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# RE-MARKINGS

Vol. 15 No. 2 September 2016

William Shakespeare

Rudyard Kipling

Jack London

Harper Lee

John Steinbeck

Mahasweta Devi

Alain Badiou

Rainer Maria Rilke

Jurgen Habermas

Morakabe Raks Seakhoa

John Cheever

Toni Morrison

Saadat Hasan Manto

Jonah Raskin

Leila Ahmed

Arundhati Roy

Kavita Kane

Little Histories

Role of Media

Journey of Language

Book Review

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# **RE-MARKINGS**

**Vol. 15 No. 2 September 2016**

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

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## EDITORIAL

Dr. Tijan M. Sallah's glowing tribute to *Re-Markings* on the publication of the 30<sup>th</sup> celebratory issue of the journal in March 2016, also marking fifteen eventful years of its vibrant existence, brings to mind W.B. Yeats's epigraph to his 1916 collection of poems, *Responsibilities and Other Poems*: "In dreams begin responsibilities." Dr. Sallah's reference to the journal as "an avenue for the brighter side of human nature" and "a generous platform for the sharing of stories, essays and criticisms of what is magnificent in our being human albeit molded by the rich diverse cultures of the world," may be an objective appraisal of the issues and concerns, both national and global, that we have addressed since we began our mission way back in 2002 but such generous praises do and must make us aware of the responsibilities that come with such accolades. In terms of material pursuits and scientific as well as technological advancement, the world may have become a habitat of limitless hopes and possibilities. Yet if we look at ground reality we find ourselves engulfed in dread and anxiety created by divisive and destructive forces all around us so much so that we are left lamenting "what man has made of man!"

The way ahead may be paved with uncertainties that threaten our very existence but we have got to continue to strive together to fight against not only terrorism and unprecedented violence but also against inequities of all kinds related to nation, race, caste, gender and class that create insurmountable barriers among the *homo sapiens*. In this context it seems relevant to draw inspiration from a statement by Pablo Neruda: "There is no insurmountable solitude. All paths lead to the same goal: to convey to others what we are. And we must pass through solitude and difficulty, isolation and silence in order to reach forth to the enchanted place where we can dance our clumsy dance and sing our sorrowful song – but in this dance or in this song there are fulfilled the most ancient rites of our conscience in the awareness of being human and of believing in a common destiny."

It is significant that *Re-Markings* has consistently striven to weave out of the strands of diverse cultures, communities and religions, a durable fabric of belief in a "common destiny" by providing a valuable platform for the diffusion and dissemination of ideas in a healthy spirit of mutual exchange wherein multiple perspectives can be seen to coexist like the variant colours of the rainbow.

Even a cursory glance at the current issue of *Re-Markings* will amply reveal the amazing diversity inherent in its contents. I deem it a

pleasure to introduce to the *Re-Markings* fraternity Comrade Raks Morakabe Seakhoa from South Africa whose interview is featured as a lead piece in this issue. Comrade Raks has had the rare distinction of being a close friend and associate of two South African icons: Nelson Mandela and Nadine Gordimer. His remark, "As a perennial political and human rights activist, my primary poetic focus has been the plight of the down-trodden, the super-exploited and poorest of the poor" lyrically resonates with the avowed aim of our journal. Also included in the current volume are tributes to William Shakespeare, Jack London, Harper Lee and Rudyard Kipling. The kaleidoscopic range and variety of other contributions in this issue bring into bold relief discourses seminal to contemporary human concern.

Before closing this editorial note, it would be inappropriate not to remember with fondness and esteem Mahasweta Devi, the relentless activist and literary icon who departed for her eternal abode on 28 July 2016. As a champion of the downtrodden and the marginalized she gave new habitation and name to the hitherto undiscovered continent of the tribal world. Intensely aware of the predicament of tribal women, she candidly stated: "a woman can be said to be virtuous only after she has been cremated and her ashes are scattered in the wind." However, with the power of her creativity she had the innate ability to enter the lives of her characters to portray and project them as empowered individuals always ready to challenge the status quo. The following lines from the Keynote Address she delivered at the Jaipur Literature Festival in 2013 is a befitting tribute to the struggle her own life symbolized: "As I have been saying for years, repeatedly, the right to dream should be the first fundamental right. The right to dream. This then is my fight. My dream. In my life and in my literature." In another characteristic statement she conveyed the idea of the dream she envisaged for the tribal world: "The only way to counter globalization is to have a plot of land in some central place, keep it covered in grass, let there be a single tree, even a wild tree. Let your son's tricycle lie there. Let some poor child come and play, let a bird come and use the tree. Small things. Small dreams."

