



Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies

E-NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 7. 2018

April, 2018

Issue guest edited by:

Debaditya Bhattacharya on behalf of IACLALS

IN PLACE OF AN EDITORIAL

Even the most extreme consciousness of doom threatens to degenerate into idle chatter. Cultural criticism finds itself faced with the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism. To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. And this corrodes even the knowledge of why it has become impossible to write poetry today. (Theodor Adorno, *Prisms* [1955], p. 33)

Perennial suffering has as much right to express itself as the martyr has to scream; this is why it may have been wrong to say that poetry could not be written after Auschwitz. What is not wrong however is the less cultural question of whether it is even permissible for someone who accidentally escaped and by all rights ought to have been murdered, to go on living after Auschwitz. Their continued existence already necessitates the coldness, of the basic principle of capitalist subjectivity, without which Auschwitz would not have been possible: the drastic guilt of the spared. (Adorno, *Negative Dialectics* [1966], p. 446)

I begin with these two rather-long borrowings from Adorno, because they speak to me and to the times that I am writing in/of. Not surprisingly, these passages from his work – by virtue of their seeming contradiction in terms – have occasioned generations of spirited debate and often-impatient controversy. I use them, however, with the precise agenda of mopping away the mist around what has been posited as a self-evident relationship between culture and apocalyptic violence. And for that, I believe that the task of ‘cultural criticism’ today rests in a conscious encounter with what Adorno calls the “less cultural question” of *life-as-survival*.

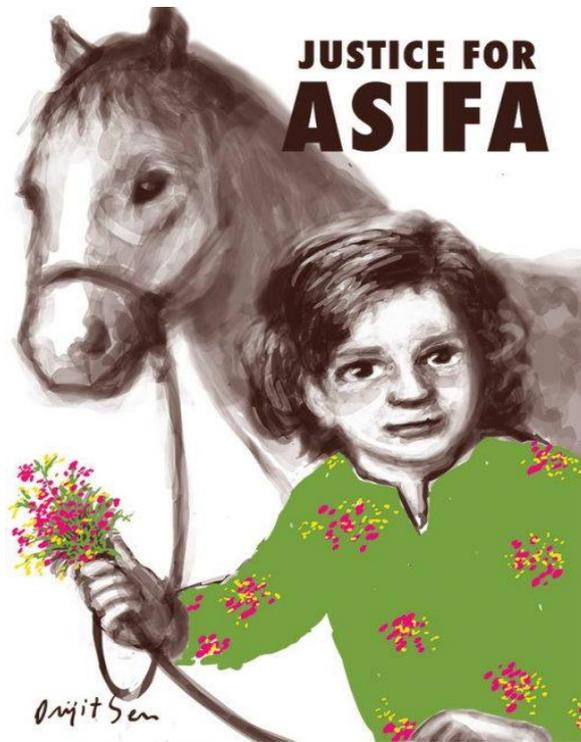
If poetry must indeed be written after Auschwitz – as it must and has been! – how does it respond to the default predicament of survival? How might a poetry of survivor-hood – in contradistinction to a postcolonial axiomatic of victim-hood – be imagined? If all that is left to literature is an expression of “perennial suffering”, is the existential archive the only referent for a cultural criticism of the present? Is the ‘perennial’, in(de)finitely distributed across everyday experience, *re-presentable* – or, has the livedness of everyday violence degenerated into “idle chatter” precisely because it cannot muster the finality of reference in *representation*? How then does one make poetry (or, for that matter, literature) out of the inherent lack of reference in the *everydayness* of survival? Insofar as the survivor’s identity consists in living *beyond* the event that promises meaning to her *as such*, can s/he be written into being? To that extent, might the survivor be inserted into language at all?

Even as I write this, the ‘nation’ – folded into mythical futures of globality – finds itself boiling in righteous rage against the murder of an eight-year-old girl who was gangraped inside a temple and left to haunt the carcass of a ‘collective conscience’. Similar instances from the recent past bear out the active abetment and complicity of a terroristic state, tethering on the dangerous edges of ethnic cleansing and fascistic excess. The fear of palpable violence is rendered so indistinguishable from the daily struggles for dignity that we have all come to normalise the dregs of democracy as the *default condition* of being. There is anger everywhere, but there is no imaginative recourse to a language that seems and feels adequate for it. ‘These times’ – as the annals of history have proverbially named the ‘contemporary’! – might seem to not belong to us, and yet we must seek voice and vocation in them.

How might our voice escape the ‘coldness’ that Adorno calls the “basic principle of capitalist subjectivity” – the settled dust of the everyday business of living, once the tumult of a rage is spent in the dreams of revolution? How could we – the ones who lived *in place of* an Asifa – process the “drastic guilt of the spared” into the worn-out archives of literature and culture, the space of belief and thought? Must a guilty survival waste itself in the outrage of a moment, without leaving behind testimonies for a time to come?

Literature – or better still, poetry – in the midst of technologically mass-produced spectacles of ‘barbarism’ must perform what Judith Butler calls the “work of mourning”. Ethically opposed to a desire for counter-violence in revenge, ‘mourning’ is what can invoke the memory of a *death died in place of an other* into an affective act of allying with *every other who lives on*. It is a form of intimate alliance between those that bear the “guilt of the spared”, and transforms it into everyday acts of bearing witness. Mourning converts death into an alternative ethic of sociality with hitherto-unimagined others, measured only against a love for the one now lost. It is pain expressed as *being-with an other* – the idea of witness (as reporting *of* the other) turned against itself into an effect of *with-ness* (as ethically folded into coeval-ness). Bracha Ettinger and Griselda Pollock have identified this movement from a ‘traumatic return’ to aesthetic reference as the incomplete project of the political. In this, the order of *thanatopolitics* – a collective unconscious driven by the desire of/for death – is inverted into the space of *eros*, the only redemptive force for democracy. A literature that ‘bears witness’ remains as the only prerogative of the survivor, and marks the space between memory and desire, trauma and voyeurism, the violence of the act and the titillation of its images on pornographic websites.

The idea of the thanatopolitical, as I have called it, is the condition of possibility of the absolute state. And it works by appropriating unto itself much more than the right to mark the limits of a 'life of dignity' – the civic guarantee of 'survival'. More pointedly, the founding moment of such a state consists in claiming the right to *name* death – some deaths as sacral and some others as criminal. What we see around us today is exactly this: the redistribution of affect over the bodies of the dead, pre-etched as the martyr or the monster. The imaginative task of literature – and more particularly, of literatures at the margins, written in other 'englishes' and other languages – is in resolutely wresting away the right to re-name the dead. In memory, in love, in alliance, and in hope of a renewed politics of survivor-hood, *literature needs to stand witness to the other who died in place of me.*



As Arundhati Roy puts it, in the notebookd verse of one of her characters:

How to tell a shattered story?
By slowly becoming everybody.
No.
By slowly becoming everything.

(*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* [2017], p. 436)

16 April 2018

Debaditya Bhattacharya

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Kazi Nazrul University

West Bengal

EVENTS AND REPORTS

Reports of IACLALS Annual Conference 2018 February 8 – 10, 2018 Aligarh Muslim University

A three day international conference on the theme “Tolerance and Bigotry: Contestations in Indian Literatures in English” was organized by Indian Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (IACLALS) in collaboration with the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) from February 8-10, 2018. The objective of the conference was to put on the table a rich set of questions, concerning tolerance and bigotry vis-à-vis the vast, wide ranging corpus of Indian literatures in English.

As many as 48 researchers, of which 31 were females and 17 males, presented their papers over the three days of the conference. These included delegates from the United States and several states of India, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Bengal, Odisha, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Neither the presenters nor the scholars who chaired the sessions at the conference were restricted to the field of English Studies, but were from varied disciplines such as Political Science, Philosophy, Mass Communication, Journalism and West Asian Studies.



On the first day, five sessions were conducted which included the inaugural session and 4 sessions for paper reading at different venues at the Faculty of Arts. The second day witnessed 3 presentation sessions, the CDN Prize Panel, a Plenary Session and the Writers Meet. The concluding day had 7 sessions, followed by the Valedictory.

The inaugural function was attended by Chief Guest Prof. Masood ul Hasan, noted poet and writer, Mr. Keki N. Daruwalla, Prof. GJV Prasad, Chairperson IACLALS, Prof. Mohd Asim Siddiqui, Chairperson, Department of English and other dignitaries such as Prof. M. Asadduddin, and Prof. Subhendu Mund, Vice Chairs, IACLALS and Dr. Angelie Multani, Treasurer, IACLALS. This session was conducted by Ms. Alisha Ibkar, Assistant Professor, Department Of English, AMU.

Professor Mohd Asim Siddiqui, Chairperson, Department of English, welcomed the guests to this platform which he hoped would bring into discussion the unexplored facets of 'tolerance' with reference to Literature. Noted poet and writer Keki N. Daruwalla delivered the keynote address that deliberated on subjects of national and artistic relevance. Further, he touched upon the point that despite the political tensions of the day, writers need not necessarily be either 'colluding or colliding' with the political establishment. He concluded his speech by stating that writers have a right to carve a voice of their own but stressed on the point that they should avoid falling into the two binaries.

The keynote address was followed by two book releases: Professor Subhendu Mund's *Odia Identity: History, Culture, Language, Literature* and Professor M. Asaduddin's *Premchand: The Complete Short Stories*.



