Nowhere Man*.

The Indian culture and the British culture serve as a trigger to her creative imagination. Like a true humanist she has imbibed the best of both the cultures and used it as a background to highlight the protagonist's dilemma in the world of human relationships. Her encounter with British culture can be seen as a profitable encounter to understand the complex working of imperialistic forces which have determined the Indo-British relationships reflected in Indian English fiction. The British image of India and the Indian comprehension of British culture provide a special structure to her fiction.

It has to be kept in mind that the British image of India and the Indian image of Britain have constantly influenced her mind and *The Nowhere Man* is a scintillating product of this influence. The fact that India is the country of Markandaya's birth and upbringing and England is the country where she had lived her major life has a bearing on her diasporic concerns. These concerns are primarily tragic because racialism and victimisation of the aliens have generated a lot of tension among the British natives and the Indian migrants. *The Nowhere Man* is placed in India as well as in England. The novelist projects the dilemma of Srinivas through the East-West confrontation thereby suggesting that the crux of the entire postcolonial literature operates between the inevitable structure of the black and the white.

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## BHARATI MUKHERJEE'S *WIFE*: A BLEAK WORLD

*Monika Gupta*

The story of *Wife* is concerned with a young Bengali girl of twenty waiting for a husband. Dimple wants a different kind of life - an apartment in Chowringhee, her hair done by Chinese girls, trips to New Market for nylon sarees. She fantasizes about young men with mustaches, dressed in spotless white peering into open skulls. Marriage would bring her freedom, cocktail parties on carpeted lawns, fund raising dinners for noble charities, "Marriage would bring her love" (3).

Though cosmopolitan in her thinking, Dimple seems to have a warped thinking that borders on the grotesque. She is not the typical Bengali middle class woman who would settle for a simple middle class woman. She wants a neurosurgeon or an architect and she believes she will find a love match. She is worried about her "rudimentary breast" (4) and she is obsessed about "... an inevitable engineer... in starched Khaki pants and dark glasses, still mustached, on a half built bridge directing laborers..."(4). Dimple is quite intelligent and analytical when she analyzes the doctor who checks her up. She makes a quick decision and says she would kill herself rather than marry an intern with a dirty smile with smudges of blood around the buttons.

Dimple seems to be a compound of contradictions at times. On one hand, she is well versed in Rabindra Sangeet and free style dancing to Tagore's music; on the other hand, she is modern enough to discuss 'the flea' that is her flat chest. She considers herself hopeless and articulates a bleak vision of an immigrant woman's failure to assimilate into Western culture. Her craving for sex can be ascertained by her hallucinations in the bathroom in the dark: "The toilet seat switched like a coiled snake. Right twisted shapes lunged at her from behind cupboards or tried to wrest her into bed" (12-13). Dimple's negative thinking and bizarre observations like seeing crows and pariah dogs work through rotten fish are indications of her warped thinking. After her marriage Dimple is terrified of living in Africa or North America but she camouflages her fear in front of her husband.

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**INAUTHENTIC DEPICTIONS OF INDIA:  
*THE WHITE TIGER AND SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE***

***Shri Krishan Rai & Dhananjay Tripathi***

Being one of the biggest markets of this globalised era, India has become an alluring destination across the board. Drawn to this magnetism of our country everyone tries to read and write about it. Aravind Adiga, the author of the Booker award winning novel *The White Tiger* and Danny Boyle, the director of the Oscar winning film *Slumdog Millionaire*, have also climbed the bandwagon. Both of them created their magnum opuses and collected accolades on their depictions of India without knowing much about India. Though from the standpoint of literary creation both works deserve what they have achieved, their portrayals of India and Indian sensibility seem distorted.

