

RE-MARKINGS

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Kathleen Alcalá

Tom Stoppard

Eugene O'Neill

Emily Dickinson

Keki N. Daruwalla

David Guterson

T.S. Eliot

Leopold Senghor

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Indian & Canadian

Diasporas

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EDITORIAL

How does one mourn the passing away of a legend like Nissim Ezekiel who remained, for almost half-a-century, in the forefront as a major poetic talent, as a poet's poet, among the foremost writers of verse in English in India and elsewhere! Perhaps the mourning tongues should echo Ezekiel's own poetic utterance: "Man should not laugh/ when he is dying./ In decent death/ you flow into another kind of time/ which is the hill / you always thought you knew" and seek solace from the fact that death will never touch the immortal precincts of his poems.

What sets Ezekiel apart from his contemporaries is the essential and unique quality of his Indianness which prevents him from revelling in the non-personal notions of a poem worthy of India, its glorious past, its mysticism, cultural or historical nostalgia, and exoticism. His primary concern is not the India which appeals to the West, but the India to which he can, and does, truly belong. "India is simply my environment," he says, "A man can do something for and in his environment by being fully what he is, by not withdrawing from it. I have not withdrawn from India." In his own poetic words: "The Indian landscape sears my eyes./ I have become a part of it.../ I have made my commitments now./ This is one: to stay where I am./ As others choose to give themselves/ In some remote and backward place./ My backward place is where I am."

The raw material with which Ezekiel wishes to carve out his poetry comprises his living awareness of India as his only home. He accepts, however, that he can identify himself only with modern India since his Jewish background makes it difficult for him to identify himself with India's past as a comprehensive heritage. He writes: "I am neither proud nor ashamed of being an Indian. I am neither proud nor ashamed of being Westernized. History is behind me. I live on the frontiers of the future that is slowly receding before me. Contempt for background impresses me as little as pride in background. Both are distorting. Tormenting, self-regarding resolutions of cultural conflict create new, tormenting problems." Ezekiel strives for "a human balance humanly acquired" to unite poetry and living, his avocation and vocation. His primary concern is not with mighty upheavals and cataclysmic changes that this nation has witnessed.

Striding his “elephant of thought,” Ezekiel manages to transmute the “ordinariness of most events” into deeply perceptive poetic experiences. He visualizes beggars, hawkers, pavement sleepers, hutment dwellers, dead souls of men and gods, burnt-out mothers, frightened virgins, wasted child and tortured animal, “All in noisy silence/ Suffering in place and time.”

Friendship and warmth permeate Ezekiel’s world, touch poem after poem and alleviate the grotesqueries of poverty, squalor and brutishness. He is equally happy to display his ability to wield a light pen, to mock himself, to mock others. He harmoniously blends together humour and wit to illumine some of the darker areas of an average Indian’s ordinary existence. He is keenly aware of the “dialectic oppositions” but he knows too that the most painful confrontation makes him happier. Whatever the enigma of existence, all he wishes to discover is “the metaphor/ to make it human good.” Ezekiel has in ample measure the power to make personal excitement socially available which he beautifully conveys by means of his linguistic virtues of strength and clarity.

It is sad, perhaps, that for the last few years before his death, Nissim Ezekiel had to battle with the depredations of Alzheimer’s disease that led to a gradual loss of memory and effected his sense of identity and location. The poet, who had all his life entertained and charmed large audiences with his pervasive humour and humanism, seemed to reflect in the silence of his mind upon the veracity of his own lines: “All I want now/ is the recognition of dilemma/ and the quickest means/ of resolving it within my limits.”

However, for those, like me, who knew him as a philosopher and friend, it is no less recompense to know that ultimately he did resolve the eternal dilemma by letting his poems confront the unfathomable reality “as it yields its secrets/ slowly/ one/ by/ one.” His immortal gifts survived it all, even death.

Nibir K Ghosh
Chief Editor

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THE GIRL IN THE TREE
ON RE-READING *GREEN MANSIONS*

Kathleen Alcalá

When I was a little girl, I lived, for a year, in a tree. It was a very fine tree, a crepe myrtle, and just the right height for spying on our neighborhood in San Bernardino, California, without alarming people. My piercing, two-noted whistle could be heard up and down the street as I summoned Bobby or Anita Lotz to play.

