

EDITORIAL

It is our pleasure to inform that the annual Journal of the Department of English, Vidyasagar University, has been included in the UGC-CARE list of journals. Having traversed a long way, holding the hands of former and present faculty in the Department, it looks forward to continuing as a platform for sustained creative and critical activities. The journal promotes a spirit of open mindedness and inclusiveness which is the hallmark of contemporary critical tendencies. In keeping with this spirit this volume includes well researched articles on a wide variety of areas.

Lanka's Princess by Kavita Kane and "Rajkumari Kamaballi" by Nabanita Debsen, focusing on the mutilation scene of Surpanakha have been analyzed by Anindita De in "Surpanakha's Mutilation or That of Womanhood? An Inquiry into Two Feminist Retellings" to investigate how the female re-tellers have attempted to expose the sexist stereotyping of women in the *Ramayana* and advocated gender consciousness through their re-interpretation of Surpanakha and re-evaluation of the Sita-Surpanakha dichotomy.

In "Experience of Menarche: Pain and Celebration in Selected Modern Indian Narratives" Ankita Gupta analyzes select modern Indian narratives to study the experiences of menarche containing both celebratory and painful tones.

"The Representation of Dalits in the History of Bengal from Ancient to Medieval Period (Around 1000 B.C.-1757 A.D.)" by Debabrata Karmakar aims to explore the representation of Dalits in Bengal in the ancient and medieval periods through a subaltern intervention in institutionalized historiography.

"Footnotes to the Archive: Memory in the Digital Age" by Gourab Goswami attempts to understand the philosophical underpinnings and by products of the creation of a digital archive with images of objects that evoke memory.

Indrajit Mukherjee seeks to explore the memory of black horror and unhealed trauma engineered by General Dyer from the points of view of three young men through constructing the national memory of Amritsar as a patchwork of fact and fiction. This article also studies how the ghostly figure of Heera appears in each man's narrative to provide an alternative worldview from the

perspectives of the marginalized in “Memories of Subjective and Objective Violence of Amritsar Massacre in Bali Rai’s *City of Ghosts*”.

In “Karnad's Theatrical Exploration of Historiography in His Representation of Four Rulers of Southern India” Jolly Das makes a brief survey of four plays by Girish Karnad in order to receive an idea about Karnad’s use of his historiographical sources for these plays, while taking a look at Karnad’s re-presentation of the remarkable rulers who are the protagonists in these plays.

“Carnavalesque Popular Culture and the *Goopi-Bagha* Trilogy of Films” by Kaushik Mondal explores how the *Goopi-Bagha* trilogy, while critiquing some of the power games, also sustains the hegemony of a heteropatriarchal society.

“The ‘devi’ and the ‘dasi’: Understanding the identity constructions of Indian womanhood in Ismat Chughtai’s “The Homemaker”” by Koyel Chanda analyses Ismat Chughtai’s short story with the assistance of Mitra Channa’s model of the ‘devi’ and the ‘dasi’.

Manisha Bhattacharyya’s article, “Negotiating the Fringes: Interpreting and Interrogating the Class and Caste Conflict in Mulk Raj Anand’s *Coolie*” illustrates how Anand predicates destiny on a class as the class system in India has become a new sort of caste system and the individual identity rooted in the detrimental class system causes much harm to the social unity.

Mir Ahammad Ali’s article on “Madness as a Critique of State-sponsored Violence: A Study of the Mad Fellows in Select Partition Stories of Saadat Hasan Manto” engages in a psychoanalytical exploration of two Mantovian stories “Toba Tek Singh” and “Sharifan” and locates the roots of the madness of the characters.

“A Broken Coriolanus: Self and the Renaissance in T. S. Eliot’s “The Waste Land”” by Rupsa Roy Chowdhury argues that Eliot’s constant allusions to the past is not simply a jeremiad lamenting the present but also an agonizing reminder of the impossibility of returning to the Renaissance Individualism of unbridled ambition and optimism, attesting the failure of its legacy in the modern age of alienated individualism.