The inauthentic portrayal of India is glaringly conspicuous at many places in Adiga's *The White Tiger*. The erroneous episodes of the novel show the superficial understanding of a writer who has spent most of his time outside the country, and consequently who has a superficial understanding of most of the things prevalent in his own country. For instance, the funeral procession of the mother of the protagonist, Balram Halwai was led by his grandmother: "Kusum my granny was leading the procession...My father and Kisan, my brother, stood behind her, to bear the front end of the cane bed which bore the corpse" (Adiga 15-16). These lines ostensibly highlight the shallow acquaintance of the author with Indian taboos and traditions. He depicts a funeral procession of a Hindu family led by a woman without knowing the fact that the presence of women in such gatherings is regarded as sacrilege in this country. This inauthenticity attains its acme when he writes: "My mother's body had been wrapped from head to toe in a saffron silk cloth...I remember swinging my hand and singing: 'Shiva's name is the truth!'" (16). Even a non-Hindu knows that it is the name of Lord Ram instead of Shiva that is uttered in such processions.

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## GENDER, GENRE AND RACE IN MARTHA C. LAWRENCE'S DETECTIVE FICTION

*Namita Sethi*

This paper examines some of the conventions of the detective fiction genre by briefly tracing the contours of some British, American and Native American writers, speculating on the ways in which the politics of the genre determines representations of gender and ethnicity. It locates Martha C. Lawrence's novels in the context of feminist detective fiction. One of her novels *Pisces Rising (PR)* is examined in some detail to explore the tensions surrounding gaming laws and the Native American community.

The title of this paper implies a certain sensitivity to issues of race and gender on the part of the popular American detective fiction writer, Martha C. Lawrence. It also refers to her detective Elizabeth Chase, a psychic or 'sensitive,' person and a Ph.D. in Parapsychology from Stanford University; one who uses her second sight to help her solve a case, which she does by using the conventional methods of a trained Private Investigator and her "9- millimeter Glock." The following extract, from the prologue to *Pisces Rising*, may serve as an introduction to her work:

*My name is Elizabeth Chase. I'm a licensed private investigator with a specialty: I'm a psychic. I know - I hate the word, too. So many charlatan's and rip-off artists have hung their shingles under the term psychic that it's hard to take the title seriously. I use it for lack of a better alternative. To call myself sensitive makes me sound like a character from Star Trek: The New Generation. Parapsychologist detective? Too many syllables, wrong image. Makes me sound as though I hunt ghosts instead of people - people being the more dangerous of the two. Ironically, the person who encouraged me to take pride in being a psychic was a lieutenant commander for the NYPD, hardly a touchy-feely organization. "Don't apologise," he told me when he caught my self deprecating tone.*

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## CULTURAL CONFLICT AND COMIC IRONY IN JHABVALA'S *TO WHOM SHE WILL*

*Ashish Gupta*

Ruth Praver Jhabvala is one of the most outstanding women writers in the arena of Indian writing in English. She has published ten novels and a book of short stories since she entered the literary scene in 1955. Most of her works deal with post-Independence India where she lives and works, with her husband, an Indian architect. At the risk perhaps of monotony she has gone back again and again to the same themes; her settings are usually the same - in and out Delhi. She tends to concentrate on the literate Hindu-middle class and European expatriates. She is interested in certain types of characters and in certain modes of behavior. Her province as a writer is contemporary India, and the problems which arouse her curiosity as a novelist are largely personal and domestic. She sets her artistic shaping imagination to work on violence, wildness, and romanticism. We might even narrow down her range further and note the prevalence in her novels and short stories of the associated themes of love, marriage and family life, all related very closely to the type of family still characteristic of India.

Living in Delhi and being a close observer of its social-cultural milieu, Ruth Jhabvala presents in her first novel *Amrita or To Whom She Will* a dynamic picture of Delhi in a state of transition. Against this background she conceives and projects a drama of cross-cultural conflict and resolution in two extended families of post-Independence India. Of the two, one belongs to the wealthy aristocracy living for generations in Delhi and the other to the new expatriate community from North Punjab now ceded to Pakistan. These families - authentic representatives of their respective communities - are faced with the common danger of invasion from each other's ranks that is bred by the peculiar environment in which they live. A vast cultural gulf separates the two communities but the lines that each draws to ensure its separateness are equally sacred and inviolable.

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## **THE PARTITION AND WOMEN: JYOTIRMOYEE DEVI'S *THE RIVER CHURNING***

*Neena Arora*

On 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947 India became 'Independent' and the country was divided into two. The partition of the country into two sovereign states was a multi-dimensional event which offered a variety of facets and experiences. The joy and pride of Independence was diluted by the traumatic experiences people had to face in the wake of the Partition.