This was followed by two parallel paper reading sessions chaired by Prof. Asmer Beg, and Prof. Tasadduq Hussain respectively. Post lunch Dr. Murari Prasad, Head of the Department of English at B N Mandal University, Madhepura (Bihar) and Prof. Nuzhat Zeba, Department of English, AMU, chaired the other two parallel sessions. The thematic preferences of the papers presented centred on the questions of tolerance and intolerance with reference to

progressive writers in Hindi, Urdu and Marathi. Dalit narratives too were a significant part of the discussion.

The second day of the conference commenced with paper reading sessions that witnessed nine paper presentations at three different venues simultaneously in the Faculty of Arts. The session chaired by Prof. Mohd. Rizwan Khan, Department of English, AMU, was dedicated to the discussion of women and tolerance, while the second session which was chaired by Prof. Radhika Mohanram, centred around north-eastern narratives. Another parallel session chaired by Dr. Jennifer Yusin, Associate Professor, Department of English and Philosophy, Drexel University highlighted the theme of tolerance or intolerance with reference to the connection and concurrence between communities.

The conference also held the CD Narasimhaiah Prize session (designed to give a platform to the short-listed papers to be considered for the CDN Prize) on the second day that was chaired by Prof. GJV Prasad, Chairperson, IACLALS. The papers had been shortlisted by two senior academics; Prof. Rohini Mokashi Punekar (Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati) and Prof. Meena Pillai (University of Kerala). The jury comprised of Prof. Mohammad Asim Siddiqui, Chairman, Department of English, AMU, Professor Amritjit Singh (Ohio University) and Professor Margaret L. Pachuau (Mizoram University). The content of the papers read in that very session compelled the audience to critically appreciate them.

Srinjoyee Dutta, Research Scholar, JNU initiated the contest with her paper, "Refugee from Belief: Affective' Disunities and Ethno-Sexual Identity Formation in the Ghazals of Agha Shahid Ali", which dealt with the hyphenated identity of the poet Agha Shahid Ali. Next, Sania Hashmi, Research scholar, JNU, paved way for a critical angle by examining one of the most controversial novels in the literary world in her paper, "Anatomy of a Provocation: Bigoted Apostasy at the limits of Intentional Fallacy." Shinjini Basu's work, "Kunal Basu's *Kalkatta: Making the city Tolerable at its seams*" threw light on the questions of tolerance and bigotry in the context of urban living. Through her paper, "The Liberation of Sita: Formulating a Feminist Mythopoesis", Amrapali Saha scrutinized Volga's *The Liberation of Sita* also reflecting upon the thematic similarity with Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad*. This was followed by a presentation by Chinmaya Lal Thakur, whose paper, "Subalternity and the Question of Responsibility: Reading Upamanyu Chatterjee's *English, August*" engaged the audience by citing interviews of right wing political leaders in identifying tolerance as an 'insufficient

marker'. The presentations were scintillating, insightful and engaging for the audience. Prof. Prasad concluded the event by encouraging researchers and appreciating their hard work.

The CDN Prize Session was followed by the Plenary Session which was chaired by Prof Asaduddin. The first speaker, Professor Radhika Mohanram, School of English Studies, Cardiff University presented her paper titled 'Textures of Indian Memory' that dealt with how bodies and memories are related to a place. She also discussed the remembrance and representation of the Partition in the Indian memory, an issue often clouded by a pervading national amnesia. The second speaker Professor Amritjit Singh, Langston Hughes Professor of English at Ohio University, spoke about the pedagogical aspect of the theme of the conference. He stressed on the importance of the knowledge imparted by teachers in classrooms to counter the rise of intolerance and bigotry in the world.



This was followed by a Writers' Meet where the panel included the keynote speaker Mr. Keki N Daruwalla, Prof. Sami Rafiq, Tariq Chhatari, Namita Singh, Asif Naqvi and Prof. Subhendu Mund. Dr. Akbar Joseph, Dept. of English, welcomed the speakers and the audience. Professor Chhatari read his short story 'Bandoq', a lucid narrative with an uplifting message of hope and optimism. He was followed by Prof Sami Rafiq, who read her fictional piece 'Padmavati's Choice' and two of her poems 'Aligarh a Suburban Galaxy' and 'I am Standing in a Mall'. Mr. Daruwalla then opened with, 'Sadhvi at the Congregation', a witty piece that conveyed the message that, 'Let not the harsh winds of our times blow love away'. He recited two poems titled, 'Alhambra' and 'Hieroglyphs' and read his beautiful translation of Faiz's *Shahrudaas*.

Prof Asif Akhtar Naqvi, a member of the Jana Natya Manch and Delhi Art Theatre, read his short story 'Roshni ke Peeche'. He was followed by Professor Namita Singh, who read her short story 'Mushak' narrating the plight of a lovable Panditji torn between suffering the bigotry in his country or the one abroad. Professor Subhendu Mund, the Vice Chair of

IACLALS, read his piece in Oriya that was beautifully summed up in his words, 'Things that are left behind, you might meet them again.'

The cultural programme, which followed next, witnessed spellbinding musical performances by the Western Music Club, AMU. The Raleigh Literary Society, Department of English, AMU, presented 'My Last Maharani', an Indian adaptation of Robert Browning's dramatic monologue, 'My Last Duchess' that reflected a society shackled by hypocrisy, patriarchy and bigotry. Keeping up the spirit of communal harmony, the students of MA ELT, MSW and M.Sc., AMU, came together to enact a street play to showcase the futility of mob violence and misplaced aggression.

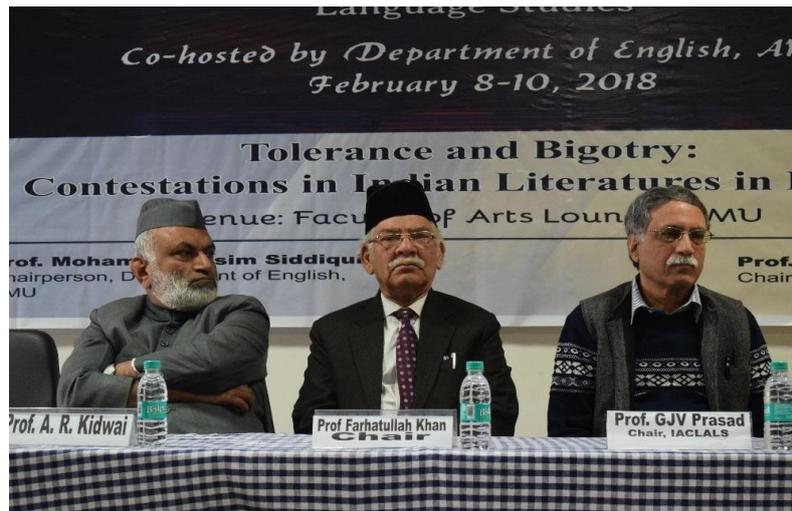


The concluding day of the conference saw seven sessions that initiated discussion about the manifestation of tolerance or intolerance in the realm of movies and songs, in the session chaired by Prof. Samina Khan, Department of English, AMU. Prof Margaret Pachau, Mizoram University, chaired a session where tolerance in relation to the identities of transsexuals was the

theme dealt with by the presenters. Prof. Shahla Ghauri, Department of English, AMU, chaired a session that revolved around the Khalistan Movement, blasphemy and the cross-culturalization in Andaman & Nicobar. Dr. Fatima Rizvi chaired another session where tolerance on a personal level and Subaltern Literature was explored.

Prof Shafey Kidwai, Department of Mass Communication, AMU, chaired the session that beheld speakers who reviewed Parsi writings and historical events of Maratha Kranti Morcha in the light of the theme of the conference. Prof. Gulrez, Department of West Asian Studies, AMU, chaired the sixth session that investigated the critical intolerance against the narratorial voice steeped in the class ventriloquism.

The Valedictory Session of the event was held at the Arts Faculty lounge on 10 February 2018. Professor Emeritus Farhatullah Khan, Department of English, chaired the session and Prof. A R Kidwai, Director, Academic Staff College, AMU, addressed the session.



Dr. A. K. Muneer, Assistant Professor, AMU, delivered the conference report and Dr. Siddhartha Chakraborti, local Coordinator of IACLALS and Assistant Professor, AMU, proposed the vote of thanks. It was followed by distribution of certificates to the delegates. Mr. Danish Iqbal, Assistant Professor, Department of English, AMU conducted the session.

Sadra Samreen, PhD (ELT), AMU
Zainab Fatima PhD (English), AMU

IACLALS Annual Conference 2018
February 8 – 10, 2018
Aligarh Muslim University

The annual international IACLALS Conference held at Aligarh Muslim University from 8-10 February 2018 has been an incredibly well-organized, highly successful and fabulously productive academic event.

I recall that in his address introducing the theme of the conference “Tolerance and Bigotry: Contestations in Indian Literatures in English”, Professor GJV Prasad urged all of us to rethink, revisit and redefine our terms of the conversation and debate, that is tolerance/intolerance and bigotry. He was exhorting us not to accept these categories uncritically. As the conference closes, it should be no exaggeration to say that Professor Prasad’s advice has been well taken both by the conference delegates and the audience as is abundantly clear from a host of papers presented at the conference and the questions and interventions by the audience throughout. All the papers presented at the conference were self-reflexive in character as they examined the very terms and categories they were deploying; now this does not mean that all of them arrived at the same conclusions. Indeed, most of them reached divergent conclusions, once

again bringing into full view the beauty of the diversity of human thought and praxis in all its richness and complexity.



