

July/Aug 2021

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# ASAA NEWSLETTER

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Association for the Study of Australasia in Asia

Website: [www.asaa.net.au](http://www.asaa.net.au)

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Association for the Study of  
Australasia in Asia

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## Australia-India Lecture Series in Literary Studies

The Departments of English at Osmania University, Hyderabad, and the University of Western Australia, Perth, jointly convened a series of lectures on aspects of Indian and Australian Literature in English. Presented online via Google Meet under the auspices of the two universities and ASAA, the lectures attracted interested audiences of students and staff of both universities and invited members of ASAA.

The series was launched in November 2020 in the presence of senior members of the administration of both universities.

On that occasion a lecture on 'Land Rights and Australian Indigenous Peoples' was presented by Associate Professor Kieran Dolin, ASAA-Australia vice-president. This was followed by a lecture 'Australian Landscapes' delivered by Tony Hughes-d'Aeth, Professor of Australian Literature at UWA.



*C Muralikrishna*



*Y L Srinivas*



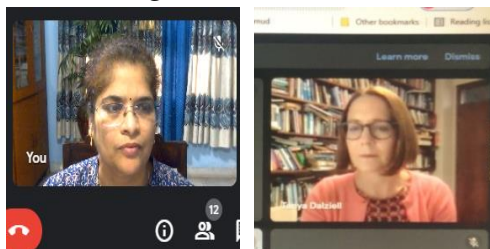
*Kieran Dolin*



*Tony Hughes-d'Aeth*

In February 2021 the series resumed with a lecture by Professor C. Muralikrishna, Head of the English Department at Osmania University, titled 'The English Poetic Writings of Swami Vivekananda'. In March 2021 Professor Y. L. Srinivas, Chair of the Board of Studies in English at

Osmania, delivered a lecture on 'The Debate English in India.'



*Parimala Kulkarni      Tanya Dalziell*

In April Associate Professor Parimala Kulkarni, ASAA-Asia president, lectured on 'Indian Chick-Lit' placing it in the context of Indian women's fiction. The final lecture, by Associate Professor Tanya Dalziell, chair of English and Literary Studies at UWA, on 'Australian Women's Writing', was held in July, following a short break necessitated by the Covid outbreak.

**Professor Dandeboina Ravinder, Vice Chancellor, Osmania University,** speaking at the conclusion of the lecture series commended the



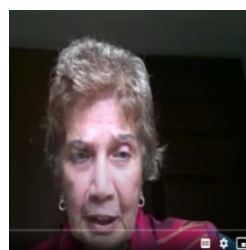
*Prof. Dandeboina Ravinder* research activities. He is one of the few academic administrators to be trained in Leadership in Academic Programmes (LEAP) sponsored by the Ministry of the Human Resource Development, Govt. of India at University of Hyderabad and at

joint lectures by the OU-UWA faculty and evinced interest in taking forward the collaboration in other meaningful academic and

Monash University, Melbourne, Australia.

Each lecture, by introducing research in an area of national significance, has served to deepen understanding of each other's societies, literary traditions and critical approaches.

We hope that this series will form the basis of further collaborations. I conclude by expressing thanks to Professor C. Muralikrishna for hosting



*Cynthia vanden Dreisen* ASAA, who has been involved in organising the lecture series and promoting the ongoing discussions between UWA, ASAA, OU.

these events. And thanks to Dr Cynthia vanden Driesen Chair, Advisory Committee,

**Kieran Dolin**  
University of Western Australia

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### Australian Books for Osmania University



*Andrew Collister* The Australian Vice-Consul at Chennai, Mr Andrew Collister has last month, despatched a generous gift of approximately fifty Australian books [focused on Indigenous and multicultural perspectives] as well as some art prints to Osmania University Hyderabad. The gift also includes the AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia. Last year Mr Collister also attended

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the Hyderabad Literary Festival where Australia had been nominated as the Guest Nation through a series of negotiations between ASAA and the organisers of the Festival, one of whom was Professor T Vijay Kumar who, at that time was Asian President of ASAA.

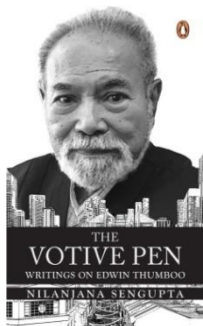
Mr Collister had also collaborated in bringing Australian writers to the HLF besides those whom ASAA had also assisted in bringing to the Festival. The gift of books is a follow-on to the dialogue that was also opened up as a result with Osmania University, the University of Western Australia and ASAA and the continuing conversations regarding establishing a Centre for Australian Studies within the Department of English at Osmania University.

**Cynthia vanden Driesen**  
University of Western Australia/ASAA

*The Votive Pen: The Writings of Edwin Thumboo.*

Penguin, Random House, 2021

A rivetting look at the fiercely original,



intellectually brilliant mind of Singapore's unofficial Poet-Laureate, Edwin Thumboo. Born of Tamil and Teochew parents, he embraced the Protestant faith late in his life. He has a self-confessed fetish for Yeats and Pound and yet completed his doctoral thesis on post-colonial African poetry. He taught himself the Ramayana and I-Ching but found traces of the Odysseus in the

shadows of the Merlion. He is brusquely vocal about poetry with a purpose and yet appears a hopeless romantic in his poems about his wife. What happens when a mind which is such a melting pot of brilliant ideas and contrary emotions tries to unscramble the identity of a country like Singapore which is complex, multiracial, has known a fierce economic growth that has often elbowed aside everything else? *The Votive Pen* sets out to see Edwin Thumboo's poetry – steadily and see it whole – without the intervening static of earlier critical writing and with an intense alertness to the text.

**Excerpt**  
From Publisher

**A Milestone Event in Singapore: Celebration of a Brilliant Career**



L to R: Nilanjana Sengupta, Edwin Thumboo.  
R: Meira Chand

Edwin Thumboo's long career as an educator as well as 'unofficial Poet-Laureate' of Singapore for decades has earned him an eminent place in the annals of Singapore's cultural history. At various points in his long and distinguished career several biographies of Edwin have emerged but this most recent one seems to have been approved by the man himself as

is witnessed by the Introduction he has written to Nilanjana Sengupta's work. The book is further graced with an appreciative account by Wang Gungwu; he is an Emeritus Professor of both The National University of Singapore and of The Australian National University, another eminent contemporary, a historian and educator during these eventful years of Singapore's and Malaya's history.

Professor Thumboo was, some years ago our Asian Patron of ASAA and has always been a valued friend. It is very pleasing that Dr. Meira Chand - our present patron (and also arguably Singapore's best-known novelist) was invited to launch the book.

**Cynthia vanden Driesen**  
University of Western  
Australia/ASAA

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### Moving Beyond Multi-cultural to Inter-cultural Harmony



*Meira Chand*

As we all come from unique and different beginnings despite the veneer of global interconnectedness, there needs to be better intercultural understanding.