The British imperialists, after ruling the country for more than hundred years, ensured that the erstwhile colonized people suffered not only emotionally but physically as well. The post-partition human suffering was exceedingly painful and terrible. Partition caused hatred and acrimony on both sides of the border resulting into unprecedented communal frenzy and genocide of innocent human beings. The Partition of India has left such a deep scar on the psyche of the people of the sub-continent that it has not faded from popular consciousness even after three decades. In fact, an event that took about a million lives cannot be erased from collective memory for various reasons.

Since the Partition of India, the empirical reality of Partition in the sub-continent has been expressed in the literature of many languages from a variety of perspectives and standpoints adding multifaceted dimensions to the corpus of Partition Literature. Since the actors of Partition were men it could be described as a male construct. The large body of Partition Literature contains male-authored texts by writers like Khushwant Singh, Chaman Nahal, Bhisham Sahni, Manto, Intizaar Hussain, Manohar Malgonkar, Shiv. K. Kumar, Gulzaar and Salman Rushdie to name a few. In recent times, there has been a spurt of women's representational writing in India from the erstwhile marginalized groups or communities. Women writers like Mumtaz Shah Niwaz, Mehr Nigar Masroor, Bapsi Sidhwa (Pakistan), Shauna Singh Baldwin (expatriate Canadian writer), Attia Hussain, Dina Mehta (Parsee writer), Manju Kapoor, Amrita Pritam and Jyotirmoyee Devi have invariably enriched the corpus of Partition Literature in the Indian sub-continent with their representation of women's perspective.

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## **DEEP ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES IN HEMINGWAY'S *THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA***

***Bhavesh Chandra Pandey***

*Man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed  
but not defeated.– Ernest Hemingway, The Old Man  
and the Sea.*

Though the essential message of the novella *The Old Man and the Sea* is the invincibility of man, it can also be read as a beautiful document of man's relationship with nature. The inherent theme of the novella is man's endurance against the forces of nature. This work professes to underline the power of man in his struggle against nature.

However the struggle between man and nature as depicted in the novella maintains a dignified level as the protagonist seems to understand the essential harmony between man and other beings. The treatment of nature in this book demonstrates a standpoint that is much akin to the concept of 'deep ecology' proposed by Arne Naess. This approach endorses 'biospheric egalitarianism'. It holds the view that all things in nature are alike in having value in their own right, independent of their usefulness to human purposes. So we should respect and take care of the natural environment with which we identify ourselves.

The term 'deep ecology' was coined by Arne Naess, the Norwegian philosopher in the early seventies. Naess and his colleague Kvaloy were impressed by some aspects of 'Sherpa Culture' on their visit to the Himalayas. They found that their Sherpa guide regarded certain mountains as sacred and accordingly would not venture onto them. Naess formulated a position which extended the reverence felt for the mountains to other natural things in general.

Deep ecology has become an important standpoint in environmental ethics. The deep ecologists respect the intrinsic value of everything in nature. The idea is briefly that by identifying with nature we can enlarge the boundary of the self. It does not separate man from nature.

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## Short Story

### THE FLIP SIDE

*Seemin Hasan*

Professor Mala Dutta was tired but relaxed. Leaning back in her rocking chair, she closed her eyes. She was back in the crowded hall. Midst thunderous clapping and flashing cameras, she saw herself receiving the award. She heard herself being congratulated and being told that her debut novel was ‘...par excellence ... a masterpiece ... so-o-o sensitive that it actually hurt ... etc. etc.’ She saw the eager crowds surging for her autograph and the security men pushing them back. She relived the grand celebration dinner and the never-before way in which everyone looked at her. The thrill of the evening just gone by came back with a dizzying impact. She sighed with pleasure. She was a celebrity.

Mala Dutta, Professor of English, 43 years old, single, reserved, content with her silences and slow life. Who could have thought that she would produce a bestseller?

