President’s Column

President’s Welcome
SALA Conference 2011

Welcome to Los Angeles, the home of LA Lakers, and the site of SALA’s first conference of the second decade. I am happy to see those who have returned to meet, and to debate, their old friends, and happier to see those who are joining us for the first time. The 2011 Conference co-chairs, Raje Kaur and Rashmi Bhatnagar, have put together a vigorous yet practical schedule, and the Secretary Moumin Quazi and Treasurer Robin Field have done their best to ensure that the logistics of the Conference function smoothly. Now it is our obligation as participants, to see that they do; what is more, it is to our advantage to get the maximum benefit from this meet. Some of you have covered long distances, all of you have sacrificed home comforts—and most have done this not, I suppose, just to give a paper but to chalk for yourself an academic track, to build a lasting friendship, or to lay foundations for a collaborative project.

It can’t be hidden from you that some SALA members are doing some fundamental work on South Asian writers and writing, even as this field of literary studies finds a place in Western curricula. As part of this privileged group, you have all the challenges and the opportunities to contribute some basic research tools for the study and assessment of the new English fiction: glosses, indices, bibliographies, biographies, critical studies, compilations of interviews, or of the writers’ critical views. If you stay in touch with your homelands, you must be aware how the new English fiction, product mainly of South Asian writers, is transforming the study of English language there, especially at regional engineering colleges and at the central universities in the offing. Needless to say, that you, because of your opportunities, are best qualified to work at the interface of linguistic and literary studies, and to cultivate new pedagogies for teaching English to non-native speakers of English. And what you do discover or learn in either of these fields is not only going to add to your value in South Asian studies here in North America but also to open doors for you in European universities with departments of South Asian or Indic studies. I invite you, especially the younger scholars amongst us, to dedicate yourself to South Asian literary studies with the global view of your significance in mind.

I hope you will use the SALA Conference 2011, and the ideas and the contacts it provides, as a springboard for the academic territories awaiting to be explored.

All the best!

Pradyumna S. Chauhan
Arcadia University
11th Annual SALA Conference Program
Transnational Realisms and Post Realisms in South Asian Literature and Culture
January 7-8, 2011
Los Angeles, California
Ramada Los Angeles, 1901 West Olympic Blvd.

Friday, January 7th
8:00 - 9:30  Breakfast Meeting: Executive Committee
9:00  Registration
10:00 - 10:30  Conference Welcome Address: Dr. Pradyumna S. Chauhan, SALA President
              Opening Address: Rashmi Dube Bhatnagar and Rajender Kaur, Conference Co-Chairs
10:45 - 12:00  Session 1: Panels 1A and 1B
12:00 - 1:30  Lunch on your own
1:30 - 2:45  Session 2: Panels 2A and 2B
3:00 - 4:15  Session 3: Panels 3A and 3B
4:30 - 6:00  Session 4: Panels 4A and 4B
6:00 - 8:00  Dinner on your own
8:00 - 10:00  Hamara Mushaira

Saturday, January 8th
7:30 - 8:30  Breakfast provided by hotel for participants staying at the Ramada Hotel
8:00  Registration
8:30 - 9:45  Session 5: Panels 5A and 5B
10:00 - 11:15  Session 6: Panels 6A, 6B, and 6C
11:30 - 1:00  Conference Plenary Session: Planetary Perspectives: Towards New Theoretical Directions in South Asian Realisms
              Jenny Sharpe, UCLA: “The Post-Slavery Archive”
              Colin MacCabe, University of Pittsburgh: “Modernism and Realism in The Satanic Verses and When Memory Fails”
1:00 - 2:00  Lunch on your own
2:15 - 3:30  Session 7: Graduate Caucus, and Panels 7B and 7C
3:45 - 5:00  Session 8: Panels 8A and 8B
5:00 - 5:30  SALA Reception for Dr. Jem Spectar, President, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
5:30 - 6:00  SALA Recognition Award Ceremony for Dr. Jem Spectar, President, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
6:00 - 7:00  SALA General Business Meeting
8:00 pm  SALA Dinner at Gill's Restaurant at 838 S Grand Ave, LA
**Friday, January 7, 10:45—12:00**  
**Session I**

**1A: Realism, Language, Translation**  
**Chair:** Waseem Anwar, Forman Christian College, Pakistan


2. “Framing Experience: Basheer and untranslatability,” Ratheesh Radhakrishnan, Rice University, Houston

3. “Sufi Realism or Political Realism: Pakistani South Punjab and Contemporary Siraiki Poetry,” Nukhbah Langah, Forman Christian College University, Lahore


**1B: Urdu Hindi Realisms**  
**Chair:** Jonathan Arac, University of Pittsburgh

1. “British Orientalism, the Dāstān, and the Inscription of Identity on Modern Urdu,” Maryam Wasif Khan, UCLA

2. “Muktibodh’s Modernism,” Karni Pal Bhati, Furman University, Greenville

3. “Bhakti Realisms,” Abdollah Zahiri, Seneca College, Toronto, Canada

**Friday, January 7, 12:00-1:30**  
**Lunch on your own**

**Friday, January 7, 1:30-2:45**  
**Session 2**

**Panel 2A: Subaltern Realisms: Dalits, Servants, Sex Workers**  
**Chair:** Kanika Batra, Texas Tech University

1. “In Search of the Real Subaltern: A Critical Look at ‘Subaltern Realism’ in Baby Halder’s *A Life Less Ordinary,*” Aniruddh Mukhopadhyay, University of Florida

2. “Claiming the Day: The Sex Worker as Subject,” Navaneetha Mokkil Maruthur, University of Michigan


4. “Out of the Shadows: Realism and Class in Thrity Umrigar’s *The Space Between Us* and Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss.*” Maryse Jayasuriya, University of Texas at El Paso

**Panel 2B: Realism, Populism, Media**  
**Chair:** David Shumway, Carnegie Mellon University

1. “Predicaments of History and Mimetic Agency: Postcolonial Return, Repetition and Remediation in *Rang De Basanti,*” Parvinder Mehta, Wayne State University, Detroit

2. “‘Kissa Kisan Ka’: *Peepli Live* and the Politics of Representation or, the Hero as Farmer,” Nira Gupta-Casale, Kean University

3. “Countering Dictatorial Absolutism Through Satire—A Socio-Political Study of Pakistani Television Drama Aangan Teda,” Rajnish Dhawan, University of Fraser Valley, Canada

**Friday, January 7, 3:00-4:15**  
**Session 3**

**Panel 3A: Realisms and the State**  
**Chair:** Robin Field, King’s College

1. “Disciplined Soldiers of Indian Freedom: Women and the Narrativizing of Quit India,” Harveen Mann, Loyola University, Chicago

2. “Every Bengalee is a Thief: Realism and Representation in *The Memoirs of William Hickey,*” Pankhuree Dube, Emory University


4. “Akhteruzzaman Elias and Critical Realism,” Hasan Al Zayed, East West University, Bangladesh

**Panel 3B: Interfacing Realism and Myth**  
**Chair:** Dr. K. D. Verma, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown


2. “Myth/History Interface in Bharati Mukherjee’s *The Tree-Bride,*” Surekha Dangwal, HNB Garhwal University, Srinagar

3. “To Observe, Record, and Reflect Life in an Indian Village: Realism and Romance in the Poetry of Ramakrishna Pillai,” Sheshlatha Reddy, University of Mary Washington

4. “Myth and Realism: A Study of Rushdie’s *Midnight Children,*” Smita Jha, IIT, India

**Friday, January 7, 4:30-6:00**  
**Session 4**

**Panel 4A: Against Magical Realism: Salman Rushdie**  
**Chair:** Deepika Bahri, Emory University

1. “Skeptical Belief and Faithful Questioning: Interrogating Realism and Bolstering Mythology in *The Satanic Verses,*” Pennie Ticen, Virginia Military Academy


3. “Problematic of Realism: Homo Social Affect and Rushdie’s Agra in *The Enchantress of Florence,*” Rashmi Dube Bhatnagar, University of Pittsburgh

4. “Realist, Post-Realist, Magic Realist: The Case of Contemporary South Asian Writers,” Feroza Jussawala, University of New Mexico
Panel 4B: Realisms in Activist Literatures  
Chair: Manisha Basu, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign  

1. “Activist Realisms in Arundhati Roy’s Nonfiction Prose,”  
Navneet Kumar, University of Calgary, Canada  

2. “Cities, Animals, and the Algebra of Infinite Injustice in Indra Sinha’s Animal’s People,” Kanika Batra, Texas Tech University  

3. “Burning Saris and Houses: Activism through Poetic Discourse (Telegu Poetry),” Bonnie Zare, University of Wyoming, and Afsar Mohammed, University of Texas.

Friday, 6:00-8:00: Dinner on your own  

Friday, 8:00-10:00: Hamara Mushaira  

Saturday, January 8  

7:00 - 8:30: Breakfast provided by hotel for participants staying at the Ramada Hotel; Conference Registration  

Saturday, January 8, 8:30-9:45: Session 5  

5A: South Asian Realisms: Exploring Subjectivity and Conflict  
Chair: Josna Rege, Worcester State College  

1. “Reading the Reality: Coming into Being through Narration in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s One Amazing Thing,” Mayuri Deka, The College of the Bahamas  


3. “‘Like Stacked Spoons’: Deconstruction and Postpositivist Realism in Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things,” Moumin Quazi, Tarleton State University  


Panel 5B: Figuring South Asian Terrorisms  
Chair: Parvinder Mehta, Wayne State University  

1. “A Call to South Asian Activism: Beyond Realisms in The Reluctant Fundamentalist,” Aneesa Hussain, Queens College, CUNY  

2. “Confessing to Racial Anger and Racialized Desire: Reading the Postcolonial Confessional Novel,” Alia Somani, University of Western Ontario, Canada  

3. “Melodrama and Masquerade in Santosh Sivan’s The Terrorist,” Rajeswari Mohan, Haverford College  

Panel 6A: Visceral Realisms: Affect and the Body  
Chair: Lindsay Waters, Harvard University Press  

1. “Asperger’s Syndrome and the Activist Struggle: Tropes of Disability and Asexuality in My Name is Khan,” Jana Fedtke, University of South Carolina  

2. “Figuring Hunger and Social Injustice: Body and Affect in Mahasweta Devi’s Short Fiction,” Rajender Kaur, William Paterson University  

3. “Materiality, Construction and the Disabled Body in Rohinton Mistry’s Such a Long Journey and A Fine Balance,” Stephanie Yorke, Oxford University, UK  

Panel 6B: Partition Realisms  
Chair: Susan Andrade, University of Pittsburgh  


2. “Disorienting Realism: Partition Fiction of the 1940s and 50s,” Shuchi Kapila, Grinnell College  

3. “South Asian Realism: Bapsi Sidhwa’s Cracking India,” Dan Brown, University of Florida  

Panel 6C: Novelistic Interventions in the Real  
Chair: Moumin Quazi, Tarleton State University  

1. “Reconstructing Reality and Space in a Heterotopia: Joginder Paul’s Sleepwalkers,” Amrita Ghosh, Drew University  


3. “Novel Realism: Rohinton Mistry’s Such a Long Journey,” Deepika Bahri, Emory University  

Saturday, January 8, 11:30 - 1:00: Conference Plenary  

Planetary Perspectives: Toward New Theoretical Directions in South Asian Realisms  

Jenny Sharpe, UCLA  
“The Post-Slavery Archive”  

Colin MacCabe, University of Pittsburgh  
“Modernism and Realism in The Satanic Verses and When Memory Fails”
Saturday, January 8, 1:00 - 2:00: Lunch on your own

