Department of Germanic and Romance Studies
University of Delhi

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Islands in Literature, Literary Islands, Island
Literature 2 – 4 March 2023 (Online Mode)

"It (adventure) is like an island in life that determines its beginning and end".

George Simmel

In the literary imagination the island, a piece of land surrounded by water, (etymologically insula is "in" + "salt water") is portrayed geographically and/or as a lost paradise of fantasy where morality breaks down. We have only to remember the references to phrases such as "crossing the seven seas" where "adventure is an island" (Stephen Gilman). The island has thus become metaphorical. Through this metaphor a new space in fiction has been sought to be created with a singular ethics and politics. However it bears keeping in mind that island territories were initially often ideated as sites of incarceration and have triggered an imagination and literature of outlaw 'isolation and discipline" centres.

Islands are a mesh of geography, fantasy, aspiration and writing. Isolational and yet relational, the use of the island motif has led to the creation of new genres over the ages. The island is a bridge between the real and the imaginary, utopias and dystopias. The diaries of Christopher Columbus from the New World were derided as rubbish by Spanish intellectuals because the writing privileged what the Europeans considered magic and fiction to articulate future truths that the kings of Spain wanted to hear, an "island of style".

In contemporary times, islands are neither center nor periphery. Their geography gives them diverse roots. A curious melding of colonialism takes place with tradition hence they are not prone

to the binaries of post-colonial thought. The Caribbean for example has been termed a sea archipelago (Antonio Benítez Rojo) with no periphery nor a Centre and whose histories, societies and cultures are connected to the whole world. Fernando Ortiz has called the culture of the island as one of transculturation because Europeans, Amerindians and Africans first met in the Caribbean. These hierarchies do not align with any time and space: they are not stuck in the past but hearken to a future of mestizaje and bricolage. The violence of colonialism is integrated with difference and has led to the creation of "polyrhythmic" societies with self-contained and tough subjects where the center is incorporated with the local distant from the alienation of post-colonial subjects bent on "writing back to the Center".

In this conference we invite presentations that explore the relationship between the geography of islands with their colonial pasts and the literatures of the world.

Papers are invited but not limited to the following themes:

1. Imaginary and Metaphorical Islands in literature (Utopia, Isla Barataria, Lilliput, etc.)
2. Island literatures of European colonialism.
3. Floating Islands /Fixed Islands of Literature.
4. Cultural identity, créolité, métissage, archipelagicity and multiculturalism.
5. Questions of displacement, belongings, roots and insularity.
6. Questions of alienation, exile and marginality of literary islands and islands of literature.
7. History and memory of cultural, ethnic, racial and class conflicts in the islands in the colonial and postcolonial times.
8. Spatial, temporal, metaphoric and political otherness of islands.
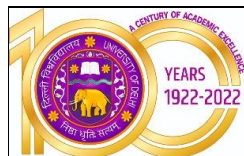

Organising Team

Prof. Minni Sawhney
Prof. Farida Irani
Dr. Rama Paul
Dr. Ena Panda

Programme:
Department of Germanic and Romance Studies, University of Delhi
27th International Conference (2-4 March 2023):
Islands in Literature, Literary Islands, Island Literature
All the slots are as per Indian Standard Time
Click on this link to join all the sessions of the Conference

Day 1: 2nd March 2023		
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	**Inaugural remarks**	Jyoti Sabharwal, Department of Germanic and Romance Studies
10:30 AM – 11:15 AM	**Keynote Address** Literary *Tidalectics*: Creating Alternative Spaces in Haiti and Sri Lanka	Judith Misrahi-Barak, English Department, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3, France
11:30 AM – 11:45 AM	**BREAK**	
Panel 1	**Chair: Jyoti Sabharwal**	
11:45 AM – 12:15 PM	"No man is an island": Climate Change and the Challenge to Insularity in Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island*	Ananya Dutta Gupta, Department of English,Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan
12:15 PM – 12:45 PM	The Hungry Tide: Rethinking Displacement, Belongings and Roots	Mousumi Paul, Department of Basic Science and Humanities, IEM, Kolkata
12:45 PM – 1:15 PM	Island Spatiality and Brave New World in Kurt Vonnegut's Galapagos: To map or not to map?	Nidhi Sharma, Department of English, SGND Khalsa College, University Of Delhi.
1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	**LUNCH BREAK**	
Panel : 2	**Island Indias and Archipelagic Memory** **Chair: Luca Raimondi**	
2:15 PM – 2:35 PM	Island India, Indian Karukera: Creolised Indianité in Ernest Moutoussamy's poetic archipelagos	Sandrine Soukaï, Gustave Eiffel University, Paris
2:35 PM – 2:55 PM	Archipelagic Memory and Cosmophilia in J. M. G. Le Clézio's Alma	Shivani Rajkomar, University of Mauritius
2:55 PM – 3:15 PM	Mauritius's Archipelagic consciousness: Remembering the Dependencies and Establishing Creolising Solidarities	Rosa Beunel, King's College London
3:30 PM – 3:45 PM	**BREAK**	
Panel 3	**Chair: Minni Sawhney**	
3:45 PM – 4:15 PM	Dreaming and Waking: The Anonymous Voices from Angel Island	Anindita Roy, Part time Teacher of Spanish, University of Delhi
4:15 PM – 4:45 PM	Language, Articulation and the Island: Re-reading Cultural Politics in Jean Rhys' Wide Sargasso Sea and J.M. Coetzee's Foe	Aisik Maiti, Postgraduate Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Bombay

Day 2: 3rd March 2023		
Panel 1	**Chair: Maneesha Taneja**	
10:30 AM – 11:00 AM	The Island of Lost Girls: Obligatory rejection of "Matrinormativity" in Manjula Padmanabhan's science fiction.	Java Singh, Independent Scholar
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Insular Geographies and Experimental Separatism in the Speculative Fictions of Padmanabhan and Mackintosh	Jahnavi Gupta Research Scholar, Dept. of English, University of Delhi
11:30 AM-12:00 PM	Dystopias and Migrant Memory: Reconstructing Utopic Island in Sea Prayer	Shalini Attri and Sudipta Sil, Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya, Khanpur Kalan, Sonipat
12:00 PM – 12:15 PM	**BREAK**	
Panel 2	**Chair: Ena Panda**	
12:15 PM – 12:45 PM	Exploring Corporeal Subjectivity in Caribbean Island Women's Narratives	Jubi C John, PhD Scholar, Department of English, Jamia Millia Islamia
12:45 PM – 1:15 PM	Identity and Alienation in Narratives of Ananda Devi	Nidhi Raisinghani Head, Department of European Languages, Literature and Culture Studies, University of Rajasthan,
1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	**LUNCH BREAK**	
Panel 3	**Chair: Sandrine Soukaï**	
2:15 PM – 2:35 PM	Archipelagic Modes of Reading and Writing in Amitav Ghosh's Gun Island	Luca Raimondi, King's College London
2:35 PM – 2:55 PM	Of Other Islands and New Worlds: Satyajit Ray's Professor Shonku and Geopolitical Reorientation in Postcolonial Science Fiction	Farha Noor, University of Heidelberg
2:55 PM – 3:15 PM	Towards an Archipelagic Poetics of Creole Bengal: Henry Derozio, Sonic Memory, and a Eurasian Modernity	Esha Sil, University of Helsinki
3:30 PM – 3:45 PM		
Panel 4	**Chair: Ramesh Kumar**	
3:45 PM – 4:15 PM	Duality and Individuality of Islands: Willow Springs in Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day*	Ananya Ghosh, (Research Scholar) and Yogini Satarkar, (Asstt. Professor), Dept. of English, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, SRTMU, Nanded, Maharashtra
4:15 PM – 4:45 PM	Representation of Majuli Island in Assam in Select Literature and Film	Shruti Sareen, Assistant Professor (contractual), Dept. of English, Jamia Millia Islamia