The racial accord we take for granted, has been grown and nurtured from historical strife. An American friend residing in Singapore recently texted me in distress. The brutal killing in the United States of George Floyd and the high-profile trial of the police

officer who caused his death, the fatal shooting of Daunte Wright last month and the protests that followed, are all happening in Minneapolis, her hometown. She said in her message: "The toxic combination of racism, guns and violence has hit me particularly hard... I am feeling a dark shadow." Her anguished remarks remind me, yet again, that we thankfully live in Singapore. There are those who tell me we live here in a bubble, but bubbles are miraculous things. Small as we are, in many areas we are up there with the best. Our peace and prosperity are envied, as is the multicultural harmony in which we live. It was not always like this. The racial accord we take for granted, has been grown and nurtured from historical strife. Amid today's peace and affluence, it is easy to forget this. However, there are those who are older who can tell of a different Singapore, of war, racism and race riots, vicious gangs, communist intimidation, and casual gun killings on street corners.

They can tell of the ravages of opium, leprosy, malnutrition and of the muddy track to the outhouse in an impoverished kampung. It is good to remember and honour the past, as it puts the present in perspective. Singapore's journey, still vivid to an older generation, is a journey we can be very proud of.

#### **Havel's call for renewal**

Singapore's journey once gave the late Vaclav Havel, writer, intellectual and former president of the Czech Republic (1993-2003), much food for thought. In a commencement address to Harvard University in May 1995,

titled "Radical renewal of human responsibility", he described sitting in a waterfront restaurant in Singapore. "My chair was almost identical to the chairs they have in restaurants by the Vltava River in Prague. They were playing the same rock music.... Above all, I was surrounded by young people who were similarly dressed, who drank familiar-looking drinks, and who behaved as casually as their contemporaries in Prague. Only their complexion and their facial features were different - for I was in Singapore." What struck Mr Havel was how completely we lived in a single global civilisation, brought into existence by technology, and how humanity is interconnected not only in the informational sense but in the casual sense as well. He noted that a single devious bank transaction in Singapore could bring down a bank on the other side of the world, and how, wherever we live, we are all familiar with CNN, Nelson Mandela, the Rolling Stones and more. It has been 26 years since Mr Havel spoke at Harvard, and the world is now even more firmly welded together. Although technological communication can convey positive information about valuable modes of human co-existence, like democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, it is also a dangerous conduit for fear and bigotry. The events in Minneapolis, and the racist bias from which they spring, reverberate threateningly nowadays on everyone's doorstep. The mass movements of human migration and misery, brought about by wars and economic

desperation, mean the single global civilisation Mr Havel described, is now multiracial in ways previously inconceivable. Inequality and racial discrimination have never been so pitiless - Myanmar's reported genocide against Rohingya Muslims, the forced breaking-up of Mexican immigrant families at the United States border, the rise in hate crimes against Asians as a result of the pandemic, and more.

### **The Singapore experience**

Here in Singapore, although incidents of discrimination do periodically arise, a peaceful multiracial society is accepted as a way of life. A 2019 survey on racial and religious harmony by the Institute of Policy Studies and OnePeople.sg, a national body that seeks to strengthen racial harmony, showed Singapore "faring well" with regard to interracial relations. Singaporeans are proud of the multiracial flag we fly.

However, beneath the surface, our ethnic communities are surprisingly fragmented. For example, our Indian population are predominantly Tamil and Malayalee from South India, smaller groups from the north consist mostly of Punjabi, Sikh, Parsi, Gujarati, and Sindhi communities. All these people are ethnolinguistically diverse. Northerners derive from the Aryan race, Southerners are Dravidians; they do not speak the same language, worship the same gods, or obey the same customs, even their cuisines differ. In Singapore, they are all lumped together under the racial category of Indian, and they do their best to cohere, but each sub-community knows the other

inadequately. Things are better among our Chinese friends, although there are still divisions. Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, Shanghainese, Hakka, Hainanese, Peranakan and more; tribe, clan, dialect and customs all serve to separate. The Malay people have gravitated here from the Malay Peninsula, Java, Sumatra or Sulawesi, but a similarity of culture, language and religion gives them much more cohesion as a community. We may live together harmoniously, but if all these ethnic groups know their own substrata imperfectly, they know even less about their racially different neighbour. The word multicultural has a passive ring to it, what we need is to actively live more interculturally.

### **Intercultural harmony**



Our challenge is to understand that today's world is not only multicultural, but also multipolar. Despite the veneer of global interconnectedness, we all come from unique and different beginnings. Underneath, we are still tribal and biased, and tempers flare easily. Globally, we must find a better code of mutual coexistence, of intercultural understanding. In Singapore, beginnings are already being made in this direction. The Intercultural Theatre Institute, founded in 2000, sets up intercultural exchange in numerous ways. The mission of the Centre for Singapore Tamil Culture is also to build bridges across cultures. Some of the activities planned include lectures that enlighten

the Indian and Malay communities about Chinese customs and celebrations; dance dialogues with Chinese, Malay, and Indian dancers performing with one another; and talks for Chinese communities on Islamic traditions and Hindu religion. In that Harvard address, Mr Havel said he had not lost hope for a more Utopian, intercultural world, because he saw a unifying similarity at the root of all cultures and religions that could be built upon, whether that was a respect for what transcends us in the way of the mystery of being, or a higher moral order, or just respect for human dignity and nature.

"Isn't the common, ancient origin or human roots of our diverse spiritualities... the thing that can genuinely bring people of different cultures together?... I have been given to understand how small this world is and how it torments itself with countless things it need not torment itself with if people could find within themselves a little more courage, a little more hope, a little more responsibility, a little more mutual understanding and love." It is my belief that minuscule Singapore is uniquely positioned with all the proper and meaningful components to take the first steps towards this vision of a better integrated world. The horrific events in Minneapolis should urge us to hasten towards it. (*The Straits Times* 2 May 2021)

**Meira Chand**

website: [www.meirachand.com](http://www.meirachand.com)

## Delhi's Choice & Colombo's Highway to Beijing



*Ameer Ali*

### Is the Indian Ocean Indian?

Post-war Sri Lanka has turned into a contestable terrain for a new Great

Game played chiefly

between two regional powers, India and China with their respective allies. Although India's presumption of control over the Indian Ocean remained uncontested once the former colonial masters started leaving the region one by one, Indian historians and political strategists like K. M. Panikkar warned Independent India of economic and security perils of surrendering control over Indian Ocean[...]

The Indian Ocean touches the shores of forty independent nation states that house 40 percent of the world's population. Two-thirds of the world's oil shipment, one-third of its bulk cargo and one-half of container traffic travel through this ocean. [...]Hence, freedom of navigation through the Indian Ocean or at least some control over that volume of water is extremely vital for the global aspirations of China.[...]

### China in Sri Lanka

[...] The signing of the Rubber-Rice Pact in 1952, the opening of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1957, China's gift of the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall in 1973, and the visit to Beijing by SL President Chandrika

Bandaranaike Kumaratunga (CBK) at the invitation of her Chinese counterpart Jiang Zemin in 1996, China's presence in Sri Lanka was nothing more than ordinary. It was the civil war that really tied together the two nations into what now looks like an inseparable economic, diplomatic and even security relationship. Sri Lanka's former president CBK expressed publicly that the country has become almost a colony of China. Certain developments as will be shown below would vouch for her contention.