Saturday, January 8, 2:15- 3:30: Session 7

7A: Graduate Caucus led by Sharanpal Ruprai, York University, Canada, and Gitanjali Kaur Singh, UCLA

7B: Theorizing Realisms of Nation/Humor/Political Economy
Chair: Pradyumna Chauhan, Arcadia University

1. “Amorphous Realism: A Viable Context for Pakistani Literary Texts,” Waseem Anwar, Forman Christian College, Pakistan
2. “What’s Funny about This Joke? Politics of Humor in Postcolonial Fiction,” Namrata Mitra, Purdue University

7C: Cosmopolitan Realisms: Writers of the South Asian Diaspora
Chair: Bonnie Zare, University of Wyoming

1. “A Study of Reality and Realism: Sankar’s Chowringhee and Monica Ali’s In the Kitchen,” Gita Mohan, Independent Scholar, UK
2. “Diasporic Realisms, Hybrid Genres: The Social Texture of Vikram Seth’s The Golden Gate,” Brian Yothers, University of Texas at El Paso
3. “Marginal Realities in Khaled Hosseini’s A Thousand Splendid Suns,” Shirin Edwin, Sam Houston State University, Texas

Saturday, January 8, 3:45– 5:00: Session 8

8A: Figurations of Violence: After Neo-Realism
Chair: Nyla Ali Khan, University of Oklahoma

1. “‘Encounter’ in Popular Hindi Cinema,” Anustup Basu, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
3. “Realism, the ‘Cinema Effect,’ and Anurag Kashyap’s Black Friday,” Alpana Sharma, Wright State University

8B: Realism and Minoritarianism
Chair: Amritjit Singh, Ohio University

2. “Controlled Reality and the Reality of Violence: Reading Sikh Pogrom in Indira Goswami’s Pages Stained with Blood,” Kumar Sankar Bhattacharya, Drew University

5:00 - 5:30: SALA Reception for Dr. Jem Spectar, President, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown

5:30 - 6:00: SALA Recognition Award Ceremony for Dr. Jem Spectar

6:00 - 7:00: SALA General Business Meeting
All members welcome.

8:00 : SALA Dinner at Gill’s Restaurant, 838 S Grand Ave, LA
Ph: 213-623-1050
http://www.gillsindia.com/

Acknowledgment of Thanks
The South Asian Literary Association would like to express its deep appreciation and thanks to Dean Kara Rabbit, of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, as well as to the Provost's Office of William Paterson University, for their generous support of the Eleventh SALA Conference being held on 7-8 January 2011 at Los Angeles, CA.
SALA MLA 2011 Panels

SALA also has three panels at the MLA Convention, details for which appear below:

227. Class Conflicts in South Asian Cultural Production  
Friday, 07 January, 10:15–11:30 a.m., 304C, LA Convention Center  
Presiding: Nivedita Majumdar, John Jay Coll. of Criminal Justice, City Univ. of New York  
2. “What Comes after Magic Realism? Class and History in Contemporary South Asian Novels in English,” Pranav Jani, Ohio State Univ., Columbus  

For copies of abstracts, please write to nmajumdar@jjay.cuny.edu

442. Postcolonial Diasporas  
Saturday, 08 January, 8:30–9:45 a.m., 309, LA Convention Center  
Presiding: Bed Prasad Giri, Dartmouth Coll.  
1. “South Asian–American Comics and Postcolonial Diasporic Identity,” Uppinder Mehan, Univ. of Houston, Victoria  

For copies of abstracts, please write to Bed.P.Giri@dartmouth.edu

819. (Re)Presentation of the “Other” by the South Asian Diaspora  
Sunday, 09 January, 1:45–3:00 p.m., 303B, LA Convention Center  
Presiding: Joylette Williams Samuels, Nassau Community Coll., NY  
1. “Reviving the Coolie Woman: Archives, Migration, and Gender in Ramabai Espinet’s Novel The Swinging Bridge,” Nandini Dhar, Univ. of Texas, Austin  

For copies of abstracts, please write to Joylette.Samuels@ncc.edu

Sessions of Possible Interest at the MLA Convention

46. Postcolonial Theory and the Pressures of Comparison

185. Planet Wiki? Postcolonial Theory, Social Media and Web 2.0

313. Postcolonial Narratology: Do We Need One?

321. National and Transnational Representations in South Asian Film and Fiction  
Friday, 07 January, 1:45–3:00 p.m., 304A, LA Convention Center  
Program arranged by the Discussion Group on South Asian Languages and Literatures  
Presiding: Moumin Quazi, Tarleton State Univ.  
2. “Ritualizing Diaspora: The Namesake’s Transition from Novel to Film,” Madhurima Chakraborty, Columbia Coll., IL  

557. Toru Dutt

587. Baleful Postcoloniality: Narratives of Life and Death on the Margins

680. Is the Postcolonial South Asian?  
8:30–9:45 a.m., Plaza 1, J. W. Marriott  
Program arranged by the Division on Postcolonial Studies in Literature and Culture and the Division on English Literature Other Than British and American  
Presiding: Susan Z. Andrade, Univ. of Pittsburgh

Speakers: David Damrosch, Harvard Univ.; Gaurav G. Desai, Tulane Univ.; Kwaku L. Korang, Ohio State Univ., Columbus; David C. Lloyd, Univ. of Southern California; Aamir R. Mufti, Univ. of California, Los Angeles; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Columbia Univ.; Ignacio Sánchez-Prado, Washington Univ. in St. Louis

This session addresses several topics having to do with multiculturalism in the American academy routinely conflated in current literary and cultural studies. How is postcolonial theory shaped by the fact that many of its leading US voices are of South Asian origin? Does this fact disproportionately influence the canonical texts of the field? What is the relation of Latin America to postcolonial studies of postcolonial studies to comparative literature? Finally, how can we understand the influence of the subaltern studies group, historians of India, many of South Asian origin, upon the larger field of twentieth-century peasant studies in Latin America and Africa?
Abstracts for 2011 Sala Conference

Hasan Al Zayed, East West University, Bangladesh

Akhteruzzaman Elias and Realism

Very few writers have been able to successfully negotiate the two limits realisms impose on writers: frame the truths of human existence, yet remain conscious about flow of time. Bangladesh writer Akhteruzzaman Elias (1943-1997) was able to do both. This paper is an attempt to understand Elias’s stance on realism: how he struggled to capture the truth of collective existence but remained acutely sensitive to the way language, location, culture and labor keep affecting our comprehension inability, the emerging spatio-temporal complexities of mimetic representation in the novel Such a Long Journey by Rohinton Mistry, a writer associated with the realist tradition, and suggests that it is particularly important to read Realist fiction against the grain in the precise historic moment that demands representation from the postcolonial text.

Mark Balmforth, Columbia University, New York, NY

Façades of Pluralism: Use and Misuse of Myth vis-à-vis “Realism” Surrounding Chandrasi’s Dutugemunu

In this socio-historical analysis I articulate the collision of history, memory, and modern politicking surrounding Sri Lankan director Jeyantha Chandrasiri’s historical epic film commemoration of second century BCE Sinhalese Buddhist hero-king and title character Dutugemunu, currently in production. I describe the significance of such a production in post-war Sri Lanka to explore the following questions: given the intensely contested nature of normative nationalistic and ethnically provocative articulations of the Dutugemunu mytho-history, whose reality is really being articulated? Moreover, can this case of modern mythologizing socially shift troubling paradigms of racial instigation under the auspices of building ethnic harmony?

Manisha Basu, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, IL

“The Stuff that Realisms are Made on”: Global English and R.K. Narayan’s Painter

In examining R.K. Narayan’s 1976 novel The Painter of Signs, my paper hopes to unsettle realist conventions of literature and thereby elude a colonially-inflected opposition between mythic and realistic narratives that has for some time pressed upon Narayan’s work, and more broadly upon Indian writing in English. The protagonist of the novel comes to be in the midst of Narayan’s characteristically bustling banality, but Narayan’s reality is not the objective life-world that houses his protagonist. Given that the novel ends with a lingering sense of how, with the painter of signs, we lose a way of thinking about the materiality of language, I will end my paper with a consideration—in dialogue with Gayatri Spivak’s...
work in this area—of how the texture of Narayan’s prose shaped a reality which has now given way to one wrought by the ‘Global English’ of contemporary Indo-Anglian writing.

Anustup Basu, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, IL

‘Encounter’ in Popular Hindi Cinema
This paper discusses the trope of ‘encounter’ that has recurred in popular Hindi cinema roughly for the last two decades as a trope of exception in the workings of political sovereignty. ‘Encounter’ is a colloquialism used by to describe extra-legal killing. It is thus the outcome of a habit of statist thinking that is a theodicy. What is foreclosed thereby is the ontological gap between human procedures of judgment and the divine ideal of justice. The state therefore, as Hannah Arendt would say, practices secrecy in broad daylight.

Kanika Batra, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX

Cities, Animals, and the Algebra of Infinite Injustice in Indra Sinha’s Animal’s People
It does not require much jamisbonding (Animal’s word for James Bond-ing) to gauge that Indra Sinha’s Animal’s People (2006) puts literature in the service of social activism. Categorizing such writing—social realist/activist literature, postcolonial allegory, environmental literature—remains a formidable task. Rob Nixon uses the concept “environmental picaresque” to describe the novel, and Rajeswari Sunder Rajan observes the “doubled authorship” which, according to her, makes it the story of the “speaking subaltern.” These readings do not discuss each of the multiple media types used by Sinha to keep the Bhopal gas disaster alive in the public imagination and role of such media in the construction of Bhopal as a city over the past twenty-five years. Categorized as a B-class, non-metropolitan city eager to acquire metropolitan trappings in part due to the media attention on the city and the media explosion in the country, Sinha’s representation of Bhopal, contributes to what following Bruce Robbins, I label “postcolonial dystopic cosmopolitanism.” This concept helps develop an argument about the status of cities as contested real and virtual (Animal’s word for the internet is “internest”) spaces in the algebra of infinite injustice playing out in a triumphantly globalized India.

Kumar Shankar Bhattacharya, Drew University, NJ

Controlled Reality and the Reality of Violence: Reading Sikh Pogrom in Indira Goswami’s Pages Stained with Blood
Gyanendra Pandey in analyzing violence distinguishes between the more pronounced form of violence from its subtler form in terms of its impact on society. Indira Goswami, the first non-Sikh writer to write about the Sikh massacre reveals this “silent” form of violence that is institutionally directed against the Sikhs in Pages Stained with Blood. Analyzing various instances of violence that seep into social structures and get internalized, my paper demonstrates how Goswami’s work questions the construction of state-driven normative reality that couches within it a dangerous form of silent violence marking the minority other through the Sikhs.

Karni Bhati, Furman University, Greenville, SC

Muktibodh as Modernist
This paper attempts a reading of some of the longer poems of the modernist writer in Hindi, Gajanan Madhav Muktibodh (1917-1964). While some scholars have argued that in the Indian literary domain realism, being central to both modernism and modernity, has aided the representation of the “struggling masses,” “the common man,” the subaltern, or the grouping which can be considered most authentically “the nation,” Muktibodh’s work, I argue, moves in a bold spirit of experimentation and even avant gardism that can be seen as suggesting, if not miming, the psychological realism we associate, more commonly, with the fragmentariness of modern experience.

