

and use of historical figures justify his strong sense of cosmopolitanism, and his use of English “reveals a curious logic . . . : to be English, or to identify as English, is to have no identity” (109). Jung-ha Kim explores Karen Tei Yamashita’s first novel, *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest*, to analyze the issue of material eco-cosmopolitanism. She finds that “Yamashita extends the scope of cosmopolitanism beyond its humancentric genealogy to reach toward the landscape of clamorous agencies and their affiliations to come” (161). Her study finds in Yamashita’s novel that the transformation of human waste into an animated plastic field, “the Matacão,” gives the substance magically magnetic power “that entices the characters and brings them together” (161). Paul Tennngart, in the book’s last essay, looks at climate fiction to explore cosmopolitanism in the wake of global warming. He argues that cosmopolitan lifestyles are greatly changed due to global warming in post-apocalyptic narratives. His study not only finds several types of cosmopolitanism in the novels but also gives a picture of various outlooks on cosmopolitanism in the climate crisis.

Overall, this collection is informative and important. A comprehensive conclusion for the book by the editors, along with a few more essays from Oceania and the Middle East, would be fantastic. Moreover, those newer to the field might find the book too complex and difficult. These are, however, minor flaws in a pivotal work that paves the way for further debates and discussions about the various forms of cosmopolitanism in contemporary (world) literature.

Md Mujib Ullah

Maaz Bin Bilal. *Ghazalnama: Poems From Delhi, Belfast, and Urdu*. Yoda, 2019. Pp. 126. USD \$19.99.

Maaz Bin Bilal’s debut collection of poetry, *Ghazalnama: Poems from Delhi, Belfast, and Urdu*, is an original and provocative offering in the landscape of South Asian poetry in English. This collection undertakes the significant task of transforming the terrain of lyric poetry from traditional expression of private feeling to active engagement with controversial issues in the public sphere.

As indicated in its title, *Ghazalnama* is an exploration of the ghazal, a literary form that consists of “syntactically and grammatically complete couplets” (“Ghazal”). Additionally, “the form also has an intricate rhyme scheme. Each couplet ends on the same word or phrase (the *radif*), and is preceded by the

couplet's rhyming word (the *qafia*, which appears twice in the first couplet)" ("Ghazal"). This form originated in Arabic and was later adopted into Persian and, through cultural transportation, found a home in the Indian subcontinent and in the Urdu language. Indeed, the Urdu section of the collection consists of Maaz's recreation of ghazals composed by acclaimed Urdu poets, such as Bulleh Shah, Amir Khusrau, Ghalib, Bahadur Shah Zafar (the last Mughal king of India), Faiz Ahmed Faiz, and Sahir Ludhianvi. In rendering the ghazal into English, Maaz follows in the footsteps of other English-language poets who have experimented with this form, particularly Kashmiri American poet Agha Shahid Ali. This section of poems translated from Urdu has great thematic range. Of these, "Let's Live in that Place" is remarkable for its taut simplicity and depiction of bleak despair in Ghalib's evocation of loneliness and oblivion. From moods of despair and alienation in Ghalib, Maaz moves from the depiction of a deep Sufi sensibility in the devotional lyric "Colour" by Khusrau, who sings in praise of the mystic Nizamuddin Aulia, to "Holi," attributed to the mystic Bulleh Shah, a poem which breaks down religious divisions in favor of common devotional practices. In "Holi," Maaz masterfully evokes the syncretic spiritual heritage of India, where Islam and Hinduism are inextricably interwoven like the warp and weft of a fabric. The poem opens "I will play Holi beginning in the name of the Lord, saying bismillah" (69), appearing to fuse a devotional bhajan of Mirabai, the Bhakti poet whose songs expressed her unrequited love for Krishna, with a Qur'anic invocation at the beginning of a ceremony. The poem goes on to represent the scene of all the maidens worshipping Krishna as their lover and responds to Krishna's question, "Am I not your Lord?" (69), with the Islamic refrain, "There is only one God" (69). This is a bold, imaginative act of fusing the monotheism of Islam with the devotional aspects of the Hindu Bhakti tradition, subverting the increasingly pervasive idea that these two religious traditions of the Indian subcontinent have always been mutually exclusive. The more modern poem of Sahir Ludhianvi, "Be it Gandhi, Be it Ghalib," laments the passing of two heroes: one credited with the successful campaign for India's independence and the other for the creation of an Urdu literary tradition. The poem is elegiac, mourning the passing of Gandhian ideals as well as the disappearance of Urdu as a living language in India because of the imposition of Hindi in Devanagari script as India's official language. In this poem, Ludhianvi mourns not the loss of religious traditions that Gandhi and Ghalib represent, but the ideals of non-violence, justice, equality, and harmony that each strove for.

