

HLF Khabar

Monthly Newsletter

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About

Khabar is HLF's latest initiative to keep in touch with its supporters and to reach out to new audiences. Through this online medium, we hope to bridge physical distances and recreate the true spirit of *sahitya*. We look forward to your feedback and your contributions. (Please see [Submission Guidelines](#)).

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KAAVYADHAARA

ఆగదు ఆగదు గద్దర్

ఆగదు ఆగదు ఆగదు
ఈ ఆకలి వోరు ఆగదు
ఈ దోపిడి పాలన అంతం వరకు
సాయుధ వోరు ఆగదు

చీమలదండలు కదిలినయ్
పాముల గుండెలు అదిలినయ్
తోడేళ్ళు తోకముడిచినయ్
ఆవుల మందలు కదిలినయ్
పులులు పరుగులు తీసినయ్

॥ ఆగదు ॥

ఇది పచ్చని చేల పిలుపు
ఇది వెచ్చని రక్తం అరుపు
ఇది అమర వీరుల సృష్టం
ఇది జగతిలో చాటిన సత్యం

॥ ఆగదు ॥

చల్లని పైర గాలిలో
పెను తుపానులు పుట్టినయ్
పాడిచే పొద్దు యుద్ధమై
ప్రళయ తాండవం చేసినయ్
చిటపట రాలే చినుకులు
వడగండ్రా గుండ్రైనవి
పిల్ల ఏరులు కలిసినయ్
పెనుగంగై ఉప్పొంగినయ్

॥ ఆగదు ॥

చల్లని అడివి తల్లులు
మెల్లగ రాజుకున్నవి
అడవిలో పుట్టిన జీవులూ
ఈ అడవులు మావంటున్నవి
జింకలు, లేళ్ళు, పక్షులు, పువ్వులు
వోరుకు సై, సై అన్నవి

॥ ఆగదు ॥

It Will Not Stop. No, It Will Not Gaddar

Translated from Telugu by
Vasanth Kannabiran

[Chorus:]

It cannot stop! It cannot stop! It will not stop!
This war on hunger will not cease.
Till this corrupt regime ends,
The armed struggle will not halt!

See! The line of ants has stirred.
The hearts of snakes tremble.
The wolves have curled their tails.
The herds of cows have moved.
The tigers have started running.

Chorus

Listen, for the fields call.
Listen, for the blood roars.
This is the dream the martyrs dreamt.
This truth we trumpet to the world!

Chorus

Tumultuous storms have been risen
From the cool breeze of the fields.
The dawn is now a fierce battle
A dance of destruction.
The merry patter of raindrops
Turned to a shower of bullets.
Rivulets rush to unite and
Swell into a huge Ganga.

Chorus

Cool forest maids
Slowly catch fire.
Creatures born in the forest
Claim the forests as home.
Joining the deer, the antelope,
Birds and flowers, they say
Yes to the battle.

తుప్పు పట్టినా గొడ్డలి
నిప్పులోకాగి మెలిసినయ్
మూలకు పడ్డా కత్తులు
వీరుని వొరలో చేరినయ్
విరిగిన విల్లు బాణము
గిరిజన భుజమునకు చేరినయ్
ఆయుధాలకు ఆయుధమొక్కటే
సవాలు జవాబు అన్నది

॥ ఆగదు ॥

జీతం గిట్టని జీవులు
జీతం వదులు కున్నరు
కూలి గిట్టని కూలిలు
కూలికిరాం పొమ్మన్నరు
బండ్ పెట్టినా రైతులు
దొరతో పందెం అడినరు
ఆకలి మంటల్లో చచ్చేకన్నా
ఆకలి మంట మండినవి

॥ ఆగదు ॥

చెరచబడ్డ నా చెల్లెలు
బల్లెం అందుకున్నది
కూలికిపోయే చెల్లెలు
కొడవలి నాతోడన్నది
అమరవీరుల తల్లులు
తమ బిడ్డల బాటలు పట్టినరు

॥ ఆగదు ॥

కోరమీసమూ యువకులు
తమ బతుకే విప్లవమన్నరు
చదువుకున్న నా తమ్ములు
చరిత్ర తిరుగేస్తన్నరు
బుద్ధిగల్గ మేధావులు
ఈ యుద్ధం మాదే అన్నరు
కవులు కళాకారులు
మాకలమే కత్తంటున్నరు
కొత్త నెత్తురుతో చరిత్రకారులు
చరిత్ర రాస్తు ఉన్నరూ

॥ ఆగదు ॥

షికారుకెల్లెకారులో
చిచ్చై పేలే డైవరు
గిర గిర తిరిగే మరలకు
సమ్మెలు బ్రేకులు వేసినయ్
అంగరక్షకుడు అగ్గియై
తన కసిని తీర్చుకున్నడు
తుపాకి పట్టిన సైన్యం
వెనక్కి తిరిగి కొట్టినయ్

॥ ఆగదు ॥

Chorus

Heated in the fire,
Rusty axes gleam again.
The knives wait in a corner
to enter the bags of heroes.
The bows and arrows
Mount the shoulders of Girijans saying
The only answer to a weapon is a weapon.

Chorus

Denied wages, the labourers
Quit their bondage.
Denied wages, coolies
Refused to work.
Denied their land, peasants
Defied their landlords.
They say:
'Better far to blaze as hungry flames
than burn with the pangs of hunger.'

