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EDITORIAL

"Libraries are full of ideas – perhaps the most dangerous and powerful of all weapons," wrote Sarah J. Maas, American fantasy author, in her novel *Throne of Glass*. No one seems to be so much aware of this fact as fundamentalist invaders who have had libraries as their most important targets while conquering nations or cultures. On May 29, 1453, the *Fall of Constantinople*, orchestrated by the Turkish conqueror Sultan Mehmed II of the Ottoman Empire, resulted in the desecration of innumerable libraries containing invaluable books and manuscripts belonging to the classical age. However, it is no less significant that the exodus of Greeks to Italy as a result of this event marked a turning point in the history of human civilization. During the said exodus what is noteworthy is that the survivors who succeeded in escaping the brutality of the Turkish invasion carried with them, at great risk of their own lives, whatever they could salvage from the libraries to keep alive the tradition of ancient learning. Such acts of daring and valour, carried out by unknown and unsung heroes, to save the accumulated wisdom of ages from extinction ended the gloom of the Middle Ages and ushered in the luminous glow of what we know today as the Renaissance.

The Renaissance created an unprecedented revolutionary transformation in human thought by showcasing, through the rich treasure-trove of ancient learning, how human concern and strong individualism lay at the centre of creative explorations of philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle and writers like Sophocles, Aeschylus, Euripides, Aristophanes and others. It was interesting to see their contributions emphasize the high moral order of the Athenian society and the unrestricted spirit of Athenian Democracy. The role of Socrates in proclaiming the need for a free spirit of inquiry may be averred from the remark made by him during his historic trial:

My whole employment is to persuade the young and old against too much love for the body, for riches, and all other precarious things of whatsoever nature they be, and against too little regard for the soul, which ought to be the object of their affection. For I incessantly urge to you that virtue does not proceed from riches, but on the contrary, riches from virtue; and that all the other goods of human life, public as well as private, have their source in the same principle. If to speak in this manner be to corrupt youth. I confess, Athenians, that I am guilty, and deserve to be punished.

The trial of Socrates, as recorded by his disciple Plato in *The Apology*, figures among the most historic trials in human history. In fact, the utterances of Socrates made by him in his defence can easily be said to be the cornerstone of human thought and ideals of living. Besides placing the value of virtue far above riches in his list of priorities, he uninhibitedly encouraged the youth to

question everything under the Sun by telling them that “the unexamined life is not worth living for a human being.” His determination to induce youngsters to ‘examine’ life and question dogmas and traditional beliefs led to the main accusation against him, that of being a ‘corrupter of youth’, a charge that he refuted by stating, “the young who follow me of their own accord—those who have the most leisure, the sons of the wealthiest—enjoy hearing human beings examined.” Professing his own ignorance, he emphatically pointed out that he was merely carrying out the divine will that ordained him to live “philosophizing and examining myself and others.”

By projecting his poverty as a badge of honour Socrates emerged as a fearless champion of truth and justice and refused to conceal his contempt for his accusers: “I do know that it is bad and shameful to do injustice and to disobey one’s better, whether god or human being.” While refuting the allegations levelled against him, he was not unmindful of the fact that he was “fighting with shadows” in vain. Endowed with exemplary power to examine and analyse others and himself, he recounts: “I have been convicted because I was at a loss, not however for speeches, but for daring and shamelessness and willingness to say the sorts of things to you that you would have been most pleased to hear: me wailing and lamenting, and doing and saying many other things unworthy of me, as I affirm—such things as you have been accustomed to hear from others.” He proudly asserts further: “it does not seem to be just to beg the judge, nor to be acquitted by begging, but rather to teach and to persuade.” It is, therefore, no small matter that Socrates happily accepted his fate to die drinking the Hemlock rather than beg for mercy or seek asylum in other kingdoms. It is amazing that with death staring him on his face, he courageously affirmed with his unique argumentative skill: “I would not yield even to one man against the just because of a fear of death, even if I were to perish by refusing to yield.” He fervently believed that a good person can never be harmed, because whatever misfortune he may suffer, his virtue will remain intact.

Socrates died in 399 B. C. E. leaving behind for posterity the rich legacy of what has come to be known as the “Socratic Method” of examining ourselves in order to discover the path we wish to tread in life. In a world gone crazy chasing material success and infirmities of noble and ignoble minds, it is natural to find millions of how-to-succeed books stacked in stores and libraries all over the world. In a scenario of this kind it may appear downright silly to ask any ambitious youngster or a worldly-wise adult to look for *The Apology* among the deluge of such repositories of wisdom. Yet, if we have the time and the inclination to take a sip from the spring of Socratic wisdom, we may end up questioning the futility of our own relentless endeavours as teachers, scholars, researchers, intellectuals or common citizens.

Nibir K. Ghosh
Chief Editor

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THE NAKED TRUTH

Charles Johnson

A truly great story like "The Emperor's New Clothes" can be compared to an old, old coin that has traversed continents and civilizations, picking up slight changes along the way yet still bearing the palm oil and wisdom of millions who've handled it. We know the famous 1837 version by Hans Christian Anderson, but I was delighted to discover—and wish I could locate—the 1335 version in a collection titled *El Conde Lucanor*, by Don Juan Manuel, prince of Villena, which, according to Wikipedia, Anderson read in a German translation from the Spanish. And an even older Indian variant exists as well.

All versions of the story that I'm aware of have the same basic premise. A silly king and his royal entourage are tricked by cunning weavers who present him with finely wrought clothing, but there's an interesting catch to this: Anyone who was born "illegitimate" or not fathered by who he or she thinks is their father (in the 1283 Indian version told by Jinaratna in the *Līlavatīsāra* version), or who is unworthy of the official positions they hold or is a fool (Anderson's version) will not be able to see such finery.

Naturally, everyone fearing disapproval, shame or social ostracism says, yes, they *can* see the invisible clothes!

While not intentionally influenced by Buddhism, this story speaks beautifully to our *zeitgeist*. And to the power of collective illusions. We conform. We go along to socially get along. We act and talk as if we believe, for example, there is something enduring and substantive called the "self," because everyone speaks that way. How often have we heard award-winning films, novels, and products praised to the skies, only to realize on inspection like the child in Anderson's version that there is no "there" there? We act as if we believe. Even wrong speech can be powerful, especially if it appeals to our vanities and fears, seducing the mind to accept what it knows by the evidence of its senses cannot be true.

But it is a child in Anderson's version of the story who sees reality clearly. The child has a zen-like Beginner's Mind, one unconditioned by fears of personal loss or gain. And it is the child innocently blurting out, "But he hasn't got anything on," that liberates the intimidated crowd watching the promenading, naked king to at last speak truth to power.

May we all one day have the courage of that child.

