

Bangladesh

The Journal of Commonwealth Literature

2019, Vol. 54(4) 533–549

© The Author(s) 2019

Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/0021989419877045

journals.sagepub.com/home/jcl



compiled and introduced by

Mafruha Mohua and **Mahruba T. Mowtushi**

University of London and University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh

Introduction

Although comparatively few writers from East Bengal/Bangladesh have opted to write in English, from the late 1960s onwards there has been a steady trickle of English translations of Bengali works.

The first such example is Syed Waliullah's *Lal Shalu* (1948), translated by the author in 1967 as *Tree without Roots*. While the aftermath of the partition of 1947 witnessed large-scale dislocation of people, regional relocations within the eastern frontiers of Bengal further complicated the many nuances of migration and reparation. *Tree without Roots* is one of the best-known novels by an East Bengali set in the newly created East Pakistan and presents an invaluable assessment of the role of religion in the construction of a Pakistani national consciousness. The story follows the travels and eventual resettlement of an ingenious Muezzin whose devout mysticism fittingly conceals the existential angst of a distressed man masquerading as a *Pir* (holy man). *Tree without Roots* is a brilliant exposition of the politics behind religious dogma in the rural outskirts of post-1947 Eastern Bengal. Yet what is curious about the novel is the complete absence of any direct reference to the Partition of 1947.

Writing of the Partition of the Indian subcontinent, Joya Chatterji notes that there is still a “gaping void at the heart of the subject”. In Bengal this void is experienced as a double emptiness. Firstly, the ordinary people of Bengal, like those of Punjab, could not fathom the logic of drawing “shadow lines”, to use Amitabh Ghosh's evocative phrase, across ancestral lands. Secondly, there is the strange case of the reluctance of Bengali writers to address the event. Unlike Hindi and Urdu writers, Bengali writers, to the bafflement and, at times, disappointment of critics, have remained relatively silent on this momentous event.

East Bengali/East Pakistani writers often took an oblique perspective on Partition, their work according more importance to the seemingly insignificant than the big events of Partition. Waliullah's widely anthologized short story “Ekti Tulsi Gacher Kahini” (1965), translated as “The Tale of a Tulsi Plant” and collected in *Mapmaking: Partition Stories of Two Bengals* (2003), is a case in point. The story recounts the experience of a

Corresponding author:

Mafruha Mohua, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU, UK.

Email: mafruha.mohua@qmul.ac.uk

group of Muslim men who take over an abandoned house in Dhaka, having fled Calcutta. The only allusion, in the story, to the violence of Partition is when Maddabar discovers a dying tulsi plant in the courtyard. His shock in seeing a harmless plant may at first seem excessive. But his anger stems from the symbolism of the tulsi plant which is sacred to Hindus and in whose homes the plant is prominently present. Maddabar's intention to uproot the plant, symbolic of the way he and his fellow refugees have been uprooted from West Bengal, is met with resistance from Yusuf, a quiet, hypochondriacal man, who has a bad cold. He observes that the tulsi plant has medicinal values and is particularly effective in curing colds. The plant is allowed to live and thrives under the care of the refugees. However, the police eventually raid the house and evict the squatters. The story ends with a reference to the tulsi plant which is once again dying in an empty house. Waliullah's reference to Partition in this story is highly unconventional. He not only brings a degree of humour to this otherwise bleak and violent event but also carries out a form of modernist demystification. The story downplays the conventional trope of the refugees' sense of displacement and intense longing for a lost home. The young men, who remember Calcutta as a polluted and crowded city, are content to occupy the sprawling two-storey house which, with its large courtyard and a "mini-forest" of fruit trees, appears to be an arcadia. There is even a tantalizing hint of a social revolution, albeit short-lived, as signified by the occupation of a house which symbolizes the wealth and comfort of the Bengali bourgeoisie by working class refugees. Also significant is the story's reluctance to invoke religion, for the plant is saved not because the refugees choose to respect Hindu beliefs but for a purely utilitarian and, one might say, trivial reason. Conversely, uprooting the plant would have suggested a form of Islamic fundamentalism of the kind which took over both East and West Pakistan after Partition.

Although direct representation of Partition is a rare occurrence in East Bengali literature, the post-1947 writers were vociferous in their criticism of West Pakistan. Shaikat Osman's *Kritodasher Hashi* (1962) rendered into English by Kabir Chowdhury as *The Laughter of a Slave* (1970) is a criticism of the repressive military regime of Ayyub Khan (1958–1969), when political parties were banned, activists imprisoned, newspapers and publishing houses censored. The novel presents a story within a story. The embedded narrative, set in the Baghdad of the fifth Abbasid Caliph (789–809 AD), reveals the tale of Tatari, a black slave, who falls in love with and secretly marries an Armenian slave-girl Meherjan. Arranged by the Caliph's wife Begum Zubaida, but not sanctioned by the Caliph, the marriage is illegal and, therefore, must remain a secret. Begum Zubaida offers the lovers a hut on the palace grounds where they have their clandestine nocturnal unions, with Tatari whiling away the night laughing heartily. On one such night, while the Caliph is strolling near the hut, he hears a full-throated laughter. His enjoyment of the laugh is such that he forgives Tatari's transgression, releases him from bondage and installs him in a luxurious abode. The free Tatari's only duty is to laugh at the Caliph's request. Yet, in his gilded cage, Tatari can no longer laugh. After many efforts to coax laughter out of Tatari the enraged Caliph has him punished and imprisoned.

In Osman's novel, Tatari's story is embedded within the frame narrative of the discovery by a group of friends in a remote village in East Pakistan of a remarkable manuscript in the possession of Fariduddin, a 90-year-old scholar of Perso-Arabic literature. Fariduddin reveals that during the siege of Baghdad in 1258 by Mongol forces, the

manuscript was taken to Hindustan and came into the possession of Shah Shuja, the Mughal Governor of Bengal (1648–1661). After the Mughal war of succession between Shah Shuja and his brothers, the manuscript was lost and eventually resurfaced in the village of Jaunpur and into the hands of Fariduddin. The manuscript is, however, more intriguing than its fantastic journey to East Bengal. It bears the title *Alif Laila wa Lailanai* (“Thousand and Two Nights”), not the commonly known *Alif Laila wa Laila* (“The Thousand and One Nights”). When the friends protest that this must be a fake manuscript, an incensed Fariduddin says that those who are slaves of a colonial state can only believe what has been taught by the colonial power. In this “original” manuscript of Scheherazade’s nocturnal storytelling there is an extra night and, therefore, an extra story, titled “Jahakul Abad” or “Laughter of a Slave”.

The discovery of the authentic manuscript of the Arabian tales, an integral part of the literary tradition of pre-colonial India, destabilises British colonial narratives and succeeds in restoring native agency in the novel. In a deft stroke, Osman links the rule of West Pakistan over East Pakistan with British colonialism, a view that was widespread amongst many Bengalis. In many significant ways Osman’s novel captures the struggle for cultural and political sovereignty of the people of East Bengal.

