**Abstracts**

**DATTARAY, Debashree: "Aesthetics and Resilience: Cultural Resistance in the Poetry of North East India"**

Feminist cultural practice which defines specific gender roles has often been inadequate to serve the agenda of Indigenous women writers from North East India in terms of their concerns for identity and self-determination. Through a few comparative case studies, the paper focuses on how such authors have tried to negotiate the challenge of representing the past from the unspoken but inexorable reality of the present. A sense of isolation has often led to a skewed understanding of literatures from the seven states of the North East of India. In fact, in his discussions on the poetry from the North East, Sumayu Satpathy writes of the critical neglect of literatures from North East India in the context of the region’s history of oppression and violence. Poets such as Temsula Ao, Mamang Dai, Cherrie L. Chhangte have vociferously critiqued neoimperialist assumptions of Indigenous identity, refusing to be labelled within the so-called mainstream literary traditions of criticism. As a response to elitist feminist spheres of belonging, these women poets have contested established hierarchies and attempted a re-visioning of aesthetic theory. Locating trauma, the politics of tradition and continuity, the ecological space, the writers in focus offer culture as a site of struggle and also account for the cultural changes in the North East. A gendered experience of change, place, and belonging has informed their experiences in socio-political and cultural territories. The paper explores how their oeuvre has theorized empirical encounters with the arts as an integral part of Indigenous knowledge systems, which in turn, have offered possible readings for Indigenous feminist ideologies.

**DE PREVAL, Jitka: "Aesthetics of the Hero's Resilience in Hindi Popular Cinema"**

The hero receives blows, collapses on the ground, bleeds, his face is covered with bruises, his body is disarticulated, lying on the ground, hardly getting up ... Suddenly, his eyes cross those of his mother or the heroine whose life is in danger. He finds his spirits and animated by superhuman strength, he turns into a superhero who makes dangerous jumps, attacks the villain, makes blow for blow until the final victory. Without resilience, that is to say, ability to resist a test and to rebuild afterwards, there is no hero, no dramatic spring, no plot, no story, and no fiction.

Popular cinema often shows individual resilience - the hero alone against all - by using the aesthetics of excess. It is also interested in characters who are not heroic. The staging of such films then accumulates the traumatic situations in which there are main characters, a priori vulnerable, highlighting the effect of their resilience. Thus, it is shown that since their childhood, the path of these ordinary heroes is strewn with obstacles and difficulties. Often orphans, they are despised and ostracized to be branded different from others: disabled, poor, badly dressed, disfigured. They resist, smile, fall and stand up without complaining. Disasters accumulate in their lives and these ordinary heroes show their resilience as an example of the "complex process by which the wounded of life can thwart all predictions" (Cyrulnik). They do not physically kick back, but win a moral and spiritual victory by standing up.

How does formal language conjugate notions of individual and collective resilience? How is the process of resilience of the main characters staged and what role do we attribute to their personality and their environment? Why does cinema idealize resilience? My paper will attempt to answer these questions by basing its demonstrations on two Hindi films centered on the main characters suffering from complete blindness and subjected to serious trauma. These are *Dosti* (Friendship, 1964, Satyen Bose) and *Kaabil* (Capable, 2017, Sanjay Gupta), both of which are popular box office successes in Hindi cinema. Each of them responds differently to the interrogations of this paper. Both show the importance of resilience as a constituent element of Indian identity.

**FIDOUH, Ahlem: "Resilience in the Literature of Pre-Independence India"**

The vast cultural contribution of India owes its existence largely to the huge number of original literary works written by Indian writers in English. Their books have dealt with multiple issues such as nationalism, the struggle for independence, and individual awareness during the pre-colonial period. This literary movement was consolidated by the rich production of novelists and represented a remarkable force in literature. This feat was accomplished by writers such as Gangadhar Tilak, Rabidranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo who managed to reveal their inner creativity in the English language, considered a foreign language in India at that time. While honoring writers who wrote in their mother tongue, these Indian writers of English overcame the constraints of writing in another language and have been able to develop their own style. They mastered the art of writing, respecting the subtleties of English and its linguistic techniques, while introducing the nuances and flavors of India. Moreover, the lucid descriptions of the struggle for freedom depicted images of awakened Indians struggling to free themselves from the British regime. Thus, the literary movement portraying the independence struggle was very resilient and had a tremendous impact on the awareness being built within the nation. In short, the works of these writers, both resilient and brilliant, served as a stimulant to revive the motivation of the popular masses.