Rashmi Dube Bhatnagar, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

Problematic of Realism: Homo Social Affect and Rushdie’s Agra in The Enchantress of Florence
Rushdie’s The Enchantress of Florence, challenges the linguistic and literary geography and periodisation of world literature. Pascale Casanova locates the emergence of world literature in Goethe’s conception of Weltliteratur as a market where all nations offered their goods. However 19th century intellectuals in Hindostan interpreted the Goethean conception of the global expansion of the literary market through the lens of an earlier historical moment in 17th century Agra, when Braj speaking Hindo and Jain merchants traded with Turkic and Persian speaking Mughal soldiers and produced a distinctive homosocial affect of mutual enchantment with each other’s language. Was literary Agra enriched or diminished by the aesthetics and politics of Rekhta or language mixture? Each retelling of 17th century Agra erodes dominant codes and institutions of literariness and literary cultures by installing mongrel language mixtures as literary language. This talk proposes that Rushdie’s portrait of Agra intervenes in this long history of debate, and explores why and how linguistic enchantments born amidst storytelling, affection, betrayal and regret between men lies at the heart of Rushdie’s vision of Italian-Mughal Renaissance as an ideal for world literature.

Daniel Brown, University of Florida, FL

South Asian Realism: Bapsi Sidhwa’s Cracking India
Bapsi Sidhwa’s novel, Cracking India (1991), showing the persistent influence of European realism in South Asian literature, uses realism to show how the 1947 Partition shapes the protagonist’s identity. However, Sidhwa briefly diverges from
realism in the story of Rana Khan, a young boy who witnesses a number of horrific, scarring events, inflicted with gothic intensity. Sidhwa thanks Khan in her acknowledgements and insists on the extra-textual reality of his story. His story is thus an indictment of the European government, which brought with it a rationalist, realist discourse, but which ultimately provoked a complete breakdown in rationality and order.

Nira Gupta-Casale, Kean University, NJ

‘Kissa Kisan Ka’: *Peepli Live and the Politics of Representation or, the Hero as Farmer’*

My paper explores the politics of representation in the controversial new film *Peepli Live*. Whereas the convention of rural realism as represented cinematically (post-Premchand) has used the parameters of formal realism to sentimentalize or mythologize the idealized farmer/farmer’s wife, *Peepli Live* deliberately eschews the comfortable and familiar trope of the oppressed but moral subaltern/everyman figure to present a postmodernist position in which the subjectivity of the farmer is as much in question as that of the viewer. I argue that Rizvi’s film is almost Brechtian in its alienation effect, and in my paper I explore the ways in which Brechtian “verzugsunstgefer” and postmodernity challenge and transform cinematic realism to create a new kind of realism.

Shumona Dasgupta, St. Cloud State University, MN

What really happened during the Partition? Text, context and the politics of representation

This paper will analyze the ways in which “the real” was constructed, consumed and circulated in the context of the Partition of India (1947). I will be focusing on three newspapers and their representations of the Partition: *The Hindu Outlook, The Hindustan Times,* and *Aaj* in the years 1946 and 47. Sharply divergent in their representation of ethnic and gendered violence, gendered and national identity, the refugee crisis, and the role of the modern State, the three newspapers often depict the same events in mutually contradictory ways. I will end with speculations on how such accounts interacted with literary narratives about the Partition.

Mayuri Deka, The College of the Bahamas, Nassau, The Bahamas

Reading the Reality: Coming into Being through narration in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s *One Amazing Thing*

Situating themselves within an un-hyphenated ethos, the narrators in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s *One Amazing Thing* create and present a “transnational” tradition through a process of discovery and narration, recognizing the intrinsic importance of not only communal, but also, the personal experience. Divakaruni negotiates between race and gendered structures through the storytellers who constantly construct and reconstruct their identities in response to shifting situations, ensuring through the narration of their tales that meaning, symbols and reality have no fixed unity or fixity. Thus, the storytellers growing ability to negotiate between the different experiential contexts through the narration of their life-experiences reveals the social space and strategies in occupying a space negating linear and static discursive referential structures and realities.

Pankhuree Dube, Emory University, Atlanta, GA

“Every Bengallee is a Thief by Nature:” Realism and Representation in *The Memoirs of William Hickey*

My paper attempts to tease out the modalities of the master-slay dialectic in the realist memoir genre. I use as my entry into this thematic the memoirs of English lawyer William Hickey (b.1749-1830) about his life in cities such as Calcutta and Madras. Written in the early 19th century Hickey’s memoirs were published only a hundred years later. In them, Hickey depicted his three Indian pageboys as pets, referring to one as “my little petboy.” Literary critic Srinivas Aravamudan has analyzed what he calls the “pet culture” of the metropole in which African and South Asian pageboys mingled with the
upper echelons of London society as exotic pets. Reading this memoir, how can we recuperate the figures of these three Bengali boys? Staying attuned to the contradictions and slippages in *The Memoirs of William Hickey*, I examine how Hickey was invested in presenting his pageboys as grateful and assimilated colonized subjects who could be transformed into pets. I unravel the fictions and favorite conceits along which Hickey’s memoir derives its narrative authority and explore what is revealed and obscured about the undercurrent of sexuality, coercion and the dynamics of power in this contested realist genre: the memoir.

Shirin Edwin, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX

Marginal Realities in Khaled Hosseini’s *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

This paper will examine tropes of dominant reality and marginal reality in the narrative techniques of Khaled Hosseini’s *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007). Unlike his first novel, *The Kite Runner*, that tells the story of a servant boy and his more affluent and privileged half-brother, the story of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* rests its central focus on Mariam, an illegitimate child with no credibility in the society she inhabits. The narrative structure, however, obliquely ascribes power and a voice to Mariam because of the reality she represents in a land whose cultural, political and historical reality has been ripped apart by war, upheaval and international apathy—not unlike Mariam’s own identity and life.

I read Mariam as a metaphorical reality of the events that Hosseini describes in tracing the story of Afghanistan from the time of its monarchy, the Soviet invasion, the war that ensued and lasted for three decades before the civil war, leading to the reign of the Taliban.

Rajender Kaur, William Paterson University, NJ

Figuring Hunger and Social Injustice: Body and Affect in Mahasweta Devi’s Short Fiction.

While the critical turn toward affect as powerful and central to culture where it is increasingly seen as key, for example, even to concepts/processes such as reason, or agency, may be a recent fad, the work of Mahasweta Devi deploys affect to brilliant ethico-political effect to violently unsettle the bourgeois liberal sensibility of the reader and catalyze a radical awareness and agency even as it forces us to rethink these categories. Both *Shishu/ Little Children* and *Daini/Witch* epitomize the anti-hegemonic sensibility of Mahasweta’s exploration of famine and hunger through a viscerally moving, affect laden evocation of the near famine situation in Palamau, a predominantly tribal district in south East Bihar, which experienced a severe drought/famine in 1978-79. These stories function as both exhortatory and warning texts at once, depicting the glimmerings of an incipiently resistant collective consciousness among the underprivileged communities while also showing the frightening, almost inevitable lapse into incoherence and insanity, as the state comes face to face with its heart of darkness.

Jana Fedtke, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

**Asperger's Syndrome and the Activist Struggle: Tropes of Disability and Asexuality in *My Name is Khan***

In the context of a post-9/11 United States, *My Name is Khan* presents a case of political and social activism. The protagonist Rizwan Khan has Asperger’s Syndrome and turns into a heroic figure that transgresses national, racial, religious, cultural, and sexual boundaries. Physical disability is often represented as asexual. The movie breaks with this taboo by developing the protagonist from an asexual childish human being into a sexually desiring man to make the character appear ‘normal.’ It is only once that his asosexuality disappears that his vision of a peaceful community, once laughed at for being childish, can be taken seriously.

Rahul Krishna Gairola, University of Washington, WA

Engendering Cuisines: The Ideological Ingredients of Gender in Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*

This paper closely reads the link between what protagonist Saleem Sinai calls “the chutneyfication of history” in Salman Rushdie’s “Midnight’s Children,” on the one hand, and the ways in which we can interpret the domestic act of cooking as one that unbinds (rather than reifies) traditional gender roles, on the other hand. Indeed, Rushdie weaves complex, extended metaphors of currying and pickling throughout the narrative. Throughout this short paper, I will conduct readings that argue that the realm of the domestic can be the most radical site of gender subversion – even in a novel that Western conventions consider “magically real.”

Toral Gajarawala, New York University, New York, NY

“To Make of Artlessness Something Poetic....”

In *The Flaming Feet*, the Kannada critic D.R. Nagaraj expresses doubt that realism, as a style, a form, a genre, can properly incorporate “lower caste cosmologies”. This is a sobering suggestion for protest literatures, which have often staked their transgressive claims precisely on radical forms of realism that can somehow do justice to their subject. In light of the putative inability of realist writing to properly narrativize Dalit life-worlds, one must ask: why is it that Dalit fiction turns again and again to the basic tropes of realism? This paper will attempt to derive the origins of the realist turn in Hindi Dalit literature which clearly labors under another literary genealogy.

Amrita Ghosh, Drew University, NJ

Reconstructing Reality and Space in a Heterotopia: Joginder Paul’s Sleepwalkers

Joginder Paul’s Sleepwalkers based on a time, many years after the Partition, focuses on the refugees in Karachi, who
construct a mnemonic space of existence by constructing a simulacrum of pre-partitioned Lucknow. This paper examines the reconceptualization of spaces and reads it as a ‘heterotopia’ in Foucauldian terms, one that causes a rupture in the unities of time and space and the idea of nation-hood. The refugee subjects’ subversion of the linearity of time opens up a different time in the narration of a nation that necessitates that the wholeness of the ‘imagined’ physical space of a nation be questioned.

Aparna Halpe, University of Toronto, Canada

Realism in Conflict: A Glimpse At Sri Lankan Literature of The Conflict Era
This paper looks at the work of Sri Lankan writers whose major fictional works deal with the issue of conflict. Focusing on Jean Arasanayagam and A. Sivanandan, I argue that realism provides a mode of confessional storytelling that attempts to redress certain forms of cultural amnesia and serves as a form of “witnessing”. However, I also argue that the realist mode of narration involves a fixing of categories that leads to difficult representations of social and political otherness. Such representations bear a burden of blame that paradoxically reveals the particular anxieties of narrating identity in a time of conflict.

Aneessa Hussain, Queens College, City University of New York

A Call to South Asian Activism: Beyond Realisms in The Reluctant Fundamentalist
Mohsin Hamid’s The Reluctant Fundamentalist challenges the notion of South Asian literature as exclusive from realist and post-realist thought. The novella takes on realist tendencies as it explores actual events and actions/re-actions towards several groups of minorities—Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians after 9/11. The novella takes a turn from the realism of everyday life to the neo-realism of a country that has shifted after the attacks of 9/11. The novella takes a turn from the realism of everyday life to the neo-realism of a country that has shifted after the attacks of 9/11. Yet, by the end of the novella, post-realism is at play as Changez, the protagonist (the Other), and the unnamed American (the Occident) challenge each other to a Marxist/post-colonial duel.

Maryse Jayasuriya, University of Texas at El Paso, TX

Out of the Shadows: Realism and Class in Thrity Umrigar’s The Space Between Us and Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss
South Asian writers have used realist novels to explore previously occluded class realities. Thrity Umrigar’s The Space Between Us and Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss show the realities of the poverty-stricken working classes but go beyond the idea of victimization. We see characters who face seemingly insuperable obstacles to agency finding space for the exercise of moral choice. How moral choice and agency can coexist within patterns of class exploitation is at the heart of both novels, thus making clear the continuing relevance of realist aesthetics for understanding the cultural situation of South Asians at home and abroad.

