

RE-MARKINGS

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RE-MARKINGS

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EDITORIAL

It is true that survivors refuse to draw any lesson from the past or present and love to continue to cherish the illusion of immunity from disaster. They tend to forget that if life is all about hedonistic pleasures, it is also about restraint about how we conduct ourselves as a member of the social community. To make a mockery of protocols like 'social distancing' and wearing a 'mask' only shows how insensitive we can be to feelings of compassion for others.

Deeply pained and concerned with the way a fairly large part of mankind continues to handle disasters and calamities, I had recorded the above sentiments in my Editorial to the September 2021 issue of Re-Markings. It is strange that a major part of the populace worldwide considers observing COVID-19 protocols a big affront to their freedom to pursue their individual and collective brand of comfort and happiness. It reminds me of an observation that A. G. Gardiner makes in his essay entitled "On the Rule of the Road": "Liberty is not a personal affair only but a social contract. It is an accommodation of interest." Wary of restrictions imposed on our limited notion of liberty, we look with disdain at anything and anyone who tries to point out the values of the 'social contract' that Gardiner talks about. Consequently, despite the marvels wrought by the vaccines to contain the savage onslaught of the pandemic, the dreaded 'third wave' has returned with a vengeance to make us aware that the era of anxiety and fear is far from over. Strangely enough, this time the new mantras are not 'mask' or 'social distancing' but the 'survival of the fittest' amidst 'community spread'.

Bob Dylan, the Literature Nobel Laureate, succinctly captures the various nuances of apathy, unconcern and indifference of people towards the predicament of fellow-homo sapiens in his popular song "Blowin' in the Wind":

How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
How many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, and how many times must the cannonballs fly
Before they're forever banned? ...
Yes, and how many years must a mountain exist
Before it is washed to the sea?

And how many years can some people exist
Before they're allowed to be free?
Yes, and how many times can a man turn his head
And pretend that he just doesn't see? ...

Yes, and how many times must a man look up
Before he can see the sky?
And how many ears must one man have
Before he can hear people cry?
Yes, and how many deaths will it take 'til he knows
That too many people have died?

The answer to Dylan's series of rhetorical questions appears as a refrain at the end of each stanza of the song: "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind." Referring to the poem, Dylan had remarked in an interview: "But the only trouble is that no one picks up the answer when it comes down so not too many people get to see and know . . . and then it flies away. I still say that some of the biggest criminals are those that turn their heads away when they see wrong and know it's wrong. I'm only 21 years old and I know that there's been too many . . ." Dylan's song lucidly articulates the imperatives of the need for change in outlook where the preference is for peace over war, love and compassion over inertia and unconcern. Though published in 1963, the relevance of the poem remains timeless and universal.

As Re-Markings enters the 21st year of its publication with the current issue, I find it considerably significant that our contributors, readers and admirers are constantly aware of the journal's unfailing commitment to provide a healthy forum for scholarly and authoritative views on broad economic, socio-political, cultural, gender, racial and environmental issues as evidenced in literature, art, cinema, television, social media and journalism.

The kaleidoscopic range and variety of discourses offered in the pages of the current volume, including the Symposium on "Words and Worlds" organized by Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law Punjab in collaboration with Re-Markings, do strengthen our resolve to confront head-on the stark reality of life's problems and spread the luminous rays of the light of awakening and engaged mindfulness to dispel the deadliest of darkness that besets the world we inhabit.

Nibir K. Ghosh
Chief Editor

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**THE HUBRIS OF HISTORICAL ILLITERACY:
THE UNLEARNT LESSONS OF PARTITION AND
1984 FROM PRAFULLA ROY TO SHONALI ROY**

Shanker Ashish Dutt

Divisive politics territorially legitimated by Cyril Radcliff's hurried and callous imperial cartography resulted in the mass exchange of population in 1947 accompanied by mobilized hate, unprecedented violence and genocide in which a million men, women, and children were killed and ten million were displaced from their homes. This was the Partition of the Indian subcontinent, a Black Swan event. Occurring thirty-three years later was the anti-Sikh pogrom in the Orwellian apocalyptic year 1984. Both these events draw our attention because of the unprecedented humanitarian crisis they precipitated through hate, violence and genocide. Partition as an event and metaphor for communal identity politics is a spectre that haunts the Indian subcontinent as Kamleshwar's protagonist Mangal, articulating the division of hearts says 'Pakistan is everywhere. It inflicts wounds on you and me. It humiliates us. It defeats us every time'.

In 2007, Nassim Nicholas Taleb wrote a book called *The Black Swan*. Its title refers to an event with three attributes. The first is that the event is rare, occurring outside the realm of regular expectations. The second is that such an event carries an extreme impact and the third is that the explanations about its occurrence can be provided after the event. In other words, it is subject to retrospective explications. Many events in history may be cited as Black Swans: the World Wars, the Holocaust, Partition of the Indian Subcontinent, the events of 1984, collapse of the Soviet Union, the spread of the internet, the market crashes of 1987 and 2008, 9/11, 26/11 and pandemics; each of these follow Black Swan dynamics. Each of these events were inconceivable before the dates of their occurrence, else they may have been avoided. From the list of Black Swans, there are two events in the 20th Century

- **Dr. Shanker Ashish Dutt**, formerly, Professor and Head, Department of English, Patna University & Former Chairman, Bihar Sangeet Natak Akademi.

JACK LONDON, JACK LONDON: DOUBLE TROUBLE

Jonah Raskin

The Double has been a literary figure since the mid-nineteenth-century, popularized by Edgar Allan Poe and Dostoevsky. Jack London, the American novelist, had the misfortune to be saddled with a real Double: a man who impersonated him for decades. Near the end of his life he told an editor he was going to write about his Double. He never did, but for much of his career he created characters with divided selves, twins and opposites. That he would do so seems inevitable. After all he had two fathers, two mothers, and a soul divided in two. London exhibited what Black scholar W. E. B. Du Bois described as "two-ness."

Ten years ago, I assembled an anthology of Jack London's work which was published by the University of California Press under the title *The Radical Jack London: Writings on War and Revolution*. The way I saw it, and still do, London wrote extensively and insightfully about class war, race war, the war between the sexes and the human war with the environment. Also, he wrote about revolutions in technology, science and politics that swept across the planet in the early twentieth century.

I wrote an introduction called "The Orphan at the Abyss" because I believed that London often thought of himself as a man without parents and sometimes introduced himself as an orphan. He did this in *The Road*, in which he explained to strangers to whom he appealed for food and shelter that his parents were both killed in a traffic accident and that he was "alone and forlorn on the streets of San Francisco."

In a sense he committed parricide. An orphan calls for sympathy. The ploy worked for London, the hobo.

Jonah Raskin, former chair of the Communication Studies Department at Sonoma State University, U.S.A., is the author of fourteen major books.

THE DREAMS OF LANGSTON HUGHES AND MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

W. Jason Miller

“The Dreams of Langston Hughes and Martin Luther King, Jr.” traces the cultural resistance to each man’s optimism by the last years of their respective lives. The remnants of King’s great dream is contextualized against a KKK rally that upstaged his speaking appearance in 1966 while Hughes’s public statements against the Vietnam War in February of 1967 reveal his fears for what colonialism meant to the Vietnamese and the lives of black soldiers. These men’s dreams seemed more denied than deferred with Hughes summarily penning “The Backlash Blues” for Nina Simone to sing with more than a tinge of revenge.