Kabir Chowdhury’s second translation is Alauddin Al Azad’s *Portrait Number 23* (1976) originally *Teish Nombor Toilchitro* (1961). In an Art Exhibition in Karachi, a painting of a child and mother titled *Bashundhara* (“Mother Earth”) earns much praise. The artist from East Pakistan tells the story of the painting to a select group of friends. It transpires that the painting’s prototypes are, in fact, the artist’s wife, Chobi, and their new-born child. Through a series of subjects, we discover the turbulent nature of their relationship, of how the artist pursued Chobi and his disappointment, very much like Angel Clare in Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, when he discovers on their wedding night that Chobi is not the simple, “pure” girl he imagined. Angered, he lashes out at Chobi, who then reveals a secret from her past, of being seduced by a business associate of her brother, the subsequent abortion that she secretly arranged and her continual sense of guilt and longing for the child that she could not have.

Anwar Pasha’s *Rifle, Roti, Aurat* was written between April and June 1971, posthumously published in 1973 and translated into English as *Rifles, Bread and Women* in 1976. The novel is narrated by Sudipto Shaheen, a Professor of English Literature at Dhaka University. The story unfolds during three days in the last week of March 1971. On the night of March 25, 1971, the Pakistani army took over strategic locations in Dhaka, including Dhaka University, and systematically massacred thousands. Pasha, who witnesses the execution style killings in Dhaka University, sets the novel during the three days following 25 March. Through conversations and reminisces, the novel reveals the socio-political inequities experienced by the people of East Pakistan and of the inevitability of the war of liberation. The novel ends with the confident assertion that East Pakistan will become Bangladesh. Anwar Pasha, however, would not see the victory he predicted. On 14 December 1971, two days before the end of the war, he was picked up from his home by the Pakistani army and killed. His murder was part of the planned killings spearheaded by Major General Rao Forman Ali of writers, artists, professors, schoolteachers, lawyers and doctors intended to cripple East Bengal intellectually. As part of General Ali’s plan over a thousand intellectuals were killed, many on 14 December 1971.

The 1971 War of Liberation is a major theme of Bangladeshi literature. One of the most captivating books to come out of the experience of the War of Liberation is Shaheen Akhtar's *Talaash* (2004) translated into English by Ella Dutta as *The Search* (2011). The central character of Akhtar's story is Mariam, also known as Mary, who is one of the 200,000–400,000 women raped by the Pakistani military and their collaborators. The occasion of the revelation of Mary's experience in the military camps is the arrival, 25 years after the war, of a young researcher named Mukti who wants to write a book on the survivors of wartime rape. Partly through the answers to Mukti's questions and partly through flashbacks, the reader is able to piece together the experiences of the women kept as "sex slaves" by the Pakistani army. Although the Bangladeshi government bestowed on these women the honorary title of *Birangona* (war heroine), a proper rehabilitation was never accomplished.

It is entirely possible for a reader to enjoy Akhtar's evocatively written novel as it is, without having to track the many instances of intertextuality. Yet Akhtar's novel can be better understood and appreciated in conjunction with some key texts, most significant of which is Nilima Ibrahim's *Ami Birangona Bolchi*. During the immediate aftermath of the war, Ibrahim was a social worker involved in setting up rehabilitation centres for rape victims. It was during this time that Ibrahim, shocked by the revelation that many of the rape victims who were abandoned by their families chose to accompany the Pakistani army to the prisoner of war camps in India, interviewed some of the *Birangonas*. Ibrahim, deeply disturbed by the *Birangonas'* decision to join their Pakistani rapists, would not publish these interviews until 1994. In 2017 Fayeza Hasanat's translation of Ibrahim's text, *A War Heroine, I Speak*, was brought out by Bangla Academy.

Akhtar's novel also sets up a dialogue with Rizia Rahman's *Rokter Okkhor* (1978), translated into English as *Letters of Blood* (2016). Rahman's novel is one of the first works of fiction that criticises the crass stigmatization of survivors of wartime rape. As *Letters of Blood* makes clear, many such survivors, shunned by family and friends, turned to voluntary prostitution not only out of desperation, but also out of sheer anger and resentment against a social order that failed to constructively address their trauma. Instead, amidst loud political proclamations, constitutional decrees were passed by the newly formed nation around the discourse of *Birangona*, which in actuality had the obverse effect of silencing rape survivors and of further homogenizing their collective experiences through a bourgeois, patriarchal narrative.

A large number of Bangladeshi novels on the 1971 war are implicitly informed by a sense of the uncertainty, confusion and disappointment that resulted from the newly formed government's handling of the *Birangonas*. Important questions are being raised today by this fiction (in both Bengali and in English) on the constitutional drawbacks and failures of political mandates in constructively addressing and rehabilitating the hundreds of thousands of women and men traumatized by the atrocities of wartime rape and abuse.

Just as the figure of the *Birangona* haunts post-independence Bangladesh, the Urdu-speaking Bihari community presents another unreconciled tension in the narrative of Bengali nationalism. Post-independence Bangladesh refuses to forget or to forgive the Bihari community's pro-Pakistan stance in the course of 1971. Through the medium of photo-narratives, the German photographer Maria Litwa presents the life stories of the

stranded Bihari communities in Dhaka's Geneva Camp and their experiences of displacement and discrimination. Several leading works of fiction on the 1971 war, such as Tahmima Anam's *The Good Muslim* (2011) and Ruby Zaman's *Invisible Lines* (2011), provide a critical assessment of the widespread discrimination that the Bihari community suffered in the wake of 1971.

Also set in independent Bangladesh is Anisul Hoque's *Ayeshamangal* (2015), translated into English as *The Ballad of Ayesha* (2018). Modelled on the celebrated Bengali folk heroine Behula from the medieval classics *Shiva Puranas* and the *Manasamangala Kavyas*, *The Ballad of Ayesha* is a modern rendition of Behula's epic quest to plead with the gods to bring her husband, Lakhandar, back to life. Hoque's novel is roughly based on the actual disappearance and murder of a young Air Force officer in the aftermath of the military coup that was orchestrated by a section of the Bangladesh Air Force in Dhaka in 1977. Hoque's rendition of the events leading to and following the 1977 coup offers a perceptive historical commentary on the Bangladeshi military government under President Ziaur Rahman, a period of escalating political tensions and disillusionment. The protagonist of the novel is the young officer's wife, Ayesha. After the disappearance of her husband, she is forced to return to the village widowed, destitute and apprehensive of what the supposed glories of liberation and independence entail for rural women such as herself, for whom independence brought financial hardship, societal shame and intense loneliness. Through Ayesha's long and painful search for her husband, Hoque critiques the country's protracted political turmoil under consecutive governments that failed to live up to the initial promises of the newly independent Bangladesh.

In 2015 the Dhaka Translation Centre of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) in collaboration with Bengal Lights Books launched the Library of Bangladesh, a series of translations of leading Bangladeshi writers. The first two translations from this series are a collection of twelve stories by Hasan Azizul Huq and two novellas, *Blue Venom* and *Forbidden Incense*, by Syed Shamsul Haq. Since then, the series has brought out five more books by Moinul Ahsan Saber, Imdadul Haq Milan, Rizia Rahman, Shaheed Quaderi and Shaheen Akhtar.