### Delhi's Dilemma & China's Opportunity

[...] Shivshankar Menon, India's former Ambassador to Sri Lanka (1997-2000), candidly explains Delhi's predicament as, "an impossible choice between reasons of state and humanitarian instincts, between idealism and self-interest, between intervention and allowing a war to run its course. As a democracy, India chose to find a middle way between them, to try to satisfy both, in the event not fully satisfying either" (Menon, 2016.). He also states that had "India ... stood aside ... defending the killers of an Indian prime minister, we would have effectively written ourselves out of Sri Lanka for the next decade or more, sacrificing our maritime and other interests in Sri Lanka and abdicating a geopolitically strategic neighbor to other powers .[...]"

Delhi's hard choice and the West's reluctance to help the Rajapaksa Government left a huge gap which came as manna from heaven for China to capitalize. An awakened China with

aspirations for economic dominance globally and to counter the unipolar world order embarked on her 'string of pearls' strategy with the construction of her One-Belt-One-Road (OBOR) new maritime silk road, through the Indian Ocean. Acquiring at least semi-permanent halting stations along that route would clear the way for her final objective. A war ravaged and debt burdened Sri Lanka, right on the doorstep of China's regional rival, India, offered a golden opportunity that was too good to miss. From the point of view of Rajapaksa's Sri Lanka, China's OBOR with its latest subway, China-Pakistan-Sri Lanka-Economic Corridor became Colombo's highway to Beijing.[...] In fact, the ninety-nine years lease of Hambantota Harbor signed by the new regime reinforced China's long-term foothold in Sri Lanka.

### **China's Consolidation & Delhi's Retraction**

With the return of the Rajapaksa regime in 2019, Delhi's relations with Colombo became even more precarious. [...]The Rajapaksa cabinet provocatively approved the Sinosoar-Etechwin Joint Venture in China to install hybrid renewable energy systems in three of Sri Lanka's small islands, Nainativu, Neduntivu and Analaitivu - all three situated in the Palk Strait and less than 50 km away from Tamil Nadu. India raised its concerns without any response from Sri Lanka.

The completion of the celebrated Colombo Port City, built entirely at China's expense of \$15 billion, on 269-hectares of reclaimed land, was the

crowning achievement of China's consolidation of her foothold in Sri Lanka. [...]

This Port City has been advertised to the world, including India, as a one-stop destination for foreign and local investors and is described as marking a turning point in the country's economic development.[...] Yet, how much of control will China exert over this financial and entertainment megalopolis and how much of the revenue earned there would trickle down to historic Sri Lanka, are questions to which only time will provide answers.

### **The New Great Game**

However, the \$64k question is how does India view this rapidly changing Sri Lankan scenario? Historically, India's security had been threatened always from her northern borders and that threat is kept alive by China's capture of Tibet and aiding Pakistan over anti-Indian resistance in Kashmir. The southern coast until now had always been safe.[...]. That assumption has now been shattered with the aggressive penetration of China into Sri Lanka.[...]

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison is warning world leaders to act in removing China's rising threat to the region. That region includes the Indian Ocean through which Australia trades with the Middle East and Europe. Morrison's call would be music to Delhi's ears. Delhi also would be pushing hard on US and European policy makers to confront China's threat to keep the Indian Ocean safe for navigation and commerce. Sri Lanka cannot escape

from that confrontation and is destined to become the main theatre of action for the new Great Game. Are the current rulers of Sri Lanka aware of what is ahead? Ignorance is always bliss. (*Colombo Telegraph* 6 June 2021)

**Ameer Ali**

Murdoch University  
Western Australia

**Earth, Sea, Sky  
The Australian Guitar and the  
Landscape Poetry of Glen Phillips**



Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 Richard Gill Auditorium, West Australian Academy of the Performing Arts (WAAPA) Western Australia.  
The May 20, 2021 Classical guitar and Poetry program conceived by Professor Jonathan Paget of the WA Academy of Performing Arts' Classical Music Department in Perth was based on Australian compositions embodying the theme of 'Earth, Sea and Sky'. As support to the guitarists, Australian poet Glen Phillips provided more than a dozen poems, some specially composed for the occasion. These were read mostly to introduce the 22 guitar compositions performed by staff, students, the Perth Guitar Quartet and Pietra Guitar Ensemble. The Australian composers featured included Philip Houghton (1954-2017), Iain Seaborn, Azariah Felton, Marcus

Roberts, Joseph Bonini and Richard Charlton. Additionally, four of the performers were playing works they themselves had composed.

Glen's 13 poems mainly preceded each musical composition and of course dealt with landscape subjects. They were read alternately by Glen and local writer Bronwyn August. The first poem, 'Earth, Sea and Sky' was composed especially for the program and compared British land and seascapes referred to by Tennyson in his poem 'Crossing the Bar' (composed near Salcombe, Devon in 1899) and the West Australian SW coast and inland. Other poems featured the Dryandra Forest near Narrogin, Wave Rock and the Avon Valley.

An audience of nearly one hundred responded enthusiastically to the creative blending of music and poetry.

**Artists' Pandemic Responses: Tales from South Australia**



*Stephen Alomes*

In Australia, despite the lesser impact of the disease, the pandemic also hit artists and writers hard. Mostly sole trader professionals, they did not receive the federal and state government support packages for businesses and employees.

Several fine artists explored the pandemic in studies of the virus and of social isolation. The poets' response was even stronger. The collection of

pandemic poetry, stories and memoir, entitled *2020 Vision: Stories from Melbourne's Lockdown: An Anthology of Stories, Memoir and Poetry* (Little Hen Press, Melbourne) was one of several anthologies and groupings of poetic responses.

Even in the milder Australian environment - insulated as an island with closed borders, reinforced by interstate borders, larger spaces and a smaller population –we have lived with the pandemic, the threat and sometimes the reality.

The global shock of the pandemic has changed the way we live, think and feel, even in Australia, as much as it contrasts with the horrific South Asian disease story, in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka and beyond.

I picked up the prose poet's pen and the painter's brush to express my artistic responses to 'our pandemic Zeitgeist'.

### **Pandemic Poetry**

In the poetry chapbook *Our Pandemic Zeitgeist* I wrote a diary in prose poems of the changing months and moods of the year 2020, the first year of the pandemic.

'The world has stopped ... or has it' from 'early surprises' and 'small beer', the first, late January, reports, cancelled air fares and a rush on toilet paper, to something 'more serious ... Borders closed, deaths increasing, A global pandemic'.

Different responses came over the changing months: the Baby Boomers' retreat to the couch for safety, the adoption of masks, the pandemic sharpening the winter cold of July, the hopes of spring, and the childlike

refrain of waiting echoing everywhere - 'Are we there yet?'

One lighter poem addressed the new virtual life of those communicating only through Zoom.

