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Amiri Baraka

Namdeo Dhasal

Derek Walcott

R.K. Narayan

Mahasweta Devi

Girish Karnad

Kiran Desai

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J.R.R. Tolkien

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Creation Myths

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Native American

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EDITORIAL

The timeline of events in January, 2014 makes one wonder whether January ought to be, unlike T.S. Eliot's April, the "cruellest month." While comfortably ensconced in the celebratory mode following the launch of our Special Langston Hughes Number on the New Year day, I was little prepared for the sad and sudden demise of two international idols and icons of "the wretched of the earth" in a brief span of five days. First Amiri Baraka, the pioneer of the Black Power Movement in the U.S., and then Namdeo Dhasal, the firebrand Marathi poet-writer and founder leader of the Dalit Panther movement in India. I thought it was a strange quirk of fate that sought to snatch away, in quick succession, two souls, located half a world apart and connected to each other by the relentless battles they fought in the stormy terrains of racial minefields and caste prejudices.

While interviewing contemporary American authors during 2003-04 for my book *Multicultural America*, one question I often asked most of them was about their take on Amiri Baraka being deprived of his Poet Laureateship in 2002 for "Somebody Blew Up America," the poem that he wrote in the wake of the twin-tower tragedy. I thought Baraka was quite right in condemning the legislative act by stating that it was a "confirmation of the ignorance, corruption, racism, and criminal disregard for the U.S. Constitution." Jonah Raskin from California felt sorry that Baraka lost his Laureateship and said, "it seems to be a sign of the times. Whatever happened to poetic license? The state seems determined to take away money from those who question authority." Contrary to Raskin's opinion, Stanley Crouch – the firebrand writer and journalist based in New York – stated: "What injustice? That's too simple a reading. It implies that some undeserving black man has been silenced by the white folks. That's garbage. First thing, I believe that anything LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka) wrote and whatever controversy it caused should not have led to his dismissal as the Poet Laureate of New Jersey. He should have remained as proof of how stupid those who chose him were."

When the news of Baraka's death came in on January 10, I sent a mail to Jonah Raskin soliciting an obituary note with a special focus on "Somebody Blew Up America." I am extremely grateful to him for enriching the current issue of *Re-Markings* with his perceptive, insightful and lucid tribute to "the king of the angry, polemical poem, the royal historian of the blues, and the princely firebrand...who never betrayed his own African American roots."

Jonah's piece arrived in the mail on the morning of January 15, 2014. The same morning's *The Hindu* brought forth the dolorous tidings of Namdeo Dhasal's departure from the sphere of our sorrow.

I have been a great admirer of Dhasal's life and work ever since I read the English translation of his poetry collection titled *Golpitha*. Published in 1972, the year he founded the Dalit Panther movement, *Golpitha* exploded like a volcano on the Indian literary scene. The poems in this collection articulated the unbridled rage of a militant caught in the vortex of a caste-ridden Hindu society. Fully at home in the "loathsome and nauseating universe" of Mumbai's red light district and its stench of death and disease, he quickly understood that real honesty lay in listening to one's own inner voice: "Never hereafter/ Must one write anything/ Shrouded in obscurity. No longer must one indulge/ In oblique poetry." Setting aside the grammar and idiom of poetic sophistication, Dhasal announced in no ambiguous terms, "I am a prisoner and a poet who goes to the heart of the matter...I am a venereal sore in the private part of language."

Intensely aware of the fact that a Dalit identity is the identity of a person uprooted several times in a single lifetime, he quickly found apt metaphors to designate the agony and the humiliation of living on the margins of human society. He vividly described what it meant to remain fettered by discrimination and prejudices: "The chained dog, being a dog, whines and sometimes barks/ This being his constitutional right: he lives on leftovers;/ He's used to injustice; his mind is desensitized;/ He'd be shot dead if he took a chance to rebel and break free of his chain." Dhasal frankly admitted that he did not have to consciously turn to poetry. The only rule, he says, he followed was "not to miss in my writing any of the subtleties and nuances of the life I lived." Though accolades and recognition came his way in the form of the Padma Shri and Sahitya Akademi awards, he was never unmindful of the fact that "This world's socialism,/ This world's communism/ And all those things of theirs,/ We have put them to the test/ And the implication is this –/ Only our shadows can cover our own feet."