Chorus

My sister who was raped
seized a sharp stake.
My sister who is a coolie
Declared the sickle her companion.
The mothers of martyrs
Trod the paths of their dead children.

Chorus

Youth with newly grown moustaches
Declared their life was revolution.
My well-read brothers
Said they would rewrite history.
The wise intellectuals
Claimed this revolution as their own.
Poets and artists declared
Their pens were their swords.
Historians began to write history
With fresh blood.

Chorus

Cars set out for shikar
With drivers who set off bombs.
Strikes put the brakes
on the empty promises
Spinning back and forth.
The security guard turned
on the man he was to protect
Taking his revenge.
The foot soldiers turned
And fired on their commanders.

అమెరికా, రష్యా బాంబులు
వాళ్ళ గుండెలో గుసగుస లాడినయ్
ప్రపంచ శక్తులు లేసినయ్
దోపిడి అంతం తేలుస్తయ్

॥ ఆగదు ॥

పారే ఏరును....
ఆపవచ్చు...
ప్రాజెక్టులు కట్టి....

పొంగే గంగలో...
పయనించవచ్చు...
యుద్ధనౌకను దించి....

గగనములోని...
ఏ గ్రాహిణైనా....
ముద్దాడవచ్చు...
క్షిపణిని పంపి....

కాని....!
జీవకోటికి
జీవించే హక్కు ఉన్నంత వరకు....
ఆకలి పోరు ఆగదు....

“ ఆగదు ఆగదు ఆగదు
ఆకలి పోరు ఆగదు ”

Chorus

American and Russian bombs
Set these hearts atremble.
The forces of the world have risen

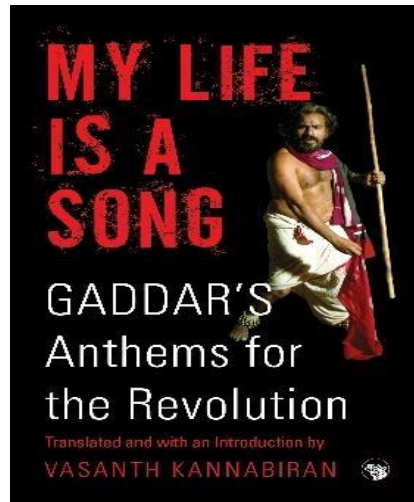
To end this oppression.
You can build a project

To halt a flowing stream.
You can launch a battleship

And sail on the swelling Ganga.
You can launch a rocket ship
And kiss any planet in the sky.

But as long as crores of people
Have no right to life
This war against hunger

Will not cease.



పోదాం పదే జాతరో గద్దర్

పోదాం పదే జాతరో
శ్రీకాకుళ యాతర
పోరు పదే జాతరో
పోదాం పదే జాతరో
అది ఏమి జాతరమ్మా
లేనోళ్ళ జాతరమ్మా

Let Us Go to the Jatra

Gaddar

Translated from Telugu by
Vasanth Kannabiran

Come woman! Let us go to the Jatra
A Jatra of Srikakulam
A Yatra of battle!
Let us go to the Jatra!

What is that Jatra, Amma?
It is the Jatra of the poor

గోసి పేల్కాగాళ్ళు
గొంగడి బొంతగాళ్ళు
పూటకు లేనోళ్ళు
పనిజేసి బతికెటోళ్ళు
ఉన్నోళ్ళ తలలు దెచ్చి
పుట్టు గొడ్డుండ్రంట

నాటు బాంబులన్ని
మూటగట్టుకోవాలి
గొడ్డుండ్లు కొడవండ్లు
బండ్లు నింపుకోవాలి
ముసలవ్వల, సంతోళ్ళను
వెంటబెట్టుకోని నడుపు

బందూకులు బర్మాలు
బండ్ల బెట్టుకోవాలి
బండి మీద ఎర్ర
జండలెత్తుకోవాలి
జండకే జై గొడుతు
బండి ముందు నడుపాలే

రాముని భీముని
బండికి గట్టాలె
పిల్లా జెల్లాతెమో
బల్లాలు ఇయ్యాలె
నీ వాడినిండ కారం
పోడి నింపుకోవాలి
ఎవడన్న బండికి
అడ్డము దగిలితె
అడ్డగొయ్యతోనీ
అరుపారు జెయ్యాలె

గుళ్ళో దేవుళ్ళకు....
మంచిరోజులు చూసుకొని....
శావలల్ల ఎక్కి....
రథాలపైన కూసాండి....
భక్త జనంలోకి వొస్తరట....
గదే జాతరైతది, యాతరైతది....
తీర్థమైతది...

జనం పిల్లా జెల్లలతో....
ఎడ్ల బండ్లు కట్టుకొని....
మొక్కులు తీర్చుకోనికీ....
కొబ్బరి కాయలు కోడి పుంజులు....
మోకపాట్టలు తోలుకొని....
జాతర పోతరు, యాతరపోతరు....

జనం....
గొల్లమందలోలే....
దేవున్ని జాతర్లకే కదులుతరు....
మళ్ళీ....
చీమలదండోలే....
పోరు జాతర్లోనే కదులుతరు....