“Retrieving the Ethnic World of the Adis: An Ecocritical Reading of Mamang Dai’s *The Legends of Pensam*” by Santosh Kumar Malik assesses the strong ecological concern along with how history, myth, tradition, memory, and fiction merge together in this novel, which showcases

the unique ecology of Arunachal Pradesh, besides advocating the restoration of the age-old bond between man and the nature as a way of retaining the identity of the tribal communities in the contemporary world of globalization and modernization.

In “History, Self-Alienation and A Study of Cultures: Studying Nirad C. Chaudhuri’s *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*” Saptarshi Mallick studies Nirad C. Chaudhuri’s attempt to write history through an autobiographical mode, establishing his views and position, detached from his countrymen, and thereby expressing himself from a self-detached point of view.

“Rabindranath Tagore’s Philosophy in His Songs” by Shubhendu Shekhar Naskar analyses select songs of Tagore to show how they ultimately focus on his deep philosophy of life, going beyond all sorts of scepticism and nihilism to proclaim the existence of a Supreme Power.

Sk. Tarik Ali’s “Difficult Truths versus Expedient Lies: HBO’s *Chernobyl* and Climate Change Denial” is an article which attempts a critical reading of the HBO mini-series with special focus on its exploration of inconvenient truths in the face of lies designed to preserve a Stalinist system of governance. Relating the suppression of scientific truth about nuclear science to climate change denial today it further looks into how the show serves as a metaphor for understanding the politics around global climate change in the Anthropocene.

Subhashis Barua shows, in “Dare to Read: A Dalit Reads in Daya Pawar’s *Baluta*”, how the act of reading gives birth to a critical bent of mind, which facilitates a gradual unmasking of the systematic despotism of the upper castes. This article explores how reading becomes a method to claim one’s right to knowledge.

In “The Game of the Unconscious in Haruki Murakami’s *Norwegian Wood*”, Supromit Maiti traces the contours of literary representations of the characters, the narrative and its undoing, while reading meticulously the influence exercised by the unconscious in the creation of these texts. The article also grazes the limits and functions of the unconscious in manipulating the actions of the characters while gauging the impact of these on the construction of the plot on one hand and the reshaping of the self on the other. The dialectics of desire have also been included in the analysis.

Tamali Neogi’s article “Strangers ‘‘here and everywhere’’: the Social Discourse in the Literature of Partition” explores the experience of the East-Bengali refugees, the ambivalence of belongingness, nostalgia, confused spatial zones of existence, split identities, hybridity and the question of nation

formation beyond boundaries, as are found in Sunil Ganguli's *East-West*, bringing out how the novel can be studied as an effective portrayal of displacement and relocation caused by partition, in the context of East Bengali refugees in West Bengal.

Ujjwal Kumar Panda, in "...not so much wrinkled, nothing so aged as this seems": The "Stone Statue" of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale* and Critical Feminist Gerontology", seeks to reexamine the character of Hermione in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* - her trial in the hand of the sexist patriarchal authority in Early Modern England, her transformation into a stone statue for sixteen long years and her final coming back to life, from the perspective of Critical Feminist Gerontology.

We hope such variety in themes and depth in critical analysis would generate finer sensibility in students and scholars alike. The Journal shall henceforth be published more frequently, in order to accommodate quality articles from scholars and faculty. The publication of the present volume has been delayed owing to the spread of Covid-19 Pandemic and subsequent shutdown of normal activities. The situation was complicated further when the Super Cyclone, Amphan, hit south Bengal badly on 21 May this year, disrupting communications over the internet for over a fortnight. However, the present volume has emerged, overcoming hurdles, big and small, owing to the unstinted perseverance of the members of the Editorial Board--grateful thanks to them for their concerted teamwork. The advisors and peers, the administrative officers and staff of Vidyasagar University and the project fellows of the SAP-DRS Programme of the Department have also put in their best efforts towards publishing the present volume, for which they deserve heartfelt gratitude.

Jolly Das

Midnapore
19 June 2020

Jolly Das
Chief Editor

Articles published in this volume reflect the views neither of the Board of Editors nor of the Department of English, Vidyasagar University.