Not her colleagues or her students, certainly. They believed she was too prosaic to feel so intensely. Her family ... it didn't exist. She had no one. Her father died soon after she was born and her weary mother a few years ago. Permanently overworked and exhausted, her mother had never encouraged interaction with any extended family there may have been. Friends ... did she have any? Not beyond acquaintances as she valued her privacy. But, Juhi? Juhi was dead. Now, Juhi had been a true friend ... perhaps she still was. Mala shifted in her rocking chair and smiled through closed eyes.

Mala's life had not been easy. Her father's death had left them penniless and helpless. Her mother aged overnight. Anxiety encroached all over her persona like wilderness in a deserted house. Burdened with the responsibility of providing for herself and her daughter, she took to sewing clothes. For small payments, she worked long hours and cursed fate and her daughter. Mala lived in perpetual dread of her mother and subsequently of the rest of the world.

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## Poetry

### THREE POEMS

*Sandhya Tiwari*

#### **MIND-MADE MANACLES**

Man is born free,  
but in shackles everywhere.  
Some are physical,  
some psychological.  
To free oneself  
from shackles physical  
is like a child's play.  
But the fetters psychological  
are difficult to tackle,  
because, many a times  
human mind is so fickle!  
Call it pretence  
or reasons' absence,  
in the name of civility  
the false show of inner nudity.  
Words like conscience,  
ethics, conduct, moral and values  
are found in books -  
not in hands, but dusted in racks.  
One rule for self,  
and another for others;  
the mind-made manacles  
result in debacles.

#### **INFINITE YEARNINGS!**

Life is beautiful -  
it opens up many choices.  
Opt for something useful,  
scattered are challenges -  
interesting and obvious.  
A plebian may choose  
things easy but not profuse.  
He shuns unbeaten path  
things magnificent air his wrath.  
Happy to remain mediocre,

life of a moth he prefers.  
Each problem and adversity  
is loaded with opportunity.  
Do not accept life passive  
aim something great and massive.

### **THE END OF THE GAME**

Human beings armed with human follies  
are marching blindfolded mongering for power.  
With swollen self and bloated pride,  
irrespective of the ability they pose -  
and pretentious in turn appear.  
Never ending desires are the culprit;  
ignoring the inner voice they march ahead -  
tread alike on many a friends' and foes' head.

No doubt they achieve success!  
Success complemented with the loathe;  
bitter and caustic, remarks and curses.  
Life though full of luxuries,  
becomes, one long sojourn with miseries.  
How easily they were trapped  
into the fastidious fast running pace of life,  
ending abruptly into subtle hollows and strife.

When they turn and look around,  
except their own shadow  
no one is found.  
Washed and wiped  
are all their aspirations  
of becoming a legend and  
basking in the glory –  
never a fact, that remained an imagined story!

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## REVIEW ESSAY

### HUMAN TIME IS A CITY

**Anita Money**

Nibir K. Ghosh begins his preface to *W.H. Auden: Therapeutic Fountain* with the observation that “How to make a world better for men to live in has fascinated the minds of thinkers, philosophers and writers in every age” and that there have been “visions of good and possibly attainable systems...and at other times fantasies of a desirable but unattainable perfection.” It is in this context that he feels Shelley’s statement that “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world” should be understood. Auden objected to and found absurd the claim that poets were world legislators but he had himself been drawn to exploring concepts for an earthly paradise or New Jerusalem, at times detailing a purely private Eden, but ultimately always concerned with ways to make a better world, which is the thesis of this book. His own line “For poetry makes nothing happen,” from his elegy *In Memory of W.B. Yeats* has caused outcry and debate though read in context it is saying something more as Ghosh recognises.

*For poetry makes nothing happen: it survives  
In the valley of its making where executives  
Would never want to tamper, flows on south  
From ranches of isolation and the busy griefs,  
Raw towns that we believe and die in; it survives,  
A way of happening, a mouth.*

“Auden in Error,” a poem by David Ray, precedes the preface and acts as a gentle chastisement, affirming that poetry does indeed make things happen, a pointer to the subtitle of Ghosh’s book which pays tribute to the therapeutic nature of Auden’s poetry. In the appendix he has printed in full Auden’s address in 1951 to the Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom where Auden allows that artists and poets may have some political value as an irritant reminder of humanity: “I think that as long as there are works of art which are, each of them, unique, they are a witness, whether people understand them or not, to the world of humanity they reflect.”