“ పోదాం పదే జాతరో
శ్రీకాకుళం యాతర ”

*From My Life Is A Song:
Gaddar's Anthems for the
Revolution*

Translated with an
Introduction by Vasanth
Kannabiran

Speaking Tiger, 2021.

Fellows with only a strip of loincloth,
Fellows with only a blanket or quilt,

Fellows without a daily meal,
Fellows who slog for a living,
Are bringing in the heads of the rich
And heaping them in mounds.

Chorus

We must bundle up the country bombs,
We must fill the cart with sickles and spades.
Bring the old women and the infants with you!

Chorus

Pile the guns and cannons in the cart
Raise a red flag on the cart
Walking in front of the cart
You must hail the flag.

Chorus

Tie the bulls, Rama and Bhima,
to the cart.
Give the young ones
planks and spears.
You must fill your pallu
With chilli powder.
If anyone tries to stop the cart
Take the axle and thrash him thoroughly.

Chorus

The priests seek good days
to celebrate festivals
for the gods in temples
but for you there are none.
Bring your polluting bodies to the temple.
Sit on these chariots.
You will enter among the devotees.
That is the Jatra. This is the festival.
This is the Yatra. This, the pilgrimage.
People pile children and family
into bullock carts
To fulfil their vows,
With coconuts, chickens and goats.
They go on pilgrimage, they go on Yatra.
They are sheep flocking to God's Jstras.
Suddenly one day they will stop plodding.
From dull sheep, they will turn into ants.
Streaming, weaving, they will move
swiftly changing their path,
In the thick of the Jatra of struggle.

Chorus

KAavyADHAARA

What pandemic is this

Translated from Urdu by
Uma Damodar Sridhar

What pandemic is this, that darkly spreads
and strikes down lives?
The clouded sky turned to dust,
The earth's breast lay barren.
Do you know how many have fled,
their belongings in bundles,
eyes homeward bound?
I too ran away from home,
not knowing where to go.
A month passed by,
My slippers broken, my feet swollen,
I was heavy with child,
looking for my lover's house.
People walked for miles and miles
on this strange journey of life.
They walked on and on,
and still they walked,
And yet the roads stretched,
on and on.

They were walking towards their homes
I was running away from mine.
The promise of my blossoming youth
lay wasted, lifeless.
I was nineteen,
Where could I go?
But I walked on, I had to!
It was my eighth month,
but still I walked.
My destination?
I knew not
But still I walked.
I found shelter under a tree.
and rested, tired.
There was silence everywhere.
The animal pounced suddenly.
I screamed
and was lost in my own silence.

The morning found my corpse.
People saw:
My skin torn
My sweet baby crying
And the rising sun asking,
Where will you go now?

Kaisa kaali waba hai phaili

Jameela Nishat

کیسی کالی وبا ہے پھیلی
انسانوں کو ڈستی گئی
فلک کا چہرہ خاک ہوا
زمین کی چھاتی سوکھ گئی
جانے کتنے لاکھوں لوگ
بوریا بستر باندھ کے نکلے
اپنے اپنے گھر جانے
میں بھاگی اپنے گھر سے
جاؤں تو کہاں میں جاؤنگی
ایک مہینہ بیت گیا گھر سے نکلے
پھٹی تھی چپل پاؤں تھے بھاری
مجھ کو پیا گھر جانا تھا
لوگ تو میلوں میل چلے
جیون کا سفر یہ کیسا ہے
چلنا چلنا مدام چلنا
لمبی لمبی سڑکوں پر
لوگ چلے تھے گھر جانے
میں نکلی تھی گھر سے اپنے
لہر لہر لہراتی جوانی
بھو کی پیاسی سند پڑی
میں تھی انیس سالہ لڑکی
جاؤں تو کہاں میں جاؤنگی

The translation was adjudged one of the ten best
submissions posted in Womawords Literary Press
June 2020 edition, *Imagining Life after Covid-19*.

Tears dripped down the walls

Translated from Urdu by
Uma Damodar Sridhar

Tears dripped down the walls
The windows cried out
Come back come back
The Tulasi plant in the courtyard
Is so full so full
Hope
Smiled like rebellious leaves
He will return he will return
From my rival's lane
Where he is lost
Lord of my heart.
The door shrieked
Talaq Talaq Talaq
The table remained
In wide-eyed stare
Memory's chair
Creaked
Kar-kar
As I sipped loneliness
From the tea cup.

Deevaaron se aansu tapakte rahe

Jameela Nishat

دیواروں سے آنسو ٹپکتے رہے
دریچے پکارے
چلے آچلے آ
آنگن میں تلسی
بھر آ بھر آ
امید
برگ آوارہ بنی مسکرائی
آنیگا آنیگا
لوٹ آنیگا
کس کی گلی سو کن بنی
کہاں کھو گیا
میرے دل کا مالک
دروازہ چیخا
طلاق طلاق طلاق

The poem and the translation were part of the installation 'Rucksack' featuring a bag with dried tea bags, in the "Exhibition of poetry" curated by Mamta Sagar and Antje Stehn in September 2020 in the Little Museum of Poetry, Piacenza, Italy.

Won't you ask the clouds

Translated from Urdu by
Uma Damodar Sridhar

Won't you ask the clouds
What life has in store?
Why is the beloved a
stranger,
and the stranger, a
friend?
Who wrote his love
on Facebook yesterday?
And who tweets,
Spreading hate?
Why is justice hollow?
Who is leading you
astray?
All are lost in the crowds
Who was wounded in the
brawl?