- **Dr. Charles Richard Johnson**, US National Book Award Winner, has adorned the Advisory Board of Re-Markings for over two decades now. This short essay originally appeared in *Lion's Roar* and is reprinted here with the kind consent of the author.



ALLEN GINSBERG REVISITED: AN APPRAISAL ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POET'S DEATH

Jonah Raskin

Allen Ginsberg published his own confessional and autobiographical poetry for half-a century, beginning in the 1940s and continuing until his death in 1997. An extraordinary performer, and a peripatetic poet he also helped create the Beat Generation literary movement with his publicity savvy. This essay, written on the 25th anniversary of his death, looks back at his life, his work and the times that shaped him and that he also had a hand in shaping. The author offers insights into *Howl* and *Kaddish*, which he argues are his two best poems. He also points to Ginsberg's flaws and suggests how readers today might appreciate his body of work, which has been translated into dozens of languages and read around the world.

When I'm in the company of poets, poetry lovers and fans of the literature of the Beat Generation, and the conversation turns to Allen Ginsberg, I'm asked, invariably, "Did you know him?" I suppose that question reflects the power of celebrities and the celebrity culture to which Ginsberg belonged. For decades, he rubbed shoulders with Bob Dylan, the Beatles, Mick Jagger, Patti Smith and the members of the Clash, the 1980s rock 'n' roll band and its star Joe Strummer. Maybe also, those who want to know if I knew Ginsberg hope I might share gossip. I do have gossip, but this isn't a gossip column so I'll refrain from broadcasting it. Sam Kushner has juicy gossip in his book, *When I Was Cool*.

I did know Allen Ginsberg and I do have stories to tell. I met him at a party at Patty Oldenburg's apartment in 1972 when we learned that Nixon had defeated George McGovern and yet another nail was driven into the coffin of the Sixties. Years later, I heard "Ginzy," as friends called him, perform at College of Marin, north of San Francisco and invited him to read at Sonoma State University, where I taught literature and law, including the laws of obscenity. I used his poetry to illustrate how the law worked and didn't work. Actually, he asked me to invite him to read. I did. The University paid him \$2,000 for a day's work.

Ever since I was teenager growing up on Long Island, about 45 miles from New York City, I had been a Ginsberg fan. I bought *Howl and other Poems* at a bookstore in Manhattan in 1956, read it from cover to cover and especially liked the poem "America" which includes the line—one of the best known in 20th century poetry—"Go fuck yourself with your atom bomb." Ginsberg was rarely shy about using obscenities. They show up repeatedly in *Howl* and

**IN MEMORY PROFESSOR CHARLES R. LARSON:
LITERARY AND CULTURAL BRIDGE-BUILDER**

Tijan M. Sallah

Professor Charles R. Larson (1938-2021) was a pioneer scholar in the field of criticism of African literature and comparative literature, and in the promotion and teaching of African, African American, and non-Western literatures in the American Academy. This poignant personal tribute brings to the fore the unique contribution of Charles R. Larson as a champion for the cause of justice for African writers besides shedding light on his innate ability to do whatever good he could to secure friendships with Africa and Africans in his eventful life.

My acquaintance with Charles Larson goes back to 1980, while I was completing my undergraduate studies at Berea College in Kentucky. Chuck was then already an established critic of African literature and a kingmaker of sorts — one whose views mattered and called attention to a writer's work. I had then just published my first collection of poetry, *When Africa Was a Young Woman*, through Writers Workshop of India. I had a Somali friend, the late Professor Said Samatar, who had studied at Northwestern University and was teaching African history at Eastern Kentucky University. Quite fortuitously, the Somali novelist Nuruddin Farah had come to visit him and Samatar told him about my newly published poetry collection and asked who would be a good reviewer. Without hesitation, Farah suggested I should send the collection to Professor Larson. I did, and the rest is history.

In April 1981, I attended a conference of the African Literature Association (ALA) at the Claremont Colleges in California — the best-attended conference by African and African Diaspora writers. In attendance were the South African Cecil Abrahams (brother to novelist Peter Abrahams of *Mine Boy* fame); Ghanaian Kofi Anyidoho; Cameroonian Mongo Beti; South Africans Dennis Brutus and Fatima Dike; Guadeloupean Maryse Conde; Nigerians Buchi Emecheta and Flora Nwapa; Senegalese Annette Mbaye d'Erneville and Aminata Sow Fall; South Africans Mazisi Kunene and Daniel Kunene; Barbadian George Lamming; Barbadian American Paule Marshall; Gambian Lenrie Peters — to name a few. I was perhaps one of the youngest writer-participants at the conference. The event was memorable for me because the Caribbean writer Maryse Conde, who, then amused by my relative youth, kept referring to me with that affable *mon petit frère*, or "my little brother." In any case, at the conference, my friend, the late, indomitable Dennis Brutus, the South African poet and anti-apartheid activist, came to me and asked if I had seen the *World Literature Today* (WLT), Winter 1981, issue, *A Look at Chinese and African Letters*, that was then newly

**‘I DRAW INSPIRATION FROM WHAT I OBSERVE’:
A CONVERSATION WITH VERONIQUE TADJO**

Nibir K. Ghosh

Dr. Véronique Tadjó is a writer, artist and professor of French and Francophone Literature. Born in France and raised in Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), she did most of her studies in Abidjan before earning a doctorate in Black American Literature and Civilization at the Sorbonne, Paris IV. In 1983, she went to Howard University in Washington, D.C. on a Fulbright research scholarship. Writing in multiple genres in both French and English, she has distinguished herself in whatever she has turned her inspiration to. Her internationally acclaimed publications include novels and poetry collections entitled *Queen Pokou*, *As the Crow Flies*, *The Shadow of Imana*, *The Blind Kingdom*, *Latérite/Red Earth*, besides books for young people: *The Lucky Grain of Corn*, *Talking Drums*, *Lord of the Dance* among others. Her work has been translated in many languages. She is the recipient of numerous awards like the Los Angeles Times Book Award for Fiction, the Commandeur des Arts et des lettres medal by the French ministry of Culture, Le Prix d'Excellence du président de la République de Côte d'Ivoire, Writing residency at The Rockefeller Bellagio Centre in Italy, Carnegie Sandwich Grant from the University of the Witwatersrand Transformation program, the Iowa International Writing Program residency in Iowa, USA, Writer in residence and Equity Scholar, Carnegie Transformation Grant at the Writing Centre, University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa and Le Grand Prix Littéraire d'Afrique Noire in Paris, France. Currently, she is Visiting Professor at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg (South Africa) and shares her time between London and Abidjan.