On behalf of the *Re-Markings* fraternity, I feel that the most appropriate epitaph for the two geniuses in question could be what Dhasal himself penned for his own icon and idol, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: "You lived like a man/ There was no acting in it/ No dramatics, no imitators."

Nibir K. Ghosh
Chief Editor

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**DON'T WATCH WHAT YOU SAY:
AMIRI BARAKA'S POETIC RESPONSE TO 9/11**

Jonah Raskin

Amiri Baraka/Le Roy Jones wrote, edited and published dozens of books, including his first volume of poetry with the unforgettable title, *Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note* (1961). But if he is to be remembered for a single work, it might be for "Somebody Blew Up America" which he wrote when he was the Poet Laureate of New Jersey and that provoked controversy when he performed it in public.

Indeed, the State of New Jersey abolished the position of state Poet Laureate rather than see Baraka fill it, a legislative action that offended poets and prompted (some) patriotic Americans to applaud. The poem and the response to it illustrate the mood of the United States in the weeks, months and years after 9/11. In many ways, the mood hasn't ended yet. "Somebody Blew Up America" is still news and still poetry, which the New Jersey modernist poet, William Carlos Williams, defined as "news that stays news."

News and information about the attack on the Twin Towers in Manhattan on September 9, 2001 appeared first on TV, radio and in print media, next in poetry and then in fiction and non-fiction books. Books take longer than TV snippets, radio sound bites and newspaper headlines. Books are usually more thorough and accurate than radio, TV and newspapers. They arrive at the end of the exhaustive process of gathering, shaping and disseminating facts, opinions and stories. The short poem lives somewhere between TV and radio, on the one hand, and the book on the other hand because it offers an immediate take, plus the kinds of reflections that require time to develop. Epic poems are something else.

- **Jonah Raskin** serves on the advisory board of Re-Markings. He is the author of *American Scream: Allen Ginsberg's 'Howl'* and *The Making of the Beat Generation*. He lives in California.

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WHY BUDDHISM FOR BLACK AMERICA NOW?

Charles Johnson

What I propose is a spiritual revolution. – Dalai Lama

In his 1970 work, *Buddhist Ethics*, H. Saddhatissa writes in the preface, "Strictly speaking, Buddhism is not a religion in the generally accepted sense of the word, and it would be more accurate to describe it as an ethico-philosophy to be practiced by each follower. And it is only by practice, by an uphill spiritual struggle, that happiness in life either present or future, as well as the goal of *Nibbāna*, can possibly be attained." I intend to discuss some of the implications of this ethical philosophy for black America, and also ways it might relate to the Civil Rights Movement. These issues are matters that I've spent a lifetime thinking about, but for me this is not merely an academic discussion. Rather, I see it as a matter of life and death for black Americans. Let me try to explain what I mean by that.

Like the narrator of Charles Dickens's novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, many black Americans today possibly feel, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." The reason is because, as Eugene Robinson explained in an April 4, 2008 article in the *Washington Post*, there are actually two very culturally different black Americas as this new millennium begins. In one profile, black Americans appear in every walk of life and profession. They are millionaires, even billionaires, having earned their wealth in business, sports, and entertainment. (Beyonce Knowles last December gave her husband Jay-Z, whose fortune is worth \$450 million, the most expensive car in the world, a Bugatti Veyron Grand Sport priced at \$2 million; a month later Oprah Winfrey premiered her own network, appropriately named OWN; and Kanye West just spent \$180,000 for a watch in his own image, which is only slightly less than the \$250,000 that rapper Usher paid a New York luxury watch company to create a timepiece with *his* face on it.)

- **Charles Johnson** is novelist, essayist, literary critic, short story writer, cartoonist, screenwriter and Professor Emeritus at the University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.A. Winner of US National Book Award (1990), he is the author of 18 books.

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**THE TALE OF MONKEY BABA: KIRAN DESAI'S
*HULLABALOO IN THE GUAVA ORCHARD***

Jitendra Narayan Patnaik

Kiran Desai's first novel, *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* (1998), which is "uproarious, whimsical, and occasionally stinging," as *The Telegraph* commented and which, as *The Pioneer* commented, "is a triumph in comic storytelling," offers, as *San Francisco Chronicle* so aptly observes, "a clever, haunting parable that expresses the joys of simplicity while conveying the absurdities of everyday corruption in contemporary India" (citations from the publishers' introductory note to the 1999 paperback edition of the book). *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* is the story of Sampath Chawla who escapes from the boredom of middle class living in the sleepy, North Indian town of Shahkot into the comical freedom of life on a guava tree and who mysteriously disappears when the army and the government agencies invade the guava orchard to drive away the monkeys.