This was a time of transition in our family. My father had been superintendent of The Optimists Boys Ranch in Devore Heights for the previous five years. Following an incident in which the board of directors had held a dinner on the grounds of the ranch, and had gotten drunk in front of the boys, and my father had objected, he lost his job. The Ranch was closed within a year, since it was also perceived to be bleeding off money from a similar facility that was closer to Los Angeles.

As a result, my family sold our house in rural Devore, and moved into the closest city, San Bernardino, so that my father could begin substitute teaching in the public schools. By then, my older sisters were attending schools in town, so it was probably seen as a convenience for all.

I was about six when we moved to that rented house at 447 West 21st Street. It was a beautiful house, full of built-in cupboards and light. There was a huge black walnut tree in the back, a jungle of bamboo, and a fruit cellar that, my father pointed out, could be used as a bomb shelter. It was also in a friendly neighborhood, where people held potlucks and we lived next door to a judge. Now it would be called a neighborhood in transition, but then it was just a mix of old residents and new, big houses and little, whites, a Chinese family, a Lebanese lady, and now, one Mexican family.

- **Kathleen Alcalá** is the author of a short story collection and three novels. She is currently a visiting Lecturer at the University of New Mexico.

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RE -VISITING HAMLET :
THE MORAL MATRIX OF TOM STOPPARD'S
ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD

C.R. Visweswara Rao

John Osborne began in 1956 an experimental theatre in England continued and developed by such new playwrights as John Arden, N.F. Simpson, Harold Pinter, Edward Bond, Peter Shaffer, and Tom Stoppard. Tom Stoppard received international acclaim with his modern Shakespearean offshoot *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. Not only did he become the youngest playwright to have had a play staged by the National Theatre, but this play was hailed as the most important event in the British professional theatre since the production of Harold Pinter's first play in 1958. Tom Stoppard burst on the stage at a time when British theatre had gone "naturalist" and was showing a serious concern for social message. Critics came to grips with the problem whether Stoppard should be called an Absurdist at all. Essays on Stoppard's place and genre revealed this concern by describing him as "Absurdist Altered". This opened the way to genuine perceptions about the uniqueness of his art: "He ends as an Absurdist farceur who has compassion for his characters," affirms Bigsby.¹ All Stoppard's central characters are caught in a bewildering world where absolute values struggle against relativity. Parodist, wit, and "ringmaster to a wild troupe of performing words, Stoppard's is a theatre as complete as anything since Ben Jonson, with whom he has much in common as he works for the "marriage of the play of ideas and...high comedy".²

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (1964-5) was performed at the Edinburgh Festival in 1966 and it entered the National Theatre in 1967.

- **Dr. C. R. Visweswara Rao** is Professor of English at S.K. University, Anantapur.

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DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS:
O'NEILL'S DIALOGUE WITH PURITANISM

A. Karunakar

*Without some understanding of Puritanism,
and that at its source, there is no
understanding of America. -- Perry Miller.¹*

The attempt to trace Puritan influence on American thought has been an ongoing engagement since the turn of the century. Although no conclusive evidence has yet emerged, Puritan studies have been firmly established as an integral part of American historiography. The work of Perry Miller, Kenneth B. Murdoch, Samuel E. Morison and others have not only provided the basic premise for Puritan studies but have also established New England Puritanism as being influential in shaping the American mind. Because, as Savelle asserts:

Puritanism was firmly rooted in the American experience and in the emerging American mind of the eighteenth century, and from New England as a center, it has radiated its influence in American civilization, for good or ill, from that day to this; and the end is not yet.²

Eugene O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms* was published in the year 1924 at a time when Puritanism was under heavy attack as the root of all improprieties in American society. To understand the nature of the attack it is instructive to note that H.L. Mencken, the most caustic of Puritanism, founded *The American Mercury* to popularise his indictments against conventional America. He "identified Puritanism with canting hypocrisy, inhibitions, joylessness, witch-hunting, and tyranny masquerading as normal earnestness.

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DIASPORAS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MIGRATION IN CANADA AND INDIA

Jayita Sengupta

For long the term “diaspora” was used narrowly to signify the migration of the Jews from Israel to all corners of the world. It is only recently that the term has become more open-ended field of enquiry to include the lives of any group living in displacement. Geographical displacement or migration, coerced or self-willed, creates a diasporic consciousness or to use Homi Bhabha’s term a “Third Space”.¹ The products of this “Third Space” or hybrid location contain within them the historical memory of confrontation, syncreticism and perennial tension to control, remake or eliminate the subordinate.