**GANAPATHY-DORÉ, Geetha: "Farmer Suicide Narratives in Indian Fiction as part of the Global Story of Resistance and Resilience"**

The Rushdian generation of Indian writers of English told stories about independence, nation building, coming of age, urbanization, migration and transformation of identity. As for Dalit and feminist literatures from India, they throw light on social oppression persisting in spite of the offsetting constitutional mechanisms and on gender discrimination and violence. Contemporary Indian ecofiction and essays tend to focus on the effects of climate change on people's lives. A recent addition to these stories that engage with sustainable development is the farmer suicide narrative. This paper intends to read Na d'Souza's novella *Dweepa* (translated by OUP from Kannada into English in 2013), Kota Neelima's novel *Shoes of the Dead* (2013) and Sonora Jha's *Foreign* (2014) as narratives that not only connect with fictional accounts of famine in colonial India but also form part of the global story of resistance to liberalization of economies and resilience in the face of destruction of sustainable livelihoods. How do the writers depict these silence emergencies? Of what is the disrupted life of the farmers a symptom? What do these narratives tell us about the ethics of writing and reading?

**GIRET-TURRO, Angelina: "The Rising Figure of the Indian Woman 1850-1915 – Resilience through Education"**

The second part of the nineteenth century in India is very ambivalent as far as both British and Indian women are concerned. As a matter of fact, their stories are similar in that they were constrained to domesticity and their roles were belittled compared to those of men. Nevertheless, this period corresponds to the rise of feminist awareness in the two countries and this had an impact for these two groups of women. On the one hand, Indian women were already present in representations (literary or artistic) but usually played the part of the subaltern and were mentioned only as servants. On the other hand, they were gradually empowered by the development of education and freedom. The development was slow and concerned a small part of the population but the second part of the nineteenth century is a landmark because Indian women such as Cornelia Sorabji and Kamini Roy brought about major changes. Sorabji became India’s first female barrister and Roy the first woman who graduated in India. Moreover, the ideas travelled between Britain and India and this encouraged a faster development of an Indian feminist awareness, the first phase of which historically lasted from 1850 up to 1915. From being represented as either the submissive or silent servant, the Indian woman became a figure of resilience, active in the fields of law and education and ready to end the Indian patriarchal society of the time. This evolution went hand in hand with the evolution of the condition of British women who were encouraged to make things change through the movement of the suffragettes.

**MOHAN Anupama: "Resilience in the Age of Neoliberalism: A Case for Collective Fragility"**

In this paper, I want to argue, somewhat counter-intuitively, against the mainstream championing of tales of individual resilience in an era where, increasingly, the individual is rendered ineffectual within macropolitical forces, the sweeping ambits of which both swamp agency and render deeply problematic narratives of agential triumph. How are we to understand such ancient concepts as charity and hospitality in an era of unprecedented risk? By playing resilience, especially neoliberal definitions of it, against the notion of fragility, in an Augustinian sense, I hope to understand the ways in which the traditional binaries of the individual and the collective are being redeployed in contemporary articulations of resilience as (primarily) an individual/familial trait. Such articulations downplay -- when not actively marginalizing -- the roles played by state agencies and apparatuses in creating the conditions for collective resilience (rather than individual ones). Augustine's understanding of "the fragility of goodness" has much to offer our rethinking of systems of human vulnerability, and even as strident calls for narratives of individual successes flood the literary market-place (seen best in the unprecedented success of self-help and get-rich books), we might do well to re-acquaint ourselves with a philosophical examination of our collectively fragile selves.