Sampath is conceived at a time when the small town of Shahkot is severely afflicted by the summer heat which "burned Malhotra's daughter far too dark for a decent marriage" (2). With no sign of monsoon's arrival, "there were dozens of monsoon-inducing proposals" (1) such as the army's proposal for "scattering and driving of clouds by jet planes flying in a special geometric formation" and the proposal of the police for "a frog wedding to be performed by temple priests" (2). Sampath is born on the day of great relief for the town when there comes a thunderous shower of rain after the scorching summer heat and there is the dropping of food supplies from a Swedish relief plane. The neighbours assure Kulfi, Sampath's mother, that "her son is destined for greatness" because "the world, large and mysterious beyond Shahkot, had taken notice of him...Even people in Sweden have remembered to send a birthday present" (12). Twenty years later, Sampath, "with spider-like legs and arms, thin and worried-looking" (14), finds himself in government service, "working in the back desk in the Shahkot post office" (24).

- **Dr. Jitendra Narayan Patnaik** worked as Professor of English in Ravenshaw University, Utkal University and Sanaa University, Yemen. He was Senior Fellow, Ministry of Culture, Government of India during 2007-2009 and UGC Emeritus Fellow, Ravenshaw University during 2009-2011.

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DEREK WALCOTT: A NOTE

S. Ramaswamy

West Indian poet and playwright, Derek Alton Walcott, called a modern day Homer by some critics, won the 1992 Nobel Prize for Literature. The Swedish Academy of Letters in its citation said “West Indian Culture has found its great poet.” Walcott’s best known poetic work is *Omeros* a 383-page epic narrative that retells dramas from *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* by the ancient Greek poet Homer, setting them in Walcott’s birth place, Saint Lucia. Walcott drew successfully from African, European and Caribbean cultural background to create an indigenous masterpiece.

Walcott was born on 23rd June 1930 in Castries, Saint Lucia – British West Indies. He began in St. Mary’s college in St. Lucia in 1941 and stayed through 1950. He founded the St. Lucia Arts Guild. His first play *Henri Christoph* was performed. He attended the University College of the West Indies, Jamaica and graduated in 1953 and taught there. In 1958 he received the Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship to study theatre in the United States. He had already published his first play, mentioned earlier. It was a drama on the Haitian revolutionary leader Henri Christophe.

Walcott has to his credit over a dozen books on poetry and his verse is regularly published in leading literary journals on both sides of the Atlantic. He has written some three dozen plays, fifteen of which have appeared in print. In addition to his creative writing, he has been a feature writer and critic for newspapers in Jamaica and Trinidad. In 1958 Walcott moved to Trinidad and the following year in order to produce his plays, he formed the Trinidad Theatre Workshop Company which he directed for two decades. He began touring with this company and visited several Caribbean islands, the United States and Canada. His plays have also been produced professionally in North America and Britain. He became a Fellow of Royal Society of Literature (1966) and was elected to the American Academy and Institute of Fine Arts (1979). He was Visiting Professor at the Universities of Harvard, Columbia and Boston.

- **Professor S. Ramaswamy** is the recipient of three Fulbright Fellowships and a winner of Phi Beta Kappa award. He was awarded the British Council Scholarship twice and has been a Shastri Indo-Canadian Fellow at McGill University.

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ASSIMILATION AND RESISTANCE: THE NATIVE AMERICAN WORLD TODAY

Nafeesa Fathima Moinuddin

Today we celebrate with African Americans the triumph of having a Black man leading the nation as the President. One looks forward to the day when centuries of oppression, exploitation and injustice to the natives will be redeemed and a Native American will head the nation. That, indeed, would be a day of great jubilation. However that doesn't seem to be in the offing for a long time. For all the assimilation and acculturation that the natives have been through, there is still a desire amongst them to be left to themselves. They are still very suspicious of the motives of non-natives. Earlier they were exploited for their land; today it is their culture that is being appropriated. Amongst all the other racial and linguistic minorities in the United States of America, a unique feature about Native Americans is that there is no "post-" to the colonial experience. Whatever one may call it – either "domestic imperialism" or "internal colonialism" – the fact remains that Native people exist in conditions of politically sustained subalternity.

