

# WORLD LITERATURE: POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES

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## ABSTRACTS AND BIONOTES

### **Writing Worlds Within and Against Colonialism in Nineteenth-Century Indian Travelogues**

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Recent work on world literature as concept and practice draws frequently on geographical metaphors. For Emily Apter, *World Literature*, in its best guises, offers access to ‘surprising cognitive landscapes hailing from inaccessible linguistic folds,’ while borders and checkpoints are frequently figured by untranslatability. Aamir Mufti criticizes many permutations of world literature as variants of ‘one-world thinking’ that imagine the world ‘as a continuous and traversable space’ (5). He replaces this smooth space with an uneven terrain striated by historical and contemporary power imbalances, forms of knowledge, differential transversability and border regimes. This spatial awareness invites a geocritical approach: how do various forms of writing, emerging in differential relations to the Orientalist power structures Mufti identifies in the space of ‘world literature,’ write geographies? And how does these interact with the ‘emerging map of the literary world’ charted by Orientalist discourses of literature or contemporary theories of world literature? An example, I will examine nineteenth-century Indian travel writing—that is, written by Indians travelling on the Subcontinent—in English. These are, on the one hand, clearly ‘Anglicist’ texts that actively seek a metropolitan British readership, and they adopt many of the conventions of the European travelogue genre. Particularly in their representation of Indian geography, however, I argue that they undermine the imperial desire to map out, define, claim knowledge of and rule colonised lands. Instead, they offer richly multilayered geographies which defy both temporal linearity human timescales and which combine psychic, literary, and environmental geographies. This paper will draw on the resources of geocriticism, as theorized by Bertrand Westphal, Robert T. Tally, Jr. and others, to consider how the writing of other-than- colonial ‘worlds’ and geographies intersected with the Orientalist forces at work on Indian literary and scientific writing in the nineteenth century.

**Gigi Adair** is a lecturer in Cultural Studies and Postcolonial Studies at the University of Potsdam. Her research interests include 18th- to 21st-century Anglophone literature, travel literature, postcolonial studies, gender studies and queer theory. She is currently developing a new project on masculinity and travel in nineteenth-century British and Indian fiction and travel writing.

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**G. Arunima** teaches in the Centre for Women’s Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University and has researched and published on both historical and modern contexts in India, focusing particularly on cultural, visual

and material texts, and rethinking the politics of the contemporary. Some of her areas of interest have been the study of family and kinship; different aspects of aesthetics and modernities; visual culture and theory; and religion and faith practices. She's the author of "There Comes Papa: Colonialism and the Transformation of Matriliney in Kerala, Malabar, ca 18550-1940" (Orient Longman, 2003), and has recently translated Rosy Thomas's biography of her husband, the iconic playwright CJ Thomas, from Malayalam to English (He, My Beloved CJ, Women Unlimited, 2018).

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## A SPACE IN WORLD LITERATURE: W.E.B. DU BOIS'S FIRST NOVELS

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Du Bois, arguably one of the most influential thinkers that emerged from the USA at the beginning of the twentieth century, has only recently come to the attention of literary scholars as an author of fiction. "Fearless in the face of genre" (Gates xi), he composed foundational works of sociology, cultural studies, economic criticism, and history—and a set of novels. The paper I propose aims to trace Du Bois's novelistic engagement with a Eurocentric canon in his early works. While *The Quest of the Silver Fleece* (1911) is set squarely in the USA, his second novel, *Dark Princess* (1928), abandons this national framework and crosses the Pacific, as Du Bois came to understand the treatment of African Americans in the USA 'as part and parcel of a larger problem of international economic domination' (Gates xvi; cf. also Bhabha). Even though the settings differ starkly, both works employ a problematic Western canon that Du Bois, a highly educated academic, was well acquainted with. Throughout the novels, he references so called 'classics' from Greek, German, English, French, and US American literature (cf., for example, Doku; Hack; Lee). However, he also is weary of the traditions of the 'world literature' he employs, and attempts to undermine the White aesthetics and Eurocentric assumptions of the Victorian romance (Hack; Lee), utopian literature (cf. Ahmad), and orientalism, in order to create a new space for African Americans in the world (literature) of the twentieth century. Therefore, instead of following Henry Louis Gates, Jr. in assessing the place of Du Bois's writing in the canon (cf. his introduction in any volume from The Oxford W. E. B. Du Bois Series), this paper will detail the canon's place in Du Bois's fiction.

**Verena Adamik** currently works as a research and teaching assistant at the University of Potsdam. For two years, she received a scholarship, awarded by the Potsdam Graduate School of the University of Potsdam, supporting her work on her dissertational project on utopian communities in US American Fiction from the long nineteenth century (supervised by Prof. Dr. Nicole Waller, University of Potsdam). She was most recently published in a collection entitled *More After More. Essays Commemorating the Five-Hundredth Anniversary of Thomas More's Utopia*, and is the final throes of submitting her PhD project.

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## Globalization, Ethical Agency and Postcolonial Discourse

**Satish C. Aikant**, H.N.B. Garhwal University, India

Postcolonial criticism at one time was regarded as the harbinger of a new ethical framework in cultural studies, especially in the western academy. With the rise of the discourse of globalisation in the 1990s postcolonial discourse appeared to lose much of its currency and critical energy, since its central issues such as coloniser/colonised, East/West and centre/margin, the cornerstone of postcolonial criticism, were no longer applicable to the global era with the blurring of national boundaries. Globalisation, which affects not only the metropolitan centres of the world but also its most remote margins, results in a diminishing capacity of a nation-state to perform its role of representing the cultural particularity. The discourse of globalisation breaks with the earlier modernisation paradigm in abandoning a Eurocentric

teleology of change, which, in many ways, has been compelled by real economic, political and cultural challenges to Eurocentrism. With the emergence of new centers of economic and political power, one can also find assertions of cultural diversity in the midst of apparent cultural commonality. While attempting to parochialize European epistemologies and the universal subject of history, postcolonial studies have been critical of how globalization discourse erodes the idea of national literatures, employing homogenizing narratives that ignore the history of empire and its ongoing legacies of violence. Capitalist modernity, which characterizes globalization, is technologically and economically powerful but suffers from cultural disorientation. It is geared to not qualitative but quantitative social goals. A counter discourse to globalization such as the postcolonial discourse could be the harbinger of a new ethical agency for creative resistance against global inequalities and oppressions, and to deal with the new forms of precarity, marginality and subalternity. My paper attempts to critically examine the phenomenon of globalization to suggest an alternative protocol, within the framework of postcolonial discourse that can supply us with an ethical paradigm for a systemic critique of institutional prejudice and offer a viable agenda for social change. World literature incorporating various national literatures can thus be viewed from a postcolonial perspective.

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### **Detouring Critical Perusal of Translation through Affect: A Study of Cultural Exchanges in Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies***

**Ann Susan Aleyas**, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

The generative ethos behind the concept of World Literature, a derivative as well as constituent of the project of modernity, is recognised at interfaces of communitarian/individual interactions. Accelerated by globalization, these interfaces are made dynamic by the circulation of people or/and cultural signs. The iterative process of translation and trans-formation at these interfaces create what is called a shared global space. The proposed paper seeks to look at scholarly articulations of the contours taken to, and consequently define, the space thus created. In doing so, the paper will attempt to push the boundaries and explore the possibility of a new mode of articulation, i.e. through affect; being in itself a medium of translation.

Early articulations of the awakening of cosmopolitan consciousness premised the will of the subject as central to the experience of translation and transformation. While Martha Nussbaum advocates for the creation of an interactive space, in her article "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism", through "knowledge of... talking with them (that) we may be capable of respecting their traditions" and about more than a decade later, Nikos Papastergiadis writes 'Cultural translation entails a commitment to imagining an alternative community,' the agency of the subject at hand is too readily assumed. Critical approaches to World Literature which places the subject at the center of the process of translation has nonetheless, critiqued the political and social impingements on the subject as well as on the cumulative shared space articulated through the former. However, is there an imagining of translation which supersedes the possibilities offered by willful global interactions or modes of cultural translation?

The possibilities of tracing affect as a medium of subject identification/difference is one that challenges this complacent assumption of agency. The Eurocentric dictations of equivalence achieved through consciously self-effacing human subject is often tempered merely by the logic of rationality, if not limited within the realm of ethical consciousness. This logic consequently sweeps the landscape of affective experience to the periphery of critical attention; an experience which has the potential to a dissolve interfaces of bounded signifying systems. The paper will attempt a close study of Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*, tracing the emerging possibility of affect as medium of translation; a category left out in the discourses on World Literature.

**Ann Susan Aleyas** is currently working as Assistant Professor at the Department of English in St. Stephen's College. She is also pursuing her MPhil Studies at Jamia Millia Islamia University, Delhi. Her area of research is on the Oral Traditions of the Jewish Christians in Kerala.

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### **World Literature in the Age of Terror(ism)**

**Brahim Benmoh**, Chouaib Doukkali University, El Jadida, Morocco

Like any other field of study, the field of world literature is subject to the world's 'horizons of expectations,' to use Hans Robert Jauss' term. Any process of (re)conceptualization of world literature as a discipline and its "methodology" requires a historical and political contextualizing. Based on this line of thought, this paper seeks to examine the question of the position of world literature vis-à-vis 9/11 event and the question whether it has responded to changes brought about the discourses of terrorism and the war on/of terror as the main repercussions which are complicit with the post-9/11 American colonial project. Indeed, 9/11 trauma and its 'regime of truths' have emphasized a kind of political and cultural transition which makes the position of world literature and its approaches more problematic and provocative. The origin of this provocation can be traced to the idea that the (post-) 9/11 contexts have brought the concepts of eurocentrism, US-American exceptionalism and nation orientation into the spotlight which in turn make Gayatri Spivak's idea of 'death of a discipline' more relevant and reasonable. The politics of representation and the post-9/11 binary opposition between the "self" and the "other," between the "West" and the "East" or between "freedom fighter" and "terrorist" make the process of doing literary comparison a difficult task. The complication of this task, this paper concludes, can be concretized when raising the question of the role of the comparatist as an intellectual vis-à-vis discourses of terrorism and war on terror as global problems which now more perplex the question of world literature and its methodology(ies).

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### **What Might the Philology of World Literature Look Like? The Postcolonial Case against Linguistic Essentialism**

**Rashmi Dube Bhatnagar**, Shiv Nadar University, India

One premise of the field of World Literature is to take account of the incontrovertible *thereness* of language literatures other than Global English and dominant European literatures. The inaugural gesture

of World literature consists of thinking through this quality of thereness or the incontrovertible existence and diverse histories of World Literatures, in particular the troubled relationship between literary mappings of "global" in Global English that do not necessarily encompass the "world" of World Literature. However a simple acknowledgement of non- Western and post-colonial literary Others does not suffice in and of itself. Disciplinary study of literature requires us to ask: on what terms? To put it more fully, world literature cannot be limited to the cultural politics of inclusive literary canons and teaching syllabi; we have to determine the terms of negotiation between the "global" of Global English and the "world" of World Literature. In effect we have to ask what might be the new critical apparatus for reconstituting the literariness of world literature? The answers to this question reveal the fault lines of scholarly debate: interpretations of the Goethean insight in order to define world literature as the production and circulation of literary commodities (Damrosch) are in crucial instances at marked variance from elaborations of the Auerbachian notion that world literature is impossible unless accompanied with, and radically transformed by, critical philology (Mufti, Apter, Pollock). The faint and barely visible lineaments of world literature as a theory of literariness (critical philology) have been under-emphasized in favor of world literature as vast literary canons. Why a return to philology and why not some other school of criticism? Philology makes literary language central to language histories. Most importantly, philology cannot grow into the present and future of literary studies until and unless it engages with and critiques its own past in nineteenth century comparative philology. As poetics rather than science philology shifts focus away from the imagined community of nation, nation-making vernaculars, Herderian *volk* and the linguistic essentialism endemic to the national literature model. Instead the new and barely imagined critical philology re-envisioned literariness not as the handmaiden of national modernity but rather as a mode of passionate and resourceful attention to the making and remaking of an anti-essentialist ecology between and among languages in literary texts. How can philology disrupt the reduction of world literature to the category of 'Literatures in translation' that are commodified exotic food? One of the ways philology disrupts this alliance between Global English and translation industry is by foregrounding the concept of untranslatability, arguing instead that translation necessitates nuanced accounts of the histories of these languages and their encounters with each other in the enchanted realm of the literary text. For the 20 minute presentation the text will be the early modern poem *Ardhbkathanak* (1640). In particular I will focus on the inadequacy of accounts by Indology of the pre-history of the Hindi Urdu divide in the little known and less understood vernacular ecology of Hindavi/Hindui.

**Rashmi Dube Bhatnagar** is a Professor at the Department of English, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Shiv Nadar University. Her areas of research interest include philology, the fifteenth century Bhakti poetess Meera, female infanticide in colonial India, realism in Indian language literatures and Anglophone novel, Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) and secularism. She is co-founder of the Hindi Urdu workshop series. Her work across her entire career has given her a powerful and unusual perspective on postcolonial writing and the construction of 'South Asian Literature' in a global context. Currently she is completing a book entitled *World and Bhasha Literatures: Revolutions in Philology*.

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### **Shakespeare as an Icon of World Literature: Translation/Adaptation as a Cross-Border Exercise**

**Mahuya Bhaumik**, Derozio Memorial College, Kolkata, India

David Damrosch in his book *What is World Literature* defines world literature as a writing that 'gains in translation' and as a 'form of detached engagement with worlds beyond our own place and time'. Thus world literature is multi-temporal, multi-spatial and multi-cultural reaching out across time, space and culture. The all-inclusive and global essence of world literature provides an enormous scope for translation and adaptation of the source text into different languages crossing borders and boundaries of

nations thus enabling world literature transcend the limits of the static and attaining the dynamic status, continuously evolving and growing through this process in diverse temporal, spatial and cultural dimensions. Shakespeare is one of the icons of world literature as his works enjoy 'universal appeal' which is one of the criteria of world literature. His influence is far encompassing with his plays being translated and adapted in different languages all around the world. This paper would try to locate the process of indigenization that these translations undergo and how the adaptations uproot the master texts of world literature from their socio-cultural context and implant them in completely different politico-cultural milieu. The translator/adaptor has his or her own intentions in pursuing this activity. Sometimes it is a mark of protest against the contemporary society or at times it is to voice own principles and ideologies. These translations and adaptations are cross-border exercises through which one culture tries to understand and accommodate another culture thus infusing a fresh lease of life into a literary work through assimilations, rejections and modifications. My paper would try to find out how Shakespeare's works, namely Macbeth and Hamlet have been adapted in Bangla translations where Utpal Dutt's Macbeth turns into a protest against the emergency thrust upon India during 1975-77 and Bratya Basu's Hemlat, the Prince of Garanhata shifts the location from Denmark to the red-light area of Kolkata filled with greed and squalor. This process of indigenization 'links' the master text to the contemporary issues thus enabling different ways of perception of the source text and helping the texts develop and evolve with new dimensions and proving Shakespeare's works to be classic instances of world literature which 'gain in translation' and are related to worlds beyond place and time.

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### **Trans-ethnography as a discursive practice: Translation in and of Mahasweta Devi's fiction**

**Arunabha Bose**, Vivekananda College, University of Delhi, India

In 'Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay and Pirtha', the character of Puran tries to represent the ancient being through language but his rhetorical agency cannot capture the pterodactyl's 'gaze'. While Bikhia's carvings denote the aesthetics of primal revisitation/remembrance as an untranslatable Ur-text; Puran's desire to taxonomically classify the pterodactyl denotes what Deleuze calls enregistrement (production of a prior recording process). The pterodactyl constitutes a missing link in the paleontological evolution of birds from reptiles; Mahasweta politicises the anthropological evolution as a historical translation since like the pterodactyl, the aboriginal remains a missing link in the transition/translation from precolonial victimhood to postcolonial subjecthood. Like the pterodactyl, the adivasi is an anthropological aberration, since he has not evolved into the figure of the nagarik. He is a paralogical figure, untranslated by transformative agency of both colonial modernity and postcolonial liberalism of bourgeois political economy. The adivasi as the original inhabitant of the earth predates contemporary epistemological systems like anthropology. Mahasweta's fable is about the untransferability and non-dissemination of meaning inseminated in the psychic structures of the gaze. Between Puran and the pterodactyl there is in Spivak's phraseology an "absence of intimacy"; the pterodactyl is the absolute alterity differed-deferred onto the "other" with whom the postcolonial intellectual cannot communicate. As Derrida notes translation is never a transport of pure signifieds; signifying instrumentality of cultural translation alert us to the politics of the disseminated textuality of Devi's own parable through Spivak's translation. Spivak's in making visible the disruptive figurations of cultural translation unlike Puran's anthropological translation alerts us to an unbridgeable disjunction/aporia in a trans-ethnological discursive space. Ethical relations for Levinas come prior to epistemological presuppositions, the denial of postcolonial foreclosure

and the effacement of her own rhetorical agency allows Mahasweta's parable to deploy an epistemological optimism in seeing cultural meaning as an unrepeatable excess and Spivak's refusal to penetrate the obscurity of the pterodactyl's gaze shows her ethnological transformation of Kristeva's pre-linguistic semiotic into a postcolonial semio-ethic.

