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NEW HORIZONS

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Double-blind Peer Reviewed



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**Post-War Trauma, Otherness, Ownership and Fluid Identities in
Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient***

Shubham Singh
Assistant Professor
Department of English and M. E. L
Central University of Allahabad

The English Patient has been described as Michael Ondaatje's attempt to understand the basic essence of humanity beyond all restraining discourses of national boundaries and ownership. This view is chiefly an account of the novel's decided negation of the rigid nationalistic ideologies that provoke a destructive scenario as played out in the murderous Second World War culminating in inconceivable extremities in the form of nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There is also an assertion of a fluidity in terms of personal identities when the constructed otherness of human beings is placed in a no man's land where the sole motivations are interpersonal connection and mutual affinity. This paper reads the novel that won the 1992 Man Booker Prize for Fiction, to suggest how it is not only a dramatization of the popular post-war detest of inhumanity of the techniques of modern warfare, but also an informed study of the gross distrust of territorial claims and debates on nationalism which were engendered as a result of the traumatizing loss of human lives in pursuance of the unquenchable thirst of establishing rigid identities and dominance of a select few on the pretext of complete demonization of a racialized other.

Keywords: fluid identities, nationalism, other, ownership, racial, trauma.

A Rejected Estate of the British Empire: Triangle of Tea, China and Assam

Dibyanjoly Hazarika

Junior Research Fellow

Political Science Department, Dibrugarh University

Trade with ancient Asian traders like China and Burma was always at the forefront of the British East India Company's policy in the Northeastern frontier of Bengal or Assam, specifically, China with whom the Company had a trade negotiation of tea. Thus, entering into China was of special significance and several British fortune hunters were experimenting with it. No other parts of the British Indian empire had a direct linkage with China except the Northeastern frontier. Despite this proximity this region was not considered valuable to be included into the empire. Thus the article aims to analyse the reasons behind such a drastic departure from the general law of mercantilism otherwise followed across India and how later it was this tea trade with China that turned upper Assam into one of the most important agricultural estates of the British empire after repeated rejections.

Keywords: tea, upper Assam, empire, East India Company, China.

Religious Discourse Ascertaining Gender Positioning in Haryana

Richa Walia

Assistant Professor

Institute for Development and Communication, Chandigarh

This paper is an effort to understand the representation of women in religious texts of Hinduism (with special reference to Manusmriti). The introductory part of this paper highlights the interface between religious discourses and gender positioning. An effort has been made to relate the moral guidelines of sacred texts with findings from fieldwork done in Haryana. The methodology is based on qualitative data and descriptive annotations of the sacred texts of Hinduism. An effort has been made to know how gender stereotypes are created and sustained through religion, with special reference to Connell's theory of masculinity. The last part of the paper puts forth some suggestions for the upliftment of women with the help of religion.

Keywords: Manusmriti, gender, religion, masculinity, patriarchy

**The Spectre of Hastinapur: Excavating *Mahabharata* in
Search of Krishna's *Bharatavarsha****

Rashmi Sharma

Research Scholar

Department of English and Cultural Studies

Panjab University, Chandigarh

The fabric of Hindu culture and nation is woven with characters, struggles and values of heroes from the great epic that is led by a great political visionary Krishna who percolates the *Mahabharata* as a mystical hero. He manoeuvres the destiny of those around him and as an insightful philosopher, envisions a celestial order of reality where an individual, the clan and groups, as well as chieftains and kings, have their operational freedom and roles. Krishna envisioned a nation and a king who will strive for dharma and establish a world order of moral righteousness and civility. He ultimately became the plot-maker in the *Mahabharata*, a formidable doctrinaire energy in the orchestration of political power and autonomy. But his vision crumbled before his own eyes and God retired to the solace of a jungle to die a death that he ordained for himself. The paper is a deliberation of how a fallible god strove to build an infallible nation and how that nation sustains in the contemporary times.