Ghosh admires Auden’s poetry, both its technical virtuosity and the prophetic tone in which pronouncements were made which went on “to define the present and the future in relation to the past in order to

give us a profound understanding of the age we live in.” He took up the challenge of writing this book as a result of the huge response to the ‘birth centenary’ tributes for Auden contained in the Special Section of *Re-Markings* (Vol.6 No.1, March 2007). He acknowledges with gratitude the help and guidance given by Professor Edward Mendelson, among others, and in the Foreword by Professor Jonah Raskin the hope is expressed that this book will bring Auden new readers from around the world to appreciate a poetry “that was intensely personal and that also reached out to the family of humanity and that cried out against war and against violence.”

Nibir Ghosh’s perspective on Auden is not only sympathetic and shows understanding but is rewarding in the serious attention he pays to Auden’s early political enthusiasms and search for ways towards a just society. He illustrates the underlying continuity of a quest which culminates in a personal philosophy that draws on Christianity and places responsibility on the individual to accept life and learn to love his neighbour as himself in order to make the world a better place.

The first two chapters cover the political situation in the late 1920s and 1930s reflecting that whenever the historical process tends to break down, it becomes fairly difficult to separate literary history from social, political and economic history. He shows how much thought Auden gave to Marxist theory and illustrates this by using quotations from both his poetry and prose on the major themes of ‘class struggle’, ‘Industrialism’, ‘Freedom-necessity-choice relationship’ and the ‘theory of evolution’. These ideas, particularly the question of freedom and necessity and the theory of evolution remain important concepts in Auden’s work to the end, evolving in various ways. He frequently contrasts the instinctual world of the animal and plant kingdom with the self-conscious world of man and also the parallel realities of Nature and History. In Auden’s address to the Indian Congress in 1951 he speaks of the danger of equating two realities with different laws:

*There are two real worlds and we inhabit both of them. One, the natural material world, the physical world, the world of mass, of number, not of language. A world in which freedom is indeed consciousness of necessities, a world in which justice means equality before the law of physics, chemistry, physiology. And then there is the other world, the historical community of persons, the world of faces, the world of language where necessity is the consciousness of freedom and justice is the command to love my neighbour as myself,*

*that is to say, as a unique, irreplaceable being....Unreality comes when either world is treated as if it were the other one.*

Auden's interest in Psychology is seen by Ghosh as related to his quest for a means of creating a better society because psychological ills cannot be ignored if civilisation is to be restored to a sound state of mental health. He offers an entertaining and revealing quote from Dylan Thomas:

*I sometimes think of Mr Auden's poetry as hygiene, a knowledge and practice, based on brilliantly prejudiced analysis of contemporary disorders, relating to the preservation and promotion of health, a sanitary science and a Flusher of melancholies. I sometimes think of his poetry as a great war, admire intensely the mature, religious and logical fighter.*

Auden's ideas on Psychology were influenced by various people whom Ghosh mentions, including Homer Lane, Groddeck and Freud, but it is useful to remember that the initial influence came from home as George Augustus, his father, who was a doctor with an interest in Ppsychology, who became school medical officer in Birmingham, a newly appointed post at the time, later becoming Professor of Public Health at Birmingham University. Auden, aware of the snobberies and gentilities as well as neuroses which existed in his own class and in some of his own relations, understood the psychosomatic nature of illness and related this to society. These concerns are apparent in the private fantasy world of *Mortmere* shared with Christopher Isherwood and Edward Upward and in his plays dealing with saga rivalries and family feuds though his awareness grows, as Ghosh points out, when he confronts the wider world of social ills in Berlin. Ghosh quotes my father, John Auden, to whom *The Ascent of F6* was dedicated, on Wystan's lack of class and racial prejudice but dislike of "evil in high places, whether in Kremlin, Berchtesgaden or Whitehall." The combination of a medical background and a thoughtful Christian upbringing had a lasting influence on Wystan and my father who, when he went to India as a young geologist, was shocked at the prejudices of some of the Englishmen he met, later marrying my mother Sheila Bannerjee who was Bengali. Our first introduction to Wystan was in 1951 when he came to stay with us in Calcutta.