May her worthy soul bask in the sunshine of the dreams she has left behind and may we continue to be inspired by her monumental life and work to undertake individual as well as collective responsibility to transform these small things and small dreams into enduring reality.

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

## CONTENTS

‘Erecting Bridges to Re-link the World’:  
A Conversation with Comrade Morakabe Raks Seakhoa  
*Nibir K. Ghosh / 7*

In Memoriam: Three Essays  
*Jonah Raskin*  
Genius Lives: William Shakespeare at 400; Jack London at  
100 / 14  
*The Jungle Book* Revisited: Kipling, India and Empire / 16  
To Mock a Killing Bird: Harper Lee and  
Her Famous Novel / 19

“My Needs are Simple: Paper, Pen, and Privacy” –  
A Tribute to Harper Lee  
*Wanda H. Giles / 22*

The Shakespearean Magic: A Tribute  
*Shernavaz Buhariwala / 32*

Revisiting Mythic Tales: A Conversation with Kavita Kane  
*Maya Vinai & M.G. Prasuna / 39*

From Dominant Poetics to "Little Histories"  
*Mini Nanda / 43*

Pseudo-Diversities and Migratory Indigenous in  
Toni Morrison’s *Sula*  
*Rahul Kamble / 52*

Solitude as an Ontological-Creative Contingent:  
Rainer Maria Rilke’s *Letters to a Young Poet*  
*Bibhudutt Dash / 60*

Geopolitical Constructs of Arab-American Identity:  
Leila Ahmed’s *A Border Passage:*  
*From Cairo to America, A Woman’s Journey*  
*Rama Hirawat / 66*

Ecocentric Reading of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*  
*Sanjay Palwekar / 72*

Role of Media in the Public Sphere:  
A Habermasian Critique of the Advertisement World  
*Ankita Sharma / 77*

Autobiographical Patterns in John Cheever's "Expelled"  
*Arati K Thakur / 83*

From Being a Part to Being Apart: Language in Indian  
Writing in English with Special Reference to  
*The God of Small Things*  
*Yogendra Pareek / 90*

The Journey of Language from Art to Science  
*Laxmi R Chauhaan / 97*

Manifestations of Evil: Reading Manto through Badiou  
*Navdeep Kaur / 102*

**Book Review**

Review of Shanta Acharya's *A World Elsewhere*  
*Anita Money / 109*

**‘ERECTING BRIDGES TO RE-LINK THE WORLD’:  
A CONVERSATION WITH  
COMRADE MORAKABE RAKS SEAKHOA**

*Nibir K. Ghosh*

*Comrade Raks Morakabe Seakhoa heads the wRite Associates (in South Africa) a one-stop public relations, strategies, project and event management agency that delivers highly effective implementable services and products, focused mainly within the arts, culture and heritage sector and beyond. From 1988 to 1997, he tenured as the Regional Co-ordinator and Secretary General of the Congress of South African Writers (COSAW). He has been Convenor of the Arts, Culture & Heritage Commission of the South African Chapter of the African Renaissance. He helped raise the visibility of South African literature and its writers through numerous events and activities. He has been involved in almost all aspects of the arts, culture and heritage since his release from a 5-year incarceration on Robben Island (1979-1984). Prior to and post his arrest and incarceration, he'd been involved in student, youth and political activism. In this conversation Comrade Raks reflects on his role as an activist and poet during and after the tumultuous anti-apartheid struggle.*

**Ghosh:** Any reference to South Africa obviously reminds one of apartheid. As a social and political activist what memories of the repressive apartheid regime still remain vivid for you?

**Seakhoa:** The apartheid spatial planning still lives with us, so, much as one tries to ‘move on’ with life, it is not easy as the effects thereof are painfully evident and continue to define the psyche and identity of South Africans along racial, more than even class lines.

**Ghosh:** What events or circumstances initially motivated you to choose the path of rebellion?

**Seakhoa:** I was about 8 or 9 years old when my Mother went with me to town and was amazed at the stark inequalities between my Uitkykrural village life and that of the Lichtenburg white town folk. Electricity, water coming from taps, tarred roads, everything that my village lacked was in abundance in this town. I remember saying to my Mother, “when I grow up, I’m going to live in this town.”