Keywords: Mahabharata, Krishna, nation, jurisprudence, dharma

भारतीयता के लिए उपस्थित चुनौतियों की शिनाख्त करती धूमिल की कविता

वीरेंद्र सिंह

असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर, हिंदी

हि० प्र० विवि० सांध्यकालीन अध्ययन विभाग, शिमला

भारत की परिकल्पना उसकी समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक विरासत के बिना असंभव है। यह एक देश का नाम भर नहीं, अपने आप में एक विचार-सरणि है जिसका फलक इसकी भौगोलिक सीमाओं से कहीं ज्यादा विस्तृत है। सम्पूर्ण विश्व को अपना परिवार समझने वाले इस देश की अस्मिता पर अंतः-बाह्य न जाने कितने ही हमले हो चुके और हो रहे हैं लेकिन कुछ बात है कि हस्ती मिटती नहीं हमारी। समकालीन हिंदी कविता इन चुनौतियों के प्रति सजग होकर अपना दायित्व बखूबी निभा रही है और इसकी एक मजबूत कड़ी है— धूमिल। इस कवि को प्रथम दृष्टया वामपंथी कहकर इनके साहित्य का आंकलन होता रहा है लेकिन इनके साहित्यिक चिंतन को इस सीमित दायरे में नहीं बाँधा जा सकता। रास्ते जो भी हों, उनका अंतिम ध्येय भारतीयता की रक्षा करना है और इस निमित्त उनकी कविता देश के अंदर उपस्थित चुनौतियों की पहचान कर उनसे सख्ती से निबटने का मार्ग भी सुझाती है और यही इस शोधपत्र का उद्देश्य भी है।

बीज शब्द : भारतीयता, संस्कृति, समकालीन हिंदी कविता, सर्वसमावेशी, सामाजिक विसंगतियाँ।

Rethinking Kinship and Environmental Ethics: An Eco-Critical Reading of Rita Chowdhury's *Chinatown Days*

Anupam Roy

Research Scholar

Department of English, Vidyasagar University

Kinship implies human relationship based on consanguinity and biological affinity. Western anthropologists assume 'blood' as the sole referent to define coherent kinship among human beings as distinguished from non-human organisms. Critical kinship studies calls into question this humanist account of kinship based on the anthropocentric binary and takes into consideration the interaction between human beings and non-humans. In the ecological network, both human beings and non-human organisms co-exist and forge a symbiotic bond that upholds environmental ethics of sustainability. This sense of interconnectedness, mutual sympathy and synergy transform ecospheric relations into a form of kinship. But this coherent interaction is obstructed in the process of rampant human encroachment and the capitalist conversion of natural entities into forms of human capital marking gross violation of environmental ethics and ultimately leading to environmental degradation. Drastic climate change coincides with transformed ecological relations leaving both human and non-human organisms vulnerable to ruthless exploitation. Capitalist exploitation in north-east India occurs in the form of indentured labour, geo-cultural displacement and predatory encroachment into the wild, forested landscape. Violation of environmental ethics causes rupture in the throbbing kinship between human beings and their surrounding environment. Taking Rita Chowdhury's *Chinatown Days* (2018) as a case-study, this paper aims to explore how human encroachment, 'jhum' agriculture and capital-intensive economy have disrupted the ecological interconnectedness in Upper Assam. This paper also examines the violation of environmental ethics, displacement of people and transformed ecospheric relations to usher in eco-literary consciousness to reaffirm and sustain kinship between human beings and surrounding environment.

Keywords: kinship, human and non-human, ethics, exploitation, transformation

Performance Evaluation of Tea Industry in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh

Manoj Sharma

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce

Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla

Tea industry in India is about 170 years old and over time, the art and science, knowledge and application of tea cultivation practices has passed from generation to generation. India is the second largest producer of tea in the world and consumes 75 to 80 percent of tea itself. The tea industry is a labour-intensive industry and provides employment to thousands of people. It is also a substantial source of foreign exchange and generates a sizeable amount of revenue for the government. Tea cultivation in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh was started by Dr William Jameson in 1849. Due to its amazing taste and fine quality Kangra tea received gold and silver medals in 1886 and 1895 in London and Amsterdam respectively. But after 1905, due to a devastating earthquake, the tea industry of H.P. has been struggling due to lack of government policies and effective support system. Through this paper, an attempt has been made to examine the production and growth pattern of tea estates situated in Kangra region of Himachal Pradesh. The study covers the time period of 2012 to 2021 and different methods of ratio analysis and percentage method have been used for analysis and interpretation of collected secondary data.