The origins of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s dream can be traced not to a minor prophet but to a major poet. That poet is Langston Hughes. We are always learning something new about Hughes. It was only recently uncovered that he was actually born in 1901 (not 1902) as everyone had long believed (Schussler). King’s birth year of 1929 has not changed, even though it is celebrated on a different day every year. King first began invoking Hughes’s poem “Mother to Son” in 1956. He knew this work by memory, as it was one of his wife Coretta’s favorite works (King, “Mother to Son”). Soon after, King was combining the light and dark imagery from another Hughes’s poem, “Youth” with a line from Robert Burns’s “Man Was Made to Mourn” (Miller, *Origins* 125). By late 1959, the preacher had personally requested Hughes write a poem to celebrate the 70th birthday of A. Philip Randolph (Miller, *Origins* 108). The dean of the civil rights movement had first threatened a march on Washington, D.C. nineteen years earlier, and the poem Hughes wrote in his honor excited King more than learning about any of the dignitaries who would attend the celebration. That poem has finally now been made available to reveal its use of the dream metaphor (Miller, *Origins* 113).

- **W. Jason Miller** is Professor of Literature at North Carolina State University, U.S.A. He is the author of three books on Langston Hughes.

**HARUKI MURAKAMI'S *1Q84* AS BIBLIOTHERAPY:
DE-TOXIFYING TRAUMA THROUGH
LITERARY TRANSFORMATION**
Jonathan Little

This article argues that Haruki Murakami's novel *1Q84* is both a dramatization of bibliotherapy (therapy through literature) and a commentary on the therapeutic potential of literature to de-toxify trauma for its characters and for its readers. Building on the writings of Emily Troscianko, Terence Cave, and other critics and psychologists, this article asserts that *1Q84* goes beyond traditional notions of bibliotherapy to offer a valuable template for linking literature and psychological healing. Literature's unique contributions relate to its imaginative storytelling power, including the power to renarrate and to reframe traumatic memories through extended embodied literary simulations.

In the beginning of Haruki Murakami's massive novel *1Q84* (2009-10), the main character in his late twenties, Tengo Kawana, is increasingly incapacitated by severe anxiety attacks. During his panic attacks he "lost all connection with the people and things around him" (*1Q84* 17) as a traumatic ten-second scene from his second year of life envelops him against his will. By the end of the novel, however, he, and another character named Aomame, have made remarkable progress in de-toxifying their traumas and regaining a sense of mental and physical health.

Bibliotherapy

The *Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science* (2011) defines bibliotherapy as: "The use of books selected on the basis of content in a planned reading program designed to facilitate the recovery of patients suffering from mental illness or emotional disturbance..."

- **Dr. Jonathan Little** is Professor of English and Director of Film Studies at Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

GOD: FOR AND AGAINST

Sushil Gupta

God has been the staple obsession of man for eons. He has bequeathed a rich cultural heritage of architecture, sculpture, music and literature. He has also spawned a lot of passion, intolerance, violence and bloodshed among the diehards of different faiths. Ever since the rational quotient of man has taken a quantum leap he has started questioning the long-held beliefs around the myth of God. God has now been declared a delusion of mankind. He is excluded from all intellectual discourses. Only the people who make a living out of the God industry continue to hold His myth as of great relevance to the spiritual and psychological well-being of the naive followers.

'If there were no God, we shall have to invent one,' said Voltaire. Well, we have done just that. There is no God, yet we have invented not one but many. The roots lie in our hoary past when homo sapiens had started exploring their surroundings and encountered various pheno-mena that befuddled them. The alteration of day and night, the cyclic return of seasons, the abundance of trees bearing fruits, the rivers, ponds and seas spewing out fish in plenty, and later on the miracle of seeds growing into edible crops, all conspiring to make his life easy, comfortable and enjoyable.

Some agency behind them seemed to shower him with blessings. This gave rise to some super-being capable of performing these miraculous tasks. This was God, who was assisted in his multifarious tasks by his deputies the lesser gods. Man felt the need to keep them in good humor. This, in turn, gave rise to various rituals that he thought would keep him in their good books. Man is always beset with sundry problems regarding his health, wealth, and the welfare of his kin. In times of distress, when nothing else works, he invokes the Almighty to bail him out of the dire straits. And at times it does work. The moderns explain it away as placebo effect.

- **Sushil Gupta** is the author of *The Fourth Monkey*, a novel dwelling on the conflict between spirituality and sensuality.

POETRY AND THE SACRED

John Robert Lee

At a time when the sacramental, the presence of the Divine, is afforded little significant space in a secular world given over to the idols of atheism, materialism, commodification, class, race and religious divisions, political and economic power, this essay is an attempt to find and situate the sacred in my Caribbean island landscape and sea-scape with their cultural and historical frames. The Christian tradition is the aperture through which the focus is on metaphysical writers, artists and others of parallel spiritual traditions who hold the sacred as their certain compass.

Contributing to a symposium, *Faith that illuminates* (1935), T. S. Eliot, in a presentation titled "Religion and Literature" said: "...the whole of modern literature is corrupted by what I call Secularism, that it is simply unaware of, simply cannot understand the meaning of, the primacy of the supernatural over the natural life..." Proposing that "the 'greatness' of literature cannot be determined solely by literary standards," he suggested that "literary criticism should be completed by criticism from a definite ethical and theological standpoint."

Leon Wieseltier, reviewing Czeslaw Milosz's *The Witness of Poetry* in 1983 in *The New Republic*, quotes Milosz's question to the Harvard audience for his Charles Eliot Norton lectures, "Is non-eschatological poetry possible?" Those lectures were published in the book, and Wieseltier, in his review, noted "Milosz's insistence upon a dimension of the holy is its appositeness to the age." For the reviewer, Milosz's "solution is the resacralization of the world." And the author himself asks, in the first essay, "How did it happen that to be a poet of the twentieth century means to receive training in every kind of pessimism, sarcasm, bitterness, doubt?"

In what seems the domineering secularism of our time, one can find many important representative voices like Eliot's and Milosz's making the case for the sacred and sacramental in our modern literatures. While one can find writers with similar concerns in other cultures,

- **John Robert Lee** is a Saint Lucian writer and poet.

**EVOCATION AND EXPANSION:
HAROLD PINTER'S *THE HOMECOMING***

Shernavaz Buhariwala

My paper, "Evocation and Expansion," is an analysis of Harold Pinter's play *The Homecoming*. This has been done through the technique of comparison of sound effects, lingering echoes and sporadic consciousness. In so doing, I have found one character melting into another, as the play moves from its "comedy of manners" confines into a wider and wider relevance to suggest an ethic that is both contemporary and viable. While preserving the naughty surface, I have pain-stakingly explored the subterranean layers, discovered the nagging obstacles of a tortured inheritance, and employed the Freudian lens to reveal the rich tapestry of an apparently simplistic play.

Something said, something withheld – something repeated, something invented – something remembered, something connected and on it goes, as a plot is crafted and a puzzle presented.