In discussing Auden's earlier poetry with its buoyancy and rhetorical advocacy of a new order against the old order and sense of imminent

doom expressed in a new style “raising ordinary speech into strong and strange incantation,” Ghosh comments on the immediate impact he had on his contemporaries in a shared public vision. He quotes from Koestler: “the success of the Soviet economy provided such a contrast to the downward trend of capitalism that it led to the obvious conclusion that ‘they are the future – we the past.’” Later, for many, Communism became the God that Failed. For Auden, as Ghosh points out, the public vision lost its validity with political systems which turned humans into statistical nonentities and the rhetoric that had accompanied the vision began to pall. Communism shared with Fascism a totalitarian disregard for the individual.

The dangers of rhetorical language which simplify the truth for effect and can obscure the more complex reality became a matter of crucial importance for Auden as a poet and Ghosh reflects sensibly on the controversy over his later corrections and rejections of poems. His quest for the good included a difficult technical quest to write poetry which was truthful and with a quieter impact which aimed to “tell the truth, to disenchant and disintoxicate.”

In this context, it is worth drawing attention to his appreciation of De la Mare’s anthology *Come Hither* for it explains his dislike of pretension in poetry (part of his objection to Shelley’s remark, I think, about legislators): “particularly valuable was its lack of literary class consciousness, its juxtaposition on terms of equality of unofficial poetry, such as counting-out rhymes, and official poetry such as the odes of Keats. It taught me at the start that poetry does not have to be great to be good....”

Ghosh’s book, though compact, covers a great deal in its carefully structured seven chapters. It will encourage the reader to access the references after each chapter and consult the bibliography at the end in order to read some of the texts mentioned in order to follow Auden’s thinking, for example, his view of the relationship of Art and Politics (“The Prolific and the Devourer”). It provides many illuminating quotations to illustrate Auden’s constantly expanding and changing ideas, showing the major influences on which he drew to formulate his own imaginative truths in his poetry and in prose. It should be a salutary book both for newcomers to Auden and for serious Auden scholars for it will introduce them to the wise thinking expressed with such mastery in the poetry and which shapes both the poetry and the prose. Auden’s originality, as Ghosh says, “lay in his quick responsiveness to, and in the vigorous enunciation and brilliant



assimilation of, the ideas of innumerable representative thinkers. These ideas helped him integrate ideological confusions and raise them to new levels of consciousness....” He comments on Auden’s belief in the Fall and in Grace and his personal understanding of God remarking that “His poetry gradually moves from the contours of contemporary social reality towards the direct contemplation of religious matters related to the eternal design.” He also quotes from “The Good Life” to show Auden’s critical view of the Church as an organisation: “When a religious body becomes an organised Church it becomes a political movement, and the historical evidence can point to no occasion on which the Church has been able to avert either war or economic changes.”

Love which features so strongly in Auden’s work both as *eros* and as *agape* becomes, as Ghosh appreciates, the crucial building block of the just city once one can progress beyond the idea of being loved oneself alone (selfish love) to a universal love which means understanding that difficult command to love thy neighbour as thyself (as a unique other equal to oneself, not a faceless number). These changes come from within but with the help of grace:

*I know nothing except what everyone knows  
If there when Grace dances, I should dance.*

Ghosh admires Auden’s poetry for its courage because, as he says, disillusionments are not allowed to settle into despair or hatred but instead life is affirmed. Taking cue from Old Masters, Auden could visualise the extraordinary nature of day-to-day ordinary human suffering and yet reveal how life remains a ‘blessing’. Auden’s words “Bless what there is for being” are engraved on a stone in his commemoration at Christ Church Cathedral.