Whether in an invaded territory like India or a settler colony like Canada, the colli(u)sion of cultures ensue from the moment of their altercation and interaction. There is a constant struggle in a diasporic writer to relate to his homeland and his culture of origin. For those who have willingly crossed the border, the diasporic vision of their homeland is myopic. It is gradually reduced to a series of objects, fragments of narratives, a photograph, an old film or such stuff which the nostalgia weaves into a kind of a fading dream. Homeland for them is a safe, innocuous place to return to in their imagination. It is a place where they would like to be in their imagination, but given a chance would never venture to return. However, for those like Bishen Singh in Manto’s story², homeland is that lost stretch of life or the ‘no man’s land’ between Pakistan and Hindustan that serves as a marker of their sanity and identity. Bearing in mind that diasporic visions are never homogenous but are conflicting, diverse and divergent depending on the nature of migration, India and Canada could be an interesting case for study.

- *Jayita Sengupta* is Lecturer in the Department of English, South Calcutta Girls College (Calcutta University), Kolkata.

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**VOICE OF THE SEQUESTERED SOUL :
FEMINIST ARTICULATIONS IN
THE POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON**

Renu Josan

Emily Dickinson, one of the prominent nineteenth century poets, remained unrecognized until four years after her death in 1886. Her poetry marked the beginning of the feminine influence in modern American poetry. She made some of the strongest and most profound statements in the history of American poetry. Her vision was grounded in the reality of her life – a reality that has been ignored or distorted by the prevailing ethos. Dickinson's poetry celebrates the life of this earth and demonstrates her commitment to nurturance rather than dominance. Her life bears witness to her resistance to 'the fathers' earthly and heavenly and her work elaborates the vision of a loving community of women that forms the basis of a counter tradition to the patriarchal society in which she lived.

Dickinson's poetic vision was based on female priorities. By setting herself apart, Dickinson reinforced her identity as a poet. In her room and garden, Dickinson gained some freedom from bounded categorized existence and she understood that a rigid persona restricts perception just as conventional religious treatments of morality and salvation reduce sensitivity to the presence of eternity in our midst. In the age of individualism and rapid industrialization, Dickinson rejected commercial values. She resisted the prevailing ethos of her time and was critical of the ideal of manifest destiny. Her work creates an alternative response to the patriarchal tradition in art and politics. She evolved a deeply personal vision that affirms her experience in a society that has often denied women a voice. Her work has much to tell about the evolution of feminist perspective. Reverence for life – generativity – is the central theme of her poetry, a generativity that radically challenges patriarchal ideology.

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CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE POEMS OF KEKI N. DARUWALLA

Alka Saxena

Over the past three decades Keki N. Daruwalla has made a special place for himself in contemporary Indian poetry in English. He was the recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award(1984) for his volume *The Keeper of the Dead*. In 1987 he won the prestigious Commonwealth Poetry Prize for *Landscapes*. Daruwalla's bitter, satiric tone is a distinct feature of his poetic style. Amidst the ample range of Daruwalla, his poems on social issues of contemporary India have a special significance. In this respect *Under Orion* has been hailed by Nissim Ezekiel as an impressive evidence of mature poetic talent and social awareness. *Under Orion* got immediate critical acclaim. Even today it is Daruwalla's favourite book. He writes in the "Preface" to a revised edition (1991): "A first book, like a first love, remains a favourite". His social awareness and his disgust with the corruption that gnaws at the very foundation of the social setup is quite evident in most of his poems.

The first poem in *Under Orion* is titled "Curfew in a Riot-torn City". During the curfew the Khakhi clad policemen are shown searching for prey among nocturnal gloom. The feeling is of despair and gloom. The feel of things is "queer" and like the policemen, the people in general also wish to "forget it all, the riot, the town, the people: the mass of liquefied flesh/ seething in fear."¹

The town is like a tumor-growth. Blood and fog are over half the town and only curfew stamps across the empty street. Brickbats, soda bottles and acid bulbs are stored on the rooftops and the lanes swarm with men in Khakhi who reluctantly move up on hearing a gun shot. The atmosphere is tense. Violence has spiraled out and curfew has been clamped on the outskirts of the town as well.

