

READING CORNER

HISTORY | LITERATURE | ART | ARCHITECTURE | CULTURE | HERITAGE | BIOGRAPHY | TRAVEL | WILDLIFE | ENVIRONMENT | RELIGION | SELF-HELP | FICTION | TRANSLATION | CINEMA | FOOD | CHILDREN

Niyogi Books wishes you a happy 2021! Hope you've been keeping busy reading.
To keep that resolution in motion, we give you a whole new series of our latest publications and more!
We commence the year with our dedication to the renowned scholar and art historian, Kapila Vatsyayan.

Kapila Vatsyayan A Multifaceted Personality



Photo Courtesy: Bharat Tiwari

Kapila Vatsyayan was a top-ranking scholar and *rasika* of Indian culture in all its rich plurality and dynamics of change. Trained as a dancer in many classical forms of dance, she rose to become a classic herself, exploring and highlighting the interdependence of the arts in the Indian tradition and their deep-rooted locale, which attained universality of both vision and aesthetic pleasure, escalating the temporal to the eternal. An institution-maker and a writer of great substance, she was truly a modern who brought to many, in our times, a critical and creative understanding of cultural continuities and changing contexts.

Ashok Vajpeyi

Kapila Vatsyayanji was an integral part of the India International Centre. With her passing away, IIC has been diminished. IIC was her life and soul. Kapilaji organized many cultural functions and events. It was hard work, but she was committed to it.

Kapilaji had a mind of her own. She had a temper which she expressed to anyone, high or low, rich or poor, who she thought was detrimental to the cultural life of Delhi.

Kapilaji was a sensitive human soul, which could be best expressed in these poetic lines:

*Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own.*

Let us follow and emulate Kapilaji's activities and endeavours.

Soli J. Sorabjee

To talk about Kapila Vatsyayan, whom everyone referred to as Kapilaji, is a heavy responsibility. She had an astoundingly diverse scholarship, an eclectic imagination, and interests spanning several fields. Beginning with her basic explorations in Indian classical dance and literature, her interests covered several fields including sculpture, architecture, painting, crafts, textiles, education, and cultural policy among others. Her rich intellectual achievements, along with the responsibilities she took up as an administrator, gave her a great opportunity and a unique ability to look at Indian culture and the arts from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Kapilaji's exceptional scholarship on dance—covering aesthetic theories, performance practices across India, south, and south-east Asia, and above all, specialized knowledge of texts like the *Gita Govinda* and the *Natya Shastra*—is well known. Her book, *Bharata, The Nāṭyaśāstra*, part of the *Makers of Indian Literature* series of the Sahitya Akademi, looks at the second-century text, comprehensively in terms of its content, authorship, social context, and its precursors. She saw dance in India as a connected tradition and was daring enough to break barriers of distinct styles, yet understanding the differences between styles.

She also found deep connections within sculptural and architectural traditions and dance. She received training in art history by scholars such as Vasudeva Sharan Aggarwala. While scholars assess a piece of sculpture on the basis of history, subject matter, and details like ornaments, Kapilaji could analyze the stance, feet position, contact with the ground, and other compositional details, because of her training in dance. These observations became the basis for her book, *Classical Dance in Literature and the Arts*. In *The Square and Circle of Indian Arts*, she took her observations to a deeper level, showing how geometric designs influenced Indian art.

All these observations crystallized into her study of the *Gita Govinda*, the 12th century Sanskrit lyrical-dramatic work, and *Jayadeva*, which has had a phenomenal influence in India on music, dance, and other arts. Kapilaji adopted this poem for a

grand digital multimedia project in IGNCA in collaboration with Xerox Park (USA), creating an electronic database of multi-lingual text, audio/video recordings, manuscripts, talks and performances, rituals and recitations. In a way, it was a futuristic project, linking culture and technology for better assimilation and access.