Day 3: 4th March 2023		
Panel 1	**Chair: Farida Irani**	
10:30 AM – 11:00 AM	Genre affinities: The School on an Island	Madhu Sahni CGS, JNU
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	Imagined and real spaces in Ari Gautier's *Le Thinnai*	Gitanjali Singh, Department of French Studies, Banaras Hindu University
11:30 AM – 11:45 AM	**BREAK**	
Panel 2	**Chair: Manmohan Singh**	
11:45 AM – 12:15 PM	The poetics of space in *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle*	Kalplata, Department of French and Francophone Studies, EFL-University
12:15 PM – 12:45 PM	Displacement and Colonialism in the Island of Prospero	Monisha Saxena, DAV PG College, Dehra Dun
12:45 PM – 1:15 PM	Island as Identity: Study of Robinson Crusoe	Debojyoti Dan, Naba Ballygunge Mahavidyalaya
1:15 PM – 2:15 PM	**LUNCH BREAK**	
Panel 3	**Chair: Rama Paul**	
2:15 PM – 2:45 PM	'One of the remotest islands on earth'? St. Helena and South African Memory	Maria Paola Guarducci, Università degli Studi Roma Tre, Francesca Terrenato, Sapienza, Università di Roma,
2:45 PM – 3:15 PM	Acculturation creating an Island: Representation of Acculturation in the Selected Works of Amara Lakhous	Parul Nagar, Research Scholar, CSLAS, JMI
3:15PM	Vote of Thanks	Rama Paul, DGRS, University of Delhi

Keynote Speaker: Judith Misrahi-Barak, Professor in Postcolonial Studies, English Dept, University Paul Valery Montpellier 3, France, Research Center EMMA, judith.misrahi-barak@univ-montp3.fr

Prof. Judith Misrahi-Barak, a former student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (Fontenay-aux-Roses), is Professor in Postcolonial Studies at University Paul Valéry Montpellier 3, France, where she teaches English and postcolonial literatures. Her prime areas of specialization are Caribbean and Indo- and Sino-Caribbean literatures in English, diaspora and migrant writing, as well as, more recently, Dalit literatures.

Her latest publications are a chapter on Edwidge Danticat's short stories (*Bloomsbury Handbook on Edwidge Danticat*, 2021); an article in a Special Issue of *The Caribbean Quarterly* on Sino-Caribbean literature (2021); *Kala pani Crossings: Revisiting 19th century Migrations from India's Perspective* (co-edited with Ashutosh Bhardwaj, Routledge, 2021); and *The Routledge Companion to Cinema and Caste in India* (co-edited with Joshil K. Abraham, Routledge, 2022).
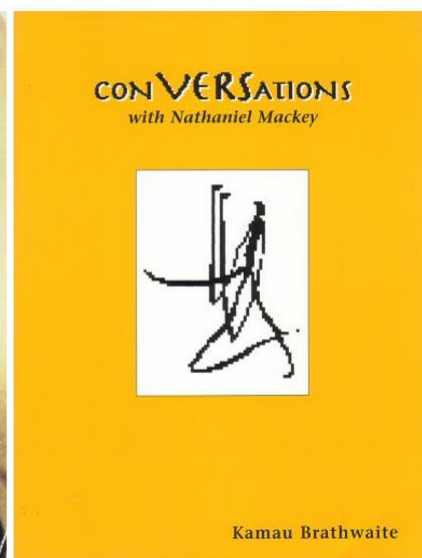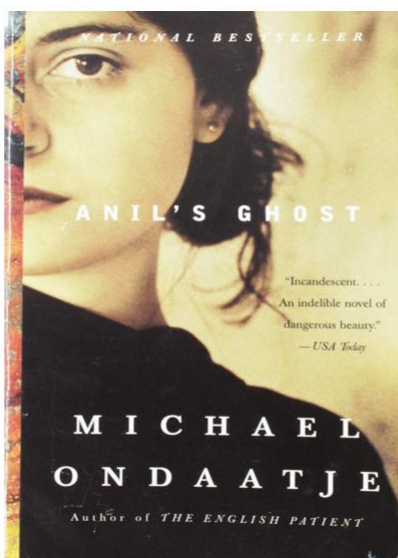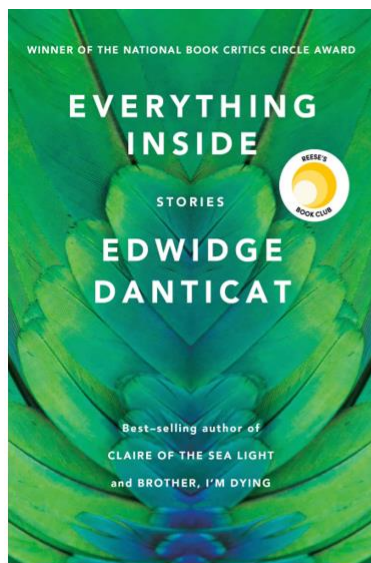
Her monograph in French entitled *Entre Atlantique et océan Indien: les voix de la Caraïbe anglophone* was published with Classiques Garnier (Paris, 2021).

She is General Editor of the series *PoCoPages* (Pulm, Montpellier).

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Literary *Tidalectics*: Creating Alternative Spaces in Haiti and Sri Lanka

 I would like to follow up on papers that were delivered at GRS in the past couple of years. At the 2021 Winter School I endeavoured to read displacement, diaspora and refugeehood with Edwidge Danticat and Shani Mootoo. At the 2022 international seminar on 'Conflict and Literature: Narratives of struggle', I examined Michael Ondaatje's novel *Anil's Ghost* through the lens of forensic anthropology, making the hypothesis that literary forensics *enables* a certain justice to be delivered to the living, in a symbolic court of law (*forensis*), thus allowing for a return to the world of the living. I also investigated the possibility that the narrative of the identification of the unidentified body of the dead in a war context could create a public space to be shared by all (*forum*).

This follow up talk will take us back to Edwidge Danticat's short story 'Without Inspection' and investigate in greater detail what was only suggested at the end of the previous paper on *Anil's Ghost*. I would like to offer the hypothesis that the literary *drifting* that is staged in both texts is the route the texts take to steer their readers from a continental approach to an archipelagic one. I will resort to EK Brathwaite's *tidalectics*, this oceanic worldview in which the world breathes with the rhythms of the sea, far from the Western terrestrial "obsession for fixity, assuredness, and appropriation" (Brathwaite1999, 34). I will analyse the impact of this literary *drifting*, taken in its literal and metaphorical meaning, to propose an interpretation of the performative dimension of the text. Danticat's and Ondaatje's literary *drifting* contributes, I would argue, to creating an alternative space and time for a certain form of care and repair to take place.

Brathwaite, Kamau. *ConVERSations with Nathaniel MacKey*. New York: We Press, 1999. Print.
Danticat, Edwidge. *Everything Inside*. New York: Knopf, 2019. E-book.
Ondaatje, Michael. (2000) 2001. *Anil's Ghost*. London: Macmillan Publishers.

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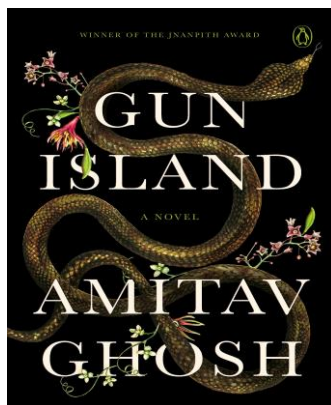
"No man is an island": Climate Change and the Challenge to Insularity in
Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island"*

Meditations XVII, the source of the epigraph in the title is John Donne's rousing assertion of his entanglement with all men as a primary, inalienable condition of existence. It underlines the intense preoccupation among inhabitants of the British Isles in early modern times with their geographical situatedness. Beginning with Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), where Utopus sets out on his project of social reconstruction by cutting off his newly founded kingdom from the mainland, insularity seems to have been a handy trope for engaging with the politics of isolation and connectedness. Shakespeare's John of Gaunt eulogises "this sceptr'd isle" in *Richard II*, II.i, while More projects Utopia as an improvement on the failed island state he inhabits. Taking cue from this early modern British demarcation of insularity as a space of duality, potentially both utopian and dystopian, I propose to study the changed politics of insularity in the recent post-colonial fiction of Amitav Ghosh.