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## IN MEMORIAM: THREE ESSAYS

*Jonah Raskin*

### GENIUS LIVES: WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE AT 400; JACK LONDON AT 100

In William Shakespeare's comedy, *As You Like it*, a melancholy traveler named Jaques waxes poetical in lines that have achieved literary immortality. "All the world's a stage," he says. "And all the men and women merely players;/ They have their exits and their entrances,/And one man in his time plays many parts."

Three hundred years later, Jack London, another melancholy traveler, might well have spoken nearly the same lines and meant them to be about himself. Indeed, he once observed that he had half-a-dozen different "selves" and proved it in a short, brilliant life that spanned the end of the nineteenth and the start of twentieth century.

A writer, vagabond, sailor, farmer, public speaker, playwright, playboy, war correspondent, and a Bernie Sanders-like socialist, Jack London was born John Griffith Chaney in San Francisco in 1876. He died in Glen Ellen, California in 1916 at the age of 40. (London ran for mayor of Oakland twice and lost.)

Around the world this year, theatergoers and thespians, are celebrating the 400th anniversary of the death of Shakespeare in 1616, his age unknown. There's another big literary anniversary afoot, as well. In 2016, fans of Jack London, one of the most popular American authors of his day, are celebrating the 100th anniversary of his death.

Both anniversaries are well worth celebrating. Indeed, if Shakespeare's plays illuminate the Elizabethan Age better than the plays of any other writer, Jack London's novels, including *The Iron Heel* and the first sections of *The Valley of the Moon*, illuminate the Gilded Age and its aftermath better than the novels of his contemporaries, including Henry James.

- **Professor Jonah Raskin**, contributing Editor at Re-Markings, *has taught journalism, media law and the theory of communication at Sonoma State University, U.S.A.*

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## **“MY NEEDS ARE SIMPLE: PAPER, PEN, AND PRIVACY” - A TRIBUTE TO HARPER LEE**

*Wanda H. Giles*

The death of Nelle Harper Lee, known professionally as Harper Lee, on 18 February 2016, in her eighty-ninth year, came as a worldwide surprise; she had published just one book, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, in 1960. After that and four minor articles, she lived a private life, emerging publicly only to participate in Truman Capote’s research for *In Cold Blood* or to make occasional necessary public appearances, primarily to receive public honors (Pulitzer Prize, Presidential Medal of Freedom, an Alabama state award). She also traveled to California for a three-week viewing of the filming of her novel. She is often described as reclusive. This generalization is argued by all the writers on Lee: She was also a sociable woman, a sports enthusiast, a family loyalist, an active Methodist who contributed greatly to her own church and to many Methodist college scholarships (the latter always anonymous), and a gregarious, ambitious, often directive personality. But with the exception of friends and family, she preferred to be alone or unnoticed in the crowds of New York. She learned upon the publication of her novel that she did not want to become celebrated (her attempts to answer every fan letter—she did sixty-four in one week—was instructive). She wanted to be able to take a public step without adulation and press. She managed the public and private parts of her life with characteristic irony, achieving a reclusive illusion while living freely among her familiars, the many unnoticing New Yorkers and the family and friends in Monroeville. Thomas Mallon, in reviewing Lee’s book, refers to her “flamboyant silence.” In Alabama, where she spent some months each year, she had a mix of country club and McDonald’s restaurants, old roads to drive on; new ones to explore; catfish and coffee to enjoy. In New York, she simply limited public appearances. A native of Monroeville—population 700 when her father, Amasa, moved his young family there in 1912 (now some 6,000)—she was close to her oldest sister, Alice Finch Lee.

- **Wanda Giles** is an independent scholar who taught in three universities.

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## THE SHAKESPEAREAN MAGIC: A TRIBUTE

*Shernavaz Buhariwala*

"Others abide our question, thou art free." In his salutation to Shakespeare, Mathew Arnold was honouring a force whose immensity transcends our obstinate questionings. A product of the exuberant Renaissance, overseen by Elizabeth's reign, he was to an extent favoured by nature, but remained essentially alone – "self-schooled, self scanned, self honoured, self secure." The New Learning stimulated by the fall of Constantinople buried the middle ages once and for all. As darkness receded, new galaxies were sighted. The contemporary scene glittered with a myriad talents; life became a great adventure and knowledge a glorious game. The world which was hitherto confined to the Mediterranean crescent spread its boundaries to distant lands. As the earth widened, the heavens opened and man felt compelled to look beyond the here and the now, to consider and measure his earthly pilgrimage. The fervid intensity of the quest was matched only by searching speculations of that undiscovered country from whose "bourne, no traveller returns." Conscience undoubtedly makes cowards of us. So Hamlet pondered over his divinely appointed duty thereby releasing pointers to the metaphysical reality. In so doing he made an unconscious statement of what a Shakespearean tragedy is about. Tragedy is positioned on the threshold between the here and the hereafter, with both departments in communication through the agency of the soul. The primacy of the soul sets a Shakespearean tragedy apart. Look at the contemporary scene and nowhere will you find such redemptive faculties.