### *To zoom or not to zoom*

To zoom or not to zoom  
 What time was it again?  
 Where's that link?  
 Do I need an ID  
 Or just click.  
 And presentation  
 What to wear?  
 Where's my costume coordinator  
 Lighting assistant  
 Make-up?  
 Set design – a painting?  
 Which one?  
 Pot plant too  
 Yes, add that! ...  
 And a webinar, is it interesting  
 ...

Several poems pursued different generational experiences, from the retired, often already living more privately, to the 'millennials who just wanna have fun'.

One poem from late 2020 gave the book its title - *Our Pandemic Zeitgeist* (Ginninderra Press, Port Adelaide, 2020)

### *Spectres Around Us...Our Pandemic Zeitgeist*

We do fear it  
 The spectre of death  
 Even if it's not through direct  
 knowledge  
 I know people who have lost,  
 Two people who lost close ones to the  
 virus,

The spectre of fear is about  
 And not the only one  
 For those addicted to global  
 melancholy  
 Weltschmerz is everywhere  
 A wounded world with gloomy  
 prognoses  
 Trump threatens everything  
 Climate change clouds are gathering  
 Dictators everywhere  
 Jobs disappearing, travel gone  
 Psyches ravaged by more than  
 boredom,  
 We are all infected by the pandemic  
 Zeitgeist,  
 The spectres are all around us.

The final poem described a nice,  
 everyday experience as I walked along  
 my street.

### *Tulips from Kensington – a small escape*

Tulips along my street  
 Charming nuances of red and gold  
 A small escape  
 from the fear of the virus,  
 with its mutant flowers  
 and terminal greyness  
 Colours which free the mind  
 And lift the spirit  
 I need them.

### **Pandemic Painting**

Another creative response was  
 through acrylic art work, different to  
 my usual expressionist portraits of  
 populist demagogues, from Australia,  
 Russia, Hungary and the US to South  
 Asia.

The painting of Corona virus angst  
 explores the crown of protrusions  
 which threatens the victims of the

virus, figures under stress multiplied,  
 for 'the spectre of fear is all around us'.



L. Corona virus – The Spectre of Fear is All Around Us  
 R. Pandemic Times – Escape into Abstract Colour

Two artistic escapes have helped  
 me. One is a retreat from our  
 pandemic psyches, a fantasy escape  
 into colour, abstracts taking us away  
 from our threatening times.

Bright colours and soft pastels calm  
 during stressful times as in this  
 peaceful exploration of colour. Like  
 the beauty and calm of the tulips we  
 need it.

The other departure is a romantic  
 escape into nature. Never a botanical  
 artist, I was now, inspired by my daily  
 walks in lockdown, finding nature in  
 front gardens, in a park and by the  
 creek. Earlier painting suburban roses,  
 I have recently pursued the calming  
 power of gum leaves - from the  
 Tasmanian blue gum, with which I  
 grew up, to gumnuts and flowering  
 gums. During a pandemic Australian  
 eucalyptus dreaming calls me.



Australian Flowering Gum – Eucalyptus  
 Dreaming

### Art's Important Contribution

Artists and poets are not always canaries in the mine, but offer a mirror showing our times. As journalists write 'history's first draft' artists explore the experience of living in our pandemic era.

Such artistic journeys are important, whether in the grave stories of South Asia, or even in Australia, a country which has been the 'lucky country' – so far – during the global pandemic.

**Stephen Alomes**

RMIT University Melbourne

### A Tryst with Destiny, A Trust in Democracy

Recently I was asked by the editor of a



Satendra Nandan

magazine to write a piece on India's 75th anniversary of independence to be celebrated in July 2021; first achieved on 15 August 1947.

India's freedom at midnight is almost as long as my reading and writing life. I went to Delhi as a teenager more than a decade after India gained her vivisected nationhood in which 'siblings' had dismembered one of the world's most composite cultures. The struggle for Indian independence lasting, over a turbulent and treacherous century, was possibly one of the greatest freedom movements in human history. It destroyed an ambitious imperial experiment and showed a new way of fighting for freedom and justice even if it led to the displacement and decimation of

millions— in fact one of the largest in world history.

[...]That India remained 'India' in the historical imagination of the world is a miracle of the magnificence of the Indian mind, always universal, always seeing beyond its mountains and oceans: a cosmic vision, rooted in the reality of the foul rag and bone shop of the human heart' (Yeats, 1933), but dreaming of infinity. That that lofty idea of India is today being corrupted with a narrow minded, bigoted sense of identity and sectarian nationalism is a matter for deepest regret[...]. The Indian subcontinent, though divided, was not destroyed: its millennial depths of decency produced some of the most remarkable men and women of the East and the West.

**Mahatma Gandhi** was supreme and in my mind remains eternally so. Born in a small seaport town in Gujarat, educated in London, he developed his *satyagraha* in South Africa and then returned to India aged 46 - one of the most remarkable transformations of an individual in world history moving thereafter to transform a nation by his transcendent love and practice of *Ahimsa*. Finally, he was assassinated, five months after the achievement of the independence of India. It remains a narrative of the unspeakable irony of history; of man's inhumanity to man. Gandhi died a decade or so before I made my first journey to Delhi: so many journeys since to a city where I found friendships, a family, and an abundance of love.

The noblest man I met as a student —perhaps the noblest in my life— was

**Jawaharlal Nehru**, free India's first prime minister for seventeen years. He died in 1964, aged 74, when I was teaching at Doon School. I remember the overwhelming sadness I felt as I wrote an article on him with the title 'This Was a Man' for a Delhi University magazine: The elements were so well mixed in him, as Will Shakespeare wrote earlier of Brutus, 'the noblest Roman of them all'. India was fortunate to have such a visionary as her first Prime Minister after its bloody Partition. For me he has remained the most extraordinary statesman-writer.

Years later, read his wonderful books: *The Discovery of India*, *An Autobiography*, *Glimpses of World History* and others; I also read his speeches. No prime minister in the postimperial world had Nehru's experience of the international currents, the ideological revolutions shaping the contours of our new realities in a nuclear universe. No leader anywhere had his education, his experience of politics both in and out of jail, his scientific temper and the spirit of spiritual poetry: a rare combination. The least religious man became the prime minister of the most religious nation. The fact that he came so close to Gandhi was almost a divine intervention.

I thought to fulfil my promise to the editor, I may write something on Nehru's historic speech delivered around midnight in New Delhi on 15 August, 1947. 'A Tryst with Destiny' is the wondrous expression of a new vision for an ancient civilisation, imagining itself into a modern nation.

I give a garbled version below composed of direct quotes and paraphrased text. It begins: 'Long years ago we made a tryst with Destiny... and the time has come to redeem our pledge, not in full measure but substantially...when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance.' His pledge is not only to the service of India and her people but the still larger cause of humanity. Always humanity; not nationality. Freedom and power bring responsibility: the future beckons us all after the terrible labour pains; and that future is one of incessant striving.[...]

