Editorial

Indian Literature: Past, Present and Future

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Introduction

Indian Literature with its multiplicity of languages and the plurality of cultures dates back to 3000 years ago, comprising Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and Epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata. India has a strong literary tradition in various Indian regional languages like Sanskrit, Prakrit, Pali, Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Oriya, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam and so on. Indian writers share oral tradition, indigenous experiences and reflect on the history, culture and society in regional languages as well as in English. The first Indian novel in English is Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864). Indian Writing in English can be viewed in three phases - Imitative, First and Second poets' phases. The 20th century marks the matrix of indigenous novels. The novels such as Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* (1935), Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupé* (2001), and Khuswant Singh's *Memories of Madness: Stories of 1947* (2002) depict social issues, vices and crises (discrimination, injustice, violence against women) in India. Indian writers, and their contribution to world literature, are popular in India and abroad.

Researchers are keen on analysing the works of Indian writers from historical, cultural, social perspectives and on literary theories (Post-Colonialism, Postmodernity, Cultural Studies). The enormity of the cultural diversity in India is reflected in Indian novels, plays, dramas, short stories and poems. This collection of articles attempts to capture the diversity of the Indian land/culture/landscape. It focuses on the history of India, partition, women's voices, culture and society, and science and technology in Indian narratives, documentaries and movies.

Special Issue: An Overview

"Whatever has happened, has happened for good

Whatever is happening, is also for good

Whatever will happen, shall also be good."

- The Bhagavad-Gita.

In the Mahabharata's Kurukshetra battlefield, Lord Krishna counsels Arjuna on how everything that happens, regardless of whether it is good or bad, happens for a reason.

Indian Literature: Past, Present and Future portrays the glorious/not-so-glorious times in history, the ever-changing crisis/peace of contemporary and hope for an unpredictable future through India's literary and visual narratives. It focuses on comparison across cultures, technological advancements and diverse perspectives or approaches through the work of art produced in/on India. It projects India's flora, fauna, historical monuments and rich cultural heritage. It illustrates how certain beliefs and practices come into existence – origin, evolution and present structure from a historical perspective. Indian Literature: Past, Present and Future gives a moment to recall, rectify and raise to make a promising future. This collection attempts to interpret various literary and visual narratives which are relevant at present.

The Epics Reinterpreted: Highlighting Feminist Issues While Sustaining Deep Motif, examines the Women characters in the Epics – Ramayana and Mahabharata. It links the present setting to the violence against women described in the Epics Carl Jung's archetypes are highlighted in a few chosen characters (Sita, Amba, Draupati). On one note, it emphasises the need for women to rise and fight for their rights.

Fictive Testimony and Genre Tension: A Study of 'Functionality' of Genre in Manto's *Toba Tek Singh*, analyses the story as a testimony and Manto as a witness. It discusses the 'Testimony and Fictive Testimony' in Literature. It explains how the works are segregated into a particular genre. The authors conclude that the testimony is to be used to understand or identify with the terror.

Tangible Heritage and Intangible Memory: (Coping) Precarity in the select Partition writings by Muslim Women, explores the predicament of women during the Partition of India through Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's *The Heart Divided* (1990) and Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (2009). It addresses 'Feminist Geography' to escape precarity. It depicts a woman who is cut off from her own ethnic or religious group and tries to conjure up her memories as a means of coping with loneliness and insecurity.

Nation Building Media Narratives and its Anti-Ecological Roots: An Eco-Aesthetic Analysis of Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, analyses the post-Partition trauma in the fictional village, Mano Majra. It illustrates the cultural and spiritual bond between Mano Majrans — the inhabitants of Mano Majra — and nature (the land and river). It demonstrates how the media constructs broad myths about culture, religion, and nation. According to the authors, Mano Majrans place a high value on the environment, whilst the other boundaries are more concerned with nationalism and religion.

Pain and Hopelessness among Indian Farmers: An Analysis of Deepa Bhatia's *Nero's Guests* documents the farmers' suicides in India as a result of debt and decreased crop yield. The travels of Sainath and his encounters with the relatives of missing farmers have been chronicled in the documentary *Nero's Guests*. It uses the Three Step Theory developed by David Klonsky and Alexis May and discusses suicide as a significant social issue. The authors conclude that farmers are the foundation of the Indian economy and that without them, India's economy would collapse. It is therefore everyone's responsibility—the people and the government—to give farmers hope so that they can overcome suicidal thoughts.

The link between animals and children in various cultures is discussed in The New Sociology of Childhood: Animal Representations in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Garden in the Dunes*, Amazon's *Oh My Dog*, and Netflix's *Mughizh: A Cross-Cultural Analysis*. It examines the chosen works from the perspectives of cross-cultural psychology and the New Sociology of Childhood. It emphasises kids as self-sufficient, engaged, and future members of society. It emphasises universal traits that apply to all people, regardless of culture. It acknowledges anthropomorphized cartoons create a bond between kids and animals.

Life in Hiding: Censorship Challenges faced by Salman Rushdie and Perumal Murugan, explores the issues sparked by their writings. It draws attention to the aggression and concerns that were forced on them by the particular sect of society. It explains the writers' experiences with the fatwa, court case, exile, and trauma.

Female Body as the 'Other': Rituals and Biotechnical Approach using Perumal Murugan's *One Part Woman* and *Matrubhoomi: A Nation Without Women*, questions the society that limits female bodies for procreation and objectification. It talks about how men and women are regarded differently, as well as the cultural ideals that apply to women. It explains infertility, which is attributed to women, as well as people's ignorance and refusal to seek medical help in favour of adhering to traditional customs and engaging in numerous rituals for procreation.

Life and (non) Living: Technological and Human Conglomeration in *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25*, explores how cyborgs and people will inevitably interact in the Malayalam film Android Kunjappan Version 5.25. It demonstrates the advantages, adaptability, and drawbacks of cyborgs in daily life. It emphasises how the cyborg absorbs cultural and religious notions. The authors argue that cyborgs are an inevitable development in the world and that until the flaws are fixed, humans must approach cyborgs with caution.

The Challenges of Using Machine Translation While Translating Polysemous Words, discusses the difficulty of using machine translation to translate polysemous words from French to English (Google Translate). It serves as an example of how the machine chooses the formal or often-used meaning rather than the pragmatic meaning and applies it in every situation. It demonstrates how Machine Translation is unable to understand the pragmatic meaning of Polysemous terms because it is ignorant of the cultures of the source and target languages. It implies that Machine Translation will become extremely beneficial and user-friendly if the flaws are fixed.

This collection of articles progresses through the literary and visual narratives of India that range from historical events to contemporary situations. It aims to record the stories that are silenced and untold through writing, film, and other forms of art. India's artistic output was influenced by factors such as independence, partition, the Kashmir crisis, the Northeast Insurgency, marginalisation, religious disputes, environmental awareness, technical breakthroughs, Bollywood, and the Indian film industry. India now reflects a multitude of cultures and customs as a result of these occurrences. As we examine the Indian narratives produced to date, we can draw the conclusion that India has a vast array of tales to share with the rest of the world.

Guest Editorial Board

Guest Editor-in-Chief

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