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TOUCHING LIVES IN A MEANINGFUL WAY: A CONVERSATION WITH DAVID GUTERSON

Nibir K. Ghosh

*David Guterson was born in Seattle in 1956. His father, Murray Guterson, is a distinguished criminal defense lawyer: David proudly says about his father: "One of the things I heard [from him] early on was to find something you love to do--before you think about money or anything else. The other thing was to do something that you feel has a positive impact on the world." Guterson received his M.A. from the University of Washington, where he studied under the writer Charles Johnson. It was there that he developed his ideas about the moral function of literature: "Fiction writers shouldn't dictate to people what their morality should be," he said in a recent interview. "Yet not enough writers are presenting moral questions for reflection, which I think is a very important obligation." His books include a collection of short stories, *The Country Ahead of Us, the Country Behind* (1989), and a book of essays called *Family Matters: Why Homeschooling Makes Sense* (1992). He is also the author of three novels: *Snow Falling on Cedars*, which won the 1995 PEN/Faulkner Award, *East of the Mountains* (1998) and *Our Lady of the Forest* (2003). Tall and handsome like a Hollywood star, Guterson is extremely gentle yet conspicuous like the Seattle rain. In this conversation with Nibir K. Ghosh at Seattle, Guterson shares his views and concerns regarding life and art.*

Ghosh: How does it feel to have traversed the long distance from the *Four Stories* that you wrote as part of your M.A. dissertation to the glory that you now enjoy as a celebrated author of such best-selling novels like *Snow Falling On Cedars* ?

- **Dr. Nibir K. Ghosh** teaches English at Agra College, Agra. This interview was conducted by him during his tenure as a Senior Fulbright Scholar (2003-04) at the University of Washington, Seattle.

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BUDDHISM AND THE POETRY OF T.S. ELIOT

Raghunath Prasad Kachhway

Down the ages, Buddha has been regarded as a sage who, after a protracted meditation under the Bodhi tree, found a way out of the darkness of human ignorance. The darkness was caused by a dark cloud of confusion as to a protagonist's answer to the sufferings of life. The four kinds of suffering that had thrown Buddha out of gear were simply examples of numerous sufferings that confront the human soul, be it the soul of Raja Harish Chandra, of Ashoka the great, of Marlow in Conrad's novel, *The Heart of Darkness*, of Job in the Bible or of Hamlet in Shakespeare's play. Eliot, too, finds the whole world turned into a wasteland groaning under the pangs of suffering. This suffering is to be taken as a challenge. Life is not something one should run away from. It is to be lived and the odds are to be faced and fought peacefully, both within ourselves and without. Faith works as a balm. This idea is found both in Buddha and in the poetry of T.S. Eliot. Further, Eliot was greatly influenced by the oriental idea of "Shanti". The word, "Shanti" rings like a gong in the concluding line of "The Waste Land". Eliot was also influenced by the "Fire Sermon" of Buddha and incorporated it as a part in his masterpiece.

Eliot, the American born English poet, who dominated the literary scene for half a century was not at all dazzled by the glory of science. On the contrary, he was badly hurt in his deeper human feelings due to the holocaust of the two world wars and the gripping fangs of materialism on human life. He, therefore, was not satisfied by the surface wizardry of words in poetry but went deeper in search of the roots of life, and in this process, he explored the Eastern wisdom ---literature like the Vedas, the Buddhist philosophy and the teachings of Confucius as well as the western thoughts like those of St. Augustine.

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DISCOURSES ON AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY: SENGHOR'S CONCEPT OF NEGRITUDE

Arunoday Bajpai

Philosophy is primarily a reflective activity which emanates from human experience. Human experience as a source of philosophical reflection could be of two categories. First, the experience of self which produces subjective reflection or second, the experience of the world around us which gives rise to objective reflection. The Greek thinkers grounded their philosophy on objective reflection. Contrary to this, Buddha's philosophical postulates were based on subjective reflection. Describing philosophy as a subjective or objective reflection is a generous definition of the term in comparison to canons of western philosophy.

Thus, originally, the debate on African philosophy centered around the question whether Africa has a philosophy of its own at all. The writers trained in western philosophy and its method, exclude the African ideas and concept from the category of philosophy proper as it lacks scientific or technical method of philosophising. Professor Antony Flew, in his book *An Introduction of Western Philosophy* asserts that philosophy consists of argument "first last and always." Since, there is no argument in African thought, it cannot be included in the category of philosophy. Similarly another noted scholar K. Wiredu in his seminal work *Philosophy and an African Culture* claims that without argumentation and clarification, there is, strictly, no philosophy. During the heyday of colonialism, western philosophical paradigms did not conceive the possibility of anything like African philosophy. Therefore, the initial discourses in African philosophy centered around the very existence of philosophy in Africa.