Wish that I could grasp
What lies hidden in the
clouds
Scores of tongues are
loosened
but voices silenced
Messages fly in the clouds
round the world
Videos float freely in the
streets
Carried by the clouds
The soil is bare
yet jungles are cut
Streets meander endlessly
but hearts are tightly shut.

I wish that I could grasp
What lies hidden in the
clouds.

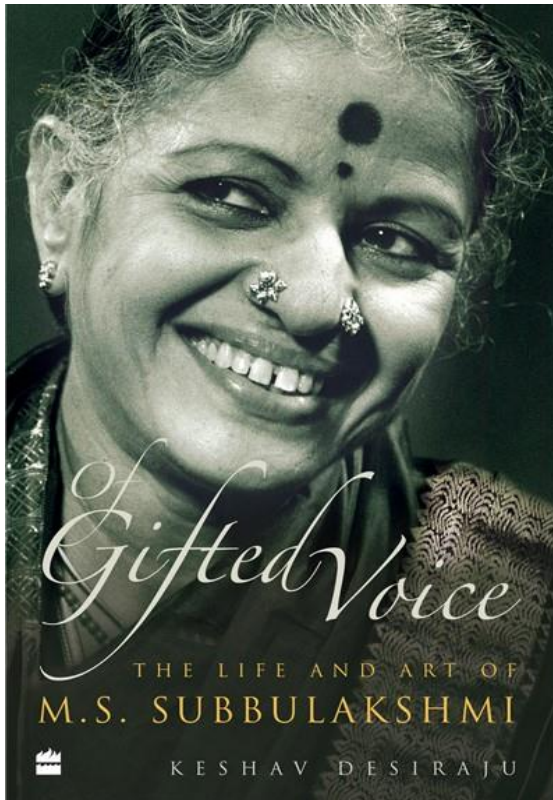
Badalon se pucho tum

Jameela Nishat

بادلوں سے پوچھو تم
زندگی میں کیا کیا ہے
اپنا کیوں پرایا ہے
اور پرایا اپنا ہے
فیس بک پہ کس نے کل
دل کا حال لکھا ہے
کون ٹویٹ کرتا ہے
نفرتیں پھیلاتا ہے
قانون کھوکھلا کیوں ہے
کون ورغلاتا ہے
بھیڑ سب پہ بھاری ہے
کس کی مار پیٹ ہوئی
کاش ہم سمجھ پاتے
بادلوں میں کیا کیا ہے
کتنے لب ہیں آج آزاد

Badalon se pucho tum was read out by Jameela Nishat at HLF 2018.