The Native Americans had diverse lifestyles in Pre-Columbian America. They had different occupations – some were hunters, some farmers, shepherds, fishermen. They spoke about 2000 different languages some of them as different as English from Chinese. They had different ways of worship, erected and built houses of various types, and were very distinctive in their dances and songs.

As the White man swept across the continent, he also presumed to make the Indian over in his image. The education that was denied to the Black man was forced upon the Native American. The children were forcibly sent to boarding schools. These boarding schools were like prisons. Separated from their families, punished for speaking their native languages, ill-fed and brutally treated, these children emerged from school emotionally and physically scarred. Assimilation and de-tribalization were the aims of these policies. The prime source of misunderstanding between the natives and the whites was due to their very different attitudes toward the land.

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POLITICS OF FEMINIST NARRATIVE IN MANORANJAN DAS'S *NANDIKA KESHARI*

Shruti Das

Nandika Keshari is a play written by the noted Odia dramatist Padmashree Manoranjan Das. It was first published in 1985 and successfully staged throughout Odisha before being translated into English by Prabhat Nalini Das in 2000. The play *Nandika Keshari* (1985) is woven around a popular legend based on historical events of the 12th century A.D. According to the legend, Nandika, the sole heir of Suvarna Keshari, the last king of the Keshari dynasty of Orissa, left her father's besieged fort, Bidanasi Durga, in the suburb of the present Cuttack city, secretly at the dead of the night and went over to the camp of King Chodaganga, the young king from the south and the invader of the fort from across the river Kathajodi. She professed her love to Chodaganga whom she had seen only from a distance. As a token of her love she offered to him her father's 'divine' jewel, which was reputed to have made her father invincible, and which she had stolen when she left the castle. Chodaganga disapproved of Nandika's action, and instead of accepting her, sent her back to the palace of Suvarna Keshari along with the 'divine' jewel with all civility. To save herself from shame and disgrace, Nandika put an end to her life on the way (Das 5). In the legend the narrative exposes the ethnocentrism of narratology by pointing out that the story in a sense is patriarchally conditioned and culturally determined.

In the play under discussion, the playwright himself says that "A fresh interpretation of the characters and events imbues this play with a new meaning. As a result, in place of the conventional Nandika of the legend, there emerges a new Nandika, the embodiment of a new spirit, a spirit born out of the compelling needs of a dying, decadent, despotic regime. The protagonist even while facing an inevitable tragic end transcends her temporal limitations to become an ageless and deathless symbol of peace, understanding, and tolerance" (5). From the playwright's confession one can observe that he has attempted a feminist narrative in his play,

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CREATION MYTHS AND SCIENTIFIC THEORIES

Hemlata Srivastava

Creationism is the theory that relates how this Universe was created with the blessings of some Divine Force. Different sections of civilization e.g. Sumerian, Babylonian, Grecian, Christian, Vedic and Islamic gave different creation myths. However, with the advancement of science, different scientific theories came to contradict the existing Creation theories. The present paper intends to interrogate the two contradictory theories and, at the same time, find out how far the scientific theories may support or corroborate the existing Creation stories.

Pondering over the Creation theories and looking at the complex and intricate system of this world with human beings, it is quite clear that there must have been a Supreme Being behind all this creation. Whenever a creation takes place, the major efficient cause or the master architect should be there who will create, manage and destroy. Along with the major efficient cause there must be the minor efficient cause or the users of the creation as well i.e. Souls, without which the creation will be purposeless. Further there must be the material cause or the raw material as well i.e. Nature, without which nothing can be made. The third cause is the common cause or the accessories that will help in creation. In case of the creation of the Universe, it includes the time and space in which the creation would be made.

Different cults have given different creation stories. According to the familiar biblical story, in the first chapter of Genesis, the Universe and man were created by Lord God (Jehovah). Initially the earth was shapeless and covered with darkness, and God's spirit hovered over the waters preparing to perform His creative will. The world was created by God in seven days beginning with light and ending with man and woman. Christians picture their God having three forms, God the Father, God the Son (Jesus) and the God the Holy Spirit who carries out God's will on earth.