Smita Jha, IIT, Roorkee, India

Myth and Realism: A Study of Rushdie's Midnight Children
Myth and realism have played a significant role, either separately or collectively, in Indian and South Asian Literature. If on the one hand we have such works as the Panchatantra and Kathasristasgar, on the other we also encounter the Arabian Tales and several other Afsana which are based on both myth and realism, and are the outcome of a genuine sort of imaginative visualization. Midnight’s Children is a piece of Indian history in its myriad forms; it is at once a political allegory, a cultural account of what India was like earlier, and what this great country is like now; and finally it is one of the supreme expressions of irony, paradox and creative intelligence, including metonymy. Myth plays a preponderant role in this novel, for no genuine work of literature can ever be created without the essential aid of myth, but at the same time realism does also play a quintessential role in this fictional work because what we find in it is gross ground realities that we see and experience in the contemporary Indian milieu. It is as a link in the great chain of the presence of myth and realism in literature that I propose to undertake an incisive study of this highly acclaimed novel.

Manjula Jindal, Independent Scholar, Chandigarh, India

Karimuddin Asif’s Mughal-E-Azam: A Study of Self, Gender, and the State
In Karimuddin Asif’s blockbuster film Mughal-E-Azam (1960), good women are aligned with the social order and bad women fall outside that purview. Good women are defined by their faith, and bad women are defined by the way men relate to them. Finally, Anarkali epitomizes the good woman because she espouses the ideal that the test for the good woman is her faith in her man. Akbar, in turn, epitomizes the good man because he espouses the ideal that the test for a good man is his faith in his duty.

Feroza Jussawala, University of New Mexico

Realist, Post- Realist, Magic Realist: the Case of Contemporary South Asian Writers
Contemporary South Asian diaspora writers seem to be moving in the tradition of realism. In an almost nineteenth century realistic mode, writers like Monica Ali and Hanif Kureishi are describing a London, though modernized and cleaned up, that seems almost Dickensian in its treatment of immigrants. However, it is Salman Rushdie’s “magic realist” work Satanic Verses that seems to raise social realism, the condition of the South Asian immigrant to a level where, when the realist modes are shattered, one is able to see the true oppressed
condition of the immigrant and understand the difficulty of attempting to negotiate the difficult territory of belonging and unbelonging.

Shuchi Kapila, Grinnell College, OH

Realism and Genocide: Consensus and ethical thinking in partition fiction
In this paper on partition fiction, I explore the different aspects of literary realism that structured the narratives of that genocidal moment. By exploring questions of literary form, I hope to arrive at an understanding of the commitments, concerns, and ethical dilemmas faced by writers who felt compelled to offer an account of the partition as witnesses. Using features of literary realism also enabled partition writers to recreate the kind of ethical voice of social consensus that partition seemed to have destroyed so effectively and irrevocably.

Maryam Wasif Khan, University of California, Los Angeles, CA

British Orientalism, the dāstān, and the inscription of identity on modern Urdu
While the practice of the cultural institution that is the dāstān dates back almost eight centuries in the Indian subcontinent, the “naṣīr” or prose dāstān, a genre affected by colonial technologies such as print and pedagogy, is, arguably, only as recent as the early nineteenth century and the rise of the first British Orientalist institutions such as Fort William College and the Hindustani Press in Calcutta. This paper is interested specifically in how this latter narrative form, the naṣīr dāstān, becomes a negotiating ground between the various “realisms” that it at once carried within its prose and those that were inserted into its form by its initial colonial audiences. Bāgh-o Bahār, a text too often seen as one of the first “Urdu” literary prose fictions, is seen thus exactly because of systematic Orientalist interventions that are able to posit it within the categories of national and therefore linguistic—Muslim and Persianate, and therefore, in a state of historical disbelonging. In other words, this paper suggests, through a close reading of Bāgh-o Bahār and non-fiction narratives surrounding it, that a text such as this one be read as the product of transactions between an emergent tradition of prose fiction writing in local vernaculars and the subsequent careful molding and reconstruction of this tradition by Orientalist scholars such as John Gilchrist and Edward Eastwick that would go on to produce a literary cannon in the image of the “Orient,” rather than a text grounded in its local space and time.

Nyla Khan, Oklahoma State University, OK

Inevitable Multiplicity of Subject Positions in Fawzia Afzal-Khan’s Lahore With Love: Growing Up With Girlfriends Pakistani-Style
In a conversation that I had with Professor P. S. Chauhan via e-mail, he pointed out that in the recent surge in American autobiography the urge to assert and celebrate the self is an inevitable response to the gradual obliteration of the self by the flattening forces of contemporary culture of the megalopolis. In that surge, Fawzia Afzal-Khan’s tightly-woven, well-crafted, poetically exuberant, intellectually incisive memoir, Lahore with Love: Growing Up with Girlfriends, Pakistani-Style, is a delight to read. I particularly enjoyed reading Afzal-Khan’s memoir because the narrator’s location could have engendered the predicament of perceiving history and social and cultural praxes with an ahistorical cosmopolitanism, but the narrator steers clear of that danger by weaving the fragments of her memory to reconstruct history. In narratives inflected by feminism, postcolonialism, and poststructuralism, Fawzia Afzal Khan, in her memoir, is increasingly concerned with the ideology of narrative texts. By deploying poststructuralist methodology in her works, Afzal-Khan attempts to relate form or technique to issues of social, cultural, and political ideology.

Neetu Khanna, University of California at Los Angeles, CA

Logics of Viscerality in the Writings of Mulk Raj Anand: The Revolution of Feeling and the All-India Progressive Writers Association
This paper interrogates a distinctive corporeal preoccupation particular to the writings of anti-colonial author and founding member of the All-India Progressive Writers Association (PWA), Mulk Raj Anand. More precisely, this paper examines how Anand fused Marxist theories with emerging medical discoveries in the fields of cognitive and psychological sciences in his literature in order to excavate how colonial institutions condition the involuntary emotional responses of the human body. It is in this context that I explore how the semiotics of Anand’s fictive bodies mediate his aesthetic inquiries into the possibility of transforming these corporeal logics: the revolutionary possibility of what Anand phrases, “the feeling of new feelings.” Focusing on his experiments in social realism, my analysis centers on the poetics of touch and sensation in Anand’s most famous novel, Untouchable. This paper thus attempts to think with Anand about one of the central problematic of the Progressive Writers movement: What is the role of literature and art in disrupting and reconditioning the emotive matrices and visceral logics that sustain the projects of empire?

Ashmita Khasnabish, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MA

Amartya Sen’s Theory of Welfare Economics and its Possible Impact on Diaspora
Amartya Sen’s theory of “welfare economics” which he very interestingly renders as the theory of “happiness” could be a great antidote to pain of immigrant and diasporic communities. He is basically rereading and deconstructing Kenneth Arrow’s impossibility theorem as explicated in his Arrow’s book Social Choice and Individual Values (published in 1951). Sen sees the lacuna in Arrow’s theory which is called
“impossibility theorem” by claiming happiness for each single individual based on their demands. What is amazing to see in Sen’s critique is the awareness about the marginalized communities in the western world—especially the immigrants who constantly readjust and adapt as nomads. Based on this theory, I will analyze the various immigrant characters from Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s *works* and the major character in Stephen Spielberg’s film *Terminal*.

**Navneet Kumar**, University of Calgary, Canada

**Activist Realisms in Arundhati Roy’s Nonfiction Prose**

This paper explores activist realisms in the writings of Arundhati Roy on resistance vis-a-vis the works of the sociologist, Ulrich Beck. I argue that Roy’s realism lies in constructing a model of resistance against forces of corporate globalization, neofascism, Hindutva, and sectarianism which essentially hinges on the idea of collective solidarity and the notion of identifying an adversary. In *The Reinvention of Politics*, Ulrich Beck challenges both these aspects of Roy’s writings in proposing a politics that eliminates the notion of the adversary, in addition to denying collective solidarities. For Beck, the adversarial model of politics, exemplified here by Roy, has become obsolete to deal with issues of terror and sectarianism. I argue that Beck’s understanding of resistance, even as it declares the end of adversarial model of politics, sidetracks political struggles which incidentally are crucial to Roy’s politics and propose that Roy’s model of realistic politics is more effective in dealing with consciousness raising than Beck’s claims.

**Nukhbah Langah**, Forman Christian College University, Lahore, Pakistan

**Sufi Realism or Political Realism: Pakistani South Punjab and Contemporary Siraiki Poetry**

This paper focuses on the genre of Siraiki *kafi*. I observe Siraiki mystic poet, Khwaja Ghulam Farid’s (1845-1901) *kafis* as a fusion of Sufism vs. literary realism and trace his influences on contemporary poet, Riffat Abbas. I contend that while maintaining spiritual ties with his motherland, fortified through the symbol of Rohi desert, Farid’s idealization of such symbols negate the realistic aspects of his poetry. This paradox and the current political milieu, together, have further complicated Abbas’s *kafi* expression that has now diverted from traditional mystic philosophy initially associated with Farid.

**Harveen Mann**, Loyola College, Chicago, IL

“*Disciplined Soldiers of Indian Freedom*”: Women and the Narrativizing of Quit India

Taking my cue from Aruna Asaf Ali’s observation that women participated in the Quit India Movement "as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom," I will assess their wide-ranging participation—national and grassroots, pacifist and militant, elite and subaltern, urban and rural. And to underscore the ideological, methodological, and religion-, region-, class-, and caste-based heterogeneity of their resistance, I will examine their diverse narrativizing of Quit India in selected autobiographies and biographies, as well as oral history transcripts, letters, interviews, and political pamphlets.

**Parvinder Mehta**, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

**Predicaments of History and Mimetic Agency: Postcolonial Return, Repetition and Remediation in “Rang De Basanti”**

In Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra’s popular film, “Rang De Basanti” (2006) the interface between colonial history and postcolonial, contemporary India reveal an interesting narrative of history and its mimetic remediation by contemporary subjectivities. The film represents non-linear history in terms of what Mark Freeman calls as “spirals of remembrance, return, repetition and reconfiguration.” Offering diverse theoretical arguments about history and its narration, including thinkers like Nietzsche, Benjamin, Levinas, Foucault and Ricœur, this paper will trace an aesthetic of mimeticism and rhetoric of history premised on ethical desire for transformative imperative in Rang De Basanti. A Levinasian analysis of the film will also highlight the distinctions between history framed in female discourse in terms of mourning and loss and the history re-visited in male discourse in terms of subjective, violent response.

**Rajiv Kannan Menon**, New York University, New York, NY

**The Third World Below: “Kitchen Cosmopolitanisms” and Migrant Intimacies in Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss***

In one of the many intersecting narratives in Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss*, Biju, an illegal Indian immigrant in New York City, takes on a series of low-paying jobs in restaurant kitchens in order to survive the violent realities of life in the United States. However, rather than solely presenting these private sites of employment as zones where cruelty can occur outside of the jurisdiction of a purportedly liberating public sphere of legality and tolerance, Desai suggests that these unseen locations of labor can enable productive forms of intimacy between members of the “shadow class.”

This paper explores how private spaces of neocolonial exploitation foster intimacies that facilitate the construction of solidarities across boundaries of race and nationhood in Desai’s novel. Utilizing a realist mode to draw attention to these subaltern diasporas, Desai’s depiction of these marginal projects of cosmopolitanism reveal the potential for the creation of subversive solidarities in the spaces that celebrations of globalization render invisible.

**Namrata Mitra**, Purdue University, IN

**What’s funny about this Joke? Politics of Humor in Postcolonial Fiction**

Each time we laugh at a joke we reveal our own assumptions.
about how things are and how they ought to be. This paper is an examination of instances of humor in literary works such as V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie and Bapsi Sidhwa. I focus on selected excerpts to show how humor is a means to explore various social and political anxieties, and challenge or restore dominant world views. I will examine what kinds of social and political worlds are made possible or impossible by instances of humor in the novels.