It may seem arcane and anachronistic to propose a paper on Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* (2019) in particular with a preamble about the early modern British conceptualisation of insularity, but the rationale lies in Ghosh's own framing of his novel as a counter-narrative to Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, as a consciously researched post-colonial inversion of the trajectory of movement of people, merchandise, legends, and ideas projected by colonial historiography. At the heart of Ghosh's fictional thesis of a living past lie the two islands, the Sundarbans and Venice; and the project of dis-covering the prefigurations of contemporary migration from the Sundarbans to Venice in the early modern period, becomes Ghosh's blue print for disrupting human insularity and divisiveness in the face of extinction.

Reading Ghosh's critique of British and European colonialism as a contributor to the earth's endangerment will afford interesting insights into the history and the politics of the idea of an island. Early modern England's cultural self-awareness as an island was both a corollary of and impetus for its part in global exploration and colonisation. This is a useful premise for an enquiry into the conditions that give a fillip to insular or anti-insular thinking. As a world citizen born in Britain's largest colony, India, writing back to the Anglophone global North about the dangers of insularity in the language of an island-nation that is synonymous with imperial history, Ghosh places himself in a paradigmatic relation with the history of the discourse of the term in the same language.
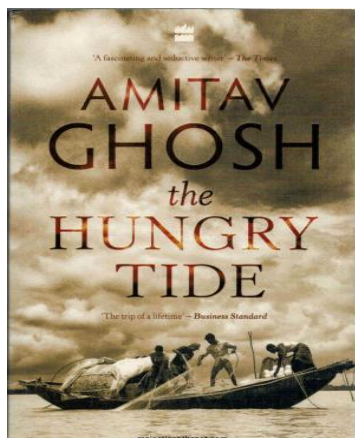
Mousumi Paul, Assistant Professor of IEM, Kolkata, Department of Basic Science and Humanities, **mousumi.paul@iemcal.com**

"The Hungry Tide: Rethinking Displacement, Belongings and Roots"

The Hungry Tide by Amitabh Ghosh presents a plethora of remarkable characters that come from various societal backgrounds and geographical locations. The fiction begins with Piya, a young marine biologist of Indian origin, yet brought up in America and Kania, a Delhi based interpreter; both are headed to Sundarbans to fulfill their professional and personal interests. Eventually they meet up people of the tide country and a sense of belongingness gets fostered through various incidents and actions. This paper aims to bring the issues of displacement, belongingness, identity and roots of selected characters. Kusum, a young girl who went away from Lusibari in search of her trafficked mother, finally landed in Dhanbad, gives voice to the sense of displacement and disorientation. The people who settled at Marichjhapi found their livelihood in the tide country and sought to build an alternative social structure for making their life better. Ghosh has complicated the issues of belonging even further. Kanai, a former resident of West Bengal, travelling to Canning and then to Lusibari, leaves behind comforts, certainties and conversing in a language that he has relegated to his past. Nirmal, Nilima, Horen, Fokir; all these characters are pivotal and the issues of displacement, belonging and roots are also reflected by them through various incidents.
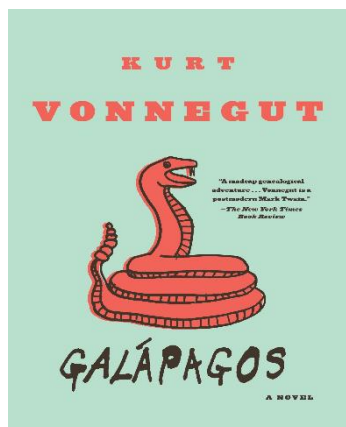
Nidhi Sharma, Assistant Professor, Department of English, SGND Khalsa College, University Of Delhi, **nidhisharma21@gmail.com**

Island Spatiality and Brave New World in Kurt Vonnegut's *Galapagos***: To map or not to map?**

Mark Monmonier famously wrote, "Not only is it easy to lie with maps, it's essential". Unlike all geographies that deal with lines, maps, scale and segments, fiction however remains liberated from such cartographic commitments. In postmodern geographies, alternate spaces lived and felt by the authors become exploratory since its physical extent is infused with social intent. In Galapagos, the titular islands existing with exact co-ordinates on the map become distinctive with its fictionality. Island spaces that are already ambiguous with their literary geography of colonial

possession, separation and transformation, further go on to problematize our geographical understanding of the maps with the presence of liminal spaces on them. While islands are projected as dream worlds, they also give a way to readers to be able to think 'with' them. This paper addresses a central question in literary cartographic readings as to "How to lie with maps?" The aim of the paper is to celebrate the places of simultaneity which challenge the limits of representation and description. This paper picks up threads from Robert Tally's concluding suggestions in his book on Spatiality where the author hints towards newer possibilities of engagement with other worldly spaces in literature. The novel *Galapagos* is a celebratory take on what literature can do to islands when geographers are confronted with the limits of its definition.

Panel: Island Indias and Archipelagic Memory

Presented by Luca Raimondi (King's College London) and Sandrine Soukaï (Gustave EiffelUniversity, Paris), luca.raimondi@kcl.ac.uk ; soukai.sandrine@gmail.com
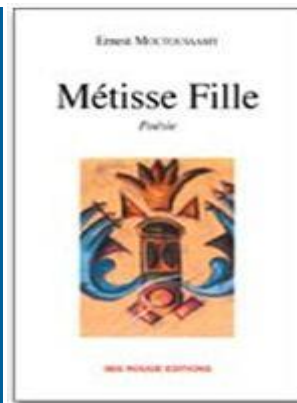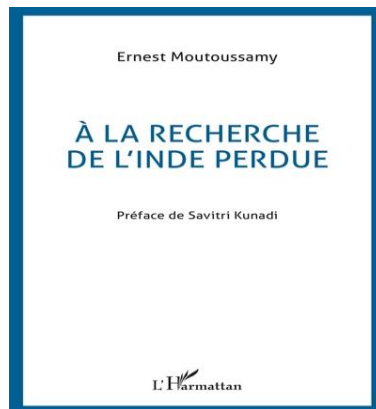
The proposed panel brings together a selection of papers drawing from the research that has gone into a forthcoming volume on literary engagements with what we term 'island Indias' and their 'archipelagic memory', co-edited by Ananya Jahanara Kabir, Luca Raimondi and Sandrine Soukaï. The papers constellate around islands in the Indian Ocean and Caribbean Sea,home to Indian diasporic populations created through indentured labour, and around the enclaves dotting the Indian coastline, shaped by competing European powers from the 16th century onwards. Our analysis of poems, novels, and short stories by Anglophone and Francophone authors who are invested in these islands and coastal zones links them through a non-territorial epistemology derived from theorisations of the archipelago as geo-cultural concept. We thereby dislodge the congruence of territorial and civilisational integrity associatedwith the idea of the 'Indian subcontinent' as a demarcated space and a distinct culture that is resolutely territorial, and argue instead for the memorialising impulse behind these imaginative investments in 'islanded' Indias open to the porosity of transoceanic connections.

The panel will be divided two sessions, with three papers each, examining texts that dialogue with archipelagic (de)constructions of Indianness through topological interest in real/fictional islands, subcontinental enclaves, and archipelagos. Ranging from Satyajit Ray's science fiction to Henry Derozio's 'Anglo-Indian' sonnets and Indo-Guadeloupean memory activist Ernest Moutoussamy's poetry, and spanning English, French, Bangla, and various Creoles, the papersradiate outwards from the Indian subcontinent while puncturing (sub)continentality through the privileging of fragments. This geographic and discursive move articulates our commitment to adopt a comparative approach to literature as cultural memory and to deterritorialise Indian studies while crossing disciplinary divisions of languages and imperial/national geographies.