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**FANTASY WORLDS:
TOLKIEN'S *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* AND
ROWLING'S *THE HARRY POTTER* SERIES**

Avneet Kaur & Gur Pyari Jandial

*All the works of man have their origin in creative
fantasy. What right have we then to depreciate
imagination? – Carl Jung*

According to Kathryn Hume, "...literature is the product of two impulses. These are mimesis, felt as the desire to imitate, to describe events, people, situations, and objects with such verisimilitude that others can share your experience; and fantasy, the desire to change givens and alter reality – out of boredom, play, vision, longing for something lacking, or need for metaphoric images that will bypass the audience's verbal defences."¹

Mimesis and fantasy thus form the key agents which serve several purposes and in our minds they give us a sense that something is meaningful.

Fantasy which is an indispensable part of literature has been defined in a number of ways. Each writer has his own perspective of fantasy. For Tolkien, fantasy is "a natural human activity...does not either blunt the appetite for, nor obscure the perception of, scientific verity...For creative fantasy is founded upon the hard recognition of fact, but not slavery to it."²

Martin Gray defines fantasy in his *The Dictionary of Literary Terms* as, "Like 'fancy', 'fantasy' originally applied generally to the mind's perceptual and imaginative processes, it is now used to denote the most playful kind of imagining... 'Fantasy' literature deals with the imaginary world of fairies, dwarves, giants and other non-realistic phenomena. A fantasy world may be an entirely consistent or parallel with the ordinary world, or it may have a dreamlike illogicality and episodic structure."³

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**NATURE-CULTURE INTERFACE:
EDWARD ABBEY'S *FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN***

Ambika Bhalla

Nobody's safe when the Government can take away his home. – Edward Abbey, Fire on the Mountain (142)

“Nature and culture do not exclude each other but are entangled with each other in multiple ways,” writes Cheryll Glotfelty in the introduction to *The Ecocriticism Reader*. It takes as its subject the interconnection between nature and culture. Ecocriticism gives human beings a better understanding of and a broader view of nature. It also analyses the role played by the natural environment in the imagination of a cultural community. The text becomes a place where different visions of nature and varying images of culture are played out. This paper aims at tracing such interconnection of nature and culture in Edward Abbey's representative text, *Fire on the Mountain*.

Cultural moorings form an inevitable part of any eco-critical discussion and it has been rightly said that “Our ecological crisis is the product of an emerging, entirely novel, democratic culture” (White 6). Depending on what man thinks about himself in relation to things around him, he acts and alters the ecology around him either positively or negatively. *Fire on the Mountain* is Edward Abbey's third novel published in 1962. The author sent an anachronistic man to confront the impersonalized power of the twentieth century. The novel presents the rigid modern world, set over two hundred miles South of Duke City, New Mexico. It appraises the Western code of behaviour to explore the individual's role in the larger scheme of voracious society. It takes on the entire United States government. The protagonist loses because of the U.S. government's superior strength but the book succeeds in a crucial way. Its powerful description translates the strength of the New Mexican landscape into an artistic conception of the earth. The principle of earth is regarded as a fundamental one in ecocriticism. Glotfelty writes, “Ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies” (xviii).

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**“DREAM DEFERRED”: LORRAINE HANSBERRY’S
*A RAISIN IN THE SUN***

Rahul Kamble & Padmakar Pande

Lorraine Hansberry (1930-1965) is an African American woman playwright. Her well known play *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959) is based on her family’s experiences of racial segregation which the family faced in Chicago. The play portrays the events in Chicago in mid-fifties. The Younger family lives in a very poor apartment there. Younger Sr. is no more, but he has left a fortune of \$10,000 in the form of Insurance money for the family. All of them are waiting for the cheque. Walter wants to be rich instantly by investing some amount of money in the liquor business. Lena, his mother, wants to buy a place for the family, provide for Beneatha’s medical education, and Travis’s (Walter’s son) future. When the cheque arrives, she immediately buys a house in an all white locality. Walter finds his dream of becoming a successful man being shattered by his mother’s authoritative decisions. When Lena gives up before his wishes and gives him money, he invests it in the liquor business and is being robbed. Dreams of Beneatha are almost shattered. The family’s dream to shift to a good locality is in the soup as the white member of the Welcome Committee of the Clybourne Park already issues a threat to them in case they move to the society. The play portrays what happens to the dreams of various members of a black family – as members of a black family which lives in a racial and capitalistic society of America.

