

ABOUT THE EDITORS



Prof. Hafiz Mohd Arif Nadvi currently serves as Professor and Head of the Department of Languages, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Integral University, Lucknow. A distinguished academician and scholar, Dr. Arif has made significant contributions to the field of literary studies, exploring themes of Orientalism and hermeneutics. He successfully introduced the appreciation Model of Orientalism to the Western World. Being a Polyglot, his approach to Multilingualism and Translation Studies makes his academic journey more exciting. Among noteworthy works include Elements of Orientalism in the Writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Thoreau, and Walt Whitman (2021) Dimensions of Orientalism (2012) Hermeneutics of Orientalism (2021), Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Kaifi Azmi's Revolutionary Vision (2024) and scholarly publications in reputed journals.



Dr. Aareena Nazneen is currently serving as an Assistant Professor at Integral University Lucknow, India. She has seven years of teaching experience at the University. She has been working as a Ph.D. Program coordinator and vice-chairperson QOAC at Integral University and supervising scholars for research in English Literature. She has been playing an active role as a coordinator in developing the syllabus of the BA (Hons.) program according to National Education Policy 2020, and it has been implemented w.e.f 2022 in the department. Her areas of interest are Victorian Literature, Popular Literature, 19th Century English Literature, Literary Theory and Criticism, Psychoanalysis, Ecocriticism, and teaching UG/PG students of English as well as the class of coursework for Ph.D. scholars. She is actively participating in research work, Supporting and facilitating in Research Design Committee (RDC), and supervising the scholar in research work, skilled in the translation of books from English to Hindi/Urdu vice-versa, skilled in the development of course curriculum/modules/training materials, Newsletters, Handbook, Journals, Annual Reports and other documentation with plagiarism check. Dr. Aareena Nazneen conducted several seminars and conferences including three International Faculty Development programs and an International Conference at Integral University. She has participated in and presented several papers in various seminars and conferences. She has been actively participating in research work. Her works have been published in renowned journals and edited books. She has also published her edited book in literature. She is the editor of several journals including SPL Journal of Literary Hermeneutics and the University Biannual Newsletter. She is also stepping forward to initiate Sustainable Development goals and agenda of climate change with Unicef and other organizations.



Dr. Vanya Srivastava is an Assistant Professor at Integral University, Lucknow, with over five years of teaching experience. She holds a doctorate in Bhutanese literature from the University of Lucknow and qualified for NET in 2018. A recipient of the "Best Actor" award from the National School of Drama, Delhi, she has served in key administrative roles including BA Program Coordinator and Convener of the International Faculty Development Program. Her contributions include designing the NEP English Syllabus and publishing research in various academic journals. Dr. Srivastava actively participates in national and international conferences, combining her literature, performing arts, and educational administration expertise.



Future Fact Society
C-4/270, Chetgani, Varanasi-221010, U.P.
E-mail : futurefactpub@gmail.com
Mob. : +91 9336924396, +91 7905318562



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Ecological Paradigms: Religious
Cultural and Environmental Interfaces

● Prof. H.M Arif ● Dr. Aareena Nazneen ● Dr. Vanya Srivastava



Ecological Paradigms: Religious Cultural and Environmental Interfaces



Edited By

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Dr. Aareena Nazneen
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FOREWARD

Environment, religion, and culture are three pivotal and profoundly interconnected subjects that drive contemporary discourse and are increasingly shaping the world of today and tomorrow. Often mistakenly viewed in isolation, these fields reveal their true significance when explored together, forming the foundation for many of the most pressing global challenges. They offer profound insight, not only into understanding the past and present but also into envisioning the complexities of the future and opening new avenues for discussion.

This volume proves particularly valuable for a wide range of readers. Scholars and researchers are here offered an impressive wealth of sources and perspectives, capable of broadening their intellectual horizons and stimulating new and fertile ideas. This volume will also act as an indispensable tool for students, who will learn how to think independently and “out of the box”. The interdisciplinary approach chosen for this work is also highly thought-provoking and ground-breaking.

One of the many elements that stands out is the emphasis the editors placed on the environment. The pandemic has served as a powerful reminder of the importance of ethical and respectful behavior toward the natural world, a theme this volume thoughtfully addresses. It also delves into the connection between global crises - both in the so-called global North and the global South - and the need for sustainability.