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"THE POSTMASTER" : AN IMAGE OF TAGORE

Gourab Gangopadhyay

Rabindranath Tagore's poetic genius has been established beyond doubt. He got Nobel prize for his immortal poetic creation Gitanjali. But his achievement as a short story writer does not lag behind. His short stories present the realistic touches of practical life. Through this paper I wish to reveal the beauties and nuances of Tagore's short story "The Postmaster." This story presents all the essential features of an ideal short story. It has an interesting beginning, a dramatic middle and a heart touching end.

A short story does not introduce many characters – "The Postmaster" is no exception to this rule. It unfolds two characters – The Postmaster himself and an orphan village girl Ratan. All the incidents of the story revolve round them and both of them are instrumental in enhancing the beauty of the story.

The Postmaster is an ideal character. Posted in a remote village, the postmaster reflects the spirit of a budding poet. When we see the Postmaster trying to give expression to the movement of the leaves or the floating of clouds in a romantic manner, then the image of the poet overshadows the character of the Postmaster. The creator and the creation become one and united: "At times he tried his hand at writing a verse or two. That the movement of the leaves and the clouds of the sky were enough to fill life with joy, such were the sentiments to which he sought to give expression"(p.8). Here, one can almost see the philosophical ruminations of the author himself impinging upon the personality of the character he has created. The poet with all his sensitive imagination and emotional outburst, influences the postmaster in his literary activities.

- **Gourab Gangopadhyay** is Reader in the Department of English at A. S. College, Deoghar, Jharkhand.

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INDIAN AESTHETIC TRADITION AND THE POETRY OF JAYANTA MAHAPATRA

Priyam Ankit

It has often been told that the Indian writer who writes in English finds himself caught in a peculiar problematic situation. The core of this problematic is that in his writings he makes a deliberate effort to grasp indigenous experiences in a language that is alien. Many critics address the solution of this problem by saying that the Indian writer writing in English can exploit this situation in his favour by giving a cosmopolitan character to his indigenous experiences (because the English language itself has moved from its Anglo-American base to a much wider dimension of post-colonial nationalisms) on the one hand, and in the process making the alien language more acceptable (by befriending it) for the native reader on the other. Thus the writer projects his cultural location in a universal arena, making his art a subject of cross-cultural exposition. Nevertheless, this is not the smooth path of writing as Norman Simms puts it, "the Indian poet who chooses to write in English sets himself immediately into a set of conflicting linguistic and cultural 'world'."¹ But what keeps the Indian writer in English intact in this "set of conflicting linguistic and cultural worlds" is the 'Indianness' which is closely woven, consciously or unconsciously, into the texture of his writing. In this context, Jayanta Mahapatra, the brilliant exponent of the Indian aesthetic tradition, serves as the most perfect illustration.

It is quite difficult to establish the defining contours of 'Indianness'. It cannot be measured by yardsticks though there are plenty of these at our disposal – the evocation of Indian environment, allusions to Indian festivals, Indian flora and fauna; description of changes in weather, the representation of the Indian landscape etc.

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THE 'TERRIBLE SONNETS' : A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

K.K. Thomas

In the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins” the spiritual takes the precedence over all the gifts and beauties”(PP:93).But unfortunately most of the critics like Bridges, Gardiner, Murray, McChesny, etc, seem to have a biased view of Hopkins’ ‘Terrible Sonnets’. They think these sonnets were the outcome of the internal conflict--between Hopkins the poet and Hopkins the priest - and the consequent desolation. They also argue that Hopkins was dissatisfied with his choice of priestly vocation. but Hopkins own words prove that the truth is just the opposite:” I do not waver in my allegians, I never have since my conversion to the church....” (SDW:262)How then this so called ‘Terrible Sonnets’ should be understood ?.

Hopkins was extremely happy that he had selected the priestly vocation and had reached a higher state of perfection where he felt a kind of saintly dissatisfaction. The great saints like St Francis of Assissi, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Augustine of Hippo, etc, felt that they were not doing what was excepted of them, although they were doing everything according to the will of God. After tertianship Hopkins too had reached such a state, where he considered himself as a ‘eunuch’. He felt that he was drifting away from God and was destined to be doomed –a common feeling among the great saints. St.Thomas A Kempis and St. Ignatius describe desolation as a part of Christian perfection:” A man must have a great and long conflict within himself before he can learn fully to overcome himself and to direct his whole affection towards god(FC:138).According to theologians this is a kind of final trial or test, after which the divine light burst forth on them.