Dr. Gita Mohan, Independent Scholar, University of Salford, U.K

A study of Reality and Realism – Sankar’s Chowinghee and Monica Ali’s In The Kitchen

My presentation will look at the portrayal of reality by two South Asian writers whose works cross several parameters – that of space, time and indeed subjects. Sankar’s novel was written in 1962 and translated into English in 2007. It deals with the life and times of guests and employees in a 1950s-60s hotel in Calcutta, as recounted by the fictional character, Shankar. Monica Ali’s work, on the other hand, describes the lives of those working in the kitchen of a London hotel, set in contemporary times, with the executive chef, Gabriel Lightfoot, playing the role of protagonist. My paper will attempt to answer the question, “Whose reality does realism narrate?”

Navaneetha Mokkil-Maruthar, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Claiming the Day: The Sex Worker as Subject

Nalini Jameela, a sex worker and activist from Kerala, India, published her first autobiography in 2005 and a second version in 2006. When a marginalized subject takes on the task of tracking the trajectory of her subject formation, it is not a quick movement of claiming the public sphere. Since the “I” she sets out to plot is not contained or stable, the form of the autobiography is reconfigured and pulls at its seams. I examine how Nalini Jameela’s work revisions the politics of literary realism and marginality.

Aniruddha Mukhopadhyaya, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL

In Search of the Real Subaltern: A Critical Look at “Subaltern Realism” in Baby Halder’s A Life Less Ordinary

I deconstruct the term “subaltern realism” as an oxymoron. Following Gayatri Spivak’s work on the subaltern figure, I argue that subalternity is marked not by the position of a realistic or counter-realistic presence, but by its absent presence. The writing of subaltern realism posits the realization of that absence in post-colonial resistance to some dominant colonial Other or “the dominant colonial Self.” However, such a project entails the subjection of the subaltern’s absent figularity to the framework of realism itself. The subaltern lies outside the narrative of subaltern realism, though the latter may be an excellent realization of post-colonial discourse.

Pashmina Murthy, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

Functional Violence: Between Reality and the Real

In 2008, a suspected witch in India was beaten, burned with a hot iron, and pushed onto a burning pyre. To reiterate Evans-Pritchard’s questions: “Why witches? Why now?” What national narrative does witchcraze unravel, when witchhunts at the local level seem disconnected from the national? I suggest that the reappearance of a pre-modern register of violence in modernity reveals the interconnections and that reconceptualizing violence through trauma refuses demarcations of lines of temporal continuity. What become troubled are not only a conventional opposition between past and present, between centre and margin, but also between reality and the Real.

Summer Pervez, Kwantlen University

Remapping Realist Partition Films: Sabiha Sumar’s Khamosh Pani

Within the relatively recent cinematic trend of partition films that combine fiction and history such as Vic Sarin’s Partition (2007), Chandrprakash Dwivedi’s Pinjar (2003), and Pamela Rooks’ Train to Pakistan (1998), Sabiha Sumar’s Khamosh Pani (2003) offers a much different look at Partition. Rather than privileging 1947 as the subject of her film, Sumar outlines Partition’s long-term impact on the development of the young nation of Pakistan. Although female centered, it is important to acknowledge that the film is also the story of Ayesha’s son, Salim. Sumar reworks the realist codes of standard Partition cinema by weaving Ayesha’s story in with Salim’s, which concerns the rise of Muslim fundamentalism in Pakistan under General Zia-ul-Haq’s agenda for the state sponsorship of radical Islam. This rise is, according to Sumar’s film, also an important and direct consequence of Partition as one of its long-term effects, alongside the psychological trauma of memory that women underwent. Salim’s story is important precisely for this reason: while the actual events of 1947 may have ended, the experience of Partition resonates well beyond those directly affected, carrying through subsequent generations.

Moumin Quazi, Tarleton State University, TX

“Like Stacked Spoons”: Deconstruction and Postpositivist Realism in Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things

Though the relationship between theory, practice, and pedagogy can sometimes be seen as irrelevant, the postpositivist realism of Satya P. Mohanty, for example, tries to erase the aporia between literary theory and a pedagogy that engages students to ethical action/activism. This paper explores the antagonistic relationship of poststructural and postpositivist realism, as expounded by Mark Edmundson and Satya P. Mohanty, as especially applied to Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things. To explore this relationship, I will explicate the controversial episode regarding Estha and Rahel, who
“once again […] break] the Love Laws.” I compare this scene to an earlier scene found 290 pages before this one, a passage that uses simile to compare the siblings’ “emptiness and quietness” to “stacked spoons” and “familiar lovers’ bodies.”

Ratheesh Radhakrishnan, Rice University, TX

Framing experience: Basheer and untranslatability
Vaikom Muhammed Basheer’s writings are often claimed to be untranslatable as they always refer back to his experiences. The paper will discuss this understanding to argue that the ‘author’ in Basheer is performative and that once unseated from ‘his’ a priori-ness, it is a retrievable category. Realism here is a narrative device, a mode of address. The ‘success’ of his writings is linked to the positioning of the reader as the subject of realism without being realist. Reframing ‘authority’ and realism as reading practices imposed by the text will help set aside the ‘untranslatability as specificity and linguistic/cultural particularity’ proposition.

Sheshlatha Reddy, University of Mary Washington, VA

To Observe, Record, and Reflect Life in an Indian Village: Realism and Romance in the Poetry of Ramakrishna Pillai
The Madras-based poet Ramakrishna Pillai’s long poem “Seeta and Rama—A Tale of the Indian Famine,” included in his collection Tales of Ind, and Other Poems (1886), self-consciously places itself in dialogue with the Ramayana, appropriated as a “nationalist” epic during the 19C. Yet “Seeta and Rama” is set in a once-idyllic South Indian village during the actual drought-famine of the 1870s that devastated the Deccan region. Ramakrishna posits an essential difference in the geography, people, and customs of South India from other regions by using ethnology, as a verifiable mode of historical knowledge, to counteract the authoritative North Indian “History” of the Orientalists as he discusses in Life in an Indian Village (1891). This paper argues that the realist (i.e., ethnographic) impulses of Ramakrishna’s poem, which constructs a nationalist narrative of South India through the new disciplinary economy of the social sciences, exist in tension with its project of nation-building, which is ultimately structured around myth.

Sharanpal Ruprai, York University, Canada

A Punjabi Parable: Empowering Sikh Women in the film Heaven on Earth by Deepa Mehta
According to the 2006 Statistics Canada census, South Asians are the largest visible minority group. If Canada holds true to the pillars of multiculturalism and diversity, then understanding how one of its largest minorities operates culturally and religiously is crucial to our nation’s political and social culture. Canadian Director Deepa Mehta recreates the Sikh household and exposes the tensions between religious and cultural traditions in her 2008 film, Heaven on Earth. Through the use of Punjabi folktales and cultural superstitions narrated against the Canadian landscape what is revealed is how women come to terms with an abusive marriage and household. I argue that as a result of using magical realism, Sikh women’s subjectivity is empowered and a more realistic image of South Asian women is presented. I will consider how Mehta’s use of magical realism empowers Sikh women’s subjectivity and reconsider how the ending of the film reflects the realities for women in Canadian South Asian community.

Alpana Sharma, Wright State University, MI

Realism, the “Cinema Effect,” and Anurag Kashyap’s Black Friday
Anurag Kashyap’s filmmaking style has often been typified by reviewers as “documentary,” “journalistic,” “objective,” and even “naturalistic.” Taken together, his films speak to an ongoing project of defamiliarizing the real while still working within the realist mode of cinematic representation. Realism is the abiding form of the cinema, and it persists in even the most fantastical of Bollywood productions. Kashyap accepts this form for its explanatory and expressive value, but, as I argue, he must exceed it in order to provide a kind of view “from below.” Taking as my example his 2004 film, Black Friday, I show how such cinematic elements as camera angle, lighting, editing, and narration disrupt the flow of mimesis and allow spectators to negotiate meaning on an extrafilmic level, in a space somewhat akin to what Ashish Rajadhyaksha has termed the “cinema effect,” or the excess of realism.

Gitanjali Kaur Singh, University of California at Los Angeles, CA

Quering Sikh American Women: Amu and Visual Representations
Sikh women in the United States hold a socio-political, religious, ethnic and cultural place in society—these specific spaces include the Indian American community, the diaspora, the gurdwara and the larger, mainstream America. How do the visual representation of Sikh women then equate as women of color in the United States? I will also discuss how the erasures of memory in Amu are a representation of Sikh American women’s position in the patriarchal US nation state. I will end with investigating the central positionality of Sikh American women through the use of dreams, realism and the diasporic “third space.”

Alia Somani, University of Western Ontario, Canada

Confessing to Racial Anger and Racialized Desire: Reading the Postcolonial Confessional Novel
From the confessions of St. Augustine, to those of Jean Jacques Rousseau, the classic Western confessional (realist) narrative has been understood as a revelation of the private self to the world. This paper focuses specific attention on Moshin Hamid’s The Reluctant Fundamentalist, and considers how the postcolonial novel puts the confessional realist narra-
tive to new use, setting up the personal confession as a way of “confessing” to racial anger at discrimination as well as racialized desire.

Scott Teal, Wolfson College, Oxford University, UK


Situating the representations of the 1975 Indian Emergency in the works of Salman Rushdie, Nayantara Sahgal, and Rohinton Mistry, this paper seeks to inspect the different registers of realism in Midnight’s Children, Rich Like Us, and A Fine Balance. It attempts to question the efficacy of reading Rushdie against social realist modes, and to put forth a more continuous and comparative framework of realisms at work in the novels.

Pennie Ticen, Virginia Military Institute, VA

Skeptical Belief and Faithful Questioning: Interrogating Realism and Bolstering Mythology in The Satanic Verses

The 1989 fatwa against Salman Rushdie appears to have cemented an irreconcilable division between the novelistic world of Ovidian refashioning and the material world of death-threat-driven seclusion brought about by religious/spiritual dogmatism. But does The Satanic Verses itself recognize an absolute division between the worlds of mythology and realism? Or does it posit places where, in Rushdie’s words, a “third principle [exists] that mediates between the material and spiritual [mythological] worlds…[and can] offer us something new—something that might even be called a secular definition of transcendence?”

Stephanie Yorke, Wolfson College, Oxford University, UK

Materiality, Construction, and the Disabled Body in Rohinton Mistry’s Such a Long Journey and A Fine Balance

In my presentation, I will apply a disability studies framework to consider the internal tensions between a realistic construction of the disabled body and Rohinton Mistry’s metaphorical, anti-materialist use of that body. While Mistry’s able-bodied characters are developed as both material and symbolic beings, disabled characters are often marginalised in a purely symbolic realm, and the symbolic role of their disability supersedes their role as embodied players. Disabled characters are valorised in the novel, but at the expense of their exclusion from normative material life.

Brian Yothers, University of Texas at El Paso, TX

Diasporic Realisms, Hybrid Genres: The Social Texture of Vikram Seth’s The Golden Gate

Realism has often seemed to be far removed from verse, but the verse novel has offered an opportunity for poets to create realist texts that examine the social texture of the cultures that they represent. Vikram Seth’s The Golden Gate is a powerful example of the realist potential of verse. Seth provides a layered representation of the realities of class, race, gender, and sexuality in 1980s San Francisco. Seth’s transnational positioning means that he is able to narrate the social, artistic, and sexual milieu of 1980s San Francisco with the transparency of perspective associated with realist paradigms.