**MULLA, Ahmed: "Resilience as (Re)Invention in Akhil Sharma's *Family Life*"**

Part memoir and part fiction, Akhil Sharma's novel *Family Life* explores the disintegration of an Indian family trying to get assimilated in the United States. While the first part of the narrative traces the characters’ travel and their encounter with another society and lifestyle, the novel brutally turns its focus towards the analysis of individual decline after the elder son meets with an accident.

Physically and mentally challenged, the once promising teenager becomes a burden of sorts for other family members. The latter’s lives are dramatically transformed. While the parents turn to different ways of consolation which isolate them and destroy their American Dream, the young Ajay, who is also the narrator of the story, alternates between incomprehension, a feeling of injustice, and his own instinct and will to go ahead.

His brother’s accident is a life-changing event for this young boy who is torn between contradictory feelings. It is then possible to interpret the trope of resilience by examining the way this teenager has to find and (re)build his identity in a new and sometimes hostile environment and the strategies he experiments with to become a member of the American society.

**MUND, Subhendu: "Resilience as Way of Life: Suffering and Acceptance in the Indian Literary Tradition"**

According to Dr S. Radhakrishnan, "The spiritual motive dominates life in India" (Indian Philosophy Vol. I 25). Further, one agrees with him when he says that all great works of Indian literature are looked upon as great scriptures and vice versa. The *Bhagavad Gita* which embodies the essence of Indian spiritual thought is regarded as the quintessence of Indian metaphysics, as well as the ultimate principle of Indian way of life.

Radhakrishnan has defined Hinduism as a way of life. Needless to say, the religious and metaphysical principles professed by Hinduism have imbibed an in-built resilience in the ordinary individuals for ages. Indian literatures (including Indian English literature) narrate this essential Indian trait of suffering and acceptance in ordinary life. More importantly, religious texts like the *Gita* have not lost their relevance even today.

According to M. S. Reddy, a well-known practicing psychiatrist and psychotherapist, eminent Indian psychiatrists and psychologists propose the *Gita* as "a source and model to develop psychotherapeutic concepts suitable to Indian context."

(https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3361835).

In my paper, I propose to synopsize the Indian concepts of suffering and resilience and wish to illustrate how our literary tradition has sought to narrate the realities of life through these concepts. I shall also try to show how modern-day problems are sought to be redressed by the traditional concepts and precepts of this religious resilience.

**NAUMANN, Michel: "Resilence in the short story *The Drought* by Shandra Sen Gupta"**

This short story shows the collapse of a man (and his daughter) confronted to drought and the cruelty of landowners. His long resistance is sustained by his past life, his human relations and his link to nature symbolized by his buffalo. His collapse and his becoming a wage-earner instead of a farmer are due to natural and social circumstances that deprive him of what constituted his stamina, his soul and his body that once made him a resilient person. If the end indeed is the most unhappy for him, the story nevertheless shows how one becomes strong and what aspects of our life and environment must be protected so that human beings do not lose their stamina.

**PATTANAYAK, Chandrabhanu: "The Resilient Tribal and Mediated Orality"**

One in every four people living in Odisha, the state I live in now, is dubbed a "tribal". One of the richest states in terms of cultural, linguistic and ecological diversity, is also known as one of the poorest. The state has relentlessly tried to "civilize the savage", "mainstream" them, take the 'tribal' out of the 'tribal' and yet they have survived. Their languages taken away, their homes cleared out, their food habits and their clothing modernized, their habitat and their cultural festivals redesigned, their Gods banished, and yet they survive. This resilience of a people is not just their need to survive, but a quest for unity through contrasting elements, through the ceaseless tasks of the creative imagination to digest and liberate contrasting spaces rather than succumb to implacable polarizations.