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BREAKING THE SILENCE: A CARTOGRAPHY OF BLACK CANADIAN WOMEN'S VOICE

Raja Sekhar Patteti

Hugh MacLennan in his *Two Solitudes*(1967) says that Canada is caught in between the British culture and French culture. The discomfiture of Canadian mentality of having one National image emanated primarily from the perception of having a national culture in two languages: English and French. In Canadian society adequate trust in the absence of tradition is a common feeling. There is a need to emphatically advocate multicultural consensus and authoritarian unity in Canadian society. In this multicultural society each group concerns itself and goes beyond the mainstream, shaping the mosaic culture. The issues inherent in mosaic culture are still addressed with a view to enabling the Canadian society as a whole to clarify its diversity in unity. Canadian mosaic culture is certainly in quandary in confronting everyone with its cultural varieties.

While dealing with the two evident solitudes MacLennan senses the inherent Jewish-Canadian solitude as 'Third Solitude'. Michael Geenstien in *Third Solitude*(1989) observes that Jewish Canadian writers inhabit a "No Man's land", the "Demilitarised zone". A closer scrutiny reveals that writers like A.M. Klein, Leonard Cohen, Matt Cohen, Adele Wiseman, Irving Layton and Mordecai Richler oscillate between tradition and modernism, home and exile, while presenting the characters. In contrast to the existing solitudes Gabriel Roy in *Tin Flute* (1983) prophesies Universal solitude. Besides these solitudes, one can never neglect the South Asian writings and the claims of Aboriginal Native writers. In the multi dimensionality of multiple solitudes, women's solitude is felt and heard in the writings of Margaret Atwood, Margaret Lawrence, Daphne Marlett, Susan Musgrave and Ervin Moore.

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NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S QUEST FOR THE DEEP WARM SECRET

Mrinalini Karmoker

This study of secrets in Hawthorne's fiction seeks to explore the implications of the ways in which Hawthorne saw himself writing, why and how he meant to make secret what readers want to demystify. The questions of How and Why Hawthorne brings himself into his texts has fascinated his interpreters so much that for all of six decades' warning to trust the tale rather than the teller, the image of a brooding Hawthorne still hovers over scholarly discussion. The search for some "great secret" really substitutes one discourse of reading for another. Rather than meeting the discourse Hawthorne actually establishes one that has proven so remarkably supple that it has accommodated a sweeping range of interpretations.

Hawthorne was a keen and accurate observer of men and events but he seldom made any direct and extensive use of his observations in his best writing. He was in many ways an acute self-critic. The man who could observe so keenly, with so much detachment, and more than this, could note his feelings about what he saw with such perfect candor, could not do his best creative work when writing directly of his actual experience of things and external events. For Hawthorne to lose touch with humanity is to destroy a necessary moral, emotional, and psycho-logical balance. The great danger is abstraction, the indulgence of a preference for idea, which cuts one off -- be it in pride, egotism vengeance, or suffering from humanity.

Hawthorne's "The Artist of the Beautiful" is a Romantic affirmation of the values of art and of the spiritual pre-eminence of the artist's imagination which intuitively penetrates to highest Goodness, Truth, and Beauty. In this story belief, idealism, and love of beauty are exalted by being contrasted with materialist scepticism and mere utility.

- **Dr. (Ms.) Mrinalini Karmoker** is Lecturer in English at Government Engineering College, Raipur.

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POETRY

Three Poems

Gurcharan Rampuri

Translated from the Punjabi by Amritjit Singh and Judy Ray

ADVICE

Even the smallest peacock feather
holds a rainbow's dazzling glory.
Each fragrance is unique,
and no butterfly is like another.

Through the ages the heart has been called
the Kaaba, holy place of pilgrimage.
Don't pick a single flower.
Don't catch a butterfly.
And don't strangle any yearning of the heart.

But who am I to give you this advice?
My child broke a glass
and just now I scolded him.

THE STAKE

Time and again I visit familiar places.
Time and again I meet the same faces.
Daily, as a devotee, I chant
repetitive verses that no longer speak to me.
My chosen faith will last a lifetime.

Even in the woods
where I carved out a new path
I became a prisoner of the same track.
Tethered to a stake, I feel so safe.