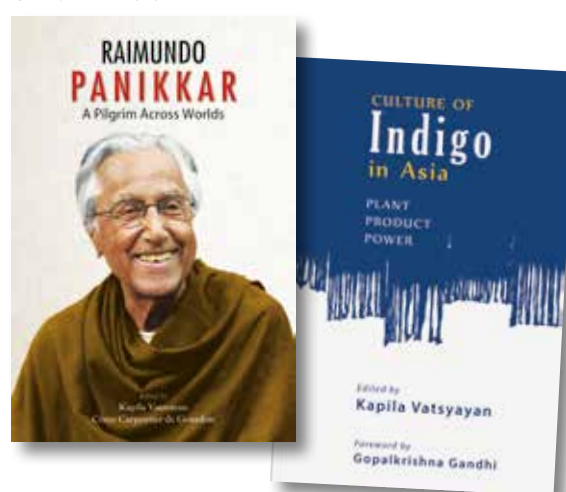
From all these varied experiences, Kapilaji built a holistic understanding of Indian culture and the arts. In all her works, and in setting up institutions, Kapilaji was trying to explore and look through an Indian window to the world outside. In this Indian worldview, there is a deep connection between nature and the human being. **To her, art was not an activity dissociated from life, but something that happened as a response to life.** Kapilaji saw this connectedness as the basis of Indian culture, like the petals of a single flower, an experience different from that of the Western world.

This is not to say that Kapilaji had a closed view of Western culture. Having studied in the US and exposed to Western philosophy, literatures (she had a Masters in English literature), and dance and aesthetic theories, she was fascinated by the kinetic theories of Laban, La Meri, Martha Graham, and Russian Ballet. However, these influences reinforced her own calling towards India, where she saw an integral unity of thought, expression, and experience, beyond differences. I remember her calling that as 'integrality'; it is not surprising that a volume published in her honour is called *Art: The Integral Vision*.

Kapilaji associated herself with a multitude of institutions in the fields of art, culture, and education. She was instrumental in the establishment of institutions such as The Central Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training. Her monograph for UNESCO, *Some Aspects of Cultural Policies in India* (1972), clearly states that 'culture was not the privilege of a small elite close to political power' and that it resides as much through diverse communities irrespective of religion, as much as through royal and official patronage. She represented India in international forums, festivals, and was part of several committees on aspects relating to culture, education, and the arts. The establishment of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) in the early 80s was, in a manner of speaking, the realization of her vision of the conceptual unity and inter-relatedness of artistic traditions.

Sudha Gopalakrishnan

*Author, translator and scholar in the fields of Indian literature, performing arts and aesthetic theory,
& Executive Director, Sahapedia*



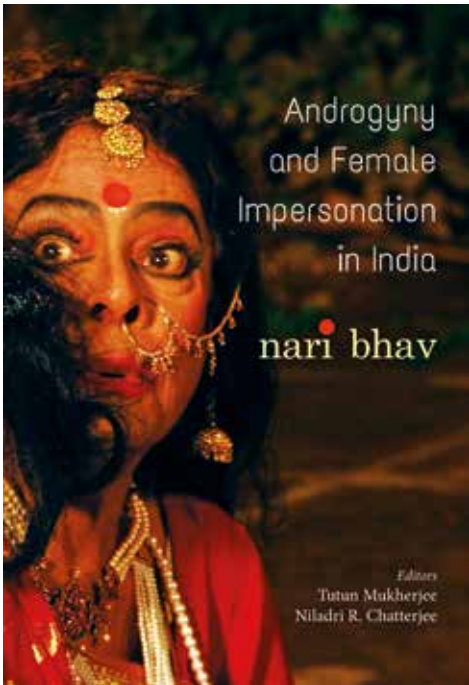
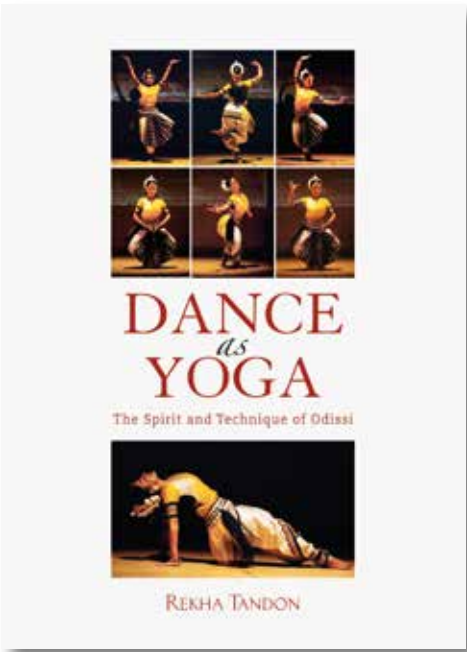
The late Dr Kapila Vatsyayan was known for many things—as a scholar, art historian, institution-maker, and an intellectual stalwart, and mostly for her scholarship and expertise in the field of dance. Dance was not just her field of study; the art form was for her the art of life. As you have read in the lead piece by Sudha Gopalakrishnan, as a leading scholar in the field, Vatsyayan came across various streams of the West, and that drew her closer to the Indian traditions of dance and culture, to build a holistic understanding of it all.