The god of Marlowe was a mere convenience conjured by Faustus to postpone the day of reckoning. Milton's god was wholly Christian. Webster foresaw a void following a struggle between oppressors and defiants. Turn backwards to Greece and you will see Aeschylus victorious from the battle of Marathon, resonating with a civilized ethic. Though much is made of the interaction between gods and men in daily affairs, the Gods of the Greeks, though immortal were never infallible. The code of arbitration was ethical, not spiritual.

- **Dr. Shernavaz Buhariwala** is associated with the English Department of RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur. A frequent contributor to *Re-Markings*, she has also taught at the State University of New York, and Hislop College, Nagpur.

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## REVISITING MYTHIC TALES: A CONVERSATION WITH KAVITA KANE

*Maya Vinai & M.G. Prasuna*

Kavita Kane is a famous contemporary Indian English fiction writer whose works are strongly based on the mythological tales from world-renowned *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. A senior journalist with a career of over two decades, which includes working for Magna publication and DNA, she quit her job as Assistant Editor of *Times of India* to devote herself as a fulltime author. A self-styled aficionado of cinema and theatre with postgraduate degrees in English Literature and Mass Communication from the University of Poona, the only skill she knows, she candidly confesses, is writing. *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen*, her debut novel, released in 2013 was an instant bestseller. In 2015, her yet another mythological novel *Sita's Sister* was released. In this conversation with Kavita Kane, Maya Vinai and M.G. Prasuna discuss *Karna's Wife* from various perspectives that are both contemporary and timeless.

**Interviewers:** According to your novel *Karna's Wife*, Karna is amazingly altruistic. He pledges his own life for his best friend Duryodhana. Why does Karna never muster the courage to point out the fallacies of Duryodhana? Did Karna's need for social recognition override his sense of righteousness?

**Kavita:** That exactly is his moral dilemma. If you are asking why Karna did not directly confront Duryodhana, firstly, I don't think however close they were, Duryodhana would have appreciated Karna's bluntness. Karna was acutely aware of the social gap between them and never crossed that line. Besides, Duryodhana was shrewd enough to know of Karna's disapproval but he used it to his advantage.

**Interviewers:** As a writer you seem to be fascinated with the genre of mythology: first *Mahabharata* and now *Ramayana*. Has your usage of mythology urged you to interrogate the stereotypical human nature and reality inscribed within a culture?

- *Dr. Maya Vinai & Professor M.G. Prasuna are faculty members in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at BITS-Pilani, Hyderabad.*

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## FROM DOMINANT POETICS TO "LITTLE HISTORIES"<sup>1</sup>

*Mini Nanda*

The *Rigveda*, also known as the tree of knowledge is the primary root out of which sprang all the later developments of Hinduism, the offshoots, and branches representing the various aspects of Hindu Civilization. The *RigVeda* testifies that women were equal to men in accessing knowledge, even knowledge of Brahma or Absolute. Their initiation into Vedic studies was solemnised by rituals or *Upanayan* ceremony. Altekar writes (200) that if the important religious *sanskara* of *Upanayan* or initiation ceremony was not performed on girls, they would be reduced to the status of shudras. Then they would be unqualified to give birth to Brahamans, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. *Upanayan* of women was mandatory also to preserve the cultural heritage of the different Aryan classes. The Rigvedic society was based on monogamy and patriarchy. The woman was an icon, a symbol of Shakti, also considered a *Datri* – a source of creative energy. The *Rigveda* has hymns composed by both rishis and rishikas like Romasa, Lopamudra, Apata, Kadru, Vishvanara etc., also called Brahmavadinis.

Panini the grammarian in his work *Ashtadhyayi* in 500 B.C. affirms that female students called Kathis studied the *Veda*. Women had other avenues open to them, apart from academic and literary options. Patanjali the eminent grammarian author of the monumental *Mahabhashya* writes about women as “Saktiki” – the bearer of spear. Kautilya in *Arthashastra* talks about women warriors. Megasthenese describes the Amazonian bodyguards of armed women in Chandragupta Maurya's reign. The Vedic age, also known as Satyug, was the time when the social and religious systems of the Hindus were established. The caste system developed. The Brahamana, or the treatise on the rituals found in the four Vedas were written.