This conference has not taken tolerance and its sister terms at face value. It didn't simply ask why we need tolerance so badly today. Some of the papers read at the conference in fact even called into question the very conviction that we need tolerance so badly today and that tolerance is a substitute for emancipation or justice. The conference didn't simply work with the notion that tolerance is a personal ethic, an ethic that issues from an individual commitment and has objects that are largely individualized, the kind of tolerance that all of us practice on a daily basis. But, most importantly, the conference also examined tolerance as a discourse of power, as a practice of regulation. As Sarah Bullard puts it, "Tolerance is not a product of politics, religion, or culture. Liberals and conservatives, evangelicals and atheists, whites, Latinos, Asians, and blacks... [well, she does not say Hindus and Muslims, we could well add them] are equally capable of tolerance and intolerance... Tolerance has much less to do with our opinions than with what we feel and how we live" (qtd in Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion*, Princeton:2006, p.1).

The conference has been remarkable in several ways, some of which I would like to highlight briefly here. In addition to a stellar list of invited speakers including the key-note speaker Mr. Keki N. Daruwalla, the well-known poet, two distinguished plenary speakers Prof. Radhika Mohanram (Cardiff) and Prof. Amritjit Singh (Ohio), and the Meenakshi Mukherjee prize winner Dr. Fatima Rizvi, as many as 48 researchers and scholars have read their papers over the three days of the conference. These include delegates from the US and from several states of India, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Bengal, Odisha, Mizoram, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Of the 48 researchers who read their papers at the conference, 31 were women and 17 men. Among the distinguished scholars who chaired the sessions at the conference were people drawn not only from the field of English Studies,

broadly understood, but also from such varied disciplines as political science, philosophy, mass communication and journalism, and West Asian Studies.



The prestigious CDN prize panel of the conference on which five research scholars presented their papers was highly competitive. At the end of a close contest, Ms. Amrapali Saha (CES, JNU) bagged the coveted prize. Another highlight of the conference was the Writers' Meet which featured such famous writers as Keki N Daruwalla, Subendu Mund, Namita Singh, Asif Naqwi, Tariq Chattari and Sami Rafiq. The cultural programme, which witnessed spellbinding musical and dramatic performances by the students of the Department of English, AMU and the AMU Music Club, also won plaudits from the conference delegates.

Plenary Sessions



Over the three days of the conference, the delegates, who met at three different venues at the Faculty of Arts complex, AMU, discussed questions around tolerance and bigotry, covering a wide range of topics within the rich and burgeoning body of Indian literatures in English. The topics discussed included progressive writers in Hindi and Urdu, Marathi and Telugu literature, Parsi authors, women's writing, popular literature, and film and song cultures. The conference

also paid a great deal of attention to subaltern literature, Dalit writing, tribal narratives, disability studies, literature from Northeast India, Kashmiri narratives, and texts from Kerala.

In the final analysis, it can be said that this conference has put on the table a rich set of questions concerning tolerance and bigotry vis-à-vis the vast, wide-ranging corpus of Indian literatures in English. Although all the questions have not been answered at the conference, I am sure that these questions will stay with us and set in motion a chain of future conversations, deliberations and research endeavours.



A.K Muneer
Assistant Professor
Aligarh Muslim University

IACLALS Annual Conference 2018
February 8 – 10, 2018
Aligarh Muslim University

‘Tolerance and Bigotry: Contestations in Indian Literatures in English’ – this was the theme of the three-day Annual International Conference of the IACLALS (Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies) this year. Hosted by the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) on 08-10 February 2018 at Aligarh, a place of great cultural and literary heritage, it was a memorable event for all of us.



Heritage it was -- visible everywhere. The Heritage Walk was only a part of the heritage journey. More than 60 participants and guests warmed up the chilly late winter days of the campus with their presentations and deliberations. As the report at the Valedictory said, there were 48 presenters in all, of which “31 were females and 17 males”.

The inaugural was graced by eminent academic and scholar Masood-ul Hasan as Chief Guest and noted poet and writer Keki N. Daruwalla with Mohd Asim Siddiqui, Chairperson, Department of English, GJV Prasad, Chairperson IACLALS, M. Asadduddin and Subhendu Mund, Vice Chairs, IACLALS, and Angelie Multani, Treasurer, IACLALS on the dais. The speakers expressed concern over the growing bigotry and intolerance and hoped that the scholarly deliberations in the coming three days would try to explore the various aspects of bigotry and intolerance in art, literature as well as the social fabric.



In his keynote address, eminent poet and writer Keki N. Daruwalla expressed his concern over the rise of intolerance. He said that writers need not necessarily be either ‘colluding or colliding’ with the political establishment. He concluded his speech by stating that writers have a right to have a voice of their own but they should avoid falling into binaries. He also averred that things are not as alarming as we think them to be, and by and large, Indian society believes

in tolerance and harmony. The keynote address was followed by two book releases: Subhendu Mund's *Odia Identity: History, Culture, Language, Literature* and M. Asaduddin's *Premchand: The Complete Short Stories*.

Like the previous year, this year too there were five finalists, as against the usual four in the CD Narasimhaiah panel: Srinjoyee Dutta (“‘Refugee from Belief’: ‘Affective’ Disunities and Ethno-Sexual Identity Formation in the Ghazals of Agha Shahid Ali”), Sania Hashmi (‘Anatomy of a Provocation: Bigoted Apostasy at the Limits of Intentional Fallacy’), Shinjini Basu (“Kunal Basu’s Kalkatta: Making the city Tolerable at its seams”), Amrapali Saha (‘The Liberation of Sita: Formulating a Feminist Mythopoesis’) and Chinmaya Lal Thakur (“Subalternity and the Question of Responsibility: Reading Upamanyu Chatterjee’s *English, August*”). As the Iaclals Chair indicated, the contest had been very tough from the very preliminary stage, and those present in the hall witnessed how close the papers were in merit. The Jury this year comprised Rohini Mokashi Punekar (IIT Guwahati) and Meena Pillai (University of Kerala) in the preliminary round; and Mohammad Asim Siddiqui (AMU), Amritjit Singh (Ohio University) and Margaret L. Pachuau (Mizoram University) during presentation.

The prestigious Meenakshi Mukherjee Prize went this year to Fatima Rizvi of Lucknow University for her published paper “Politics of Language, Cultural Representation and Historicity: ‘Shatranj ke Khiladi’ in Self-translation and Adaptation”. The judges were Rina Ramdev, Rita Kothari and Alex Tickell. It was wonderful to watch Dr Rizvi in conversation with Dr Asaduddin, the editor of the volume where the paper was published.

There were two plenaries this time: Professor Radhika Mohanram (Cardiff University) spoke on ‘Textures of Indian Memory’ and Prof. Amritjit Singh (Langston Hughes Professor of English, Ohio University) on the pedagogy of tolerance.

One of the highlights of the conference was the Writers’ Meet in which writings in various bhashas were presented by such well-known poets and writers of the country as Keki N. Daruwalla, Sami Rafiq, Tariq Chhatari, Namita Singh, Asif Naqvi and Subhendu Mund.

On the second day, there was a delightful cultural programme. It began with a ‘nukkad natak’ (street play) based on a story of Dr Rashid Jahan, followed by musical performance by the Western Music Club (AMU), and an adapted play ‘My Last Maharani’ (‘My Last Duchess’) staged by ‘The Raleigh Literary Society’ (Department of English, AMU).



Professor Emeritus Farhatullah Khan and Prof A. R. Kidwai, Director, Academic Staff College attended the Valedictory Session. Prof Subhendu Mund and Dr Siddhartha Chakraborti proposed the vote of thanks on behalf of Iaclals and AMU respectively.

Every year there is a general feeling that this year's conference is the best so far, and the warmth of hospitality was something which indeed touched everyone, thanks to the extremely caring organisers (which includes the ever-smiling students) and, on the top of everything, the delicious food which was served.

Subhendu Mund

Vice-Chair, IACLALS

India @70: Revisiting Memories and Histories of 1947

IIT-Kharagpur, 3-4 January 2018

The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur organized an International Interdisciplinary Seminar sponsored by the Indian Council of Social

Science Research (ICSSR) and the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) on 3-4 January 2018 to mark the 70th year of India's independence. The Seminar was jointly convened by Professor Anjali Gera Roy, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur and Professor Nandi Bhatia, University of Western Ontario, Canada. Thirty renowned and emerging scholars from universities in India, Canada, USA and Singapore revisited the events of 1947 in the two day Seminar, juxtaposing histories and memories of Independence. The Seminar began with a round table discussion on "History and Memories" featuring noted partition scholars Professor Gyanesh Kudaisya, National University of Singapore, Professor Sucheta Mahajan, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Professor Bodh Prakash of Ambedkar University Delhi, which was moderated by Professor Gopa Sabharwal, founding Vice Chancellor of Nalanda University.



Other well-known scholars included Professor Himadri Banerjee, former Guru Nanak Chair Professor in Indian History, Jadavpur University, Professor Bhaskar Chakraborty, Calcutta University and Professor Sukeshi Kamra, Carleton University, Canada. Professor Padmini Mongia of Franklin and Marshall College, USA presented a personal visual narrative of memories of Multan. Along with deliberating on political histories of Independence and partition, historians, sociologists and scholars in literary and cultural studies explored literary, cinematic and testimonial documents to trace the repercussions of the violence of partition across Punjab, Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir, Tripura, Mizoram and Assam. The Seminar also covered the effects of partition beyond the subcontinent in the diaspora to situate it in a global context. The evening saw the screening of two documentary films *Dere tun Dilli* by Shilpi Gulati and *A Thin Wall* directed by Mara Ahmed and co-produced by Surbhi Dewan that was attended by the larger community in Kharagpur. The Seminar concluded with a Workshop of Graduate students from various disciplines.

