

NEW LITERARIA- An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities in collaboration with Department of History, Humanities and Society, University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy & Department of English, Central University of Karnataka, India Presents 5<sup>th</sup> International e-Conference

On

## **Bridging Realms: Exploring Intersections in Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Date: 04.10.2024 - 05.10.2024**

**Time: 11.00 AM (IST)**

### **ABSTRACT VOLUME OF RESOURCE PERSONS**

#### **Racialization in South Asian American Writing**

**Prof (Dr) Nalini Iyer**

**Professor of English, Seattle University, Northwest US**

#### **Abstract:**

With the nomination of Kamala Harris as a candidate for the President of the United States, the discussion about the racial identity of South Asian has surfaced again in the public sphere. My talk will explore the question of racialization of South Asians as it has evolved over the last hundred years. I will examine specific literary texts as well as immigration history to frame this talk.

**Bio-note:** Dr. Iyer received her Ph.D. in English from Purdue University. She specializes in postcolonial literatures with a focus on South Asia, Africa, and the South Asian and African diasporas. Courses she teaches include Literature of India, African Literature, Writing Resistance: Women in Non-Western Cultures; Asian American Literatures; Literatures of Resistance (University Honors). She is a widely published, internationally recognized scholar. She is the Editor of South Asian Review, a Taylor & Francis journal published by the South Asian Literary Association. She is the first woman editor of the journal. She also has served in leadership roles with the Modern Language Association and the South Asian Literary Association. She has held the Wismer Professorship and also the Theiline Pigott-McCone Endowed Chair in the Humanities.

#### **Cultural Climate Models: An Interdisciplinary Approach**

**David Higgins, Professor of Environmental Humanities, University of Leeds, UK**

#### **Abstract:**

This paper will introduce the European funded project 'Just Futures: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Cultural Climate Models'. This project brings together literary studies, linguistics, science and technology studies, and literature pedagogy to analyse how texts move between seemingly neutral climate facts ("models of") and normative social values ("models for"). It understands the cultural modelling of climate change as an important complement to dominant scientific climate models. The paper will reflect on how the project integrates methods from the humanities and social sciences, and the consequent challenges and opportunities of such an approach.

#### **Bio-note:**

David Higgins is Professor of Environmental Humanities at the University of Leeds. He has published widely on British Romanticism and, more recently, literature and environmental

crisis. He is both a researcher and a practitioner of nature writing, and works with cultural organisations to develop impactful research. His most recent book is the co-authored *Land Lines: A History of Modern British Nature Writing, 1789–2020* (Cambridge University Press, 2022; paperback forthcoming). With Julia Hoydis (Graz), he co-leads the collaborative project ‘Just Futures? An Interdisciplinary Approach to Cultural Climate Models’.

### **Between Documentary & Utopia: Poetry as Method**

**Dr Frank G. Karioris, Visiting Professor of Writing, Jeonbuk National University,  
South Korea**

#### **Abstract:**

The goal of research is to provide a better understanding of the conditions of the world it is examining, and to shine a light on where it is or should move into the future. This short lecture will detail the use of poetry as a research method, and will show the ways that poetry opens up insights that are not always as accessible with traditional research methods alone. Building on previous research, the presentation will conclude by positioning poetry as a seam for understanding & analyzing the present/future and individual/community, theorizing the import of poetry as method for documenting today, and an opportunity for building tomorrows.

#### **Bio-note:**

Dr Frank G. Karioris is a Visiting Professor of Writing at Jeonbuk National University (South Korea) whose work focuses on issues of sociality, masculinities, and education. They have worked and lectured in more than a dozen countries and are the author of the monograph *An Education in Sexuality & Sociality: Heteronormativity on Campus* and co-editor of *Masculinities Under Neoliberalism*. In addition to their scholarship and teaching, they are a working poet whose writing has appeared internationally in a wide variety of literary journals.

### **Encountering Pareidolia as a Gateway to developing Forest Sentience**

**Dr Francis Joy, Post Doctoral Researcher, University of Lapland Arctic Centre,  
Rovaniemi, Finland**

#### **Abstract:**

Analysis into the phenomena of pareidolia in the north of Finland as a way of exploring biocultural heritage has brought into focus different questions concerning the development of imagination and reimagining new approaches towards exploring and enhancing awareness of forest sentience which is a profile area currently under development within the Gifts from the Sentient Forest Project. One of the main focus areas of research for exploring pareidolia is through strengthening contact with trees and forests within the cycles of the eight seasons which are unique to the Arctic and northern areas of Finland. Currently, one of the broader subject matters under investigation is observations of trees and forests within the winter cycle which can last for seven months, as shifting snow and ice forms transforms different landscapes whereby, configurations of pareidolia are encountered. In fact, the various ranges of pareidolia means it crosses many thresholds across the eight seasons and thus, a study of this phenomena creates a basis for producing various types of narrative data. This particular research area is important because of the potential to develop unique types of knowledge of the Arctic environment as well as create an international profile area which, furthermore, supports our aims of collecting data about how trees and forests can inspire people and help bring about transformation.