The other sections of the book consist of Maaz's original poetry and map the trajectory beginning with his early life in Delhi, segueing into Belfast

where he spent several years as a doctoral student, and ending with a return to Delhi. The first Delhi section begins with many traditional themes found in ghazals, like the trials of romantic love, rendered in rhyming couplets. But there is an abrupt change in theme and form with the poem "Knowledge 1," which portrays the traumatic loss of the poet's father. Although a couplet, true to the ghazal, each main line is broken into thirds, creating a sense of fracture and unresolved pain. In the next few poems, the focus broadens to encompass many volatile issues in the public sphere. "Scars" is a longer narrative poem that captures the trauma of Kashmir's continued state of insurgency and contrasts it with the region's pristine past of cultural and religious harmony, saffron fields, and snow, which are now sullied by the smell of burning flesh. In the Belfast section, Maaz creates vignettes of diasporic life in poems like "Biryani in Belfast" but also displays an emerging cosmopolitan sensibility. While still rooted in India and the cadences of the Urdu ghazal, he expands toward concerns about Palestine in "A Ghazal for Gaza," which forges a kinship with Kashmir, explored in other poems through the connection of two heavily militarized states under neocolonial occupation.

In the concluding section of *Ghazalnama*, we are transported back to Delhi, but the city is almost unrecognizable from the earlier section. In "Air Black," we are plunged into the thick smog, a recurrent environmental hazard in Delhi, and Maaz portrays Delhi as "an opium den / where everyone's an addict / of toxic scum" (92). The "Amaltas-Monsoon" poem offers some relief to this oppressive air, which seems reminiscent of a different more verdant Delhi. The critique of environmental pollution grows into anguish over Kashmir in "A Shriek About Kashmir, July 2016." "Muslimah" is the most memorable poem in this section because it satirizes many stereotypes of Muslim women's identity and attempts to present a variety and heterogeneity of Muslim women's roles.

Ghazalnama is a reminder of the power and beauty of the ghazal form and the contribution of this form to the syncretic cultural history of India. At a time when the idea of the secular Indian nation is facing potential erasure under rising forces of Hindu nationalism, this work acquires great significance, while also reminding us of the rich resources of Indian spiritual and poetic traditions in imagining a more inclusive and just future. Maaz Bin Bilal fuses his intimate familiarity with the genre and history of the ghazal with a cosmopolitan sensibility, extending the realm of the ghazal beyond the Indian subcontinent so it can become a conduit for the shared sufferings of many people denied a homeland and self-determination. Maaz's achievement is to establish political solidarity for disenfranchised people, while remaining meticulous in his technical practice of the form. Political commitment

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and formal innovation gracefully complement each other in this collection. *Ghazalnama* marks the arrival of a talented practitioner of the ghazal, one who celebrates its rich history and pursues innovations that express the exigencies of the present fragile geopolitical moment.

Lopamudra Basu

Work Cited

“Ghazal.” *Poetry Foundation*, poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms/ghazal. Accessed 12 May 2021.