In 2018, the Library of Bangladesh series published Shaheed Quaderi's *Selected Poems*, translated by Kaiser Haq. Quaderi, along with Shamsur Rahman, Bilal Chowdhury, Al Mahmud and Rafiq Azad, belonged to the group of poets who came of age in the 1950s. They would often congregate in a hotel delightfully named "Beauty Boarding" in the labyrinthine vicinity of old Dhaka. By the mid-60s the Beauty Boarding poets produced ground-breaking work, which, although under the influence of the modernist poets of the 1930s, had a distinct style of its own. Quaderi was undoubtedly the most innovative and unabashedly modernist of the group. Haq's superb translation consists of 55 poems selected from Quaderi's first published collection, *Uttaradhikar* (1967) to *Godhulir Gaan*, published posthumously in 2017.

Beloved Rongomala, Shaheen Akhtar's fourth novel, is the latest in the Library of Bangladesh series. It is a fictional account of the feud between Raj Chandra Chowdhury, the heir to the Babupur Zamindari, and his uncle and acting Regent Rajendra Narayan Chowdhury over Raj Chandra's unacceptable love-affair with the nautch girl, Rongomala. Akhtar's novel is a vivid portrayal of life in south-eastern Bengal in 1700s. The novel

reveals the capricious nature of Zamindari power, the inner domain of the women, the alluring Rongomala, and the enigmatic wife of Raj Chandra, Phuleswari, who comes to Babupur with a magnificent dowry that not only consists of jewelleries that her husband purloins but also a fantastic menagerie of exotic birds who are Phuleswari's most cherished companions. There is also Adam Ali, a merchant seaman, bewitched by a Burmese "witch" Ayi-Ma, who remains for a time in Burma, forgetting his family in Babupur until he is able to break the spell and return to his wife Ayna, the daughter of Karim Sheikh, chief boatman of the Zamindar family. There is also an Englishman, a tax collector of the East India Company, who whiles away his time spying on the village women through his telescope, a device which intrigues the inhabitants of Babupur. In fact, in Akhtar's novel, the problem that arises in the Chowdhury family is not entirely due to Raj Chandra's excessive fondness of Rongomala, breaking the strict codes of caste, but to the wealth of the royal family being drained by excessive taxation by the East India Company. Although the English tax collector makes infrequent appearances, his power is felt throughout the novel.

The earliest translation and assessment of the 18th-century ballads in East Bengal that tell the story of Rongomala and the feuding Chowdhurys can be found in Dineshchandra Sen's *Eastern Bengal Ballads* (1923-32). Sen makes use of the many records of the East India Company regarding the Zamindari of Babupur to provide the historical and economic background of this legend. More recently, David Curley has offered an insightful assessment of how Rongomala's ballads reveal the dynamics of Zamindari power in 18th century Bengal.

In Akhtar's novel we also see the interconnected history of south-eastern Bengal and Myanmar, especially the region of Rakhine or what used to be known as Arakan. Thibaut d'Hubert's *In the Shade of the Golden Palace: Alaol and Middle Bengali Poetics in Arakan* (2018) is a timely study, which, like Akhtar's novel, explores "the Bengal-Arakan continuum". Through a critical assessment of the poetry of Alaol (1651-1671), a Bengali who became the chief court poet of Mrauk U, the capital of Arakan, d'Hubert offers an in-depth discussion of the adoption of "Perso-Arabic political culture" of Chittagong (south-eastern Bangladesh) by the Buddhist kings of Arakan. From 1430 to 1784 Bengali poets and merchants played a key role in Arakan, acting as the "main intermediaries" between the Buddhist kings and the larger Islamic world. For the Arakanese kings, Chittagong was the cosmopolitan centre of Bengali culture and exerted a strong influence in Arakan. The story of Alaol's presence in the court of Mrauk U is as fantastic as the feuding Chowdhurys of Akhtar's novel. Alaol was born into a rich and educated family in Bengal, his father a counsellor to the King of Fattihabad. While accompanying his father on a business trip to Chittagong, their boat was attacked by Luso-Arakanese pirates. His father was killed in the attack and Alaol was taken as a slave to Mrauk U, where he became a royal horseman and eventually a celebrated poet.

Intriguingly there is an important subplot in Akhtar's *Beloved Rongomala* involving Portuguese pirates who kidnap Jaggeswari, a Brahmin girl. Although Jaggeswari eventually manages to escape, she is by then with child and realizes that a return to her home and family is no longer possible. Jaggeswari becomes a celebrated courtesan. Phuleswari's slave-servant, Heera, is none other than Jaggeswari's granddaughter, her blue eyes a painful reminder of her grandmother's loss of caste.

2018 also saw the publication of *Noakhali to Infinity*, Dipankar Narayan Roy's account of his family's flight from Noakhali to Calcutta during the aftermath of the Partition of 1947. Interestingly, Dipankar Narayan Roy is a direct descendant of the Royal family of Akhtar's novel. Both Dipankar Narayan Roy and the Chowdhurys in *Beloved Rongomala* trace their lineage to Raja Biswambhar Sur, the first ruler of the Kingdom of Bhulua, the ancient name of present-day Noakhali in south-eastern Bangladesh. When Gandhi arrived in Noakhali on 20 November 1946 to quell communal violence, he stayed in Dipankar Roy's ancestral home. On 27 December 1946 Nehru and J. P. Kripalani, the President of Congress party, also stayed in this house. Thus, the violence of *Rongomala's* story is intertwined with the violence of Partition and the disappearance of Raja Biswambhar Sur's line in East Bengal.

In recent years Taslima Nasrin has become Bangladesh's most controversial and widely read writer. Since the early 1990s many of Nasrin's books have been banned in Bangladesh and, at times, in India as well. Whilst Nasrin's negative assessment of Islam is the primary reason behind the ban, the Bangladeshi literary establishment has also struggled to accept her writings on female sexuality. *Split* (2018), originally published in 1993 as *Ka* in Bangladesh and *Dwikhandita* in West Bengal, is Nasrin's second volume of memoir. It was banned in both Bangladesh and in India soon after publication. The common political consensus was that Nasrin's comments on Islam would lead to communal violence. In literary circles the memoir created a stir not because of her views on Islam, but because of the revelation of Nasrin's relationships with some of the leading writers of Bangladesh. Setting aside the litany of accusations of obscenity and blasphemy that Nasrin faced after the publication of this memoir, *Split* should be read for its vibrant account of the literary world of Bangladesh and West Bengal in the 1980s. *Exile* (2018), Nasrin's third memoir, written during the first period of her exile, is focused on personal travails. This is a more unforgiving Nasrin who states that Bangladesh is "a medieval and intolerant nation of bigots, extremists and fanatics". Although it must be said that bigotry, religious intolerance and fanaticism were not characteristics of medieval Bengal and that such attitudes arise out of the peculiar modernity of Bangladesh, Nasrin's anger is not without justification. Although a majority of writers and intellectuals of Bangladesh neither support the ban on her books nor her enforced exile, few have come out in public to show their support.