Véronique Tadjó's works amply display the spirit behind Tennyson's poem wherein Ulysses says, "I am a part of all that I have met." Widely travelled, she admits she has "an aversion to telling a story in a linear form," probably reminding one of T. S. Eliot's line, "I must borrow every changing shape/ To find expression." The immensity of the power of her writing can be gauged from the following lines taken from two of her poems that were featured in *A World Assembly of Poets*, published by *Re-Markings* as a special number in November 2017 and guest-edited by Dr. Tijan M. Sallah:

What burden do you bear
In this foul world
Heavier than the city

**SOME VERSIONS OF THE BODHISATTVA:
MEDITATION ON MAXINE HONG KINGSTON AND
THÍCH NHẤT HẠNH**

(Part Two)

John Whalen-Bridge

The first two subsections, published in the previous issue of *Re-Markings*, were entitled “1. Cultural Transmission Has to Be Popular” and “2. Allowing for the Humanity of the Bodhisattva.” Our story continues with the third section, below, entitled “Flies in the Holy Ointment, and the Two Bodies of Religion,” which explores the built-in tension (as opposed to contradiction, or failing) between the transcendentalist and materially ambitious aspects of institutional religion. Finally, I return to the idea of the bodhisattva, especially in relation to our secular resistance to the ideal categories of religious thinking. I even name one or two. I would like to thank Owen Harry, Joe Lamb, and Helena Whalen-Bridge for advice on this essay.

3. Flies in the Holy Ointment, and the Two Bodies of Religion

An anecdote: When Maxine read for free at the 2004 American Literature Association conference, which she said she was glad to do to publicize the fruit of the Veteran Writers Group publication *Veterans of War, Veterans of Peace*, published by Arnie Kotler’s Koa Press, she freely associated with the various scholar-fans, and, after some Buddhist gossip about Zen slave labor she went into the creation of the restaurant *The Greens*, she joined us all for a joyful dinner. Or was it a different year, when I assembled a panel on Buddhism and biography, that she and Earl walked—Earl danced—through the streets of San Francisco, conversing into the night like winners of the party from *Tripmaster Monkey*, until I dumbly said that I thought there *were* perfected creatures on Earth, naming the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh as examples?¹ If so, that would have been 2010, and the point (and I do have one) is that Maxine gave me a measured, stern look and asked me, “Oh, so you don’t know about the creation of the Unified Buddhist Church and how the Community of Mindful Living was pushed out?” I had no idea what she was talking about, but I listened as she explained. The short version is that the lay people who founded the Community of Mindful Living and Parallax Press were unkindly sidelined after years of faithful service. In 2018 I had the pleasure of dining with Arnie Kotler and the Kingstons. Arnie met Thich Nhat Hanh in New York, at the million-person anti-nuclear march, where Thich Nhat Hanh led a workshop on Buddhist nonviolence, along with Richard Baker-Roshi and Brother David Steindl-Rast.

**DESHBANDHU C. R. DAS:
AN UNPARALLELED NATIONAL HERO**

Manas Bakshi

There is an African proverb that says that “until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.” Instances are not uncommon in Indian history when stellar contributions of many leaders in the freedom struggle against British rule have been consigned to oblivion or relegated to marginal footnotes. This essay brings to the forefront the dynamic role of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das not only as a patriotic leader with mass appeal but also his stature as an outstanding lawyer, charismatic orator, committed social reformer and a literary genius.

Every year in India the Independence day or the Republic day is observed with spectacular pomp and traditional gaiety; while remembering in reverence, tribute is offered to some of the prominent leaders and martyrs who fought for freeing our country from the foreign yoke, hardly we are respectfully reminiscent of a multi-dimensional gentle colossus named C. R. Das — popularly called Deshbandhu which means ‘Friend of the Nation’. His stature as a nationalist leader, his charisma as a lawyer, his contribution as a poet and his sacrifice as a patriot deserve not only due attention but also proper evaluation, but unfortunately it is still awaited even after 75 years of independence.

Let us seize an opportunity, here, to look into the aforesaid aspects one by one. Born on 5th November, 1870 in Kolkata (then Calcutta) Chittaranjan Das graduated from the Presidency College in 1890. In his college life, while he was largely inspired by the socio-political ideals of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Surendranath Banerjee, his cultural background was also a distinct one with an eye to social change — for his family was associated with the *Brahmo Samaj* which had set a reformist role model in those days. He went to England in 1890 to prepare for and appear at the Indian Civil Service (ICS) but his attempt in the British dominated Indian Civil Service having fallen through, he studied law and joined the legal profession as a barrister. C. R. Das practised law at the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple at London. In England, his campaign in support of Dadabhai Naoroji paved the way for Naoroji’s winning a seat in the House of Commons from central Finsbury — so much so that he was the first Asian to get involved as a part of the Westminster in 1892. It was a great achievement for both. The tenure of C.R. Das as a barrister at the Calcutta High Court began after his return from England in 1893. Before dwelling on his role as a lawyer, let us cast a glance at his political life as a nationalist leader.

PEEVES & PREJUDICES

Sushil Gupta

Through science education I imbibed a rational perspective on life that later resulted in developing a secular outlook. As I grew up I discarded all kinds of superstitions: astrology, talismans, ghosts-witches-spirits et al. I stopped taking seriously mythological narratives and scriptural authority. God and religion and rituals became my favorite peeves.

As teenagers while preparing for our board exams we were studying the usual subjects: arithmetic, algebra, geometry, science, histories of India & England, geography, two languages – English & Hindi. There was a supplementary book that was not a part of the syllabus. However, that book alone turned out to be the cornerstone of our intellectual make-up later in life.

The book was titled IDEAS THAT MOVED THE WORLD. It was a slim volume of about 100 pages carrying the contributions of 20 eminent thinkers who had radicalized human thought over the centuries. The ones that fired our imagination were: Darwin, Galileo, Newton, Freud, Marx. Each thinker was devoted about 5 pages each which carried a brief sketch of his life followed by his contribution, the reaction of his contemporaries, and subsequent acceptance of the wider world.

After school my own academic career took a zigzagged route: graduation in science, post-graduation in English literature, another post-graduation in Philosophy. I made a living by teaching English language & literature to undergraduate students. Philosophy, at once the most sublime and the most trivial of human pursuits, sustained my interest in the realm of ideas. Voraciously I consumed tomes of Russell, Nietzsche, Sartre, Camus, Dawkins, Karen Armstrong, Osho et al. I thought this cursory introduction was necessary because I am a product of all that I have studied and that has gone into forming my outlook on life. My reading is at the core of my peeves against the prejudices of the world.

The first thing that I threw out of my window was superstition of any kind. Ghosts, spirits, angels, fairies, witches, witch-craft all were dismissed summarily. To this day I can not enjoy a book or a film that revolves around a devil, a ghost, a snake reincarnated as a woman. I can not persuade myself to delve into the works of Tolkiens and Rowlings. Talismans, amulets, good-luck charms are similarly out of my ken. It took me some time but the next on this list was God – the greatest superstition of all. Before I dwell on it in detail I shall like to sweep away some other cobwebs of human thought.