Dreams in Lorraine Hansberry’s play *A Raisin in the Sun* are conscious dreams and not the dreams in a sleep. They are dreams of thoughtful mind, restless soul, and yearning desire. They are throbbing and are the cause and reason for their dreamers’ existence. They are alive, active, dynamic as well as perturbing. Walter Lee has a dream to become a successful liquor baron, a successful entrepreneur, like other examples he has before him, to be a part of the American Dream.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A VILLAGE: A STUDY OF PRAFULLA MOHANTI'S WRITINGS

Manoranjan Behura

Autobiography is a non-fictional narration of self. Reputed people write autobiography to tell their tales of ups and downs, myriad experiences they have passed through. Sometimes autobiographies become controversial for containing objectionable things that arouse public ire. For such controversy G.B. Shaw once said that all autobiographies are false. It sounds strange listening to the phrase "the autobiography of a village," a new term in literature. The village and its description in literature go to antiquity. But the autobiography of a village named Nanpur, in the remote area of Jajpur district of Odisha, has become possible and fruitful in the writings of Prafulla Mohanti, a writer and painter of international repute. Mohanti's writings and paintings centre round both the inner and outer parts of his native village which stands on the fertile bank of the river Birupa.

The four books of Mohanti: *My Village, My Life, Changing Village, Changing Life, Through Brown Eyes and Village Tales* portray the pictures of Nanpur from different angles to depict the microcosm of Indian village life. As Mohanti says, "*My Village, My Life* is not only a portrait of Nanpur, it is the portrait of village India. I have been recording its life since my childhood through my own experience and experiences and memories of the villagers. Many people in India and abroad have told me how Nanpur relates to their own experience and perception" (Preface 12). Mohanti's debut book, *My Village, My Life*, was published in 1973 by Pamlico Books. It received international applause for its unique non-fictional theme of delineating a village as it is. It has been translated into Japanese, Norwegian, Danish and Portuguese languages. The Indian village culture got an international recognition when B.B.C. London made *My Village, My Life* a film in 1982. Mohanti faithfully portrays the poverty, ignorance, superstitions, religion and a detailed village ways of life without the aid of fiction.

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AESTHETICS OF SUBVERSION: MARGINALIZED WOMEN IN MAHASWETA DEVI'S *BREAST STORIES*

B. Vijaya

Mahasweta Devi's fiction, essays, plays, journalistic writings and her activism could be viewed as a gesture of protest, a resistance to the dominant power structures in India: Privileged communities vs. underprivileged communities (caste inequalities); The rich vs. the dispossessed (class contradictions); male vs. female (gender discrimination).

Mahasweta takes the side of the marginalised in the above binaries either singly or cumulatively, and records their travails. This concern for the downtrodden is born out of her conviction that Independence has not brought any change in their lives and, if anything, the exploitative methods of ruling classes have made them more miserable. For her, social activism and documenting the harsh realities in the form of fiction are inseparable.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who translated many of the works of Mahasweta Devi from Bengali into English, provides elaborate criticism in the form of Introductions and Forewords which are appended to the texts. Mahasweta's work began to attain high visibility and recognition outside India and it was largely because of Spivak's translation of her stories and the feminist theory she built around them in *Imaginary Maps* (1995) and *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (1998). The earliest of such effort was by Kalpana Bardan whose *Of Women, Outcastes, Peasants and Rebels: Selection of Bengali Short Stories* that contained six of Mahasweta's short stories published by the University of California Press, Berkeley in 1990. According to Spivak, "Mahasweta Devi is as unusual within the Bengali literary tradition as Foucault or Derrida within the philosophical or political mainstream in France" (46).

Mahasweta's fictional writings mainly focus on the subjugation and suppression of women. In some stories, women revolt as in the case of "Draupadi" and in other stories like "Douloti," they remain silent despite their sufferings. Her protagonists resort to physical or psychological vengeance when their grievances are not redressed.