Fourth Anniversary of Sahitya Adda (Literary Rendezvous)

On 12 November 2017, the fourth anniversary of Sahitya Adda (Literary Rendezvous) was celebrated in a homely and congenial atmosphere at the house of Dr Bhaskar Roy Barman, Patron at Banamalipur (Miccle), Agartala, West Tripura, Tripura, India. The inaugural song was presented by Babli Dey. In his address of welcome, Dr Bhaskar Roy explained in detail why Sahitya Adda (Literary Rendezvous) has chosen to idolize Shakespeare, Kalidasa and Rabindranath Tagore. The address of welcome was followed by the reading of a poem by Anil Kumar Nath. In fact it was fortunate of him to have read his poem, because a comment thrown by Dr Bhaskar Roy Barman electrified the assemblage of poets and scholars. Other poets who brought their poems to read and the scholars who had prepared themselves to speak forgot to read their poems and deliver their speeches. The comment was ‘All great men are liars.’ One of the guests present asked whether Dr Roy Barman meant to say Shakespeare, Kalidasa and Rabindranath Tagore that Sahitya Adda (Literary Rendezvous) idolizes are all liars. Dr Roy Barman replied that it would not be possible for them to understand his comment by the sense in which the word ‘Liar’ is commonly used. He meant to say that all great men are inconsistent fellows and inconsistency is their forte. There is no untruth in great literature. Surendra Debnath asked Dr Roy Barman to explain about the truth of literature. Dr Roy Barman said what great men perceive through their mind’s eyes is truth and it is the truth of great literature. Subimal Roy spoke a few words to support Dr Roy Barman’s comment. Other poets and writers also participated in the lively discussion. At the end of the discussion all poets and scholars unisonantly commented that it is at Sahitya Adda that every poet and writer has freedom to speak and express his or her view. Prof. Saroj Choudhury earlier on voiced the same comment and asked Roy Barman to organize a short discussion on folklore.

Dr Bhaskar Roy Barman

“Protest of Peace”

The Sarvodaya International Trust (New Delhi Chapter) in collaboration with the India International Centre, New Delhi, organized “Protest of Peace” on the occasion of Martyr’s Day on 27th January, 2018 at the C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium (IIC). The program was anchored and introduced by Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath (Trustee, SIT, NDC) who spoke about the imperativeness of invoking Gandhi’s relevance and his principle of ahimsa in light of the deeply unsettling times of flaring communal tensions in the country. She emphasized Gandhi’s attempts to imbibe womanly qualities into the nationalist struggle as a clear statement against

the prevalent muscular and masculinist politics. Ms. Ritu Menon, critic and publisher Women Unlimited, delivered a talk on “When Women Wage Peace”, beginning with a poignant poem by Mamang Dai. She spoke of how Non-violence could be understood as a more active form of resistance, not meant for the faint-hearted, and how women over the ages have resisted armed conflict in a sustained manner. She referred in detail to the event and implications of women’s protest against Manorama Devi’s brutal rape and killing in Imphal. She concluded by reiterating the fact that repression itself is gendered and women have always resisted repression in their own, unique way.

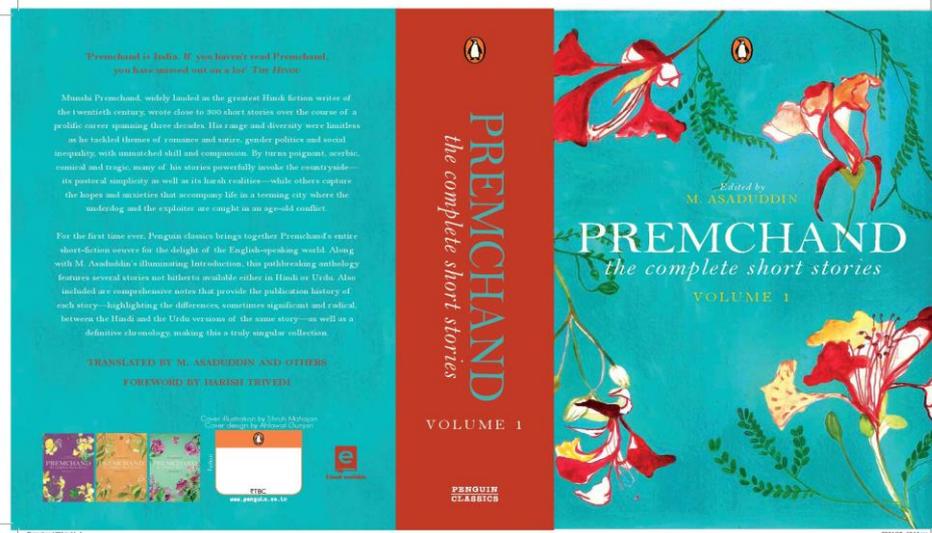


This was followed by Professor Sumangala Damodaran (Ambedkar University) and Mark Aranha’s musical rendition of “Singing Resistance” where she sang several iconic songs of resistance, including some from IPTA, a song from the times of the Bengal Famine (early 1940s), and Padma Vibhushan Bhupen Hazarika’s iconic song “Dola”. Padma Shri and Sahitya awardee Sh. Keki N. Daruwalla recited a few of his poems, including “Jerusalem”. The formal vote of thanks was delivered by Indira Varma.

Kalyanee Rajan, New Delhi



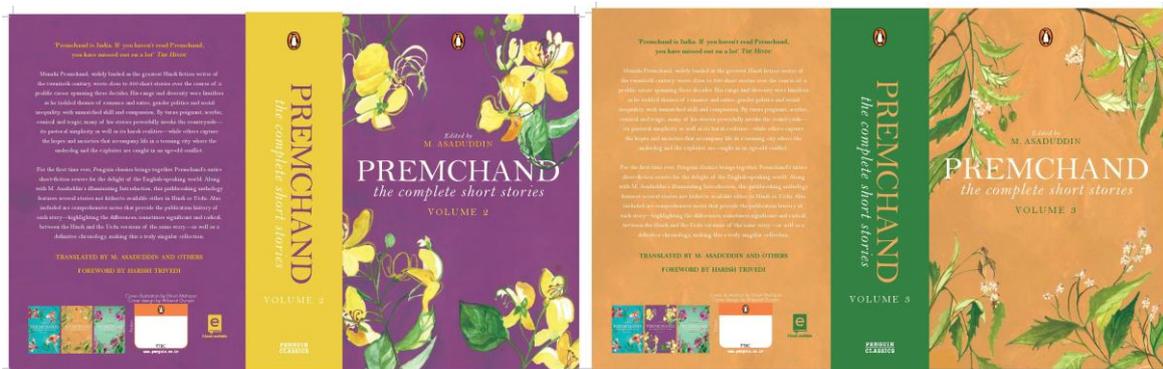
BOOK OVERVIEW



Premchand: The Complete Short Stories
Volumes 1-4
TRANSLATED BY M. ASADUDDIN AND OTHERS
Penguin

Salient features:

- Carries **300 stories** written by Premchand, translated into English.
- Some stories like “Dara Shikoh ka Durbar” and “Janjal” and two parts of the three-part story “Daru-e Talkh” which were not available earlier either in Hindi or Urdu: excavated here from rare sources, and made available for the **first time**.
- Taken together, the volumes constitute **3264 pages** of dense printed material, running into more than **1500,000 words**.
- The volumes offer a **comprehensive view of Premchand**, the classic, in all his shades.
- There is a comprehensive ‘Foreword’ by **Harish Trivedi** and an **extensive Introduction** by the editor, **M. Asaduddin**.



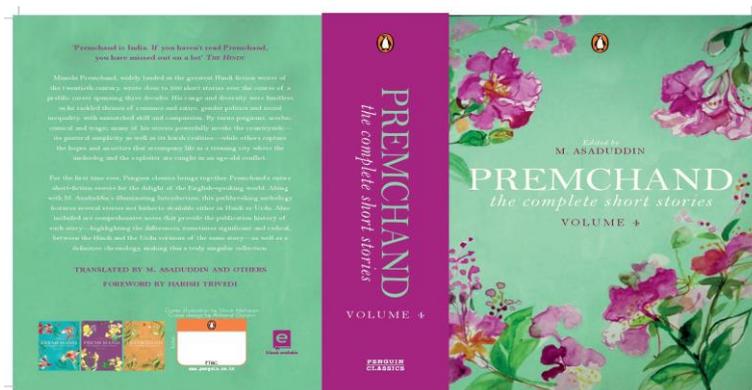
Overview

'It is impossible to arrive at any kind of assessment of modern Indian literature without taking full account of Premchand . . . These four volumes deserve a place on the bookshelf of every lover of modern fiction, in India or elsewhere'

SHAMSUR RAHMAN FARUQI

Munshi Premchand, widely lauded as the greatest Hindi fiction writer of the twentieth century, wrote close to 300 short stories over the course of a prolific career spanning three decades. His range and diversity were limitless as he tackled themes of romance and satire, gender politics and social inequality, with unmatched skill and compassion. By turns poignant, acerbic, comical and tragic, many of his stories powerfully invoke the countryside - its pastoral simplicity as well as its harsh realities - while others capture the hopes and anxieties that accompany life in a teeming city where the underdog and the exploiter are caught in an age-old conflict.