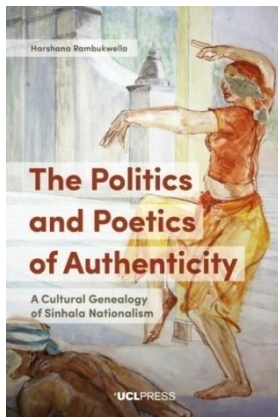
If peace is indivisible, so is freedom; so is prosperity, and so is a disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments. (Think of Covid-19 in our lifetime.) The vital, free, independent India had awakened. It is a fateful moment for India, for all Asia and for the world.[...] We cannot encourage communalism or narrow mindedness, for no nation can be great whose people are narrow in thought or in action. To the world, he pledges India to work towards furthering peace, freedom and democracy.[...] India is a complex civilisation, more than a country, and no nation faced more horrendous challenges after 163 years of colonization with numerous problems of caste and communalism, science and superstition, challenges of modernity and ideological conflicts of two world wars, and two world revolutions in Russia and China.[...] It was in New Delhi that I first felt a sense of freedom and found love and

affections of enduring friendships and families. My faith that has survived three racist coups in my small country, Fiji. The gift of a place is often priceless. I discovered it in Nehru's New Delhi. I am glad that I studied in Delhi and met Pandit Nehru. My heart fills with great gratitude for so graceful a human being. It is he of whom I think on this Indian Independence Day. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru died at 74; independent India is now turning 75.

**Satendra Nandan**  
University of Canberra

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**The Politics and Poetics of  
Authenticity**  
A Cultural Genealogy of Sinhala  
Nationalism  
*Harshana Rambukwella*



What is the role of cultural authenticity in the making of nations? Much scholarly and popular commentary on nationalism dismisses authenticity as a romantic fantasy or, worse, a deliberately constructed mythology used for political manipulation. *The Politics and Poetics of Authenticity* places authenticity at the heart of Sinhala nationalism in late

nineteenth and twentieth-century Sri Lanka. It argues that the passion for the 'real' or the 'authentic' has played a significant role in shaping nationalist thinking and argues for an empathetic yet critical engagement with the idea of authenticity. Through a series of fine-grained and historically grounded analyses of the writings of individual figures central to the making of Sinhala nationalist ideology the book demonstrates authenticity's rich and varied presence in Sri Lankan public life and its key role in understanding postcolonial nationalism in Sri Lanka and elsewhere in South Asia and the world. It also explores how notions of authenticity shape certain strands of postcolonial criticism and offers a way of questioning the taken-for-granted nature of the nation as a unit of analysis but at the same time critically explore the deep imprint of nations and nationalisms on people's lives.

**Praise for *The Politics and Poetics of Authenticity***

'An excellent synopsis of society's socio-political and economic evolution to readers interested in understanding colonial and post-colonial Sri Lanka in the 19th and 20th centuries....

Simultaneously, the book is also a reference point and guide to local and global scholarship that have attempted to read various aspects of nationalism.'

- *The Island*, 2021

'This is a refreshing contribution to the growing body of scholarly literature on Sri Lanka's Sinhalese nationalism, its politics and intellectual strands. Its value is enhanced by the marshalling of sources available in the

Sinhalese language that are usually ignored in scholarly work on contemporary Sri Lanka.'

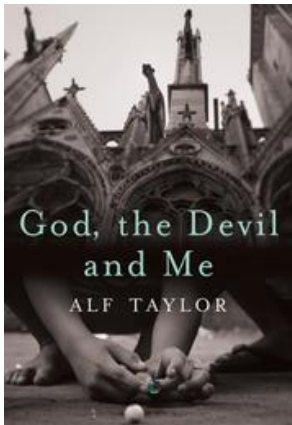
-Jayadeva Uyangoda

'This is an impressive work that guides the reader with compassion through the cultural and political whirlwind of colonial and postcolonial Sri Lanka. Rambukwella breathes fresh air into old debates, probing the ironies of authenticity and inauthenticity through the lives and works of three leading nationalist thinkers. Timely and inspiring.'

-Nira Wickramasinghe, Professor of Modern South Asian Studies, Leiden University

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**Launch of Alf Taylor's *God, the Devil and Me***



Alf Taylor's long-awaited memoir, *God, the Devil and Me*, was launched on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at the Centre for Stories in Perth before a packed crowd of family, friends, fellow-writers, and readers. The Nyoongar elder and writer gave Indian audiences a foretaste of this book during his appearances at the Hyderabad Literary Festival in 2020. *God, the Devil and Me* is an alternately hilarious and heart-breaking account of his childhood,

which he spent in the New Norcia Mission run by Spanish Catholic monks. He and the other Aboriginal children endured conditions of physical cruelty and deprivation, and racial and cultural abuse. Alf Taylor recreates his childhood self vividly, yet also infuses the narrative with his mature judgments on that traumatic experience.

The event began with a Welcome to Country by Alf's brother, Ben Taylor, and included a performance on the Didgeridoo by Daniel Garlett. Dennis Haskell facilitated proceedings, and official launch was conducted by the novelist Kim Scott, who offered a profound commentary on the book and tribute to its author.

*God, the Devil and Me* is published by Magabala Books:

<https://www.magabala.com/products/god-the-devil-and-me>

**Kieran Dolin**  
University of Western Australia

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**RISING ASIA**  
JOURNAL

**About the Journal**

*Rising Asia* is a scholarly publication and journal with a multidisciplinary orientation. It serves as a resource for the study, investigation, and teaching of Asian societies. Each volume of the journal contains interpretive essays on all aspects of Asian history, economy, diplomacy, literature, health, science, military affairs (war, peace and society or WPS) and culture.[...] The journal

also publishes research articles in the field of Film Studies, as well as commentaries on museum exhibits and resource guides, provided all of them are scholarly in nature.

**Editor-In-Chief: Harish C. Mehta**

McMaster University, Canada; [...]and former Senior Indochina Correspondent, *The Business Times of Singapore*.

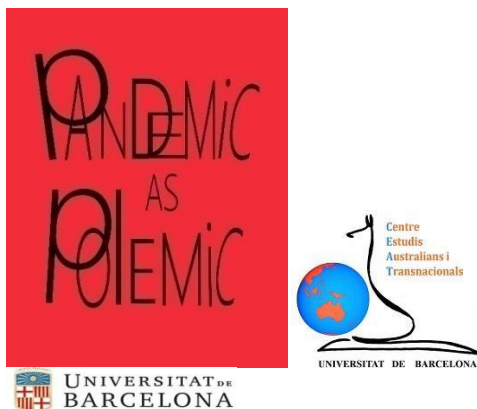
**Consulting Editor: Gurjit Singh**

Former Ambassador of India to Germany, Indonesia, ASEAN, Ethiopia and the African Union; Honorary Professor of Humanities, Indian Institute of Technology, Indore (Japan, Indonesia, ASEAN, Africa and Europe).