MEET MY BOOK

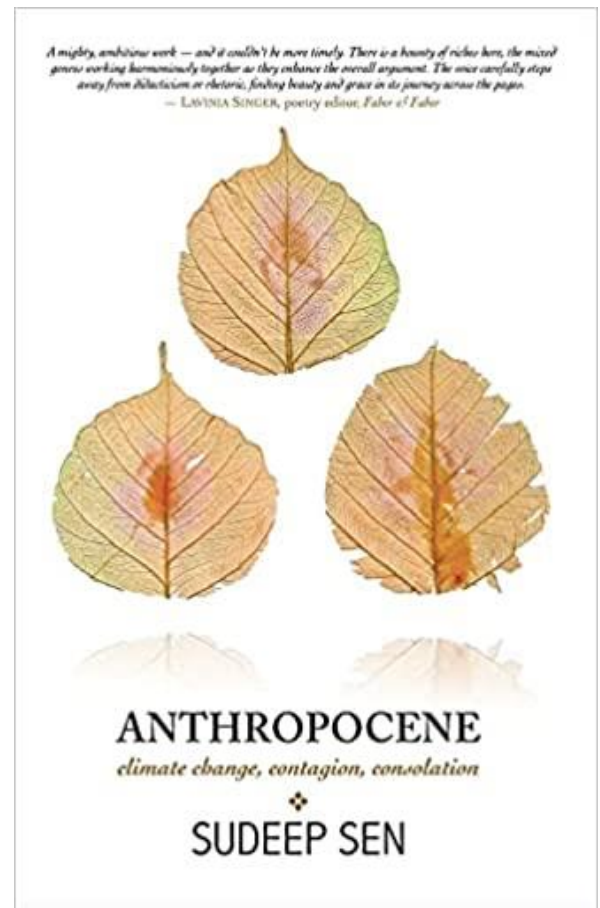


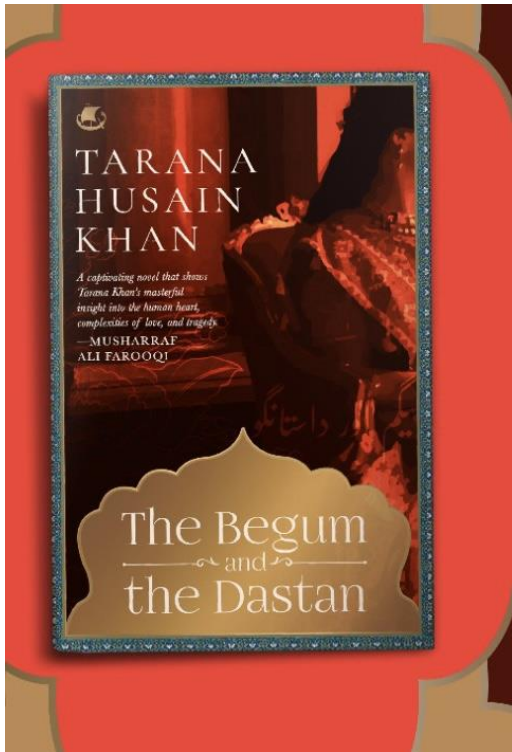
Why did I write about MS? Mainly because I wanted to recognize her identity as a diva, as one of the 20th century's greatest performers. Although she was portrayed in many ways, she was first and foremost a classical vocalist of the highest rank. This identity has consistently been denied to her. And this is what I hoped to redress. No one who heard Subbulakshmi in concert, or met her, howsoever briefly or casually, would have forgotten the event. I too have a bagful of memories. My last personal memory of MS is of visiting her on the last day of 2002 when she spontaneously asked me, a near-stranger, to join her for lunch. MS lives on in the collective memory of the world. It has been a joy to write about this most remarkable of Indians.

— Keshav Desiraju

I see *Anthropocene* as part of a larger socio-cultural force, of which the pandemic is one of the many crises. It all started with a newsclip I stumbled upon almost fifteen years ago, where the President of the Pacific Island of Kiribati expressed his concern about his people becoming “climate refugees” due to the rising sea levels. Since then, it has been a gradual evolution of ideas and the recent pandemic accelerated my literary and artistic response to the climate conflicts. The book includes poetry, prose, creative non-fiction, essay and photography. I have woven my private ideas of isolation with the larger global issues, political wars and their consequent Geopolitical/geological catastrophes. However, the book is not a doomed vision of the post-human world but a plea for slowing down, positivity and an urge to embrace “Hope, heed, heal — our song, in present tense.”

— Sudeep Sen



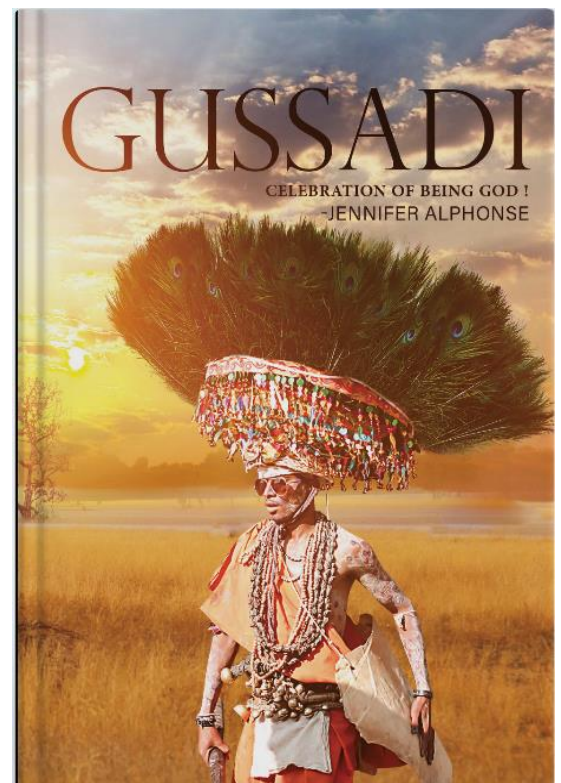


The Begum and the Dastan is inspired by real-life characters and events. It narrates the story of Feroza Begum, a noblewoman in 1897 Sherpur, who is detained by the Nawab of Sherpur in his glittering harem. She negotiates the glamour and sordidness of the harem with rare courage. Moved by her plight, Kallan Mirza, a skilled dastango, spins a hauntingly familiar tale of a despotic sorcerer, Tareek Jaan, and the women trapped in his grand illusory city, the Tilism-e-Azam. In the present day as Ameera listens to Dadi narrating the tale of Feroza Begum, she is compelled to ask herself if anything has changed for Sherpur's women.

— Tarana Husain Khan

I love telling stories, be it through photography or films. I first visited the erstwhile Adilabad district in 2014 to make a documentary on one of Asia's most ancient tribes, the "Raj Gonds." My small team and I trekked to some of the most isolated places in the district to document the traditions, culture, and artistic heritage of the tribe. Their way of living has not changed much over the centuries, although the world around them has changed drastically. Around Diwali, I stumbled upon this spectacular, centuries-old custom "Gussadi"! I was enchanted by its mythic history and biting satire. The very first time I saw the Gussards perform the dance of the Gods, I decided to do my bit to preserve the legacy of Gussadi. A documentary on Gussadi (trailer at: youtube.com/watch?v=XkKXK6h6hBU) preceded this coffee table book.

— Jennifer Alphonse



FEATURE

Literary Podcasts

Over the past year, most of us have been up a steep learning curve when it comes to internet-based tools. In an effort to cut down on screen time and rest our tired eyes, many of us have also discovered the world of podcasts. While news, analysis and other informational genres might be the most popular, there are a number of literary and book-related shows for the more bookish among us.

Literary podcasts range from straight-up readings of classical, popular or recent work (in a variety of languages) to interviews and discussions with authors, or audio dramas for all ages and tastes. Some discuss a particular work, and others engage in conversation around a writer's process or the writing life. Here are some to get you started.