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### **What is A Postcolonial World?**

**Rachel Busbridge**, Australian Catholic University, Australia

In *What is a World?*, Peng Cheah (2016) asks what meanings are given to the category of 'world' in world literature. In this paper, I take Cheah's titular question as an invitation to reflect on the meanings of the postcolonial and the worlds elucidated and animated by postcolonial critique. As a descriptive category, the postcolonial speaks in quite material terms to the world produced in the mid-twentieth century, when many countries formerly under European colonial domination transitioned to independence with all the cultural, political, economic and social reckonings this entailed. As a critical project, the postcolonial is a problematising and destabilising force, both a cultural interjection and a prudent reminder that there is no turning back from the world colonialism put into play, the legacies of which are embedded in the hierarchies and false promises of globalisation, as well as the Eurocentricity of hegemonic cultural formations and the sneaky relations to periphery they produce. While it is always underlain by a normative vision of alternate decolonised worlds, postcolonial has for the most part restricted itself to critique. Yet, in describing—however critically—the world in certain ways, postcolonial critique also contributes to making it. If the grandest of all postcolonial narratives is the distinction between West and Rest, this paper asks what valence conventional postcolonial critique has in an emerging world of reshuffling geopolitical order, where US neo-imperial hegemony is waning in favour of what would seem to be a complexly multipolar world and the category of 'West' is exposed as more splintered, fragile and imagined than ever before. It is argued that returning to the local, whether that be the urban, national or regional, may not only prove more illuminating in tracing the social, historical and cultural resonances of the world emergent, but also reanimating the postcolonial critical project that another world is possible.

**Rachel Busbridge** is a Lecturer in Sociology at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne, Australia, and a Commissioning Editor of *Thesis Eleven: Critical Theory and Historical Sociology* (Sage). A political sociologist, her areas of research interest include postcolonialism and theories of decolonisation. She is the author of *Multicultural Politics of Recognition and Postcolonial Citizenship: Rethinking the Nation* (2018, Routledge) and has published articles in *Theory, Culture and Society*, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* and *Social Identities*, amongst others.

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### **Tagore and World Literature: Translation in a Contemporary Frame**

**Radha Chakravarty**, Ambedkar University Delhi, India

Drawing upon the insights of Rabindranath Tagore, who coined the term *visva sahitya* to express his own understanding of Comparative Literature, this paper resituates translation as the cornerstone for new directions in World Literature. While conventional understandings of World Literature tend to reconfirm

existing power structures and hierarchies, translation opens up the possibility of thinking beyond the national/global binary by interrogating the lines along which such binaries are conceptualized. Translation operates at the borders that are seen to divide cultures, languages, worldviews and geographies. It functions in the in-between spaces where the potential for radical re-imaginings can be located. Such a perspective on translation demands a long view of time, situating the contemporary in relation to past and future. It calls for a wide view of space, involving alternative geographies that do not necessarily divide the world into global North and South, or into nation states that promote their own brands of nationalism, but rather, impel us to think across borders in ways that promote a dynamic reconfiguration of what we understand as 'our' world. Through an examination of the role that translation has historically played in shaping power relations in the world, this paper projects the transformative potential of translation as the key to a radical reconceptualization of a World Literature for the future.

**Radha Chakravarty** is a writer, critic and translator. She has co-edited *The Essential Tagore* (Harvard and Visva Bharati), nominated Book of the Year 2011 by Martha Nussbaum, and edited *Shades of Difference: Selected Writings of Rabindranath Tagore* (Social Science Press, 2015). She is the author of *Feminism and Contemporary Women Writers* (Routledge, 2008) and *Novelist Tagore: Gender and Modernity in Selected Texts* (Routledge, 2013). Her translations of Tagore include *Gora*, *Chokher Bali*, *Boyhood Days*, *Farewell Song: Shesher Kabita* and *The Land of Cards: Stories, Poems and Plays for Children*. Other works in translation are Bankimchandra Chatterjee's *Kapalkundala*, *In the Name of the Mother* by Mahasweta Devi, *Vermillion Clouds: Stories by Bengali Women*, and *Crossings: Stories from Bangladesh and India*. She has edited *Bodymaps: Stories by South Asian Women* and co-edited *Writing Feminism: South Asian Voices* and *Writing Freedom: South Asian Voices*. Her poems have appeared in *Journal of the Poetry Society of India*, *The Fib Review*, *The Skinny Poetry Journal* and *Indian Poetry Through the Passage of Time*. She is currently translating the memoirs of Mahasweta Devi. She was nominated for the Crossword Translation Award, 2004. She is Professor of Comparative Literature & Translation Studies and Dean, School of Letters, at Ambedkar University Delhi.

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## **The Postcoloniality of Late Empire: Nineteenth-Century Istanbul and the Making of World Literature**

**Etienne E. Charrière**, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey

In the past two decades, a particular event in global cultural history –the migration to Istanbul of a number of Jewish German scholars in the 1930s- has received considerable scholarly attention and has come to be perceived as a foundational moment in the development of comparative literature as a field of inquiry. In the wake of Edward Said's interest in the notion of exilic humanism as embodied by Erich Auerbach, several scholars have set to investigate the repercussions of this prolonged stay of Western scholars in Turkey. Among them, Emily Apter has gone as far as suggesting that Istanbul in the 1930s constituted, in fact, the very locus of comparative literature's 'invention'. Working against the grain of this narrative, the present paper argues for the relevance of an earlier stage in the history of the city, not only to a genealogy of comparative literature as a discipline, but also to contemporary debates around the notion of 'world literature' itself.

Shifting the focus to the late nineteenth century, this paper examines instead a time when Istanbul was still the capital of the Ottoman Empire and concurrently served as a major literary center for various ethno-linguistic communities including Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Sephardic Jews, and other groups. In this particular ecosystem, literature was written, consumed and translated in multiple languages and across several scripts. As this paper argues, it is this particular status of late-Ottoman Istanbul -not only as a multiethnic and multilingual space, but also as the seat of an imperial Muslim-majority empire increasingly subjected to a variety of semi-colonial encroachments on the part of Western powers- that makes it a fertile ground for an inquiry aimed at emphasizing points of tension within concepts such as those of

‘world literature’, ‘literary cosmopolitanism’ or ‘border thinking’ and at problematizing the presumed neutrality of such critical categories.

Placing a particular emphasis on the practice of translation as well as on its material, social, and political entanglements in the context of late-Ottoman Istanbul, this paper highlights the ways in which the notion of ‘untranslatability’ becomes invested with new meanings when texts and literary genres originating in the West assume a hegemonic position in a non-Western, multilingual space, thereby complicating inter-communal cultural contacts through translation at a local level. In doing so, the present paper argues that looking at the complex processes involved in the globalization of culture in the mirror of a late-imperial metropolis such as Istanbul can allow for the formulation of new paradigms pertinent to contemporary discussions of world literature in the postcolonial age.

*Etienne E. Charrière* received his PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of Michigan with a dissertation on the rise of novel writing in the four of the main communities of late-Ottoman Istanbul (Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and Sephardic Jews). Since 2017, he is Assistant Professor in the Department of Turkish Literature at Bilkent University in Ankara.

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## **Postcolonial Translation and the Development of World Literature: Indian Literature in English Translation**

*Abhinaba Chatterjee*, Independent Research Scholar

How does translation as a postcolonial phenomenon, affect the understanding and appreciation of the modernism in the corpus of literature called the ‘Indian Literature’? How does translation affect the approximation of Indian literature into the well-known binaries of centre-periphery, and influence the development of World Literature, within the multilingual space of Indian literature? This paper seeks to address these questions.

David Damrosch points out that translation play an important role in creating the category of ‘world literature’. To the question, ‘Why should anyone read this motley assembly of texts?’ Damrosch answers that he wants to trace “what is lost and what is gained in translation, looking at the intertwined shifts of language, era, region, religion, and literary context that a work can incur as it moves from its point of origin out into a new cultural sphere”. I suggest that the global spread of modernism and its local flowerings need to be understood through the vigorous translation activity that accompanied it. By means of a comparative study of the modernisms in Indian literature in Hindi and its English translation, I would strive to show that the impact of translation was by no means unidirectional or targeted towards the West. The simultaneously local and cosmopolitan character of this modernist literary corpus, far more important and extensive than Indian literature in English, can only be understood through a continuation of the project of modernism’s translations.

Indian literature is a simultaneously located and internationalist literature, which can be understood as being premised on a multilingual literary sphere in which translation plays a prominent role. Rather than attempting to approximate Indian literature to the fashionable centre-periphery model adopted by critics who have used world-systems theory for re-structuring the modern literary field, because such a conception of world literature will end up repeating the blinkered transnationalism of Comparative Literature by erasing from view a large part of the planet that does not fit the Western/ Third World and colonial/postcolonial binary oppositions. Ultimately, this postcolonial schema cannot comprehend and deal with the complexity of today’s globalized world with its multiple centers. Rather, I look at its

enduring engagement with the public sphere and with political resistance through a variety of narrative forms that defy any categorization within a singular model of literary modernism emanating from the capitalist centers and re-appropriated by the peripheries.

**Abhinabha Chatterjee** holds an M.Phil degree in English literature from Delhi University. He has been associated with literature and has published on diverse topics to include papers on Theatre of the Absurd, Politics of Sequencing Shakespeare's Sonnets, Indian literature in English and translation and Diaspora literature. His research interests are postcolonial literature with special reference to Indian and Australian literature, Translation Studies and Comparative Literature. He is presently engaged in a study of modernities in Indian Literature and in English translation.

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## **Dislocation of the Colonized: Theorizing Untranslatability in the Colonial Literature of Taiwan and Korea**

*Pei Jean Chen*, Academia Sinica, Taiwan

This paper attempts to theorize and historicize the ideas of modern language and translation, and to challenge the imperialist and nationalistic mode of worlding with the notion of “untranslatability” that embedded in linguistic and cultural practices in colonial Taiwan and Korea. My research shows that a broad archive of texts that have mediated the entanglement between East Asian societies, however, were routed through and interrupted by imaginative geographies incommensurate with the nation-state. In particular, Taiwan and Korea are perceived as cultural entities through their vertical relations with their imperial pasts, and segregated from each other as the ‘unimagined communities.’ I propose to track the processes of transnational exchange and translational shaping of the modern concepts of national language and literature, to problematize the nationalistic imaginaries of the world by inter-referencing Taiwan and Korea. Furthermore, I redefine notion of translation as a bordering system—the knowledge-production of boundaries, discrimination, and classification—simultaneously creates the translatable and untranslatable (i.e., the equivalence and incommensurability) in asymmetrical power relations. The equivalence between different cultures is always given and unquestioned, while the figure of untranslatability or incommensurability is constantly ‘filtered’ or “fragmented” to facilitate a homogeneous space and progressive worldview for social orders. The reductionist view of translation obscures the heterogeneity underlying the disparate experiences of world inhabitants, who intersect with but are not confined to national language frontiers. With this, I proceed to discuss the experience of colonial ambivalence as ‘untranslatable,’ and use the notion of ‘untranslatability’ as a critique of the regime of translation. (Sakai 1997) I discuss how this ambivalence is embodied in the experiences of colonial writers Wu Yung-fu and Pak T'aewŏn and their novellas ‘Head and Body’ (1933) and ‘A Day in the life of Kubo the Novelist’ (1934). Wu Yung-fu (1913-2008) and Pak T'aewŏn (1909-1986) were the iconic modernist writers in colonial Taiwan and Korea. As a generation that was writing in Japanese and inhabiting colonial metropolises, what Wu and Pak were struggling with were the ambivalent feelings toward language and colonial daily life. Thus, I illustrate two characteristics of the ambivalent untranslatability embedded in their novellas: the linguistic untranslatability and the experience of unhomeness, to discuss how untranslatability results in the colonized's dislocation in homogeneous time-space relationships, while at the same time, how it offers the site to explore the ‘transnational space of debate that crosses linguistic boundaries’ and find the reflection from that historical present and to caution against the legacy of colonialism.

**Pei Jean Chen** is an Assistant Professor in the Graduate Institute of Taiwanese Literature at National Chengchi University, Taiwan. She received her PhD degree from the Dept. of Asian Studies, Cornell

University in May 2016. Her dissertation examines the processes of transnational exchange and translational shaping of the modern concepts of national language and literature, as well as romantic love and sexuality in early twentieth-century East Asia. Her subsequent project focuses on the legacies of colonialism and the cold war ideology of gender normalization in postwar Taiwan and South Korea. Her research and commentary have appeared in *Bulletin of Taiwanese Literature*, *Journal of Taiwan Literary Studies*, *ARTCO* and *Culture Studies Monthly* in Taiwan.

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## **Configuring the ‘World’ in ‘World Literature’: A Case Study of Arundhati Roy’s Reception in Berlin**

*Priyam Goswami Choudhury*, Freie Universitaet, Berlin, Germany

In early June in 2017, Martin Kämpchen declared from Shimla “Nichts is gut in Indien”. That nothing was/is okay in India should be a striking declaration in a German newspaper in any political climate; that it was spoken for Arundhati Roy’s second novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* before a tense election season in Germany is where I begin my query. Over the summer in Berlin, the Literature Fest invited over a hundred leading authors; the reception of Roy’s novel gained particular notoriety. Taking from Edward Said’s study of *Orientalism*, this paper explores the possibility that the reception of Roy has a more important relationship with Germany’s own contemporary politics and history. In this paper, I will critique the language of German newspapers like *Berliner Zeitung*, *Deutsche Welle*, *kulturradio*, *Die Tagesspiele* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine* as a clue to understanding how the ‘world’ in ‘world literature’ is always a category of not understanding the world but to configure, measure and, indeed, create a “surrogate and even underground self” from the position of a culture that is at the centre of discourse making (Said 5). As Walter Benjamin said, “[t]ranslations that are more than transmissions of subject” (255) and in engaging with Roy’s reception in 2017, what emerges for us is an imposed universality of values and concepts where there are, in essence, no earnest manner of engaging with the text of the novel but a performance of a Western European country’s press that, in oversimplifying ‘world literature’ through Roy, is trying to understand itself. The second part of my paper will explore exclusively this concern. By tracing back the term ‘world literature’ to Johann Peter Eckermann, the paper’s concern will be to contextualize how the reception of Roy’s work in 2017 is related ideologically to the self-fashioning of nationhood and its imagination[s]. The imagination of the nation vis-à-vis what it constructs as ‘the world’, then, creates the idealized India that is both a place of the exotic “Indian novel” (Peschel) and the place of confusion, or ‘verwirrend’ (Widmann).

**Priyam Goswami Choudhuri** is a graduate student at the Freie Universitaet, Berlin, where she is currently writing her MA thesis on Indian poetry in English.

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## **Which World, Whose Literature?**

*Supriya Chaudhuri*, Jadavpur University, India

Like world history and world-systems theory, world literature is an invention of a recent date and one perhaps nearing its end. Emily Apter suggests that this is because of the imminent disappearance of the ‘world’ itself, as a thought-figure that is increasingly abstract and untranslatable. My paper will argue that world literature is hollowed out internally by contesting claims of representation, much like the South African artist William Kentridge’s image of a globe staggering unsteadily, on precarious pylon legs, across a blasted landscape. While there is a dying planet that we unavoidably inhabit, the worlds to which we lay claim are not the same, and the postcolonial condition is precisely that in which world literature becomes impossible.

**Supriya Choudhuri** is Professor (Emerita) in the Department of English, Jadavpur University, Kolkata. Her research interests include European Renaissance literature, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Indian cultural history, modernism, narrative, translation, critical theory, and sport.

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### **From Colonial Nationalism to Postcolonial Globalism: Representing History's U-Turns**

**Bhupen Chutia**, Lakhimpur Girls' College, North Lakhimpur, Assam, India

The interesting u-turns that history takes have been a very important subject of contemporary literary works. While ultra nationalist capitalism had resulted in the colonization and compartmentalization of the non-state territories of the non-western world, the neo-nationalist sentiments that these territories had learnt from the same colonial forces also resulted in the termination of colonialism from most of the colonized world. At the same time, the movement of capital across borders separating the nations presently has led to a situation where those very national boundaries are being challenged and undermined. This curious phenomenon of going back to the pre-colonial days of borderless non-nation-states has become an area gaining significance in recent times. The so called globalization of the world has turned the table full circle. The centres of the erstwhile colonial order have been displaced by the so-called peripheries. It is in this context that postcolonial theory and literature deserve serious reading – for their assertion of particularities and differences in the face of the all powerful narratives of civilizing mission and development models. Postcolonial writers like V.S. Naipaul have not only debunked the colonial arrogance and tall-tales but also created a space for the unfortunate victims of colonization, which is, of course, not another version of same arrogance. If a homogenized global culture is a day dream best to be avoided, the complex, hybridized and un-romanticized narratives of postcolonial writers have led to the possibility of another world order – the cosmopolitan world of the ‘others’ where the dream of a ‘refined’ and ‘perfect’ self is already deferred. Postcolonial writers have helped in the emergence of the spaces outside the civilizational centres as the new areas from where all the stories are told. A study of the writings of V.S. Naipaul will reveal how, in a curious turn of events, a complete role reversal is imminent in the present world order.

**Bhupen Chutia** teaches English at Lakhimpur Girls' College, North Lakhimpur, Assam. He has published in the areas of postcolonial literature and diaspora studies.

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### **From Globalisation to Planetaryity : Reflections on Literature as Intervention in the Late Capitalist World System**

**Nilanjana Deb**, University of Jadavpur, India

The current phase of the Anthropocene has seen irreversible damage being done to the planet through colonization, globalization and consumerism. Globalisation has resulted in the hardening of the boundaries of nation states even as it has fostered the increasing dominance of transnational and multinational economic forces that do not have any accountability to the local human ecologies that they impact across the planet. The pursuit of profit through monopoly capitalism has led to the indiscriminate extraction of natural resources, large-scale displacement and the exploitation of labour in a manner that favours the state players (and non-state players backed by the state) of the developed world. The manner in which neo-colonialism of the late capitalist era perpetuates its stranglehold is to co-opt citizens into a culture of unthinking consumerism, turning them into easily manipulated 'users' rather than 'producers' at every level from material commodities to the world wide web. The result is an increasing impoverishment

of the economically and socio-politically disempowered across the planet, the irreversible depletion of the planet's resources, and the shrinking of the ability to imagine a future beyond what Amitav Ghosh has called the Great Derangement. If postcolonial and anticolonial writing provided much of the impetus in the ideological resistance to imperialism, one imagines that the turn towards the notion of 'planetary' by an eminent postcolonial theorist such as Spivak augurs well for extending the function of theory and literature to interrogating the ways in which capitalism and consumerism affect human attitudes towards collective futures of human and other species on this planet. If globalisation is predicated upon an anthropocentric-cartographic concept of the globe, then planetary demands a turn, as suggested by Bruno Latour and Donna Haraway, towards a rethinking of humans as one species among many interdependent species on the planet, whose collective fate hangs in balance. This turn towards the decentering of the human as well as the reimagining of possibilities beyond consumerism and unthinking wastage demands the intervention of writing including creative theorising, poetry and fiction. My paper examines the ways in which postcolonial writing extends the 'politics of the possible' to engage with the effects of neo-colonialism upon our material and affective realities, and establish what might be termed a planetary consciousness.