Migration, settlement and exile have been crucial themes long before 1971 in works originating from Eastern Bengal. In his autobiography *My Days and Ways* (2014) the Faridpur-born (present-day Bangladesh) playwright Ganesh Bagchi describes in detail the lengthy passage he undertook by land and sea, from Calcutta to Kampala a year after India's independence from Britain. Bagchi takes acute note of the transoceanic traffic of South Asian migrants, labourers and expatriates making their way into East Africa across the Indian Ocean in search of employment and rehabilitation. Ganesh Bagchi's works of fiction and non-fiction in English produced over a span of six-decades (beginning in the 1950s) alert the reader to a period of intense socio-political upheaval following the independence of India. He explores a range of interrelated issues regarding the Partition of Bengal and the relocation to Uganda of a small group of East Bengalis seeking new and unanticipated beginnings in Kampala.

The first notable example of English writing from East Bengal is Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain's "Sultana's Dream" published in 1905 in *The Indian Ladies Magazine*, Madras. One fine afternoon, Sultana, an upper-class Muslim woman, dozes off while pondering on the miserable condition of the women of India. While asleep she dreams of a remarkable country where the men are kept in Purdah and the women, who have achieved marvellous feats of science and technology, run the country. The story is not only a criticism of the practice of keeping women in Purdah but also an early example of feminist science-fiction.

In post-independence Bangladesh, English writing has maintained a "fugitive presence", to quote the poet Kaiser Haq, one of the most accomplished and innovative English language writers in Bangladesh. Nissim Ezekiel exerted a strong influence on Haq, especially in relation to his poems written in South Asian English. These poems employ parody, wit and irony to reveal the many foibles of the Bangladeshi bourgeoisie. Humour is a prominent characteristic of Haq's poetry and is used as a critical tool to assess socio-political issues. In his latest collection, *Pariah and other Poems* (2017), there is a turn towards poignant lyricism and nostalgia. There is also subtle intertextuality, such as in the poem "Inheritance" which echoes Shaheed Quaderi's first collection of poetry, *Uttaradhikar* ("Inheritance"). Often, we see subtle and overt dialogue with the greats of Anglo-American modernism, especially T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and D. H. Lawrence. Haq has also translated many of the classic works, past and present, of Bangladeshi literature. He has not only translated, as we have seen, Quaderi, but also the other great modern poet of Bangladesh, Shamsur Rahman. Another recent work by Haq is the stupendous *Triumph of the Snake Goddess* (2015), the first English translation of the medieval *Mangal-Kavyas* (tales of gods and goddesses) of the snake Goddess Manasa. Although Haq's translation makes use of five extant versions of the epic, he employs a modern and, at times, playfully post-modern narrative style. Unlike the *Mangal-Kavyas*, Haq renders the epic in prose format, coloured with his unique sense of humour and wit. In many ways, this is as much a work of transcreation as it is of translation.

In recent years there has been a noticeable increase in the number of Bangladeshis choosing to write in English. Adib Khan, Monica Ali and Tahmima Anam are widely read and appreciated. Ruby Zaman's *Invisible Lines* (2011) follows the story of a young Bihari-Bengali survivor of wartime rape. The novel paints a fascinating picture of the multifarious roles played by women — Bihari, Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani — whose lives are dramatically altered by the formation of a newly-independent nation-state that brought with it new notions of national identities and allegiances. Set against the more affluent and cosmopolitan social circles of Dhaka, Sylhet and Chittagong, Zaman's work examines how women from the affluent classes dealt with war, separation and partition by reinventing their lives through settlement in the Anglo-American world as a means of personal rehabilitation and recuperation.

Exile, migration and repatriation remain important thematic trajectories in the works of contemporary Bangladeshi novelists many of whom live and write from North America and Europe. The aspiring Bangladeshi-Nigerian-American novelist Abeer Hoque, author of *The Lovers and the Leavers* (2014) and the memoir, *Olive Witch* (2016) is a case in point. Another diasporic writer based in the United States is Nadeem Zaman

whose *Days and Night's in the City* (2018) is a collection of eight stories that recount the loves and travails of the inhabitants of Dhaka. Zaman's debut novel, *In the Time of the Others* (2018) set during the nine-month period of the war of 1971, is a straightforward narrative of the war from the perspective of both East and West Pakistanis.

Bangladeshi writing in English has become more vibrant and innovative in recent years, with the advent of a younger generation of authors who have adroitly experimented with a wide variety of subject matters, employing an array of narrative techniques from historical realism to magical realism. The British-Bangladeshi writer Zia Haider Rahman's novel *In the Light of What We Know* (2014) weaves in the financial crisis of 2007 with the global war on terror. Shazia Omar's *Dark Diamond* (2016) is a work of historical fiction based partly on the life of Mirza Abu Talib, more popularly known as Shaista Khan (1600–1694), the famed viceroy to the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. The Bangladeshi-Canadian novelist, Ghalib Islam's *Fire in the Unnameable Country* weaves an intricate magical realist narrative of the fictional city of La Maga and its complex labyrinths of stories that multiply and overlap in vertiginous rapidity. These stories draw on a number of literary sources and influences, from classical Perso-Arabic literature to the works of Shakespeare, Rabelais and Orwell.

Bird Catcher and Other Stories (2018), Fayeza Hasanat's debut collection of eight stories, is set in Bangladesh and the Bangladeshi diaspora in the United States. In the opening story, set in Florida, the protagonist, estranged from her husband and frustrated by the need to continuously explain and justify her presence in America, is thwarted in her wish to commit suicide by "walking into the ocean". There are echoes of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* and Charlotte Perkins Gillman's "The Yellow Wallpaper". "Mother Immigrant" is another reflection on the liminality of the migrant condition, specifically the strain of being between and betwixt two cultures. The title story is written as a fable where a mysterious Bird Catcher finally achieves his dream of capturing a 'divine' bird so that he can hear at his pleasure its elusive song. But the captured bird, like the slave Tatari in Osman's novel, refuses to sing for the Bird Catcher.

The Storm (2018) by Arif Anwar, a Bangladeshi-Canadian writer, begins with one of the deadliest natural disasters on record, the Bhola cyclone that hit East Pakistan on 3 November 1970 and killed half a million people. We see two of the central characters, Honufa and her infant son, on their way to seek shelter from the approaching storm in the local Zamindar's house. From there on, the novel employs a fragmented and elliptical narrative style, shifting between places and times, to reveal the interconnected history of Honufa's family with that of the local Zamindar. World War II, the Partition of 1947 and the war of 1971 provide the socio-political contexts in which the story of the two families unfolds.

In conclusion, we would like to refer to three important works of academic criticism that came out in 2018. Subhoranjan Dashgupta's *Elegy and Dream: Akhtaruzzaman Elias's Creative Commitment* is a critical appraisal of Akhtaruzzaman Elias, one of the undisputed masters of 20th-century Bengali literature. Unfortunately, Elias' work has yet to be translated into English. Dashgupta delineates strains of Marxist thought in Elias's prose works of the 1980s and 1990s. His study uncovers a discernable undercurrent of Hegelian and possibly Derridean influence in Elias' work.