*Mahabharata* is also considered as the fifth *Veda*. According to the *Bhagwat Purana*, Vyas composed the story out of compassion for women and shudras to present the Vedic knowledge to the uneducated.

- **Dr. Mini Nanda** is Head, Department of English, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

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## PSEUDO-DIVERSITIES AND MIGRATORY INDIGENOUS IN TONI MORRISON'S *SULA*

*Rahul Kamble*

This paper critiques, with Toni Morrison's novel *Sula* (1973), the notions of diversity and diversifying intention, in relation to African Americans' attempts to settle during the first few decades of twentieth century in America. By diversity, in this context, I mean the apparent demographic, cultural, and economic diversification, which was not necessarily designed to benefit the African Americans. They were imported from Africa, sold in the slave trade, engaged in the employment other than they had known in Africa, accommodated on the shunted places, and segregated in multiple ways. This could also be interpreted, falsely, as diversification of African Americans' experiences. Their coming to America and their assimilation and integration into the society, culture, and economy was based on their utility or due to its inevitability in the changed scenario. The novel deals with the originating conditions of African Americans' settlement on the American soil just after their emancipation from slavery. It depicts their struggle to make the hostile place habitable and recreate the living conditions according to their requirements, but specifically it portrays the community's struggle against the untimely external influences of white-sponsored modernization. It exposes the vulnerability of the infant settlement and the imminent end of its innocence and character. The casualties are their own morality; the history of its struggle against the plundering white society; beliefs; and its internal mechanisms of healing. It might appear quite unscientific and unempirical of me to use a literary text to explain and critique the issue of diversity. But I prefer an insightful text of *Sula* over bureaucratic deliberations about diversity in state discourse. The novel helps to understand how a disadvantaged community is shunted to a difficult geographical locale, how the community defines its culture through collective behaviour in relation to the outer world, powerful society's derogatory attitude towards their culture, changes in material perception of geophysical resources, and how the pseudo-participatory behaviour is actually unilaterally beneficial to the powerful while adversely impacting the most vulnerable.

- **Dr. Rahul Kamble** is Assistant Professor in the Department of Indian and World Literatures at English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad.

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**SOLITUDE AS AN ONTOLOGICAL-CREATIVE  
CONTINGENT: RAINER MARIA RILKE'S  
LETTERS TO A YOUNG POET:**

*Bibhudutt Dash*

Addressed to a young poet Franz Xaver Kappus who wrote to Rainer Maria Rilke asking for his advice about becoming a writer, Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet* (1929) is a collection of ten letters that prioritizes solitude as an ontological-creative contingent, that is, the vital necessity of solitude both to writing and to living. Rilke highlights that living or writing is contingent to the fact of being alone, and underlines the paradoxical nature of solitude whose simultaneity of charm and dread foreground an antinomy that informs the condition of a solitary self. To be alone is to be solitary, but solitude enforces a union with oneself, which is the bedrock of an aesthetic exercise. Solitude as both lovable and fearsome is an extraordinary experience for an artist, and it enables him to confront the existential-artistic tension.

As Stephen Mitchell writes, Rilke "both loved and feared solitude, he often wanted to escape from it, but it was the necessary condition for his poetry" (*LYP* "Foreword" xiii, hereinafter referred to as *LYP*). Such contrasting approach is confounding, but it reveals a sortal status that solitude confers on the writer. By 'sortal,' a term used in philosophy, I refer to an individuality that is made possible, or constituted by the simultaneous counterpoint of attraction and dread. In figuring out solitude as both "burden and gift and as the foundation for all genuine work," Rilke underlines this counterpoint as an extremely reifying condition. It is puzzling to think how solitude can be both a burden and a gift. However, the dichotomy underlying it points to a dual function of solitude in that the ontological aspect of it, that is "being qua being" tends to galvanize a creative process which would otherwise have been frustrated by associations or what Thomas Gray in his "Elegy" (1751) calls "the madding crowd" (Mautner 401).

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**GEOPOLITICAL CONSTRUCTS OF  
ARAB-AMERICAN IDENTITY: LEILA AHMED'S  
A BORDER PASSAGE: FROM CAIRO TO AMERICA,  
A WOMAN'S JOURNEY**

***Rama Hirawat***

*Her first step is to take inventory...she puts history through a sieve, winnows out the lies, looks at the forces that we as a race, as women, have been part of...This step is a conscious rupture with all oppressive traditions of all cultures and religions. She reinterprets history ... adopts new perspectives....Deconstruct, construct (Anzaldua 104).*

In her milestone book *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Chicana feminist, Gloria Anzaldua implores the women of colour to construct a sense of identity by questioning the customary approach of perceiving their self which have been formed by continually encrusted historical processes.

