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Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández and Antonia Navarro-Tejero, eds.  
*India in the World*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars  
Publishing, 2011. Pp. xvii, 305. US\$75.99.

I'm asking my university library to buy *India in the World* and plan to assign chapters from this book in my postcolonial literature courses this year. Why? Because more than a few of the essays are exactly what I have been looking for as a teacher and scholar of postcolonial literature.

The range of authors and genres covered make this book a rich resource. There are essays analyzing novels by writers often considered canonical to postcolonial literature such as Anita Desai, R.K. Narayan, and Salman Rushdie. There are also essays on less canonical writers such as Ananda Devi (Indo-Mauritian Francophone writer of Telegu descent), Manju Kapur (Delhi-based Anglophone writer), and Sunny Singh (London-based Anglophone writer). Despite this emphasis on novels and novelists, those interested in other forms of cultural production such as poetry, art, film, and comics need not despair. Of particular interest is Joel Kuortti's "'City and Non-City': Political Issues in *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones*," which analyzes, contextualizes, and contrasts Arundhati Roy's lesser-known screenplay (and later film) of the same title against her well-known novel *The God of Small Things*.

Another highlight of this book's range is that its topics vary across time, space, and perspective in unexpected ways. It is not often that one comes across a book that offers insight into the Indian response to *El Quijote* and how the principles of Sanskrit poetics open up J.M. Coetzee's *Slow Man*! The variety of perspectives also extends to approaches to literary analysis and

cultural studies—from analyzing the modernist aestheticism in Anita Desai's fiction to a feminist reading of R.K. Narayan's *The Dark Room*.

Aside from its engaging breadth, most of the essays in this book excel at offering the seemingly elusive yet increasingly necessary combination of being short and effectively contextual. Since the essays average ten pages each, with the longest essay being only twenty pages long, they are an ideal source of readings for undergraduate students. The best part is that such brevity does not come at the expense of context. Indeed, this is one of the few collections of short essays that offers the necessary historical, cultural, or theoretical context for readers to grasp the significance of the argument and analysis presented.

The advantages of such efficiently contextual essays cannot be over-emphasized. Felicity Hand's "From Inscrutable Indians to Asian Africans," for instance, because it presents an overview of the South Asian presence in East Africa before, during, and after colonization, could profitably accompany a study of East Africa not just in literary studies such as a reading of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child* but also in cultural studies, especially of race and ethnicity in Uganda and Kenya. It also moves students and scholars alike from a more simplistic black-white binary in African studies to a more nuanced one by introducing hybrid writers like M.G. Vassanji who was "born in Nairobi of parents of Indian descent . . . grew up in Dar es Salaam, studied in the United States and now resides in Canada" (81). The nuancing of binary understandings of race and ethnicity—one that productively distinguishes different historical waves of immigration in various parts of the world—is a key feature of the essays in this collection. Elisabeth Dambock's "Exoticism Stops at the Second Hyphen" is perhaps the strongest piece to wrestle with this issue in the collection.

Yet that is not the only contribution Dambock's essay makes. Building on Graham Huggan's *The Postcolonial Exotic*, Dambock tackles two key questions facing the field of postcolonial literature: First, to what extent is postcolonial literature as it is practiced in research, teaching, and writing today true to the "anti-colonial intellectualism that reads and valorizes the signs of social struggle in the fault lines of literary and colonial texts" (17), and to what extent does being true to this framework make postcolonial literature relevant to our times? Second, to what extent is the teaching of postcolonial literature rendering postcolonial subjects a "consumable Other" and their literature and culture "culturally 'othered' goods" (18)? Dambock's efforts to historicize, contextualize, and critique the academic field, market phenomenon, and term of "postcolonial literature" enables readers to self-consciously reflect on their relationship with postcolonial literature. Assigning Dambock's essay at

the end of an introductory course on postcolonial literature could encourage students to be critical of the ways in which they've been socialized to respond to postcolonial literature, subjects, and cultures.

What Dambock's essay does with the phenomenon of "postcolonial literature," other essays in the collection take up with other significant ideas. Laura Peco González captures the changing meanings of the term "Anglo-Indian," something worth discussing when studying E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*. Maurice O'Connor's explanation of the significance of Kashmir in the history of India-Pakistan relations would serve any reading of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*. Antonia Navarro-Tejero's overview of feminism in India and Rosalía Villa Jiménez's informative discussion of sati would be ideal companions to Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak." In short, because of the wealth of context that these essays provide, there are multiple ways in which they would compliment teaching and research on South Asian literature, postcolonial studies, and even postcolonial theory.

If I must discuss weak points, two of the essays seemed overly general and underdeveloped possibly because of time or space constraints. This was disappointing because their topics were valuable. Also, some of the essays bear the limits of working in English as a second language or in translation. Still, missing articles, misplaced prepositions, or confused word choice only made it a little difficult to follow three essays in this collection of twenty-five; it is nothing adept readers of difficult texts cannot work through. It might even enable reflection on the dominance of English as a global language—another key concern for postcolonial literature. As I said in the beginning, *India in the World* is a rich resource for students, teachers, and scholars. Mine it.

Lena Khor