 Dr Sandrine Soukaï (Gustave Eiffel University, Paris),

Island India, Indian Karukera: Creolised *Indianité* in Ernest Moutoussamy's poetic archipelagos

About 44,553 indentured Indians were transported to the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe between 1854 and 1889 to work on sugarcane plantations after the French 1848 abolition of slavery. Yet, compared to slavery, indenture has remained marginalised in collective public memory. Indo-Guadeloupean politician and writer Ernest Moutoussamy is among the few to have focused on that traumatic memory. I analyse his collections of poetry *Métisse Fille* (2001) and *A la Recherche de l'Inde perdue* (2004) as archipelagos. His poems interrelate memories and histories of slavery and indenture transculturally through filamentous networks of poetic tropes, images and rhythms which recur like "repeating islands" (Benitez Rojo 1985) within and across each collection of poetry. While each poem could appear to be an insulated and enclosed i(s)land-world, each collection is in fact also a world of islands (Ottmar Ette 1996) in which free verse and networks of poetic images tidalectically connect various poems, and memories, intermingle (pre)colonial and contemporary cultures as well as diverse languages - including Carib, French, Creole and Indian languages - to shape an Indian *Karukera* (Carib name for Guadeloupe) and a creolised *Indianité* defined not from a central single continental space but from the diasporic, metasporic, mobile and metamorphosing space of the Caribbean archipelago.

Dr Shivani Rajkomar (University of Mauritius)

Archipelagic Memory and Cosmophilia in J. M. G. Le Clézio's *Alma*

This paper posits that J. M. G. Le Clézio's novel *Alma* forges one meta-myth to subvert the ethnicisation of memory underpinned by separate myths of origins nurtured in multicultural Mauritius, and to redeem feelings of implication and the implication of memory in the trauma of the subaltern. This meta-myth harnesses the archipelagic to re-member ancestral displacement to the former plantation colony. The archipelagising of origins, memory and geography de-hierarchises these, dismantling fixed geopolitical 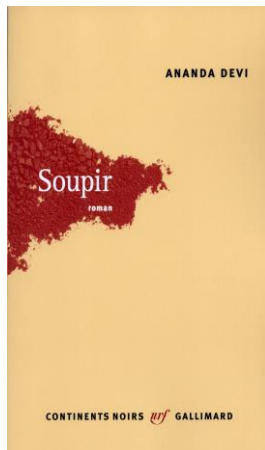understandings of identity and nationhood. France is depicted as implicated colonial metropolis; and India is inscribed, via the maroon of Malagasy origins, in a creole cultural mnemonic continuum that creolises it in diaspora and destabilises its implication in the ethnicisation of memory. I argue that driven by a reparative and reconciliatory impulse, Le Clézio's disobedient archipelagic memory creates philia across time, people and spaces in the creole cosmos of his meta-myth aspiring to be model of relation.
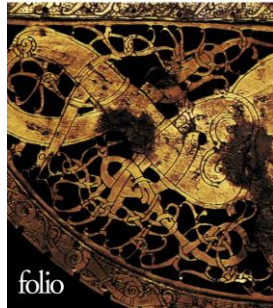
Dr Rosa Beunel (King's College London)

Mauritius's Archipelagic Consciousness: Remembering the Dependencies and

Establishing Creolising Solidarities

This paper explores J.M.G. Le Clézio's *Le Chercheur d'or* (1985) and Ananda Devi's *Soupir* (2002), two novels that are preoccupied with Indianness and are set in Rodrigues, a small, impoverished dependency of Mauritius inhabited by a predominantly African-descent population. ntral to Le Clezio's work is an enigmatic woman of mixed Creole and Indian descent, encountered by the narrator during a treasure hunt modelled on the adventures of the author's French ancestor. In Devi's novel, the struggle of a small community haunted by the memory of the slave trade is infused with the author's own subjectivity as an Indo-Mauritian woman whose work is deeply influenced by her ancestral culture. Exploring the conflicted multicultural landscape of the Mascarene islands, I will trace an archipelagic geography that connects Rodrigues with Mauritius via India, and I will interrogate the authors' ambivalent position as 'implicated subjects' (Rothberg) in the violent past of the Mauritian archipelago.

Dr. Anindita Roy. Part time Teacher of Spanish Language, University of Delhi.
Dreamimg and Waking: The Anonymous Voices from Angel Island,
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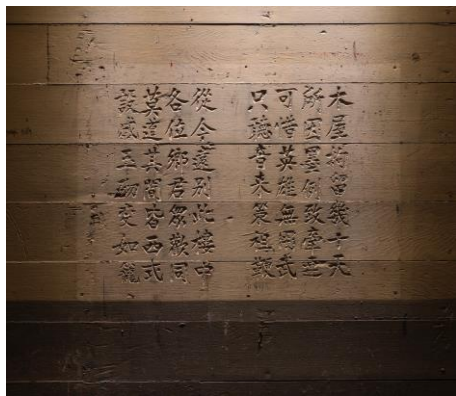
"No man is an Island"- the poet says. Though the history of human immigration all over the world utters how agony and despair turn the human being into islands. All Islands, as we know geographically and politically belong to any particular country. Necessarily surrounded by water, islands somehow enjoy a status of distance, a separation, an alienation from their so -called mainland. Thus, islands have been used as spaces for isolation, exile or banishment, as a space for 'others', especially for political is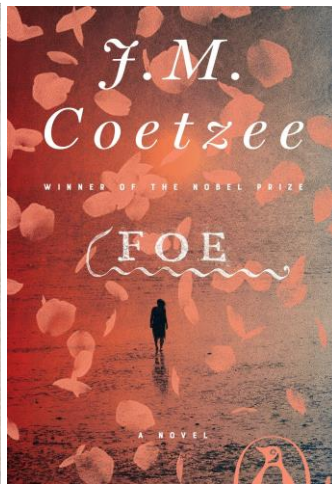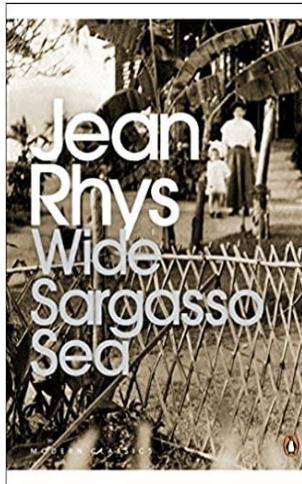olation. Situated in the San Francisco Bay, United States, Angel Island is one of those islands that was used for political reason. In the first few decades of 1900's, people from China were trying their luck to be emigrated to the United States. Upon their arrival, these people were detained on Angel Island, waiting for the approval or denial for their request to enter the mainland of the United States. They had to wait for weeks, months, even years, in the unhealthy and rammed place. But human minds find the way to open up their wounded hearts through the poems and inscriptions in their mother tongue. Also, the Japanese and the Koreans, left their insular experiences in the same way in this very island. These agonized creations are the intra-history of the South Asian diaspora of that time. This article will discuss those anonymous voices of suffering, agony of displacement, despair and marginality as well as the memory that plays a vital role here in their poems. This article also focuses on the 'American Dreams', written on the wooden walls of the shabby detention barracks of Angel Island.

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Language, Articulation and the Island: Re-reading Cultural Politics in Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* and J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*

The island as a space within Eurocentric textual traditions has been a site of cultural translation, not only in the evident configurations of power between the categories of centre and periphery, but also suggesting how language and the politics of coloniality are connected. Stephanides writes, "The virtual spaces of islands are susceptible to translatability …, serving as sites of mediation between cultures." Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Coetzee's *Foe* have been discussed texts within critical discourses identifying how the space of the island can be connected to larger concerns of coloniality and the politics of culture. Both the texts not only question and shed light on cultural politics of language but also provide, or can provide, a discursive counterspace to the ideological structures of coloniality, one that emerges from a rewriting of spatial otherness(es). The present paper will attempt to decode some of the implications of how language, creolization and (un-)translatability work within the spatial parameters of the two novels. Along with close readings from the texts looking at the politics of linguistic/ cultural transaction (and therefore at creolization and cross-cultural grammars), the paper will also read how the nuances of intertextuality in the novels reflect these concerns.