BLIND ALLEY

After a few drinks
we compare our score cards –
what have we accomplished in our lives?

After my schooling, for some years
I climbed the mountain tracks of struggle for my
land.
With a sudden turn,
I shouted slogans of freedom
and then became a slave to work,
though I did not put down my pen.

Love for beauty outshone devotion to the motherland
and I lost myself in creative work.

Then I found a partner and loved her, too,
but I did not forget my joy in other paths.
Even the need for bread cannot eclipse the sun.

Money seduced me.
I crossed the seas in search of riches.
But is gold everything?

How wide are the rifts!
The fire of love for family, beauty,
and light burns on in me
while mammon's jealous eye tolerates
no other smoldering.
I am trapped in a blind alley.

After a few drinks
we try to tally our scores –
what have we accomplished in our lives?

But then,
after a few drinks
how can we possibly answer this challenge?

- **Gurcharan Rampuri** (born 1929) has been writing poetry in Punjabi for well over five decades. Author of seven volumes of poetry, he moved to Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1964. He has won many awards,

and his poems have been translated into many languages, including Russian, Hindi, Gujarati, and English. His *Collected Poems* has recently appeared in India. Many of his lyrical poems have been set to music and sung by well-known singers such as Surinder Kaur and Jagjit Zirvi.

- **Amritjit Singh**, Professor of English at Rhode Island College, has authored or edited over a dozen books on American and Indian literatures. He co-edited, with Peter Schmidt, *Postcolonial Theory and the United States: Race, Ethnicity, Literature* (UP of Mississippi), with Daniel M. Scott, *The Collected Writings of Wallace Thurman* (Rutgers UP, 2003), and most recently *Interviews with Edward W. Said* (UP of Mississippi, 2004).
- **Judy Ray** co-edited, with David Ray, *Fathers: A Collection of Poems* (St. Martin's Press). Her books include *Pigeons in the Chandeliers* and *The Jaipur Sketchbook: Impressions of India*. She is a volunteer teacher of English to adults in the community in Tucson, Arizona.



TWO POEMS

Ritu Bali

GONE AWAY

*Some hollow pain eats within
When one you adore just walks away
Away from the mellow halo of thoughts
He breaks the unknown web of threads
What affection weaves without my will
I do not know what breaks me in
And comes like moisture on my cheeks*

*I lack that courage to bid him stop
Not well known and still I crawl
Into that storm where the leaves tremble
And lips lack voice to cheep him halt*

*And pigeons shriek for the wind that warns
That the stranger who just left today
May not think this up and all*

*'Tis hundred times I scold my mind
To stop this oozing of my heart
Now I shall build a separate hell
Lest you may find I split in two
Being lost in vain from the start.*

MY SEPARATE HELL

*Wild Chimes
New songs, old Melodies, deep
Rooted embraces
With plenty of laughs, cries, grins
Hugs, kisses, frets
In a blink of an eye
All broken glasses
And promises jest
As you drink your brains out
And smoke all evil in
To puffed vengeance and deceit
You smile like a fool
Manipulating yourself to me
Snuggle up
Each morning and night
To me or yourself
Deep rooted screams
Of people and places we went
Haunt me day and night
But do not touch me in my dreams
As I bask in some other planet
Away from yours
My den, where with mirth
Wild chimes, shimmering stars
Embrace my own world.*

- **Dr. (Ms.) Ritu Bali** is a Delhi based poet currently residing in Muscat.



HARVEST OF DREAMS

Ammangi Venugopal

Translated from the Telugu by P. Laxminarayana

The mighty waterfall never flows to wet his parched land
What an ignorant creature the farmer is !
And yet so good at turning his spine into a sturdy plough
Ploughing and sowing of seed goes on for ever
Until he finds ugly erosions on his palm
The dried eyes nor even yield the harvest of dreams
It is a long relentless season of hunger
The river goes dry as ever
Now how to sell off the pledged strip of ancient land
This muddy little piece embodies the mighty soul of
generations within.

- *Ammangi Venugopal* is a noted Telugu poet.

THE SEA

P. Laxminarayana

The sea is outrageous –
Its turmoil never tapers off
With a thousand faces
It crawls naked and alone –

The sea explodes into coils of wild fear
The uncontrollable fluid reality –
With dread and continuum of human pain
The sea tries to immolate every moment
The sea is a martyr of our times –
It lives and dies
The echoes of infinity melt in the dark waters
While it swirls across the glassy surface of history
The vast mass of men are mere particles of sand
Pale and silent.

