



## Guest Editors' Note

At the very beginning, we, as guest editors for this special issue, would like to thank the contributors and take a moment to celebrate the eclectic range of articles from colleagues across the country and even international. The articles have explored a comprehensive range from film studies, literature, literary theory, language studies and communication studies. Perhaps what binds most of these articles is the researchers' critical acumen with which they address the issues of power imbalances in the contemporary neo-colonial society and revisit marginal discourses from an alternate viewpoint.

The first article of this issue by Bandyopadhyay and Modak ushers the questions of Hallian "representation" of an image (the myth of "Padmavat") in the public "cultural circuit" (case of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's recent film *Padmavati*) and the consequent meaning makings that are generated. A second article on film (Tapan Sinha's *Atithi* based on Tagore's short story "Atithi"), by Pradhan, also negotiates the concerns of representation of a literary piece in media and uses the Derridean theoretical frame of "supplement"—one that adds to complete and even substitutes at the same time. The third article on film studies by Mondal brings in the issues of postmodernity and queer nationalism, as witnessed in select films of Rituparno Ghosh that critiques the otherwise nonchalant modernity of an imagined heteronormative community. Jayati Kumar's is a historical analysis of the representation of women characters in Indian mass media that exudes the ideologically conditioned value of the society.

The articles on literature discourses about a wide range of authors: Canadian, Indian, Japanese, Sri Lankan Canadian, Aboriginal Australian. Alghamdi's is a fresh take on Atwood's elusive female characters who could only be partially understood (hence misunderstood) by the curiosities of patriarchal gaze. Veio Pou's understanding of Tesmula Ao makes a significant contribution to the critical trauma literature, emanating from the debilitated psychosomatic state of women victims in a war zone, of this Sahitya Akademi Award-winning Naga woman writer. War is also a motif of critical consideration by Rai in her article on Japanese post-war writings (Nosaka Akiyuki and Sakaguchi Ango's) of reclamation of the individual and individuated body from the appropriative and homogenizing tendencies of creating a national body. Similarly, Manjula Padmanabhan's *Escape* as recounted by Chakraborty is a critique of the nation's insensitivity towards the appalling rise in the count of women's death and a woman's desperate attempt to "escape" a post-apocalyptic dystopia of female foeticide. The impacts and concerns of globalization on the Diaspora (Sri Lankan Tamils in Canada), as evident in Selvadurai's text, is well assessed by Ta in his article. The normative paradigm of a woman's identity, as institutionalized and reified by the phallogocentricity, religion, culture and society, as depicted in Bhyrappa's novel is critically appraised by Banerjee. The subjugation of women, whether Dalit Indian or Aboriginal Australian, within a neo-colonial or colonial construct, is well argued within a comparative literature frame by Nanda. A fresh and interesting look at colonialism/postcolonialism relation is perhaps to

be had through Sarkar's estimation of the popularity of *Phantom Comics* (a text that propels the grand narrative of colonial modernity) in India. A different perspective of the intercontinental relationship between two otherwise disparate cultures (China and Aboriginal Australia) is brought out in Pal's estimation of Kath Walker's poems written in China and deliberations on issues of nature, biodiversity and eco-consciousness. Pandey's article moves beyond the precincts of literature to give a critical assessment of Jameson's view of western culture as a response to the contemporary political economy. The final set of remaining articles were presented in the "Business Communication and Gender Studies Track" of the first multidisciplinary international conference, AMSICON 2019 (Alliance Management Studies International Conference) hosted by Alliance School of Business, Alliance University, Bangalore. The first article of this section by Chanda is a trenchant and caustic criticism of Chetan Bhagat's novels and non-fiction that exude the majoritarian nationalistic ideology in the garb of the pragmatics of managerial communication. Concerns of communication take a different turn with Ray's insistence of "authentic material in the CLT approach to develop communicative competence". The remaining two articles take us back to the precincts of literature and film studies. Dutta's scanning of Padmanabhan's *Harvest* from the humanist/feminist perspective comes out as a wonderful criticism of an otherwise compelling posthumanist existence. Deb's article on Jean Genet's avant-grade film *Un chant d'amour* investigates a set of aporias that dismantles the binaries of sexualities, centre-margin, speech-silence, desire-duty, that help readers rethink the concerns of queer studies from a defamiliarized perspective. An interesting addition is Dogra's interview with Rajalakshmi Prithviraj. A writer who weaves the experiences of army and war into her novel, Prithviraj is a realist who by her own admission creates to impact the lives of others.

If at the very beginning we had mentioned the general thematic discourse of most of the articles in enunciating an alternate perspective to a range of literary and cultural texts; then what also binds the articles together is a sense of untrammelled free-thinking of their writers that promise to generate a bold, uninhibited push to the 21<sup>st</sup> century critical studies in humanities.

**Dr. Anubha Singh**

Acting Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice Chancellor  
Alliance University, Bangalore  
&

**Dr. Arindam Das**

Associate Professor, English & Business Communication  
Alliance School of Business,  
Alliance University, Bangalore