Her expertise in the art form not only earned her authorship, but also many awards in her lifetime. In 1970, Vatsyayan received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship, the highest honour conferred by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, India’s national academy for music, dance, and drama. This was followed by the Lalit Kala Akademi Fellowship, the highest honour in the fine arts conferred by Lalit Kala Akademi, India’s national academy for fine arts, in 1995. In 2011, the Government of India bestowed upon her the Padma Vibhushan, India’s second highest civilian honour.

With her passing away, the world of letters has been left poorer. Niyogi Books is honoured to have published her works in her lifetime. And we dedicate some of our publications in the memory of the eminent Kapila Vatsyayan.

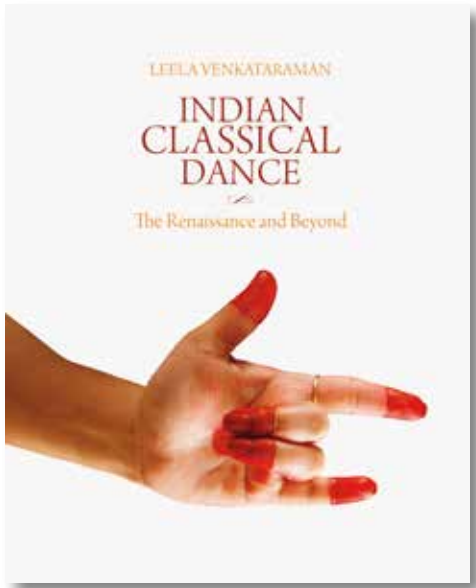
Dance as Yoga by Rekha Tandon describes odissi’s mechanism for creating, dispersing, and expressing energy, as well as some early experiments in choreography that extended its accepted parametres with reference to Choreological Studies.

It is for both performers and audiences to better appreciate the reasons for the restraints inherent in such dance forms and, by doing so, have an informed appreciation of innovation that builds on traditional strengths.



Striving towards bringing an end to gender polarization, this book traverses the concept of ‘androgyny’, emphasizing on the constructed and performative aspects of gender and not on the dichotomy of sex in religion, theatre, and dance, but also in contemporary performative mediums like films, television, and the internet.