In *Australianama* the historian Samia Khatun uncovers tantalizing networks of exchange between South Asians and the Australian Aboriginal communities. The study reveals a fascinating traffic of people and texts such as the collection of 19th-century Bengali Sufi poetry called *Kasasol Ambia* (Stories of the Prophets) that travelled with Bengali lascars, traders, *ayahs*, “book-repairers” and cloth merchants to the Australian outback. By exploring the hitherto little known and little understood accounts of South Asian migration to Australia, Khatun recounts her own journey to Australia as a Bangladeshi by situating her story of migration as a continuation of the South Asian “odyssey”. Written in a clear and accessible language with an eye to communicating the untold stories about the long-standing, dynamic South Asian-Australian connections, Khatun’s book will also attract non-specialist readers from beyond the scholarly communities who have an eye for what makes a good story.

Tariq Omar Ali’s *A Local History of Global Capital: Jute and Peasant Life in the Bengal Delta* examines how the 19th-century history of jute production thrust the Muslim peasantry of East Bengal into the politics of the global market economy. Of special interest for the scholar and student of literature is chapter five of the book where Ali skilfully traces the intricate channels of agrarian Islamic discourses that were at the heart of East Bengali Muslim peasant life and self-fashioning in the first half of the 20th century. In such an agrarian society, East Bengali Muslim men of the mofussil towns produced works on a plethora of subjects that ranged from Quranic hadith to market-based fiscal entanglements and economic hardships faced by the Muslim peasantry. A cottage publishing industry in rural East Bengal facilitated the printing of such texts. However, the practice of conveying these writings through oral recitation, specifically known as *boyan*, was as important as the publication of these texts. Agrarian writing of this period saw Islam as a “religion of restoration”, that would facilitate the reconstruction of a peasant utopia.

Bibliography

Poetry

- Ahmed, Dilruba *Dhaka Dust: Poems* 95pp Graywolf Press (Minneapolis: Minnesota) [2011].
- Akbar, Ahsan *The Devil’s Thumbprint* 54pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2013].
- Ali, Mir Mahfuz *Midnight, Dhaka* 64pp Seren (Wales) [2014].
- Eusuf, Nausheen *Not Elegy, but Eros* 88pp New York Quarterly Books (New York) [2017].
- Haq, Kaiser *Black Orchid* 20pp Aark Arts (London) [2001].
- *The Logopathic Reviewer’s Song* 48pp Aark Arts in association with The University Press (Dhaka) [2002].
- *Published in the Streets of Dhaka: Collected Poems* 231pp The University Press (Dhaka) [2012].
- *Pariah and Other Poems, Second Enlarged Edition* 77pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2017].
- Hashim, Syed Najmuddin *Hopefully the Pomegranate* 114pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2007].
- Hossain, Khandakar Ashraf *On Behula’s Raft: Selected Poems* 64pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2008].
- Jahan, Sabahat *Rough Edges* 131pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2010].
- Khan, Razi *Argus under Anaesthesia* 58pp Khoshroz Kitab Mahal (Dacca) [1976].
- *Cruel April* 58pp Lutfur Rahman (Dacca) [1977].
- Rahman, Nadeem *Politically Incorrect Poems* 146pp APPL (Dhaka) [2004].
- Sen, Rai Bahadur Dinesh Chandra *Behula: A Myth of the Snake Goddess* 10pp Indian Press (Allahabad) [1907].

- *Eastern Bengal Ballads* 4 vols 2001pp Gyan Publishing House (New Delhi) [2006; originally pub in Calcutta 1923–1932].
- Siddique, Rumana *Five Faces of Eve: Poems* 90pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2007].
- Suhrawardy, Shahid *The Collected Poems of Shahid Suhrawardy* 300pp The University Press (Dhaka) [2012].

Fiction

- Ahmed, Ikhtisad *Yours, Etcetera* 135pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2015].
- Ahmed, K. Anis *Goodnight, Mr. Kissinger and Other Stories* 192pp The University Press (Dhaka) [2012].
- Ahmed, Sharbari Zohra *The Ocean of Mrs. Nagai: Stories* 157pp Daily Star Books (Dhaka) [2013].
- Alam, Shahidul *Uneven Octagon* 138pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2007].
- Ali, Monica *Brick Lane* 384pp Scribner (New York) [2003].
- Ali, S. M. *Rainbow Over Padma* 334pp The University Press (Dhaka) [1994].
- Anam, Tahmima *The Bones of Grace* 448pp Harper Perennial (New York) [2016].
- *A Golden Age* 276pp Harper Perennial (New York) [2007].
- *The Good Muslim* 304pp HarperCollins (New York) [2011].
- Anwar, Arif *The Storm* 320pp Atria Books (New York) [2018].
- Choudhury, Zeena *Church Bells and Darjeeling Tea* 108pp The University Press (Dhaka) [2017].
- Ghuznavi, Farah *Fragments of Riversong* 153pp Daily Star Books (Dhaka) [2013].
- Hamid, Shamim *Zuleikha's Dream and Other Stories* 110pp The University Press (Dhaka) [2002].
- Hasanat Fayeza *The Bird Catcher and Other Stories* 125pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2018].
- Hoque, Abeer Y. *The Lovers and the Leavers* 248pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2014].
- Hossain, Saad Z *Djinn City* 238pp Unnamed Press (California) [2017].
- Imam, Neamat *The Black Coat* 340pp Periscope (Reading) [2016].
- Islam, Ghalib *Fire in the Unnameable Country* 384pp Hamish Hamilton (Canada) [2014].
- Jahangir, Javed *Ghost Alley* 311pp Bengal Publications (Dhaka) [2014].
- Khan, Adib *Seasonal Adjustments* 297pp Allen & Unwin (NSW) [1994].
- *Solitude of Illusions* 268pp Allen & Unwin (St. Leonards, NSW) [1996].
- *The Storyteller* 355pp Flamingo (Pymble, NSW) [2000].
- *Homecoming* 262pp Flamingo (Pymble, NSW) [2003].
- *Spiral Road* 368pp Fourth Estate (London) [2010].
- Khan, Razia Sultana *The Good Wife and Other Tales of Seduction* 158pp Univ of Nebraska Press (Nebraska) [2007].
- Omar, Shazia *Like a Diamond in the Sky* 253pp Zubaan-Penguin (New Delhi) [2009].
- *Dark Diamond* 252pp Bloomsbury India (New Delhi) [2016].
- Rahman, Kazi Fazlur *Derelict* 127pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2010].
- Rahman, Mahmud *Killing the Water: Stories* 216pp Penguin Books India (New Delhi) [2010].
- Rahman, Zia Haider *In the Light of What We Know* 512pp Farrar, Straus and Giroux (New York) [2014].
- Soomro, Durdana and Ghazala Hameed *Bengal Raag* 147pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2006].
- Zaman, Nadeem *Days and Nights in the City* 164pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2018].
- *In the Time of the Others* 268pp Picador-Pan Macmillan (New Delhi) [2018].
- Zaman, Niaz *The Crooked Neem Tree* 153pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) (1982).
- *Didima's Necklace and Other Stories* 116pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2005].
- Zaman, Ruby *Invisible Lines* 316pp HarperCollins (Noida UP) [2011].