For the first time ever, Penguin Classics brings together Premchand's entire short-fiction oeuvre for the delight of the English-speaking world. Along with M. Asaduddin's illuminating Introduction, this path breaking anthology features several stories not hitherto available either in Hindi or Urdu. Also included are comprehensive notes that provide the publication history of each story - highlighting the differences, sometimes significant and radical, between the Hindi and the Urdu versions of the same story - as well as a definitive chronology, making this a truly singular collection.



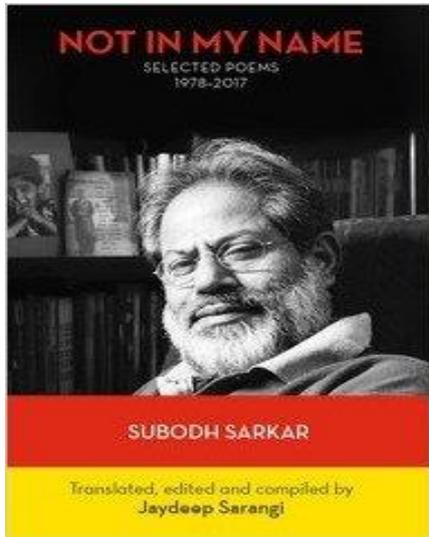
About the Editor

Author, critic and translator in several languages **Mohd Asaduddin** writes on literature, language politics and translation studies. He is currently Professor of English, and former Dean,

Faculty of Humanities and Languages, and Director, Jamia Centenary History Project at Jamia Millia Islamia University in New Delhi, India. He was Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA, during 2008-2009, where he taught two courses – Literature in a Global Context and Postcolonial Literature. In the same year he led a Presidential seminar, “Literature and Culture in Islam: Perspectives from South Asia”, at Raritan Valley Community College, New Jersey, USA. Earlier he was a Charles Wallace Trust Fellow at the British Centre for Literary Translation at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, in 2000. He has lectured/ led workshops at the universities of Delhi, Kolkata, Dhaka, Paris, Oxford, Cambridge, East Anglia, Chicago, Rutgers, New York, St. Louis, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Among his books are: *Premchand in World Languages: Translation, reception and cinematic representations* (Routledge, 2016), *Filming Fiction: Tagore, Premchand and Ray* (Oxford U Press, 2012), *A Life in Words* (Penguin, 2012), *The Penguin Book of Classic Urdu Stories* (2006), *Lifting the Veil: Selected Writings of Ismat Chughtai* (Penguin, 2001), *For Freedom’s Sake: Manto* (Oxford U Press, 2002), *Joseph Conrad: Between Culture and Colonialism*, and (with Mushirul Hasan), *Image and Representation: Stories of Muslim Lives in India* (Oxford U Press, 2000). He is the Vice Chair, Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (IACLALS). He is a regular speaker at literary festivals on translated literature and Translation Studies, and has received the following prizes for his translation: Katha Award, Dr A.K. Ramanujan Award, Sahitya Akademi (National Academy of Letters) Award and Crossword Book Award.

Available on Amazon: https://www.amazon.in/Complete-Short-Stories-Vol-1-4/dp/0143441132/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1517456167&sr=1-1

BOOK OVERVIEW



Not in My Name: Selected Poems (1978–2017)

Subodh Sarkar (Sahitya Akademi Award-winning poet) and Jaydeep Sarangi (translator)

Authorspress, New Delhi, 2018. Rs. 390

About the Author:

Subodh Sarkar's first book of poems was published in the 1970s, and now he has 31 books to his credit. He recently participated in the IWP, University of Iowa as a Fulbright fellow. He is a recipient of the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award (New Delhi), Gangadhar National Award for Poetry (Sambalpur University) and Bangla Academy Award (Kolkata). He is now the Chairman of 'Kobita Academy', Kolkata. Sarkar is the editor of *Bhashanagar*, a Bengali culture magazine with occasional English issues. He was the guest editor of *Indian Literature*, New Delhi. He teaches English at City College, Kolkata.

About the Translator

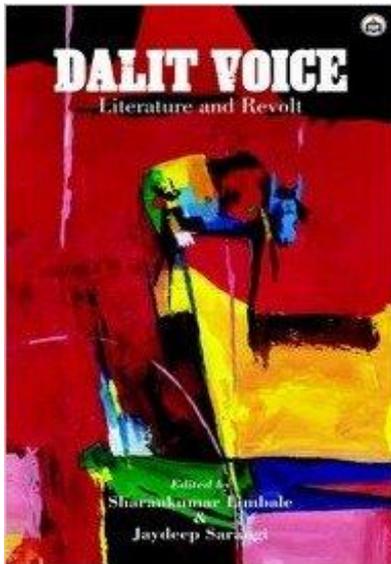
Jaydeep Sarangi is a bilingual academic, poet and translator anchored in Kolkata. He is one of the translators/editors of *Surviving in My World: Growing up Dalit in Bengal*. He is the Vice President of 'Guild of Indian English Writers Editors and Critics'. Sarangi is a senior faculty in the Department of English, Jogesh Chandra Chaudhuri College (University of Calcutta), Kolkata.

About the Book

Subodh Sarkar's poems shimmer with an audacity of simplicity, openness and lucidity which mark his poetic idioms subtle, specific and razor-sharp where the poetic corpus retains as an inviting discourse. Love is a companion of the poetic soul. The poet wants to sign in the 'peace accord' of minds. Subodh Sarkar allows his poetry to speak for an artist's responsibility towards life, contexts and manners of the time. These poems bring out the poet's social, historical, political and economic dimensions to the reading world. He celebrates things happening around him every day; humbled by time's magic hands. This is a selection from the poems he has written over the last four decades.

Amazon link: <https://www.amazon.in/Not-My-Name-Selected-1978-2017/dp/B079CLKP5W>

BOOK OVERVIEW



Dalit Voice: Literature and Revolt

Sharankumar Limbale and Jaydeep Sarangi

Authorspress, New Delhi, 278 pp., 2018. Rs. 1200.

About the Book:

The stigma of "caste based discrimination" is attached as soon as one is born in a scheduled caste family. *Dalit Voice: Literature and Revolt* is by far the first book on dalit studies to cover dalit situation of different parts of India. It is a variegated caravan, a lighted discourse of resistance and emancipation. The book aims at a dalit standpoint; 'a politics of difference'

or 'discourse of discontent' from the mainstream Indian criticism. The standpoint is a project not an inheritance; it is achieved. Dalit woman needs to break her silence. Some essays in the book give voice to her subjectivity and lived experiences.

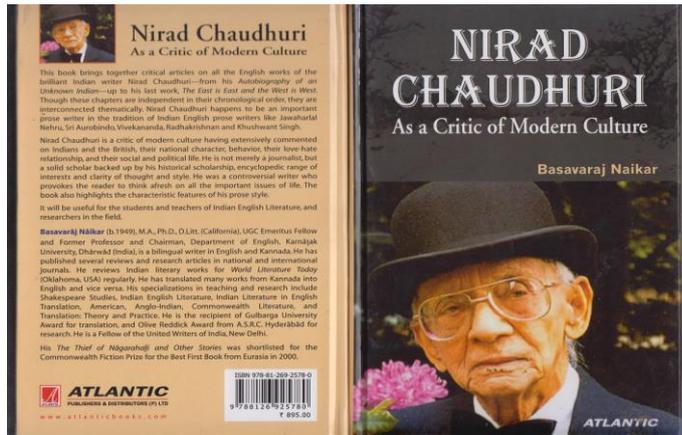
About the Editors

Sharankumar Limbale is a Marathi language author, poet and literary critic. He has penned more than 40 books. He is best known for his autobiographical novel *Akkarmashi*. *Akkarmashi* is translated in several other Indian languages and in English. The English translation is published by the Oxford University Press with the title *The Outcaste*. His critical work *Towards an Aesthetics of Dalit Literature* (2004) is considered amongst the signal works on Dalit literature.

Jaydeep Sarangi has several seminal publications on dalit studies in important journals like *Transnational Literature*, *Writers in Conversation* (Australia), *Text Matters* (Poland), *Le Simplegadi* (Italy), *JSL* (India) and *Muse India*. He is a review editor for *Contemporary Voice of Dalit* (Sage Publication). Sarangi is a senior faculty, Dept. of English, Jogesh Chandra Chaudhuri College (University of Calcutta), Kolkata. He may be reached at jaydeepsarangi@gmail.com

Amazon link: <https://www.amazon.in/Dalit-Voice-Literature-Sharankumar-Limbale/dp/B079DM7YRN>

BOOK OVERVIEW



Nirad Chaudhuri: As a Critic of Modern Culture
By [Basavaraj Naikar](#)
Atlantic, 327 pp., 2017.

About the Book:

This book brings together critical articles on all the English works of the brilliant Indian writer Nirad Chaudhuri — from his *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* — up to his last work, *The East is East and the West is West*. Though these chapters are independent in their chronological order, they are interconnected thematically. Nirad Chaudhuri happens to be an important prose writer in the tradition of Indian English prose writers like Jawaharlal Nehru, Sri Aurobindo, Vivekananda, Radhakrishnan and Khushwant Singh.