A plot, E. M. Forster tells us, is made up of events arranged in their time sequence, with emphasis on causality. The cause to begin with is an objective entity which gets lodged in the victim's mind, gets muta-ted through sundry influences, is partaken of by interactors as each acquires a piece of the morphed product which is thereafter organized according to his own proclivities and predilections. Around the central pivot revolves a group of cohorts holding analogical mirrors, in which distorted images appear and reappear. These enigmatic surfaces, while illustrating the diversity of viewpoint, constitute a puzzle. Any attempt to establish coherence necessitates a walk along the trail to pick up the jig-saw pieces and put them together. The picture thus completed, can be prettily packaged with the letters QED boldly inscribed. Except that Art is not a Sphinx whose interest is over once her riddle is solved. If the Sphinx is to mature into a Muse, the journey cannot end with the constructed face, but should proceed to the soul. The super-structure is illusory, the foundation is all. The story, that is events in their time sequence with scant regard for causality, is only secondary.

- **Dr. Shernavaz Buhariwala** has been associated with the English Department of RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur. She is a frequent contributor to *Re-Markings*.

THE BLACK AND THE UNPLEASANT: UPAMANYU CHATTERJEE'S WEIGHT LOSS

Tanutrushna Panigrahi

The paper discusses Upamanyu Chatterjee's 2007 book *Weight Loss* in the light of Black Humour and the principles of the Absurd. The analysis includes how the text subscribes to the tenets of the revitalized black comedy of the post-postmodernist literary era and how the author contextualises the narrative in the Indian scene through the life journey of an aggressively libidinous Bhola whose sexual sins haunt his future and lead him to death. Borrowing from French surrealism as the foundational codes of black humour to critically reading the American black humourists, the paper attempts to canonize *Weight Loss* in the line of those of Ellison, Vonnegut, Barth and Swift.

The objective of this study is to read *Weight Loss* by Upamanyu Chatterjee in the light of black humour as a literary ideology and discuss its aesthetic value as a commentary on the postmodernist surrealistic laughter. *Weight Loss* participates in the tradition of the modern comic novel, particularly the black comedy, in two significant ways. One, it depicts the protagonist's internal conflicts with the outer world and his defense of the inner self against the physical, psychological and social constraints of the latter. Secondly, it is a search for possibilities of comic renewal of life through annihilation, death and sinister laughter and not through reconciliation and reintegration to the society as a benign comedy. The book, like most other postmodernist novels of the anti-fiction mode, disturbs the reader with its juxtaposition of the morbid with the comical as would the books by Vonnegut, Barth, or even Jonathan Swift, whom Breton included in his anthology to be one of the earliest black humourists, do.

- **Dr. Tanutrushna Panigrahi** teaches in the International Institute of Information Technology, Bhubaneswar. As a doctoral Fulbright Fellowship grantee she studied the unpublished work of John Cheever in the special collection libraries: Houghton in Harvard and Goldfarb in Brandeis University, Massachusetts, USA.

REPRESENTATION OF INDIAN MUSLIM WOMEN IN INDIAN ENGLISH FICTION AND NON-FICTION

Sahar Rahman

This paper studies the representation of Indian Muslim Women in selected works of fiction and non-fiction in English written by Indian writers. It is based on two novels – Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* and Shama Futehally's *Tara Lane*; and a literary nonfiction *Unveiling India* by Anees Jung. These representations map the lives of Muslim women in a transitional society and portray the emergence of women who are intelligent, responsive and eager to change.

When we think of Muslim women in India, the image that conjures up before our eyes is of veiled women who are uneducated, oppressed, powerless, voiceless and marginalised. This is the typical image of Muslim women who are invariably imagined and portrayed as silent victims caged within the ghettos they inhabit. The representation of Muslim women in Indian literary history is inadequate. These women remain largely marginalised in the mainstream Indian English literature and even in the works of Muslim male writers. It is only the women writers who show a central concern with Muslim women.

According to Pablo Picasso, art is a lie that tells us the truth. In an attempt to study the representation of Muslim women in India, this paper deals with two novels – Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961) and Shama Futehally's *Tara Lane* (1993); and a literary nonfiction *Unveiling India* (1987) by Anees Jung. Interestingly the fictional works place the imaginary characters into the real historical periods and events while the non-fiction provides glimpses into the real life of ordinary Indian women and reflection on the author's own life. Attia Hosain, Shama Futehally and Anees Jung belonged to elite Muslim families and acquired modern Western education and exposure.

- **Dr Sahar Rahman** is Associate Professor in the Department of English at Patna Women's College, Patna University.

THE BENGAL PARTITION IN LITERATURE

Ajit Kumar Mukherjee & Pranamita Pati

The paper shall make an attempt to find out the cause of the absence of great work of art on Bengal partition theme. Further, what is available and how far they have been able to narrate the sufferings of the destitute will be a point of discussion in the paper. The paper will deal with two Bengali novels: Bimal Mitra's *Ekak Dasak Shatak* and Joytirmayee Devi's *The River Churning (Epar Ganga, Opar Ganga)* and a film *Meghe Dhaka Tara*. Of course, the paper will also discuss Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason, The Shadow Lines* and *The Hungry Tide*.

The greatest and the most poignant event in the post-Independence Indian history is the partition of India in both Punjab and Bengal. It is a political maneuver engineered by politicians to gain the booty of Independence. Of course, the main brain behind it is the famous Nation of shopkeepers, British Government whose only religion is to divide and rule. Sorry to say, Gandhi is made a scapegoat. The dream of one India, one nation is turned to dust by the political pundits of our country. Who suffered? The innocent people of the Punjab and Bengal who had to go through untold sufferings and terrible traumatic experiences. Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins called it, "The most complex divorce in history" (*Freedom at Midnight* 261).

Any social or political upheaval is bound to affect the writers who are the unacknowledged legislators of that time. There has been much writing on the Punjab partition, both in book form and film, TV serial. A novel like Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* is remarkable. Even Bhishm Sahani's *Tamas* and the mega serial "Buniyad" vividly narrate the poignant sufferings of the Punjabi refugees. *Train to Pakistan* is a highly emotional and evocative novel.

Bengal partition is different from the Punjab partition. Bengal partition, in fact, started from 1906 and no one knows when it will end. Sri Aurobindo's *Bande Mataram* series refers to Bengal Partition from 1906 onwards. It remains a bull in a Chinashop till the formation of Bangladesh.

- **Dr. Ajit Kumar Mukherjee**, former Director, KIIT School of Languages, Bhubaneswar (Odisha).
- **Dr. Pranamita Pati** is Assistant Professor of English, Janata College, Satmile, Odisha.

DEEPLY ENTRENCHED PATRIARCHY IN THE FILM *THE GREAT INDIAN KITCHEN: AN ANALYSIS*

Mrudula Lakkaraju

The Great Indian Kitchen is a movie that rips open the sugar-coated patriarchy and exposes the visceral incorrigible slimy underbelly of patriarchy. The paper is an attempt to analyse and list the wide range of patriarchal concepts that come into play with marriages. Analysing the movie is an attempt to bring into discussion and hence for correction the flawed concept of marriages and giving voice to a corrigendum this paper attempts to offer. Using the Cultural, Psychological, Social, Political and Economic angles, this paper also attempts to analyse the vice like grip of patriarchy and how the movie The Great Indian Kitchen exposes its dark, grisly underbelly hidden beneath all the grand gestures made by 'well established' and 'highly reputable' families.

Directed and written by Jeo Baby, this movie in Malayalam stars Nimisha Sajayan, Suraj Venjaramoodu. The movie was originally distributed by an OTT platform Neestream. It was released on 15 January 2021 in India.