**THE SEED AND THE DEED: AN ANALYSIS OF
EUGENE O'NEILL'S *MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA***

Shernavaz Buhariwala

My paper is an analysis of O'Neill's play "Mourning Becomes Electra" though the process of internal evolution. I have followed the trajectory as one character enters into another and the past is subsumed in the present. The deviation from the Aeschylus play is presented and the development followed along Freudian lines. The colour imagery is unraveled and the ramification of retribution explored.

Every deed has a seed. It is activated by reason and fired by passion. Aeschylus' play "The Oresteian Trilogy," set in Ancient Greece and written almost five hundred years before Christ, has served as an archetypal influence on subsequent plays of generational crime and punishment. To name just a few – O'Neill's "Mourning becomes Electra," Sartre's "Flies" and T. S. Eliot's "The Family Reunion." While the action and retaliation owe to the parental source, each develops in its own right in accordance with its climatic conditions and more importantly the paramount world of its imagination, the world that remains victorious through change and decay, and gives to Art its eternal endurance. While I must invoke the societal mores of the "Oresteia" to establish a "local habitation and a name," I am more concerned with the creative imagination as it "bodies forth the forms of things unknown." The pre-Olympian code which enframes Aeschylus' play punishes blasphemy against the Gods, the shedding of kindred blood and treachery to host or guest. This code though edifying, is restricted in scope for it condemns the murder of a parent but is silent on the murder of a wife. The play starts with Agamemnon's (the king of Argos) return from the Trojan War, only to be killed by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus. The daughter dispatches her brother Orestes to the wilderness fearing he may be his mother's next target. Her time is spent in organizing for the day when her brother will return and slay his mother. Her wish is realized when Orestes returns after years and kills his mother at the behest of the god Apollo. Orestes spends eight years in exile tortured by the Furies who were the guardians of the pre-Olympian code. He is then asked to appear for a trial by Jury, where Apollo functions as the defence counsel and the Furies form the prosecution. The vote is equal, so Athena the goddess of reason and the presiding judge intervenes for his acquittal. Orestes is thus led in a victory procession to the throne of Argos. Actually the seed was sown in the previous generation. Thyestes seduced his brother Atreus' wife, so Atreus retaliated by butchering Thyestes' children and serving their meats to the father at a state banquet. Personally, I can never equate the

DALIT CONSCIOUSNESS AND LITERATURE: AN INTRODUCTION

Santosh Gupta & Bandana Chakrabarty

This Introduction discusses how Dalit Literature has emerged as a form of social resistance in the contemporary context. Who is a Dalit and what is Dalit Literature has been answered here. The reformers and activists of the nineteenth century facilitated the emergence of the Dalits on the Indian political stage. Dalit writers in Maharashtra like Namdeo Dhasal, Annabhau Sathe and Shantabai Kamble believed that the atrocities of the upper castes could be exposed only through literature. As compared to Marathi, Tamil and Telugu Dalit Literature, Bangla and Odia Dalit literature have been a recent phenomenon. The Dalit scenario has undergone a visible change in the twenty-first century. Today the educated Dalit finds a possibility of collective ascendance for a new humanism privileging the human experience as central and fundamental.

As a term Dalit Literature was used for the first time at a conference of Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangh in Bombay. The Dalit Panthers Manifesto published in 1973 defined the term 'Dalit.' One of the pioneers of this movement was Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar who believed that writing was a means to assert against the caste system. Feminist Dalit literature came into existence from the 1990s with writers like Urmila Pawar, Baby Kamble, Meena Kandaswamy and Bama. Many of these writers found the autobiography to be the most suited genre for voicing their experiences.

The arrival of the Dalits onto the Indian political stage in the twentieth century was facilitated by the social reformists and activists in the nineteenth century. A number of bold and rebellious figures rose from the lower castes, the untouchables, tribals and other marginalized communities, now collectively referred to as "Dalits" demanding avenues of education and better social treatment for their groups. This struggle was supported, reflected and publicized to a great extent by the literature written by and about the Dalits. Reflecting the inner and the outer material world of these discriminated and suppressed people, the literature written about them by the Dalits and the non-Dalit authors became for the Dalits a means of their self-reconstruction. This literature has grown steadily and vigorously, now demanding its own place in the mainstream Indian literature.

Generated in the most adverse conditions and surviving against all odds, Dalit literature grew by its own agency. Most of the Dalit writers have been activists as well, their call for change and justice finding expression in written and

CHANGING CONTOURS OF BIHARI LITERATURE

Shrikant Singh

Bihari literature hitherto considered a misnomer is now turning to be real. Long ago Grierson had called three vernacular languages of Magahi, Maithili and Bhojpuri as Bihari language. Now, a century after Grierson, Abhay Kumar's *The Book of Bihari Literature*, not only approves the thesis but also expands it further. In English translation he accommodates specimen literatures of Pali, Sanskrit, Persian, Hindi, English, Urdu, Magahi, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Angika and Bajjika. This paper examines the historical context of the thesis mostly referencing Kumar's book and explores the vast treasure-trove hidden in this field and avers that it will be of value for the individual scholar and the state in redeeming its identity while maintaining its linguistic and cultural plurality.

It is an irony that the Indian province of Bihar, which once gave rise to the great empires of Magadh, Maurya and Gupta, has been home to two of the world's major religions, Buddhism and Jainism, and had raised the world-renowned University of Nalanda, has degenerated now into what V. S. Naipaul wrote of early 1960's India as 'An Area of Darkness'. By the latter phrase is meant a land of poverty, corruption, lack of education and indiscipline. Large scale continual migration of labours, students, job-seekers, traders and entrepreneurs from the state manifest that it is a land of lost opportunities.

Bihar is suffering from image crisis. In such a grim situation publication of *The Book of Bihari Literature* by Abhay Kumar from Harper Collins India is a good tidings especially for the people of Bihar. Through English translation it presents before the Western readers the vast treasure trove of literatures written in Pali, Sanskrit, Prakrit, Persian, Urdu, Hindi, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Magahi, Bajjika and Angika languages. Thereby it adds new treasures to the stock of English letters. For the first time it also brings to light the prolific writings of Magahi literature, hereto obscure, even to the people of Bihar. Hopefully these vernacular literatures in new garb will create new identity for Bihar.

