

ICLA Research Committee :

**Literary and Cultural Interrelationships between India,
Its Neighboring Countries and the World**

Report

(submitted for the ICLA Meeting on September 3-4, 2014 at Beijing)

Prof. Chandra Mohan

- I. **Seminal presentations and Quality publication of the papers presented at special workshop at the ICLA Congress at Paris, July 19-24, 2013.**
 - a) **Eight out of ten submissions of the articles have been accepted for publication by the Editorial Committee of the ICLA Publication of the proceedings (Paris Conference, August 2013). It is indeed creditable.**
 - b) **Fifteen seminal presentations** by the eminent scholars from India and adjoining countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and also from North America focusing on the theme of the project were made at the special session / workshop held at the ICLA congress in Paris. The program was spread out to five days continuously with presentation of three papers per day during the session from 11.00 to 12.30. Prof. I.N. Choudhuri, Tagore Chair, University of Edinburgh addressed the opening session on the 19th July 2013.

The workshop closely looked at the *Literary and Cultural Relationships* from the perspective of socio-cultural and religious consciousness in the South Asia and the World. The research based presentations were made by Chandra Mohan : '***Genesis of Interrelationships***'; Jasbir Jain: '**Initiatives for Peace and Narratives of Healing in the Subcontinent**'; Anisur Rahman: '***Love Songs to the Divine: Sufi Music in India and Pakistan***'; Jancy James : '***Ramayana as Cultural Linkages South Asian Comparativism***'; Chelva Kanaganakam; '***Cultural Politics of Tamilnadu***

and Sri Lankan Literatures’; S. Mukherjee: *’Ramification of the Ramayan in India, Indonesia & Thailand : A Comparative Study*’; S. Asha, : *’Shared Cultures and Different Spaces: Conflictual Relationship of Subjectivity*’; E.V.Ramakrishnan: *’Poetry as a Site of Cultural Resistance in the subcontinent in the works of Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Muktiboth and Kazi Nasrul Islam*’; Amina Kazi Ansari: *’Songs of the Nation : Popular Lyrics from India and Pakistan*’; M.Hossain : *’Contesting Boundaries Musically A Reading of the Songs of Bangladesh and India*’; M. Yaqoob : *’Contemporary Resistance to Patriarchal and Colonial Heritage*’; Ipshta Chanda: *’Locating the Nama: Genological Research*’; Sayanthan Dasgupta : *’A Palimpsest of History*’; B. Chakrabarty: *’Strings of Love across Language, History and Space: Music of the sub-continent-Baul and Sufi*’ : and Dheeman Bhattacharyya : *’Negotiations of Borderlands*”.

II. Formal Introduction of Three Important Academic Courses relating to the development of the Project:

a) A course in Nepali Language and Literature at Undergraduate level in the department of Comparative Literature at Jadavpur University was introduced. The UGC-Centre of Advanced Study (CAS) in Comparative Literature (Phase 2) of Jadavpur University facilitated this by holding an attachment of students program with Southfield College Darjeeling, and preparing, through a two week workshop in September 2011, for translation Nepali stories into English, Hindi and Bangla. A Course-book for Nepali literature in translation, entitled Call of the Hills eds. Sayantan Dasgupta and Kabita Lama (Centre of Advanced Study, Jadavpur University) was published in English and now a similar volume in Bangla will be published soon.

b) A course in Urdu Language and Literature at Undergraduate level in collaboration with scholars from Jamia Milia Islamia was introduced at C.L. Department, Jadavpur University. Translation of literary essays from Urdu into English in collaboration with visiting scholar Bilal Hashmi, New York University was undertaken. Proceedings of the workshop will be published soon.

c) A course on Literature in Cross-Cultural Contexts, involving Indian Literature in the Subcontinent and World Literature Journey through translation was undertaken by the Centre for Translation

Studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi with Prof. A.K. Singh as its Coordinator.

Three Publications related to the project are:

1. **Travelling with the Namah** by Ipshita Chanda (Centre of Advanced Study), Jadavpur University, Kolkata, 2013.
2. **The book titled *Raatbhor Jharer Tandob: Bharatiya Nepali Sahityer Pathyoboi* (The Storm Raged All Night: A Coursebook of Indian Nepali Literature): Anthology of Nepali-language short stories in Bangla translation along with Kabita Lama and Seemanitni Gupta**, is published by Jadavpur University under its CAS in Comparative Literature (Phase 2) program. It contains 20 short stories by various writers.
3. **Forgiveness: Between Memory and History** is a forthcoming monograph which explores the two major discourses of violence and non violence and explores the cultural and philosophical traditions as well as the contemporary discourses on forgiveness and peace. The special focus remains on the subcontinent and the ethical dimension relating to the other.