Translations

Drama

- Ahmad, Momtazuddin *Wedding and The Wild Kite* ed Muhammad Nurul Huda 134pp Bangla Academy (Dhaka) [2000].
- Ahmad, Sayeed *Three Plays* 113pp Bangla Academy (Dhaka) [1979].
- Al-Mamun, Abdullah *Kokilas: A Play in Three Parts* trans Kabir Chowdhury 74pp The University Press (Dhaka) [1993].

Poetry

- Alam, Fakrul *Jibanananda Das: Selected Poems with an Introduction, Chronology and Glossary* 156pp The University Press Ltd (Dhaka) [1999].
- Dasgupta, Samir *Songs of Lalou* 93pp Sahitya Prakash (Dhaka) [2000].
- Dunham, Mary Frances *Jarigan: Muslim Epic Songs of Bangladesh* 370pp Univ Press Ltd (Dhaka) [1997].
- Haider, Daud *Holding an Afternoon and a Lethal Firearm* trans Lila Ray 56pp Writers Workshop (Calcutta) [1981].
- Haq, Kaiser *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* 368pp Harvard Univ Press (Cambridge, MA) [2015].
- Hussain, Abul *Early Poems: A Selection* trans Syed Sajjad Hussain 55pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2006].
- Islam, Kazi Nazrul *The Morning Shinai: Twenty Poems of Kazi Nazrul Islam* trans Kabir Chowdhury 77pp Nazrul Institute (Dhaka) [1991].
- *The Return of Laili: Selected Songs of Kazi Nazrul Islam* 119pp trans Nashid Kamal Adorn Publication (Dhaka) [2010].
- Kamal, Sufia *Mother of Pearls and Other Poems* 208pp Bangla Academy (Dhaka) [2001].
- *Where My Darlings Lie Buried: Memoirs of the Genocide, A Collection of Bengali Poems* 69pp Vantage (New York) [1975].
- Mahmud, Al *Al Mahmud in English: Selected Poems* 157pp Ananya (Dhaka) [2006].
- *Beyond the Blue, Beneath the Bliss* 112pp Pathak Samabesh (Dhaka) [2000].
- Quaderi, Shaheed *Library of Bangladesh Presents Shaheed Quaderi: Selected Poems* trans Kaiser Haq 127pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2018].
- Rafiq, Mohammad *This Path: Selected Poems of Mohammad Rafiq* trans Carolyn B. Brown 142pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2018].
- Rahman, Shamsur *The Devotee, the Combatant: Select Poems of Shamsur Rahman* 96pp Pathak Shamabesh (Dhaka) [2000].
- *Selected Poems of Jasimuddin* 54pp Oxford The University Press (Dacca) [1975].
- Yazijian, Edward *100 Songs of Hasan Raja* 240pp Pathak Samabesh (Dhaka) [1999].
- *Selected Poems: Shamsur Rahman* trans Kaise Haq 90pp Pathak Samabesh (Dhaka) [2016].
- Uddin, Jasim *Gypsy Wharf* 159pp Allen & Unwin (London) [1969].
- *Shamsur Rahman: A Witness of His Times* 158pp Foundation of SAARC Writers and Literature (New Delhi) [2003].

Fiction

- Akhtar, Shaheen *Library of Bangladesh Presents Shaheen Akhtar: Beloved Rongomala, A Novel* trans Shabnam Nadiya 273pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2018].
- *The Search* trans Ella Dutta 366pp Zubaan (New Delhi) [2011].

- Al Azad, Alauddin *Portrait Number Twenty Three* trans Kabir Chowdhury 119pp Bangla Academy (Dacca) [1978].
- Chaudhury, Anis *The Perfect Model and Other Stories* trans Kaiser Haq 131pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2010].
- Hai, Hasnat Abdul *Sultan* trans Kabir Chowdhury 320pp The University Press (Dhaka) [2008].
- Haq, Syed Shamsul *Library of Bangladesh Presents Syed Shamsul Haq: Two Novellas* trans Saugata Ghosh 122pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2015].
- Haque, Mahmudul *Black Ice* trans Mahmud Rahman 150pp HarperCollins India (New Delhi) [2012].
- Hoque, Anisul *The Ballad of Ayesha* trans Inam Ahmed 186pp Harper Perennial (New Delhi) [2018].
- Hossain, Mir Mosharraf *An Ocean of Sorrow* trans Fakrul Alam 540pp Bangla Academy (Dhaka) [2016].
- Hossain, Rokheya Shakhawat *The Essential Rokeya: Selected Works of Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain* trans Mohammad A. Quayum 200pp Brill (London) [2013].
- Hossain, Selina *Plumed Peacock* trans Kabir Chowdhury 160pp Chaturanga (Dhaka) [1983].
- *River of My Blood* trans Jackie Kabir 224pp Rupa Publications (Kolkata) [2016]
- *The Shark, the River and the Grenades* trans Abedin Quader 100pp Bangla Academy (Dhaka) [1987].
- Huq, Hasan Azizul *Library of Bangladesh Presents Hasan Azizul Huq: Twelve Stories* trans Bhaskar Chattopadhyay 171pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2015].
- Jahan, Nasreen *The Woman Who Flew* trans Kaiser Haq 376pp Penguin Books India (New Delhi) [2012].
- Khan, Razia *Draupadi* trans Razia Khan 179pp Bangla Academy (Dhaka) [1998].
- Milon, Imdadul Haque *The Chain* 56pp trans Abedin Quader Biddiaprakash (Dhaka) [2004].
- *Library of Bangladesh Presents Imdadul Haque Milon: Two Novellas* trans Saugata Ghosh 144pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2017].
- Nasrin, Taslima *French Lover* trans Sreejata Guha 304pp Penguin Books India (New Delhi) [2001].
- *Revenge: A Fable* trans Honor Moore 178pp Feminist Press (New York) [1992].
- *Shame: A Novel* trans Kankabati Datta 302pp Prometheus Books (New York) [1997].
- Naushin, Jahanara *The Woman Who Ate Cooking Pots: Selected Short Stories* 94pp Bengal Publications (Dhaka) [2018].
- Osman, Shaukat *Janani* trans Osman Jamal 216pp Heinemann Asian Writer's Series (Portsmouth) [1994].
- *The King and the Serpent* trans Roshaida Khatun 104pp Bangla Academy (Dhaka) [1985].
- *The Laughter of a Slave* trans Kabir Chowdhury 99pp National Publication House (Karachi)
- *The State Witness* trans Osman Jamal 102pp Peepal Tree Press Ltd (Leeds) [1993]. [1970].
- Pasha, Anwar *Rifles, Bread and Women* trans Kabir Chowdhury 276pp Bangla Academy (Dacca) [1976].
- Rahman, Rizia *Library of Bangladesh Presents Rizia Rahman: Letters of Blood, A Novel* trans Arunava Sinha 115pp Bengal Lights Books (Dhaka) [2016].
- Raihan, Zahir *Different Spring* trans Razia Khan 86pp Bangla Academy (Dhaka) [1999].
- *Rising from the Ashes: Women's Narratives of 1971* trans Niaz Zaman 298pp The University Press (Dhaka) [2012].
- Rushd, Abu *The Aborted Island* 78pp Bangla Academy (Dhaka) [1985].