Introduction

India is a traditional country; here in any religion, the way of life in general is rooted in traditions that have not changed over centuries. Our lives resemble a kind of an anachronism. On one hand we have a whole generation settled in various countries and the back end of the families steeped in traditions as if anchoring this errant Diaspora. No matter where you are, there is this immense pressure to carry on the mantle of tradition. Religion and tradition are not necessarily linked to Patriarchy, they have been hijacked by it and this power equation continues to manifest in the most traditional institutions like home and marriage.

- **Dr. Mrudula Lakkaraju** is Associate Professor in the Department of English at Osmania University, Hyderabad.

IN SEARCH OF THE TRULY HUMAN W. H. AUDEN'S "LAW LIKE LOVE"

Navleen Multani

W. H. Auden's poem "Law Like Love" focuses on the sublime emotion of love. He believes that love can resolve dilemma of individuals and society. Love, according to Auden, is the basis for an ethical society. Auden associates with ideology of collective man, shifts from first person plural to other points of view, for reasserting plurality within the group to speak for others in the community. He addresses the silence in legal speech and justice to formulate meaning to understand the nature of laws. This paper examines how Auden expands upon the similarity between law and love to point out that both cannot be defined in absolute terms. Just as love is a longing for immortality of goodness and beauty, law must also long for wisdom goodness and truth for the benefit of humanity.

Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-73) was a British-American poet, playwright and critic of the 20th century. He published his first book, *Poems*, in 1930. He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1948 for *The Age of Anxiety*. His father, a prominent physician with knowledge of mythology and folklore, and his mother, a strict Anglican, had a great influence on Auden's poetry. Auden was a member of a group of writers called the "Oxford Group" or the "Auden Generation." Stephen Spender, Cecil Day Lewis and Louis MacNeice were members of this group. The Group endorsed Marxist and anti-Fascist doctrine and engaged with social, political and economic concerns in their writings. Auden moved to US in 1939 and became an American citizen in 1946 (Spears).

Auden's compositions are terse, rely on images and colloquial language to convey his political and psychological concerns. Frederick Buell, in *W.H Auden as a Social Poet*, identifies the roots of Auden's terse style in the codified language used by the poet while conversing with his school friends.

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**THE MARABAR CAVES AND TEMPLE IN
A PASSAGE TO INDIA:
A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST PARADIGM
*Achal Sinha***

Widely acknowledged as one of the greatest classics of the 20th century, E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* is also accepted as his profoundest effort in his treatment of the political and spiritual themes. It was his fullest and sincerest effort to deal with a new kind of experience to bring together races, creeds and faiths. An attempt has been made in this paper to re-visit and re-interpret some of the maxims which have been presented to readers. Forster's tryst with India is also seen as a continuation of an earlier quest to look for a more whole-some spiritual experience in an otherwise incomprehensible but vast and profound civilisation.

Once a work is released into the public territory, it becomes the property of the reader, and hence can be interpreted from multiple perspectives. It is up to the reader to choose his interpretation: there cannot be any authorial control. The design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art [Wimsatt and Beardsley 468]. Umberto Eco spoke of written texts as being machines to generate interpretations. Readers from different cultural contexts and personal backgrounds engage with texts in different internal dialogues to reveal multiple meanings. The author thus is relegated to being a controlling device as readers vie for space to interpret and explain. It should not, however, be interpreted as an attempt to undermine the positions of literary criticism or theory and give all the power to the reader, but credence must be given to the reader who may receive the text differently because her/his codes of interpretation differ from those of the author. Eco [35-36] believes that this indeterminacy allows the reader to explain the work in her/his terms and offer a new explanation which tends to complete the work.

The British literary consciousness during imperialism is best exemplified by the novels of the Raj, which inevitably enunciate the psychic dissemination of colonial prejudices and stereotypes.

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CHUGHTAI, MANTO AND THEIR SENSE OF TIME

Richa

There has always been a debate on the purpose of literature. Some believe it to be a medium of delight whereas others take it to be a medium of instruction. Progressive writers believed in contributing to the social consciousness through their committed writings. The paper attempts to compare two progressive writers namely Ismat Chughtai and Saadat Hasan Manto and engage in a close reading of their perception of the historical time they belonged to. It analyses their social commitment focusing on the stories based on the theme of sexuality and war.

When we speak of Ismat Chughtai (1915-1991) and Saadat Hasan Manto (1912-1955), we are looking at an era falling between the pre-independence period via struggles and movements to independence and partition. Chughtai was active till 1991 but Manto passed away early after madness and ill health in 1955. During the pre-independence movement and partition both the writers were actively playing their roles of progressive writers. Progressive Writers Association was dedicated to purposeful writing with an attempt to bring about a change in society. It was like activism through writing. About the great event of independence, Chughtai believed that, "15th August came and went, leaving behind embarrassed, whimpering and teary-eyed masses. The hearts that had been singing were hushed, the dancing feet were stilled. Those who did continue to dance had no idea what beat or melody they were dancing to. Disappointed hearts began to understand. Suddenly it became clear that they had been handled a tinned moon with plating so brittle that it didn't last for more than two days." (Chughtai 5)

Belonging to the same group, Chughtai and Manto were writers of different convictions. We look at two individuals with their own vision and perspectives that is not borrowed from any other convention or writer or moral code, both of them reflect on life with a purpose and had read many writers including Russian, French and English and what they knew best was how to weave life into stories that could appeal to people. Vintage, 2012, pp. 51-54.

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**HISTORIOGRAPHICAL AND CULTURAL
MOTIFS IN *THE HUNGRY TIDE* IN THE LIGHT
OF FOUCAULT'S CONCEPT OF HETEROTOPIA**

Prantik Banerjee & Tuhina Bose

The aim of this paper is to read Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* in conjunction with Foucault's Heterotopian theory with particular focus on exploring the historiographical and cultural motifs in the text. Engaging Foucault's concept of emplacement, the paper explores the possibility of the narrative to juxtapose itself within the realm of social and cultural binaries. This study addresses the need of those voices to be heard that were either drowned in the glorification of the western thought or were suppressed as being marginal. The paper takes its inspiration from Foucault's essay *Of Other Spaces* to place these narrative devices within the heterotopian context.

The purpose of this paper is to examine Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* through the Foucauldian concept of Heterotopia, to suggest how the floating biome of the Sunderbans is an 'archaeology' of local knowledge, customs, and rituals that bear the imprint of diverse cultures and histories. Ghosh's choice of the fluid, shifting archipelago of islands and its inhabitants of natives, migrants, refugees and travellers presents a rich multicultural history of colonialism, nationalism and globalism. The paper will attempt to demonstrate that the past and present lives of the Sunderbans are intermeshed with the ebb and flow of the tides that shape the physical contours of the place. The ever-mutating topography of the place, one where the sea and the river continually draw and redraw the borders of the land, holds in tension both the utopian and the dystopian possibilities of Foucault's heterotopia. By applying Foucault's ideas explicated in his essay *Of Other Spaces*, the analysis will uncover the recurrent use of certain historiographical and cultural motifs as a narrative device.

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CLAIMING FEMALE SEXUALITY: A STUDY OF SELECT INDIAN WOMEN AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Nibedita Das

She, 'the other', has been othered from her own self and coerced to surrender her individuality through the naturalization of patriarchal constructionism. Caged within the socio-cultural and religio-ethical bars, women succumb to this imposed silence. The normalization of biased social constraints, institutionalization of patriarchy and crafty execution of power have confined them to a motivated forgetting of self, body and sexuality. This paper is an attempt to focus on three Indian Women Autobiographers – Kamala Das, A. Revathi and Nalini Jameela – who broke the long-imposed silence and challenged the gender stereotypes. These intrepid women autobiographers decolo-nized their individual self by claiming their right over their bodies and sexuality.