Stephanides, Stephanos. *Islands, Literature, and Cultural Translatability*. 1 Jan. 2008, journals.openedition.org/transtexts/212.
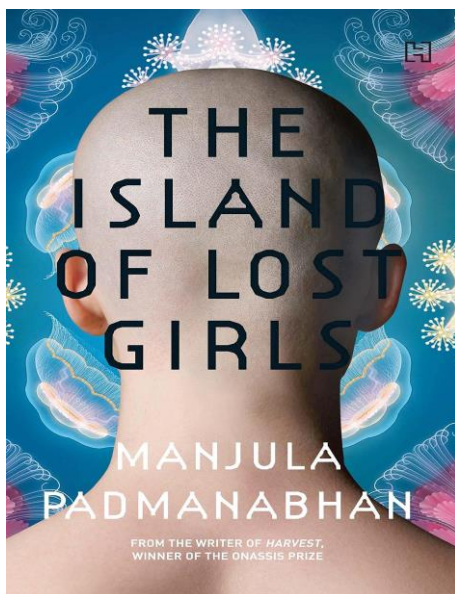
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**The Island of Lost Girls: Obligatory rejection of "Matrinormativity" in Manjula Padmanabhan's science fiction.**

Manjula Padmanabhan's second novel in the Meiji Saga, *The Island of Lost Girls* depicts a society where all female children are "ritually deflowered immediately after birth." When they grow up, the girls are segregated into two groups–feems and damaged. 'Feems' provide sex services to a select group of men and are repeatedly subject to violence. After prolonged brutality, they become too damaged to be socially useful. The damaged girls, who are in amuch greater number than the feems, are given shelter in several small islands. Each island is headed by a female

Mentor, who uses budgeted funds to run the island and pay for the damaged girls whom she wants to protect from further violence.

In a society where marriage and biological reproduction are extinct, women are not confined by the double bind of 'matri-normativity.' Marriage has been outmoded and maternity has been rendered obsolete by advancements in cloning. However, on the mainland, the obligatory rejection of matri-normativity is not enough to free women from brutal exploitation. This begs the question whether in a world where marriage is extinct, and motherhood is obsolete is the question of matri-normativity irrelevant?

The paper carries out a close reading of the spatial logic of the islands to explicate how Padmanabhan reinterprets matri-normativity in a world devoid of marriage and motherhood. In the real world, a sense of permanence and stationariness are at the root of matri-normativity. Marriage is entered into with expectations of permanency. Motherhood is generally seen as a progression in the 'settled' status of the woman. The paper aims to explore Padmanabhan's island habitats to lay open their potential as solutions for the root problems of matri-normativity.

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Insular Geographies and Experimental Separatism in the Speculative Fictions of Padmanabhan and Mackintosh
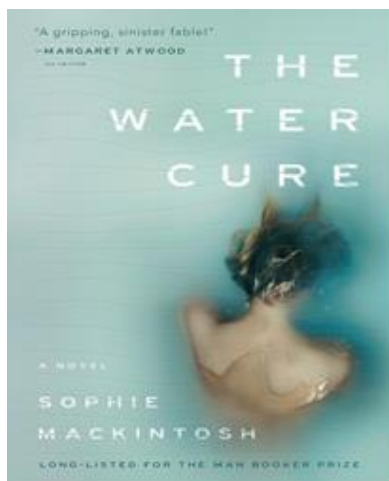
Marilyn Frye in "Some Reflections on Separatism and Power" argues that men have a parasitic relationship with women due to their near-absolute access to women and their labour. Therefore, feminist politics, she concludes, must have an aspect of separation and "no-saying" for the assumption of power. Speculative fiction has proved conducive to the exploration of feminist separatist politics, providing a *textual space* to imagine a broad-spectrum of alternate values and communities. These thought experiments are also frequently located in a separate fictional *geographical space*, whether a different country or a completely different planet.

How far removed these fictional terraforms, in conception and distance, are from familiar geography often is a measure of the separation of the fictional communities and their politics. Absolute separateness in the form of female exclusive "utopias," for instance, is often hosted in fantastical and far-off locales—Mary E. Bradley Lane's *Mizora* (1890) is set in the centre of the Earth and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland* (1915) exists in an Eden-like manicured "enormous garden."

Islands, with their geographic and cultural insularity, have been a popular geography in such imaginaries of a separate and different political and communal order, providing an anchor in reality and possibility to, both, utopias and dystopias. Sophie Mackintosh in her *The Water Cure* (2018) and Manjula Padmanabhan in *The Island of Lost Girls* (2015) are two twenty-first-century speculative fictions that carve out a separate space for women and other minorities on islands. This paper proposes to closely examine how the geographical setting colours and enables the ideology and practice in both texts. The focal enquiry would be how the physical separateness of the island geography plays a part in the exploration of feminist ideological separateness here.

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Dystopias and Migrant Memory: Reconstructing Utopic Island in *Sea Prayer*
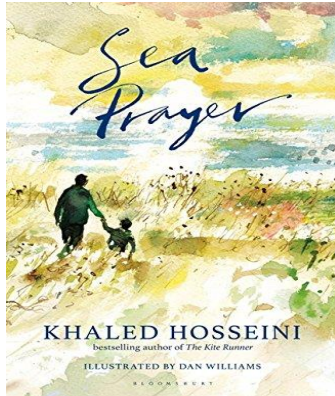

Sea Prayer as the novel goes narrating and thus telling the tales of pain of forcible relocation which is actually a dislocation, graphically. The brush paints the pains and tears, insecurity and uncertainty through the simple colors and strokes. The present paper analyses here the different components of storytelling through cherishing memories, the lexis and enunciation that basically shows the personal and communal denunciation of people from a disturbed political background. This study emphasizes on memory, its construction and reconstruction through various events and experiences. It tries to find an address, therefore a stability, of the migrated memory within this globe.

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Exploring Corporeal Subjectivity in Caribbean Island Women's Narratives

With the term 'island women' this research is targeting the moment of indenture (1849-1917)
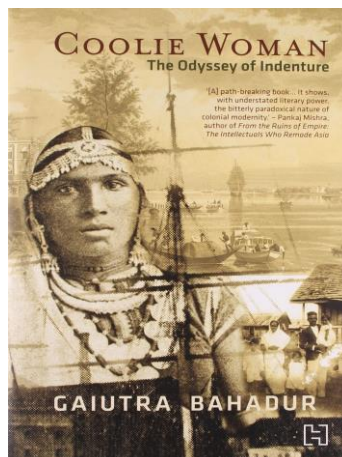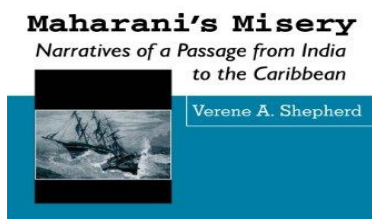
and aims to explore the narratives of women who have travelled and migrated through the ocean. While looking at Indo-Caribbean women's literature, the relationship with sea travel has been termed as jahaji-bahin. Loosely translated as sisters on the ship, Brinda Mehta explains jahaji-bahin as a consciousness, one which has given indentured women a shared humanity. This consciousness has at its centre the experience of being on the ship and leaving the homeland forever. She talks about the 'jahaj' as both the space of mobility and marginality.

The abstract then aims to look at the corporeal experiences of women who have conducted transoceanic journeys and the ones who reside near waters bodies like an island. The ubiquity of the sea resists a singular notion of belonging or attachment, dispersing the subject, unsettling it, imposing a fluid and continuous state of being as Sam Trubridge explicates and thus the relationship between the sea and the subject with reference to the body needs to be investigated. With texts like Gaiutra Bahadur's *Coolie Women: The Odyssey of Indenture* and Verene Shepherd's *Maharani's Misery: Narratives of a Passage from India to the Caribbean*, the abstract seeks to uncover the body politics witnessed in Coolie women's narratives, how the intersection of caste and class finds interaction within the fluid space of the ocean and then the island, whether the plantation economy with its dynamic population of

men and women gave the latter any sexual agency, and finally the paper will also focus on the complexities involved in the 'choice' to emigrate.