**Note:** For more information regarding this fascinating new Journal, visit : <https://www.rajraf.org/>

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### Pandemic as Polemic



The Covid-19 pandemic has been a great challenge, individually and socially, raising questions about lifestyle, environment, social and economic inequality, health policies, science and especially governance and politics. Covid-19 is the basis of most current debates in our media and politics, and has become a rich

interface of conflict. Yet, polemic can also be the source of renovation and construction, and as such, Covid-19 needs to be discussed from a multidisciplinary, global perspective. The Barcelona November 2021 seminar entitled *Pandemic as Polemic* aims to provide such a floor for open-minded discussion.

The seminar will be held ON LINE on Thursday 4th and Friday 5th November, and is free of charge, but registration is needed at the e-mail address [ceatubenrolment@gmail.com](mailto:ceatubenrolment@gmail.com). Information and links for the Seminar will be sent to the registered participants. English, Catalan and Spanish will be the languages of the Seminar, but participants can submit and give their communications in German, French, Italian, Portuguese, Galician and Basque as well. No translations will be provided. For further information contact [ceatsubmissions@gmail.com](mailto:ceatsubmissions@gmail.com)

**Scientific committee:** Dr. Isabel Alonso Breto, Dr. Montserrat Camps-Gaset, Dr. Maria Grau-Perejoan, and Dr. Martin Renes.

Australian and Transnational Studies Centre | Faculty of Philology | U of Barcelona | Gran Via, 585 | 08007 Barcelona, Spain.

<http://www.ub.edu/dpfilsa/welcome.html>



**Katherine Mansfield: Germany and Beyond**

Bad Wörishofen, Germany  
9-10 July 2022

An international conference organised by the Katherine Mansfield Society With the Bad Wörishofen Mayoralty and Tourist and Spa Bureau.

### Call For Abstracts

Mansfield's first book of stories, *In a German Pension* (1911), was inspired by her eight-month stay in the Bavarian spa town of Wörishofen in 1909 at the age of 21, but the importance of Germany and all things German in her writing has not been explored in any depth until recently. Although Mansfield did not return to Germany in the same way as she kept visiting France, her spiritual home in Europe, Germany continued to hold a fascination for her long after her 1909 sojourn, and myriad associations can be traced in her fiction as well as her notebooks and letters.

This two-day conference (with readings by creative writers on 11 July) aims to open up to new scrutiny the impact of Germany on Mansfield's work and life.

This conference will be held in Bad Wörishofen, a Bavarian spa town that honours Mansfield as one of its most famous residents. The Katherine Mansfield Society in collaboration with the Bad Wörishofen Mayoralty and Tourist and Spa Bureau, is proud to announce this conference that aims to explore Germany's meaning to Mansfield's vision of the world.

**Abstracts** of 200 words, together with a 50-word bio-sketch, should be sent to the conference organisers: Dr Delia da Sousa Correa (Open University, UK), Dr Janka Kascakova (Catholic University, Ružomberok, Slovakia), Dr Tracy Miao (Xi'an

International Studies University, China) Dr Monika Sobotta (Open University, UK), Professor (University of NorthamptonUK)

[kms@katherinemansfieldsociety.org](mailto:kms@katherinemansfieldsociety.org)

**Submission deadline: 31 March 2022**

Selected proceedings will be published in a special issue of *Humanities*, a peer-reviewed, open access journal for all humanities disciplines that focuses on ideal human existence

<https://www.mdpi.com/journal/humanities>

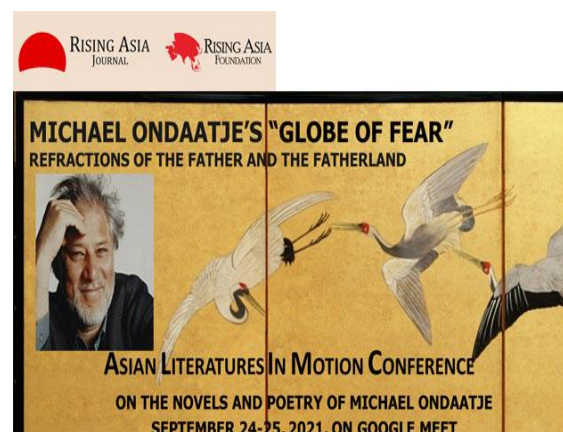
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### Michael Ondaatje's "Globe of Fear": Refractions of the Father and the Fatherland

#### Conference on

#### "Asian Literatures In Motion"

Organized by Rising Asia Foundation and Journal on September 24-25, 2021, on Google Meet



Contact emails:

[harish.mehta@utoronto.ca](mailto:harish.mehta@utoronto.ca) and

[julie.mehta@utoronto.ca](mailto:julie.mehta@utoronto.ca)

For more details please visit:

[www.rajraf.org](http://www.rajraf.org)

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## Challenging Precarity: A Global Network

This international network is dedicated to challenging a major phenomenon of our times: precarity and precariousness. Working in the social sciences and humanities its members refer to concepts of precarity (a political condition, the consequence of uneven power relations under globalization) and precariousness (the inherent state of vulnerability and marginality resulting from the differential distribution of resources), attributing these conditions and states to structural inequality, lack of agency, reduced access to rights and capabilities, and social exclusion. Under scrutiny is the systemic social and economic deprivation of populations in the Global South caused by political neglect or corruption and catalyzing an unparalleled exodus of refugees. There is planetary precarity due to environmental degradation and the crisis of global warming; and recently the new precariat, the subclass whose precaritization appears in aspects of the gig economy, such as zero hours contracts embraced by remittance workers and manifesting in radical economic marginality such as homelessness and soup kitchens. And finally as the pandemic has starkly shown, there is precarity due to lack of access to the internet and its resources: this constitutes the new illiteracy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Founded in 2017, the network has been presciently placed to address the

global crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, one of such enormous impact and consequence that it can be considered as marking a new threshold in all discourses on precarity. Early on in the time of maximum lockdown, in May 2020, Om Dwivedi, the network's Deputy Chair, convened a virtual conference, 'Imagining the Post-Corona virus World', hosted by Auro University.

The network has benefited from cross-institutional collaborations and inspirational leadership beginning with the Pro-Chancellor of Sri Ramswaroop Memorial University, Lucknow, Mrs Pooja Agarwal, where the network was founded at 'The New India' International Conference. There has been generous institutional support from the University of Córdoba, Spain where the network's first major conference, 'Precarity, Populism and Post-Truth Politics' was held in February 2018.



*L to R: Opening Ceremony Mrs Pooja Agarwal (Pro-Chancellor of Sri Ramswaroop Memorial University, Lucknow), Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández (University of Córdoba), Enrique Quesada-Moraga (Vice-Rector of Research and Territorial Development, University of Córdoba) Mr Agarwal (Chancellor, Sri Ramswaroop Memorial University, Lucknow) Janet Wilson (University of Northampton, UK), Om Prakash Dwivedi (Auro University, Gujarat, India).*

The 'Challenging Precarity' conference (February 2019), was held in Auro University, Gujarat, India and was supported generously by the then

Vice-Chancellor Avadhesh Singh (who has since sadly passed away).