*Women will strive in silence until new stories are created
which confer on them the power of naming themselves.*

– Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar

India Women write autobiographies to tell their own stories and express diverse experience by transgressing from the 'object' to the 'subject'. "There will be narratives of female lives only when women no longer live their lives isolated in the houses and the stories of men." (Heilbrun 47) Writing autobiographies by women is an attempt to write themselves into history, to fill the blank page, to voice the unspoken female experience and to allow the female reader to partake of the emotional satisfaction of feeling the strength and weakness of women's lives. The journey from silence to speech is not an easy one, especially in the patriarchal setup.

The patriarchal system is designed to subordinate female place in the society, taking away her identity, space, right, freedom, body and sexuality. The wide imposition and the normalization of this system in day-to-day life makes this concrete and acceptable without introspection. In this context, Uma Chakravarti rightly avers...

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THE INDIAN PROGRESSIVE WRITING INITIATIVE: ITS EUROPEAN (NON-BOLSHEVIK) FACE

R. P. Singh

When one looks closely into the history of the birth and life of the progressive writing movement in Indian vernaculars (particularly in Urdu and Hindi), one sees two distinct 'temperamental' phases – the European and the Indian. The movement took its birth in England as a result of the meeting of minds and ideas about the relationship between life and literature among a small group of English-educated and Marxism-influenced young Indian intellectuals. The distinctness of the short European span from the long Indian phase lies in the former being open-minded and the latter being increasingly marked by a 'bureaucratic' approach to literature as an organ of a political programme.

The publication by the Penguin Books in 2014 of the 'surprisingly first' English translation (as it came after over eight decades of the original) of *Angaaray* (literally, 'burning coals'), the slim 1932 volume of ten Urdu prose fictional works by Sajjad Zaheer, Ahmed Ali, Rashid Jahan and Mamud-uz-Zafar (later (in)famously known as the *Angaaray* Collective will inevitably lead, in the Anglo-phone world, to a renewed interest and assessments regarding the various aspects of the Socialist Realism literary movement which this collection of nine short stories and one one-act play in Urdu started and spawned in the various Indian vernacular languages, Urdu being the prime one. One of these very important aspects are the set of out-shore influences which worked as motivating agents. The other, closely related with it, is the charge of 'the orthodoxy of belief in changing the image of (Indian) humanity at second-hand through (Soviet) Russian communist doctrine and ideas' (Ali 143). This article will attempt to map those influences with the argument that the movement, in its short European life-span, was radically different from its long Indian phase.

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THE GHAZAL TRADITION AND AGHA SHAHID ALI

Akshada Shrotryia

The ghazal form is perhaps one of the oldest forms of poetry to have survived the ravages of time. Appealing in its aspect and rhyme, the ghazal also remains popular in today's literary world. Agha Shahid Ali, an Indo-American poet manifests this further in his writing. This article attempts to trace the ghazal tradition and study Agha Shahid Ali's ghazals.

The Ghazal finds its origin in the ancient texts written in Arabic. The oldest piece of work in Arabic literature is the 'Mu'allaqat' or better known as the 'Seven Odes' or 'Golden Odes' in English. These odes are a collection of 7 long poems or *daastaans* that narrate different tales. Initially, they were narrated by warriors who told people of their conquests. These conquests consisted of acquiring land as well as women. The men sang of their love and the desire of (and for) sex. Exaggeration, boasting, and amorous excessiveness define these poems.

These tales soon started to take a form and gradually, a poet emerged. During the pre-Islamic times, the poet held immense repute. So much so that society celebrated the existence of one in their midst (Arberry 14). It is said, in fact, that these odes "furnish sufficient examples of the poet in a political role...the ancient Arab bard was the public relations officer of his tribe" (Arberry 15). It was believed that the poet would immortalise their tribe.

He would sing these tales in public as the audience indulged in Dionysian revelry. It emerged, therefore, as a lyrical form of poetry. In other words, it was essentially meant to be sung and performed in front of an audience. They enjoyed hearing the heroic tales of men, their love affairs, and the tragic separation between them and their beloved. Soon, a structure was adopted as these tales travelled from Arabia to Persia. In 13th century, it would reach Hindustan.

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE: WORDS AND WORLDS

Nibir K. Ghosh

*with Khushi Kaul, Deepali, Aviral Pathak,
Jaiveer Singh, Shreya Jain & Charvi*

The Symposium on “Language, Law and Literature: Exploring Words and Worlds” organized by the Department of English, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law Punjab, Patiala in association with Re-Markings on September 25, 2021 turned out to be an unforgettable experiment in more ways than one could expect. After I received an invitation from Dr. Navleen Multani to speak on “Why Literature Matters in the Study and Practice of Law,” a flood of ideas began simmering in my mind.

In the context of law and justice, I was reminded of the lines that the villainous King Claudius utters in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*: “in the corrupted currents of this world/ Offense’s gilded hand may shove by justice,/ And oft ’tis seen the wicked prize itself/ Buys out the law.” This startling resonance of a statement made by the Bard more than four centuries ago, set me pondering over the efficacy of law in contemporary parlance where the power of “offense’s gilded hand” continues to tilt the scales held by the blindfolded deity of justice giving an impression of ‘Andha Kanoon.’ I also thought of the statement made by Mahatma Gandhi about the lawyer’s profession being a ‘liar’s profession.’ I asked myself, why would these youngsters, who were preparing themselves for a lucrative career in Law, be interested in listening to an online talk on the possible influence of ‘abstract’ ideas on the ‘concrete’ materialistic realities of life? However, undeterred by the anxiety of such influences, I decided to take the cue from one of W. H. Auden’s characteristic utterances: “You cannot tell people what to do. You can only tell them parables. And that is what art really is, particular stories of particular people and experiences, from which each according to his immediate and peculiar needs may draw his own conclusions.”

I began with the narrative of Frederick Douglass, the Negro slave who, inspired by the conversation between a Slave Owner and a Slave in *The Columbian Orator*, became one of America’s greatest abolitionists. The fact that a slave boy of eight years polished the shoes of the whites for a month to be able to buy *The Columbian Orator* speaks for his grit and determination to break free from the fetters of slavery through the power of words. He states in his autobiography: “From my earliest recollection,

I date the entertainment of a deep conviction that slavery would not always be able to hold me within its foul embrace.”

As an instance of the transformative potential of literature, I shared excerpts from the Hindi short story entitled *Haar Ki Jeet* by Acharya Sudarshan. How the words uttered by Baba Bharti, at a moment when the dacoit Khadak Singh deprived him of his beloved horse, Sultan, effected a change of heart in the latter is nothing short of inspirational.

What seemed to me to be most relevant for the students of Law was the tale of the internationally eminent jurist Nani Palkhivala, whom C. Raja Gopalachari, India's first Governor General, referred to as 'God's gift to India.' Nani Palkhivala began as a student of English Literature and wanted to be an English teacher. But destiny had marked him out for carving his name on the 'sands of time' through a career in Law. Right from his childhood he had been a voracious reader eager to devour with passion any great masterpiece that came his way, be it from literature, philosophy, jurisprudence, biography, autobiography etc. He has acknowledged that what remained forever etched in his memory were the following lines of Wordsworth:

that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. (Tintern Abbey)

The impact of these words on Palkhivala may be gauged by one single statement that he made in the Keshavananda Bharati case that brought him instant renown: "The survival of our democracy and the unity and integrity of the nation depend upon the realisation that constitutional morality is no less essential than constitutional legality. Dharma (righteousness; a sense of public duty or virtue) lives in the hearts of public men; when it dies there, no Constitution, no law, no amendment, can save it."