The essence of the lines that serve as an epigraph for this paper resonates in the works of Leila Ahmed, an Arab-American feminist. Her memoir, *A Border Passage: From Cairo to America, A Woman's Journey*, is an attempt to explore and understand the nuances of her identity in relation to the political and social events of the time. The narrative documents Ahmed's quest for the historicity of her lived realities as an Arab-American Muslim female. She deconstructs the received socio-political notions about identity and constructs her own frame of identity based on well researched geopolitical and religious facts. Ahmed conjoins the personal and the political to configure the making of her present self in the genre of memoir.

As a form of self-inscription, a memoir negotiates the position of the subject amidst the dilemmas caused by race, gender, ethnicity and class. While writing about self, the writer nurtures the dual consciousness of being the historical subject being written about and that of an analyst, who examines the past in the present, from a particular intersecting point of history and subject.

- **Dr. Rama Hirawat** is Lecturer in English at S.S. Jain Subodh P.G. College, Jaipur. Her areas of interest include Muslim women and hyphenated writers.

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## ECOCENTRIC READING OF JOHN STEINBECK'S *OF MICE AND MEN*

*Sanjay Palwekar*

John Steinbeck, the Nobel Prize winning writer and an amateur biologist, remained obscured and neglected so far as the ecological aspect of his writings is concerned. His writings resonate with nature, ecological principles and environmental concerns. He stands out from other nature writers, both American and British, as his treatment of ecology is deeper which calls for large scale measures for environment protection. However, this aspect of his writings has been brutally ignored and disregarded. Hence, Brian Ralisback refers to him as "unrecognized father of ecocriticism" (web). Steinbeck's commitment to the natural environment remained unwavering throughout his life. Simmonds calls him an "ecological Prophet" (323). Bill Devall confesses that "not including Steinbeck in *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered* was a sin of omission" (qtd. in Kopecky 84). Despite neglect over a long period of time, exploration of ecological aspect in Steinbeck's works is now gaining momentum.

John Steinbeck was influenced by ecological principles and developed a holistic methodology in his writing to describe and evaluate the relationship between human beings, natural environment, and non-human world. *Of Mice and Men* is manifestation of Steinbeck's love for and intimacy with nature. The place (Salinas) where he was born and grew up exercised an enormous influence on him and played a significant role in the development of his ecophilosophy. Nature for Steinbeck is not simply out there but plays a very important role in the development of human psyche; it is a real sustenance amidst adversities in the course of human existence. The opening of the novel is set in Salinas Valley down the bank of the river in the State of California imbued with natural beauty. Steinbeck mentions several objects in nature such as trees, river, cliffs, mountains, mouse, dog, rabbits in a lyrical fashion:

- **Dr. Sanjay Palwekar** is Assistant Professor at Post Graduate Teaching Department of English, RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur.

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## **ROLE OF MEDIA IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE: A HABERMASIAN CRITIQUE OF THE ADVERTISEMENT WORLD**

*Ankita Sharma*

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962), Jurgen Habermas talks about the emerging bourgeois who gradually gave birth to a sphere in which state authority was publicly monitored through informed and critical discourse by the people. But, now a days, the bourgeois reading public that debated critically about matters of culture has been replaced by the mass public of culture consumers. From a public critically reflecting on its culture to one that merely consumes it, public sphere has disintegrated. The objective of the paper is to study the role of media in deterioration of public sphere. The paper aims to prove that media serves less as an organ of debate than manufacturing and managing consensus and promoting consumer culture. As a vehicle for the prevailing ideology, the media exerts pressure toward conformity with existing conditions. The false consciousness fostered by the media results in “a nexus of modes of behavior” that is consonant with the behaviors required by the political and economic system (Cook 67). The world fashioned by the mass media is a public sphere in appearance only. The advertisement industry, through its subtle apparatus ‘mass media’, helps to maintain the hold of reification over thinking processes, prescribing our reactions to reinforce the status quo. The public sphere has lost its radical democratic character. Rationality is completely lacking in a consensus created by sophisticated opinion molding media. The tendency of the media today is to produce audiences without the capacity of deliberation and critical thinking. Media curtails the reactions of their recipients by drawing them under spell where public is deprived of the opportunity to disagree.