**Nilanjana Deb** is Associate Professor in the Department of English, Jadavpur University. Her research interests include colonial and postcolonial literatures, diaspora studies, subaltern studies, cultures of protest and the environmental humanities. Her doctoral research was on literary histories of Aboriginal communities in Australia and Canada. Her postdoctoral work examined narratives of the movement of working-class emigrants ('coolies') from India's rural heartland through the colonial port of Calcutta to plantations of the British and French Empires in the nineteenth century. She is presently the principal investigator of a British Library Endangered Archives Programme funded project to digitise the papers of the British India Association.

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### **The Kiplings, Disney, and a Visual Conversation**

**Christel R Devadawson**, Department of English, University of Delhi, India

I'd like to use the space of this presentation to think about the extent to which images travel --- or indeed, refuse to do so --- under pressure from political and economic management. The specific visual conversation I wish to study is that between two clusters of images: those of rural and regal India. These are set up first by Flora Annie Steel/ Lockwood and Rudyard Kipling (working in curious collaboration) and used by subsequent story -tellers, of whom Disney is the best known. Is it possible for a world to change but for a conversation to remain the same? Do texts and images translate the politics of power uniformly? Is it possible to argue that a changing viewership/ readership constitutes a particular kind of border -crossing? Steel's collection of Punjabi folktales and *The Jungle Books* will be used for this purpose.

**Christel Devadawson** is Professor and Head, Department of English, University of Delhi, where she supervises research in contemporary South Asian life-writing, detective fiction, and popular visual culture. A Cambridge-Nehru scholar from Girton for her PhD, Christel is currently working on a manuscript on the visual politics of Lockwood Kipling. Her most recent publication in the field of Visual Studies is *Visuality, Spectacle and the Common Good in India Today* (U of Roehampton, 2017) She curated the exhibition entitled *Legacies of laughter, legacies of loss: Pictorial satire in postindependent India* for Samanvaya, the Indian Literature Festival, 2015. Her books include *Out of line: Cartoons, caricature and contemporary India* (Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2014), and *Reading India, Writing England* (Delhi: Macmillan 2005). As a keynote speaker at the CUAC Triennale (Chennai 2017) Christel spoke on gender and visuality in contemporary India. As Westcott Memorial lecturer (2001), Christel spoke at Cambridge, Birmingham, Leicester and Warwick on the subject of India's road to postcolonialism.

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## **The Worldings of Sam Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners***

**Lars Eckstein**, Universität Potsdam, Germany

I would focus on the quality of creole performativity of narration in this novel which, I argue, translates between Trinidadian performance styles such as calypso, and Western models of novel writing. This also involves a curious narratorial position which, even though heterodiegetic (or third person) blends in with the collective of characters, effecting a musicalized prose in call-and-response fashion. I thought this might be interesting as in 'world literature' I always found 'world' much less problematic than the implied assumptions of what 'literature' should be; and that at least in fiction the monadic subject of the narrator is hardly ever put in question, nor is the privileging of writerly communication over oral performance.

**Lars Eckstein** is Professor of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures outside of Britain and the US at the University of Potsdam, Germany. His research interests include postcolonial and decolonial theory, literary and cultural memories of empire, and the study of global popular cultures

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## **'Globalized' literature or 'Global Coloniality': The Case for Postcolonialism**

**Neena Gandhi**, American University of Sharjah, UAE

Goethe's "Weltliteratur" or world literature foresaw an era of international exchange where the German language would play the lead in translation of various literatures. As an example are the Max Mueller Bhavans (Goethe Institutes) of India, cultural institutions that encourage the learning of the German language and promote a more widespread reader base of the translations of Indian Vedic texts by Max Mueller, a scholar of Sanskrit. Well known theorists of world literature argue that world literature to Goethe entailed Europeanization whereas world literature today comprises literature that crosses the narrow frontiers of a few Western countries and the flow of literary texts is now from the periphery to the center rather than vice versa. Given this context, it is further claimed that postcolonialism as a literary category is now obsolete. My paper argues that as long as it is not just desirable but also acceptable to need Western literary theorists to critique a work from a 'marginalized' or a non-Western country or to explain the cultural institutions from which that work flows, postcolonialism is not just required to be understood as a literary category or as a phase in literary theory but also as a political, social and cultural discourse. The paper draws on Dipesh Chakravarty's concept of "the subalternity of non-Western" histories where "Europe works as a silent referent in historical knowledge" and there is a compulsion "to refer to works in European history" to understand the need for postcolonial studies. While still defining itself as a counter narrative, postcolonialism challenges the metanarrative even if it does not or cannot change the metanarrative. Postcolonial studies attempts to delink the western hegemony of knowledge. Moreover, globalization itself is currently undergoing a metamorphosis. The anti-globalization movement negates the centralization and hierarchy that globalization could never distance itself from. We, thus, need to be wary of a 'globalized' literature that subsumes national and cultural differences which may lead to a 'global coloniality' further suppressing cultures of the erstwhile colonies.

**Neena Gandhi's** area of research is postcolonial literature. She has published articles on postcolonial literature in international journals. Her teaching areas include academic and research writing, English Renaissance drama, modern European drama, twentieth century British novel and Partition literature. Prior to joining American University of Sharjah in 2002, she taught at Zakir Husain College, Delhi University for 14 years.

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## Two South Africans in the Soviet Union: The Work of 'Worlding' in World Literature

*Lucy Gasser*, University of Potsdam, Germany

Moving from Pheng Cheah's delineation of world literature, this paper engages the possibilities enabled by the notion of 'worlding', a language taken by Cheah from Martin Heidegger, and also used by Gayatri Spivak to formulate a critique of such (imperial) practices. Cheah imbues his understanding of the task of world literature with normative force, an argument made compelling by its aim of looking to constructively ethico-political ways of reading, as well as to the work literature can do of opening up worlds both imagined and real. I take this as an entry point for a discussion not only of what kind of world the 'world' in 'world literature' is, or should be, capable of imagining – but also the importance of the question of who is doing the worlding. Rather than looking to instances, then, of the metropole worlding the 'peripheries' (usually starkly implicated in colonial violence, cf Spivak), or examples of the 'global South' writing back to the 'global North', I propose an inquiry into imaginative journeys that bypass the ostensible 'centre'. An instantiation of these is to be found, I suggest, in the imaginative production of the Soviet Union by travellers from the global South. I thus offer a comparative reading of two travelogues written by South Africans during apartheid and the cold war. The first is Laurens van der Post's *Journey into Russia* (1964), the second Alex La Guma's *A Soviet Journey* (1978). The two are starkly different in positioning, both lived and ideological: the first a white man with ties to the British nobility, professing an 'objective' viewpoint; the second a black South African active in the struggle against apartheid, exiled as a result, and an ardent communist. Yet they are both able to draw on (very different) South African backgrounds in their tellings and represented understandings of the worlds they encounter when they enter the Soviet Union. As a result, I propose, reading these texts alongside each other serves as a corrective for many problematic constructions of 'Europe', particularly as centre and origin of 'culture' and 'civilisation'; as well as emphasising connections and potential solidarities between the '2<sup>nd</sup>' and '3<sup>rd</sup> worlds', to which the '1<sup>st</sup> world' is peripheral.

**Lucy Gasser** is a PhD Scholar, University of Potsdam. After a BA majoring in English Literature, French Literature and Film Studies, Rachel completed a two-year coursework Masters in English Language, Literature and Modernity at the University of Cape Town. In her MA dissertation, she explored issues of (cultural) translation in the Anglosphere of America and Britain within the context of the Cold War. During this time, she also taught in the English, Film and Philosophy departments of UCT, as well as working as a research assistant and academic writing tutor. In 2014, she moved to Berlin to begin work on a PhD project at the Freie Universität, where she also taught a number of seminars in the English Institute. She became a fellow of the RTG Minor Cosmopolitanisms in 2016.

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## Irishness and Chaosmos in the 'Wake'

*Shantam Goyal*, University of Delhi, India

To contend for postcoloniality in Joyce would require a closer look at Irish colonial history, a difficulty compounded by the fact that Ireland is often not seen as a "victim" of British expansion in the same grade as some others. *Finnegans Wake*, nonetheless, can verily be read as a scroll of what Bhabha calls "colonial nonsense," a composite of the "inscriptions of an uncertain colonial silence that mocks the social performance of language". This would be a sensible language which has somewhere along the way, as Joyce writes, dissolved "every person, place and thing in the chaosmos." Another line of thought, suggested by Ned H. Polsky, an early critic of Joyce, goes towards reading the *Wake* as a universal novel, meant to bring together several elements which would be "archetypal of world history." This strategy still remains a popular style of reading characters such as H.C.E., Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, or Here Comes Everybody the everyman, and A.L.P. or Anna Livia Plurabelle, the universal woman flowing like the river Liffey through Dublin. For a novel of supposedly global artistic concerns, the *Wake* remains

terribly invested in life as it is lived in gossip and myth-making around Dublin's river. And like Ulysses, the Wake too is an exercise in the cartography of Dublin. This would seemingly suggest a critique of the text's metropolitan concerns, and of Joyce's proclivity for the global city. However, there is something quintessentially Irish about the Wake which overtakes what is quintessentially urban about it, not least being the 19<sup>th</sup> century Irish folk song which gives the novel its title. If we then define world literature, like world music or world cinema, to be that whose very foundation is its unfamiliarity to part of the world, what is it that makes Joyce a world author and the Wake a global novel? Is it the Irishness his work is steeped into, a national- cultural character which is understood as not restricting translatability for critical approaches which veer away from its Irishness? Or is it because of the pure linguistic and formal farrago the Wake is often read as, which forestalls even the idea that translatability may be required before opening up an incision in the text? This paper will attempt to chart a chronology of critical engagement with the work to see whether there is indeed a sense to the worldliness which has come to define the Joycean artform.

**Shantam Goyal** is a Writing Tutor at Ashoka University, and an M.Phil Scholar at the Department of English, University of Delhi. His current research focuses on Joyce and Sound Studies. He also occasionally reviews books for *The Print*.

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### **Crusoe in Calcutta: the case of the Bengal Family Library**

**Abhijit Gupta**

In 1851, the newly-constituted Vernacular Literature Society set up the Bengal Family Library, with the aim to bring out titles suited for a 'family library' that would include women readers. The chief aim of the society was to promote 'sound and useful to Vernacular Domestic Literature for Bengal', and it proceeded to do through an ambitious curriculum of translations from western works into Bengali, though there were some who argued that translations into the vernacular were absurd 'because they cannot transfuse all the shades of thought of the original', and that Bengali 'was the rude tongue of a semi-barbarous race'. One of the first works to be translated was Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, in the form of *Robinson Crusoe-r Bhraman Brittanta*, published in 1852. This 'translation' featured Crusoe as the son of an Armenian merchant in Calcutta, and wrecked him on one of the islands of the Eastern Archipelago. This led to a lively debate within the Society on the theory and practice of translation, leading to a remarkable preface by Hodgson Pratt, one of the founder-members of the Society, in a translation of the French novel Paul et Virginie. This paper will examine how the efforts of the Society may be seen as an attempt to frame an incipient Bengali canon of fiction through the medium of adaptations and translations, and how the gains and losses for the Bengali novel were accrued as a result.

**Abhijit Gupta** is Professor of English at Jadavpur University, and Director, Jadavpur University Press. He graduated in English from Jadavpur University and received a PhD from Cambridge University for his work on 19th century British publishing. He is co-editor, along with Swapan Chakravorty of the Book History in India series, of which four volumes have been published: *Print Areas* (2004), *Moveable Types* (2008), *New Word Order* (2011) and *Founts of Knowledge* (2015). He was associate editor for South Asia for the *Oxford Companion to the Book* (2010). He has completed an electronic database and location register of all books printed in Bengali from 1801-1914, which is now the basis of the 'Two Centuries of Indian Print' project at the British Library, London. His other research areas include science fiction and fandom, physical culture, graphic novels, crime fiction and the 19th century.

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### **World Literature and Quantitative Analysis: A Romantic Reappraisal**

**NA Jacob**, Ramjas College, University of Delhi, India

This paper is an assessment of distant reading and quantitative literary analysis from the perspective of Romantic aesthetics and poetry. Drawing on an assortment of Romantic texts, both literary and philosophical, my paper tries to reframe recent debates about close and distant reading through the perspective of writers such as Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Schiller and Schlegel. Through a reconsideration of Romantic ideas of part/whole relations my paper attempts to negotiate the continuities and discontinuities between qualitative and quantitative methods of reading. The Romantic emphasis on irreducible particulars defined in opposition to general truths appears to militate against any sort of quantitative model that requires a subsumption of particulars into larger wholes so as to be able to discern broader discursive regularities and shifts. My attempt, however, will be to explore the stakes involved in such a starkly contrastive framing rather than highlight discontinuities alone.

**NA Jacob** teaches English at Ramjas College, University of Delhi. His doctoral thesis at Rutgers University was titled *Looking Through Words: Histories of the Visual Image in Nineteenth-Century Literature*. His interests include literature and philosophy, literary theory, aesthetics, and photography studies.

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### **‘What is a World?’ World Literature and the Rifts of the Postcolonial**

**Sourav Kargupta**, Independent Post-doctoral Scholar

This paper presents a critical evaluation of the book *What Is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature* (Cheah 2015) which marks a paradigm shift in the fervent debates concerning the idea of ‘world literature’ that started roughly around the turn of the century, and gathered steam through the publication of a series of books by literary scholars re-kindling the Goethian term “world literature” within and beyond the discipline of comparative literature. Cheah’s recent book tries to give the discussion a more literary-philosophical turn, asking the ontological question of literature itself, contra the recent trends in thinking ‘world literature’ either as a “spatial category, determined solely in terms of extension” or as a mere mapping of the “flows of literary exchange across national boundaries”, leading to a “restricted understanding” (Cheah, 5). Breaking from this approach (which includes much discussed works by discussants of world literature such as Franco Moretti, Pascale Casanova, David Damrosch among others, i.e. a wide spectrum), Cheah tries to think of ‘literature’ as a fundamental opening of (human) experience to temporality and narrativization, an imminent “normative force” which resists capitalist globalisation. The strength of Cheah’s case, however, lies in his ‘historicization’ of this ontological argument. He argues that the historical nature of capitalist globalisation necessitates that the resistances to its exploitation of human values must be inscribed most poignantly in the texts of postcolonial literature. This paper agrees with the framing argument of the book, that one needs to balance the recent trends in conceptualizing ‘world literature’, which run the risk of social scientific or economic reductions, with a more rigorously philosophical understanding, both of ‘world literature’ and of its historical predicament within the capitalist mode of production. However, the paper also tries to make at least three major criticisms of Cheah’s book, of the easy division it makes between (exclusively) ‘European philosophy’ and ‘postcolonial literature’ (in which the latter seems to merely ‘illustrate’ the insights coming out of the former), of its inability to explain the disjunctions between an ontological understanding of the ‘world’, and the historical location of postcolonial literature (missing the ‘rifts’ productive of the ‘literary’ and of the ‘world’ as postcolonial), and of its trivialisation of Marx’s analysis of expropriation of labour-power in favour of (Cheah’s reading of) the Heideggerian idea of ‘unworlding (Entweltlichung)’ (Cheah, 155, 124). The paper makes its case with special reference to the work of Jacques Derrida and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, along with some references to the ‘Ibis Trilogy’ by Amitav Ghosh.

**Sourav Kargupta** is a postdoctoral scholar, currently unaffiliated, and working on a book-project. His doctoral thesis concerns feminist philosophy, deconstruction, and the works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. He has been an Erasmus Mundus Postdoctoral fellow at the Dept. of Global Studies, Aarhus University, Denmark. His latest publication is: Kargupta (2017): “De-cision: Resisting the ‘Tragic’ and Surviving the Subject”, in: *Philosophy, Language and the Political: Reevaluating Poststructuralism*, eds. Manjali and Crépon (New Delhi: Aakar Books).

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### **Beyond Borders and Boundaries: Translation, Relocation and the Politics of Power**

**Afrinul Haque Khan**, Nirmala College, Ranchi, India

‘Humanistic culture’, says Mufti, ‘is saturated with informal developmentalism – a “first in the West, and then elsewhere” structure of global time ... in which cultural objects from non-western societies can be grasped only with reference to the categories of European cultural history, as pale or partial reflections’. Translation challenges this ‘informal developmentalism’ of ‘humanistic culture’. Translators, especially from the third world nations, ‘rewrite’ the indigenous texts in English, the ‘Hegemonic International language’ and make those texts accessible/ comprehensible to the English speaking world, and hence, transfer across borders and boundaries not only the translated texts from non western nations but also the ‘rich tapestry of traditions’, customs, beliefs and values contained in those texts. In other words, translation enables the relocation, not only of the texts from third world nations, written in indigenous languages, but also the third world cultures, which have been, to quote Gayatri Spivak, ‘exploited but with rich intact heritage, waiting to be recovered, interpreted and curricularized in English translation...’. I propose to examine, through an analysis of Gayatri Spivak’s translation of Mahshweta Devi’s *Chotti Munda and His Arrow* how translation enables the relocation of indigenous texts from the third world nations to the metropolitan centers of power and how this relocation empowers the translated texts and also the culture embedded in those texts.

