

Editorial Note

We are delighted to bring out this issue of *Crossings*. After our take on the Entanglements of once-imperial English in the special volume just prior to this, we go back to our normal rhythm of presenting English Studies through the kaleidoscope of language, literature, and culture.

As usual, our undertaking of *Crossings* involves an occasional paper. Claire Chambers, an advisory editor of our journal, reflects on some of her “life-changing” moments in Afghanistan when she realized that ideas of freedom are not necessarily homogenous and universal. Her discovery of the local nuances of culture contests the West’s reductionist view of understanding culture through sartorial stereotypes such as burqas or miniskirts.

In the Literature and Cultural Studies section, the first article by Shantanu Das examines different spatial constructs in Saadat Hasan Manto’s “Ten Rupees,” the tale of a teenager being forced by her mother to be in the flesh trade, that both limit and release subjectivity.

In the next article, Sahelee Parveen Dipa challenges the normative masculinity attributed to freedom fighters through her provocative reading of a collection of letters written during the Liberation War of Bangladesh, *Ekattorer Chithi*. The passion with which the young men fought on the battlefields finds a different tenor when they write home to explain their purpose. For Dipa, personal letters become subjects of public attention as they define gendered nationalism.

Issa Omotosho Garuba, in his article, moves us to Nigeria where we are reminded of the therapeutic nature of creative art in Olu Obafemi’s *Running Dreams* while the psychoanalytic aspect of literature dictates Afruza Khanom’s reading of Grace Paley’s short story, “The Pale Pink Roast.” Khanom identifies and elaborates on the dark triad of Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy in the protagonist Peter to show how he applies these manipulative behaviors for his sensory marketing and exploitation of female sexuality.

The next article examines the Oscar-winning film *The Shape of Water* and the Japanese anime *Ponyo* to highlight material ecocriticism and its ethical dimension through which the fluidity of water is characterized in these contemporary films. Shibaji Mridha’s central argument lies in the insistence on the natural element’s ability to bridge the human and non-human divide.

In his article, Shaibal Dev Roy explores the poetry of African American slave poet, George Moses Horton, from an ecocritical point of view while Musarrat Shameem surveys the creative work of some female writers who use the virtual space, “Pencil,” to sculpt their cultural identity. Shameem’s primary research will allow readers to understand an emerging trend where the digital space is allowing more and more writers to eschew traditional publishing modes to take advantage of a shared, interactive platform for their group formation.

The last article of the Literature and Cultural Studies section compares two literary instances

of metamorphosis written with a gap of 100 years. Kafka's human-animal interchange is re-examined through a look at a Nigerian black man's story of transformation into a white man. Samirah Tabassum underscores the vulnerability of the protagonists in a capitalist calculus to forward her arguments on biopolitics.

The Language and Applied Linguistics section is enriched by Tran Nguen Quyen Anh's rendering of Vietnam's experience of dealing with English as a medium of instruction in Higher Education. The controlled group study on translanguaging practices can serve as a benchmark for other researchers. Similar primary data is available in Mohammad Shahedul Haque and Fatema Tuj Jannat's quantitative-contrastive study of vowel sounds in English and Spanish.

Jimalee Sowell applies transformative learning theory to understand the impact of exchange programs on pre-service English language teachers. Sowell writes from her personal experience but validates her hypothesis through some research tools to point out the deeper understanding of teaching gained by exchange fellows.

The last article of the section recounts the newly introduced ELT and "new liberal arts" in China. The pressure of internationalization is shaping new avenues of pedagogy which require comparative glances. Yidie Xu and Fang Fan remind us of our shared future road that is changing the face of English Studies.

The Book Review section introduces readers to an influential publication by the Asiatic Society that introduces Bangladeshi writers writing in English. Two expatriate academics, Mohammad A. Quayum and Md. Mahmudul Hasan, have taken a laudable initiative of critical mass needed for creative writers. This anthology, in its limited scope, mentions the pioneers who have earned a niche for Bangladeshi authors. Many of these authors reside abroad. The collection gives these authors a territorial tag that is not lost in the baggage of South Asian, Indian or Commonwealth literatures.

We are happy to note that our journal is receiving much critical attention. Our readers' feedback and references will help our scholars cross the distance and find new academic shores.

On behalf of the Editorial Board,

Shamsad Mortuza, PhD

Chief Editor