My paper will explore how the hugely endangered tribal people of Odish survive despite the aggression of the state, the destruction of the eco-system, and in the midst of a strange juxtaposition of an age-renascent savagery and a conquest-ridden civilization. This seems a sinister marriage and yet this precisely is the situation that may offer us an answer to the enigma of vision as a capacity to rediscover a scale of community, a primordial voice. For, as Carl Jung suggests, "he who speaks in primordial images speaks with a thousand voices". My paper will also look at how slowly but surely the many voices in this mosaic are being re-sensed in terms of "Orality" rather than the literate discourse and this is happening through the mediation of new technologies.

**SEN, Suddhaseel: "Nationalist cosmopolitanism and cultural resistance in colonial India"**

The cultural dimension of colonial encounters has often been understood in terms of colonial hegemony, by means of which colonizing powers are seen to have exerted cultural control over their colonized subjects (and, by extension, made them willing accomplices in colonial

rule), and colonial mimicry, in which the slippages that inevitably occur as the colonized try to imitate the culture of the colonizer are seen as being unintentionally subversive. Both concepts provide a skewed understanding of the cultural dimension of the colonial encounter in a place like the Indian subcontinent, where the colonized vastly outnumbered the colonizers, and pre-colonial languages and literatures continued to flourish during the colonial era, even as they got modified over time because of colonialism. In my paper, I argue that colonial cultural resistance needs to be understood in terms of the development of "nationalist cosmopolitanisms," a phenomenon that can be seen in nineteenth-century Europe as well.

Analyzing the cultural dimension of the colonial encounter in terms of nationalist cosmopolitanism enables us to understand how Indian writers and intellectuals exercised their agency to engage critically with the culture of the colonizer and, in the process, to choose what they thought was valuable in the culture of the colonizer. In addition, by placing the writings of Arjun Appadurai and Thomas L. Friedman side by side, I argue that hegemony and mimicry are terms better suited to understand the cultural scenario in the post-colonial context, when political emancipation has been accompanied by the need felt by third world countries to emulate the still-dominant cultures of their ex-colonizers.

**SENGUPTA, Jayita: "Visual Arts and Resistance"**

My presentation will endeavour to narrate briefly how a visual art presentation through semiotics of representation can create "monumental history" (Kristeva).  I would speak briefly on the paintings of Amrita Sher-Gil, and presentations by Shirin Neshat (Iranian visual artist)  in "Turbulence"  and her other works, graphic novels by Amruta Patil, before coming to my own visual art presentation titled "Shivelight", which was recently presented in Mumbai and Kolkata.   All of these visual art presentations by these women artists are a commentary on Gender and Resistance.

**SINGH, Savita: "A ‘Beyond’ within the Anthropocene: Creation of young ‘Pasho’ in Krishna Sobti’s Novella "Daar Se Bichuri""**

It is more or less clear that Krishna Sobti is a complex writer even though she rejects feminism rather simple mindedly. The characters of her stories and novels betray her bravely. They take her to a "beyond" which is almost like a nightmare for the grammarians of the patriarchal symbolic order. Placed precariously at the border of barely visible 'in and out' of this anthropocenic structure, they are rebellious enough to be susceptible to the dangerous game of destruction. Yet they are resilient enough to survive as autonomous beings. One can say that compared to the character of Mitro of 'Mitro Marjani'-Sobti's rather famous protagonist, who left the carefully constructed modern masculinity of an Indian variety perturbed and grieving and finally submitting to her bodily desires; the character 'Pasho' of "Daar Se Bichuri", abandoned by her mother for a new lover, takes the cruel beatings of Indian society only to push herself beyond it, or rather, her beautiful body beyond it, secure within an awareness that her beauty in itself is redemptive. After being thrashed by her maternal uncle and aunty for the attention she received from a young Muslim boy in school, she looks at herself in the large mirror placed in the verandah of the old *haveli*, and smiles to herself as if all of this can be forgotten. This mirror, as if her own self, gets placed inside her and she learns to rely more on this than on the conditions of life that patriarchy offers to women within its order. In fact, she lives both within and outside of herself. Bought and sold, she saves herself from being raped by a '*firangi*' soldier, never losing the sense and purpose of her beautiful body. This feminine wealth, safe within Pasho’s secret image of herself, creates another space for her to slip into. Krishna Sobti begets this space for women to breathe life by way of her womanly writing. not so unaware after all, that when women write they make a difference to this world. It is not for nothing that feminists find themselves aesthetically and theoretically prepared to address the challenges of the "anthropocene", another name for the global effect of capitalist patriarchy.