Adding some of my own experiences to show how literature mattered to me in shaping my life and career as a teacher, scholar, writer, critic, editor and a perpetual learner, I concluded my talk with Bob Dylan's celebrated song: 'Blowing in the Wind' that motivates one to give up complacency, inertia and indifference and be moved to action on hearing the painful cry of humanity.

Since the virtual mode had screened off the view and voice of the participants, I had no way of knowing how many of them I had put to sleep in the hour-long talk. I did draw some consolation and contentment from the nice words of appreciation coming from the organizing team.

However, after the event, when Dr. Navleen sent me the spontaneous responses she received from her participating students, I couldn't help feeling both flattered and humbled. Some of the observations made by students, whose names I am not aware of, are given below.

1. This session was so good and it gave me such a great insight for law and literature's dependence on each other that I remained glued to the screen for much of 4 hours even in virtual mode.

2. Thank you for a great course. Great presentation style with lots of opportunities to ask questions and talk about real life examples which all made for a really enjoyable and informative course.

3. Thanks so much for such a great session. So much of your presentation was just what I needed to boost my change in mindset and working practices. I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciated your structured approach to such a wide topic with some fantastic takeaways which I can put into practice.

4. The session made me aware of the profound depths of the realms of one's conscience; conscience that guides a man to glory and untold fortunes or to the infernos and darkest of abysses according to what a man thinks, wishes and acts.

These impressions brought home to me what I had always believed in about the tremendous potential of young minds to take in whatever they consider of value to them. In spite of numerous distractions to keep them 'fruitfully' engaged, if they could remain alert and glued to their computer screen for hours and listen as well as note with precision what they heard, and consequently, give lucid expression to what they truly felt about the relationship between literature and life, it is ample evidence of their willingness to believe that change always comes from within oneself.

On account of our own closed mindsets toward the younger generation, we are usually reluctant to give them any credit for initiative or innovation in giving form and shape to their ideals of life and living. As educationists we often talk about 'holistic education' and 'thinking out of the box' kind of cliches but never create the opportunity for a young mind to discover what lies deeply embedded within his/her own self. We say we intend to encourage them to think 'out of the box' but we do not hesitate to make them remain submerged in and surrounded by piles and piles of boxes, filled with garbage and bookish nonsense, that leaves them with hardly any space for individual growth and development.

The emphasis of the participating students on “opportunities to ask questions and talk about real life examples” and their keenness to explore “the profound depths of the realms of one’s conscience” makes it evident that they are more serious about their role as responsible citizens than most self-proclaimed guardians of society. It is no ordinary feat that over a hundred students submitted short essays on “Words and Worlds” in response to the announcement made by Re-Markings (co-sponsor to the event) to publish the best entries in the current issue of the journal.

Arranged in order of merit in descending order, the accompanying short essays display a wide range of views that reflect the enthusiasm of the participants in providing a reassuring spark of hope to create a world mirroring their own dreams and aspirations. If as practitioners of Law, they can keep alive their intellectual curiosity and make books and wisdom of the ages their lifetime companions, I am optimistic that, with their awakened minds, they would leave no stone unturned in ensuring that ‘offense’s gilded hands’ can no longer make a mockery of the institutions of justice and fair play. Another aspect that these essays highlight is the skill and ability of these youngsters to make a name for themselves as in the domain of creative writing. I wish them all success in their experiments with words to create a world of their choice.

WORDS AND WORLDS

Khushi Kaul

“How can law and literature be interrelated?” This is a question that perplexed me before I attended the deeply engaging Symposium “Language, Law and Literature: Exploring Words and Worlds” organised by the department of English, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab on September 25, 2021. Eminent speakers, Prof. Prasannanshu and Prof. Nibir K. Ghosh enlightened the attendees. Any misconception or doubt that I had in my mind about the relation between law, language, and literature got clarified after this informative seminar. Law, language and literature are almost inseparable. Language and literature are tools for the interpretation and practice of law. Law is a set of rules which is expressed and communicated through languages. One who has a command over language has an equal command over law. Laws can be interpreted by a competent lawyer in his client’s favour if he has good mastery over the language. It has been observed that great lawyers are often brilliant orators. For example, Cicero, who was a lawyer in the Roman era, was also considered one of the greatest orators of his time,

for his discourses on politics and society. Literature, more often than not, conveys the essence of law, or lack of it, through many stories it holds in its repository.

A narrative about injustice in society often creates an equal impact in the minds of scholars and practitioners of law. During the freedom movement, many popular and great authors expressed the oppression and suffering of the enslaved nation through their literary works. These powerful and impactful writings were considered to be the voice of the people and represented their emotions. Famous works of Munshi Premchand, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, made the stakeholders of the Justice System conscious of the condition of the masses and had an impact on the reforms adopted to deliver relief and justice to the people. In my opinion, the greatest piece of literature pertaining to law is the Constitution of India, drafted by the Constituent Assembly headed by Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as its Chairman. The Constitution of India is a marvellous piece of literary art, composed with great precision and thought. I firmly believe that the Constitution of India should not only be regarded as a statutory document that empowers the State and the citizens by laying down the framework of fundamental principles, rights, and duties, but also be an integral part of the phenomenal literature of modern India. The interdisciplinary connection that binds people and society in a symbiotic relationship is expressed through words by law and literature.

Deepali

Words play a very important role in our life. They serve as a means for us to communicate and express ourselves. Words have a great effect on human mind. A single phrase can spark friendship, whereas a string of words can spark enmity. Words have the power of changing the world. This power resides in everyone but only a few know the exact use of it. The great reformers of the world such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Raja Ram Mohan Roy have all used the power of words to reform the society. The words of Mahatma Gandhi helped him in invoking the people of India against the Britishers. Nelson Mandela invoked the people of South Africa to fight for their freedom through his words. Hitler's declaration that Germans were the most outstanding race enabled him to influence the people of Germany and take the world by storm. Words make the world go round. Words are the only constant thing that connects men and women from different time period and different nations. Words, in many ways, give meaning to our lives. We must learn to enchant other souls with the beauty of our words, allowing

them to sustain and transform us in the process. We make a difference in the world with our words.

Aviral Pathak

Word can be defined as a tiny cluster of letters, fundamental elements of a language, arranged in a meaningful sequence. Sequence plays a vital role in deciding the meaning. Same set of letters can have diametrically opposite meaning depending on the sequence of arrangement. Letters a, a, n, s, t forms 'Santa' and 'Satan', same with 'united' and 'untied'. One's command on language depends on one's grasp on words, tools of language. The sharper the tools, the firmer the grasp. One must be well-versed with words to create a magic. Words, the magical small symbols, transfer invaluable knowledge and wisdom. Words have been utilised by prudent people to plant the seeds of innovation. Contrastingly, dictators and unworthy leaders misuse their mastery of words to manipulate mankind. A word can change the world, for better or for worse. Words like love and democracy have brought drastically positive changes in the world, though it might be a daydream for a few. On the opposite end of the spectrum, association with words like 'black' or 'terrorist' is no less than a nightmare. Words are the most potent force available to humanity. We may either deploy the positive power vested in words like 'sublime love' or utilize words in negative manner like 'violence'. Words have potential and power to heal, humble, hypnotize, humiliate, hinder and hurt.