[Books and Beyond](#): Tara Khandelwal and Michelle D'costa of the independent publishing venture Bound chat with Indian writers about recent work. Guests on the weekly podcast have included Sonia Faleiro (*The Good Girls*), Diksha Basu (*The Windfall*, *Destination Wedding*) and Samit Basu (*Chosen Spirits*).

[The New Yorker Fiction](#) and [The Writer's Voice](#) (also from *The New Yorker*) feature new and old writing from the magazine. While the former has authors reading out stories they have enjoyed from across issues, the latter features authors reading their own new fiction.

[How to Proceed](#) from the House of Literature in Norway has host Linn Ullmann engaging with authors about their writerly (and readerly) lives, politics, inspiration and process.

[Sugar Calling](#) from *The New York Times* is a series of conversations between Cheryl Strayed and older writers, where she draws on their wisdom in the early days of the pandemic-related shutdown. Guests include Margaret Atwood, Alice Walker, and George Sanders. And there's much, much more—in languages other than English, too, available for free on all podcast platforms.

— Usha Raman



PROFILES



Poetrywala: Dedicated to Poetry

Literary enthusiasts, Hemant and Smruti Divate established Poetrywala (paperwall.in), a Mumbai-based publishing house dedicated exclusively to contemporary poetry, in 2003. Poetrywala offers a platform to emerging, and avant-garde poets and has so far published more than 120 books of poetry by Indian and international poets like Dilip Chitre, Mustansir Dalvi, Ben Mazer, and Harkaitz Cano. Revenue from this small-scale business is ploughed back into the publishing house. The Divates' conviction that genuine poetry best captures the ethos of a culture and society is borne out by their excellent sales records even during the pandemic. In future, Poetrywala plans to focus more on translations of poetry collections and reach a wider audience.

Matwaala: South Asian Diaspora

Poets' Collective



Our mission is to promote South Asian poetry in the American literary landscape and collaborate with other arts in North America through a festival, publications, and mutual support among poets. The racial incidents of 2020 motivated us to craft the 2021 festival as a poets-of-color series of readings as a gesture of solidarity and friendship. The festival flagged off on April 22 with a reading by five African-American women poets: Dorothy Randall Gray, Cynthia Manick, Loretta Diane Walker, Marsha Nelson, and Anastasia Tomkin. The reading was preceded by a slide show by Usha Akella to honor the BLM movement, and remarks by Pramila Venkateswaran highlighting the relationship between African Americans and South Asians. The second reading by Mexican poets was scheduled for July 8.

— **Usha Akella & Pramila Venkateswaran**
Directors, Matwaala



The Dog Ear Society

Founded in 2012 by Mubashir Ansari and Anjali, “The Dog Ear Society” book club began by sharing the names of the books they grew up reading that had a lasting impact upon them. Later they developed a unique style with a host suggesting a particular topic and members picking up a book of their own choice within the proposed genre. This helped exposure to a wide variety of literature and style of writing of many authors and poets in any language. In 2016, one of the hosts introduced the group members to a unique genre of fiction writing stories in exactly 100 words called ‘Drabble Writing’. They wrote and shared stories in both English and Hindustani. This also resulted in one of the members becoming a published author in drabbles in 2020. During the pandemic, online book discussions continue, while personal face-to-face interaction over wine and cheese is missing! For more details, contact Mr N P Shinh: npsshinh@gmail.com

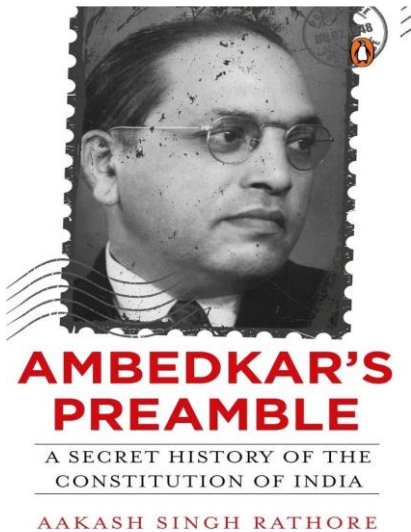
Quills Literary Club



Established in 2015, Quills Literary Club, RBVRR Women’s College, is a platform for students to pursue and publish their creative expressions. It aims to empower young women with life skills by cultivating a genuine love for language and literature. The club is a friendly space where faculty and students exchange feedback on their writing and performances. It has nearly 150 members from different disciplines and has organized several monthly-meetings, events, festivals on literary and cultural issues. “[Quills: The World of Words](#)” is the official blog of the club. In 2019, students published their poetry in the chapbook, *Zephyr* (Hawakal). Members of the club have been regular volunteers at Hyderabad Literary Festival. It has been a learning and a joyful experience for students to interact with authors and artistes from all over the world.