Abdollah Zahiri, Seneca College, Toronto, Canada

Bhakti Realism

This paper seeks to investigate the Bhakti movement’s efforts to dismantle the ‘reality’ that guaranteed the perpetuation of the hegemonic power structure in the caste-ridden India. This utopic yearning to topple domination betrays a yearning for inventing a subaltern reality that supersedes the tyrannical reality. This subaltern reality seeks to establish egalitarianism, social justice and tolerance. It is a demand for a ‘better’ reality. This paper seeks to investigate this potential embedded in the rich poetry of the Bhakti movement. This paper also seeks to investigate this poetic justice that laid the foundations for future change and social mobility to come.

Bonnie Zare, University of Wyoming, and Afsar Mohammed, University of Texas

Burning Saris and Houses: Activism through Poetic Discourse

One way in which bodies are disciplined to perform gender is through clothing. Two contemporary Telugu poems, Jayaprabha’s “Burn the Sari” (1988; English 2002) and Jupaka Subadhra’s “Kongu, No Sentry on my Bosom” (2007; 2009), unpack the function of a particular piece of clothing, the sari, and consider the degree to which it and the female body are confining to women. This talk compares the two poems’ activist goals and explores how one poem may offer an alternative way of thinking about the daily work of household and family preservation and the sari’s aid as a tool for survival in that work.
Dear Friends, Colleagues, & Associates:

I am writing to you as the President and Treasurer of a small New York based 501(c)3 non-profit foundation established in 1998. We will be holding a fundraising event at the MLA Annual Convention in Los Angeles in January 2011 and I would be delighted if you could attend.

The name of our foundation is the Pares Chandra Chakravorty Memorial Foundation. It was established because of a $10,000 bequest from Lore Metzger, known to many of you, Candler Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Emory University. The actual work represented by the foundation has been in place since 1986. There are seven small primary schools in the rural area of the most "backward" (the word used by the Government of India) state of West Bengal in India. The goal of the foundation is to train teachers on the job to develop the intuitions of democracy in children so that the children have some hope of entering the mainstream. We aim to achieve this practically by teaching teachers how to teach the state curriculum.

Since the foundation is small, it is currently funded through individual donations. Our project flies below the NGO radar, and our motto has been, from the start, "first schools, then buildings." In other words, we focus first on the quality of schooling and then on the physical infrastructure. The schools are run by the local landless Dalit communities with three or four visits from a team of two every year, sustained by bimonthly phone calls. The schools are currently housed in fragile lean-tos that the communities put up themselves, sometimes with a little help from the lowest state unit of local self-government.

In 2006, one of our schools came up to our standards and we held a fundraiser at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council that allowed us to build a modest school building. Two of our other schools have sustained themselves now in such a way that additional school buildings are in order. Now our foundation needs to raise the money to put up these additional buildings. We very much hope that members of the MLA such as yourself will be sympathetic to our cause and join us in helping to sustain this educational work. We greatly look forward to what we anticipate will be a positive response.

The fundraiser will be held on January 7th from 5 to 8pm at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel (404 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles) in their Hollywood Ballroom located on the 3rd level (please use the Red Tower elevators).

There will be a cash bar and light snacks. There will also be a short presentation on the work of the foundation at 6:30pm.

For attendance at the fundraiser we request a minimum donation of $100 for faculty members and $25 for graduate students. These donations are tax-deductible, and we can accept cash or checks made to the “Pares Chandra Chakravorty Memorial Foundation.”

We very much look forward to seeing you there!

Yours,

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

With Foundation Board Members

Ritu Birla
Ben Conisbee Baer
Brent Hayes Edwards
Thomas Keenan
Bill Michael
Lecia Rosenthal
South Asian Review News

You may access the SAR Website at:

The 2011 Regular Issue of the South Asian Review

South Asian Review, the referred journal of the South Asian Literary Association, invites submissions for the 2011 Regular Issue, Volume 32, Number 2 (October/November). SAR is a representative scholarly forum for the examination of South Asian languages and literatures in a broad cultural context. The journal invites healthy and constructive dialogue on issues pertaining to South Asia, but the thrust of the dialogue must be literature and the sister arts. The journal welcomes critical and analytical essays on any aspect or period of South Asian literature (ancient, precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial). SAR is open to all ideas, positions, and critical and theoretical approaches. Recognizing the linguistic and cultural diversity of the subcontinent, the journal particularly welcomes essays in intercultural, comparative, and interdisciplinary studies in the humanities. The journal is also interested in essays on music, painting, sculpture, architecture, and other related fields. The following areas are of special interest to the journal:

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Critical articles of 15–25 pages, prepared in accordance with the MLA style and accompanied by an abstract of 8–10 lines and a biographical note of 50 words or so, must be received by June 30, 2011. Articles can be sent by mail or transmitted electronically. All correspondence pertaining to the 2011 issue should be addressed to:

K. D. Verma, Editor
South Asian Review
Department of English
University of Pittsburgh-Johnstown
Johnstown, PA 15904
Phone: 814-269-7143
Fax: 814-269-7196
kverma@pitt.edu

Inquiries regarding book reviews should be addressed directly to:

Professor P. S. Chauhan
Department of English
Arcadia University
450 South Easton Road
Glenside, PA 19038-3295
Phone: 215-572-2106
chauhanp@arcadia.edu
CALL FOR RESEARCH PAPERS ON INDIAN ENGLISH WRITING (PROSE, POETRY, DRAMA AND FICTION)

Authentic, scholarly and unpublished research papers are invited from scholars/faculty/researchers/writers/professors from all over the world for this volume tentatively titled as Indian English Writing: Speculations and Observations.

The volume will be published with an ISBN (International Standard Book Number) by a renowned Delhi based publisher.

The articles should be on any theme of any work of Indian English Prose, Poetry, Drama and Fiction

The paper should not usually exceed 11 pages maximum, 6 pages minimum in single spacing.

Each contributor is advised to send full paper with brief bio-note, declaration and abstract as a single MS-Word email attachments to my email addresses: amnawale@gmail.com up to 15th Jan. 2010. The contributors are also supposed to submit one hard copy of the same i.e. (i) Full paper (ii) A declaration (iii) Abstract and (iv) Brief bio-note to postal address given below. One hard copy is required for our record. Without hard copy no paper will be considered for publication.

Postal Address to Send Hard Copy of Paper:
Dr. Arvind Nawale,
“Akshar”
Anand Nagar,
Near Nanded Naka,
UDGIR, Dist: Latur
(M.S.) 413 517. India
(For more information, please email Dr. Arvind.)

____________________________________________________________

Call for Papers: 30th Annual West Indian Literature Conference

“I Dream to Change the World”:
Literature and Social Transformation

October 13-15th, 2011
University of the West Indies, St Augustine

Caribbean culture and its productions continue to be critical instruments for imaginatively addressing the on-going imperative for social change and self-fashioning. George Lamming contends that the work of the Artist is to “return the society to itself” “to its past” and to the “visions of the future” on which the present is constituted. Although such a function was originally directed to a confrontation with colonialism’s systemic erasure or misrepresentation of its others, an engagement that is never quite exhausted, Caribbean nation states must now call themselves to account for the outcomes of their Independence projects.

The region must engage new questions about the quality of life now available to its citizens. It must confront with urgency the many challenges arising from all spheres of life, from its political culture, economic circumstances, gender politics and family life, marginalised groups, youth culture and entertainment industries, foreign media infiltration, crime and violence. No longer is it acceptable to point the finger at the past or to an external “other” as a source of blame. Nation states must engage the new sites and agents of oppression or negative social conditioning generated from within and beyond its borders in order to ask ourselves more responsibly: what are the requirements of the future?

Equally important to this process is recognising the unique contributions the region’s literature and cultural life have to offer. Caribbean writers have long been engaged in theorizing identity and culture beyond monolithic paradigms that are mired in race and ethnic prejudices and so are a rich resource for ideological and social change that has relevance to the world. These offer fertile methodologies for (re) reading cultures and literatures that have historically read the region as for instance Barbara Lalla has demonstrated in her Caribbean readings of medieval literature.

Indeed debates about the function of literature, from which the practice of criticism can hardly be excluded, are as old as the medium itself. Issues have ranged from literature’s necessary independence from politics of activism and its role in the work of social protest and change. The inescapable politics of textuality remains as pertinent an issue as the concern with the reduction of literature to politics. For the developing world the stakes are even higher and in a Caribbean where the “culture of reading” remains the practice of the few, Lamming’s longstanding concern with finding more innovative ways to mediate the world of text to larger sections of the population is yet to be effectively addressed.

The 30th Annual West Indian Literature Conference invites papers on the theme, “I Dream to Change the World”: Literature and Social Transformation. It welcomes presentations on a broad range of topics and in cultural mediums inclusive of literature, literary linguistics, film, visual arts, and popular culture.

Please submit an abstract of not more than 250 words and a short profile (approximately 150 words) by 25th February, 2011.

Submissions should be sent to: Dr. Geraldine Skeete  Geraldine.Skeete@sta.uwi.edu
Dr. Giselle Rampaul  Giselle.Rampaul@sta.uwi.edu
CFP: 3rd Conference on Orientalisms and the Asian and Arab Diasporas: Imaging the “Oriental” in the Americas and the Iberian Peninsula

You are all invited to participate in the Third Conference on Orientalisms and the Asian and Arab Diasporas in the Americas and the Iberian Peninsula, which will take place on Friday, April 22 and Saturday, April 23 at the University of California, Merced. The name of this year’s conference is Imaging the “Oriental” in the Americas and the Iberian Peninsula.

Keynote Speaker: Julio Villanueva Chang: “De cerca nadie es normal. ¿Cómo reporto y escribo mis perfiles?”
Second Keynote Speaker: Roshni Rustomji-Kerns: “Orientalism and Beyond: Subverting Hierarchies/Re-membering Ourselves through Narratives and Images”

Those interested are invited to submit a one-page abstract in Spanish or English, dealing with any of the topics listed below or any other topic related to Orientalism, Occidentalism, and/or the Asian and Arab presence and heritage in the Americas and the Hispanic world, or their respective imaginaries. Please send it via e-mail to Dr. Ignacio López-Calvo, ilopez-calvo@ucmerced.edu, Dr. Cristián H. Ricci crici@ucmerced.edu, or Dr. Kevin Fellezs kfellezs@ucmerced.edu.