**Afrinul Haque Khan** is Assistant Professor and Head in Department of English at Nirmala College (Ranchi). She has done her doctoral research on the works of V. S. Naipaul and her thesis is titled ‘Displacement and Migration: Major Themes in the Works of V. S. Naipaul’. Her papers have been published in several reputed national and international journals and books. She is a member of several reputed associations like IACLALS, IASA and ASAA. She is also a member of the Core Editorial Team of ‘Das Literarisch’ (An International Bi-annual Peer Reviewed Journal of English Studies and Creative Writings).

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### **Can a local text be a global core text? Translation, Textual Dialectics and World Literature**

**H S Komalesha**, IIT Kharagpur, India

Behind the making of a classic, in any language, there is a significant contribution from intertextual elements that lend the work its polyphonic and palimpsestic dimension. Textual dialectics – a result of the interplay of multiple texts within a text – plays a major role in converting an otherwise ordinary work into a classic that has the potential to earn its rite of passage into the hallowed precincts of world literature. If we consider translation as the most intimate act of reading, a close reading of the text we intend to translate, then how do we translate the voices and echoes of the tradition that are latent in that work? While the process of recreating a text from the source language into the target language is in itself a very difficult task, highly challenging and often problematic, then, is it possible for a translator to recreate the entire tradition that has gone into the making of a new text? While accommodating tradition and intertextual elements, what problems does a translator encounter, and how does s/he equip the ‘foreign’

reader to engage deeply and meaningfully with texts rooted strongly in local cultures? While seeking answers to whether a translator should aspire to turn local texts into global core texts, this paper attempts to explore the intricate and organic relationship that exists between tradition, intertextuality, translation, and world literature. To achieve clarity and specificity, these discussions are taken up in the backdrop of my English translation of *Sankranti*, a modern classic Indian play written by P Lankesh – one of the gifted writers of the Kannada world.

**HS Komalesha** is Associate Professor of English in the Department of Humanities and Social Science at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. He works in the areas of Indian Literatures, Postcolonial Studies, Translation and Cultural Studies. Some of his latest work includes , *Issues of Identity in Indian English Fiction* (2008) and English translations of two Kannada monographs *Anupama Niranjana* (2008) and *Rashtrakavi Kwempu* (2013) published by Sahitya Akademy. He has published widely on Indian English Literature and postcolonial studies.

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### **The “World” is not Enough: Disembodied Locals of Global Writing**

**Prakash Reddy Kona**, EFLU, Hyderabad

The local is the contemporary avatar of the native, except that the former happens to be everywhere and nowhere - marginalized in class, region and gender terms owing to lack of mobility or in an extreme form turning into refugees in search of home - and not just in the erstwhile colonies to which the so-called native aspires to return in fact or in the fictionalized worlds of memory. If the idea of the world is not enough and is slowly taking the appearance of the globe, literature is relegated to the institutional care of departments given to study languages, being now replaced by “literary” or global writing occupying the centre stage of media-based platforms where the “eye doth feast/ And to the painted banquet bids my heart.” World literature with its other-worldly (as in the worlds of others) concerns by expanding the horizon of translation and comparative framework to include works in unexplored dialects and languages of newly occupied lands, is grandparent to the fantastic lord of the one ring, the citizen of Narnia, or Harry Potter – at once global and a challenge to the linguistic nihilism of Bazarov in Turgenev’s *Fathers and Sons* or the spiritual vacuity of Ivan Karamazov in Dostoevsky’s novel. Alyosha’s saintliness which complements that of the petite Simon in *Lord of the Flies* is not an answer to the “worldliness” of literature that speaks the language “of men” and not of poets. What is the “world” is neither the distant cousin of the global nor two strangers on a train who create a common destiny through a notion of how murders can be committed without being caught. The “world” of literature is invented to suit “such stuff/ As dreams are made on” while the less than modest global writer comes as close to realizing the dream as virtual reality will allow by opening the “doors of perception” dedicated to playing with itself using words as erotic instruments in the service of thought. Whether Brexit, Trump’s victory or the pugnacious Black Lives Matter (BLM), the disembodied locals, a little more at home in the worlds of Shakespeare and Goethe than the “museum of innocence” operating as a transnational idiom, choose to fall back on the past rather than endure an unpredictable future in which they might have no role to play. Once, in the role of marginal characters such as Caliban, Satan, the Negro slave Jim or Mowgli, they now refuse being reduced to types in the new world order. Their borderline presence in the past serves their interest in terms of visibility more than the politically correct versions of the present where the argument for self-assertion euphemistically disguises political isolation. While identity politics are essentially conservative, whether the disembodied locals will seek in world literature the answers to the predicament of belonging to a specific world or prefer being scattered across the globe, is the thrust of this paper.

**Prakash Reddy Kona** is a Professor of English Literature at The English and Foreign Languages University(EFLU), Hyderabad. He completed his doctorate at the University of Mississippi, MS in 1997. His thesis is a comparative analysis of Derrida, Chomsky, and Wittgenstein. His current interests are Women’s Studies, Films, Third World Politics and Literature, Classical Humanism and the 21st century as a site of globalization versus radical political movements.

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## Reading *'Doosri Parampara Ki Khoj'* in English Translation from the Perspective of World Literature

**Akhilesh Kumar**, S.G.T.B. Khalsa College, University of Delhi, India

Translation is a very important aspect of world literature as it is through translation that literatures and cultures can be exchanged on a global scale. The act of translation can itself be perceived as a political act of a choice of whether or not to give in to cultural hegemony and hence the translator has to maintain the right kind of balance between the source language and the target language. Yet, the literary aspects and cultural connotations of the source language are often lost in translation when represented according to the language of the target culture. For instance, many scholars or students read translations of colonial or post-colonial literatures which have European or American interpretations.

It is important therefore that the ideas in the source language text are presented aptly. There are numerous examples where culturally specific aspects of the source text are misrepresented, excluded or misinterpreted by the translators who do not understand the culturally specific connotations of source texts. This has in fact been the case of Indian texts translated into English by European translators. Some European translators have in the past deliberately or accidentally misrepresented or excluded key ideas presented in the source language text which are fundamental to the understanding of the culture of the source language and its speakers. For instance, when William Jones translated *Abhignan Shakuntalam* in 1789, he completely excluded the extracts about perspiration from his translation. Similarly while translating *Raag Darbari* in 1992, Gillian Wright has mistranslated the word 'akhara' as gym. The specific meaning of akhara is a space used for training in Indian martial arts with nothing else but a pile of soil, while the concept of gym is a room full of equipment for exercising.

In my paper, I will try to bring in issues of translation, interpretation and representation with reference to Namwar Singh's *Doosri Parampara Ki Khoj* (In the Search of an Alternative Tradition), 1982. In this work, Singh has explored the possibility of an alternative tradition that can parallel the established Indian literary tradition. Singh discusses this alternative tradition by following the debate between two schools of thought, led by two widely known Hindi authors, Ramchandra Shukla on the one hand and Hazariprasad Dwivedi on the other.

In the first chapter of the book, Namwar Singh discusses Dwivedi's viewpoint, that without a deeper understanding of the literatures of surrounding cultures or the neighbouring states like Bangla and Oriya literatures, it is impossible to understand Hindi literature. In my view, this idea can be extended and applied to world literature as well. That is to say, without the deeper study of the literatures of neighbouring countries and continents, it is impossible to understand world literature and the concept of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam' i.e 'a one world nation'. This idea, in my view can be applied to the context of world literature as well. Through the act of translation one can present indigenous texts before the world so that readers can interpret the text in both ways – that of the target culture, while simultaneously being true to the literary tradition of the source language.

**Akhilesh Kumar** is Assistant Professor at the Department of English at S.G.T.B. Khalsa College, University of Delhi since 2009. His areas of interest are postcolonial literature, translation studies, women's writing in nineteenth and twentieth century and contemporary literature. He has completed his PhD from University of Delhi. His translation of Namwar Singh's essay is in the works to be published by Routledge in the book *Discourse on Hindi Literature*. He is also working on publishing an essay 'Translating Harivansh Rai Bachchan's prose work relating to Literature and Culture' and a translation of Shri Lal Shukla's essay '*Ajney aur Adhunik Hindi Upanyas*'.

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## **The Home and the World: Understanding Dalit Aesthetics**

**Raj Kumar**, University of Delhi, India

Dalits in India are victims of caste oppression over the millennia. They have been systematically denied rights to live with dignity and self-respect by the caste society. Even after seven decades of India's Independence, they are not fully free to exercise their freedom. They continue to remain the "Other" in their own country. It is true that Dalits have suffered caste humiliations all through these years. But they have never been silent. Indian history is replete with instances of how Dalits have been protesting against caste through various means. The recently emerged 'Dalit literature' is an example of how Dalits are mobilizing resistance against caste oppression to have dignity and social justice.

With more and more Dalit texts coming out in English translation and published by the world-repute publishers, Dalit writers are virtually speaking to the world. Apart from general readers, Dalit texts are now read, analyzed and critiqued by both students and teachers in foreign universities. Dalit studies as an autonomous discipline is also getting established in many universities in abroad. As a result, caste questions are getting serious attention world-wide. Citing some of these instances as positive development for Dalit movement and Dalit literature, the present paper will propose to ask the following questions: What is the primary focus of Dalit literature that which gets global attention? How do Dalit writers negotiate with local/national issue such as caste with the global audience? With Dalit literature travelling abroad, what is the future of Dalit discourse?

**Raj Kumar**, PhD, is Professor in the Department of English, Delhi University. His research areas include autobiographical studies, Dalit literature, Indian writing in English, Odia literature and post-colonial studies. He has been a Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla in 1999 and has published in journals such as *Social Action*, *Sateertha Bulletin*, *The Fourth World*, *Creative Forum*, *Language Forum*, *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature*, *Indian Literature*, *Social Scientist*, *Journal of the School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies* and *Economic and Political Weekly*. Raj Kumar has also translated literary texts from Indian languages, especially Odia into English. His book, *Dalit Personal Narratives: Reading Caste, Nation and Identity* has been published by Orient BlackSwan, New Delhi in 2010 and got reprinted in 2011, 2015 and 2017. His English translation of Akhila Naik's *Bheda*, the first Odia Dalit novel is published by Oxford University Press, Delhi in 2017.

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## **Epic in Novel: Mahabharata, Caste and Violence in two Postcolonial Indian Novels**

**Aruni Mahapatra**, Emory University, USA

For several writers, "worldliness" has been the price of postcoloniality. When Derek Walcott alluded to Donne's *Devotions* (or Defoe's *Crusoe*), J. M. Coetzee to Wordsworth (or Cavafy, or Kafka, or Cervantes), Chinua Achebe to Yeats, or Patience Agbabi to Chaucer, they situated themselves in a tradition that "global", Anglophone readers would recognize. By referring to familiar names, these writers described the violence of colonialism in unfamiliar places, and eventually questioned the relevance of the tradition to understand the violence of colonialism. But what about those writers who feel compelled to describe violence that is culturally specific, for which there is no language in the European canon? And if, forsaking the European canon, they are forced to draw on a lesser-known tradition; can they still communicate to as wide a readership? In disciplinary terms, can they leave the ghetto of "area studies" for the storied halls of "world literature"? This paper explores how two twentieth-century Indian novelists, Arundhati Roy and Shivaji Sawant describe and critique caste-based violence by re-imagining a character (Karna) and his anger (in "Karna parva") from the Sanskrit epic Mahabharata. Roy's middle class characters in *The God of Small Things* demonstrate their alienation from the caste-ridden underbelly of 70s Kerala by talking about, reading and consuming Walter Scott,

Conrad, Fitzgerald, and a slew of American movies and music groups. Indian literature is conspicuously absent, until it's not: in a key event, Roy's twin protagonists understand how and why, twenty years ago, they unwittingly contributed to the lynching of an untouchable "Parayan" man, Velutha. As Esther and Rahel watch Kathakali dancers perform Karna's rage from Karna Shabadam (Karna's Oath), Roy's readers learn of an "Indian" inequality: caste. Thirty years earlier, Shivaji Sawant, a lesser known Marathi writer had turned Karna's rage into a novel: *Mrityunjaya*. While Sawant recreated in prose the epic's reflection on its own misogyny and casteism, Roy, writing for a differently educated audience, "explained" more of the text and channeled it into a powerful critique of postcolonial India. I will compare Book 8 of the Mahabharata, "The Karna parva" with its re-creations in the twentieth century novels by Roy, Sawant and their sources, to understand the terms on which the two novelists enable their very different readers to sympathize with a lower caste man. Studying the allusive networks inside and among texts in relation to the economic and cultural networks outside texts which recognize them as "world literature" will suggest that some texts wear the crown of "world literature" less easily than others, and that unease may be important for scholars invested in "world literature", if not for the texts themselves.

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### **The Universal Paradigm: A Sustainable Alternative to Postcolonial Discourse**

**Margarida Pereira Martins**, ULICES (University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies), Portugal

Postcolonial literature established itself as a reaction to the colonial, Eurocentric perspective, though reinforced through the Western enterprise, to express the cultural identity and emerging voice of nations involved in a social, political and economic restructuring following independence. Since its onset, however, the term 'postcolonial' has carried a heavy historical and political burden which in the interest of globalised and more democratic ideologies today, literary and cultural industries struggle to overcome. 'World' literature therefore arises as a refreshing alternative, one which appears to shadow the failure of the colonial/postcolonial project in an effort to gather all nations, societies and cultures as borderless, ahistorical and globalised. The idea that texts are linked to the construction of nation, to the search for a national identity and to the rewriting of history is diffused as emphasis is placed on individual stories, local in flavor, but universal in nature, which form the pieces that make a society, a nation and the world. Although world literature still carries an ideological crevasse and underlines the discomfort of global divisions, it gives way to new narratives, new forms and new social realities, no longer just focused on the postcolonial paradigm. The local, though not necessarily a model of nation becomes an important point of entry and a differentiating factor within a globalized conception and representation of culture. A new discourse therefore emerges where scholars and writers move beyond the political and historical limits that have enclosed the postcolonial to explore new ways of understanding the changing nature of society and individuals in the 21st century.

In the interest of this debate I am going to be looking into the work of Nepalese writer, Samrat Upadhyay, namely his first novel *The Guru of Love* (2003) and his book of short stories *Arresting God in Kathmandu* (2001). Upadhyay's texts are an example of how the universal and the specific, the global and the local are interworked to depict the transformations of language, society and culture. These narratives also provide a relevant contribution to the discussion in support of "world" as opposed to "postcolonial" as a more sustainable alternative approach to new literary forms which share a common discourse, regardless of having or not experienced a colonial past.

**Margarida Martins** is a researcher at ULICES (University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies) and an online lecturer in English language and culture at the Universidade Aberta in Lisbon. She has a degree in

Social Anthropology and Ancient History (University College London), a Masters in American Literature and Culture (Keele University, UK) and a PhD in Literary and Cultural Studies (University of Lisbon) with a thesis on the novels of Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai. Her main research interest focuses on contemporary literature, mainly postcolonial and diasporic, working with theories from social anthropology, cultural studies, literary criticism and language studies in an interdisciplinary approach to the narrative.

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### **Wordling Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness***

**Ana Cristina Mendes**, Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal

Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) is a novel crammed full of misfits and outsiders, the flotsam and jetsam of Indian society. Roy's second and latest novel is inhabited by cohorts of 'others': hijras, political rebels, the poor, women who will not 'know their place', abandoned baby girls. The narrative shows us these 'others' as they are carving out new spaces for themselves, living new possible lives, taking up new roles in India's composite society. Even if some of Roy's characters' ambitions are left unfulfilled and their romances are doomed, this exuberant, sprawling novel clearly celebrates not just the Other, but the position of Otherness, indicting those in positions of political and financial power, while applauding the courage, authenticity and warmth of the marginalised and subalternised. Using Roy's novel as case study, specifically its global marketing strategies (pre- and post-publication) and early reviews, I focus on the wordling of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* and, interrelatedly, on the status and (in)stabilities of a postcolonial Indian Writing in English (IWE) corpus vis-à-vis world literature. This paper departs from an unproblematized translatability assumption upon which some notions of world literature seem to rely, according to which the translatability attribute of world literature is not only understood in the broader sense of cultural communication and negotiation beyond a narrower sense of inter-linguistic transfer, but is equated to almost seamless cultural border-crossings. I begin with a brief analysis of the global marketing strategies and early reviews of Roy's novel as a work of world literature, more than postcolonial and/or IWE literature, which offers an opportunity to revisit the vexed issues of the marketability of literary texts in English, the translation into English of vernacular languages, and of the English language as irredeemably a hegemonic formation. While doing so, this paper is attentive to questions regarding canon formation and power relations, in literature and between literatures, in line with Michael Bérubé's contention that 'canons are at once the location, the index, and the record of the struggle for cultural representation; like any other hegemonic formation, they must be continually reproduced anew and are continually contested' (1992, 4-5). In the second part of the paper, based on global marketing strategies (pre- and post-publication) and early reviews of Roy's high-profile novel, I explore specific representations of the Other, comparing them with previous globally circulated depictions of a spectrum of Indian 'others' in selected works of IWE, to assess the purchase of these recent representations in the world literature marketplace.

**Ana Cristina Mendes** is Assistant Professor of English Studies at the School of Arts and Humanities, University of Lisbon (where she teaches courses in Cultural Studies and Intercultural Communication) and a researcher at the University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies (CEAUL-ULICES). Her areas of specialization are cultural and postcolonial studies, with an emphasis on the representations and reception of alterity in the global cultural marketplace. Her latest publications include the co-edited special issue "New Directions in Rushdie Studies" (2017) of *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, articles in *Continuum*, *Modern Asian Studies* and the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, and the co-edited volume *Transnational Cinema at the Borders* (Routledge, 2018). She serves on the board of the Association of Cultural Studies and is a research affiliate at the Amsterdam Centre for Globalisation Studies (ACGS).