— **Anisha Bodapati**
BTCFS, III Year
Student Editor, Quills Literary Club

BOOK REVIEW



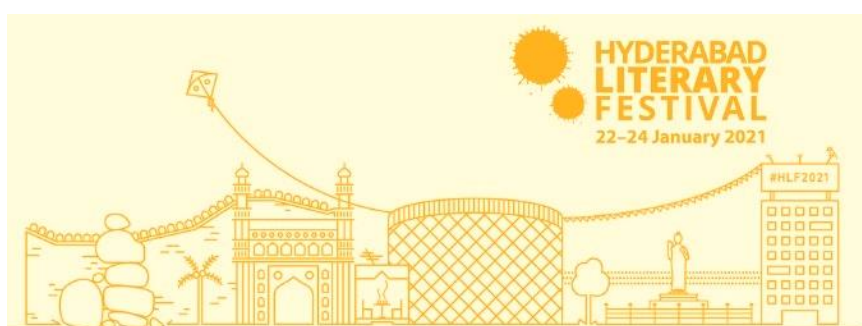
Ambedkar's Preamble: A Secret History of the Constitution of India by Akash Singh Rathore. Penguin Random House, 2020. 256 pages, ₹599.

On 26 January 1950, the Constitution of India was adopted and came into effect; its Preamble was its vision and mission. The Preamble helps us understand both the core meaning of the Constitution and the principles and values of our Republic. The Preamble's authorship, however, is not agreed upon. In *Ambedkar's Preamble: A Secret History of the Constitution of India* Akash Singh Rathore, sets out to do just that. The book presents the various cases for the authorship of the Preamble. It argues that Dr Ambedkar was almost single-handedly the author of the Preamble.

The book consists of six chapters, each speaking of a central concept in the Preamble: Justice, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Dignity, and Nation, and how each of these words stems from the life and thoughts of Dr Ambedkar. The book draws most of its arguments from the debates of the Constituent Assembly, minutes of the Drafting Committee chaired by Dr Ambedkar, and most importantly the works and life of Dr Ambedkar. The author's style is lucid and his language fine. The author makes effective and persuasive arguments and counterarguments.

The book is a must read for not only those who want to understand the authorship of the Preamble but also the historical, intellectual and moral principles upon which the Constitution and this Republic stand, as well as Dr Ambedkar's life and works. Rathore is a philosopher, an author of twenty books, and an academic.

— Amaan Ali Khan



HLF ONLINE SESSIONS

25 June 2021

A Breed Apart: Konkona Sen Sharma and Parvathy Thiruvothu in conversation with Padma Ramesh.

KSS: “It was never planned as such.... Maybe from the outside it may look like I’m a breed apart or something but it’s not like that from the inside. Most of my choices are just an extension of my personality. I’ve been very blessed, very privileged to have Aparna Sen as my mother.... I’ve always seen her kind of living life on her own terms. I had in that sense a rather unconventional childhood and upbringing. So, perhaps, I’ve always been comfortable with being a little different and not necessarily having to fit in.... So, I don’t really see it as if I’m trying to be different. I see it more as I’m trying to be true to myself. I’m just trying to be authentic to my own self.... I like to do things my own way and take my own decisions... whatever repercussions it may have”.

PT: “Film was not a huge part of my upbringing. But then the film *Notebook* happened to me... and I was quickly introduced to this whole new ocean. I was just dropped into it and the next couple of years was like learning how to swim in it, while not losing a sense of who I am, or who I was becoming.... I don’t know why, but I always felt that I should never let my identity be hooked on to this profession. The craft, yes, I’ll take a lot away from the craft and I’ll have a relationship with it, but not the career itself. So, all my choices were informed by the fact that, ok if this is going to be my last film, or if this is going to be a system around me which is stifling that I can’t grow, I’ll find another place to grow. I’ll not stay here and compromise”.

Watch the complete session at www.youtube.com/watch?v=P12L7Q6H5Ys

18 June 2021

Performing Arts and Cinema in Hyderabad Deccan: Kamalakar Pasupuleti in conversation with Sumanaspati Reddy.

KP: “Aurangzeb destroyed the city of Hyderabad to such an extent that nothing was left in the city. The destruction was so comprehensive that when the French General Bussy arrived, he had no place to stay. He lived virtually in Charminar. That was the state of Hyderabad before the arrival of Nizam Ali Khan. The city began to be rebuilt only during the time of Nizam Ali Khan, the Second Nizam, when he shifted the capital from Aurangabad to Hyderabad. It was like building a new capital. So, except for a few buildings that were not destroyed by Aurangzeb, the city of Hyderabad was built by Nizam Ali Khan.... Mah Laqa Bai Chanda is a familiar name and everybody knows about her. Ghulam Samdani Khan Gohar, the State Historian appointed by Mir Mahboob Ali Khan, the sixth Nizam, was authorized to write a biography of her. His biography *Hayat-e-Mah Laqa* and her own collection of poetry *Gulzar-e-Mah Laqa* are both authentic sources of information about her. But very little is known about the other lady, Lutfunnisa, although she had a vast collection of poetry, about 8000 couplets and that book, in its original handwritten form, is preserved in the Salar Jung Museum.... But her whole *divan* was never brought out. I hope one day somebody will sit in the Salar Jung Museum and, although it might take a couple of years, painstakingly copy all those couplets from this nearly 150-year-old document and publish them”.

Watch the complete session at www.youtube.com/watch?v=K12_wmtXKUQ

4 June 2021

Kabir Bedi in conversation with **Kishwar Desai** about his autobiography *Stories I Must Tell: The Emotional Life of an Actor*.