- ***Dr. P. Laxminarayana*** is Professor of English at Osmania University, Hyderabad.



THE SEER'S EYE

V.V.B. Rama Rao

In unfrenzied insight rolling, the seer's eye
Chanced on a white vulture's broken nest
Feathered with welding rods
Insulating multi-core cable bits
Clutch-wire lengths reinforced
Which sight was it – fore or hind!
Vulture is a thing with crooked beak
Fattened, ingesting, fattened on putrefying matter

Devil inspired?

Will vultures transformed be

Into white doves, blue pigeons and black birds?

Sure they do, confident, the seer says.

- ***Dr V.V.B. Rama Rao***, a retired ELT professional, is a creative writer and translator. He has published three novels in English and five in Telugu.



BOOK REVIEW

Singh, Amritjit and Daniel M. Scott III. Ed. *The Collected Writings of Wallace Thurman: A Harlem Renaissance Reader*. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2003.

Who is Wallace Thurman? Many readers of African American literature would know him as the writer of the novels *The Blacker the Berry* (1929) and *Infants of the Spring* (1932), his most well-known works so far. To the scholars of Harlem Renaissance, he is also the radical, questioning voice that comes through a few journal articles that remained available during the long decades in which Thurman's reputation went into relative obscurity. Now the publication of a definitive edition of all the extant works of Thurman in *The Collected Writings of Wallace Thurman: A Harlem Renaissance Reader* edited by Amritjit Singh and Daniel M. Scott III in 2003 completely changes the way Thurman is going to be understood by the contemporary readers. Wallace Thurman bodies forth from the pages of *The Collected Writings* in an amazing revelation as not just a novelist, but a writer who practiced many genres, including plays, short stories, poems, essays, and journalism; a fiercely independent literary critic with very highly developed critical standards; and most important of all, a keen-witted intellectual who saw it as his responsibility to take positions on all the crucial contemporary issues concerning identity, race and art. Langston Hughes captured the youthfulness, the brilliance and the critical acumen of Thurman in the frequently quoted lines thus:

a strangely brilliant black boy, who had read everything and whose critical mind could find something wrong with everything he read...Thurman had read so many books because he could read eleven lines at a time. He would get from the library a great pile of volumes that would have taken me a year to read, but he would go through them in less than a week and be able to discuss each one at great length with anybody. That was why, I suppose, he was later given a job as a reader at Macaulay's—the only Negro reader, so far as I know, to be employed by any of the larger publishing firms. . . He wanted to be a very great writer, like Gorky or Thomas Mann, and

he felt that he was merely a journalistic writer.”
Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea*.

Born in 1902 in the American West in Salt Lake City, Utah, Thurman moved to Harlem in 1925 just at the beginning of the resurgence of black arts and literature known as the Harlem Renaissance. Both deeply involved in and highly skeptical of the ideas and the developments in the period, Thurman was a central figure of the Harlem Renaissance in many ways, with his strong influence on the younger set of writers and intellectuals, his radical and bohemian ways, and his challenging, iconoclastic attitude that rejected both white and black stereotypes of black identity and art. Thurman died at an early age of 32 in 1934. He remained a neglected figure in the following decades till interest in his works revived in the 1970s with increased scholarship in the areas of Harlem Renaissance and the American 1920s.

Amritjit Singh and Daniel M. Scott have brought together all of Thurman's works, many of which are previously unpublished, in *The Collected Writings* for the first time. This is a very valuable contribution to the process of recovery of literary texts, a process that has been so seminal to the development of ethnic, minority and non-canonical literary traditions. *The Collected Writings* is one of those books that inexplicably did not happen earlier, even though the need for such a volume, as the editors say in the preface, has been felt for years with the growing scholarly interest in understanding the complex phenomenon of the Harlem Renaissance. The publication of this painstakingly researched and impeccably edited volume is extremely significant not only for making this versatile writer available to modern readers but also for providing a very close, and unconventional, perspective on the Harlem Renaissance and some of its major figures that is revealed in Thurman's writings.

- **Dr. (Ms.) Nita N. Kumar** is Reader in the Department of English at Shyama Prasad Mukherji College, University of Delhi.

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The true strength
of
every human soul
is
to be dependent on
as many nobler
as it can discern,
and
to be depended upon,
by as many inferior
as it can reach.

John Ruskin

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