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### **Crowding Culture? - Beyond Global, Local, and Glocal**

**Anders Michelsen**, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

One of the more intriguing ideas coming out of the debates on globalisation from the 1980s onward is the idea of 'glocalisation'. In early uses this term was merely a portmanteau of the dichotomy globalisation/localisation alleging, 'think globally and act locally'. As many other terms related to debates on globalisation, however, the term is inherently political and involves in various relationalities emerging out of the increasingly diffuse dichotomy of 'global' and 'local'. Today an obvious example of glocalisation may be the political economy of the global finance market, while another may be the activities of globally situated Diasporas.

One early and interesting portrait of glocalisation is found in Arjun Appadurai well known idea of the new cultural vehicle, coming out of a 'social work of the imagination', 'the scape': 'a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order'. The scape is an organisation prone on systemic complexity yet with highly ideosyncratic dynamics, '... the critical point is that the global relationship among ethnoscapes, technoscapes, and finanscapes is deeply disjunctive and profoundly unpredictable because each of these landscapes are subject to its own constraints and incentives ... at the same time as each acts as a constraint and parameter for movements in the others'. Not surprisingly Appadurai uses 'finance' and 'media' as samples of a possible typology of scapes but he simultaneously emphasizes that any sort of cultural organisation may be a 'scaping' venture, e.g. diasporas.

The paper will make a situated contribution to the paradoxes of current strategies of cultural production involved in scaping, by taking up the new term of the 'crowd', as in 'crowdsourcing', coined by Jeff Howe in Wired 14.06. <sup>1</sup> This kind of 'resourcing' is 'not outsourcing; it's crowdsourcing', Howe argues: that is, sourcing from a crowd as contrasted to sourcing 'out' from one entity of to another, 'sending jobs to India and China is so 2003'; i.e. sending from one national context to another or from national entities to alleged global entities. By now, crowd sourcing has long since created its own critical field related to the problems of neoliberal sharing economies such as Uber, Airbnb and more delicate issues such as the Japanese phenomenon of 'hidden homeless', or exploitation of academic research in the US.

In the paper the theme of the conference will be an occasion to consider what cultural notions we may develop after five decades of potential, conflict, negotiation and organization built up by globalization processes, including the surge of alleged national and chauvinist prospects in all parts of the world. It will be argued that it is high time that we consider action-based, creative notions of social and cultural formats and dedicate theoretical resources to think about such. While it is clear that the current regulatory set up globalization render new extreme inequalities <sup>2</sup> while statist the economic models in China and India has eradicated poverty to a world historical low, by producing a new middle class, we need to think about how such emergent features of the current world society can be involved much more in active, creative organizations that make collective change possible: the paper is going to indicate how the notion of the crowd can be seen in this context.

With point of departure in my participatory action research in The Horn of Africa, sourcing diaspora's health knowledge to their region of diasporic origin by way of ICT4D, I will reflect on the prospects of the crowd and its possible resources for a new political map of globalization beyond the global and the local: a scalable and solidaric form of cosmopolitanism working in what Appadurai presciently termed the 'critical point' of current social work of the imagination.

**Anders Michelsen** is Associate Professor, PhD, Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen. His research interests focus on philosophies of culture and globalization with two major areas of work: relations between culture, creativity, the imagination and the visual, and, design, architecture and technology, in practice led and participatory formats of 'information and communication technology' <sup>4</sup> development.

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## **Whither Goes the Parsi Author?: Neither ‘Postcolonial’, nor ‘Global’**

**Roomy Naqvy**, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India

World literature must present itself as highly problematic, eliding over national literatures and falsely positing certain authors / literatures as ‘more privileged’. However, it is not necessarily true that all Indian literatures, whether written in English or translated into English, must be judged from the paradigm of the ‘postcolonial’ either. For instance, the Marathi dalit poet and activist, Namdeo Dhasal’s wife, Malika Amar Sheikh’s autobiography, *I Want to Destroy Myself*, translated into English by Jerry Pinto, may not easily fit into the paradigm of the ‘postcolonial’.

There exists a substantial body of literature written by Parsis in English as also in Gujarati, which remains largely untranslated. One acknowledges the need for translation as also the problems and the politics associated with it. After engaging with the ‘postcolonial’ paradigm for a number of years, I seem to veer towards a point of view that large bodies of Indian texts need to be analyzed in terms of their cultural identities. The concept of World Literature may certainly be tossed out of the window as the Parsi texts seem to focus on the Parsi community, identity and culture. World Literature, then, would simply obliterate the Parsi cultural and literary heritage into oblivion. The Parsi author would also sit uncomfortably into the ‘postcolonial’ paradigm as is usually understood.

The Parsis present themselves as a unique community. The 2011 Census puts them around 60,000 people. In a country, which has witnessed majority (or a strident majority, in the view of a few commentators) as well as minority fears, the Parsis do not fear any such majority onslaught. It is an excellent example of a minority community, which has been an agent for social change. In fact, I would like to use the term ‘marginal culture’ for the Parsis, as also a number of such cultures that permeate India, instead of the term ‘minority’, which, to me, seems derogatory. The Parsi contribution to Indian modernity cannot be ignored. A 20-minute presentation would presume a paper of around 3000-3500 words. I would like to trace Parsi colonial history, contribution to modernity and systems of knowledge in about half the paper and devote the rest to an analysis of selected Parsi literary texts. I would like to argue in favour of national literatures, which take into account different ethnicities as also various cultures.

**Roomy Naqvy** is currently enrolled for his PhD on ‘Imaging the Self, Community and Nation: A Study of Parsi Writings of the 20th Century’ under Professor Mukesh Ranjan at the Dept of English, Jamia Millia Islamia, where he has also taught for the last decade and a half. His maternal root being Parsi is no major reason for him to be seriously engaged with Parsi Zoroastrian culture. But he remains convinced that a lot more work remains to be done in the area. He is the recipient of Katha Translation Award (Gujarati) 1996 and is known for his substantial contributions to Gujarati literature as a translator. He has published translations, book reviews and poems in *Indian Literature*, *Wasafiri* (UK), *91st Meridien* (journal of International Writing Program of the University of Iowa), *ARIEL*, *Tebelka*, *Visual Verse* (London/Berlin), *The Four Quarters Magazine*.

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## **Evocation of the Modern: Tanpınar, Ali and the Writing of Nostalgia**

**Pallavi Narayan**, National University of Singapore, Singapore

In Turkey and India today, the resurgence of religious fundamentalism is a significant tension in society (Peer 2017). This is inevitably reflected in writing on the city, here Istanbul and Delhi; indeed this goes back to even the 1920s-30s, the so-called “modern” period. For “[t]he contemporary period is seeing a formidable reorientation in “city writing”: it displays a conscious engagement with the conceptualization of the city, its pluralities and its tensions. Indeed, “our contemporary is very much an act of the modern” (Banerjee 2011: 266). In this context, this paper sees the intervention of the new Asian modernity as an act of conscious performativity in a nostalgic text such as Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar’s *A Mind at Peace* as compared with Ahmed Ali’s *Twilight in Delhi* (1940). It investigates how the act of translation that

Tanpınar's text requires need not impinge on the creation of meaning that emerges from the city as seen in a text written in English. Renewed interest in examining the identity of the city makes my intervention pertinent: placing these novels, one based in Istanbul and the other in Delhi, alongside each other allows me to analyse the evocation of the city's identity that this intersection of his fiction and translation—or its absence—effects. Finally, this paper asks how the city's literary landscape is channeled by way of translation, and how, if a novel of a certain period in the past is written in English, it affects the contemporary's reader's sensibility.

**Pallavi Narayan** holds a PhD in literature from the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (2016) for her doctoral dissertation titled "Pamuk's Istanbul: Everyday Architecture"; her book manuscript is under preparation. Based in Singapore, she is affiliated with the South Asian Studies programme, National University Singapore, where has guest lectured on the Minor in Art History. She has taught Communication Skills at IIT Delhi. In the last few months, she has presented her ongoing research on Istanbul and Delhi at the Humanities and the City conference at the Singapore University of Technology and Design, and given seminars on the role of the private museum at Ambedkar University Delhi and IIT Delhi. Her publications are both academic and general, as book chapters and in journals; her poetry has been published in several literary journals and books.

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### **The Indo-Islamic Erotic: A View from the Global Classroom**

**Shad Naved**, Ambedkar University, New Delhi, India

This paper is an attempt to think from where we are, in the global university in India, about the archive of pre-modern poetry that is called upon to represent different parts of the mythical Hindustan, a forerunner to the imagined idea of the nation. The material it draws on is experiments at an Anglophone university in Delhi under the rubric of comparative literature to teach undergraduates and postgraduate students pre-modern forms of *their* poetry. Its aim is to make us pause at a set of contradictions that world-literature thinking glides over: meaninglessness in translating literary form; loss of sound in reading metrical structures; and confusing eros with sexuality as the condition of reading today. These are some of the conditions, it argues, that situate the teacher of *our* literatures in the global classroom.

**Shad Naved** teaches Comparative Literature at Ambedkar University Delhi. In his doctoral work he studied the ghazal in Urdu as an erotic form in transition to literary form at the cusp of colonialism.

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### **Postcolonial, Postmodern and Contemporary: The Politics of African Poetry**

**Nneoma Otuegbi**, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

African poetry has evolved significantly over the years and elicited diverse debates bothering on the language of its presentation, its content and thematic obligations. An important aspect of the arguments which has received little attention is hinged on the form of the art in the era of postmodernism. This issue on its own opens up new discussions on the relationship between postcolonialism and postmodernism especially as regards African poetry. This paper examines the different angles of the debate through the theoretical base provided by Homi Bhabha on postmodernism and postcolonialism alongside Micheal Berube's similar work on the subject. The study agrees that due to the uneven forces of literary and cultural representation recognized in the dawn of postmodernism, African poetry reserves the right to bear allegiance to the cultural consciousness and thus become a tool, a form of communal expression for the good of the masses to whom the poet is a representative. Through analysis of selected works from

Nigerian poets, the paper highlights the thematic and cultural implications of the genre as well the kinship between the postmodern and the contemporary.

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**Anindita Pandey** is Regional Publishing Manager, Taylor & Francis Journals, based in New Delhi. She heads their Journals Editorial programme in South Asia and is responsible for the growth and development of the Taylor & Francis journals portfolio from this region. She has been a part of the publishing industry for over 13 years, having previously worked at Pearson and SAGE. Anindita has a Masters in Anthropology from the University of Delhi and a postgraduate diploma in Journalism from the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, Delhi.

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### **Fin du Globe? Decadence as World Literature**

**Harald Pittel**, University of Potsdam, Germany

The literary term ‘decadence’ seems to lead a double life of its own: signaling the advent of something new in times of crisis and transition – such as the crystallization of individualism qua formal innovations, entailing the (pre-)emergence of a (post-)modern mind-set and the gradual emancipation from grand narratives –, the implicit sense of decay is also apt to foreground the lingering of the old as it is deprived of its former glory, the persistence of crumbling traditions, regimes and societies. The fascination with decadence – as well as its predicament – thus lies in kinds of experience and agency in which the old and the new are realized as inextricably entangled.

Several contributions have suggested that “decadence” should be regarded not as an exclusively Western phenomenon pertaining to Fin-de- Siècle cultural turns. The translation of key works of British and French decadence in China, Russia and South America, as well as the existence of comparable strands (like the mid-19th -century Urdu Rekhtī poetry) in India, would point towards an understanding of decadent literature as a global phenomenon. Such a perspective could help to investigate into the political dimensions of decadence in the wake of the dissolution of imperial, colonial and state orders. More specifically, it is well worth exploring which criteria are to be met, and which strategies would be adequate, for decadent art to unfold a notable emancipatory potential. One approach might be to artistically and critically embrace the “decadent dilemma” as such, implying an outlook that is not content with turning one’s back on received horizons, but to remain decidedly fixated on the vast inventories, archives and residues of the past, recognizing that these are no longer under the sway of dominant culture’s hierarchies. We do not have to look any further than Oscar Wilde for an idea of what such a conscious and reflected use of decadence might entail. The sense of past fascination cultivated by the Anglo-Irish arch-aesthete is centred around a horizon that is heralded by the keyword “romance.” The term marks out a space precisely for negotiating how a sense of bygone greatness can be preserved by individualist transformation of de-hierarchized cultural elements when tradition is losing its authority. Decadence is thus not about mere playfulness, irony and relativity, but offers infinite adventures of exploring cultural memory, amounting to a ‘blast from the past’ of “romance-related” ideas (philosophical, political, artistic, sexual) around meaningful and desirable existence, these elements echoing heroism, noble passions, intense experience and a disdain for conventionality, but offering themselves to be reconfigured in ever-new ways. Taking this cue from Wilde, a new and more global understanding of “decadence” would concede a place for grand narratives after all: past horizons leaving a deep and formative mark on individual’s self-understanding, but nonetheless inviting to be freely and critically adopted, amended, changed.

**Harald Pittel**, M.A., studied English and German Literature, Philosophy, and History at RWTH Aachen University, Newcastle University and the University of Potsdam. He was a teaching associate with the Department for English and American Studies from 2011-17. His research interests include Fin-de-Siècle and (Post-)Modernist literature, literary and cultural theory. He wrote his PhD dissertation on "Romance and Irony - Oscar Wilde and the Political."

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### **What on Earth is a World?: Media Habits and Habitats**

**Satish Poduval**, EFL University, Hyderabad

The world is clearly an imaginary category, doubling as both narrative content and discursive context. It refers to mimetic situations conjured up through a text by authors and readers; it also points to a secondary, meta-diegetic, administering of the imaginations of authors and readers. The seam between these two senses of the world is revealed/concealed within the frames of intelligibility that are naturalized through reiteration and routine. My presentation will discuss some aspects of this phenomenon, through a consideration of differences between earlier broadcast media formations (operating in terms of a 'world-service' or a 'world-market') and the newer media technologies (enabling rhizomic politics and epistemologies as well as the policing of subjects through the world-wide web).

**Satish Poduval** teaches at the Department of Cultural Studies at the English and Foreign Language University, Hyderabad. His research interests include Literary and Cultural Theory; Media and Film Studies and Contemporary Kerala. His recent publications include 'The Affable Young Man: Civility, Desire and the Making of a Middle-Class Cinema in the 1970s,' in *South Asian Popular Culture*, (2012); 'Governmentality and the Enthusiasm for Democracy in India,' in *The Politics of Passion: Reframing Affect and Emotion in Global Modernity*, (2013) and 'Hacking and Difference: Reflections on Authorship in the Postcolonial Pirate Domain,' in *Postcolonial Piracy: Media Distribution and Cultural Production in the Global South* (2014).

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### **Translating the Untranslatable: Hans Blumenberg's Theory of Absolute Metaphor in the World Literature Frame**

**Julian Potter**, La Trobe University, Australia

In this paper I will attempt to bring some of Hans Blumenberg's ideas of 'absolute metaphors' and work on myth into dialogue with some of the preoccupations of world literature: world-making, the Untranslatable, the ineffable. In *Work on Myth*, Blumenberg, in the manner of a social contract thinker, creates his own myth of the origins of storytelling. At a decisive point in the dawn of culture human beings experienced Angst in the face of a general terror that could not be conceptually captured, named the 'absolutism of reality'. Metaphor and myth are able to conquer this inconceivable terror by neutralizing its threat in storytelling. But because metaphor is indirect, it is malleable, impermanent, historical, contextual, in comparison to the concept, which for Blumenberg strives for timeless universality. The limit Blumenberg places on conceptuality offers an inexhaustible source of new metaphorical determinations, and prevents the endgame of technical reason from coming to pass. Can this theory be used fruitfully, directly or analogically, to think about world literature as a problematic aggregate of human creativity and consumption? I would suggest that Blumenberg's careful negotiation of both Enlightenment and Romantic traditions in approaching the questions of modern culture can add interesting complexity to the issues of national and civilizational products in circulation in a 'world system'.

**Julian Potter** is a PhD student at La Trobe University, the production editor of the journal *Thesis Eleven*, and proprietor of Minerva's Books, a second-hand bookstore in Ballarat, Australia.

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### **Remembering (to Forget) English: Phule's Gulamgiri and the Crises of World Literature**

**Rahee Punyashloka**, Centre for English Studies, JNU, New Delhi, India

Phule's explosive anti-Brahminical, anti-caste treatise, *Gulamgiri/Slavery* (1873), offers a curiously singular vision of "postcoloniality". It starts out with an English preface-and in turn, being one of the earliest Indian "political treatises" to be written in English-that spells out its attempt to function as an exposé of the Brahminical hegemony over all forms of societal- discursive functioning prevalent then, and ends with this now seemingly problematic "oath" of allegiance- The Sudras are the life and sinews of the country, and it is to them alone and not to the Brahmins that the Government must ever look to tide them over their difficulties, financial as well as political. If the hearts and minds of the Sudras are made happy and contented the British Government need have no fear for their loyalty in the future. (Phule, 35) The assertion of such a "postcoloniality" where the "happy and contented" Sudras accept subordination to the British Government reads like speculative fiction in the now. Of course, it foregrounds the oft-repeated hypothesis that the anti-British "nationalist movement" was not really encapsulative of all of the nation, and especially not the lower castes. But Phule's assertion, made in the English language, also complicates a statement such as "[I]n post- Industrial Revolution colonialism, broadly understood, the language of the colonizer was a problematic and painful acquisition" by Aamir Mufti in *Forget English!: Orientalisms and World Literature* (2016); it becomes clear that Phule's acquisition of English is quite contrary to being a problematic acquisition; it is rather, a clear 'ally' through whose employment Phule seeks to assert his outward pledge of allegiance and seeks to overthrow the "old masters" i.e. the Brahmins. Further, throughout his book, Phule engages in a remarkable deployment of diverse sources of "world literature", including Homer, Shakespeare, Thomas Paine, American abolitionists, the historical conception of Christ, the scholarship of European Indologists and treatise and reports written by various British officials among many others, so as to explicate and elaborate upon his notion of the titular "Slavery"; which therefore becomes an expansive, universal articulation that is not merely limited to the Indian caste-based system of slavery. This paper is designed as twofold: firstly, it attempts to elaborate how Phule's choice of both the English language, as well as diverse sources from across the world so as to substantiate his theses in *Slavery* make him a singular figure who sees and deploys world literature as political. Secondly, having established Phule as a "figure" of world literature, we look at how his assertions complicate the hitherto theorized versions of postcoloniality vis-a- vis "World Literature", with an emphasis on the work of Mufti et al.

