OF CULTURAL STUDIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

(UGC approved Multi-disciplinary Peer-Reviewed Journal)
Currently Indexed in UGC CARE LIST

Vol. - XII, No. - XV

Eds.

Amitava Roy, Ronan Paterson, Bryan Reynolds, Subir Dhar, Tapu Biswas



TAGORE GANDHI INSTITUTE / SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY AVANTGARDE PRESS

Published by

Dr. Tapu Biswas

146, Sarat Bose Road, Subash Nagar

Dum Dum Cantonment, Kolkata - 700065

for Avantgarde Press, Shakespeare Society of Eastern India.

6A, Maharaja Nanda Kumar Road,

P.O. Sarat Bose Road,

Kolkata 700029.

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Website Address: www.tgi.org.in

Web Link: http://tgi.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Vol-XII No-XV.pdf

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Corresponding Editor: Dr. Tapu Biswas

Issue: December, 2019 Issue Published on January, 2021

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Cover Design: Tapu Biswas

Typing & Page setting: Sekhar Bose

Front Cover Acknowledgement: Contemporary artist S. Bose's version of Rabindranath as Christ based on Tagore's self potrait. © Rabindra Bharati University Museum.

Printed at:

Mahamaya Press & Binding 23, Madan Mitra Lane, Kolkata -700006

Ph.: 033-2360 4306

Price: ₹ 400.00 (Rupees Four Hundred)

US \$20 UK £15

ISSN NO: 2347-4777 (Peer-reviewed Journal)

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Glenn D'Cruz's Where are you coming from, Sir?: Memoir of 'Routed' Identities

Saurabh Kumar Singh & Ashutosh Singh

'If you ever forget you are a Jew, a gentile will remind you' (Joseph Heller)

India's relationship with Australia has spanned over three centuries. Both the countries share a common thread of relationship in terms of their colonial experiences. Several British families were given land grants, after service in India and brought many Indian servants with them. Later on many Indians went to Australia as contracted labourers on vegetable farms, and sugar plantations. Over the period of time, the relationship between these two countries was framed by politics, policies, and attitudes derived from the British Empire. In order to safeguard the rights of high and standard 'white settlers', in the beginning of 20th century 'White Australian Policy' instituted 'Restriction Act' which was passed to check the influx of workers specially people of colour including white in some cases. This law was later on repealed in 1947 at a time when Australia needed cheap labourers. In the wake of this Anglo-Indians were given special consideration to enter into the territory of Australia.

Glenn D' Cruz happens to be the child of Anglo-Indians migrants in Australia. His story –memoir Where are you coming from, Sir? which first appeared in Visibly Different: Face, Place and Race (2007) expresses his deep concerns and dilemma over his mixed and hybrid identities. As an Anglo Indian he has been comfortable neither in his motherland (India) nor in his fatherland (England). This memoir essays his trials and tribulations; his violent victimization; and mental anguish and resentment over his exodus from India to England. He finally receives some consolation; his mind and body breathes in new air and new light after reaching Australia. But the questioning attitude remains intact as he is