KB: "I did the play *Tughlaq*, Girish Karnad's first play in English, and the great Alyque Padamsee was my director.... When the curtains parted, what the audience saw was me standing with my back to them, with arms outstretched, lit from the top light with every muscle on my back defined, and looking as though I was completely nude, and everyone went 'ah! oh my god!' and that became the talking point of the play.... So, this became a sensation. I must clarify, the play was a major hit because it was brilliantly written by Girish Karnad and outstandingly directed by Alyque Padamsee. I played the title role, I think, really well and got great reviews. That play opened the doors for me. Film producers started coming to me and asking me to join Bollywood films.... I actually wanted to be a film maker, but when I got these offers, I thought okay, let's join Bollywood as an actor, and then we'll see about directing, let me get into the industry first. It's a question of recognizing opportunity. I didn't say 'No, no, I'll wait for a directorial offer'. You'll have to recognize opportunity.... That's one of the lessons of my life".

Watch the complete session at www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7-iOuwxuhM

For updates on HLF online sessions, subscribe to HLF YouTube channel <youtube.com/c/hlf-India>



REMINISCENCES

On a pleasant winter evening, as part of HLF 2015, we were privileged to be in the audience for “Parchayiyan”, a play based on the life and work of the renowned poet-lyricist Sahir Ludhianvi played by the incomparable Tom Alter, performed at the open-air theatre at HPS, Begumpet. At succeeding HLFs, we were fortunate to hear well-known authors speak and participate in panel discussions, watch some of the best filmmakers’ works screened and interact with them, enjoy dance recitals and readings from books. “Nanha Nukkad” for children, the food court, and the well-stocked book shop run by The Bookpoint have been major attractions. HLF has certainly emerged as a brand to reckon with over the last decade.

— **Shankar Melkote**

Film, theatre, dramatized reading enthusiast and lover of books

The Hyderabad Literary Festival was the undoubted highlight of the year 2016 for me. I was heartened by the overt support HLF extended to free speech and dissent, nowhere better exemplified than in the pride of place given to Nayantara Sahgal. The sessions featuring Kiran Nagarkar and Pervez Hoodbhoy of Pakistan were brilliant examples of discourse that rose above jingoistic noise. HLF 2016 was a memorable experience, even if my own panel discussion, ostensibly centred around my book *Third Man* was a bit of a damp squib. It became a session about my khadoos Mumbaiyya-Hyderabad former teammate Vijay Mohan Raj who decided the whole hour belonged to him and hogged the strike, not forgetting to deliver a homily on ethics to me and the audience. Poor anchor Harimohan Paruvu was denied the strike for far too long to score!

— **V Ramnarayan**

Former Indian first-class cricketer, journalist, editor, translator, and teacher

In 2019, while working in Telangana, I was privileged to attend the Hyderabad Literary Festival. As someone who has attended and presented at several such events in the UK, I was delighted to find that the Hyderabad Festival was one of the most enjoyable. As an educator, I was particularly impressed by the way in which so many young people had been involved in a range of creative activities. It had been my intention to return to this year’s event, but sadly the Covid-19 pandemic intervened. However, I must commend the organisers for having provided access on-line and have enjoyed a number of events during the lockdown.

— **Richard Rose**

Writer, Professor Emeritus, University of Northampton



NEW PUBLICATIONS

I Want a Poem and Other Poems by Jerry Pinto. Speaking Tiger, Rs 274. A collection of delightful, quirky, real and relatable poems that burrow into the deep and familiar terrains of human nature.

After Death Comes Water, selected prose poems of Joy Goswami. Translated by Sampurna Chatterjee. Harper Collins, Rs 312. The book showcases the extraordinary range of the writer's genius and inventiveness.

Hunchprose by Ranjit Hoskote. Penguin Books, Rs 347. Vibrant with linguistic experiment, the collection of poems weaves unpredictable patterns, celebrates our plural selves.

How are You Veg? Dalit Stories from Telugu by Joopaka Subhadra. Translated by Alladi Uma and M. Sridhar. Stree, Rs 500. Drawn from the author's lived experiences as a Telangana Dalit woman, the stories capture the complexities of rural and urban women's lives, their angst and happiness, insults and courage.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Friends

Thank you for your overwhelming response to our call for submissions! We could not reply to you individually. But rest assured that every submission will get due attention, and will be considered for publication in future issues.

We invite

- Original, un/published poems (two or three poems; 40-50 lines in all; in English or Indian languages, along with their English translation).
- Reviews of recent books, films, web series, podcasts etc (in not more than 300 words).
- Write ups on book and literary clubs and societies and their activities (in not more than 100 words).
- Authors' introduction of their recent books (in not more than 100 words).
- Information about recent publications (in not more than 50 words).
- Announcements of forthcoming events (in not more than 50 words), and so on.

Submission Guidelines

(Only for new submissions. Those who have already sent, NEED NOT resend).

- All submissions should be sent only as MS-Word documents. If you are concerned about the formatting going awry in transmission, you may also send a PDF as an additional document for reference.
- In the Subject field of the email, describe your submission as: Poem, Review, New Publication, etc.
- Follow the word limit. Submissions that are far beyond the word limit will not be considered.
- Give a one-line description of yourself—your designation, or occupation, etc.

There is no deadline for sending submissions. All submissions should be sent to <hlfkhabar@gmail.com>.



Visit our website: www.hydlitfest.org