People outside Bihar do not know that Bihar does not have a single representative language for the entire state. Many think that Hindi is the sole language spoken and written in Bihar while those under influence of cinema think that Bhojpuri is the representative language of Bihar. The truth is that the contemporary Bihar is split into five linguistic subcultures: Magahi, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Angika and Bajjika. All these vernacular literatures along with those in Hindi, Urdu and English written by Bihari authors together represent the 'Bihari

**ECOFEMINISM IN KAMALA MARKANDAYA'S
*NECTAR IN A SIEVE***

Simmi Gurwara

In Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954), Rukmani, the protagonist, is compelled to witness and participate in the monopolization of power, augmented economic activity, and expansion in a fast-changing India. *Nectar in a Sieve* registers Rukmani's attempts to regain and rebuild her sense of community and terrestrial attachment. The attempts she makes to keep her self-esteem intact and regulate her life echoes some of the intricate customs in which country women of the global South debate modernity. This paper attempts to examine Rukmani's plight and practices with the lens of ecofeminism.

It is imperative to focus on the beginning of *Nectar in a Sieve* to fathom Rukmani's bond with the land and her environs. In the novel, the relaxed stride and foreseeable shape of rustic village life is precipitously and irretrievably changed by an interruption wreaked by foreign forces. Rukmani reminisces her good old days: "While the sun shines on you and the fields are green and beautiful to the eye, and your husband sees beauty in you which no one has seen before, and you have a good store of grain laid away for hard times, a roof over you and a sweet stirring in your body, what more can a woman ask for?" (Markandaya 8). The laid-back tempo of her description, and specially the manner in which Rukmani associates the loveliness of the fields with the loveliness her husband happens to see in her, mirrors a unison as well as amplexity of life. The novel chronicles the onset of white proselytizers and bureaucrats. The presence of mainly two religions – Sikhs and Muslims – alongside ethnic outsiders forms a significant part of the text. The novel delineates the outburst of extensive mechanization underlining Nehru's post-colonial plans of advancement.

The novel unfolds with the matrimony of young Rukmani to a tenant farmer, Nathan. According to the chatter mill of the village, this match is not up to the standards of her family as they had married off their three elder daughters in more affluent families. This disagreeable marriage was in fact a fallout of her father's contracted stand in his community. Earlier, her father was the fountainhead in the village who commanded authority and respect. But "the headman is no longer of consequence," Rukmani's elder brother informs, "There is the Collector, who comes to these villages once a year, and to him is the power, and to those he appoints; not to the headman" (Markandaya 4). These words dawned upon Rukmani a bitter truth which was tough to

HERMENEUTICS OF THE FOUR PURUSHARTHAS IN THE HINDU TRADITION

Deepa Chaturvedi

The four Purusharthas in the Hindu tradition are the foundation on which the tradition has survived for centuries. The exegesis into the Purushartha tradition brings out the valuable thesis that the Purusharthas meant to be for the Purusha or the being, and Kratavarth, for the society are a comprehensive life system which believes that for the whole to be wholesome, the parts need to be in good shape too. Rules laid for the individuals translate into social rules and get interwoven into each other thus dissolving the binaries of the individual and the social. The paper intends to collate all these views which reveal the comprehensiveness of the concept.

In Hinduism, the Purushartha are the canonical four aims of human (read Hindu) life. The four together present a pattern of consummate life of Hindus by aiming to satisfy their physical, material, spiritual and emotional needs. In the hierarchical order, from the lowest to the highest, these goals are:

- Kama-Pleasure or love
- Artha-Wealth
- Dharma-Righteousness or Morality
- Moksha-Liberation from the cycle of rebirth or Reincarnation.

Historically, Dharma, Artha, and Kama, were articulated first (Sanskrit: Trivarga) and the fourth and the ultimate goal Moksha was added later (Sanskrit: Chaturvarga).

The famous verse of the *Mahabharatha* that proclaims its encyclopedic range and intention, does so in terms of the four Purusharthas: "As regards Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, what is found here may be elsewhere but what is not here will not be found elsewhere" (Iyer 7-8).

Not only do the great epics of the Indian tradition mention the Purusharthas but their importance is amply demonstrated by the fact that full master works were dedicated to them – the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya, the *Dharmashastra* of Manu, and the *Kama Sutra* of Vatsyayana. The fourth Purushartha – Moksha, which was historically able to attain canonical recognition later than did the other three but which immediately acquired eminence over the other three, has almost six systems of philosophy – *Nyaya*, *Vaisesika*, *Yoga*, *Samkhya*, *Mimamsa* and *Vedanta* to enforce and espouse its value, dedicated to justify and advocate its supremacy. Here it would not be out of place to mention that

OKAKURA'S *IDEALS OF THE EAST* AND THE AESTHETICS OF THE ORIENT

Jyoti A Kathpalia

The following paper discusses aesthetician and art critic Okakura Kakuzo's singular and complex approach to the history of Japan through the tracing of the transitioning of art in various periods of Japanese history vis-à-vis his book *Ideals of the East*. Okakura brings forth a pan Asian ideal with Japanese culture at the forefront through some brilliant and intricate connections that he effectuates between art, history, society and politics. However, in the process Okakura also erects certain alternate binaries by excluding groups and regions from his pan Asian ideal. The paper ends with an analysis of Okakura's internationalism, his positionality within the western ethos as well as the nationalism of Meiji Japan that undergirds much of his evolving positions – both as an international acclaimed art historian and as an ultra-nationalist.

As the story of modern Japanese is commonly told, it began with Fenollosa and Okakura and their campaign to turn Japanese art from its fascination with Westernization back to the appreciation and expression of qualities that, though contemporary, were intrinsically Japanese. Their campaign polemicized the field to create two villains: Westernization and stagnation. Always, they were the stewards of Japanese painting, overseeing its regeneration as a modern national painting (Conant 34)

But even as Okakura was articulating the ideal of Asia, in the same moment, he was also carving out a place for Japan in the civilized world of the West as the inheritor and leader of this present fallen Asia (Duara 969).

It is between the above two viewpoints that I try to locate and analyse *Ideals of the East* by Kakuzo Okakura (pen name Tenshin). Speaking as an aesthetician with tremendous knowledge of the arts, straddling the bicultural ethos of Asia and Euro Americas and speaking from a distinct position of high self-stylisation both in terms of his statements and his attire, Okakura occupies a significant place in the complex interactions of Asian, Japanese and world art and history.

Kakuzo Okakura (1863-1913) was one of the stalwarts of Japanese and Asian aesthetics and theory. He was singularly responsible for bringing a Japanese and pan Asian aesthetics and culture to the fore. Okakura held prominent positions in the Japanese government as Secretary Minister of Education and director of the new Imperial Art School at Tokyo. As a student Okakura was very influenced by Prof Ernest Fenollosa, an American art historian specialising in Japanese art. He was the founder of the Tokyo Fine Arts school and Nippon

COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE IN THE NATURE POETRY OF DOUGLAS STEWART AND KEDARNATH SINGH

G. L. GAUTAM

The paper seeks to explore how Douglas Stewart and Kedarnath Singh converge on the following points with regard to their representation of nature in their respective poetry: a) We can't conceive the world of nature, comprising the birds, animals and rivers, apart from the life of human beings; b) The modern bourgeois life, characterized by the world of trams and banks, has turned man strange to the world of nature; c) Kedarnath Singh warns us how the market, the hardened signifier of capitalism, views the rural landscape as producer of grain and other products. This tendency will create an imbalance in land relationship since market is a colonizer and the producer is a native.