Words are so powerful that defining their power in words is impossible. Is this a limitation of the power of words?

Jaiveer Singh

The pages of my notepad with recommendations of various literary works scribbled on them flip and flutter with the gentle breeze. It appears like a treasure-chest opening layer by layer. Though it took me a few minutes to compile but would require my entire legal career to critically comprehend the astute observations on language and literature. All thanks to the virtual Symposium organised by Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab on 25th September, 2021.

Each one of the dignitaries present illumined significant aspects of intersections between law and literature. Prof. G. S. Bajpai, Vice-Chancellor, RGNUL, urged the students to read the judgements of Lord Denning, Krishna Iyer and Oliver Wendell Holmes which have literary overtones. Writings of Indian wordsmiths such as Bankim Chandra

Chattopadhyay, P. L. Deshpande and Shrilal Shukla address issues of power, authority and the rule of law. He referred to Munshi Premchand as a 'world-class criminologist and legal researcher. Dr. Prasannashu termed words as *Shabd Brahma* (Universe with sound). A legal practitioner must walk the path that leads from *Ekantavada* (One sidedness) to *Anekantavada* (Many sidedness). Apart from that, *Vidya Dadati Vinayam* (Knowledge gives us humility) should be his/her mantra. According to him, a flautist can teach us how to present arguments as if they were pure tones and soothing notes, adapting the fingers on the flute to the acoustics of the courtroom. Ms. Chanima Wijebandara focussed on empathic and ethical elements that may be learned through literature. Prof. Nibir K. Ghosh spoke on the values that are entrenched in literature by recounting *Haar Ki Jeet* by Sudarshan revolving around hermit Baba Bharati, his horse Sultan and the dacoit Khadak Singh. Subsequently, he traced the path of Indian jurist Nani Palkhivala from an avid reader since childhood to the epithet of 'God's Gift to India'. We must follow our Atma (Soul), our innate moral compass to be more like transformed Khadak Singh who returned Sultan rather than departing as a most dangerous animal. Dr. Navleen Multani and Dr. Tanya Mander shared their own unique impressions. As a fitting finale to the event Prof. Ghosh shared the song 'Blowing in the Wind' by Bob Dylan (the Literature Nobel Laureate) that pulled at everyone's heartstrings.

The symposium turned out to be a rare experience as it brought home to me a hitherto unknown world of exemplary ideas to comprehend the complex world of justice and law.

Shreya Jain

Literature becomes woven into the fabric of law and is aimed at people's welfare. While a piece of literature does not have legal authority, it plays a paramount role by way of the precedential value of the opinion in which it appears. Works of literature have a societal context and delve deep into the limitless human experience. Vulnerable communities across the world have voiced their concerns by invoking popular imagination through literature and have significantly endeavoured to take their struggle to the legal domain. For instance, the judgment of Budhadev Karmaskar v. State of West Bengal mentioned the stories of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyaya to uphold the inherent right to life of sex workers in India.

Political Thinkers such as Locke and Thomas Jefferson enunciated that law protects the inalienable natural rights of human beings and conforms

to moral standards. Literature aids the lawmakers to determine morality in law. Literary works in a narrative form reiterate the wrong use of law that leads to gross injustice. Literary works evoke human emotions, connect us to the reality of the society and make us realize the true meaning of substantive justice. Freedom as an ideal has customarily been treated with reverence, forming an integral part of law in democracies but Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* states that true law leads to freedom. Portia's Speech in *The Merchant of Venice* brought in the intrinsic value of mercy in law. *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini expose the brutal, repressive laws introduced by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* explores prejudices, violence and hypocrisy. Literary texts emphasize that there are a set of higher moral principles against which law is to be judged and laws which impede human rights should be challenged by the people. In contemporary times, protests against unfair laws and regimes find traces of literature in them. The 'three finger' salute used by protesters in Thailand and Myanmar is inspired by the 'Hunger Games Salute'. Literature has the potential to transform social movements and as law is a testimony to the will of the people, the intersection of law and literature has immense value. Literature can also enrich the legal narrative as an inductive representation of people's thought process subtly encapsulated in literary works. Law in its bare form has to be put to wide interpretation; literature's deep reflections can be extremely fruitful. A literary bent helps lawyers argue proficiently and judges articulate better. An advocate is the officer of the law and literature inspires him/her to uphold the flag of justice. Hence, we can conclude that law and literature are inexplicably intertwined and share a connection which is beneficial for the entire humanity.

Charvi

Far out in the uncharted backwaters of the unfashionable end of the western spiral arm of the galaxy lies a small unregarded 'Word World'. Alphabets are born with a gift of laughter and a sense that there were two worlds in which they have to live. Alphabets, the inhabitants of the 'Word World', come together to form relationships that are known as words. All words have their essence and each alphabet plays a particular role in every relationship. Like humans, the alphabet performs different roles in different relationships. These relationships/words belong to a clan i.e., language. Every clan is ruled by its distinct law, grammar. Some roles are more important than others. Despite their presence, a

few are ignored. Like 'h' in honesty goes unrecognised. There does exist a hierarchy of relationships. A few words are more emphatic than others. Others have a positive connotation while many have a negative connotation. All in 'Word World' know "You get meaning in the next world. In this world, you have the words." It is the human world that recognises words. Human world in itself is a word that understands the essence of each word. 'Word World' is a foreign country but it is very much like the 'Human World'. Each word has many meanings. Like human beings, the words of this world are transient. They are assigned a meaning that narrows or broadens with changing times.

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LANGUAGE, LAW AND LITERATURE SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS

Navleen Multani

Online symposium on "Language, Law and Literature: Exploring Words and Worlds" was organized by the department of English, RGNUL Punjab in association with Re-Markings, Biannual Refereed International Journal of English Letters. Prof. Nibir K. Ghosh, Chief Editor Re-Markings and Prof. Prasannanshu, Director Centre for Linguistic Justice and Endangered Languages, NLU Delhi deliberated on the interdisciplinary aspects of law and literature. Prof. G. S. Bajpai, Vice-Chancellor RGNUL, reflected on relationship between law and literature in his inaugural address. He accentuated the role of literary works in elevating cognitive skills and unravelling social mores of the world. Alluding to the writings of Justice A. P. Shah, Justice Krishna Iyer, Franz Kafka, Oscar Wilde and Charles Dickens, Prof. Bajpai focussed on the connection between law and literature. Ms. Chanima Wijebandara, Judicial Officer, Sri Lanka and Guest of Honour, talked about the humane, philosophical and ennobling effect of literature. Prof. Ghosh eulogised the academic initiative of RGNUL which underlined the importance of literature for students of law.

The inaugural session was followed by Prof. Prasannanshu's discourse on importance of law, language and literature in legal education. While speaking on the topic "Law, Language and Literature in the Context of Legal Education and Profession," he referred to the well-structured oration of Cicero and the importance of good communication skills in the legal profession. Prof. Nibir Ghosh highlighted the epistemological benefits of reading literature. "Narratives," he said, "have the power to change perspectives." He observed, "Books are the life-long companions of men." Prof. Ghosh spoke on the topic, "Why Literature Matters in the Study and Practice of Law?" "Parables and experiences of great men illuminate minds and leave an indelible imprint on the readers," he remarked. Citing the works of W. H. Auden, Mahatma Gandhi, Frederick Douglass, August Wilson, William Wordsworth and Nani Palkhivala, Prof. Ghosh observed that reading literature emancipated minds. He encouraged the participants to read literary works and invited paragraphs/opinions on the topic "Words and Worlds." He announced that the best five perspectives would be published in Re-Markings.