- Saber, Moinul Ahsan *The Mercenary: A Novel* trans Shabnam Nadiya 160pp Bengal Lights Books Ltd (Dhaka) [2016].
- Shamsuzzaman, Abul Fazal *The Trembling Flame: A Collection of Short Stories* 63pp Tribhuj Prakashani (Dhaka) [1992].
- Syed Manzoorul Islam *The Merman's Prayer and Other Stories* trans Syed Manzoorul Islam 293pp Daily Star Books (Dhaka) [2013].
- Waliullah, Syed *Night of No Moon* trans Afia Dil 144pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2006].
- *Tree Without Roots* trans Syed Waliullah 223pp Chatto & Windus [1967].

Auto/biography

- Ahmed, Abbasuddin *My Life in Melodies* 234pp Adorn Publications (Dhaka) [2014].
- Bagchi, Ganesh *My Days and Ways* 494pp FCM Publishing (London) [2014].
- Chaudhuri, Maria *Beloved Strangers: A Memoir* 208pp Bloomsbury (New York) [2014].
- Dhar, Maloy Krishna *Train to India: Memories of Another Bengal* 324pp Penguin India (New Delhi) [2009].
- Haq, Kaiser "English-medium Boy: A Post-Commonwealth Memoir" *Griffith Review* 59 [2018] pp283–290.
- *The Wonders of Vilayet: Mirza Sheikh I'tesamuddin* 156pp Writers Ink (Dhaka) [2002].
- Hoque, Abeer Y. *Olive Witch: A Memoir* 254pp Fourth Estate (Noida, UP) [2016].
- Nasrin, Taslima *Meyebela: My Bengali Girlhood* trans Gopa Majumdar 300pp Steerforth Press (South Royalton) [1998].
- *Split: A Life* trans Maharghya Chakraborty 496pp Penguin Random House India (New Delhi) [2018].
- *Exile: A Memoir* Maharghya Chakraborty 360pp Penguin Random House India (New Delhi) [2018].
- Roy, Deepankar Narayan *Noakhali to Infinity* 81pp Notion Press (Chennai) [2018].

Interviews

- Marranca, Bonnie and Gautam Dasgupta "Tradition and Modernity in Bangladesh: An Interview with Sayeed Ahmed" *Performing Arts Journal* 14(2) pp104–112.
- Quyaum, M. A. "Introducing a Bangladeshi Writer in English: Interview with Kaiser Haq" *World Literature Written in English* 36(1) pp110–119.
- Shook, David "Opening Bangladesh to the World: A Conversation with Four Contemporary Writers" *World Literature Today* 87(3) pp45–48.
- Siddique, Rumana "'Every Poet Has to Find His or Her Own Way': Kaiser Haq in Conversation" *The Daily Star* 25 Nov <<https://www.thedailystar.net/literature/every-poet-has-find-his-or-her-own-way-kaiser-haq-conversation-rumana-siddique-1496224>> [2017].

Criticism

General Studies

- Acinpakhi Infinity: Indigenous Theatre of Bangladesh* Syed Jamil Ahmed 396pp The University Press (Dhaka) [2000].
- Australianama: The South Asian Odyssey in Australia* Samia Khatun 288pp Hurst & Co and Oxford Univ Press (London) [2018].
- "Ballads, Public Memory and History in the Littoral Zone of Eastern Bengal" David L. Curley in *Literary and Religious Practices in Medieval and Early Modern India* Raziuddin Aquil, David L. Curley Routledge (New York) [2017] pp137–162.

- “Bangladeshi Anglophone Literature: Rerouting the Hegemony of Global English” Nasia Anam *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 20(3–4) pp325–334.
- Barisal and Beyond: Essays on Bangla Literature* 336pp Clinton B. Seeley Chronicle Books (California) [2008].
- “Beckett in Bangladesh” Shaheen M. Mahmud (1993) *Samuel Beckett Today* 2 pp59–65.
- Contradictory Lives: Baul Women in India and Bangladesh* Lisa I. Knight 236pp Oxford Univ Press (Oxford) [2011].
- Crossing Over: Partition Literature from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh* Frank Stewart and Sukrita Paul Kumar 219pp University of Hawaii Press (Honolulu) [2007].
- “Democratisation Process in Interculturation: Staging Ibsen within a Folk Theatrical Form in Bangladesh” Nilu Kamaluddin *Ibsen Studies* 14 pp38–51.
- A Divided Legacy: The Partition in Selected Novels of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh* Niaz Zaman 350pp Oxford Univ Press (Oxford) [2000].
- Early Feminists of Colonial India: Sarala Devi Chaudhurani and Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain* Bharati Ray 208pp Oxford Univ Press India (New Delhi) [2012].
- “English Language Fiction of Bangladesh” Cara Cilano in *South-Asian Fiction in English: Contemporary Transformations* Alex Tickell Palgrave MacMillan (London) [2016] pp59–77.
- “Flowers in a Begging Bowl: Tagore, Eliot and Bengali Modernism” Mafruha Mohua *Modernist Cultures* 13(2) pp212–234.
- “The Forgotten Women of 1971: Bangladesh’s Failure to Remember Rape Victims of 1971” Firdous Azim in *Unveiling Desire: Fallen Women in Literature, Culture, and Films of the East* Devaleena Das and Colette Marrow 298pp Rutgers Univ Press (New Brunswick, Camden) [2018].
- “From Bangladesh to Brick Lane: The Biocultural Stereotypes of Migrancy” Mrinalini Chakravorty in *In Stereotype: South Asia in the Global Literary Imaginary* Columbia Univ Press (New York) [2014].
- Gender, Nationalism and Genocide in Bangladesh* Azra Rashid 138pp Routledge (London) [2018].
- “The Hijra Comes in from the Heat and Dust” Kaiser Haq, *Wasafiri* 30(4) pp3–7.
- In the Land of Buried Tongues: Testimonies and Literary Narratives of the War of Liberation of Bangladesh* Chaity Das Oxford Univ Press India (New Delhi) [2017].
- “In the Streets of Dhaka: How Has the Colonial Legacy — and the Recent Past — Affected the Trajectory of English Language Literature in Bangladesh?” Fakrul Alam [2015] <<https://himalmag.com/english-language-literature-bangladesh/>>.
- Infinite Variety: Women in Society and Literature* Firdous Azim and Niaz Zaman The University Press (Dhaka) [1994].
- Into the Twilight of Sanskrit Court Poetry: The Sena Salon of Bengal and Beyond* Jesse Ross Knutson 224pp Univ of California Press (Berkeley, CA) [2014].
- “Living in Marvelous Lands: Persianate Vernacular Literature and Cosmographical Imaginaries around the Bay of Bengal” Thibaut d’Hubert in *The Persianate World: Rethinking a Shared Sphere* Brill (Leiden) [2018].
- A Local History of Global Capital: Jute and Peasant Life in the Bengal Delta* Tariq Omar Ali 272pp Princeton Univ Press (Princeton) [2018].
- The Ocean of Love: Middle Bengali Sufi Literature and the Fakirs of Bengal* David Cashin 329pp Fören för orientaliska studier (Stockholm) [1995].
- “Partition and the Bangladeshi Literary Response” Kaiser Haq in *Revisiting India’s Partition: New Essays on Memory, Culture and Politics* Amritjit Singh, Nalini Iyer, Rahula Girola 400pp Lexington (Maryland) [2018].
- The Partition of Bengal: Fragile Borders and New Identities* Debjani Sengupta 283pp Cambridge Univ Press (Cambridge) [2015].