**Keywords:** Pareidolia, Trees, Forests, Forms, Faces, Snow, Ice, Nature, Arctic Areas, Landscapes, Narratives.

**Bio-note:** Francis Joy is a PhD graduate from the University of Lapland Faculty of Art and Design, Rovaniemi, and currently works as a post-doctoral researcher and member of the Arctic Anthropology Research Team at the University of Lapland Arctic Centre, Rovaniemi, Finland. Currently, Francis is a project leader in the Gifts from the Sentient Forest Project (<https://www.sentientforestproject.com/>), which is a 2-year project funded by the Kone Foundation, Finland, which supports research into forest intelligence. <https://research.ulapland.fi/en/persons/francis-joy>

Other research fields of interest are a comprehensive study of the pre-Christian religion of the Sámi who are Europe's Indigenous people, living across 4 continents of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola Peninsula, north-west Russia.

ORCID Id: 0000-0001-9860-6016

## **Narratives of Transformation: Poetic Justice's Representation from Renaissance Stage to Digital Platforms in Shaping Societal Morality and Ethics**

**Dr. Upasana Singh, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, India**

### **Abstract:**

The study of justice- both its execution and subversion- has long been a cornerstone of literature and cinema, serving as a mirror to societal values and ethical frameworks. In classical literature, particularly in the works of William Shakespeare, the concept of poetic justice is a prevalent theme where virtue is rewarded, and vice is punished, thereby restoring moral order. However, contemporary cinema has increasingly embraced narratives of reverse justice, where traditional moral codes are subverted, and the line between right and wrong becomes blurred. This shift raises significant questions about the impact these narratives have on younger audiences, especially Generation Z, popularly known as Gen. Z, whose worldview is being shaped by these stories. The present study explores the evolving narratives of justice, first time redefined during Renaissance for every member of the human race, in literature and cinema and their psychological impact on Gen. Z. Through the lens of traditional poetic justice in Shakespearean dramas such as *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *The Tempest*, where moral order is ultimately restored and wrongdoers face their just consequences. The discussion highlights the humanities' role in reinforcing ethical ideals and social norms. In contrast, the study examines the shift towards reverse justice in contemporary films like *Joker* and *The Batman* (2022) from Hollywood, and Bollywood blockbuster *Gangs of Wasseypur*. These films often depict worlds where moral degradation leads to success, and justice is subverted or delayed, challenging the audience's perception of morality and fairness. *The Batman* offers a gritty, morally ambiguous narrative where the line between heroism and vigilantism is blurred, reflecting modern societal complexities. The study will analyze how these contrasting depictions of justice shape the mindset of Gen. Z, potentially fostering cynicism and moral ambiguity. By integrating perspectives from both humanities and social sciences, the discussion will explore how these themes are disseminated and amplified in digital spaces, influencing young audiences. This interdisciplinary study aims to underscore the critical role of storytelling in shaping ethical frameworks and its significant impact on the moral compass of future generations. The paper seeks to bridge the gap between the timeless narratives of justice in classical literature and the

evolving depictions in contemporary cinema. By examining these themes through the dual lenses of humanities and social sciences, the paper will provide valuable insights into the ongoing dialogue between tradition and modernity, and its profound impact on the minds of the next generation.

**Keywords:** Digital Platform, Gen. Z, Narratives, Renaissance.

**Bio-note:** Dr. Upasana Singh is an Assistant professor in English at the Department of English, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, where she has been nurturing intellectual growth of young minds since 2015. Her academic journey is marked by notable achievements, including her Ph.D. from The National Institute of Technology (NIT), Kurukshetra with the thesis titled “Hemingway's Shakespeare: A Study in Intertextuality”. Dr. Upasana is an active contributor to the scholarly community, having presented more than 12 papers in International and National conferences, further enhancing discourse in her field. Notably, she served as a Resource Person in an International conference in collaboration with Director Higher education, Haryana in 2023, showcasing her expertise and leadership in academia. Dr. Upasana is one of the foundation members of The Shakespeare Association, India, with passion for literature promoting and exploring Shakespearean studies across India. Additionally, Dr. Upasana has made significant contributions to academic literature with over 10 papers published in prestigious International and National journals. Driven by her commitment to excellence, she continues to shape the future of English Studies through her research, teaching and scholarly endeavours.