**SINHA, Umi: *Belonging*, Myriad Editions, 2015 (from the novel's Cover blurb)**

Lila Langdon is twelve years old when she witnesses a family tragedy after her mother unveils her father’s surprise birthday present – a tragedy that ends her childhood in India and precipitates a new life in Sussex with her great-aunt Wilhelmina.

From the darkest days of the British Raj to the aftermath of the First World War, Belonging tells the interwoven story of three generations and their struggles to understand and free themselves from a troubled history steeped in colonial violence. This is a novel of secrets that unwind through Lila Langdon's story of exile to England, through her grandmother Cecily's letters home from India, and through the diaries kept by her father, Henry, as he puzzles over the enigma of his birth and his stormy marriage to the mysterious Rebecca.

**TRECH, Caroline: "Resilience or non-resilience in hybrid British films of the South-Asian diaspora"**

How to overcome a trauma of identity? How could British-Asian films help the South-Asian diaspora in their resilience process?

Demonstrating the resilience of the South-Asian diaspora could be a cry for despair. Indeed, resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress and bouncing back from difficult experiences .

Resilient people can survive the tragedies they have endured, but they have to go through emotional pain, difficulty or distress. Using cinema as an art in service of the people, hybrid British-Asian films provide a wide range of instances in which the characters must endure their pain and trauma, and continue living. We will focus on how the new generations tackle obstacles and the painful path to resilience.

I am planning to analyze resilience in a few British-Asian films. My presentation will include interviews with film directors.

**UNDERWOOD, Dhana: "Sunjeev Sahota, The Year odf the Runaways: Politics of Resilience and Survival'**

Sahota's *The Year of the Runaways*, published in 2016, plunges us into the life of a group of young people in Sheffield in the north of England. As illegal immigrants from the Indian subcontinent, they must adopt a survival policy that forces them to work illegally for unscrupulous employers who exploit them. The author focuses mainly on three young men, Tochi, Avtar and Randeep and explores their struggles in this alienating and hostile world of this industrial city. Every day is a bitter struggle against the tyranny of the employers, the brutality of others, the intransigence of immigration policy and social prejudices. They all suffered severe trauma in their home country first of all. In order to provide for their families in India, they must be highly resilient to the dangers they face, the creditors who threaten them and the immigration officers they must avoid at all costs. And trapped in this group is Narinder, a young Sikh woman (with a legal status of citizen) who decides to marry Randeep in a marriage of convenience to help him obtain a residence permit. The life of these four youngsters falls into a series of obstacles to overcome. Given these issues, I would like to explore relevant themes such as the complexity of immigration, honor, sense of duty and human resilience to hardship.

**VOLNÁ, Ludmila: " R. K. Narayan's Resilient Characters: India's Search for Identity"**

Indian writing in English abounds in examples of different kinds of resilience both at individual as well as group or community levels. Natural disasters, famine and poverty, war, colonization and its aftermath, tragic family events or individual discontent are, among others, factors discussed in the novels that require to be faced and dealt with.

This paper proposes to analyze two of R. K. Narayan's novels, *The English Teacher* and *The Man-eater of Malgudi* with respect to the ways in which the main characters are striving for resilient solutions for their respective crises, i.e. individual struggles that concern vicissitudes of family life as well as invasive foreign forces of the colonization-based oppression, these being situated, nevertheless, both within a narrow and a larger community contexts.

While focusing on Narayan's subtle treatment of features distinctively characterized as Indian, the paper will discuss the coping strategies and factors that play a role in the process of the protagonists' strivings including those running counter to these attempts, and indeed, first of all, those making a successful accomplishment possible.

**ZAIDI, Nishat: "Nationalist Politics vs Cultural Resilience: Urdu in Post-Partition India"**