**Rahee Punyashloka** is a doctoral research fellow at Centre for English Studies, School of Language, Literature, and Cultural Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has recently submitted his M.Phil Dissertation titled 'Invisibility as a Philosophical Problem' which is due to undergo examination. His research interests include contemporary philosophy, image studies, and the works of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Derrida, and Jotirao Phule. He is also a visual artist and filmmaker with several exhibitions and screenings worldwide.

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### **Literary Untranslatable and World Literature: The Case of Orhan Pamuk**

**Feba Rasheed**, University of Delhi, India

Orhan Pamuk is one of the chief proponents of world literature. He is considered to have played a crucial role in the establishment of The Institute of World Literature at Harvard University. His pivotal

role in the institutionalization of world literature, along with the achievement of the Nobel Prize is said to be symbolic of a dialogue between the East and West - both geographically and culturally. The turbulent history of Turkey in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with multiple regime changes and attendant cultural transformations is said to have resulted in a perpetual state of melancholy- lamenting the 'lost glory' of a once empire. Pamuk refers to this state as *hüzün* something Emily Apter explains as a case of literary untranslatable. The massive reception and circulation of Pamuk's works raises certain questions in the light of world literature discussions. For instance how do we look at Pamuk's role in the world literary space which supposedly has its center in the West, although Pamuk points towards Istanbul as his center? Considering the history of Turkey with no physical colonization but a violent shift through Westernization, which effected massive change in Turkish society including the written script (Arabic-modified Roman alphabet), what is at stake when it engages with the West on an everyday basis? Can we look at this beyond a feeling of lack or belatedness, and a deliberate attempt to make a distinct space with a shift in the present center? If so, how do we understand the major allegations against Pamuk from the home that he tries to fit Turkey into the demands of Western reception than presenting the reality of the land? Also, since he is one of the authors who fare tremendously well in translation with his works translated into around 55 languages, what happens to the literary untranslatable in Pamukean oeuvre?

### **Feba Rasheed**

Feba Rasheed has recently completed her M.phil from the Department of English, University of Delhi and is currently working as an Assistant Professor at Ramjas College.

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### **The Subject and World Literature: Literary and Historical Reportage of Aurangzeb's Accession (1658), c.1670-c.1730**

*Vikas Rathee*, Central University of Punjab, India

Does world literature have to be a proportionally representative collage of literatures translated into languages placed hierarchically (or heterarchically)? The idea of world literature privileges an understanding of literature that keeps texts, taken to be representatives of literary cultures, nations and/or regions, as central. What happens to 'world literature'; when we see it not as a function of texts, but of genres, personalities, themes, events or revelations? How should we define 'world', 'literature'; and 'world literature'. To this end, this presentation explores the figure of Aurangzeb (1618-1707, r.1658-1707), and, especially, his accession as the Mughal padshah (1658). Aurangzeb's accession evoked responses from London to Batavia recorded in multiple oral and written genres including *tarikh* (history), *vachanika* (bardic), epistles, journals, drama and painting in different languages. Predominantly, the incident has been understood as a 'historical'; phenomenon through the aid of particular narratives from the age of Aurangzeb. Firstly, these narratives hail from the *tarikh* (synonymous with 'history') genre in Persian. The second group of narratives hails from the genre of travel accounts in European languages, especially Italian, French and English. This historical image of Aurangzeb has come at the exclusion of texts in other literary and non-literary genres. Thus, the literary Aurangzeb of England as seen in John Dryden's *Aurengzebe* and other works posits an imagined figure neither confirmed nor denied by historical texts. Hindawi bardic texts based on direct reportage of the events of 1658 portrayed an alternative 'historical'; Aurangzeb. There are further narratives and images of Aurangzeb's accession that exist in Dutch, Ottoman Turkish, Assamese, Manipuri and other languages. To what extent is fruitful to divide texts of the reportage of Aurangzeb's accession as literary or historical? How was it that a non-European subject provided such an impetus to 'world literature', and that too in the seventeenth century? This requires reconfiguration of accepted models of 'world literature'. To what extent did European and extra-Indian reportage of the event derive from the standard Persian *tarikh* texts produced in India

largely under the aegis of the Mughal court? Can we see European reportage on the Old World (such as Dryden's Aurengzebe) as comparable with others such as those on the New World (such as Aphra Behn's Orinooko)?

**Vikas Rathee** teaches History at Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. From 2014-16 he was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has a PhD in History from The University of Arizona for writing *Narratives of the 1658 War of Succession for the Mughal Throne, 1658-1707*. He has also researched and lectured on the place of India in pan-regional and global events such as the Ghaznavid Empire and World War II.

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### **Translation Today: Emergence of Literature in an Age of Electronic and Performing Texts**

**Supratik Ray**, University of Delhi, India

Translation and its subsequent understanding has been the nexus around which world literature has always debated upon. Different modes of translation, transliteration and transcription have all had their share of positive and negative criticism. While the question of essence of a language is something any translator has to deal with, there is also the additional responsibility of cultural appropriation. Seemingly, the modern translator is also faced with another daunting challenge- the emergence of the digital text. The digital text in the form of e-books and audio books compound the translators problem as it not only opens up the text into a free market and thus susceptible to multiple systems of translation, but also brings into play the performative aspect of an audio book. The paper I propose to present is divided into two parts. The first part shall delve into colonial instances of translation and examine the appropriation the translators exercised to make the translated text more suitable to cultural reception. It shall also examine instances of multiple translations of the same text to different ends and interpretation thus opening up a singular work in two or more different works. The second part of my paper delves into the comparatively modern receptacles of translation, that of the digital text and the audio book. The audio book brings out the question of orality in a work of literature that may have been intended for 'reading in seclusion'. The performative aspect is instantly compounded by the translator's tendency to frame the text in a manner as to hold the attention of the listener rather than the reader. I hope to conclude on a note where I shall try to reconcile these two seemingly opposite binaries of translation, the performative and the personal and chart the emergence of literature in translation in an age of electronic and performing texts.

**Supratik Ray** is currently pursuing his M.A. in English from the Department of English, University of Delhi. He has presented papers at National and International Seminars across India. His areas of research interest include textual scholarship, translation studies, Gender studies, Gerontology, Violence and trauma studies and twentieth century drama.

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### **The "Major" Role of Small Languages (Hebrew and Czech) in World Literature**

**Charles Sabatos**, Yeditepe University, Istanbul, Turkey

Much as Goethe's scattered remarks on Weltliteratur gave rise to the still-debated concept of world literature, Franz Kafka's 1911 diary entry on small literatures, and the "pride and support" they offer their nations, inspired the philosophers Deleuze and Guattari to formulate their theory of "minor" literature. Based on cultural histories of prewar Prague, they propose that Kafka's polyglot and multiethnic society allowed him to be "a nomad and an immigrant and a gypsy" in German. More recent theorists of world literature such as Pascale Casanova and David Damrosch have critiqued (and refuted) aspects of the

minor literature concept in relation to Kafka's work, but less attention has been paid to the differing functions that each language may have in their "tetralinguistic" model. In fact, two of the languages directly connected to Kafka's own situation, Hebrew and Czech, which function as "mythical" and "vernacular" languages in relation to the major "vehicular" German of Central Europe, have also been used as major languages by minority writers in ways that parallel the postcolonial experience.

In his novel *Arabesques* (*Arabeskot*, 1988), one of the first Hebrew-language texts by an Arab writer to receive widespread critical attention, the Palestinian Anton Shammas counterposes family memories of displacement and loss following the establishment of the Israeli state with his contemporary experiences as a visiting creative writer in the United States. By referring to himself as an "Israeli Arab," Shammas evokes the same paradoxical issues of identity that Kafka encountered as a "Czech/German Jew" in the late Austro-Hungarian Empire; one of his intertextual allusions is to the title character of Willa Cather's *My Antonia* (1918), who is an immigrant from the Czech lands. More recently, Irena Eliášová's *Our Settlement* (*Naše osada*, 2009) portrays life in a Roma ("gypsy") community from the perspective of a young girl in early 1960s Czechoslovakia. In the Czech context, where national identity is still heavily defined by language, Eliášová's use of multilingualism negotiates between the "separate but equal" status of Czech and Slovak under Communism and the suppression of Romany that has persisted to the present. Ironically, it is through the Hebrew and Czech languages that Kafka's marginalized "Arabs and gypsies" can "reterritorialize" themselves within world literature. Both Shammas and Eliášová illustrate the imbalance in the study of major and minor languages, and indicate a largely unexplored direction for research: the cosmopolitan potential of small literatures as a form of cultural translation.

**Charles Sabatos** is an Associate Professor in Comparative Literature at Yeditepe University in Istanbul. His research is focused on transnational contexts of Central and Eastern European literary history, particularly modernist and contemporary fiction.

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### **Subversive Acts, Transgressive Spaces: One Part Woman and the Politics of Translation**

**Amrapali Saha**, Center for English Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

On December 2014, protests broke out in Tiruchengode, Tamil Nadu, the geographical setting of the novel *One Part Woman*, as well its writer Perumal Murugan's hometown. The activists of the rightwing Hindu nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) burned copies of the book and demanded a ban on it. The denouement of the book was the fundamental point of contention, in which a childless married woman participates in extramarital sex, albeit with societal sanction. The organization regarded the book as an insult to Hindu women as well as a willful distortion of social, religious and cultural history on the writer's part. Consequently, Murugan announced the "death of the author" with a dramatic declaration on Facebook. However, in 2016, the Madras High Court ruled in favour of the writer, granting him relief from all the controversies that had hounded the novel. Now the most interesting part about this literary kerfuffle is that although the Tamil original, *Madhorubagan*, had been in circulation since 2010, it is only in 2014, when the English translation by Aniruddhan Vasudevan was published, that the controversy took flight.

This brings me to the conceptual paradox of world literature, that is, in spite of cherishing a globalized ideal of literature as transnational and transcultural, both the producers and consumers of such literature are evidently "culturally enmeshed subject(s)" (Butler 182). Then perhaps the prohibition of his novel and the silencing of Murugan's voice as a writer begin to make sense. In the tension between two sorts of "fabrications", that of modernity and tradition, literary questions themselves are enmeshed with political and historical ones (Sadana 124). A critical engagement with Murugan's works reveals the complex, multi-dimensional relationship of individuals with the societies in which they live, and how they navigate and negotiate the quagmire of social rules and codes of conduct. That is a process which also characterizes the

circulation and interpretation of cultural forms such as literature. In *One Part Woman*, Murugan imagines the conjugal relationship of its characters Kali and Ponna as not only being inclusive but perhaps constitutive of transgressive spaces and subversive acts. On the one hand, the novel is an exploration and expression of female desire and sexuality, that old bugbear of the social institutions of marriage, family and patriarchy in India. On the other hand, it is an imaginative, parahistorical account of the diverse undocumented practices within the broader framework of Hinduism, drawn from the author's sociological research in that area and his knowledge of folklore and oral tales.

In his essay, "Who Killed Perumal Murugan?", A. R. Venkatachalapathy claims that the advocates of burning books do not understand literature. My contention is that they do understand literature and the power of its interpretive possibilities, especially in the present scenario, when Indian literatures, irrespective of their place of cultural and linguistic origin, can and do gain global currency through translation into English. I take David Damrosch's formulation of world literature as a "mode of circulation and of reading" (5) to suggest that the literary forms of a country can now act as political and cultural ambassadors of that nation. Such a mode of perception problematizes the task of interpretation, which instead of being diplomatically "neutral" or "apolitical", must engage with the concrete cultural contexts from which such works emanate. Therefore, I seek to locate *One Part Woman* in the category of "world literature", which when truly polymorphic in constitution and polyphonic in its discursive and interpretive possibilities, will assist in the process of unpacking and analyzing the elements of Murugan's book that makes his literary representation and the subsequent translation of it into English a political act.

**Amrapali Saha** is a Ph.D. scholar at the Centre for English Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

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### **Searching for the Fanatic in the World of World Literature**

***Mu'sab Abdul Salam***, University of Delhi, India

The condition of possibility of world literature can be said to be a particular worldview, namely a single undifferentiated world of realities. What this 'ontological regime' enables is a making sense of alterity of objects, people and events that are "alien", making possible the imagination of a familiar world, a world without boundaries, the world of world literature. However, the recent 'turns' in social sciences have emphasized on the importance of being reflexive/recursive about the premises especially ontological upon which our knowledge pursuits function for it holds much stake (ethical as well as ecological) in how we perceive the world and consequently the way we inhabit it.

My interest in this paper is in making this reflexiveness speak to the idea of world literature. That is, how efficient a category is world literature to account for the diverse textualities that exist(ed) around the globe? This will require us to acknowledge that the idea of world literature is predicated on certain tacit ontological assumptions which require rethinking. Here, rather than replace one set of assumptions with another I propose we take seriously the recent developments in anthropology, science and technology studies, object oriented ontology etc. which impels us to make way for an ontological contingency in which the world is understood not as a site of pre-discursive objective nature upon which we carry out our epistemological practices but as an unfolding where different configurations of realities continuously emerge through the formation of new relations, connections and networks, constituting an incomplete world that is always in the making. The foremost implication of this gesture for world literature I suppose will be highlighting the limits of our own assumptions, including the certainties that we claim to have dismantled anticipating an encounter with radical alterity. Literature and literary reading will no more be the ideal form of textuality nor will critique be the privileged site of literary relationality. In addition, this

might enable us to acknowledge the traditions that were made no longer thinkable within a liberal paradigm that lie at the limits of world literature (pace Allan).

For this purpose I will consider the figure of the 'fanatic Mappila' in British colonial discourses. Other than being a recalcitrant subject the fanatic was also someone who didn't know how to read properly. The British administration had banned the printing and publication of certain padappattu war songs that commemorated the sacrifice and bravery of contemporaries and as well as ancestors which gained popularity during the heyday of colonialism as well as the gatherings where people recited them in congregation. It was considered to inspire the fanatic Mappila into senseless violence for the fanatic reading was not a private intellectual act rather something that had affective, embodied and 'communitarian' dimensions that transcended the 'immunitarian' Euro-colonial understanding of reader/reading/texts. Similar concerns can be seen to be haunting the contemporary public sphere of Kerala too which came to the fore after the publication of Santhosh Echikkanam's short story 'Biryani'. When issues of representations were discussed once again the image of fanatic Mappila who is not adequately equipped to 'read' was invoked by the author, who obviously knows 'reading' and belongs to the universal reader/writer of world literature. The question then is: where does one place the 'fanatic reading' in world literature discourses? Considering the fact that critical reading is the privileged forte of world literature, is it possible to argue that in expropriating literary cultures world literature is also involved in an act of civilizing, of teaching how to read properly, in the process discrediting or rather disappearing other modes of readers, reading, being with textual objects/subjects? If we were to take the suppositions of ontological turn seriously how might then we engage with the fanatic reading without taking recourse to the tired liberal responses like cultural relativism or ethnographic philanthropy? Would literary studies be ready to genuinely engage with the other, the differently different, if the engagement necessitates effacing the certainties upon which the self sustains itself? My paper will be an attempt to grapple with these questions, in other words, a search for the being of fanatic reading in the ontological register of world literature.

**Mu'sab Abdul Salam** teaches English at Indraprastha College, University of Delhi.

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### **Writing Southern Worlds: The Case of JM Coetzee**

**Meg Samuelson**, The University of Adelaide, Australia

The oeuvre of the South African born and now Australian resident writer JM Coetzee seems in many ways to exemplify currently dominant formulations of 'world literature'. Internationally celebrated, as evidenced by the award of two Bookers and the Nobel Prize, Coetzee's writing has long had an uneasy relation to the national frame, and he explicitly chafed against the category of South African literature before and after his emigration to Australia in 2002. Many scholars of his writing have - approvingly or disapprovingly - observed how it transcends its spatiotemporal circumstances, with Rebecca Walkowitz most recently founding her notion of the 'born translated novel' on it. This paper will test and review these positions while arguing that, though it may transcend the national frame, Coetzee's writing maintains an ex-centric relation to the metropole by inhabiting and advancing instead the positions of a provincial literature and, more recently, literatures of the south. Tracking these positions and orientations across his narratives and through a focus on its settings, I will consider the ways in which they consolidate and/or complicate current orthodoxies in world literary studies while opening into a reflection on the geographic south vis-a-vis the global south or the postcolonial.

**Meg Samuelson** lectures in the Department of English and Creative Writing at the University of Adelaide, Australia, and is an Associate Professor Extraordinary at Stellenbosch University, South Africa.

She has published widely on South African, as well as southern and eastern African and Indian Ocean literatures, film and photography, including the book *Remembering the Nation, Dismembering Women? Stories of the South African Transition*. She has three book projects in progress (i) South African Literatures: Land, Sea, City; (ii) Amphibian Aesthetics: Writing from the African Indian Ocean Littoral; and, (iii) with Pramila Gupta, *Photographic Culture in Zanzibar, 1868-2018*. Other and related research interests include maritime and coastal literatures and cultures, debates on world literature and the praxis of literary scholarship, Anthropocene thought, and the southern hemisphere.