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Identity and Alienation in Narratives of Ananda Devi
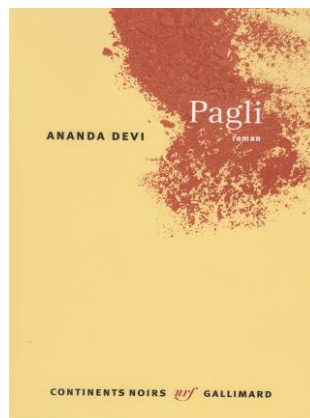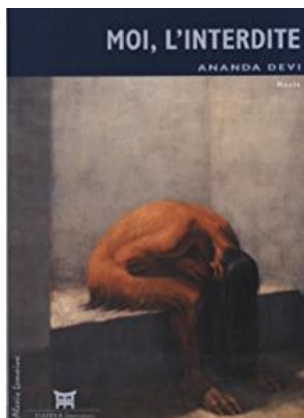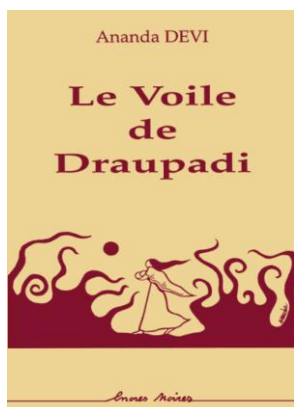
According to Stuart Hall, identity is one of the most controversial term today. In his book entitled "*Questions of Cultural Identity*", the question on *"Who needs identity"* lies at the heart. Hall says that identity is a key concept in the literary world especially in post colonial literatures where the quest for identity is the main preoccupation. In contemporary Mauritian literature, the question of identity is represented in a rich and complex melange of linguistic and cultural influences. The population of Mauritius is primarily composed of Indian indentured labourers, African and Malagasy slaves, Chinese traders, French colonial settlers, and economic migrants from across the globe This métissage of people from diverse ethnic background explains the pluralism of cultures, traditions, languages and customs in the Mauritian society. Despite its small size and large distance from the rest of the world, this island counts a variety of languages, French, English, Creole, Hindi, Tamoul etc

The question of identity and alienation occupies a central place in the narratives of Ananda Devi, a literary prolific and a Mauritian born francophone writer. Born in Trois-Boutiques, Mauritius, in a family of Indian origin, she is considered one of the major figures of the Indian Ocean literature. She has written several literary texts, including short stories, novels, poetry and essays. Devi gives voice to her female characters so that they can surpass the racial, cultural, ethnic and sexual barriers not through confrontation, but through discovery and search of one's identity in the society. Through the study of the three novels of Ananda Devi, *Le Voile de Draupadi, Moi l'Interdite and Pagli,* the present article proposes to examine closely the characters in the novels of Devi, who live in a stigmatised world where their identities are jeopardised by the society leading to their alienation. This leads us to raise a fierce stream of questions which we propose to examine in the present study. How does a literary text address this issue of identity crisis and narrate their stories of alienation? What are means adopted by these people to find their place in the society?

Dr Luca Raimondi, King's College London

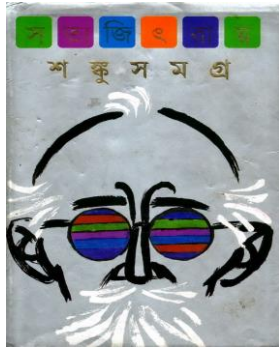**Archipelagic Modes of Reading and Writing in Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island***

Amitav Ghosh's novel *Gun Island* (2019) unfolds across a terraqueous string of real and imaginary places, from the tidal Sundarbans Forest to the Venetian lagoon, tracing connective filaments of errancy and migration, belonging and becoming. Focusing on the

vectoral geographies of the novel, the intertextual dynamics that curl the story outwards, and the mise- en-abyme structure that bends it inwards and reverberates in the motif of the 'island within an island', in my essay I deploy the archipelago as the model for an anti-essentialist conception of culture and identity, and examine how Ghosh's text articulates formally an archipelagic approach to the history and cultural memory of India (and beyond). At the same time, I read the narrator's attempts to unravel the Bonduki Sadagar legend as an allegory for an archipelagic reading method that relies on polyglossia, trace-thinking, and an understanding of space as 'bhuta', an incarnation of the principle of relation.

Dr Farha Noor, University of Heidelberg

Of Other Islands and New Worlds: Satyajit Ray's Professor Shonku and Geopolitical Reorientation in Postcolonial Science Fiction

India's celebrated film-maker, illustrator and writer Satyajit Ray created the mad scientist character, Professor Shonku, in a series of Bengali science-fiction short stories for young readers. Serially published from 1961 onwards, the narratives are presented retrospectively, through a reading of Shonku's indestructible diaries. Shonku's character as an Indian scientist emerges dialogically through interactions with his European colleagues during their shared adventures. I focus on the sites of these interactions: real as well as imagined geopolitical spaces, in particular, islands located in various oceans and seas across the globe. Mobilising archipelagic theory, I explicate Shonku's portrayal of these islands as heterotopic and heterochronic spaces of dreams and deviations. The recurrent motif of elusive islands in Shonku's diaries then emerges as the fragmented terrain on which the struggle between a colonised identity and Bengali 'sub-imperialist delusions' (Sudipta Kaviraj, *The Invention of Private Life*, 2015) is played out.

Dr Esha Sil, University of Helsinki

Towards an Archipelagic Poetics of Creole Bengal: Henry Derozio, Sonic Memory, and a Eurasian Modernity

This paper examines the archipelagic space-time of the nineteenth-century Eurasian modern via the sonic memory of what scholarship is now identifying as 'creole Bengal'. It scrutinises the vocal and mnemonic imaginaries underpinning the work of Henry Derozio (1809-1831), a Calcutta-based poet and intellectual of mixed Portuguese and Anglo-Indian ancestry. Deploying a conceptual apparatus interspersing archipelagic epistemes with relevant theories of sound, I re-evaluate Derozio's allusive 'creole' discourse, to delineate how its memorial palimpsests implicitly challenge the normative prevalence of the 'British' versus 'Indian' binary – a binary which has for a long time characterized the colonial historiography of Bengal and India, marginalizing India's other European cross-cultural encounters, as well as the interstitial narratives of those who occupied a 'space between

"Indian" and "British"'. My analysis establishes how the littoral and transoceanic vectors of Derozio's submerged Lusophone nostalgia mobilise the dense intercultural synergies of the European *comptoirs* along the Hooghly River in Bengal, to inaugurate an alternative archipelagic poetics ofremembering their creolised legacies.

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Duality and Individuality of Islands: Willow Springs in Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day*

Islands are characterised by their insularity, often depicting them as subordinate spaces due to their separation from the mainland. However, spaces in literature are performative, often playing diverse roles. African American literature strives to subvert all ideas of subordination regarding races, religions, traditions and cultural practices. Creation of fictional island spaces enables authors with the liberty to depict such spaces as empowered and having agency in spite of their physical subordination. Magic realism, used as a tool, aids in this subversion further by dispersing magical elements within reality and producing magic realist spaces. Gloria Naylor creates such a space in her work *Mama Day* through the island of Willow Springs, a fictional landmass situated off the coast of Georgia and South Carolina but neither under jurisdiction of either state nor displayed on any map, giving it both legal and geographical autonomy and hence, authority. Willow Springs, like a character, expresses the story of resistance and individuality by opposing the state bodies that constantly try to impose authority on the island by trying to locate it on a map, enforcing jurisdictions of the neighbouring US states, and ultimately by intending to rule the island with western ways of governance. This paper investigates the duality of fictional spaces that are magical and real at once and how these spaces use magic woven into reality to subvert the colonial and racial hegemony and create narratives of authority, autonomy and resistance.
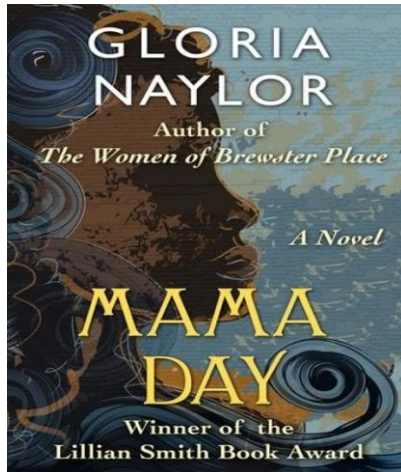
Dr Shruti Sareen, Assistant Professor (contractual), Dept of English, Jamia Millia Islamia, shrutanne.ipcollege@gmail.com
Representation of Majuli Island in Assam in Select Literature and Film

The paper intends to explore the depiction of Majuli island in a collection of short stories, *My Island, My Majuli* by Monika Rauth, the film *Bornodi Bhotiai* directed by Anupam Kaushik Borah, and a short documentary *The Untold Majuli* directed by Vishal P. Chaliha.