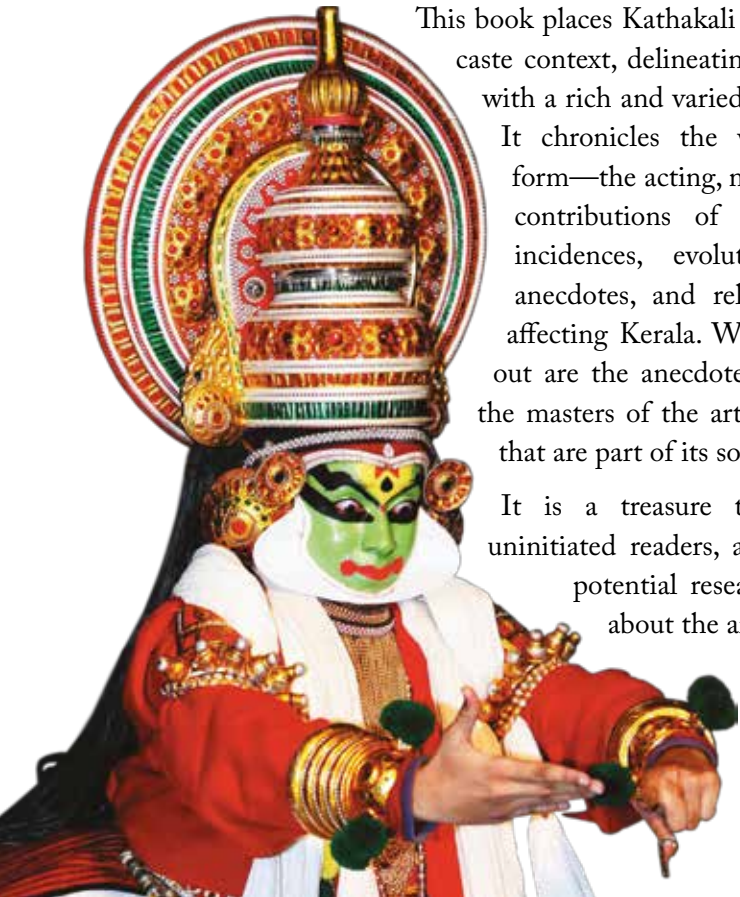
Conversations with the performers reveal how female impersonation has gained and is in the process of acquiring a certain position of respectability and recognition in society, as well as how it has been able to create a unique new craft on stage.



This book traces the journey of the evolution of Indian classical dance since the years of Independence.

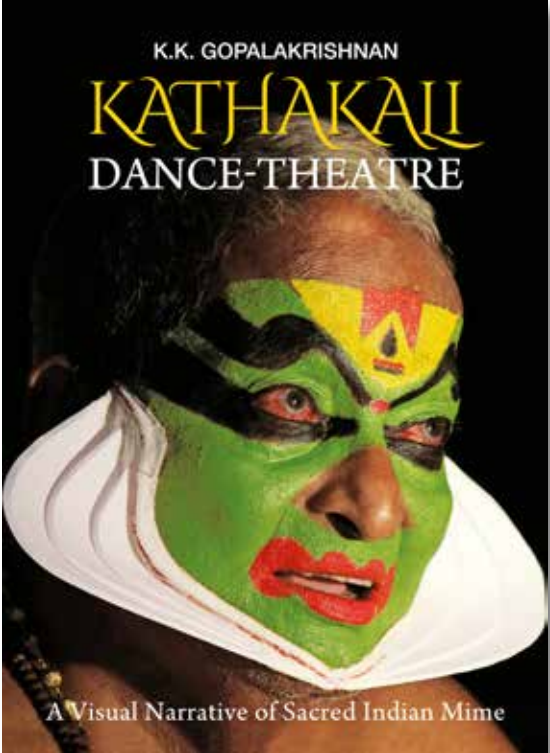
Covering the eight classical dance forms of India—Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Manipuri, Mohiniattam, Odissi, and Sattriya—Leela Venkataraman seamlessly weaves together a historical perspective with the contemporary scenario.

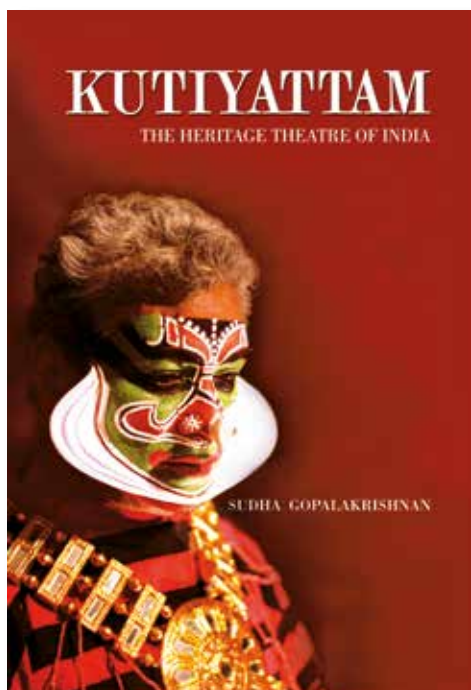
Beautifully illustrated, the book is a must-read for dancers and dance historians, students and teachers of dance, and those interested in Indian culture.