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FEMINIST CONCERNS IN GIRISH KARNAD'S *WEDDING ALBUM*

Santosh Kumar Sonker

Male subjugation, confined identity, and unpaid labour have been the hallmarks of female identity. The term “feminine” – that is defined as “other” than “masculine” – connotes qualities quite opposite to “masculine.” They are not only binary opposite terms, but the first one also bears all sorts of negative aura. However, Feminists, for the last one century, have been raising their voice against the practice. While Kate Millet in *Sexual Politics* (1970) registers that sexual politics governed by male chauvinistic views has placed man as a sovereign subject in the society and woman as subjugated to man, Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and Subversion of Identity* (1990) holds that “gender” is just an approval and continuation of the traditionally imposed images. The entire feminist discourse revolves around two axioms i.e. “gender” difference is the basis of structural inequality between male and female, and “gender” inequality is not a biological reality but a cultural construct. It aims to understand the social and psychic mechanism that constructs and perpetuates gender inequality and tries to subvert it to the possible limits.

Though Feminism in India, in many senses, does not stand quite parallel to that of the Western idea, yet its critique of the system grossly rooted in male chauvinism manifests its multifaced resistance to the practice of women subjugation in our society. One such example can be cited in the works of Girish Karnad, who, like other feminists, neither depicts females' plight ideally nor blindly romanticizes their heightened position. Instead, his deliberation of women condition in Indian society is logical and realistic. His play *Wedding Album* presents a pending marriage in an urban middleclass, Karnataka-based Saraswat family – the Nandkarnis. While oscillating between the real and techno-savvy world, the play also weighs the pros and cons of wedding culture in Indian society and reassesses the space given to women in contemporary global era.

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PSYCHODYNAMICS OF SELF AND IDENTITY IN ELIZABETH BROWNING'S *AURORA LEIGH*

Perna Vanjani

This paper deals with the bondage of conventions in nineteenth century Victorian society. The thrust is on the unique handling of the "Woman's Question" in a male dominated society as presented by Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her work *Aurora Leigh*. The psychodynamics of self and identity in the life of the artist is depicted with a special reference to the Psychoanalytic Theory and the Theory of Self.

The terms 'self' and 'identity' are two illusive constructs. They relate to different ideas about how people view themselves. Such a reference to a person's view of his or herself can limit or expand one's life. It is this mental awareness and persistent regard that sentient beings hold for their existence and essence. When Sigmund Freud came up with his research on human dreams in the year 1900, a new milestone in human reflection and the non-physical inner self came to the forefront. His Psychoanalytic Theory floated a new understanding of the importance of internal mental processes. According to his theory, personality is a composite view of the functioning of Id, Ego and Superego meaning conscious, subconscious and super conscious level of mind.

The concept of 'self' and 'identity' since then has always had a strong influence on the emerging profession of counseling and development of personality. 'Self' in its true sense is a complex process of gaining self-awareness and accumulation of knowledge about beliefs regarding personality traits, physical characteristics, abilities, values, goals and roles, thus giving meaning to 'identity' of an individual. This concept of selfhood and self recognition comes alive in the texture of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's work. Such a deep understanding of human psyche in an age when very limited knowledge about the inner compass of beings was known puts Elizabeth on a higher pedestal among contemporary writers of her age. It is all the more interesting that Elizabeth positioned herself as a precursor to all psychological counselors.

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ANGLO-INDIAN IDENTITY IN ALLAN SEALY'S *THE TROTTER-NAMA*

Raichel M. Sylus

Literature of the minorities has gained importance in the recent past. The once unvoiced voices have started to voice out their issues to establish their pitiable presence in this world. It is either one among the fold who voices the issues or one outside the fold who voices the issues for the voiceless. Allan Sealy has emerged as the voice for the voiceless minority, the Anglo-Indians. Down the centuries history has recorded the lives of people who have lived as minorities and as distinct entities but outside the mainstream flow of culture and civilization.

Sealy, a postcolonial Anglo-Indian writer shot into fame after the publication of *The Trotter-Nama: A Chronicle*, written for and of the Anglo-Indian community in India. While there have been many writers who have penned the plight of the marginalised and the downtrodden in their community, like Rohinton Mistry (about the Parsis), M.G. Vassanji (about the Khoja community), Sealy stands tall amidst a foray of writers in jotting down the lives of the once-flourished community still existing in India. Apart from these there are writers from other literatures too who have carved a niche in their career and their lives for emerging as a voice amidst huge masses of less fortunate people. Examples abound in all literatures to show that people have lived in confusion between two cultures. Colonization has led to mixing of races, cultures and people.