The Majuli island in Assam is the largest river island in the world. A couple of features make it unique. Firstly, even though it is a one-and-a-half-hours ferry ride away from the mainland, there has been no bridge connecting Majuli to the rest of Assam all these years. This has resulted in an insular and yet pristine atmosphere in Majuli. It has not yet been spoilt by pollution and environmental degradation. Secondly, it is known as the cultural capital of Assam, partly because of a strong presence of tribal culture, and partly because it became the hub of the Vaishnav monasteries or xattras (sattras) set up by Srimanta Sankardeva in the 16th-17th centuries. Srimanta Sankardeva, besides being a religious and social reformer, made immense contribution in the fields of music, dance, and other arts, which have consistently been developed and practised in, the monasteries. Thirdly, Majuli is unique in that fact that being a river island, it faces damage due to floods and erosion and the island has rapidly been shrinking and disappearing because of these reasons so its very existence is under threat. There is a development discourse which wants to build a bridge to Majuli which would be beneficial in a variety of ways, but there is also a concomitant fear of the culture, purity and uniqueness of the island being eroded away.

Although islands are secluded and isolated places, it is quite remarkable that till date no bridge has connected the mainland to Majuli, despite it being a river island. It is also remarkable that while it is known as the cultural capital of Assam, its fate is so uncertain that we do not even know how long it will be in existence. We often have romanticised notions of life on an island, precisely because of their remoteness, boundedness, and scenic beauty. However, in this process, we tend to forget the real challenges that people face here in everyday life. How different is it to live on an island as compared to living on the mainland? How is everyday life lived in Majuli in its specificity, what are the rhythms of lives, what are the spatial practices through which people navigate space, how do people create their own 'stories'? These are some of the questions my paper proposes to address through an exploration of the aforementioned literary and audio-visual texts.

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**Genre affinities: The School on an Island**

In this paper I shall focus on the centrality of an island for the execution of a pedagogical idea. Islands suggest freedom, nonconformity, isolation, imprisonment, idealism, discipline. The paradoxical representation of the world of islands in literary texts finds an echo in another literary genre, that of the school novel. The water surrounding islands is the boundary that separates them from the 'rest of the world'. Schools too are associated with a similar paradoxical lexis. They exist as part of a society and yet are separated from it. In William Golding's

1954 novel 'Lord of the Flies' a group of young schoolboys are marooned on an island with disastrous consequences. Unlike Golding's novel in Sandra Lüpkes 2020 novel 'Die Schule am Meer' (*The school by the sea*), children are not left alone to watch over themselves, but here we have teachers and islanders, a fully functional society. Lüpkes explores the history of a reform school on the island of Juist in the closing years of Germany's engagement with democracy and the beginning of National Socialism. The genre of the island novel collaborates easily with the school novel as both demand an isolated spatial context. The story of this reform school at Jusit is presented as a place of escape and experiment, it is a place that a group of teachers and students hope to find shelter from the increasingly alarming situation in schools in Germany.

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**Imagined and real spaces in Ari Gautier's *Le Thinnai***
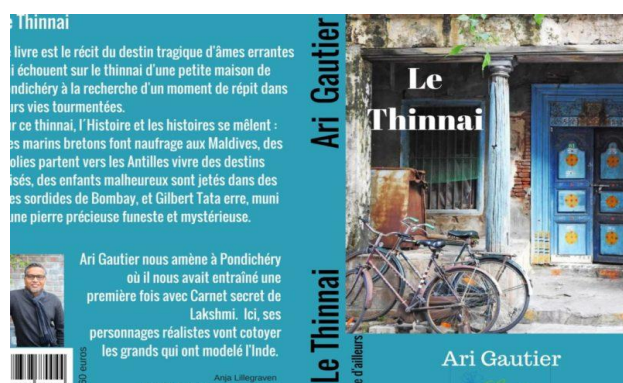
Puducherry formerly known as *Pondicherry* remains a historic city of cultural and social importance in the down south region of India where past and present intermingle thanks to the spaces found within the city. These spaces seek to tell a history or histories which is at times missing from the mainstream history of India or finds at best a place in the history books as a footnote. In *Le Thinnai*, Ari Gautier, francophone writer of Indian origin, shares with us an interesting take on the colonial and pre-colonial history of Pondicherry through the spaces found within the city. This fictional tale weaves a narrative where historical facts blend well with the imagination of the author. JN Street, white town, black town, Padmini Nagar and many more such places found within the borders of this city have stood the test of time and are now termed as heritage sites. In 1954 when Pondicherry gained its independence from French colonial rule, the then PM Jawahar Lal Nehru stated in his famous speech at the townhall of *Pondicherry* that he wanted *Pondicherry* to remain "a window of France on India". However, Ari Gautier in this novel takes a different turn on this Europeanised representation of the city and gives it the much-needed ethnic representation that of the thinnai (veranda) which can be found in the title of the novel itself. This paper would attempt to explore and decode the rapport that exists between the people and the real/imagined spaces of the city. Pondichery itself serves as a junction and meeting point of cultures, identities, class boundaries and most importantly history/ies in Ari Gautier's *Le thinnai*. The paper would also attempt to highlight the importance of *le thinnai* over the culturally popular term used in the context of Podicherry *the French window*. The thinnai suits better as a space and symbolic representation of the city of Pondicherry in the postcolonial interactions.

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**The poetics of space in *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle***
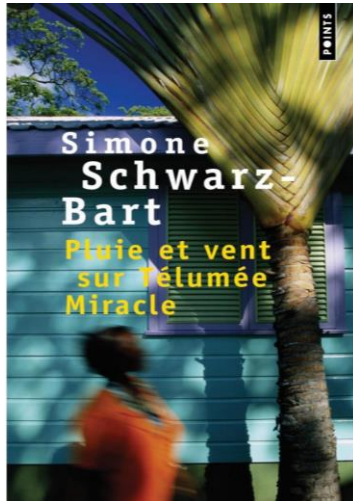
Published in 1972, *Pluie et vent sur Télumée Miracle* is a novel written by Simone Schwarz-Bart, a French-speaking writer and feminist from the Guadeloupe islands in the eastern Caribbean Sea. This novel narrates the story of four generations of Guadeloupean women, the first is the great-grandmother, whose name is Minerve, the second is the grandmother Toussine nicknamed "Queen", the third is the mother of Telumée, Victoire and the fourth is "Télumée" renamed as Télumée Miracle. Through her novel, the author recognizes and integrates the black and alienated women of Guadeloupe into the mainstream. Telumée herself represents the Caribbean Island country with extraordinary folkloric wisdom, knowledge of magic and healing, and power over reality and destiny. Through this power, she finds her freedom, dives into the journey of self-discovery and summons her energy to pursue and affirm her presence in her country. She is looking for her identity not outside but inside her island, a space surrounded and protected by water; an element that reflects her feminine self. In this "little garden", *Télumée* becomes a legend and gains the nickname "Miracle" when she miraculously cures her sick daughter. *Télumée's* self-discovery in the spatial realm of the island is a search for the Caribbean self that is lost in history. This paper is interested in exploring the many metaphorical images that signify Guadeloupean women's knowledge, strength, and courage that are formulated within the juxtaposed presence of land and water. This paper also reads the folkloric poetry of "feminine" silence and perseverance of a Guadeloupian woman that is born when two spaces meet, the land and water.

