

Department of Germanic and Romance Studies

University of Delhi, Delhi - 110007

CALL FOR PAPERS

Conflict and Literature: Narratives of struggle.

10-12 March 2022

“Man of my time: You killed again, as always, as your fathers killed...” Salvatore Quasimodo

Almost ten percent of the world’s population lives in a state of low intensity or full blown conflict either in a civil war or in situations where rival gangs fight each other and the local population. The youth is particularly ubiquitous in these conflict situations as we have seen recently in the case of the victorious Taliban entering the Afghan capital or the MS 13 street gangs of San Francisco. This phenomenon spans the entire XXth century and images of the Falangists during the Spanish Civil War, and Italian *Resistenza* come readily to mind. Indeed vigilante groups like Baader Meinhof in Germany, Red Brigades in Italy, terrorist organizations like ETA and drug cartels have traditionally relied on an infusion of youthful energy to swell their ranks. On the other hand, conflict situations are also marked by youth movements that defy authority in a bid to right injustice as is clear from the movements that fight fundamentalism, violence and police excesses.

Unsurprisingly, conflicts and wars fuel literature and other art forms. The depiction of war has resulted in new genres of literature and each of the movements detailed above from the war time memoirs to the narco novels of Latin America, Spain and *giallo* of Italy have been trendsetters. Often these narratives are an alternative to mainstream historical and political discourses as in the case of adolescent literary texts depicting Southern Cone dictatorships or graphic novels which deconstruct metanarratives with zany humor.

How does conflict manifest itself formally and aesthetically in a text? Does the inscription of conflict have wider ramifications for literature in that it contributes to an amplification of the idea of text. In this context we have only to remember the war chronicles of George Orwell or Ernest Hemingway or the documentary photographs of Danish Siddiqui as pictures say what a thousand words cannot.

We invite papers with an interdisciplinary approach to texts on war and also those that have challenged existing discourses in the fine arts, performing arts and film. Possible themes could include the texts of revolutions, caste and class wars, conflicts of the individual with society, the Self and the Other and all kinds of intragroup and inter group struggles.

Abstracts in around 250 words that include the paper title, academic affiliation, and contact details of the speaker should be submitted by 20th January 2022 to both the following email IDs of Professor Minni Sawhney, Head of the Department, head@grs.du.ac.in and Professor Ramesh Kumar, Coordinator of the seminar swamiramesh1@gmail.com.