Possible topics include the following:
- Can we speak about orientalist discourse when the exoticist gaze comes from formerly colonized countries?
- Can a text be considered orientalist if it exoticizes the other without an obvious idealization of self?
- Can we talk about orientalism when dealing with non-eastern cultures and peoples?
- How can strategic self-orientalization be used for economic or political profit?
- Is the “Orient” still helping Europe and the Western Hemisphere to define themselves?
- Orientalism, Occidentalism, strategic Orientalism, and self-orientation
- How can strategic self-orientalization be used for economic or political profit?
- Is the “Orient” still helping Europe and the Western Hemisphere to define themselves?
- Orientalism, strategic Orientalism, and self-orientation
- Occidentalism
- Asianness and Arabness in the Americas and the Hispanic world
- "Cooleism"
- Asian and Arab literature and culture in the Americas
- Asian and Arab characters in Western literature
- Nationalisms and the Asian or Arab as the "Other"
- Japonisme in literature, film, and other types of cultural production
- Asian and Arab testimonials, memoirs, and autobiographies in the Americas and the Hispanic World
- Asian and Arab women in the Americas and the Hispanic world and their representation
- José Rizal and other Spanish-language Filipino Authors
- Asian/Arab transculturation, hybridity, and assimilation in the Western World
- Erasure and misrepresentation of Asians and Arabs in Western cultural production
- Asian and Arab religiosity and "witchcraft" in the Americas
- White supremacy and Asians/Arabs in the Americas and the Hispanic world
- Chinatowns in the Americas
- “The Orient” in Travel Literature
- Performing, Reading, and Writing “the Orient”
- Feminization of “the Orient” and “the Orientals”
- Asian/Arab identities, cultural difference, and de-ethnification in the Western world
- Western travelers and imaginaries in the Near and Far East
- Arab and Asian travelers and imaginaries in the West
- Asian/Arab transnationalism, exile, and "inner exile"
- Racialization of Asian/Arabs
- Orientalism and the Asian and Arab diasporas in the Portuguese-speaking world

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PAPERS
Preference will be given to proposals submitted by MARCH 1, 2011, though later proposals may be considered if there is space
Notification of acceptance: MARCH 10, 2011

Extended versions of a selection of the papers presented at the conference will be published in the academic journal TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World
For more information, visit the following website: http://crha.ucmerced.edu/sites/crha/files/public/orientalism%20lier.pdf
CFP: Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World

Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World is a peer-reviewed and interdisciplinary journal of Luso-Hispanic and U.S. Latina/o literary and cultural studies. It is published by the University of California. The Journal promotes the study of marginalized areas of Luso-Hispanic and U.S. Latina/o cultural production of any period and invites submissions of unpublished essays. It also welcomes relevant interdisciplinary work, interviews and book reviews, as they relate to “South-to-South” dynamics between formerly colonized peoples. Although the Journal is mostly devoted to non-canonical work, it will consider articles that rethink canonical texts from postcolonial and transmodern approaches. We encourage contributions from a variety of fields and disciplines, including literature, cultural studies, media studies and new media, visual arts, performance studies, music, religion, cultural anthropology, and history.

Transmodernity functions as an open-access forum for Hispanists, Lusophonists, and specialists in US Latina/o Studies in a global academic community where scholars are increasingly interrogating borders both within and outside Spain, Portugal, Latin America and the United States, and focusing on the multiple intersections and exchanges that flow across borders.

In order to facilitate the broadest possible cultural conversation, the journal will be available without cost to anyone with access to the Internet. It is sponsored by The University of California and UC Merced’s School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts, and is hosted on the eScholarship Repository, which is part of the eScholarship initiative of the California Digital Library.

Submission Guidelines
Please submit manuscripts electronically to http://publish.escholarship.org/cgi/submit.cgi?context=ssha/transmodernity. If you have any problem uploading your file, please contact: transmodernity@ucmerced.edu Submissions are accepted year-round on a rolling basis. However, in order to be guaranteed full consideration for the Spring issue, you must submit your article by November 15, 2010.

Manuscripts should range between 8,000-10,000 words, including notes and works cited, must follow the Modern Language Association Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing, and include an abstract (not to exceed 250 words). Submission guidelines and the style guide for Transmodernity can be found by following the links in the navigation bar to the left: http://escholarship.org/uc/ssh_transmodernity

Proposals Invited for Special Forums
Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World invites proposals for Special Forums in upcoming issues. Each Special Forum will be a cluster of articles that speaks to a critical issue in transnational Hispanic, US Latina/o and/or Lusophone Studies. We are particularly interested in innovative scholarship that is presented by coalitions of scholars from around the globe and which interrogates the geographical, topical, and ideological parameters of Hispanic, Latina/o and Lusophone Studies.

The Editorial Board will consider Special Forum proposals on a rolling basis. Proposals should be submitted in a Word document to transmodernity@ucmerced.edu

Each Special Forum proposal should include: (1) a cover note that briefly explains the significance of the special focus and introduces the prospective guest editors (2) a draft of the call for papers for the Special Forum (300-word limit).

If the Special Forum proposal is accepted, the forum’s guest editors will send out the call for papers, field all submission queries, and follow Transmodernity’s procedures for a peer review process. Special Forums are housed within issues of Transmodernity, and guest editors are responsible only for the content of their forums.

Commitment to a Cultural Commons
Authors retain copyright for all content published in Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World. However, authors grant to the journal the right to make available such content, in any format, in perpetuity. Authors may reproduce, in other contexts, content to which they possess the copyright, although in any subsequent publications Transmodernity should be acknowledged as the original publisher.

ISSN:2154-1361

Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS!

Amritjit Singh has been elected for a five-year term on the Executive Committee of the MLA Division for Ethnic Studies in Language and Literature.

Cynthia Leenerts was tenured and promoted to the rank of Associate Professor at East Stroudsburg University.


Kanika Batra’s book Feminist Visions and Queer Futures in Postcolonial Drama: Community, Kinship, and Citizenship was published by Routledge in December 2010.


Pradyumna S. Chauhan has been doing field work, collecting digital data and oral discourse current in Bagheli language, which will soon be on the list of endangered languages. Having established the 300-page text of Bagheli Folksayings, he is now engaged in translating the sayings into English. Some of the findings, derived from the analysis of the collection, may see publication as chapters/articles in the not too distant future.

Pranav Jani’s book Decentering Rushdie: Cosmopolitanism and the Indian Novel in English was published by The Ohio State University Press.

Professor Bibhash Choudhury of Gauhati University, Guwahati, India, has devoted a chapter to the study of Ronny Noor’s novel Snake Dance in Berlin (Orient Blackswan, New Delhi, 2009) in his recently published book, Beyond Cartography: The Contemporary South Asian Novel in English (Papyrus, Guwahati, 2010).

Sharanpal Ruprai is a 4th year PhD student at York University in the Department of Humanities; she received the 2010-2011 Ontario Graduate Scholarship this past year.

Waqas Khwaja has been promoted to full professor with effect from July 1, 2010. In January 2011, Dalkey Archive Press will be publishing an anthology titled Modern Poetry of Pakistan for which Waqas Khwaja has served as translation editor as well as a contributing translator. A National Endowment of the Arts project, Modern Poetry of Pakistan is the first anthology of its kind to appear in English and brings together multiple poetic traditions indigenous to Pakistan, with 148 poems translated from seven major languages, six of them regional (Baluchi, Kashmiri, Panjabi, Pashto, Seraiki, and Sindhi) and one national (Urdu). Presenting the work of forty-four poets and fifteen translators, this book reveals a national literature rich and diverse in its themes, with work both classical and modern belonging to distinct yet overlapping cultures sharing many existential concerns and perceptions. Review copies can be requested from Jeremy Davis, Managing Editor, Dalkey Archive Press through his email: davies@dalkeyarchive.com

A special issue on Pakistani Literature, which Khwaja has guest-edited for the Journal of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies, will be available for distribution at the end of December 2010. Khwaja will be offering a reading from Modern Poetry of Pakistan and his own poetry as a featured guest at the Savannah Book Festival, Feb. 18-20, 2011.

On March 9, 2010, Khwaja gave a reading for the Poetry Society of Georgia’s Poetry Reading Series at the Telfair Museum, Jepson Center of the Arts.

Other notes of interest

- The first issue of Asian American Literature: Discourses & Pedagogies is now online: http://onlinejournals.sjsu.edu/index.php/AALDP/issue/current

Just click on the table of contents on the website and the pdf for any full text article can be accessed from there. It is designed for readers, students, and teachers of Asian American literature and its first issue includes an interview with Karen Tei Yamashita and eight peer-reviewed essays on a range of topics focusing on the pedagogy, research, and reading of Asian American literature.

- The new issue of Ewomen has been launched. The issue theme is politics and leadership. Submissions for city diary; travelogue, fiction and poetry are being accepted. Please check the URL www.the-indian-subcontinent.org.

- The 5th Annual Galle Literary Festival will be held in Galle, Sri Lanka, from January 26-30, 2011. Check out the festival website: http://www.galleliteraryfestival.com/
In Memoriam

P. Lal

Tribute by Rubana Haq

Death was no suprise guest
Purushottama Lal: 1929-2010

"Every year, for the last thirty years, I have sojourned to Puri in summer, staying in the same room, staring at the same trees, the same sea, the same frothy eerie wondrous phantasmasgoria. And every year a new face, more new faces are added to the posthumous Roll of Honour. A phalanx of old familiars, reinforced by fresh entrants."

(P. Lal: Lessons)

Two column obits and headlines were not Professor Lal's style. He lived cautiously remembering Yudhisthira's definition of the most wonderful thing in the world: to watch friends and others passing away and yet thinking one would live forever. Death, to him, was not a surprise guest. P. Lal died last night at Bellevue Hospital on the eleventh day of his hospitalization.

For P. Lal, poetry meant: morality, music and metaphor and life meant a fortunate combination of a good marriage, good friends and fortunate historical bends.

In 1955, he married Shyamasree Devi daughter of Kalidas Nag, the eminent indologist and historian and novelist Shanta Devi and had two children, Ananda Lal, (Professor at Jadavpur University) and Srimati Lal. Post-partition scene provided P. Lal the opportunity to find publishers for Indians writing in English. He married Shyamasree Devi daughter of Kalidas Nag, the eminent indologist and historian and novelist Shanta Devi and had two children, Ananda Lal, (Professor at Jadavpur University) and Srimati Lal. Post-partition scene provided P. Lal the opportunity to use English as a tool for expression of creativity to the Indians. Therefore, Lal, the poet, founded Writers Workshop in 1958, a small publishing house in Lake Gardens, Kolkata with a group of friends including Anita Desai, Jai Ratan, Raghavendra Rao, Kewlian Seo, Pradip Sen and provided the platform to many first time writers like Vikram Seth, Prabhat Nandi and published Nissim Ezekiel, Agha Shahid Ali, Adil Jussawalla, Kamala Das and many others extensively at a time when finding publishers for Indians writing in English was an extreme challenge.

Purushottama Lal, the recipient of the Padma Shri award, was also an honorary professor at St. Xavier's College for the last forty years, where he interacted with his students on a weekly basis. Ever since 1999, Lal, the transcreator of Mahabharata had also routinely began slokas by slok reading of the epic to a group every Sunday at the Birla Sabhaghar. To many, he taught the lesson of the importance with our hands clasped, saying a prayer for the souls in silence, waiting for his turn to embark on the eleventh day of his hospitalization.

At 10.05pm, on November 3 2010, India lost one of its last great icons. Padmashree Professor Purushottama Lal is mourned by generations of scholars, academics, poets, writers and translators of the likes of Anita Desai, Jayanta Mahapatra, Vikram Seth, Kamala Das, who owe much of their success to him. Purushottam Lal, born in Kapurthala, was a Punjabi by birth but a Bengali by choice. His wife Shyamasree is the daughter of late Kalidas Nag, an eminent historian and Indologist, and Shanta Devi, a novelist. His mother-in-law Shanta was herself a bilingual writer. She was the sister of Sita Chatterjee, another significant writer of the early twentieth century; and Sita and Shanta were the daughters of the illustrious Ramananda Chatterjee, the father of modern journalism in India.