## **Posthumanism and the Question of Human**

**Dr Geetha BJ, Professor & Head, Department of English Studies, Central University of Tamil Nadu, India**

### **Abstract:**

“Posthuman” and its on-going influence in the contemporary academia invites a re-definition on the notion of human in the context of recent scientific and bio-technological developments. Posthuman has become an umbrella term to include Posthumanism, transhumanism and new materialisms. Posthumanism, a second generation of postmodernism, is placed in a hybrid vision of humanity (cyborg of Donna Haraway) itself and can be seen as a radical critique of humanism and anthropocentrism. While the currents of other thoughts like transhumanism, antihumanism, and the notion of technologies of the self (Foucault) have become significant discussions in the posthumanist scenario. To the question of which human is the posthuman? It requires the idea of human to be reinscribed within the categories of sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia, ableism and the environment by destabilizing the limits and symbolic borders posed by it. Further, re-investigation of dualistic concepts such as human/animal, human/machine, human/non-human and the deconstruction of life/death, organic/synthetic, and, natural/artificial become integrated observations. Thus, the arrival of posthumanism indicates the reappraisal of what is human? But the challenge remains what is the singular model for human identity? It is clear that human identity requires a parallel approach in terms of analysis of traditional definition of humanity with a rigorously anthropocentric perspective to non- anthropocentric post-human perspectives. Humans and their humanity are historical and cultural constructs rather than transcendental concepts free from philosophical ideology and they therefore have to be placed within larger contexts like ecosystems, technology and evolution. This approach only becomes posthumanist when the human is no longer seen as the hero of greater attributions, but essentially prevails in a morphing stage within the evolution of complex life forms.

**Keywords:** Posthuman, Cyborg, Transhumanism, Technology, Philosophy.

**Reference:**

Andersson, Ingrid. "The subject in posthumanist theory: Retained rather than dethroned". *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol 54, issue 4, 2020, pp 395-403.

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Ferrando, Francesca. *Philosophical Posthumanism*. Bloomsbury Academy, London, 2019.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison*. New York:Pantheon Books, 1977.

Hayles, N. Katherine N. *How We Become Posthuman*. 74<sup>th</sup> ed., University of Chicago Press, 1999.

**Bio-note:**

Dr. B. J. Geetha is working as Professor & Head in the Department of English Studies at Central University of Tamilnadu. She has 24 years of teaching experience. She has published two books, edited one book and two journals, and published 66 research articles in the UGC CARE listed journals, peer-reviewed, and Scopus indexed journals with impact factor. She completed a UGC funded project and presented academic and research papers in the national and international conferences. She has been serving as editorial member in four peer-reviewed international journals. She visited countries like University of Ghana, Legon and Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia to present papers. She has delivered many invited talks as resource person in national and international conferences, workshops, FDP and Refresher courses. She has successfully guided 48 PG, 24 M.Phil and 3 Ph.D. scholars in the emerging and frontiers areas of research. She has been awarded as the Best Woman Researcher - a special jury award by the BODHI International journal along with the American College, Madurai in 2021 for her research contributions and conferred with the Eminent Academic Award among professors category in appreciation and recognition of outstanding performance in administration, teaching, research and publication on 24/8/24 by Root International Academic and Research Excellence Awards 2024.

**Unknown unknowns: What Cyberspace in the 1990s might tell us about the future of AI Policy and DH Research**

**Prof Claire Warwick, Professor of Digital Humanities, Department of English, Durham University, UK**

**Abstract:**

In this talk, I will discuss what we can learn about policy making in AI by looking back at the early days of the internet. Thirty years ago, cyberspace, as it was then called was heralded as a new technology that would change every aspect of our working, and social lives for the better. Some academics and journalists warned of future hazards, such as cyber addiction, or the death of physical community. But meanwhile, real harm was being caused online to those who suffered trolling, hate speech and abuse. But the victims of online harm in the 1990s were overwhelmingly female, and their experience went unnoticed by policy makers, who might otherwise have been alerted to potential dangers inherent in online environments.

I will argue that we find ourselves in an analogous situation with regard to AI, a technology which also promises to have profound effects on our lives. Journalists and scientists are already warning of its potential for future harm. But we currently have almost no information about the average person's knowledge or experience of AI, whether that person happens to live in the former coalmining villages of the North East of England, or a highly computationally networked city in India.

DH scholars are in an ideal position to address these questions, because of our interdisciplinary focus and dual concern with human experience and technical and computational phenomena. If, therefore, we want to understand the analogous harms, and benefits of AI, it is imperative that we develop our own early warning systems to alert us to future harms: we need, urgently, to find out more about how the average person experiences AI and take their views seriously or we risk missing signs of real danger which could affect us all in future.

**Bio-note:**

Claire Warwick is a Professor of Digital Humanities in the Department of English at Durham University. Her research is concerned with the way that digital resources, including artificial intelligence techniques, are used in the humanities and cultural heritage and in reading behaviour in physical and digital spaces. Her monograph on the history of cyberspace- *Digital Humanities and the Cyberspace Decade: A World Elsewhere*- will be published in October 2024.