Opening Ceremony: Avadhesh Singh,  
Lighting the Lamp Janet Wilson

Tor Vergata, University of Rome, hosted the 'Precarious Lives: Uncertain Futures' conference held in January 2020.



L to R - Om Prakash Dwivedi (Auro), Rohit Singh (Registrar, Auro), Tabish Khair receiving the A.K. Singh Memorial Award for Best Fiction, Aarhus University), Janet Wilson (Northampton), Elisabetta Marino (Rome, 'Tor Vergata')

These successful events which have established the network in the academic stratosphere have been due to feats of organisation and convening by dedicated members, Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández (University of Córdoba), Om Prakash Dwivedi (formerly of Auro University) and Elisabetta Marino (University of Rome, Tor Vergata).

The Challenging Precarity Network also has a vibrant publishing programme: a special issue of the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 56.4 (2020), 'Challenging Precarity', coedited by Janet M. Wilson, Om Prakash Dwivedi, and Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández; and a double special issue of *Alterity Studies and*

*World Literature*, 2-3 (July 2020), coedited by Om Dwivedi and Aleks Wansbrough, 'Dealing with Precarity'. Forthcoming are publications from the University of Rome, 'Tor Vergata' conference, edited by Elisabetta Marino and others, another special issue of JPW, 'Fractured Identities', coedited by Om Prakash Dwivedi and Aleks Wansborough, and the collection, *Representing Vulnerabilities in Contemporary Literatures*, edited by network members Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández and Miriam Fernández-Santiago, published by Routledge. Furthermore, Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández and colleagues have received research funding of 44.895,00 € from the Andalusian Agency of Research, co-financed by European Union under the Operative programme FEDER Andalusia, 2014-2020, for their project 'Interfaces: Representations of Human Vulnerability in the Fourth Industrial Revolution' (P20\_00008).

The network plans for its next conference to be held at Royal Holloway University of London, when it will be safe to meet face to face again. We welcome the affiliation with ASAA, and are open to enquiries and comment. Please direct communication to the Membership Secretary, Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández, ([cristina.gamez@uco.es](mailto:cristina.gamez@uco.es)).

Below is the link to the network website.  
[http://icp2019.aurouniversity.ac.in/About\\_research\\_network.aspx](http://icp2019.aurouniversity.ac.in/About_research_network.aspx)

**Janet M Wilson**

Emerita Professor, University of Northampton  
Chair, Challenging Precarity Network

## Life on Scroll: Lockdown Creativity

IIT Kharagpur organized an online workshop cum exhibition “Life on Scrolls: Lockdown Creativity” in collaboration with Gurudev Tagore Indian Cultural Center (GTICC), Embassy of India, Mexico City, Mexico and on Ora World Mandala, Mexico Saturday, February 20th 2021 at. The objective of the workshop cum exhibition was to bring together indigenous and folk artists from India and Mexico. The patchitrakars or scroll painter from Naya in West Bengal India dialogued with Huichol and Amate artists in Mexico.

Video recordings of scroll performances on the coronavirus created by twenty award-winning patachitrakars were presented followed by those by Amante and Huichol artists from Mexico. The presentations were introduced by Anjali Gera Roy, Professor, IIT Kharagpur on Patachitra, Sonia Deotto, Director Ora World Mandala, Mexico on Huichol painting and Prof. Maira Mayola Benitez, Cultural Promoter, Mexico on Amate. The highlight of the workshop cum exhibition was a live interactive session between five Naya patachitrakars, Gurupada Chitrakar, Manu Chitrakar, Rani Chitrakar, Swarna Chitrakar and Manimala Chitrakar and Wixarika artist José Benítez Sánchez and Amate artist Rodolfo Roman Lopez from Mexico. The workshop cum exhibition conducted in English, Spanish, Hindi and Bengali and translated by Dr Yogendra Sharma proved the old

adage that art and music know no boundaries.



*Participants in Online Exhibition cum Workshop on Life on Scroll: Lockdown Creativity*

The Workshop cum exhibition was hosted by Dr Shrimati Das, GTICC Mexico and began with a welcome note by Dr Das on behalf of the Ambassador of India in Mexico Shri Manpreet Vohra. Professor V K Tiwari, Director IIT Kharagpur addressed the Workshop cum exhibition emphasizing the similarity between Indian and Mexican cultures and hoped that their shared interest in folk arts, indigenous knowledge systems and spirituality would bring the two nations together.

A series of online exhibitions of visual representations of the Coronavirus by the scroll painters of Naya, a village of scroll painters located 56 kms from IIT Kharagpur, have been planned as an outcome of the project “Folk Artists in the Time of Coronavirus” funded by IIT Kharagpur. On July 3, 2021, another exhibition cum symposium “Scroll On: Naya Patuas Sing out the Coronadanav” held in collaboration with Calcutta Chapter of INTACH, was co-hosted by Mr G M Kapur, Convener West Bengal and Calcutta Chapter of INTACH. The exhibition

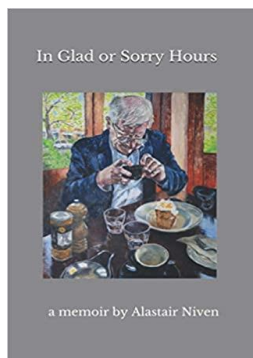
began with a prayer for late Gurupada Chitrakar, one of the leading scroll painters in the exhibition who died of Covid related complications four days before the exhibition cum symposium. The virtual walk through exhibition followed an incisive expert talk by Dr Frank J Korom, Professor of Religion and Anthropology at Boston University and author of *Village of Painters: Narrative Scrolls from West Bengal* (Santa Fe, Museum of New Mexico Press, 2006). The presence of the 80 year old Patua elder and guru Dukhushyam Chitrakar made the interactive discussion with the scroll painters an occasion to remember.



L: Swarna Chitrakar Singing to her Scroll on the Coronavirus R: Gurupada Chitrakar with his scroll painting on the Coronavirus

**Anjali Gera Roy**  
Professor, IIT Kharagpur

***In Glad or Sorry Hours: A Memoir***  
**Alastair Niven**



Alastair Niven has plied a career as

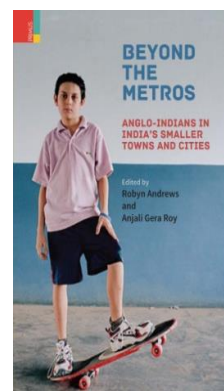
writer, lecturer and administrator, including as director of literature at both the Arts Council and the British Council. He was president of English PEN in an epoch of change and has a special interest in Africa dating from his university years. Public service finally led him to Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park, where he headed its royal foundation for discussion of educational and ethical issues.

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***Beyond the Metros: Anglo-Indians in India's Smaller Towns and Cities***  
Ed. Robyn Andrews and Anjali Gera  
Primus Books 2021



This book focuses on Anglo-Indians residing in a number of small towns and cities, away from the metropolitan centres of modern India. It provides a socio-historical account of some of these towns

were closely associated with traditional occupations for Anglo-Indians, although in recent years the structures of their economies have changed.