The literature of the Anglo-Indians has always tried to be in opposition to India and Indians. Sealy tries to depict the contradictions during the colonial rule in India. The marginal status which they were enjoying for a period was so intensified that they became more marginal in all aspects. Their struggle to survive started from then on. While an in depth reading of Anglo-Indian literature is still at the nascent level, there is no dearth of writers writing about this community which has yielded to its growing popularity. The existence of the minorities has been part of the Indian culture and context.

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R.K. NARAYAN'S "THE AXE": AN ECO-CRITICAL STUDY

Sohrab Sharma

The paper makes an eco-critical study of R.K. Narayan's short story "The Axe." There is an implicit ecological concern in the story. The story points out that the time has come when we should develop the same kind of love for nature and natural environment as Velan, the protagonist of the story, has for trees.

Analysing the story from an eco-critical viewpoint necessitates references to eco-criticism as a literary theory. In 1978, William Rueckert used the term "eco-criticism" for the first time to suggest the scope of ecological terms and concepts which can be applied to the study of literature. Eco-criticism is defined as "The study of literary texts with reference to the interaction between human activity and the vast range of 'natural' or non-human phenomena which bears upon human experience – encompassing (amongst many things) issues concerning fauna, flora, landscapes, environment and weather" (Childs and Fowler 65).

During the last two decades, attempts have been made by a few environmental-friendly critics to critically analyse the degree of degradation that is taking place in nature that will eventually decide the fate of human existence. It is rightly said that the "Eco-critics analyse the history of concepts such as 'nature', in an attempt to understand the cultural developments that have led to the present global ecological crisis. Direct representations of environmental damage or political struggle are of obvious interest to eco-critics, but so is the whole array of cultural and daily life, for what it reveals about implicit attitudes that have environmental consequences" (Waugh 530).

Although eco-criticism is a new theory in the literary arena – on account of the development of science and technology material prosperity seems to be the only goal of human endeavours – yet it is gradually gathering momentum and attracting the attention of the world community. In the face of technological and commercial growth it appears as if everything except earthly progress has lost its significance.

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RAZIA SULTAN: REEL AND REAL

Anupama Kaushal

Indian Cinema has always treated period films with magnificence and majesty. The first film of Indian Cinema, *Raja Harishchandra*, was a historical film and the first moving picture was *Alamara* (the daughter of Aurangzeb). Indian film fraternity has, time and again, looked into the pages of history to undertake projects on historical events or characters who had been popular with their audience. In this category, films portraying Muslim history and culture have always been of keen interest and attraction for the Indian audience be it *Alamara*, *Mugal-e-Azam*, *Anarkali*, *Razia Sultan* or *Jodha Akbar*. The success of these films reflect the passion of viewers as well as film-makers for historical films.

In 1983, the Bollywood film industry sought some sublime theme from history and emerged with *Razia Sultan* directed by Kamal Amrohi. Razia Sultan has always been a controversial and popular figure in history. She has attracted everybody's attention for being the first and the only Woman Sultan (King) to come to the throne of Delhi for three and a half years in 1236 AD. She belonged to Turkish Seljuk ancestry. Iltutmish, the second to occupy the throne of the Slave Dynasty, gave his daughter Razia excellent education and boldly nominated her, formally, as his successor to the throne of Delhi for he did not find his living sons, one lecherous Rukunuddin and the other crippled Bahram Shah, capable enough to handle and hold the turbulent throne of Slave Dynasty in Delhi. She not only had a fair knowledge of the sciences but was also well versed in *Koran*. It is interesting to know that she also wrote Persian verses under the penname of 'Shirin'.

A lot of hue and cry was raised at the decision of Iltutmish in passing on the rule to Razia but he remained convinced that she was the most apt of all his heirs. Unfortunately, the narrow Turkish mentality biased against women as well as her scheming brothers narrowed down her capable, righteous and just administration to only three years and a half. In 1240 AD she was defeated by Bahram Shah at Kaithal. Her story following that defeat has been left unwritten by historians.

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We did not go
on to the stage,
Neither were
we called.
We were shown
our places,
told to sit.
But they,
sitting on the stage,
went on telling us
of our sorrows;
our sorrows
remained ours,
they never became
theirs.

- *Waharu Sonavane*

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