

**EDITORIAL**

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The ninth issue of *Indialogs* is dedicated to Emotions and intended as a continuation of the thought-provoking work carried out during the fourth international seminar of the Spanish Association for Interdisciplinary India Studies (AEEII), successfully held online in early November 2020. Under the title “Affecting India: Identities at the Crossroads of Emotion in a Global World”, the event sought, as does this volume, to study the formation of identities in the light of feeling, or rather, to realise the complex intersections between Indianness and affects, two concepts as hard to accurately define as they are easy to oversimplify. Of special interest was the elusive overlap between cognition and emotion, as well as a potential translatability or transnational reach of the latter which could lead to the decolonisation of otherwise Eurocentric approaches. Authors in this issue never lose sight of the main objective as they expand it geographically and thematically in the thirteen pieces compiled, from the purely academic to the genuinely creative.

As the first three articles demonstrate, literature is indeed a conduit for emotions. María Luz González-Rodríguez analyses the significance of water imagery in Anita Rau Badami’s *The Hero’s Walk*, likening the fluidity of liquids to that of affect. Through a careful exploration of family dynamics along with bodies and homes used as receptacles of the non-physical, she contends that the ambivalent nature of water—a chaotic yet purifying element—can be transformative if, as presented in the novel, suppressed feelings are released in the face of trauma. The house as metaphor reappears and takes centre stage in the contribution by Mónica Fernández Jiménez, who interprets V.S. Naipaul’s *A House for Mr. Biswas* as a depiction of diasporas in the West Indies which, in being inclusive of the Indo-Caribbean community in particular, broadens the horizons of creolisation. Although or maybe because the idea of home resists closure, it must be constantly negotiated in parallel to the questioning of essentialist identities. In this vein, Meenakshi Malhotra interrogates Orientalism by drawing on selected writings of E.M.

Forster and Edward Thompson which prove complex enough not to perpetuate stereotypes about Hinduism. Unlike some of their literary predecessors and coevals, these novelists circumvent the imperialist agenda through a fictionalisation of India that encompasses not only power relations, but most importantly introspection.

In the remaining articles, Andrea de la Rubia turns to a different form of art to examine national images of Nepali-ness as portrayed in contemporary paintings, with greater emphasis on the work of Birendra Prataph Singh. She distinguishes two phases of artistic expression: the first being influenced by Western trends without abandoning its heritage in the representation of Nepal for a global world, and the second becoming more diverse in approach and style through the incorporation of emerging artists who embrace visual irony as a means of venting their emotions while conforming with the precepts of the Panchayat system. Shifting the focus to another community, Shahid Jamal, Aakash Upadhyay and Amrita Bajaj provide a qualitative in-depth study of the Dimasa tribe in the Dima Hasao district of Assam from a geocultural standpoint. It is suggested that, for the Judima rice wine so traditional in the region to be granted Geographical Indication status, written evidence of the relationship between places and products should not be mandatory in areas such as Northeast India, where orality abounds and ownership can be established through the passing down of social rituals.

The miscellanea section contains eight pieces which further cement the essential role that affects play across disciplines. Devarakshanam (Betty) Govinden honours the memory of the Indo-Fijian historian Professor Brij Vilash Lal with an intertextual poem and, in a logical continuation, the associations between writing and pain are tackled at length in Isabel Alonso-Breto's illuminating interview with the late Sri Lankan author Jean Arasanayagam, who comments on literary, social and political issues. For her part, Miriam Lamas Baiak delves into the bodily expression of emotion through Indian dances, remarking the detailed descriptions in books on the topic and the possibilities offered by a hyperconnected world. Next, Jaydeep Sarangi and Basudhara Roy contribute each a selection of poems, plus a moving essay by the former on childhood memories, which cover a wide gamut of emotions and, coincidentally, make express reference to healing, right before a review—also by Roy—of *The Partition of Indian Women*. As she notes, the gaze is of utmost importance in a work edited by Carole Rozzonelli, Alessandro Monti and again Jaydeep Sarangi which takes the titling notion beyond Indian independence in its address of gender issues. In the two reviews that follow, Gargi Dutta and Maria-Sabina Draga Alexandru respectively discuss Himadri Lahiri's *Asia Travels: Pan-Asian Cultural*

*Discourses and Diasporic Asian Literature/s in English* and Juan-José Martín-González's *Transoceanic Perspectives in Amitav Ghosh's Ibis Trilogy*. While the first book explores Asia in the broadest sense, the second one combines postcolonial studies with maritime criticism, thus returning to the concept of fluidity and bringing this volume full circle.

To conclude, it is imperative to thank all the people involved in the challenging publication of the present issue. As is known, this electronic journal is housed on the servers of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, which late last year suffered a major cyberattack that, among other disruptions, rendered the platform inaccessible for months. Credit must be given to the entire editorial team, particularly to the reviewers and the copyeditors for their generous work against the clock; infinite appreciation goes to the authors too for exercising patience and trusting us with their intellectual production. I personally extend my sincere gratitude to the General Editor, Felicity Hand, for the opportunity to guest-edit this issue, her commendable professionalism and, speaking of affects, also a deep caring about the success of *Indialogs*. May this volume feel relevant, inspiring and occasionally touching to those who invest their time in it. Happy reading!

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