**Anjali Gera Roy**  
Professor, IIT Kharagpur

## Book Launch – Richa Dhawan



### INDIAN WRITER IN AUSTRALIA

Richa Dhawan is a writer of Indian diaspora. Born in India, she received her education in Delhi and Sydney. Currently she is based in Singapore and devoted to full-time creative writing.



International Seminar on English Language & Communications  
Jan 20 & 21, 2021 Organized by Bhupal Nobels University Rajasthan

Seminar Convener  
Dr Jaysree Singh  
Department of English  
BN University, Udaipur

Guest of Honour  
Professor Jagdish Batra  
Head, Department of English  
OP Jindal Global University, Sonapat

Book Release by  
Professor Vidushi Sharma  
Department of Communications  
New Delhi Institute of Management

## ASAA TEAM

### Meira Chand – Patron

**Stephen Alomes – President, ASAA (Australia)** Adjunct Professor at RMIT University, Melbourne. He is possibly one of the longest-standing members of the Association and has made a distinctive contribution to all our conferences and publications over many years, with a particular interest in the national and the colonial in a globalising world. Email: [stephen.alomes@rmit.edu.au](mailto:stephen.alomes@rmit.edu.au)

**Kieran Dolin – Vice-President, ASAA (Australia)** is Associate Professor of English at the University of Western Australia and Head of Postgraduate Studies. He was a representative for WA with ASAA and has visited Hyderabad before for an ASAA Conference. His work to assist the ASAA group attend the Hyderabad Literary Festival 2020 was phenomenal. Besides presentations at the Festival he also met with officials of Osmania University to initiate official discussions on the possibility of establishing a formal Link with the University of Western Australia. (See the numerous annotations in this Newsletter) Email: [kieran.dolin@uwa.edu.au](mailto:kieran.dolin@uwa.edu.au)

**Kavita Ivy Nandan – Secretary, ASAA (Australia)** is editor co-editor several work from 1998-2007. Her first novel *Home after Dark* was published in 2015. She completed her PhD in Literature at the Australian National University and has lectured in Creative Writing and Literature at the University of Canberra, the University of the South Pacific, Charles Darwin University and the Australian National University. Kavita was born in New Delhi, grew up in Suva and moved to Canberra in 1987. While still a postgraduate Kavita attended the historic first ASAA conference in Kerala in 1997. Email: [nandan.kavita@gmail.com](mailto:nandan.kavita@gmail.com)

**Parimala Kulkarni – President, ASAA (Asia)** is Associate Professor in the Department of English, Osmania University, Hyderabad. Her area of specialization is Women's Writing.

Her research interests include Indian Literature, Gender Studies, and English Language Pedagogy. She has co-edited a book, *Contemporary British Literature - Post 1990s: A Critical Study*. She is a recipient of a UGC Research Award 2014-2016. She was previously Secretary (Asia) and has had crucial responsibilities for the production of the ASAA Newsletter. Email: paripavan@gmail.com

**K.T. Sunitha – Vice-President, ASAA (Asia)** was formerly Professor of English at the University of Mysore. She organised the ASAA Conference in Mysore in July 2010, bringing together several institutions, besides the University of Mysore: Professor C.D. Narasimhaiah's Dhvanyaloka as well as Professor Anniah Gowda's International Centre for Commonwealth and American Literature and Language Studies. She has presented research papers on Indian writers at Australian university conferences and taught Australian literature and presented research papers in the field at Indian and other international conferences. Email: kt\_sunitha@yahoo.co.in

**Secretary, ASAA (Asia)- TBA**

**Ishmeet Kaur – Editor, ASAA Website** is an Assistant Professor in the School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies at the Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar. She teaches courses in English literature, language and communication studies and has worked on translations of texts from Punjabi into English and vice versa. Her specialist interests in research lie in Australian Literature, Post-colonial Studies and Sikh Studies. She has worked on Indigenous writing from Australia and India. Her doctoral thesis was a comparative study of Patrick White's novels and *Guru Granth Sahib*. She has recently published (2014) a work entitled, *Patrick White: Critical Issues*. She was selected as an "Inspired Teacher" for the President of India's In-Residence Programme at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. Email: ishmeetsaini@gmail.com

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Greg Battye** is Adjunct Professor in Design and Creative Practice at the University of Canberra. His research includes photography, narrative theory and new writing technologies and new media forms. Greg's works are held by the National Gallery of Australia, the National Library of Australia and other national institutions. Greg was vice-president of ASAA for several years from 2007. Email: Greg.Battye@canberra.edu.au

**Tony Simoes da Silva** was Professor and Associate Dean of International Programmes with responsibility for South Asia till he recently took up the position of Head of the School of Humanities at the University of Tasmania. Tony co-edits the *Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature (JASAL)* and *La Questioners Meridionale/The Southern Question*. He attended the ASAA conference at Osmania University and is well-known to many of our Asian colleagues. Email: Tony.SimoesdaSilva@utas.edu.au (Note: TBC).

**Glen Phillips** is a well-known poet and is Director of the Landscape and Language Centre at Edith Cowan University adjunct ECU professor. He serves on several literary boards and Foundations and is represented in more than 20 anthologies and is author or editor of 20

books. Glen has been a long-time supporter of ASAA initiatives, since its inception in 1995. Email: glenlyp@bigpond.com

**Anjali Gera Roy** is Professor in the Department of Humanities of Social Sciences at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. She has published essays in literature, film and cultural studies on India as well as on African culture. She is now researching the transnational flows of Bollywood cinema and has recently co-edited several volumes in this field. She was President of ASAA (Asia) for several years and has remained an active member of ASAA for many years. Email: agera\_99@yahoo.com

**Satendra Nandan** is Emeritus Professor at the University of Canberra. He is also widely known for his creative work as and as a poet. In March 2012 he was awarded the prestigious Harold White Fellowship at the National Library to write his autobiography. He has lately been appointed a member of the Fiji Constitutional Commission (July 2, 2012). He helped found ASAA at the historic meeting at the ACLALS conference in Colombo in 1995 and has served as vice-president for many years. E-mail: satendra.nandan@gmail.com

**Cynthia vanden Driesen** is a Research Fellow with the School of Humanities, University of Western Australia. Her research and publications are mainly in the area of Australian writing and other New Literatures in English. With help from Satendra Nandan she set up ASAA at an international meeting of Asian and Australian academics in Colombo (noted above). She has served continuously as President since the inception of the Association and is currently the Chair of the Advisory Council. E-mail: cynthia.v@westnet.com.au

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- South Africa** Dr. Bridget Grogan, University of Johannesburg.

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**Application for Membership of ASAA**

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**Name (in capital letters) Prof./Dr./Mr./Ms.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Institutional Affiliation** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone No** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Special interest in Australian/NZ Studies Publications/Research/Teaching**

**Date**

**Signature**

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(Please address applications to the presidents or committee members of either the Asian or Australasian branches of the association, depending on where you are located. Email addresses provided above)

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