Nirad Chaudhuri is a critic of modern culture having extensively commented on Indians and the British, their national character, behaviour, their love-hate relationship, and their social and political life. He is not merely a journalist, but a solid scholar backed up by his historical scholarship, encyclopedic range of interests and clarity of thought and style. He was a controversial writer who provokes the reader to think afresh on all the important issues of life. The book also highlights the characteristic features of his prose style.

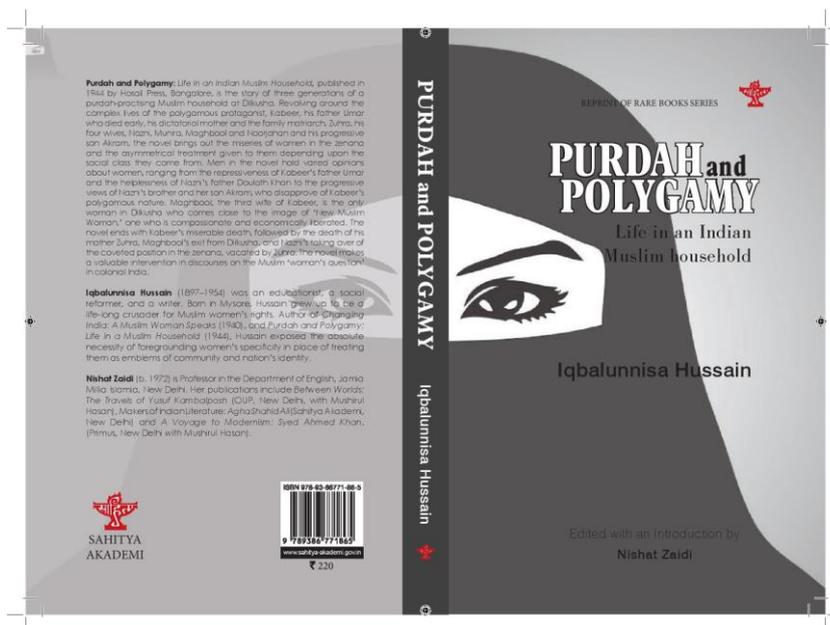
It will be useful for the students and teachers of Indian English Literature, and researchers in the field.

About the Author:

Basavaraj Naikar did his M. A.(English) from Karnataka University, Ph. D. from Gulbarga University and D. Litt. from California University. Presently he is working as Professor of

English and Chairman of the Department of English, Karnataka University, Dharwad. He has so far written 8 books (five in English and 3 in Kannada language), besides editing eight books and translating nine books. His notable publications include *Thief of Nagarahalli & other stories*, *The Rebellious Rani of Belavadi & other stories*, *The Sun Behind the Cloud* (a historical novel) and *Shakespeare's Last Plays: A study in Epic Affirmation*.

BOOK OVERVIEW



Purdah and Polygamy: Life in an Indian Muslim Household
By [Iqbalunnisa Hussain](#), ed. Nishat Zaidi
Sahitya Akademi

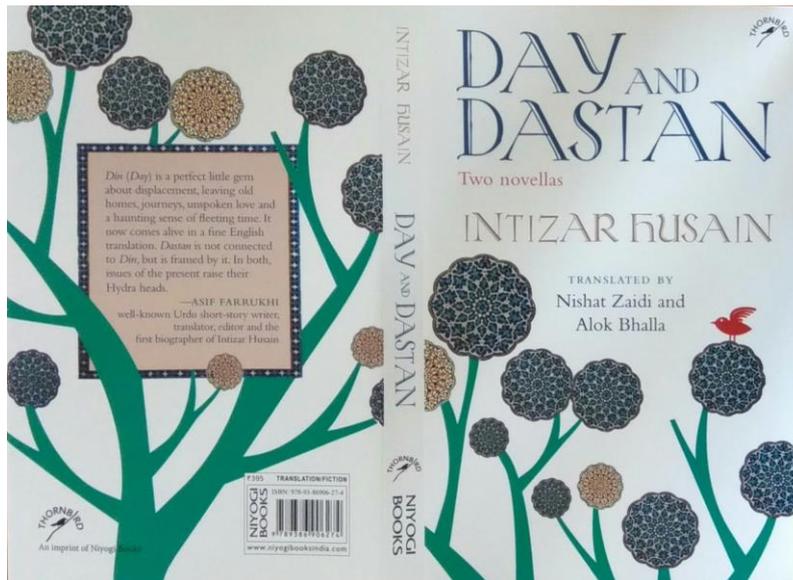
About the Author:

Iqbalunnisa Hussain was a women's rights activist, educationalist, and reformer. She was the author of several books, including *Changing India: A Muslim Woman Speaks* (OUP, 2015), a groundbreaking autobiographical and contemporary reflection on social issues, originally published in Bangalore, India, in 1940. She is one of the first Muslim women to write a full-length novel in English during the pre-Partition era and has also been called the 'Jane Austen of India' by Sir R. Reddy, Vice Chancellor of Andhra University.

About the Editor:

Nishat Zaidi is Professor at the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Languages, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. A translator and critic, she focuses on Indian Literature in English Translation. Her research interests include postcolonial writings, Indian literatures in English translation, Feminist Studies and American poetry. She translates from Urdu and Hindi into English and vice versa. Her recent publications include *Makers of Indian Literature: Agha Shahid Ali* (Sahitya Akademi, 2014), *Between Worlds: The Travels of Yusuf Kambalposh* (OUP, 2014 with Mushirul Hasan), *Pencil and Other Poems* (Tr. Sahitya Akademi, 2014), *A Voyage to Modernism: Syed Ahmed Khan* (Primus, 2011; co-author: Mushirul Hasan), *Makers of Indian Literature: Makhdoom Muhiuddin* (Sahitya Akademi, 2009), and *Ghalib Aur Unka Yug* (Sahitya Akademi: 2008).

BOOK OVERVIEW



Day and Dastan

by [Intizar Husain](#) (Author), [Nishat Zaidi](#) (Translator), [Alok Bhalla](#) (Translator)
Niyogi Books, 192 pp., 2018-04-19

About the Author:

Intizar Husain was born in Dibrugarh, India in 1925 and migrated to Pakistan in 1947. His published works include seven collections of short stories, five novels, nine plays, travelogues and essays in Urdu and English. His works have been translated into many of the world languages. He was

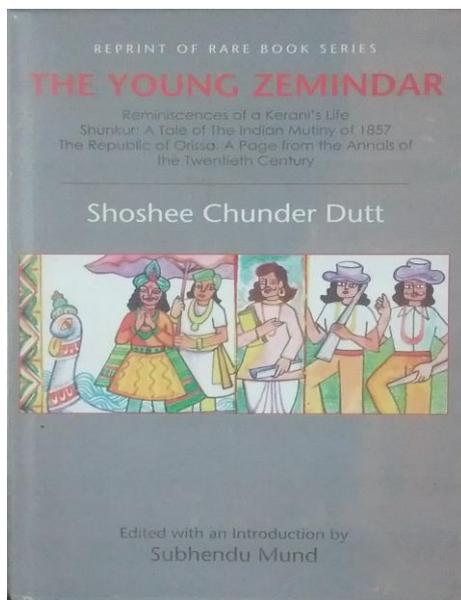
the recipient of many literary awards, his novel *Basti* was short-listed for the Man Booker International prize in 2013. In 2012, he was given the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Lahore Literary Festival and in 2014, he was conferred the French Officer de L'Ordre des Arts et des Letters. He passed away in 2016.

About the Translators:

Nishat Zaidi is a Professor, Department of English at the Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. A scholar, critic and translator, she has a number of published works to her credit. She has co-edited *Story is a Vagabond: Fiction, Essays and Drama* by Intizar Husain (Special Issue of Manoa, University of Hawaii, 2015)

Alok Bhalla has published extensively on literature, translation and politics. He was recently a Fellow at Mahatma Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram and at the Institute for Advanced Study at Nantes, France. His recent publications include *Story is a Vagabond: Fiction, Essays and Drama* by Intizar Huisain and *A Chronicle of the Peacocks* (stories by Intizar Husain).

BOOK OVERVIEW



Subhendu Mund. Edited with an Introduction, Notes, Bibliographies, References

***The Young Zemindar* [1883] and other fictional works: *The Republic of Orissa: A Page from the Annals of the Twentieth Century* [1845], *Reminiscences of a Kerani's Life* [1872-**

73]; and *Shunkur: A Tale Of The Indian Mutiny of 1857 [1874]*) by Shoshee Chunder Dutt.

Reprint of Rare Book Series. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2017. ISBN: 978-81-260-4618-8. pp. lxii, 611. Rs. 600

Subhendu Mund. *Odia Identity: History, Language, Culture, Literature*. Bhubaneswar: Odisha. Sahitya Akademi, 2017. ISBN: 978-81-93610558. pp. 280. Rs. 250. Odia

Subhendu Mund. (Co-Editor/Co-Compiler) *Chalanti Odia Abhidhan* [Dictionary of Current Odia]. Bhubaneswar: Odisha Sahitya Akademi, 2017. pp. 866. ISBN: 978-93-87637-03-4. Rs 500/-



CALL FOR PAPERS: CONFERENCES / VOLUMES

SPECIAL ISSUE ON ASIAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, FILM, AND ANIMATION

CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue on Asian Children's Literature,

Film, and Animation

December 2018

Guest Editor: Bernard Wilson

This special edition of *SARE: Southeast Asian Review of English* invites papers on Asian children's literature, film and animation, and on intercultural and cross-cultural comparisons between Asian (Eastern, Southeastern, and Southern) cultures and other children's literature and film. Papers may include - but are not limited to - analyses and comparisons of traditional children's stories such as fairy tales, folklore, myths, fables and legends, as well as young adult fiction, such as fantasy and realistic fiction and film. Papers may deal with one specific genre or culture, or may involve cross-cultural comparisons.