We are still on the threshold of the 21st century. However, we can clearly imagine what our planet Earth would be like by the mid 21st century if it is abused unabated in the name of development. The media have been warning us of the consequences of global warming – a disastrous phenomenon caused by the pursuance of naked capitalist exploitation of the natural resources like land, forest and water. The rapid pace of urbanization, which came in the wake of colonization, has caused damage to the world of flora and fauna, resulting in the extinction of the common species of birds and jeopardizing wildlife. It is indeed sad that the greed of man has caused an immense loss to the planet Earth. In the Indian context, the enormity of the problem could be grasped from the fact how Arundhati Roy, Medha Patkar and Mahasweta Devi have carried on a pitched battle in the resistance to the Indian state. Taking Arundhati Roy and Mahasweta Devi as role models, a 21st century creative writer will not only have to create awareness, through his writings, of the loss, but also work for the preservation of the already-depleted natural resources.

A writer, writing in 21st century, in fact, will have to come out of his individualistic shell the modern bourgeois life has built and break the islands of isolation the postmodern culture has been building through its culture of shopping malls and free market economy. Hunger for more and more individual propertied assets, according to the revolutionary philosopher Karl Marx, accounts for the alienation and estrangement of man from man and from nature. To put Marx's views in the words of William Adams: "Because we are dominated by private property we are unable to experience the world of nature objects, other people." (Williams, 1996: 252) Unfortunately, thanks to blind exploitation of nature, we are a generation with melancholic moods and

VIRTUAL CLASSROOM: READING LITERATURE IN A LIBERATED SPACE

R. P. Singh

This article argues that the students' will and competency to critically discuss and understand literature can be exercised more freely, and so more powerfully, in a virtual than in a physical classroom. There are two psychologically boosting reasons for this to happen. First, the online classroom psychologically 'invites' all students to participate in the interactive discussions; and secondly, the participating students can confidently express personal experiences, even controversial views. Engaging with literary texts, armed with critical literacy, one can see a richly fruitful critical reception in the liberated virtual space (classroom).

When the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, issued a circular encouraging the Indian higher education institutions to adopt the Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), which would be valid 'for credit mobility as per the UGC (Credit Framework for Online Learning Courses through SWAYAM) Regulations 2016' (quoted from the commission's letter, 19 May, 2020 addressed to all the VCs of Indian universities), the already murmuring debate about online delivery of education intensified around mainly three concerns related with what may or may not happen in our COVID-cracked educational future. These three inescapable concerns can be expressed through the questions: Is the online mode an efficacious mode? Will it be inclusive enough? What will happen to the idea of the value and meaning of education when it will be delivered through virtual classrooms? It can be said that the third concern-question is the end which the other two ones help us reach at. In other words, the aim of education is to 'create' enlightened and free citizens through maximally effective means with-out any exclusionary barriers and their avoidable fallouts.

This article, written with an apprehension that the disruption and rupture caused by COVID-19 will make virtual classrooms a quasi-permanent feature of the transaction of education in days and years to come, will try to argue that such classrooms, subject to their being made optimally fit and fine in terms of infrastructural efficiency with socially just and equitable dimensions, can be vehicles of inculcating and strengthening the value of reading and understanding literature with what is called critical literacy after Paulo Freire's conceptualization of the 'pedagogy of the oppressed' enunciated in his eponymously titled book of 1970. This value of education has got an added relevance in the media-laden socio-cultural and political environment in which

SELF AND NATURE: AN EXPOSITION OF MARY OLIVER'S SELECT POEMS THROUGH POSTHUMANISM

Bhishma Kumar & Sovan Chakraborty

This paper studies the views of Mary Oliver, an American Pulitzer Prize winning nature poet, on the liaison between the human and the non-human world through the lens of posthumanism. "Posthumanism" is a theory that deals with the concepts of intercorporeality, biotic egalitarianism, removal of binary of Self/Other, and exclusion of the ego-centric mindset of the human society. We have, in this paper, used this paradigm professed predominantly by Pramod K. Nayar. We have selected four of Oliver's poems like "August," "Sleeping in the Forest," "Aunt Leaf," and "The Swan?" for discussion on her sensitivity towards the non-human life.

The poetic impetus of Mary Oliver for observing the natural world transcends the range of ego-centric attitude of the human beings. Most of her fictional creations deal with the concept of "posthumanism" and "biotic egalitarianism," (*Respect for Nature* 306) which reject the human belief of being in itself superior to others. The poet proposes a post-humanistic approach towards the human and the non-human world, where everything on the planet has equal significance striking out any hierarchical prejudices among them. She asserts that the human is not a separate entity in the domain of natural ecology. She is spiritually and innately linked with its lesser known-kingdom through her permeable body. She, in one of her essays titled "Sister Turtle," writes, "All things are meltable, replaceable. Not at this moment, but soon enough, we are lambs and we are leaves, and we are stars, and the shining, mysterious pond water itself." (61)

Posthumanism emerged in reaction to Renaissance Humanism wherein we find that the human had occupied a central place in the entire existence that later produced the ideology of Self/Other, with the air of anthropocentrism. This dogma of the human of being superior to the others was fueled with the introduction of science and technology in order to bring up a more 'advanced' civilization. And to say the truth, no doubt, it has helped the human society bring up an advanced human civilization, but also, in reverse, it has awarded it an ego-centric attitude, which separated the human beings from nature offering deterioration of their reverence for the natural kingdom and its ecology. Ironically, this has affected not only in alienation from and dominance of the human world from that of the non-humans, but also has increased the catastrophic possibilities to the entire existence, including that of the human beings. The only bright side of this condition is that philosophers, litterateurs

**THE LIMITS OF UTOPIANISM:
MEANING AND INDIVIDUAL FATE IN
ANDREI PLATONOV'S *THE FOUNDATION PIT***

Aashima Walia

The present research paper critically reads Andrei Platonov's *The Foundation Pit* to understand the limits of utopianism. Platonov, a Soviet Russian writer, engages with the traumatic nature of the socio-political transition that took place in the late 1920s from Leninism to Stalinism. The paper builds the argument that Platonov has weaved imagination and reality together in a meticulous manner to foreground the politics of dystopian imagination. Using Ernst Bloch's insights, the paper highlights how the novel employs literary imagination as a mode of representation to examine the multidimensional nature of social and political reality.