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Displacement and Colonialism in the Island of Prospero

No other type of territory has been so affected by colonial enterprises as islands. They were the first to be colonized in the European Age of Discovery. With time, these island spaces were used to explore and create bridges between the real and the imaginary. The main objective of this writing is to highlight the cultural legacy of colonialism. This is also to make the readers aware of the human consequences of external control and economic exploitation of native people. It studies the colonial and post colonial interpretations of Shakespeare's well known play *The Tempest*.
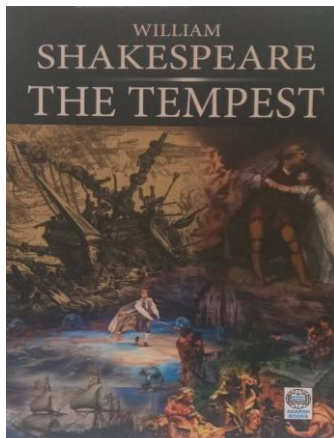
Post-colonial literature often addresses the problems of displacement, racism and belonging that accompany colonisation. It examines the social and political power relationships that sustain colonialism and neo-colonialism, including the social, political and cultural narratives surrounding the colonizer and the colonized. Post-colonial readings interrogate the processes, values and results of colonialism. We can learn about this through reading the texts produced by the colonizers. Post-colonial writings such as *The Tempest* shock us with their depiction of race, gender and ethnicity which are out of tune with our current ways of thinking. William Shakespeare's last play, *The Tempest* can be interpreted in

post-colonial perspective. The plot is based in an island and the description of it seems more significant as it pertains to colonies, which had been colonized at the time when the play was written. The drama revolves around how the colonizers captured the land of the natives and how they controlled the native people (especially Caliban), their tradition and culture.

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Island as Identity: Study of Robinson Crusoe

The island itself has symbolic significance because it is the physical means which changed Crusoe to stop wandering (Butler 99). The confinement found on the island is what is mostly responsible for the growth in which took place within Crusoe. "By acquiring a sense of place, (he) also established a sense of self" (Butler 99). This, again, illustrates the dramatic change
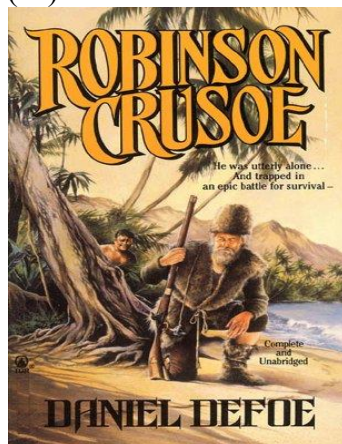
in character that has taken place within Crusoe over the course of his "adventure". Some see this "solitude as the universal state of man" (Watt 55) and in the case of Robinson Crusoe, it was this solitude that essentially changed his whole psyche and made him less of a wanderer, both spiritually and physically, for he found faith in God and no longer was able to aimlessly stray due to the confinement on the island.

When we look at the territory of the island in Crusoe's consciousness we see a kind of deterritorialization. Deterritorialization or as J.A.Scholte prefers to characterize it as a spread of supra-territoriality (Scholte 15-17) is what defines the space in memory which is differed and deffered as political borders marks the Derridean 'différance'. Différ*a*nce is the difference that shatters the cult of identity and the dominance of Self over Other; it means that there is no origin (originary unit). *Différer* [to differ] is to not be identical. (*Writing and Difference*, 1-5). As the border is refused by Crusoevian self, the Islander Robinson tries and exist in the realm of the Lacanian 'Real Order', as it is a realm outside language, and which escapes signification. But their existence reconfigures geography so that social space is no longer wholly mapped in terms of territorial places, territorial distances and territorial borders. The 'political écritures' ensure that the newspapers are in disciplined linearity to celebrate the self in global and local legality of borders. Borders write themselves as legal hegemony become inseparable with executive and legislature.

In case of Robinson the centrifugal pull of home is countered by centripetal force of island that created a borderless identity in epistemic framework of the film. In quest of a space of self, Robinson searched for 'I' outside the parameter of grammar. We have a classical article of Benveniste, in which he shows that the personal pronoun " I" cannot be defined outside of the linguistic reality in which it manifests itself. Besides, every time the present pronoun " I" is used it implies on the part of its user a dédoublement. To quote from Benveniste:

> *Je* ne peut être défini qu'en termes de 'locution,' non en termes d'objets, comme l'est un signe nominal. *Je* signifie 'la personne qui énonce la présente instance de discours contenant *je*.' Instance unique per définition, et valable seulement dans son unicité. .... .Mais, parallèlement, c'est aussi en tant qu'instance de forme *je* qu'il doit être pris; la forme *je* n'a d'existence linguistique que dans l'acte de parole qui la profère. II y a donc, dans ce procès, une double in stance conjuguée: instance de *je* comme réfèrent, et instance de discours contenant *je*, comme réfère. (Eugenio Donato 557)

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'One of the remotest islands on earth'? St. Helena and South African Memory

The Southern routes along which enslaved people were moved across the Indian and Atlantic Oceans are particularly relevant for the history of South Africa and its mixed communities. In a massively catastrophic framework, some prisoners managed to escape from slave ships and found shelter in St. Helena, a small volcanic island less than 2.000 kilometres west of the African coast. A place of resistance since the Sixteenth century, St. Helena's history is nonetheless largely told from a Western perspective according to which it was "discovered" and exploited by Europeans (Portuguese, Dutch, British explorers and traders) for whom it played the part of a strategic stop-over and/or settlement for centuries. Above all, the island is renown for being the site of Napoleon's exile (1815) and death (1821). There is a different tale, though, about St. Helena, where rebellious people such as the Zulu king Dinuzulu were banished, or prisoners during the Anglo-Boer wars were kept. Also, the descendants of freed slaves and indentured labourers often migrated from the island to South Africa. Whole sections of St. Helena's history are generally ignored or undermined while the place is still presented today in exotic terms on touristic websites focussing on the beautiful landscape, thereby erasing the complex stratification of its past: "St Helena Island is one of the remotest Islands on Earth. It is a subtropical paradise where the mountainous terrain and micro-climates create an astounding diversity of landscapes…". In our talk we will outline St. Helena's multiple stories departing from a choice of historical and literary sources, and discussing in particular the private and local versions of the island's past as they come through in South African contemporary culture and literature in English and Afrikaans.

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Acculturation creating an Island: Representation of Acculturation in the Selected Works of Amara Lakhous
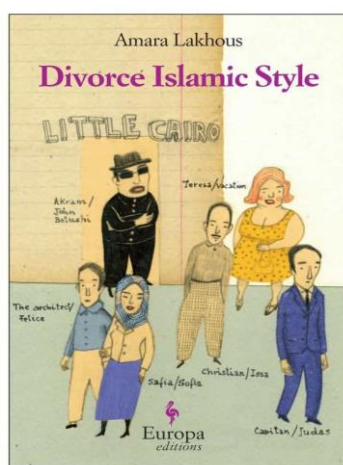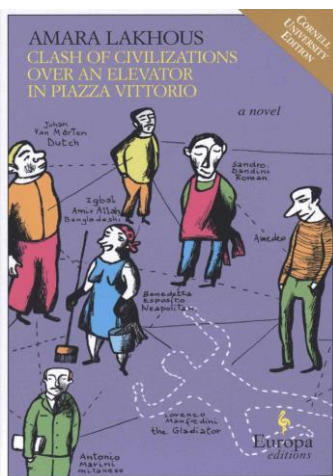
Acculturation is a dynamic process of social, psychological, and cultural changes in which an immigrant learns, adjusts, and regulates according to the new cultural domain. Along with this adaptation, the immigrants also retain their native culture in the hostland. Acculturation is about learning how to keep on one's own culture while interacting with the other cultures. It is like a salad-bowled concept that everything stays independent, but it all mingles together, and enhances each other.

Amara Lakhous in two of his novels – *Clash of Civilizations Over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio* and *Divorce Islamic Style* – portrays that immigrants who are trying to assimilate

with the culture of the hostland while preserving their native cultures often result in the conflict between cultures. Such conflict provokes problematic status quo that usually has adverse consequences like homesickness, alienation, double-identity, anxiety in the lives of immigrants in the host-country. These consequences are aggravated by the prevailing socio-economic and political discrimination that are commonly faced by the immigrants. Hence, even if immigrants want to leave the past behind and embrace the culture of hostland, then there are various factors preclude immigrants from integrating into the mainstream culture. After being isolated in the hostland, immigrants create their own space like an island – a specific space in Rome made by Muslim immigrants who were unable to integrate in the culture of hostland. This island of immigrants in Rome gives them sense of security and belongingness.

This paper tends to analyze the struggle faced by immigrants due to the cultural, traditional, and linguistic conflicts with the natives in the selected two Italian novels.