SARE is particularly interested in these thematic areas:

1. Southeast Asian children's literature and film.
2. Representations of other Asian societies or cultures in children's literature, film or animation.
3. Representations of gender expectations and gender roles in children's literature, film or animation from these regions.
4. Representations of cultural and ethnic aspects in Asian children's literature, film or animation.
5. Crossing borders in children's literature, film, or animation, which may also include translated texts.

The deadline for submission of full papers (5000-7000 words) is **30 September 2018**. All papers should be submitted in English and uploaded to the *SARE* website at sare.um.edu.my.

Further submission guidelines can be found on our website.

If you have any questions related to the special issue, please send an e-mail to sarejournal@gmail.com.

About the Guest Editor:

Associate Professor Bernard Wilson teaches at the University of the Sacred Heart, Rikkyo University, and Gakushuin University. He has spent the past two decades teaching at universities in Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Japan and specializes in postcolonial literature, children's literature, and cinema. He is widely published in Southeast Asian literature in English, Indian and Chinese diaspora literatures, and East/West theory, and his work has appeared in leading international journals in the United States, Asia, Australia, and the U.K. He is currently writing a monograph on Western cinematic interpretations of Asia.

**Digital Humanities Alliance of India (DHAI) 2018 Inaugural Conference-
June 1 and 2, 2018**

Venue: IIT INDORE and IIM INDORE

In his recent polemical piece, noted academic and cultural critic, Timothy Brennan calls Digital Humanities, a “bust” and declares: “[a]fter a decade of investment and hype, what has the field accomplished? Not much.” Brennan’s critique of DH, amongst others, is that “[DH] promises to break the book format without explaining why one might want to — even as books, against all predictions, doggedly persist, filling the airplane hangar-sized warehouses of Amazon.com.” What remains potently interesting is that Brennan’s questioning of DH and its machine-oriented methodology[ies] is itself rooted in an Anglo-American episteme: one that has continuously promoted the “print medium” as the only legitimate paradigm for advancing worthwhile humanistic inquiry. We juxtapose Brennan’s provocative piece with the experience of disparate and disruptive forms of DH in India—often an outlier to Anglo-American argument strains— to frame this CFP for the first Digital Humanities Alliance of India (DHAI) Conference in June 2018.

Taking off from Padmini Ray Murray’s comment at the Digital Diversity 2015 conference: “your DH is not my DH,” the DHAI 2018 conference hopes to critically discuss the possibility of disrupting dominant assumptions about the nature and form of DH. Through a self-reflexive reminder that DH practices are contingent and situated, we would like to explore how postcolonial digital performances are about the need to forge our own (humanistic) practices

that may find overlaps but may possibly and necessarily be divergent from Euro-American DH methodologies. Deeply cognizant of the fundamentally different terrains as well as institutional and national histories that shape our experiences in India, the inaugural DHAI conference is committed to deciphering through interrogations, intersections and rigorous deliberations how DH theory and praxis converge (or not), within these physically and discursively diverse spaces.

For this first edition of the Annual DHAI conference, we invite academics, scholars, practitioners, artists, students and interested stakeholders to not only propose operational questions like “Does India have the required technological framework and/or the required levels of access provided to different intersectional identities to implement a DH curriculum at the school and university levels?” but also questions of ontology: should knowledge frameworks be substantially reconceptualized keeping in mind technological exigencies and if so, what is the role of the Humanities in developing the contextual (local) theoretical vocabulary? In other words, what are the methodological challenges in decolonizing knowledge structures? Does the Digital matter and does it matter differently in a postcolonial space such as India?

Paper/Panel topics might include (but are not limited to) those that address:

- Digital Pedagogy
- Digital Literacy
- New knowledge archives
- Cultural heritage work
- Digital genealogies
- The role of the Digital in Social justice in South Asia

Please submit your panel and paper proposals to the conference organisers at dibyadyutir@iimidr.ac.in and nmenon@iiti.ac.in by April 30, 2018

- Panel proposals (150-200 word abstract). Panels will last for 90 minutes, and it is advisable that proposals allow sufficient time for the presentation of papers as well as discussion.
- Independent papers (100-150 word abstract). These will be allocated to suitable panels by the conference organizers.

The Conference is expected to be held in Indore during June 1-2, 2018. More information about the venues, dates as well travel support for student delegates will be shared soon.

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR CAESURAE SPECIAL FEATURE

VOLUME 3: ISSUE 1

(www.caesurae.org)

Patterns of Art and Cultural Confluence in Pre-Modern time

The sensibilities of Indian visual art are diverse and complex. India, being such a large country, pluralism of thoughts and ideas, concepts and configurations are its unique elements. It has evolved over the years by imbibing, mingling and transmitting a wide variety of styles, trends, approaches and aspirations. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the cultural borrowing that has shaped the Indian art in pre-modern times, both from regions within the country and the impetus that travelled from outside. We invite papers that will look at regional transmission – how the neighbouring zones have influenced each other's architecture, painting and sculpture as well as the influences travelling from outside like Persian elements in Mughal painting and architecture, Hellenistic in Gandhara or the interaction between the artistic vocabulary of Nepal, Tibet, China, Sri Lanka and South East Asia.

The papers should be mailed to Dr Rajasri Mukhopadhyay.

Email: rajasrichithi@gmail.com

Ecotones: Encounters, Crossings, and Communities

2015-2020

Ecotones 4 - Partitions and Borders

at Jadavpur University and West Bengal State University

December 12-15, 2018

in partnership with

Concordia University (Montreal, Canada), EMMA (Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3)

&MIGRINTER (CNRS-Université de Poitiers)

<https://emma.www.univ-montp3.fr/fr/valorisation-partenariats/programmes-europeens-et-internationaux/ecotones>

An ‘ecotone’ is a transitional area between two or more distinct ecological communities, for instance the zone between field and forest, mountain and ocean, or between sea and land. The two ecosystems may be separated by a sharp boundary line or may merge gradually. An ‘ecotone’ may also indicate a place where two communities meet, at times creolizing or germinating into a new community.

After the first three conferences held in Montpellier, Poitiers and Reunion island, ‘Ecotones 4’ will focus on one area that has served as an ecotone for centuries. This is the area of Bengal in East India, an ecotone area between Europe, the Indian subcontinent and the Far East. With its unique position, the region has been criss-crossed for centuries, by travellers, traders, colonists, refugees, pirates and missionaries of diverse racial, religious, linguistic, regional and national affiliations from all over the globe.

In this conference we will explore how a region functions through history as a transitional space between two ecologies. Do these ecotone spaces echo the distinct notes of its two borders, or do these spaces create a unique melody of their own and constitute a third space? How do these ecotone spaces reflect the dynamic flow of people into and out of its precincts? Do they have essential attributes that impact the people who call the ecotone their home? The studies on the culture and the geography of these areas will also enquire into the vulnerability of the ecosystems and of the populations in these areas, the former experiencing a persistent burden from the latter who source their livelihoods from their habitat, while the latter have to bear the brunt of myriad forms of assault.

During its centuries-old history, the region of Bengal has been a space that, like the people who inhabit it, came to be dynamic in nature. This has been a space that has, through history, granted refuge to many — a history that was made possible because of its unique geographical terrain, making it, paradoxically, both easy to access and difficult to monitor. This aspect has been accentuated by the political position of this ecotone area, situated between two nations, and on the Bay that opens into South-east Asia.

Bengal is a transitional zone where the urban and urbane space of North India dissolve into the marshy, rural world of the Gangetic delta; it is a transcultural zone where the racial and cultural ‘purity’ of Brahminical and Mughal India gave way to a syncretic mixture of languages, cultures and ethnicities; it is a transcolonial zone where French, British and other European

interests intersected and creolized. This plurality can be seen reflected in the cultural and religious practices, in popular and classical art cultures, in public institutions and architecture, as well as in the folklores and customs of the place.

In order to explore the ecotonal nature of the territory from an interdisciplinary perspective, the conference will identify geographical areas, environmental concerns, historical periods and cultural fields which have been ecotone areas of conflict, confluence and transition.

The proposed areas of interest of this conference will be around the following issues:

- 1) Migration into and out of the ecotone area,
- 2) Socio-cultural and economic aspects of such im/migrations,
- 3) Trans-regional ties as a consequence of these im/migrations,
- 4) Fluidity and porosity of borders,
- 5) Heterogeneity and confluence of identities
- 6) political definition and redefinition of borders and identities
- 7) changes in the geographical map of the region and its impact upon the nature of the ecotone
- 8) natural calamities and forced migrations

The conference will work at three distinct levels:

- a) academic — with scholarly papers that analyse the historical, political, socio-cultural and anthropological aspects of the area;
- b) cultural — through story-telling via folklore, textile cultures, songs and *pats* (pictures);
- c) performative/auto-ethnographic — first-person accounts of people who have either arrived or transited through the area driven by a diversity of reasons ranging from those of livelihood, to that of natural and man-made calamities.