I would like to end with two quotations which are an affirmation of Nibir Ghosh’s thesis: one from a letter written to my father in 1941 - “Every ohm of private happiness and decency is, I am convinced, a political asset to the world,” and a verse from “Aubade” written at the end of his life and published posthumously in *Thank You, Fog* in 1974:

*Human Time is a City  
Where each inhabitant has  
A political duty  
Nobody else can perform,  
Made cogent by Her Motto:  
Listen, Mortals, Lest Ye Die.*

## REFERENCE

***W.H. Auden: Therapeutic Fountain* by Nibir K. Ghosh. New Delhi: Authorspress, 2010. Price: ₹ 525 (hardcover). Pages: xvi+175.**

- ***Ms. Anita Money*** is an administrator in an inner city London comprehensive organising work experience and enrichment opportunities for students. Her father, John Bicknell Auden, Wystan's brother, worked for the Geological Survey of India until just after India's Independence. Her mother, Sheila Bannerjee, a painter, was granddaughter of W.C. Bannerjee, the First President of the Indian National Congress. She Read English at St. Hugh's College, Oxford. She Worked for William Cookson on the poetry magazine Agenda from 1993 to 2000.



## STAGESTRUCK

***Saumitra Chakravarty***

Belying the reductivist connotations of Kipling's East and West, Dr. S. Ramaswamy's book *Stagestruck* is a wonderful synthesis of ancient Sanskrit dramatic theory and twentieth century Western theatre productions. From Bharatamuni to Shakespeare, from Karuna Rasa in *Samson Agonistes* and *Murder in the Cathedral* to Hasya Rasa in *The Tempest* and *The Cocktail Party* is an odyssey indeed, but not necessarily as turbulent as Odysseus'! For the author seamlessly joins centuries and cultures, countries and continents with as much ease as one flipping the pages of an encyclopedia or an atlas. From drama to theatre is like moving from the page to the stage and here we have the author effortlessly donning the masks of scholar and thespian with equal fluency and expertise.

In the thirty chapters of the book lie hidden a lifetime's experience of being exposed to the greatest dramatists of the twentieth century and the most spectacular theatrical productions on stages across the world. It is an opportunity which few people are blessed with and the book is a harvest of these invaluable experiences. Plays we may read, criticism we may peruse, but the vastness of scope this book exposes us to is a veritable goldmine of information, more exhaustive in scope

than in depth. The author is equally at home in the intricacies of Sanskrit dramatic theory which is his particular forte and in application of that theory to the Western dramatic texts from Shakespeare and Milton to Eliot and Pirandello. To the man of the theatre, the text is no more than a script, cold words on paper which must be fleshed out in the theatre. "The printed script of a play is hardly more than an architect's of a house not yet built," says Gordon Craig, while the present author calls it no more than a sub-text. Closer attention is paid to drama as Drisya Kavya rather than Sravya Kavya. Taking the examples of Kalidas's *Sakuntalam* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and the many dramatic and cinematic corollaries that have evolved out of them across the centuries, the author examines the various forms of visual media that have influenced their presentation in theatres across the world - the Noh plays, the masque, the music hall, the pantomime, the opera. Equally well exposed to stage and screen, traversing the world of the colossuses of theatre and cinema in Europe and Hollywood, the author comments on subtle differences of production and technique.

The book exposes us to the entire gamut of European theatre from the Epic Theatre of Bertolt Brecht, the Absurd Theatre of Wesker and Pinter, the Total Theatre of Peter Shaffer, the Mirror Theatre of Luigi Pirandello and the plays of the Celtic Revival. Japanese Noh plays, Shadow theatre and Puppetry find their place here too. Most noteworthy again is the interconnectivity between the West and the East, which lends a special dimension. Due to his vast exposure, traversing departments of the world's best universities and theatres in India and abroad, the author offers intimate glimpses of private correspondences, unpublished poems and plays, biographical details and personal interviews of dramatists and directors.

The book, with the beautiful cover design of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford overlooking the Avon, is a veritable goldmine of information of an amazing scope and variety where the author plays the scholar of unparalleled erudition rather than a critic with particular insight. Unfortunately, misprints in the book are too numerous to be overlooked for even a casual reader.

#### REFERENCE

***Stagestruck* by S. Ramaswamy. Bangalore: S.K.S.S. Charitable Trust, 2009. Price ₹ 500. Pages: xii+336.**

- **Dr. Saumitra Chakravarty** is Professor of English and Vice Principal of VV.S. College, Bangalore. She has published extensively in India and abroad.



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doubts.

- *Bertrand Russell*

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