### **Juxtaposition of the AD World and the Public**

We are influenced and manipulated far more insidiously than we realise. Ads influence our purchasing decisions and our thought processes. Typically, these efforts take place beneath our level of awareness so that the appeals which move us are often hidden.

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## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PATTERNS IN JOHN CHEEVER'S "EXPULSED"

*Arati K Thakur*

*It seems to me that any confusion between autobiography and fiction debases fiction. The role autobiography plays in fiction is precisely the role that reality plays in a dream. As you dream your ship, you perhaps know the boat, but you are going towards a coast that is quite strange; you're wearing strange clothes, the language that is being spoken around you is a language you don't understand, but the woman on your left is your wife. It seems to me that this not capricious but quite mysterious union of fact and imagination one also finds in fiction. My favorite definition of fiction is Cocteau's: "Literature is a force of memory that we have not yet understood." It seems to me that in a book that one finds gratifying, the writer is able to present the reader with a memory he has already possessed, but he has not comprehended (Donaldson, Conversations 155-156).*

"Fiction," according to John Cheever, the American novelist and short fiction writer of the nineteenth century, "is the most intimate and acute means of communication about one's own deepest anxiety and intuition on the meaning of life and death" (69). Life according to him is a 'creative process' and what he felt is lost in one encounter is refilled in the next. "Fiction," according to him, "is meant to illuminate, to explode, and refresh us" (109). He wrote not only to make sense of his own life, but his works helped others make sense of their own. As he exposes his innermost thoughts in his writing, he always conceals it with equally relevant statement in his fiction, so as to reach larger truths in life. As a man, and as an artist, he is truly universal.

Cheever's early life rests upon a search of identity for himself. His quest for life aided him not only in understanding the world but also about himself and vice versa. This paper aims to study the autobiographical patterns of composition in John Cheever's first story, "Expelled" by using Doubrovsky's method of auto fiction, where the author, protagonist and narrator share one identity.

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**FROM BEING A PART TO BEING APART:  
LANGUAGE IN INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO  
*THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS***

*Yogendra Pareek*

Whenever there is any talk of Indian writing in English, there are certain traits that loom large in the foreground. First and foremost, every kind of it seems a reaction to colonial writing; little is proactive. Second, all attempts at defining Indianness end with a sermon on pluralism. Third, there is propaganda about the Indian variety of English, which till now has been like chasing a chimera. All this has produced items that are too attractive to the buyers, especially the native ones. These have been called by various names: Indianisms, linguistic awkwardnesses etc.

Besides, not much focus is there on the audience: are they just the Indian readers or even the western ones? It is only recently that the western readers have also been included in the picture. Not that there are no intellectuals in India, but the west cannot be ignored. So, for any Indian writer it is necessary to target both the native and non-native readers. Otherwise they cannot earn a living by being only a writer, as Braj B. Kachru has pointed out in *The Other Tongue*: "Third world writers must tread a fine path between the perils of incomprehensibility on the one hand and nondescriptness on the other. Their works must appeal to large and potentially lucrative American and British markets; yet each novel must contain exotic elements of character, theme and setting as well as language, if it is to succeed financially. A contemporary American writer can earn a living by writing books which characterize (or caricature) one of the nation's ethnic groups (e.g. John Updike on American WASPS); whether his books appeal to readers in London or Lagos or Lahore makes no difference. Not so for the Indian, African or the Caribbean writer" (284). It is Kachru's last sentence that is most important. And in India, writers are criticized if they consider writing as a profession and try to earn a livelihood out of it. They are considered pro-west and lesser nationals.

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## THE JOURNEY OF LANGUAGE FROM ART TO SCIENCE

*Laxmi R Chauhaan*

Learning and teaching in 21<sup>st</sup> century has changed threefold in last two decades. There is no aspect of our life which is not influenced or has remained untouched by the changing technology. Initially the recording of the language was done by using symbols, pictograms and ideograms. "The history of language and technology is not as old as the history of language, but is exactly as old as the history of recorded language" (Language and Technology). Many a language in history has become dead today simply because people have stopped speaking these languages. Some languages which are not spoken by people are Sumerian, or Akkadian, or Hittite. Charles Barber in his book *The Story of Language* has said that all living languages change though the rate of change varies from time to time, and from language to language. Some of the languages have changed so rapidly that they have become classic in many ways. "Nobody today speaks classical Latin as spoken by Julius Caesar or classical Greek as spoken by Pericles, or the old Icelandic spoken by heroes of the Norse sagas" (Barber 54). So, these languages are dead though they did not die completely but have changed into something else. There are speakers of Greek but it has changed from how it was spoken in the Athens of Pericles.