Few people have the imagination for reality. - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The aim of the present research paper is to understand how attempts to turn utopian vision into reality have often led to inhuman dystopian realities as represented in Andrei Platonov's *The Foundation Pit* (1973, 1996; trans. from Russian by Robert Chandler et al., 2009). His works deal with existential questions and are primarily political in nature. His first novel, *Chevengur*, published in 1928 and written from the perspective of the marginalized, examines the impact of political change that took place in the 1920s after the adoption of Vladimir Lenin's New Economic Policy by Russia. His next novel *The Foundation Pit* – a gloomy, symbolic, semi-satirical work – deals with the transition that took place in the late 1920s from Leninism to Stalinism. The novel remained unpublished in Russia until the 1980s.

Ernst Bloch was a German philosopher whose life-long project was to engage with the question of social dreaming; and to understand the complex dialectical relationships among reality, imagination, and social dreaming. Bloch emphasised the role of imagination and social dreaming in making explicit the latent possibilities of a historically determined 'reality'. "Every goal, whether attainable or unattainable, whether crackpot or objectively meaningful," Bloch argued "must first be imagined in the mind" (165). Before becoming actual, reality and its contours are shaped by the force of imagination, proving that utopian imagination is not useless. Commenting on Bloch's take on the notion of 'utopia', Hudson writes: "Bloch denies that utopia is 'no place' and has no basis

**SELF-DECEPTION AND ADULTERY IN
RICHARD YATES'S *REVOLUTIONARY ROAD***

Rajan Lal

Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road* is a domestic tragedy of a collapsing and disintegrating marriage of a middle-class suburban couple, Frank and April Wheelers, who get bored from the extant routine of their life at Revolutionary Road in the Revolutionary Hills, New York during the nineteen-seventies of the century. This paper shows how the decision of the protagonists of the novel for phenomenal betterment leads them to self-deception, adultery and tragedy in their conjugal life. It explores the catastrophic metaphor of doomed and duped middle-class morality of relationships of the contemporary American suburbia.

Richard Yates is known as the 20th century lost icon novelist of America. *Revolutionary Road* follows the Greek dramatic tradition based on fate and flaw. It is compounded of two parts. Part one consists of seven chapters and part two of nine chapters. In many ways, the novel might be counted a commentary on the mid-20th century American values. Individualism, informality, change and progress, materialism, directness and assertiveness, disillusionment, self-deception, infidelity, and adultery are some of the American values which have been touched upon by the novelist here. Irony is associated with both tragedy and humour. Trajectory in literature is a course of life which is filled with traumas and wounds, trials and tribulations, and catastrophic experiences. Here the novelist's characters undergo such ironic trajectory. They seek to change their ordinary life into extraordinary one but all in vain and meet their tragic and ironic experiences because of some tragic flaw like those of the Greek dramatic characters.

Yates's *Revolutionary Road* is structured like a three-act play and opens *in medias res* like that of the epic convention in which the female protagonist, April Wheeler, appears as a performing actor in a local community theatrical performance of a play titled *The Petrified Forest*. She is a mother of two children and has undergone two abortions as well, yet wishes to be a successful theatre player. Her husband, Mr. Frank, watches her dramatic performance physically by sitting among the spectators. She is unable to perform as per her aspirations, and gets much too depressed. She is overambitious, so under-performance was not acceptable to her. They leave for their home after the show. On their way home, he tries to placate her by appreciating her performance, but she was so fractured and frustrated that she remained inarticulate with him and maintained some distance even in the car. A long time passes by

**MULTICULTURAL BRITAIN AND
REPRESENTATIONS OF INTER-RACIAL
RELATIONSHIPS IN
ZADIE SMITH'S *WHITE TEETH***

Manasvini Rai & Preeti Bhatt

Zadie Smith's novel *White Teeth* focuses on the lives of characters belonging to formerly colonized countries who reside as migrants in contemporary multicultural Britain. The author presents a penetrating depiction of interactions between members of varied socio-economic, gendered, and cultural categories within disparate racial groups. Smith's delineation of socio-cultural association between races, through the depiction of inter-racial friendships, marriages, and cross-racial solidarity among female characters, forms the fulcrum of her narrative. Comparisons are drawn among Smith's representations of inter-racial associations in *White Teeth* considering Edward Said's Orientalist paradigm on one hand, and Kimberle Crenshaw's intersectional theorization of identity and power on the other, unveiling a progression towards representing a more diverse multicultural Britain.

Zadie Smith's debut novel *White Teeth* (2000), set in modern-day multicultural London, during the final quarter of the twentieth century, explores the dynamics of the interactions between individuals belonging to diverse races and nationalities in the familial and socio-economic spheres. The narrative brings to the fore the inter-racial associations formed between immigrants from former European colonies such as Bangladesh and Jamaica on one hand, and citizens of former colonizer territories such as Britain, on the other. Primarily, Smith's novel revolves around the events and issues taking place in the lives of characters belonging to two families – namely the Iqbals and the Joneses. The Bangladeshi Iqbal family consists of the married couple Samad and Alsana, and their twin sons Magid and Millat, while the Joneses comprise the white Englishman Archie, his Jamaican wife Clara Bowden, and their mixed-race daughter Irie Jones.

In the *International Encyclopedia of Social & Behavioral Sciences*, Duncan Ivison asserts that the term 'multiculturalism' indicates "the state of a society or the world in which there exists numerous distinct ethnic and cultural groups seen to be politically relevant" (Ivison "Multiculturalism"). In addition, John Clayton has put forth that "multiculturalism" can be regarded as "the existence of difference and uneven power relations among populations" based on "cultural markers" such as race, ethnicity, and religion, varied from dominant norms (Clayton "Multiculturalism"). Furthermore, according to Jennifer L. Eagan in the

**ESSAY AS CULTURAL CRITIQUE: READING TONI
MORRISON'S *THE SOURCE OF SELF-REGARD:*
*SELECTED ESSAYS, SPEECHES, AND MEDITATIONS***

Parwinder Kaur

The present research paper delineates essay as an important medium to understand this bilateral association between culture and literature. Essays have been consistently providing a space to throw light on complex social, cultural and political occurrences for centuries. As a genre of nonfiction, essay opens a window to see the everyday life and covert agendas afresh. In similar context, this paper is an attempt to bring forth Morrison's selected essays as a critique of modern culture. Morrison's essays, as keen observers of various nuances of modern African American identity, hold an important position in modern prose tradition.