- Partition's Post-Amnesias* Ananya Jahanara Kabir Univ Press (Dhaka) [2014].
- "Patterns of Composition in the Seventeenth-Century Bengali Literature of Arakan" Thibaut d'Hubert in *Tellings and Texts: Music, Literature and Performance in North India* Francesca Orsini and Katherine Butler Schofield 566pp Open Book Publishers (London) [2015].
- "Pirates, Poets, and Merchants: Bengali Language and Literature in Seventeenth-Century Mrauk U" Thibaut d'Hubert in *Culture and Circulation: Literature in Motion in Early Modern India* 316pp Thomas de Bruijn and Allison Busch Brill (Leiden) [2014] pp47–74.
- "Pulp Fiction in Bangladesh: Super Spies and Transplant Authors" Mahmud Rahman *World Literature Today* 82 pp39–42.
- The Refugee Woman: Partition of Bengal, Gender, and the Political* Paulomi Chakraborty 314pp Oxford Univ Press India (New Delhi) [2018].
- Rehearsing for Revolution: The Political Theatre of Bengal* Rustum Bharucha 254pp Univ of Hawaii Press (Honolulu) [1983].
- "Revisiting a Dream-Site of Liberation: The Case of Mukta Natak in Bangladesh" Syed Jamil Ahmed *Research in Drama Education* 16(1) pp 5–27.
- "Six Woman Writers from Bangladesh" Rebecca Janson *Journal of South Asian Literature* 23(1) pp151–153.
- The Spectral Wound: Sexual Violence, Public Memories, and the Bangladesh War of 1971* Nayanika Mookherjee 352pp Duke Univ Press (Durham) [2015].
- Sufism and Saint Veneration in Contemporary Bangladesh: The Maijbhandaris of Chittagong* Hans Harder 392pp Routledge (London) [2011].
- "Stanislavsky in the Modern Theatre of Bangladesh: A Mapping of Postcolonial Appropriation and Assimilation" Syed Jamil Ahmed in *Stanislavsky in the World: The System and its Transformations across Continents* Jonathan Pitches and Stefan Aquilina 480pp Bloomsbury (London) [2017].
- "Tagore and National Identity Formation in Bangladesh" Fakrul Alam *Journal of Contemporary Thought* 34 pp179–196.
- "The Trope of the 'Fallen Women' in the Fiction of Bangladeshi Women Writers" Hafiza Nilofar Khan in *Unveiling Desire: Fallen Women in Literature, Culture, and Films of the East* Devaleena Das and Colette Morrow 298pp Rutgers Univ Press (New Brunswick, Camden) [2018].
- "The Urban Experience of Displacement: Re-viewing Dhaka through Street Art and Graphic Narrative" Mahruba T. Mowtushi *South Asian Review: A Special Issue on South Asian Graphic Narratives* 39(1–2) pp227–238.
- Tribal Culture, Folklore and Literature: Mizos of India, Bangladesh and Myanmar* Laltluangliana Khiangete 208pp Mittal Publication (New Delhi) [2013].
- Who's Who in Bangla Literature* Ehsanul Hoque 96pp Centre for Bangladesh Culture (Dhaka) [1996].

Studies on Individual Writers

- Alaol, Syed *In the Shade of the Golden Palace: Alaol and Middle Bengali Poetics in Arakan* Thibaut d'Hubert 378pp Oxford Univ Press (New York).
- Das, Jibanananda *A Poet Apart: A Literary Biography of the Bengali Poet Jibanananda Das, 1899–1954* Clinton B. Seely 341pp Rabindra Bharati Press (Calcutta) [1990].
- Elias, Akhtaruzzaman *Elegy and Dream: Akhtaruzzaman Elias' Creative Commitment* Subhoranjan Dasgupta 142pp Shipra Publications (New Delhi) [2000].
- Hossain, Mir Mosharrif *The Prose Works of Mir Mosharrif Hossain, 1869–1899* Mohammad Abdul Awwal 329pp University of Chittagong Press (Chittagong) [1975].

- Hossain, Rokeya Sakhawat *Feminist Foremother: Critical Essays on Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain* Mohammad A. Quayum and Md. Mahmudul Hasan 312pp Orient Blackswan (Hyderabad) [2017].
- Hossain, Rubaiyat “War, Healing, and Trauma: Reading the Feminine Aesthetics and Politics in Rubaiyat Hossain’s *Meherjaan*” Elora Halim Chowdhury *Feminist Formations* 28(3) pp27–45.
- Huq, Hasan Azizul “The Nexus of Class, Identity and Politics in the Representational Economy of Partition: The Case of Hasan Azizul Huq” Md. Rezaul Haque in *Revisiting India’s Partition: New Essays on Memory, Culture and Politics* Amritjit Singh, Nalini Iyer, Rahula Girola Lexington (Maryland) pp245–260.
- Islam, Kazi Nazrul *Kazi Nazrul Islam: The Voice of Poetry and the Struggle for Human Wholeness* Winston E. Langley 184pp Nazrul Institute (Dhaka) [2007].
- Islam, Kazi Nazrul *The Dissent of Nazrul Islam: Poetry and History* Priti Kumar Mitra 354pp Oxford Univ Press India (New Delhi) [2007].
- Nasrin, Taslima “Women in the Era of Modernity and Islamic Fundamentalism: The Case of Taslima Nasrin of Bangladesh” S. M. Shamsul Alam *Signs* 23(2) pp429–461.
- Nasrin, Taslima *The Crescent and the Pen: The Strange Journey of Taslima Nasrin* Hanifa Deen 292pp Praeger (Connecticut) [2006].

Journals

- Asiatic* 12(1) Special Issue “Bangladeshi Writing in English” eds Mohammad A. Quayum and Md. Muhamudul Hasan <<https://journals.iium.edu.my/asiatic/index.php/AJELL/issue/view/49>>.
- Bengal Lights* published by the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (Spring 2013-ongoing).
- Six Seasons Review* <<https://sixseasonsreview.com/>>.
- Wasafiri* 84 Special Issue “A Voice in the World: A Special Issue on Bangladesh” eds Ahsan Akbar and K. Anis Ahmed 90pp.

Internet Sites

- Banglapedia: National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh* (ongoing) <<https://www.banglapedia.org/>>.
- Bengal Lights Books* (ongoing) <<http://www.bengallights.com/books.php>>.
- Monsoon Letters* (ongoing) <<http://monsoonletters.com/>>.
- Six Seasons Review* <<https://sixseasonsreview.com/>>.