This book places Kathakali in its historical, social, and caste context, delineating its 400-year-old journey with a rich and varied collection of photographs. It chronicles the various facets of the art form—the acting, music, and costumes, crucial contributions of the masters, momentous incidences, evolution of styles, riveting anecdotes, and related socio-political issues affecting Kerala. What makes the book stand out are the anecdotes from conversations with the masters of the art and the common legends that are part of its social fabric.

It is a treasure trove of information for uninitiated readers, arts scholars, theatre buffs, potential researchers, and students keen about the art and its future.

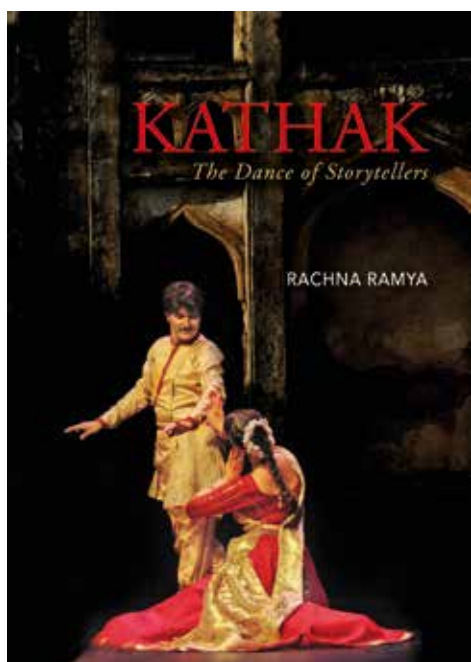




Kutiyattam is widely acknowledged as the only living link to India's ancient theatrical tradition. While its origins are hazy, it is said to have an unbroken history of around two thousand years, combining old Sankrit theatre with the regional forms of Kerala. *Kutiyattam: The Heritage Theatre of India* by Sudha Gopalakrishnan discusses the theory and practice of the art form and aims to introduce Kutiyattam to a larger readership. This is the first major book on this vibrant theatre tradition that has existed in India from the times of the *Natya Shastra*.

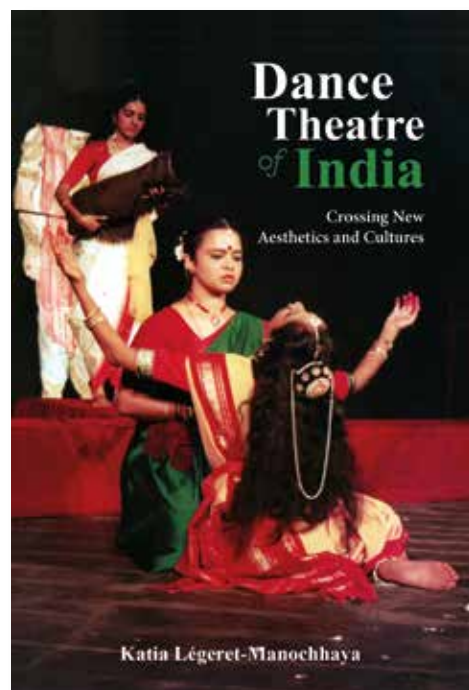
'Leafing through it provides all the pleasure you can ask for, again and again.'

– The Book Review



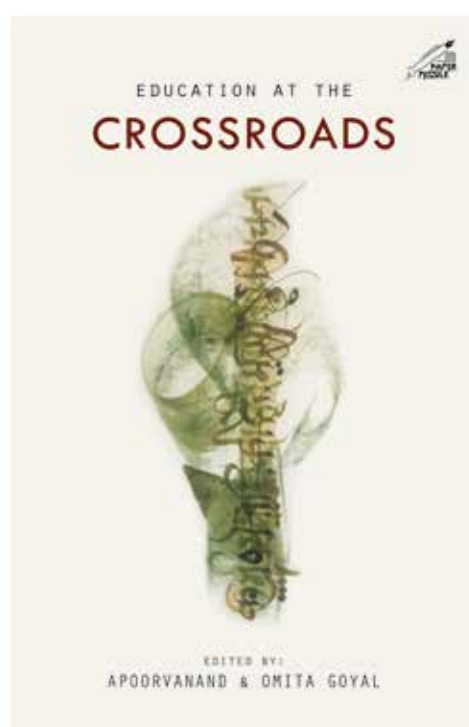
The book thoroughly examines the influence of Bharat Muni's *Natya Shastra*, an ancient treatise of dramatic arts, on present-day Kathak. Investigating this compelling dance style from cultural and historical perspectives, the book delves into the essential principles of Kathak, its schools and major artists, the format of Kathak performance, repertoire, Kathak music, predominant trends in training, and the system of practice through the lens of theory and application.