Dr. Navleen Multani, Assistant Professor of English and PRO RGNUL Punjab, talked about the significance of artistic works and indispensable role of language in comprehending the substance of law. While dwelling on the theme of the symposium, she said, "Words in literary works explore customs, authority, power, paradoxes of equity and legitimacy to provide understanding of morality, law and justice." Quoting Jacques Derrida, she emphasized the power of words. Dr. Tanya Mander, Assistant Professor of English, spoke about the importance of language and relevance of examining the intersection of law and literature. After the technical sessions, the ensuing interaction navigated the discussion on role of forensic linguistics in court proceedings to court language and law in literature. The discussion session was moderated by Namah Bose, Pranit Singh and Raghav Arora. 167 participants, including faculty and students, attended the symposium. Dr. Navleen Multani extended the vote of thanks.



POETRY

Sagar Mal Gupta

GOODBYE BY A CORONA PATIENT

Every member of the household was fear stricken
hearing the siren of the ambulance.
It stopped in front of their house.
Then the medical team got out of
the ambulance to let them know that
their father was corona positive.

He had no travel history
He observed all the rules of social distancing
He used masks and cleaned himself with soap and water
He ate wholesome food and did yoga and meditation.

A flood of tears welled up in his wife's eyes
She started weeping bitterly
Fifty years married life
Many ups and downs faced together
They drank tea together
They had lunch and dinner together
Now how will she live without him
She started weeping loudly
and went into a state of coma.

He wanted to hug his daughter
He wanted to embrace his son
He wanted to cuddle the little ones
But alas! not allowed.

Many a time he and his wife
thought of making a will
but went on postponing it.
Many a time they thought of
buying a house of their own
but went on postponing it.
The marriage of his daughter was also pending
but he found no suitable match.

All the family members were weeping bitterly
He asked them to say 'Good Bye'
but no words came through their mouths
They felt choked and stifled.
The medical team tried to
boost their morale by saying
'He will be all right. Don't worry.
We shall cure him.'
But he and the family members
knew that it was an empty solace.
When he was being transferred to the ambulance,
everyone was reminded of that ghost story
in which one member of the family
was to go to the giant every night, but
never to return.

BOTTLE POEMS

Life can brave those moments of
exigencies blithely
that occur when life stands
on its head like round bottles
but that spiked moment of
topsy-turvydom is very risky
because the spiked bottle
has very little round space.

An empty eye tear box
kept on two bottles
is blown away by the wind.
Don't be light in weight,
opinion, outlook, beliefs
in decisions, in thinking and execution.

If the foundation is strong,
the structure will be strong.
Be highly imaginative in dreams,
be firm in setting up a goal,

and be bold in thought and action.

THE SAD SILENCE OF THE MONUMENTS OF THE WORLD

Eiffel Tower is waiting
curiously for spectators
without them it feels forlorn and sad.

The Trafalgar Square in London
misses the bustling crowd of demonstrations

The Victory Column in Berlin
with its silent viewing platform
invites viewers unsuccessfully
to view the whole city.

Times Square New York
an iconic landmark
feels deserted without business activities.

The old lanes and by-lanes
in Venice
rue the absence of people
who frequented them day and night

The most populous city of Beijing
blames the outbreak of corona
for its silence and the predicament
of other monuments in the world.

But inwardly they all feel exultant
for their pristine glory
being untrodden and untouched.

- **Professor Sagar Mal Gupta** was educated at Edinburgh University in the UK and at the University of Hawaii in the US from where he earned his Ph.D. in Linguistics. For fifty-six years he taught English Literature, ELT and Communication at various colleges and universities in India and abroad. He has three poetry collections to his credit: *The Crescent Moon*, *Songs of India and the World* and *Songs of Rajasthan and Other Poems*.



Manas Bakshi

RECYCLING

Breaking the barriers
Of life and death
We've come again;

The last poem is yet to be written
On the palimpsest of frailty,
The last stroke on life-canvas
Remains due;

A scratched paper's whirling
Century-old aspirations, wounded memory
Nibbled at still by divisive forces!

Look back not in anger but in shame —
Between man and man
Created distance — same as before — has remained!

Breaking the barriers
Of life and death
Now we're stranded
At a remote abandoned place
Before being deported
To an unpredictable enclave.

A bubbling self
In the relentless pursuit
Of transcendental silence
Within the self
Is transitory existence —

Mind seeks
Words of love and bonding
To fructify forever,
Body seeks
The clasp of a sheath
Beyond the cover of the ingrained five elements,

In wait, beyond all that seems derelict
An astral body
Alluding to the Karmic manuscript.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

A city nourished long
With love and care
In the littoral lap of nature
Dies of erosion of human values,
Depletion of nature;

The last sun sinks in desperation...
Crematorium ready
On the bank
Of a silted river —

Only a few existing crabs
Swarm into their holes
Shaking off the memory
Of moonbeams on water
Beneath the winter sky ...

Fleshy beneath shells
Their hope of survival
Consigned to the certainty of crude reality:
The recipe of a palatable plate,

These are perhaps the last ones
Before the doom's at the doorstep!

FIGHTING IT OFF

Glower of hard times
I assuaged myself
All along my life
Who cares for it?
Thunderous gale sweeping away
Fallen twigs, uprooted weeds
And dry leaves

This time spared not me,
Covid by name
More pernicious than
A malady could be.

I felt as dry as
One of those blown away lifeless wretched
Amid the dumped-up rubbish
Making no difference with
The piled up dead bodies
Across the vast waterbody
Beside the E M bypass-linked
Kolkata megacity.

Injected virus from outer world
To nullify the inhaled ones
Sensed my being:
Was I till then non-existent?
Or, in existence sans conscience
Of a true human being?

Since birth I've
Always been driven by
The unpredictable wind
Along the trouble-stricken path to survival...
Not knowing where could I be landed,
Was the way towards a blind ditch
Beneath the plateau of worldly fulfillment
Or, salvation undefined
In the worn-out pages of life?

MATUTINAL

Pigeons in the wee hours of morning
Surround a cornice,
Seem looking for an ionic signal
For a sudden flight
Into the blue.

Rays of the morning sun
Spread lustrous effulgence
On pigeons on the wing.
Elegant display
Of colourful motifs
Around a contexture
Of black, brown, grey and white.

Evanescent moments
Of stirred up thoughts
And supernal feelings
Swirl into an orbit
Of their dropping-feather-like words
With afflatus in bardic vein
For the beginning of a poem.

- **Dr. Manas Bakshi** is a major voice in Indian English poetry with twelve books of repute that include *In the Age of Living Death*, *Of Dreams and Death*, *The Midnight Star*, *Between Flower and Flame*, *Parnassus of Revival*, *Soliloquy of a Sailor* among others. A doctorate in Economics, his poems have appeared in various noted publications in India, U.S.A., Canada, Japan, New Zealand etc.



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The propagandist's
purpose
is to make
one set of people
forget that
certain other
sets of people
are human.

-Aldous Huxley

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