We trust the strong regional focus will give a specificity to the conference, which may then be useful in comprehending the patterns of human behaviour and history to arrive at theoretical or thematic understanding of ecotone areas, in Bengal and elsewhere.

We invite contributors to upload their proposals (a 250-word abstract, title, author's name, a 150-word bio, and contact) to the conference website: [Ecotones 4 Kolkata](#)

Each presentation will be 20 minutes (followed by discussion time). All methodological and theoretical approaches are welcomed. We also invite creative interventions suggesting fresh topics. A selection of papers will be considered for publication at the conclusion of the series of 'Ecotones' events.

Venues: Jadavpur University and West Bengal State University

Dates: 12-15 December, 2018

Language: English

Deadline to send a proposal: March 15, 2018

Notification of acceptance: April 15, 2018

Scientific committee

Prof Sucheta Bhattacharya, Jadavpur University, India

sucheta.bhattacharya@gmail.com

Dr Thomas Lacroix, MIGRINTER, CNRS, Université de Poitiers, France

thomas.lacroix@univ-poitiers.fr

Dr Judith Misrahi-Barak, EMMA, Université Paul-Valéry, Montpellier 3, France

judith.misrahi-barak@univ-montp3.fr

Dr Nalini Mohabir, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada

nalini.mohabir@concordia.ca

Prof Maggi Morehouse, Coastal Carolina University, SC, USA

morehouse@coastal.edu

Prof Sipra Mukherjee, English Department, West Bengal State University, India

mukherjeesipra@gmail.com

Dr Urvi Mukhopadhyay, History Department, West Bengal State University, India

urvitinni@yahoo.com

Organising committee

Prof. Sucheta Bhattacharya, Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University

Prof. Sipra Mukherjee, English Department, West Bengal State University

Dr. UrviMukhopadhyay, History Department, West Bengal State University

‘Ecotones’ Program Coordinators

Dr Thomas Lacroix (MIGRINTER, CNRS, Université de Poitiers)

Dr Judith Misrahi-Barak (EMMA, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3, France)

Prof Maggi Morehouse (Coastal Carolina University, SC, USA)

Call for Papers: The Future of Women

Special Issue

Gender Issues

A special issue of *Gender Issues* is now open for submission of articles by those conducting original applied research related to the future of women and gender conceptualization. We seek manuscripts that re-visit a women’s rights agenda and provide new insights into feminist anti-patriarchal strategies in the face of ethnonationalism, religious intolerance, and retrograde ideologies regarding gender, caste, race, ethnicity, and sexuality. We invite a critical discussion of issues including (but not limited to):

- Poverty of women,
- Unequal access to education,
- Lack and unequal access to health care systems,
- Violence against women,
- Vulnerabilities of women in armed conflict,
- Inequality in economic structures,
- Inequalities in power and decision-making,
- Institutional mechanisms to improve the advancement of women,
- Inadequate protection of human rights,
- Under-representation/misrepresentation of women in the media and movies
- Inequalities in natural resource management and in the safeguarding of the environment, and

- The discrimination and violation of the girl child.

Innovative approaches to these questions are particularly welcome. A general description of what the journal seeks to publish follows:

Date for Submissions: 7 April, 2018

Suggested Publication Date: December 2018

Inquiries and submissions: <https://www.editorialmanager.com/geis/default.aspx>

Please visit <http://link.springer.com/journal/12147> for further details. Special attention should be paid to the "For Authors and Editors" section, which includes information about preparing the manuscript for submission. Authors should include abstracts and brief bios. Authors should submit through the Editorial Manager system and *insert a note* that this article should be saved for the "Future of Women-Special Issue".

Guest Editor: Dr. Anita Singh is a professor in the Department of English and Co-coordinator of the Centre for Women's Studies and Development at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India. Dr. Singh is the conference chair to the 2018 *International Conference on the Future of Women*.

Gender Issues is multidisciplinary and cross-national in scope focusing on gender and gender equity. The journal publishes basic and applied research examining gender relationships as well as the impact of economic, legal, political, and social forces on those relationships across four domains:

1. Understanding gender socialization, personality, and behaviour in a gendered context.
2. Exploring the wide range of relationships within the gender spectrum, such as acquaintances, friendships, romantic, and professional relationships.
3. Assessing the impact of economic, legal, political, and social changes on gender identity, expression, and gender relations.
4. Interpreting the impact of economic, legal, political, and social changes on the aspirations, status and roles of people internationally.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Uncommon Commonwealth

15-19 July 2019, submissions due August 2018

The University of Auckland Grafton Campus, Aotearoa New Zealand

‘The job of holding the center . . . is often done by the men from the provinces, from the outskirts. Contrary to popular belief, the outskirts are not where the world ends—they are precisely where it begins to unfurl.’

(Joseph Brodsky)

‘Is heaven also made in Taiwan? And does Jesus really know how to speak Samoan?’

(Sia Figiel, *The Girl in the Moon Circle*)

In its modern history, the Commonwealth has provided an uncommonly flexible set of social, political, legal and economic forms of association. Founded in British colonialism, it conducts its business in a more or less common language, English and, arguably, shares core cultural values. But the Commonwealth is marked by the distinct topographies, histories, ethnicities and indigenous languages of its member states, variously confronting post-independence, the legacy of Britain’s “masks of conquest”.

It is uncommon in that it survives—albeit haphazardly—as its members are drawn into new strategic alliances and loyalties. But how successful is this survival? Does this new Commonwealth matter, and how long will it last? How important are the traditional commonalities of language, legal systems and political values among countries of such different experiences and concerns? How does literature figure in this mix? Is it less or more truly the case that, as Rushdie asserted thirty years ago, “Commonwealth literature does not exist”? If so, does it not-exist differently? Has Commonwealth culture, including its literatures, been overtaken by new forms of transnational association driven by globalising forces? The Commonwealth now looks unfixed, in ways that mesh with notions of postcoloniality, yet it refuses to accommodate strictly to postcolonial theory. This Commonwealth, no longer dominated or unified by the traditional metropole, increasingly seems structured by rhizomatic connections, converting traditional passages of migration and commerce into reversals and redirections, speaking sideways or talking back.

How does this work out for language and literature? In particular, acknowledging the venue for this conference, how does this work out within the South Pacific? How does the South Pacific, including the settler societies of New Zealand and Australia, now relate to major continental Commonwealth neighbours like Canada, South Africa and India? Is the cultural orientation of India and Canada intra-continental, rather than intra-Commonwealth?

Within this re-shaping of Commonwealth identities lies another uncommonality: the various dismantlings of British colonies have resulted in new modes of regional alliance; paradoxically, perhaps, they also prompt efforts to articulate a new cosmopolitanism. Who is our neighbour? In an age of mass travel and unbounded popular culture, Commonwealth countries are inevitably engaged in globally current issues; new technologies give a place in popular consciousness to crises of famine, population displacement and massive inequality. Does contemporary literature work this way? Correlatively, it might be argued that cosmopolitanism, a new order of universal sympathy – including its claimed association with the novel – has emerged from the patched up history of this uncommon Commonwealth.

What we share may no longer be our unifying factor: commonly, now, we seek instead to restore, document, celebrate and develop our differences. To be uncommon in this fashion, however, may still be to participate in the unfurling of the world, with the peculiar support of Commonwealth histories of dismantling and re-formation. Or to be uncommon may be to speak with our own voices and to determine our own trajectories, to do “unheard of things” with English, our uncommonly common tongue.

We invite proposals for papers and creative submissions that tackle how new cultural and literary formations have emerged in the modern Commonwealth, or ways in which writing and culture address this pluri-form modern order. The following list of topics is indicative, not exclusive. We are keen to receive proposals for linked or associated papers from panels of speakers.

Topics:

- ‘Unheard of things’: Indigenous languages and literatures.
- ‘Imaginary Homelands’: migration, metamorphosis and nostalgia.
- Living on the edge: islands and beaches.
- Nationhood, nationalism and internationalism.
- Transnationalism, regionalism, south-to-south relationships.

- New migrants, refugees and cultural transplantation.
- Racism and tribalism.
- New definitions of race, ethnicity and language.
- Colonial vestiges and ruins: monuments, public spaces, architecture.
- New spaces, identities and/or hybridity.
- Cosmopolitanism, or 'cosmopolitical community'.
- Travel writing: beyond mapping and canvassing empire.
- Sports alliances, rivalries and competitions.
- Redefining magic realism and fantasy; reclaiming myth.
- Building 'houses' of literature.
- 'World' and 'Nation' literatures.
- The multicultural text; or Comparative Literature within the Commonwealth.
- International and local publishing and national/regional/global book prizes.
- Creative and critical collaborations.
- Political transitions and new economic alliances.
- An eco-critical commonwealth.
- Post-imperial imaginaries.

Opening Keynote: Witi Ihimaera, Distinguished Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit, Queen's Service Medal/www.bookcouncil.org.nz/writer/ihimaera-witi/

Conference Contact: Brent Hemi: b.hemi@auckland.ac.nz

Conference Committee: Conference Convenor: Assoc. Prof Selina Tusitala Marsh: s.marsh@auckland.ac.nz; Professor Tom Bishop, Professor Malcolm Campbell, Assoc. Prof Paula Morris, Dr Claudia Marquis

Conference abstracts (250-300 words) to be sent to: Dr Claudia Marquis: c.marquis@auckland.ac.nz

Submission deadline: 30 Oct 2018; Notifications: 30 Nov 2018



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