

EDITORIAL

Death said, 'your son I shall take'
The bandit said 'I will your wealth'
Destiny said, 'I will take all that you call your own'
And the critic said, 'I will snatch away your name and fame'
But the poet gently smiled, 'Which one of you can take away the
felicity of my words?'

Rabindranath Tagore (*translation ours*)

These lines were written by Rabindranath Tagore, the bard of India, nearly a century ago yet their reverberations are felt even today. The Covid 19 pandemic has devastated humankind and indeed brought in its wake death, bandits and destiny that Tagore wrote about. Quite a few of us have lost some of our dear ones; human relations, finances, education, trade, tourism and sustainable development projects have all undergone a kind of change like never before. Even before all the people could be vaccinated and Covid 19 eradicated; before the world could get back on her feet economically and psychologically, the world has again been thrown into a crisis, this time manmade, in the shape of Russia's war on Ukraine. This is starkly reminiscent of another gruesome pandemic and another devastating war exactly a hundred years ago. Scabs have been removed and memory is translated into reality where anxiety of existence and trauma of separation have become bedfellows with a weird new normal. Yet, this is the juncture where the wordsmith creates and great literature is born. C.S. Lewis once said, "You can make anything by writing" and this could not have been truer than at the time of this global humanitarian crisis. Writers have indeed made literature, addressed the wounds and affected healing by mixing "memory and desire"; desperation and hope and subjugation and rebellion. In 1922, was published one of the greatest modernist poems of our times, *The Waste Land*. Nicolas Tredell has rightly argued at the outset of his essay "*The Waste Land: Trauma and Healing*", included in this volume of *Literary Oracle*, that "T. S. Eliot's great Modernist

poem *The Waste Land* was first published 100 years ago, in 1922, at a time when the world was trying to recover from a global trauma, or rather two combined traumas of a kind with which we are all too familiar today: war and pandemic". Pradipta Sengupta, with the help of gaze theory, interestingly highlights Eliot's involvement with visual culture and the avant-garde art movements of the twentieth century in "The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock", a precursor of *The Waste Land*. A. N. Dwivedi's essay "Indian Philosophy in Structuring *The Waste Land*" analyses the structure of the poem to expose the elements of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy that have gone into making the poem. Indrani Deb on her part argues about the currency of *The Waste Land* today and contends that the success and sustainability of the poem is because of its multicultural multi-religious nature. Devanshi's essay offers a new dimension in looking at the poem. She claims that the predicament of humans portrayed in the poem is a result of systematic technology induced dehumanisation. Kasturi Joddar makes a comparative study of *The Waste Land* and Arun Kolathkar's *Jejuri* positing the contemporary relevance and scope of *The Waste Land*. We hope that in future our contributors and other scholars will contribute more to T.S. Eliot scholarship.

Despite dark clouds of anxiety and uncertainty and a difficult limping back to normalcy through a new hybrid work culture in the cruel April heat, the Editors and publisher of *Literary Oracle* decided to bring out a special issue commemorating the hundred years of the publication of T.S. Eliot's magnum opus, *The Waste Land* while paying homage to his other poems too. We have worked hard and brought together scholars from across the globe and encased their erudition within the covers of our journal to 'make' a memorable special edition by paying homage to the greatest modernist poet T.S. Eliot, on occasion of the centenary of the publication of *The Waste Land* (1922) and also including research papers in varied areas and retaining our 'Interdisciplinary' and 'International' identity. We sent out a 'Call for Papers' when the third wave of the pandemic was raging around the world with the 'Omicron' fear shutting the doors and confining people again. We are honoured and humbled by the huge response of researchers as papers poured in from all the corners of the world. Scholars from United Kingdom, France, United States,

Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal and India reinforced our faith in our mission to create sustainable literary and social criticism that will help budding students, teachers and scholars alike. Aditi Jana's essay interrogates gender in the poems of Rupī Kaur and Tishani Joshi as they promote the disregard of margins and peripheries in the quest for self-identity. The double marginalisation of women in the Arab countries as they are subjected to multiple forms of violence and subjugation is the central core of discussion by Debabrata Das as he discusses the works of Ahdaf Soueif and Fadia Fakir. Dipankar Parui provokes the reader to delve deep into the fundamental questions raised by Amitav Ghosh in his landmark non-fiction work *The Great Derangement* regarding the lack of interest and concern over the serious ecocritical apocalypse in the world of literature. Khum Prasad Sharma presents an insightful analysis of Gita Kesari's path-breaking novel *Kasingara* which relates the tragic tale of a young girl, Maiya Saheb who is victim of patriarchy. The lack of sensitivity in the portrayal of disability in the Hindi film *Zero* is the topic of Manirul Islam's article and it also highlights the deprivation of disabled actors who enact the drama on celluloid. Claude Omhovère's thought-provoking paper discusses how landscape writing enhances the literary economy of the novel *Fire in the Rain* by Anita Desai. She argues how two landscape painting traditions that were a millennium apart- the *Shanshui* style of the Chinese and the Renaissance tradition of the West – were used by Desai in an interplay of pictorial traditions that upset static views of an eternal India steeped in tradition. The art of translation, its uses and difficulties have been delineated by Sukriti Ghoshal as he posits how translation interrogates the power structure and embraces internationalism. Suparna Roy's paper examines the peripheries of women as subjective objects in *Nobody Can Love You More* by Mayank Austen Soofi. The subjugation, ensuing depression and the inherent fortitude of African women that enables them to survive, is the central point of discussion by Thomas Jay Lynn, where he analyses the novel *Half a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

The scholarly papers and book reviews included in this issue address a vast gamut of multi-disciplinary deliberations that are relevant, thought-provoking and will surely add substantially to the

knowledge bank in related fields of inquiry and will serve to broaden the readers' awareness.

Literary Oracle welcomes suggestions from her readers and wishes them a happy reading experience.

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