P. Lal is no more, but his legend will continue to inspire generations of poets, writers, scholars, transcreators, and of course, lovers of literature. His mother-in-law Shanta was herself a bilingual writer. She was the sister of Sita Chatterjee, another significant writer of the early twentieth century; and Sita and Shanta were the daughters of the illustrious Ramananda Chatterjee, the father of modern journalism in India. Many of the celebrated scholars, poets and writers of today began their career with Lal’s encouragement and patronage. The list is a long and stunning one: Nissim Ezekiel, A. K. Ramanujan, Jayanta Mahapatra, Adil Jussawalla, Kamala Das, Vikram Seth, Prabhat Nandi, P. Lal personally supervised and effectuated all the productions. He was the editor, proofreader, designer and publisher of every single book. And he even did the beautiful calligraphy for the designer, handloom covers. For decades, Lal was the centre of creative activities in Calcutta. Every Sunday, writers would get together at his residence. Scholars, writers and poets who came to Calcutta made it a point to visit his place. The visitors to his reading sessions were such luminaries as R.K Narayan, Mukul Raj Anand, Nirad Chaudhuri, Raja Rao, Pearl S. Buck, Allen Ginsberg, Gunter Grass, Geoffrey Hill, Christopher Isherwood, Peter Brook, Paul Engle, Santha Rama Rau and Sasthi Brata. Lal’s critics accused him of patronizing “unknown writers”. To this, he would reply: “WW is not a professional publishing house. It does not print well-known names; it makes names known.” Many of the first works of poets and writers of today began their career with Lal’s encouragement and patronage. The list is a long and stunning one: Nissim Ezekiel, A. K. Ramanujan, Jayanta Mahapatra, Adil Jussawalla, Kamala Das, Vikram Seth, Prabhat Nandi, P. Lal personally supervised and effectuated all the productions. He was the editor, proofreader, designer and publisher of every single book. And he even did the beautiful calligraphy for the designer, handloom covers.

This is not all. P. Lal’s achievement as a poet, critic and translator (he preferred the term ‘transcreator’) has almost been overshadowed under the huge banyan of his institution called Writers Workshop. He has transcreated the Upanishads, and the entire Mahabharata, verse by verse. The English rendering of the mahakavya runs into 8832 pages! Through his Writers Workshop he encouraged translation of Indian classics and bhasha literatures. He has himself translated Premchand and Tagore. Sarvajit Ray’s English rendering of his father Sukumar Ray’s Nonsense Verses was also published by Writers Workshop.

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In Memoriam

Dr. Atamjit Singh

Professor Atamjit Singh, an eminent academic, a distinguished professor, and a literary scholar, who worked tirelessly in his life to promote Punjabi around the world, passed away in San Jose on November 12, 2010. He was 76.

He was born in Muktsar, District Ferozepur, Punjab, in August 1934 to Professor Kesar Singh Uberoi and Sardarni Balbir Kaur. Raised in an academic family, Atamjit Singh graduated from C.B. High School, Ambala Cantonment, and pursued further education in at G.M.N. College, Ambala, as well as Government Colleges in Ludhiana and Patiala. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Delhi under the guidance of the Punjabi poet-scholar, Dr. Harbhajan Singh. His doctoral work was on the Concept of Shringhar (Divine Beauty) in the compositions of the fifth Sikh Guru, Guru Arjun Dev.

At age 20, Dr Singh began his first job as a lecturer at Mukand Lal National College, Yamunanagar. He went on to distinguish himself as a teacher-scholar at Khalsa College and Arts Faculty, University of Delhi, as well as at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. He served as a Professor and Chair of the School of Punjabi Studies at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. He also taught courses in Punjabi language at Tokyo University of Foreign Languages, and gave seminars and workshops at the Osaka University of Foreign Studies. His other diaspora experience included conducting courses in Punjabi and Sikh Studies in Thailand, United Kingdom, and United States. He was also twice the Director of Punjab State Text Book Board, where he led the development of curriculum and textbooks for use in the Indian state of Punjab at K-12 and college levels. While he was primarily a scholar of Punjabi Language and Literature, he knew many other languages such as Urdu, Persian, Hindi, Sanskrit and Bengali.

In August 1993, he joined the UC Berkeley's Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies and established the first-ever Punjabi Language Program on a California campus. In 1998, he moved to San Jose State University and helped create a successful Punjabi Language Program and established Guru Nanak Heritage Institute for Punjabi Studies in 2007. He worked with volunteers from the community, high schools in Bay Area, and other academic bodies to establish a solid program for Punjabi studies. With the support of the funding committee spearheaded by Dr. Mahinder Singh Madan and Dr. Inder Mohan Singh of Chardi Kala Foundation, he organized five major conferences on Sikhism and Punjabi Literature. These included the conference on Sikh Studies, Globalization of Sufism, the Eternal Message of Guru Granth Sahib Ji and a special conference on the life and writings of Guru Arjan Dev Ji. He was involved in numerous Interfaith events in the Bay Area; helped organize different literary symposiums including several honoring the Punjabi Poets from across South Asia. He was a beloved teacher and mentor to literally thousands of students in the Bay Area, including many at the San Jose Gurdwara, where he taught Punjabi along with Sardar Malvinder Singh Kohli and Sardarni Pushpinder Kaur Singh for many years. Both in India and the United States, Professor Atamjit Singh worked with a number of academic organizations such as the Punjabi Sahit Akademi (the Punjabi Literary Academy) in India and the Punjabi Writers Associations in U.S. and Canada.

While highly respected as a scholar and teacher, Professor Singh’s most endearing qualities were his humanity, gentle humor, and forgiveness. He was gentle, sweet and generous in his ways. His brilliant intellect did not come in the way of his tolerance for human foibles or his respect for religious and cultural diversity. He combined his soft-spoken ways with strong progressive values for all men and women of all castes, classes and races. Amritjit Singh, an eminent professor of English and African American Studies at Ohio University, recalled his beloved older brother as “a gentle lion, whose rib-cage was made of steel-like values.” He added, “Atamjit was both Blake’s Lamb and Tiger.”

Dr. Atamjit Singh leaves behind his wife Swaranjit Kaur, his son Colonel Pankaj Punit Singh of San Jose, his wife Deepinder Kaur, and their daughter Punnya Kaur. He also leaves behind five younger sisters and brothers in various parts of the United States as well as eleven nephews and nieces as well as seventeen grandnephews, who are all contributing members of the communities they live and work in.

Dr. Atamjit Singh will be missed greatly by his students, friends and family members alike. He was an inspiration for many of them and will be long remembered as an amazing and giving human being.

(Tribute and photo from Dr. Atamjit Singh Memorial Page on Facebook).
Recent Books of Interest for South Asianists (a partial list)

Fiction, Poetry, and Other Creative Writing:

*Aftertaste* by Namita Devidayal (Random House India)

*Chef* by Jaspreet Singh (Bloomsbury)

*Dancing with Kali* by Lalita Das (Niyogi Books, Delhi)

*The Dollmaker’s Island* by Anu Kumar (Gyaana Books, India)

*Family Matters and Other Complications* by Latika Mangrulkar (Eloquent Books, Durham, CT)

*The Immigrant* by Manju Kapur (Faber and Faber)

*In Other Rooms, Other Wonders* by Daniyal Mueenuddin (Bloomsbury)

*Kaleidoscope: An Anthology of Sri Lankan English Literature, Volume II* edited by D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke (Vijitha Yapa)

*Lahore with Love: Growing Up with Girlfriends Pakistani Style* by Fawzia Afzal-Khan

*Lessons in Forgetting* by Anita Nair (Harper Collins India)

*Migritude* by Shailja Patel (Kaya Press)

*Monkey Man* by Usha K.R. (Penguin India)

*The Moon in the Water* by Ameena Hussein (Perera Hussein)

*One Amazing Thing* by Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni (Voice)

*Saraswati Park* by Anjali Joseph (Harper Collins UK)

*Shikargah: A novel in Punjabi* by Surinder Neer Chetna Parkashan (Ludhiana)

*Stitch your eyelids shut: poems* by Vivimarie VanderPoorten (Akna)

*Turtle Dove: Six Simple Stories* by Divya Dubey (Gyaana Books India)

*The Wish Maker* by Ali Sethi (Penguin)

Scholarly books:

*The Apu Trilogy: Satyajit Ray and the Making of an Epic* by Andrew Robinson (I.B. Tauris, distributed by Palgrave Macmillan)

*Bollywood and Globalization: Indian Popular Cinema, Nation, and Diaspora* edited by Rini Bhattacharya Mehta and Rajeshwari V. Pandharipande (Anthem Press)

*Decentering Rushdie: Cosmopolitanism and the Indian English Novel in English* by Pranav Jani (Ohio State UP)
Recent books, continued.

*Diaspora, Development, and Democracy: The Domestic Impact of International Migration From India* by Devesh Kapur, (Princeton UP)

*Europe's Indians: Producing Racial Difference, 1500-1900* by Vanita Seth (Duke University Press)

*Everyday Nationalism: Women of the Hindu Right in India* by Kalyani Devaki Menon (University of Pennsylvania Press)

*Feminist Visions and Queer Futures in Postcolonial Drama: Community, Kinship, and Citizenship* by Kanika Batra (Routledge)

*In the Shadows of the State: Indigenous Politics, Environmentalism, and Insurgency in Jharkhand, India* by Alpa Shah (Duke UP)


*Literary Orientalism A Companion* by A.R. Kidwai (Viva)

*Muslim Portraits: Everyday Lives in India* edited by Mukulika Banerjee (Indiana UP)

*Postnational Feminisms: Postcolonial Identities and Cosmopolitanism in the Works of Kamala Markandaya, Tsitsi Dangarembga, Ama Ata Aidoo, and Anita Desai* by Hena Ahmad (Peter Lang)


*The Story-Time of the British Empire: Colonial and Postcolonial Folkloristics* by Sadhana Naithani (University Press of Mississippi)

*Transforming Faith: The Story of Al-Huda and Islamic Revolution Among Urban Pakistani Women* by Sadaf Ahmad (Syracuse UP)

*Worlds Within: National Narratives and Global Connections in Postcolonial Writing* by Vilashini Cooppan (Stanford UP)

**Won’t you become a Life Member of SALA?**

Life Membership demonstrates your commitment to the South Asian Literary Association. Through the financial support of your Life Membership, you are promoting the excellent scholarship on South Asian literature, language, and culture seen in the journal, *South Asian Review*. You are fostering dialogue on critical issues at our annual conference as graduate students and professors alike present papers, exchange ideas at roundtable discussions, and listen to keynote speakers. You are supporting our annual Hamara Mushaira, where writers and artists share their creative energies through readings and performances. You are aiding in the mentoring of graduate students and young faculty as they begin their academic careers under the guidance of seasoned academics from around the world.

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Robin E. Field, SALA Treasurer
If you have not yet renewed your membership in SALA for calendar year 2011, please take a moment to do it now. Membership in SALA entitles you to keep receiving the SALA Newsletter, as well as to receive the refereed journal, *South Asian Review*.

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SOUTH ASIAN LITERARY ASSOCIATION
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SALA promotes knowledge of, and scholarly interest in, the languages, cultures, and literatures of South Asia and the South Asian diaspora. Membership in the Association is open to all individuals and libraries/institutions/organizations interested in South Asian literature, culture, languages, and philosophy, and also in comparative studies.

SALA hosts two sessions at the Modern Language Association’s annual convention and, in addition, hosts an independent annual conference during the same week as the MLA Convention.

SALA publishes a newsletter carrying announcements of its two MLA sessions, scholarly activities and accomplishments of its members, new titles in the field, and other valuable information for those interested in South Asian literatures.

SALA also publishes a refereed journal, the South Asian Review (SAR), a representative scholarly forum for the examination of South Asian languages and literatures in a broad cultural context. The journal invites healthy and constructive dialogue on issues pertaining to South Asian literatures, arts, and cultures.

SAR, intended for an audience of various disciplines, welcomes critical and analytical essays on any aspect or period of South Asian literature (ancient, pre-colonial, colonial, and postcolonial). SAR is open to all critical and theoretical approaches.

Membership dues include subscriptions to the Newsletter and the South Asian Review.

If you have any announcements you would like to see in the Summer 2011 SALA Newsletter, please send them in the form of an e-mail (MS Word attachments only, please) to mjayasuriya@utep.edu by May 15, 2011.

Visit the SALA Webpage at:
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