In 1990, Toni Morrison delivered a series of three lectures as part of William E. Massey Sr. Lectures in the History of American Civilisation at Harvard University. This lecture was compiled under the title *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and Literary Imagination* to be published in May 1992. She was already a distinguished novelist of *The Bluest Eye* (1970), *Sula* (1973), *Song of Solomon* (1977), *Tar Baby* (1981) and her most critically acclaimed *Beloved* (1987) by that time. Her fiction was well-received as the early exponent of shaping a modern African American literary tradition. The rich incorporation of myth, folklore and history characterises her fiction. However, the publication of these lecture series had marked a significant shift in her literary oeuvre by introducing Morrison as a literary and cultural critic. She published two more collections of essays titled *What Moves at the Margins: Selected Nonfiction* (2008) and *The Source of Self-Regard: Selected Essays, Speeches, and Meditations* (2019). These are replete with Morrison's insights on contemporary American culture and literature. Both the collections comprise the essays written over a period of past five decades sufficiently disclosing the fact that Morrison's creative and critical works go hand in hand. The essays included in all the three collections are true manifestation of the writer's attempt to establish essay, along with other forms of art, as an important literary genre which critiques various modern political and cultural practices.

Accordingly, the present research paper is an attempt to bring forth Morrison's essays, with special emphasis on form, content and approach, as a critique of modern culture. It develops a two-fold argument: on the one hand, the

EXPLORING MULTIPLE AVENUES AND GENRES OF CREATIVE WRITING FROM ANCIENT TO CONTEMPORARY TECHNOLOGICAL TIME

Ashna Taneja

Creative writing provides us with tools to investigate the whole universe using our imagination, knowledge and proficiency in our respective languages. It is the attainment of the skill of executing what we've studied or perceived so far in our own unique manner. This study explores the transformations that creative writing has gone through from ancient time to the present days of digital technology. With an analysis of new forms of creative writing an attempt has been made to get deep insights into the minds of modern creative writers and their understanding of all that dwells in the society. Based on the existing facts, the role of technology in giving creative writing a rather diversified approach is scrutinized. It further attempts to propose an idea of how various social media platforms serve as tools for boosting creative writing.

Introduction

The art of creative writing had been into existence since 23rd century BCE which is marked by the conquest of Sargon the great in Mesopotamia. The ancient forms of writing were known as cuneiform (using clay tablets) which were usually composed as temple hymns and myths. They were written as a matter of worship in the praise of their deity and contained numerous biographical features and ancient traditions. Enheduanna, the daughter of Sargon has been recognized as the very first named writer who made a major contribution in ancient literature. A study of her work revealed the religious traits back then and laid emphasis on the glorious qualities of its divine muse and the skill of creative writing. She considered creative writing as a challenge to encapsulate celestial and eternal wonders through the written word.

The term 'Creative Writing' was first used by Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American essayist, in his address "The American Scholar" which was delivered in 1837 at Cambridge. Creative Writing as implied by him is the absolute truth which is written as seen by an active soul in the hour of vision when our mind is buttressed to invent and labor. The words then combined or read become radiant with manifold allusions.

Creative Writing and Creative Writer Defined

'Creative Writing' as defined in the dictionaries is a writing that showcases invention and imagination. An examination of this art of expressing imagination

POETRY

POEMS FROM AMMA'S GOSPEL

Rajender Krishan

OM

Om
Primordial energy
The sound of silence.
Om
The Only Verse
Manifesting eternally
The Universe

NAMASTE

Salutations to the One
That pervades the entire Cosmos

As I honor that space in thee
Where dwells
The very Cause of Life
Unanimously
We hear together
The symphony playing the notes
Of love, light, truth, harmony
In our throbbing hearts' solitude
Vibrating and enriching
Humility, compassion, fortitude

MAYA

That
what was not
 yesterday
but is
 today
and will not be
 tomorrow
If is not trickery

– an illusion –
then what is it?

LEAF

The Autumn saw
my green body turn yellow
and with the flow of winds
I moved on towards
My new journey.

The tree, my father
having nurtured me
standing majestically
and silently
did not hold me anymore.

I had come of age
capable to embrace
the dew drops
and dance with
the blades of grass

Eventually to become dust
and dissolve into
the eternal embrace
of Mother earth

Is this dissolution
Death or Life?
Perhaps, the path
That we seek ... Nirvana.

- **Rajendra Krishan** (aka Raj Chowdhry) is a poet based in New York, USA. He is the founder and editor of literary website Boloji.com since 1999. These poems are from his poetry collection *Amma's Gospel* published by Setu Publications, USA. He is passionate about poetry, photography and visual art.



TWO POEMS*Christopher Guerin***VIEW FROM THE DUNES**

I asked my youngest why the grains of sand,
After millennia in roiled water,
Grow only so small and no smaller.
(Wouldn't gold dissolve if endlessly panned?)
"Maybe they're too tiny," said my daughter,
"To be abrasive anymore." Last year,
A storm raked off ten feet of grassy dunes,
Leaving jagged walls and crumbling wounds.
The long-buried sand was the same as here
On the upper ledge, unchanged under tons'
Gravitational grinding of eons.
The waves, gale-wind-whipped, tip over and drop,
And even in the stillest air never stop.
Each grain of sand changes less than the suns.

RONDEAU FOR RUTH

He knew euphoria the day they met.
He's often felt so between then and now.
Was it the shy smile or searching brown eyes
Or how her eyelashes would lower and rise,
Like glinting perfection taking a bow?

How could any-day simple chance allow
Strangers meeting to result in a vow
And forty years devoid of pain or lies?
He knew euphoria the day they met.

His eye is protected by her eyebrow.
Their two hearts beat with a whisper and wow,
Not felt, but heard, always in sweet surprise.
No thought between them arrives in disguise.
They will never fail to remember how
They knew euphoria the day they met.

- **Christopher Guerin**, former President at Fort Wayne Philharmonic, USA, holds two degrees in English Literature from Northern Illinois

University, USA. creating new concert series such as “Philharmonic Unplugged” and expanding the orchestra’s reach throughout northeast Indiana.



**‘SHELLEY, YOU WILL ALWAYS SHINE’
A Tribute to P. B. Shelley on the bicentenary of his death**

Toyesh Prakash Sharma

One day these kingdoms will fade.
One day things will lose their "own"
but your written words will be
the same as when you wrote them.
Shelley, you are the representative of
your "own" ideals encased in verse;
you have shown the cycle of time through "The Cloud,"
your odes show your intimate love for nature,
you have celebrated liberation and
revolutionary idealism through "The Revolt of Islam,"
you showed the real face of time through "Ozymandias,"
you have explored the nature of being and reality
through "The Triumph of Life theme."
You are like a flower and the things you made
are like pollen grains that spread
and give birth to the new flowers;
possibly, one of them is reading these words of mine,
so, Shelley, you had shined before
and you will always shine. (8th July 2022)

- **Toyesh Prakash Sharma** is a student of B.Sc. 1st year at Agra College, Agra. With his passion for Mathematics, he has published over 50 papers in internationally acclaimed Mathematics journals. He has also authored a collection of Hindi poems titled *Meri Abhivyakti*.



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way to live
with honor
in this world
is to be
what we
pretend to be.
- *Socrates*

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