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### **The Helm and the Galley: English and its Converts.**

**Mohammad Saquib**, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

While the call to replace 'postcolonial literature' with 'world literature' may sound contentious, earlier than its time and an unlikely utopia to some, it has been taking shape, circulating and has formed a hard to dismiss underbelly in the literary world a world which is only as far from imperialist politics and capitalistic materialism of globalisation as the grass from the earth. The Theories of Colonial Discourses called for a 'universalism' against the regional flavour and relegated all literature (in English) from the Commonwealth to a sub-canon of general mediocrity. Now, when the drum beats of the Orientals have reached a fever-pitch and can neither be subdued nor ignored, the fervent call for 'world literature' is doing the rounds. This is owed in part to globalisation which in turn owes its birth to the colonial enterprise. With there being no doubt in English being the global language, the world literature that is being called toward for, is easily to be understood as English. Hence, the 'translation' and the 'border crossing' is a one way traffic a crossing over to the Anglican Church of literature, a migration, a conversion. In fact, those writing in English for their own regions are translating culture and pledging their 'fealty' to English. Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Marquez, Pamuk and many more have been appropriated by the translation phenomenon as a unifying practice so much so that soon very few may actually be left to know their original medium of writing. Even in a country like India, people know of Perumal Murugan as the writer of *One Part Woman* and not Madhurobhagan. So, it is more of a regulatory model of the 'Greenwich meridian' which is English and a country like India which should have more than one standard meridian cannot get more in the map of 'world literature'. The paper will attempt to extrapolate upon these points through some sample stories of R.K Narayan (like *Two Goats and a Horse*) to draw upon translation of culture, poems of Tennyson that betray colonialist agenda (like *Ulysses*) and some cloistering (translated) poetry of Lao Tzu. The division of Indian literature written in English into Literature from the Northeast, Dalit Writings etc. would also be touched upon.

**Mohammad Saquib** is a Research Scholar (PhD) in the Department of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh (UP). His topic of research is *The Subaltern Speaks: Shifting Postcolonial Perspectives in the Novels of Easterine Kire*.

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### **Indian Detective Fiction from National and Global Perspective: Analysing Satyajit Ray's Feluda Mysteries**

**Somali Saren**, EFL University, Hyderabad, India

A work of world literature, as David Damrosch describes, is born in 'the locus of a negotiation between two different cultures': the host culture and the source culture. However there is a possibility of 'highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination' in the 'contact zone' (Mary Louise Pratt). In case of genre fiction, in present context detective fiction to be specific, this problem seems to be more

relevant as the texts need to be careful not to discard the global generic expectations irrespective of its local connection. In India detective fiction was introduced through translated work from English to Bangla, and then to other Indian languages. These works, however, was incapable of generating any intellectual or historical substratum in India unlike Europe (Orsini 436). Later during the 1930's Bengali detective fiction writers moved away from imitation to adaptation of the genre, from the Westernized detectives to more Indian ones. Hybrid in nature these detectives displayed ambivalent feelings- the complex mix of attraction and repulsion to the colonial culture and tradition. Most famous of them is Satyajit Ray's detective Feluda. His detection method is that of Holmes's; based on empirical evidences and science of deduction. The loftiness of Westernized sleuth is visible in the description of his appearance: strongly built, six-feet tall. Ray even openly declared Holmes and his cases as the inspiration of the series and its detective. At the same time the Ray incorporates Indian elements such as history and culture throughout the works. The question that arises then: Can a body of work that follow not only a western generic structure but also draw the detective according to well established conventions, be eligible to be represented as a world literature? Should the targeted readers of English translations of Feluda mysteries be just the national readers or are they worthy of global attention?

**Somali Saren** is a doctoral candidate of English Literature at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad.

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### **Reading the World: Ann Morgan and the Cult of Reading Diversely**

*Amrita Sarkar*, PN Das College, Palta, India

To coincide with the London Olympics in 2012, editor and UK citizen Ann Morgan undertook 'a year of reading the world' reading one novel, short story collection or memoir from each of the then 196 UN recognised countries of the world. Her efforts have been published in her book *Reading the World: Confessions of a Literary Explorer*. Morgan's undertaking is a representative example of one of the most popular reading and publishing trends in the 2010s – a trend that is marked by the phrase 'reading diversely'. Through hosting challenges such as 'diversethon' and the 'read diversely tag', online reading communities have taken to reading books written or translated into the English language that expand beyond predominantly reading white, male authors from the USA, UK and other first world countries.

The proposed paper will begin with an examination of what constitutes as 'world literature' pertaining especially to texts published or that have gained renewed popularity in the digital era, and since the rise of book blogging and online reading communities. While examining the notion of country itself, where books (fiction as well as non-fiction) written about immigration, global terrorism and politically unstable countries form a significant section of the collective reading habits of online reading communities, I will explore the effects such literature can have on these communities. The paper will also focus on how online reading communities, though most popular among first world, white millennials, which is also notably inclined towards a greater female reading population, is changing the scope of publishing and distribution in these countries. The nature of such reading challenges like that of Morgan's, presumptuous though they maybe in terms of sizing up the cultural, political, aesthetic and sociological aspects of a country into a single long-form text, throw up interesting questions regarding processes which determine the selection of texts (such as availability, reviews, or when either is lacking, having to source texts and getting them translated by natives of those countries). The paper will also explore how and if expectations towards being 'well-read' or 'widely-read' or, perhaps, diversely or conscientiously-read to gain greater perspectives on cultures besides their own are met through such challenges and their sociological impact, as well as impact on the publishing industry and literature as a whole.

**Amrita Sarkar** has done her MA in English from Jadavpur University and her BA from Bethune College. Her research interests are in the areas of Gender Studies and Popular Culture. She is currently Part-Time Permanent Lecturer at P. N. Das College.

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### **Vishwa Sahitya: Exploring an Indian Perspective on World Literature**

**Dhurjjati Sarma**, Gauhati University, Assam, India

‘Vishwa Sahitya’ is the term used by Rabindranath Tagore in one of his Addresses in 1907, in response to the Western notion of National Literature. It is worth noting that the concept of Vishwa Sahitya is based primarily on the concept of ‘Vishwamanava’ – an idea of being or entity that transcends geographical and national boundaries. Through the concept of Vishwa Sahitya, Tagore points towards the recognition of inter-relatedness of all human beings, irrespective of their national or regional identities. However, against Goethe’s rejection of ‘national literature’ as ‘an unmeaning term’ and call for hastening the approach of ‘world literature’, Tagore visualises writers and artisans from various countries and periods working under the master plan of erecting Vishwa Sahitya as a ‘mandir’ (temple), which in fact, is forever in the making. This hints at a never-ending process of participation and augmentation of the idea of World Literature and thereby facilitating writers and artisans from the succeeding epochs and periods to participate in the grand scheme of things as stated above. The purpose of my paper is to examine the possibility of Indian Literature providing a perspective for studying World Literature in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. My paper would look into the manner in which litterateurs and critics belonging to the vernacular literary traditions of India have understood and, in turn, re-fashioned the concept of Comparative Literature as an outgrowth and extension of Tagore’s idea of World Literature. Though there are a number of noted personalities after Tagore, namely, Shri Aurobindo and Kuvempu who have attempted to put forward their own understanding of World Literature, my paper would endeavour to examine the concept within the framework of ‘Indian Literature’ where there is constant interplay between an integrative sense of ‘Indianness’ and a strong sense of regional identity inherent within the vernacular literary traditions. The concept of Indianness is itself a critical one demanding deep and constant introspection from time to time. On the other hand, there seems to be no alternative other than the ‘comparative method’ to study the interactions of regional literatures among themselves. Therefore, we may extend this argument to argue whether there is any (or better) way to study World Literature other than the methodology of Comparative Literature. And what role does ‘Indian Literature’ could possibly play in this regard. My paper would attempt to provide some preliminary answers to these questions.

**Dhurjjati Sarma** studied at the University of Delhi for his MA (English) and MPhil (Comparative Indian Literature) degrees. Presently, he is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literary Studies, Gauhati University, Assam. Prior to that, he was an Assistant Professor of English at Tihu College, Nalbari and at Kaziranga University, Jorhat. He also worked as a Production Editor at SAGE Publications, New Delhi, and, before that, as a Research Fellow in North East India Studies at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi. He engages himself in teaching and research activities in literary criticism, literary history, comparative literature and cultural studies, with special emphasis on Indian Literature.

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### **Dalit Human Literature/Dalit World Literature**

**Florian Schybilski**, University of Potsdam, Germany

I propose a paper investigating the phenomenon of and politics surrounding the recent surge in interest regarding the translation of Dalit literature. This engagement would be based on an understanding of the acts of translation and publication as explicitly political in the sense that they are indicative of an active attempt to bring views and ideas from ‘other spaces’ into the target language’s discursive sphere and to make them productive in the public negotiation of ‘what should be done’. I assume that translation – by rendering problems and texts intelligible for its consumers – can create visibility for Dalits and their concerns, potentially providing them with allies who occupy subject positions and develop agency radically different from their own. At the same time, translation into non-Indian languages also means establishing a subject position abroad, i.e. a first inroad enabling self-presentation and possibly participation instead of mere re-presentation in those languages’ discourses. As the academic lingua franca and the language of human rights, English, of course, takes on a privileged position in this respect. In the past three years, however, the German literary sphere has seen a number of translated volumes of Dalit writing published. Perhaps chief among these projects is “Human Writes – Translating Dalit Short Stories”, which was a cooperative effort of the German Heinrich-Heine-University’s Department for Anglophone Literatures and Literary Translation, and the PEN-Club Austria. Out of this project arose two German translations: The first one is Harish Mangalam’s short story collection *Light of Darkness*, which was published as *Aus dem Zwielficht – Vierzehn Einblicke in das Leben von Unberührbaren* (2015). The second one is Bama’s short story collection *Father May Be an Elephant and Mother Only a Small Basket, but...*, which was translated as *Das Klagelied des Wasserspeichers – Erzählungen aus Indien* (2016). Both volumes were published by the Vienna-based publishing house Löcker as part of the Edition PEN. Similarly, Meena Kandasamy’s poetry volume *Miss Militancy* and her novel *The Gypsy Goddess* have been translated into German and published by Wunderhorn as *Fräulein Militanz* (2014) and *Reis & Asche* (2016), respectively. Employing these translations – all of them English-German – and their geneses as my object of research, I argue that they are part of a larger international pro-Dalit alliance for the w/ri(gh)ting of wrongs. The translation of Dalit literature thus emerges as a political practice and, in this specific case, a practice that demonstrates international solidarity beyond the Anglophone sphere trying to put this supposedly ‘local’ literature center-stage.

**Florian Schybilski** is a PhD student at the University of Potsdam, Germany. His general research interests include the nation & nationalism, Dalit writing, and cosmopolitanism. He is currently engaged in exploring and charting writing on caste outside of the subcontinent.

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### **The World in ‘World Literature’**

***Albeena Shakil***, OP Jindal Global University, Sonipat, India

Despite 19th century antecedents in the ideas of Goethe and Marx-Engels, the recent resurgence of interest in ‘world literature’ is a post-globalization phenomenon involving renewed aspirations for universality based on ‘distant reading’ and assumptions of ‘translatability’. Recent scholarship of Mignolo and others, however, pose serious conceptual challenges to this perpetual quest for universality by Western modernity. Postcolonial theory and criticism, too, stand implicated in the ‘project of scholarly transformation within the [Western/modern/colonial] academy.’ One of the proposed remedies is south-south translations and conversations, especially based on ‘decolonial aesthetics’ and ‘border-thinking’. Despite promise, the concept of decoloniality is also theoretically complicit in assumptions of translatability within the global south. This paper seeks to explore whether translations per se are contaminated by asymmetrical systems of power, knowledge production, communication and publication, or is the pursuit of contingent and provisional universalisms desirable? Towards this end, the paper will examine three questions: 1) what is the shape of the world in the post- globalizations era?; 2) despite literary translations from across the global south, why have translations from India failed to make any

significant mark in the recent archive of ‘world literature’ in comparison to Indian-English writing?; and 3) is translation within the nation, i.e., within the multilingual and socially- stratified terrain of India, posing challenges that are similar or dissimilar to those posed by cross-border translations? The examination is premised on the idea that there is a clear distinction between the pre- and post-globalization worlds. As opposed to the earlier clear and geographical divide of North-South/West-East/developed- underdeveloped, the contemporary terrain is one where there are enclaves of prosperity/West within the East and pauperization/East within the West leading to points of consonance and dissonance within as well as between nations. The paper will be based on the exploration of the literary terrain of novels and novelists in the past few decades, with special reference to the English-bhasha debate in India.

**Albeena Shakil**, PhD, is Assistant Professor of English at the OP Jindal Global University, Sonapat. She is former Fellow of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla. She has authored *Understanding the Novel: A Theoretical Overview* and edited *Summerhill: IAS Review journal*.

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### **Colonial Imaginary and the Idea of Asia: The Project of British Romanticism**

**Anjana Sharma**, University of Delhi, India

European colonialism, embedded in the values of early capitalism, was, as we well know today, the fecund breeding ground of what was named as Orientalism, the obverse image of all that was then necessarily defined as the Occidental. This historical shift that began in the late seventeenth century, gathered momentum in the eighteenth century, and came to its fullness in the nineteenth century has a long and complex cultural, political, economic and not the least, psychological narrative. A multi layered, multi-cultural, mixed race account that still shapes the ways in which the new global order responds even in the twenty first century. While initially it was the German and French orientalist who awoke to the “discovery” of new Asian civilizations with rich ancient cultures and traditions, ultimately it was the British colonialist with their army of erudite bureaucrats, lawmakers, and savants who were most successful in “translating” Asia and exporting it back from the several Asian colonies. This circulating network of texts, of images, of translations, of object and travel accounts created new borderlands that were at times ideationally complex and at others subject to a reductive vision that still bedevils the idea of ‘Asia’. The new territory of “world literature” is inaugurated by William Jones and shapes the Romantic imaginary in ways that are still being exhumed.

**Anjana Sharma** teaches at the Department of English, University of Delhi, India. From 2011–2015, she was Founding Dean (Academic Planning) at Nalanda University located in Rajgir, Bihar, India. Her path breaking doctoral work contested the hegemony of British Romantic poetry and provided a counterculture account through archival work on pamphlets, periodicals, memoirs, and novels of the pro French revolutionary writers in England in the 1790s. It was subsequently published as *Autobiography of Desire: English Jacobin Women Novelists of the 1790s* (Macmillan, 2004). She has published widely in this area: Editor, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (Oxford, 2000), Editor *Frankenstein: Interrogating Gender, Culture, and Identity* (Macmillan, 2004). She co-edited with Terry Collits, *Agamemnon’s Mask: Greek Tragedy and Beyond*, Foreword by Terry Eagleton (Macmillan, 2007). Her other areas of interest are Indian Writing in English with a special focus on gender and culture. Her recent work is on the representation of Mahatma Gandhi in the public sphere in 1947 through the archive of English language newspapers.

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### **The Politics of Translation in Contemporary Indigenous Literature of Australia**

**Priyanka Shivadas**, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

Indigenous literature of Australia, with its unique cultural identity and political concerns, is in a constant struggle to gain more visibility nationally and internationally, without making itself a commodity for sale. Given the needs of the indigenous communities of Australia, it is important for their voices to be heard, especially at a global platform. This has meant that indigenous writers have had to adopt the predominant language of globalization, or English, as a vital strategy to attract international readership and further their own struggle for sovereignty and greater social and political empowerment. This, on the other hand, raises the question of Aboriginal languages. It is estimated that of the 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages which have existed on this continent, the vast majority are considered endangered. The widespread use of English will only obliterate them further. Moreover, Aboriginal narratives, born of an ancient, complex oral tradition and a non-Western spiritual worldview, consist of an internal emotional, idiomatic and syntactic structure that doesn't always comply with standard English. As a result, contemporary Australian writers of indigenous heritage have deliberately invented and shaped what has been commonly referred to as "Aboriginal English". It is also a kind of translation, even if not literary. Here, one translates culture-bound elements from a certain culture that uses a certain language into another language. In my paper, I would like to focus on this aspect of translation, which is rarely acknowledged as translation. I would like to argue that it is an important tool for the survival and renewal of minority cultures and languages and also cross-cultural communication. For this purpose, I would consider the text *The Swan Book* (2013) by Alexis Wright. I would also be looking at the politics surrounding the use of Aboriginal English as some writers and scholars have not hesitated to call it a half-hearted measure, if not a harmful one, in the continuation and perpetuation of Aboriginal culture and languages.

**Priyanka Shivadas** is a Ph.D. student at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her research interests focus on the intersections between Environmental Humanities and Indigenous Literary Studies.

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### **Dynamics/Disjunctures of "World Literature"**

**Vipan Pal Singh**, Govt Brijindra College, Faridkot, Punjab, India

If the inception of Goethe's *Weltliteratur* paralleled the emergence of 19th century capitalism then the revival of "world literature" in the modern era seems to be collateral with the ascendancy of new-capitalism and its attendant discourses. More recently, there seem to be two broad categories of thinkers who critically assess the dynamics of "world literature": the first who perceive "world literature" as a manifestation of humanist cosmopolitanism for the global elites, and the second who consider it as an incarnation of singular capitalist modernity in which there is little potential to translate the texts from diverse literary traditions. The objective of this research paper is to seek a postcolonial reorientation of the critical problematic for understanding "world literature" so that the poststructuralist framework with its various specificities of the aesthetic may be inflected with the materialist structures encoded in the texts. An attempt will be made to address the question that whether such meta-theoretical approach to the dynamics and disjunctures of "world literature" can suggest a compatible alternative to the existing models.

**Vipan Pal Singh**, PhD, is Assistant Professor of English at Govt. Brijindra College, Faridkot, Punjab, India. He has done his PhD at Punjabi University, Patiala on the topic 'The Problematics of Complicity and Resistance in Selected Works of Edward Said and Homi Bhabha.' He has presented many research papers at international conferences and delivered extension lectures on issues pertaining to Postcolonial Studies. Reputed journals like *Journal of Contemporary Thought* and *The Atlantic Literary Review* have published his papers. He is a life member of Forum on Contemporary Theory, Baroda, India, member,

Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies, and member, Postcolonial Studies Association, UK.