We can better understand the change in language with an illustration given by Barber with reference to Joseph Addison's *Spectator* in the year 1711. Though there is little difference in grammar, syntax or vocabulary, Addison uses 'sung' where we would use 'sang' in sentences like, "The next Stop to our Refinement was the introducing of Italian Actors into our Opera; who sung their Parts in their own Languages, at the same Time that our Countrymen performed theirs in our native Tongue." In this sentence we see that even the use of capital letter is done in a different way as compared to the contemporary use or it may be an example of ardent use. In the words of Barber: "By about 1700, the main changes in the pronunciation that made up the Great Vowel shift were all completed" ( 207).

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## **MANIFESTATIONS OF EVIL: READING MANTO THROUGH BADIOU**

*Navdeep Kaur*

Alain Badiou is one of the foremost living philosophers in France. The complexity, originality and the creative force of his philosophical works has fascinated the specialists of contemporary philosophy for over two decades. Fabien Tarby opines that he is a Philosopher whose “philosophical declarations happens to be laced with mathematical bombs” (131). Much of Badiou's life has been shaped by his dedication to the consequences of the May 1968 revolt in Paris. His work ranges over a combination of fields. He is the author of several successful novels and plays as well as more than a dozen philosophical works. The concept of the ethic of truths holds a central position in Alain Badiou's philosophical thought. Badiou's idea of the Evil (Alain Badiou uses capital “E” for Evil throughout *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*) is closely related to his ethics of truths.

In *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, originally published in French in 1993, Badiou elaborates his concepts of the ethic of truths and Evil. He opines that there is no ethics in general because there is no abstract subject who would adopt it as his shield. There is only a particular kind of human animal, convoked by certain circumstances to become a subject – or rather, to enter into the composing of a subject. We can say that a subject, which goes beyond the human animal (although the human animal remains its sole foundation) needs something to have happened, something that cannot be reduced to its ordinary inscription in ‘what there is’. Badiou names this supplement an event (*Ethics* 41). The process of a truth stems from the decision to relate henceforth to the situation from the perspective of its eventual supplement, which Badiou terms fidelity (*Ethics* 41). To be faithful to an event is to move within the situation that this event has supplemented, by thinking the situation ‘according to’ the event. The event is excluded by all the regular laws of the situation and it “compels the subject to *invent* a new way of being and acting in the situation” (*Ethics* 42). In Badiou's philosophy there is no subject without a process of subjectivization.

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## Book Review

***A World Elsewhere*** by Shanta Acharya. Bloomington: iUniverse, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-4917-4364-5. pp. 360. Price: £12.

### *Anita Money*

*A World Elsewhere* has been described as a coming of age novel and also a feminist novel addressing the situation of women and their responses to the cultural expectations of their society but while this type of categorising of genre has its uses it can also limit perceptions. In my view this first novel by Shanta Acharya, an established poet, is offering something broader and it is more interesting to see it in relation to the work of other Indian writers writing in English whose backgrounds vary but who share in different degrees their own and English culture, a mixed heritage created by colonial rule.

Shanta Acharya has a deep emotional and intellectual attachment to India and has written about the influence of Indian thought on Ralph Waldo Emerson. In this novel, as in her poetry, there is an idiosyncratic combination of a matter-of-fact and often ironic awareness of things with an abstract philosophical mode of thought related to a cultural and genetic reality where fate is both in our stars and in ourselves.

The novel is set in Orissa, post-independence, and a familiar India is evoked with its multiple influences and pervasive reminders of the British presence. Acharya uses a number of Indian words like *jehebapa* and *jejema* (grandfather and grandmother) *Bakshish*, *biddi*, and *chowkidar* which may be known to readers but there is a useful glossary provided for less familiar words and the coinage *Eve-teasing*, a euphemism used in South Asia to mean street harassment, reminds one that English counts as one of the numerous languages of India, mutating to Indian-English. Behind this India lies a silent older India and I recall a line from Acharya's poem "On First Reading the *Bhagavad Gita*" "From an ancient land we came/ A continent vast as Memory."

- **Anita Money**, niece of 20<sup>th</sup> century's greatest poet W.H. Auden, has been organising, since 2003, work experience and enrichment opportunities for students at an inner city comprehensive which reflects both the multicultural and class realities of London. She studied English at St. Hugh's College, Oxford.

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It is wise  
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think  
it was  
their own  
idea.

*- Nelson Mandela*