I would like to express my gratitude to Integral University for its commitment to a better, more inclusive and peaceful, as well as diversity-conscious future. I feel indebted to

inspiring colleagues I now consider friends. Heartfelt congratulations to the editors for the remarkable effort they have put into curating a volume that fills an important gap in criticism, while promising to inspire generations to come.

Prof. Elisabetta Marino

Associate Professor of English & America Studies,
Department of History, Humanities, and Society
University of Rome 'Tor Vergata', Italy



PREFACE

"Environment, Religion, and Culture: Promoting Intercultural Dialogue through Literature for Sustainable Development"

In an era marked by environmental crisis and cultural division, this edited volume emerges as a beacon of hope and understanding. By interweaving the threads of environment, religion, and culture through the lens of literature, we embark on a journey that transcends borders and bridges divides.

This collection brings together diverse voices from across the globe, each offering unique perspectives on our shared challenges. Through poetry, prose, and critical analysis, our contributors illuminate the intricate relationships between human spirituality, cultural practices, and the natural world.

As we confront the urgent need for sustainable development, this volume argues that literature serves as a powerful medium for fostering intercultural dialogue. By engaging with narratives that span different faiths and traditions, readers are invited to explore common ground and cultivate empathy.

The works presented here not only critique unsustainable practices but also celebrate indigenous wisdom and innovative solutions. They challenge us to reimagine our relationship with the environment and with each other, paving the way for a more harmonious and sustainable future.

We hope that the readers find our approach for worthy future discussions and academic attention.

For a green future!

Prof. H.M. Arif
Head, Languages

Dr. Aareena Nazneen
Assistant Professor, Languages

Dr. Vanya Srivastava
Assistant Professor, Languages



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Indian Cinema as a Medium to Redefine Narratives about Witches Built by Religion and Culture

Mohd. Adeel

Research Scholar, Department of English, University of Lucknow

Abstract–

This paper tries to examine what makes Witches an interesting topic in the contemporary arts, especially in visual medium. What personality attributes of them are making them relatable for today's modern, educated, emancipated women and why they are emerging as global icons for women. Contemporary Indian cinema is successfully building a counter narrative to break the popular narrative established by Culture and Religion. How cinema narrative has shifted from being the victim or villain as witches. Indian cinema is a powerful tool for social reflection. It has witnessed significant transformations over the years, particularly in its portrayal of women characters. Within this paradigm shift, the portrayal of witches has evolved from stereotypical, malevolent figures to empowering feminist icons. This research paper explores the journey of witches as feminist symbols in contemporary Indian cinema, examining how these characters have come to represent strength, independence, and resistance against patriarchal norms. Drawing on a qualitative analysis of selected films, this paper delves into the nuances of these portrayals and their impact on Indian society's perception of women.

Keywords – Religion, Culture, Women, Patriarchy, Counter Narratives, Gender Representation

Ecological Paradigms: Religious Cultural and Environmental Interfaces

Introduction

For centuries witches have been depicted as sinister, malevolent beings, serving as cautionary tales or symbols of societal fears and anxieties. However, in recent years, Indian cinema has taken a remarkable turn, transforming these mythical beings into symbols of empowerment and resistance against oppressive gender norms. To comprehend the significance of this cinematic shift, a brief historical context is necessary. Traditionally, women in Indian cinema were typecast into limited roles, confined to portrayals of submissive wives, dutiful daughters, or tragic heroines. These representations perpetuated regressive gender norms, reinforcing the patriarchal order prevalent in society. In Religion and Culture, Witches were depicted as vile antagonists, embodying the male-dominated notion of women as evil and conniving beings. The Culture and Religion always painted witches as villains, later literature made them victims and now cinema is emancipating them and making them a feminist icon. In Every Religion and culture, they are depicted as malicious, evil and ugly looking creatures out there to disrupt humanity and God. The mention of Witches is there in Christianity, their counterparts in Hinduism as dayaan , Churail or Dakkani and Ifrat , a female jinn in Islam . In words of writer Moni Mohsin “Most cultures have their own version of these bad girls. The witch of Endor appears in the Bible; sorceresses in the Torah; Circe in Greek mythology; Baba Yaga in Russian folklore. Aside from not providing a son for her fat, petulant husband, among Anne Boleyn’s many listed crimes that justified her beheading, was also that she was a witch.” Such depiction and notions gender typed gave rise to crime against women under witch craft hunting or trials in society.

In the early modern period, from about 1400 to 1775, about 100,000 people were prosecuted for witchcraft in Europe and British America. Between 40,000 and 60,000 were executed. The witch-hunts