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### **'Holding the Pass': J.M. Coetzee's Negotiations with the 'Consecrated' Center**

*Anas Tabraiz*, ZHDC (Evening), University of Delhi, India

In my proposed paper I would like to specifically discuss some important issues on world literature that J.M. Coetzee, the South African Nobel Laureate, raises in fictional works like *Elizabeth Costello* and non-fiction like *Inner Workings*. While we in India struggle against the politics of the translation of Indian texts into English, and the loss of Indian voices in the English rendition of texts, Coetzee raise the important issue of the transformation and standardisation of the texts produced by the European writers in their native languages and peculiar dialects. In *Inner Workings*, Coetzee discusses lesser known writers of European Modernism and talks of the sacrifices they had to make in order to be published and in finding a readership in the language of their respective mainstreams. In *Inner Workings* Coetzee interestingly discusses how the writers in the various dialects of the countries of Europe had to forego the sharpness of their native expression in order to be acceptable by the world market. The scattered discussions on world literature in Coetzee's works promise to provide material for an engaging paper on the politics of standardisation in European Modernist writing. At this initial stage I propose to write a paper on Coetzee's views on World Literature.

**Anas Tabraiz** has recently completed his Ph.D on "The Pursuit of Ethical Silence in the Works of J.M.Coetzee" (2016). He has been teaching at Zakir Husain Delhi College Evening (DU) for the last 15 years. His areas of interest are Renaissance studies, psychoanalysis, Urdu Ghazal and Symbols in Indian Mythology.

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### **Literature in/as Margin: A Geo-Cultural Perspective to the Literature of Barak Valley and the Problem of Canon Rooting**

*Abbas Tapadar*, Shyam Lal College, University of Delhi, India

Indian regional literatures have had a long-standing history. Many such bodies of literature, probably due to their respective hierarchically placed marginal positions, have not been duly recognized or sketched upon. These literatures are massive in production scale and carry nothing less in terms of value than their counterparts in the centre that is their parent literary canon/body. Being at the peripheral trajectories, these bodies of literature usually remain uncovered and unillustrated in the historiography of the mainstream body/parent body of literature. How much does a language and its territorial markers contribute in the recognition of a body of literature existing at the peripheral sites? How does a literature body identify itself in its position as/to the "offspring"/"mainstream" vocabulary? Do these "marginal" literatures ever get into a "global" (however problematic the term itself could be) status? What are the possible political controls happening around questions of recognition/representation/identification and probably canon rooting of these literatures? The paper will be an attempt at looking into these and many such pertinent questions around a marginal body of literature from the North East India. Of course, the paper will try to focus on how this literature is deeply rooted to its territorial representation (space, history etc) and at the same time has been going through a perennial canon rooting crisis (as I would see it). The paper would specifically highlight upon the dominant forms produced in that body of literature and their representational territorial geo-histories and geo-present together with an account of how in itself this entire body of literature has, in many ways than one, stood proclaimed as an independent literary body.

**Abbas Tapadar** teaches Literature in the Department of English, Shyam Lal College, University of Delhi with specializations in Modern European Drama and Classical Literature. He has been working on the area Literature from the Margin as a special research interest. He has been working on translations of Mahasweta Devi's fiction as part of his doctoral study. He has also presented papers on politics of canon formation in literature at various national and international conferences. He also translates literary fiction from Bangla, Assamese and Urdu into English.

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### **The Frontier, the Postcolony, and Translation: Reading A. K. Ramanujan**

**Chinmaya Lal Thakur**, CES, JNU, New Delhi, India

Proponents of supranational conceptions and practices such as 'World Literature', globalization, and translation suggest that borders and frontiers need to be traversed in the interest of diverse cultural entities and communities coming into greater contact with each other. Such contact is supposed to be a significant step towards realizing the 'virtue' of establishing and further consolidating 'egalitarian' multiculturalism. However, as the recent work of Geoffrey Bennington (*Kant on the Frontier: Philosophy, Politics, and the Ends of the Earth*, 2017) has shown, the 'frontier' acts as an interruption in teleological schema that aim at traversing the frontier itself. In other words, the frontier emerges as an entity that can potentially threaten supranational thinking in political and cultural terms. It seems to me that the postcolonial turn in translation studies in the 1990s marked the recognition of the 'postcolonial' as (Kant and Bennington's) interrupting frontier that could critique the growth of translation studies. The latter seemed to forget that translation was an unequal transaction between unequal cultures. Hence, Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi in their pioneering volume *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice* (1999), in the context of English and French colonialism, reminded their readers of "the unequal power relations involved in the transfer of texts across cultures". (16) Yet, postcolonial translation appears to have been unable to finally emerge as a significant interrupting frontier as it ceded space to ethnicism and certain naïve postcolonial nationalism. Consequently, it not only recognized the colonizing/master tongue as an elitist and unnatural imposition in the postcolonial situation but also ignored the unequal power relations that existed among different languages within the postcolony, for the sake of consolidating a 'national' front. Bassnett and Trivedi in the same volume, for instance, argue that "Rushdie has already translated himself into becoming an English-language writer." (12)

Recent thinking in the field of postcolonial translation studies, however, has come to recognize the necessity of translation and self-translation within postcolonial multilingual contexts. (Francesca Orsini and Neelam Srivastava, 'Translation and the Postcolonial', *Interventions*, 2013) It is in this background that this paper seeks to study some of the translations of A.K. Ramanujan which transact responsibly among various Indian languages such as Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Sanskrit. With specific attention to his work in *The Interior Landscape: Classical Tamil Love Poetry* (1967), *Speaking of Siva* (1973), *Hymns for the Drowning* (1981), and *Poems of Love and War* (1985), it proposes that the ethics and aesthetics of his translations allows them to not only emerge as the interrupting frontier of supranational thinking but also as the responsible and significant 'postcolonial' in the practice of postcolonial translation.

**Chinmaya Lal Thakur** is a Research Scholar at the Centre for English Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His areas of academic interest include Continental philosophy, modernist writings, and postcolonial literatures.

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## **Translated Spaces and Trans- Created Bodies in Petina Graph's *The Book of Memory* and W.G. Sebald's Narratives**

**Krishnan Unni P**, Deshbandhu College, University of Delhi, India

The colonial body has always been placed in relation to a number of theoretical issues such as the site of suffering, the platform where the juridico- political questions of the colonial state is exercised and as the subject of virility. The representation of body in world literature in relation to postcolonialism varies in its intricacies with respect to time, space and aspirations of the region and locales. This is where a discourse of the body connected to translation arises. Translation does not imply only the transfer of ideas from one language to another; on the other hand, it also implies how the depiction of the body in the text offers possibilities of seeing this "Other". However, in postcolonial times, such descriptions, apart from certain theorizations invite a number of challenges. One such major challenge is the way the body is inscribed in literature and the space of such inscription in world literature. This might turn the shape of the postcolonial literature from a methodology of seeing the body as the "Other" but understanding the body as something intimate in our times – in other words, as an already translated subject. In this paper, I will look at the novel by Zimbabwe born Petina Graph's *The Book of Memory* and the German writer W.G. Sebald's sections from *The Rings of Saturn* and *The Emigrants* to develop an argument that the postcolonial depiction of body is something more elusive and strategic than the mere awareness of the body as the site of suffering at certain point in colonial history. First and foremost, I will argue that in world literature, these two writers engage themselves in a peculiar anti- colonial mapping by internalizing the issue of space and time. Body in their writings does not merely imply the human body; on the other hand, the writing space that encompasses both the regional and marginal tropes that constitute the subject. The Cartesian logic premised on an ontology of a particular subject with some kind of a hegemonic idea of privileging the eye over the temperamental space will be questioned to articulate a discourse of the "Other". Next, I will propose that unlike the popular notion that this "other" is something residing outside, it is very much a discourse of the inside. Both Petah and Sebald engage in dismantling the "other" residing outside. Their engagement with different tropes of memory contextualizes the regional and the liminal space of narration that shapes the discourse of the body connected to translation. Following this, I will try to develop an argument that how in these texts, postcoloniality can be seen as a strategy of internalizing and expressing certain colonial conjunctions, where body is the locus of translation and retrieval. This paper will also attempt to chart how these narratives express a new sense of "difference" – that is, difference centered on regions and locales. In world literature, the depiction of such difference, especially as Sebald's narratives show us, provide reflections on "liminality", an important feature that figure in translation. How Sebald and Petah in their narratives perceive a newness of the liminal world will be a matter of enquiry.

**Krishnan Unni P.** is Associate Professor in English at Deshbandhu College, Delhi University. He is a creative writer in Malayalam and in English and has published five books He has edited an Indian edition of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *Chronicle of A Death Foretold* (World View Publications) and his debut novel in Malayalam, *Keralam: Oru Documenta* won the Karoor Neelakanta Pillai award in 2016. His latest book is on the Italian philosopher and theorist Giorgio Agamben published as part of the Theory series by S.P.C.S. Kottayam, Kerala. He is a member of the Cultural Studies group in Cairo University, Egypt and a representative of the Memory- Studies Network at university of Lund, Sweden. His areas of interests are the Third World literatures and films, gender formations, changing patterns of sexual dissidence and the politics of the dispossessed –concerned with music, football and popular culture.

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**Noh Collaboration – Ito, Pound, Yeats, Nishikigi and Certain Noble Plays From Japan**

**Abid Vali**, The American University of Kuwait, Kuwait

As Ezra Pound sought to redefine poetic modernism in the light of the Vorticist theories he was working on with Wyndham Lewis in the last months of 1913, he received assistance from an entirely new direction in the form of Ernest Fenollosa's notebooks on Chinese poetry and Japanese Noh drama. While these notebooks ultimately resulted in the publication of *Cathay* in April 1915 and *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* in September 1916, Pound was initially more interested in Noh than in Fenollosa's notes on Chinese poetry. Nishikigi's three distinct characters allow the audience to pay heed to the web of relationships that are possible between them thus allowing another element of the play to surface strongly: the element of ritual, involving the "tripartite structure" ("Experiment" 10) that Nicholls finds so important. In the story of Nishikigi, the relationship of the main characters is key to the production of a ritual that is then meant to have an effect on the audience. The allegory of the play allows us to see how new and untutored perceptions can question the traditional version. Through what I call his 'transnational collaboration' with Noh ideas, texts and the interlocutors through which he sought to read them, he translated the plays he published over to Vorticism producing yet another avant-garde aesthetic movement. Yet Pound's transnational collaboration is, I will show, not just a means to a Vorticist end. Instead the Noh interaction offered Pound potential allegories for modernism itself as a practice of transnational collaboration. In Nishikigi, we find tradition encountered as if from an estranging distance, and an allegory of cross-cultural exchange.

**Abid Vali** is an Assistant Professor in the English Dept. at The American University of Kuwait. His current research focuses on Transnational Collaborations in Modern Poetry, specifically the later work of William Butler Yeats and Ezra Pound's oeuvre, and Globalization in literature as a whole. He has taught Literature, Rhetoric and Composition at various English & Writing Studies Departments on 3 continents and earned his PhD from The University of Otago in Dunedin, NZ.

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**Milind Wakankar** teaches philosophy and literature at IIT Delhi, and is the author of *Subalternity and Religion* (Routledge, 2010). He has just finished a manuscript on 'Religion and Primary Narcissism.'

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### **'Restorying' the Partition of India**

**Sakshi Wason**, University of Delhi, India

My paper attempts to look at the cosmopolitan as a 'third space' – i.e. the interstice between colliding cultures, a liminal space which gives rise to the different and new – with regards to an area of negotiation of meaning and representation. I wish to access this third space through the visual filter of graphic narratives, in Vishwajyoti Ghosh's anthology of partition narratives, titled *This Side That Side: Restorying Partition*. In this in-between space, new cultural, political, geographical and social identities are constantly formed and re-formed and are constantly in the process of becoming, never solidifying into monolithic entities. The collaborators of this graphic anthology attempt at designing a creative edge that derives from the condition of being in a place that simultaneously is and is not one's home.

The cosmopolitan can be read as being in between a space of places and flows. The location of any literary text is unfinished – indebted to a network of past collaborations and contestations and also, to those collaborations and contestations which have not yet taken place. Hayden White, in *The Content of Form*, writes of the process of narrativization as one that is a solution to a problem of a general human concern, namely – "the problem of how to translate knowing into telling, the problem of fashioning human experience into a form assimilable to structures of meaning that are generally human rather than culture-specific. He quotes Roland Barthes, who remarked – 'narrative is simply there...like life itself...international, transhistorical, transcultural'. Another interesting aspect about narratives (in any

form) that White as well as Barthes discusses is translatability. Narratives allow for participating in a shared reality, since they function as a 'meta-code' – which White defines as a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of a shared reality can be transmitted. Arising, as Barthes says, between our experience of the world and our efforts to describe that experience in language, narrative 'ceaselessly substitutes meaning for the straightforward copy of the events recounted'. *This Side That Side: Restorying Partition*, an anthology of graphic narratives, curated by Vishwajyoti Ghosh, narrativizes the Partition, visually and textually. For several refugees, national memory and personal narrative combine to make the Partition an inevitable aspect of independence. The memory of Partition, however, is not a straightforward remembrance of an historical event. "An important condition of remembering" as Whitron put it, "is that we should be able to forget". Memory, as many have indicated, involves forgetting. Forgetting is an important part of memory whereby individuals organize and remember by attempting to tidy disjointed facts. This classification and ordering are in operation for entire social groups, not just those who directly experienced the traumatic event.

Alongside the above-mentioned concerns relating to memory, trauma, history, representation, I would also like to focus upon cosmopolitan procedures and processes that transcend borders and boundaries and therefore appear to describe more abstract phenomena in the language of social science, motioning towards sets of ties reaching beyond and across borders of sovereign nation-states. I would like to read the 'home' as a set of relations rather than as a fixed geographical, economic or socio-political entity, as a space provided within the collaborators' graphic narratives, which offer themselves as mini-histories in the backdrop of the Partition of India in 1947.

**Sakshi Wason** a PhD scholar at the Dept. of English, University of Delhi, is interested in exploring the relationship between the individual, the state and democracy, through the filter of graphic fiction. Her work deals with the politics of visual culture and the constructedness of vision.

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### **Puncturing the World Text: The Obstinance of the Banyan Tree**

**Dirk Weimann**, Potsdam University, Germany

When the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in South London were opened to the general public in the 1840s, they were presented as a 'world text': a collection of flora from all over the world, with the spectacular tropical (read: colonial) specimens – palms, orchids, ferns, bamboos etc. – taking centre stage as indexes of Britain's imperial supremacy. However, the one exotic plant species that preoccupied the British cultural imagination more than any other, remained conspicuously absent from the collection: the banyan tree, whose non-transferability left a significant gap in the 'text' of the garden, thereby effectively puncturing the illusion of comprehensive global command that underpins the biopolitical designs of what Richard Grove has aptly dubbed 'green imperialism'.

In my paper I will try to demonstrate how, in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the banyan tree became an object of fascination and admiration for British scientists, painters, writers and photographers precisely because of its obstinate non-availability to colonial control and visual or even conceptual representability.

**Dirk Weimann** held teaching positions at the universities of Magdeburg and Tübingen as well as EFLU Hyderabad and Delhi University. He is co-spokesperson of the DFG-funded research training group Minor Cosmopolitanisms and programme leader of the Delhi-Potsdam exchange programme Genre Transactions in World-Literary Space. Publications include *Genres of Modernity: Contemporary Indian Novels in English* (Rodopi 2009); *Perspectives on English Revolutionary Republicanism* (Routledge 2014) and *Postcolonial Justice* (Brill 2017) and numerous edited volumes and articles on aspects of literary history and theory. He is currently working on a book with the working title *Gutter Texts* that looks at large-format narrative genres beyond the prose novel.

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## **World Literature: An Imperialistic Tool or an Effort at Building Political Solidarity**

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When Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto*, appeal the workers' of the world to unite, are they dismissing the specificity of culture, context, the localized and the quotidian? Or is it a cry which does not diminish the significance of the discrete, yet mobilizes on the premise of a common lived reality. How do we scrutinize the unification of the literature of the world then? My paper problematizes the category 'World Literature' – the multitemporal and the multicultural. It explores the difficulties we currently have in constructing such a category. My purpose is not to pose or contrast category by category. Notwithstanding ambiguity imbuing in conceptualisation with every category or generality, if the global, cosmopolitan now proposes 'World Literature' as inevitable, then in the interstice between the inescapably political category 'Post-Colonial' and the neutral, descriptive even apolitical category 'World Literature', my paper argues against the politics of creating a binary between the two. Rather we need to question the historical context which renders 'World Literature' unequivocally blunt and reactionary. The heterogeneity of the colonial histories of the nation-states and World Literature itself being constituted differently in different cultures, a congruency of any sort demands a strong political commonality and solidarity. G. G. Marquez's Nobel Prize winning speech highlights his desire of foregrounding the local (cultural, political, and social) reality on a global scale. This originates from a dialectical process, that of being understood and accepted by the colonizer and at the same time to resist the multiple hierarchies by forming a positive collective based on a sense of shared suffering. I will be looking at Manto's short stories and Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and investigate the same. "A culture's norms and needs profoundly shape the selection of works that enter into it as world literature, influencing the ways they are translated, marketed and read."<sup>1</sup> The idea of World Literature is gaining currency or is being politically maneuvered with a purpose, not in 'socialist realism' but in 'market realism'. And therefore the imperialist bent and perpetuation of the Anglo-European as essentially universal. With West forming its pivot, and translatability assumption it's premise, it is rendering the text as homeless, contextless – belonging nowhere. Walter Benjamin raises a plausible question vis-à-vis translatability of a text. He negates the idea of a work of art (whether original or translation) to be intended for the reader, and concretizes that conveying the form and meaning of the original as accurately as possible in translation, is the only way of not belittling the significance of borders and still establishing a kinship of languages.

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