VII) A SYMPOSIUM on the South Asian Perspectives of Comparative Studies : Humanities and Social Sciences – (relating to the theme of the ICLA research project) was conducted by the South Asia Study Centre, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur in collaboration with Comparative Literature Association of India during March 20-21 , 2014.

The inaugural session included welcome by Prof. Karori Singh, Director, South Asia Study Centre, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur; Addressed by Hon'ble Dr. Dev Swarup, Vice Chancellor, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, ; A Report by Prof. Chandra Mohan, General Secretary, Comparative Literature Association of India (CLAI), Keynote Address – Prof. Harish Trivedi : South Asia : New Conceptualization, Thanks by – Prof. Shashi Upadhyaya, SASC, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

Papers relating to the theme of the project were presented by **Prof. Anisur Rahman**: *Negotiations with Language: Reading South Asian*

Women Writers; Prof. Chandra Mohan: Umbilical Cord of Literary Interrelationships between India and Its Neighbouring Countries; Dr. Sayantan Dasgupta: Comparative Literature : The South Asian Context; Prof. Ameena Ansari: Bifurcations, Trifurcations and Nationalisms: A Perspective on South Asia's National Anthems; Ms. Nisanka Sanjeevani Ariyaratne; Comparative Studies in Social Sciences in Sri Lanka; Dr. Krishan Gopal: Comparative Studies on Sri Lanka; Prof. Shashi Upadhyay: Indian Studies on Pakistan : Search for Comparative Perspectives; Prof. Sieghild Bogumil: Questioning some Major Issues of Comparative Literature in Light of the Reception of the African Art of by Picasso and the Cubists; Prof. Ramakant: Comparative Studies in South Asia; Mr. Dheeman Bhattacharyya: Of Dusts, Sounds and Memories: Criminal Tribes at 1871 – Social Cultural Contexts; Dr. Charu Mathur: Narrating Resistance : Laxman Jackwade's Achalya/the Branded; Prof. Karori Singh: Area based Studies and Comparative Studies in South Asia; Dr. Surendra Singh Chauhan: Comparative Studies on Environment: South Asian Perspectives. Prof. Dorothy Figueira: Approaches to Comparative Literature; Prof. Mohan Lal Sharm: South Asia Studies in Comparative Perspective: Retrospect and Prospect; Prof. Jasbir Jain: The Epiphany of Differences from Linearity to Simultaneity; Prof. Suchorita Chattopadhyay; The Voice of the South Asian in Canada : A Comparative Study.

VIII) Forthcoming Special Programs relating to the Research Committee project during the year 2015, are as follows:

- a) The theme of the forthcoming International Conference on **Culture, Arts and Socio-political Movements in South Asia: Comparative Perspectives** has a direct relevance with the theme of the ICLA Research Project. It will be hosted by the Centre of Rajasthan Study and the Department of Urdu and Persian in collaboration with the Comparative Literature Association of India at the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur during the first week of March 2015.

We are pleased to announce that **Prof. Hans Bertens, Hon'ble President, ICLA** has graciously accepted our invitation to be the Chief Guest at the inaugural of this conference in Jaipur. A large number of eminent scholars and members of ICLA have also

consented to address the conference. The main thrust of this conference is related to the theme of the ICLA Research Project. This major event will attract scholarly participation from neighboring countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Afghanistan and other SAARC countries. The sub-themes will include an interface of Polity-economy-culture-arts-literature; Religious/Philosophical Movements: Interface with Literature; Socio-political Movements and Fragmentations of Composite Culture in India, South Asian countries and the world.

- b) A well chalked out academic program relating to the research based presentations will be organized in conjunction with the SAARC (South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation), and with Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) On this occasion we will have a literary festival of writers and poets from neighboring countries and the world. The noticeable factor shared by all is the usage of common languages. It is firmly believed and aptly stated: 'We share Urdu and Punjabi with Pakistan. We share Nepali with Nepal. We share Bengali with Bangladesh. We share Tamil with Sri Lanka and we share English with everybody else'. So we have this magnificent scope of connectivities and shared traditions. It involves our culture, our art, our music that provides vibrancy to the concept of inter-relationships in Arts and Culture in Indian subcontinent and the world.

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