Keywords: gross profit (GP), net profit (NP), return on asset (ROA)

Interface of Gender and Nature: Analyzing Divakaruni's
The Forest of Enchantments

Shivangi

Research Scholar

Department of English and Cultural Studies

Panjab University, Chandigarh

The present paper seeks to ascertain strands of spiritual ecofeminism in *The Forest of Enchantments*. It attempts to study feminist and ecological lessons embedded in Divakaruni's retelling of the *Ramayan*. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's spectacular novel, *The Forest of Enchantments*, is a refreshing and compassionate retelling of the *Ramayan*. The novel is told in the voice of Sita. In the prologue to the novel, Divakaruni points out that Sita calls her story "the Sitayan" (4). By placing Sita at the centre of the novel, Divakaruni transforms the great Indian epic into a narrative of pluralities and possibilities. As the narrator and definer of her own story, Sita attempts to rupture the dominant patriarchal discourse. This modern-day retelling opens new spaces within the traditional androcentric discourse, enabling women to question the masculinist paradigms of the 'grand narrative'.

Keywords: ecofeminism, ecology, nature, spirituality, Indian women writers, religion, mythology

Effect of Organic Vapours on Activation Energies of Metal Phthalocyanines Dispersed Glasses

R. Ridhi

Assistant Professor, Department of Physics
Mehr Chand Mahajan DAV College for Women, Chandigarh

G.S.S. Saini

Professor, Department of Physics
Panjab University, Chandigarh

S.K. Tripathi

Professor, Department of Physics
Panjab University, Chandigarh

Metal Phthalocyanines (MPcs) and their related derivatives have the tendency to alter their electrical properties on interaction with organic vapours depending on the central metal site, ligand attached and functionalized substituent group. In the present study, interaction mechanism of methanol and benzene vapours with Nickel phthalocyanine tetrasulfonic acid tetrasodium salt (NiPcS) and aluminum phthalocyanine hydroxide (AlPcOH) has been probed by studying variations in their activation energies after vapours exposure. For this purpose MPcs have been dispersed in the porous sol-gel glasses to allow the vapours to diffuse uniformly and efficiently at the surface of MPcs for proper charge transfer interaction and hence increasing sensing efficiency. AlPcOH was found to be insensitive to methanol but NiPcS showed some variation in its electrical property with methanol exposure. Benzene exposure showed variations in activation energies of both AlPcOH and NiPcS dispersed glasses. The sensing of methanol is attributed to the presence of functionalized substituent group on NiPcS unlike the case of AlPcOH. Benzene sensing is dependent on the electron-affinity of the central metal atom of MPc ring. NiPcS dispersed glass has been found to exhibit better sensitivity as compared to AlPcOH dispersed glass for both organic vapours.

Keywords: activation energies, phthalocyanines, organic vapours, dispersed glasses.

Customer's Perception Towards Bank Selection Criterion: An Empirical Analysis

Gagandeep Kaur

Assistant Professor, PG Department of Commerce,
Mehr Chand Mahajan DAV College for Women, Chandigarh
and

Mamta Ratti

Assistant Professor, PG Department of Commerce,
Mehr Chand Mahajan DAV College for Women, Chandigarh

The purpose of the paper is to evaluate the criteria employed by customers while selecting a bank. It focuses on identifying the factors of bank choice criteria among customers of selected Indian banks. Data was collected from a sample of 264 customers using purposive sampling technique. The results of exploratory factor analysis revealed that six factors: responsiveness of the bank, financial benefits for customers, professional attitude of employees, convenience, special services and assurance emerge as important determinants of bank selection criteria. The findings of this study can add to the existing literature and can be used as a starting point on which future studies can be built. This study can also help bank selection decision among prospective customers. It can also help banks in devising appropriate marketing strategies for reaching and attracting new customers.

Keywords: bank, factor analysis, selection criteria, responsiveness, assurance