A rare resource, this text is a comprehensive read for dancers, teachers, and Kathak lovers alike.



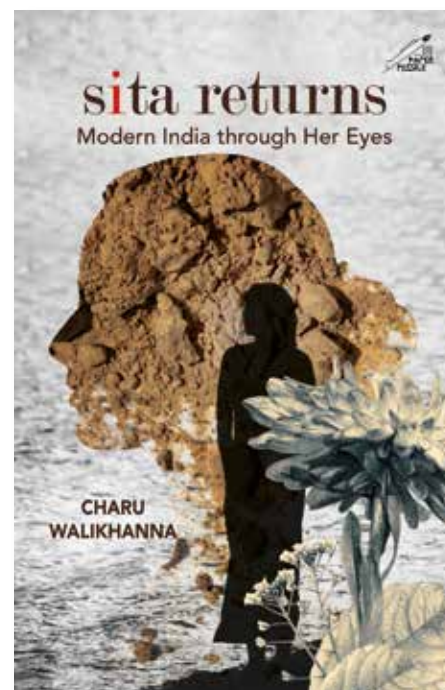
Translated from French, this book provides both an insider's and an outsider's perspective on Indian dance theatre. The author, Katia Légeret-Manochhaya, narrates her real-life experiences with the art forms she learned in India. With distinguished expertise on the aesthetics of Indian dance theatre, the author speaks of its influence on Europe and how it is staged theatrically in contemporary France.

Transformed into a transcultural piece of work in its very essence, this book overcomes all barriers—linguistic, literary, physical, cultural and geographical—to bring the global community of actor-dancers from the world of dance theatre to the fore.



This text asks a fundamental question: what is education? While there can be no one answer, this volume presents a clear understanding of the current state of education in India, which stands at crossroads.

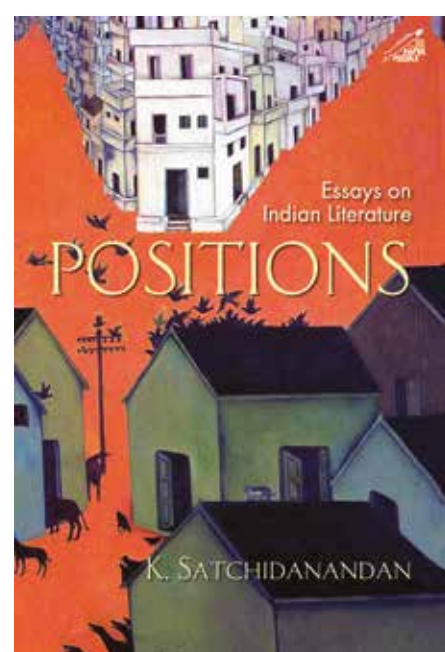
A common theme that runs through the papers is the recognition that education has to teach us to think and question. If this is the imperative, education must take cognizance of disparities in incomes and social status, the heterogeneity of culture, religion, language, and lived reality.



Sita is worshipped in India as a paragon of virtue. However, it is rarely mentioned that she often flouted the conventions and norms of her time; she defied Ram's aspersions, stood up to Ravan, and raised two children as a single mother. Sita underwent two trials by fire; the ordinary Indian woman faces trials every day and is expected to pass an *agnipariksha* at every turn in her life. *Sita Returns* illustrates Sita's journey to learn about the condition of women in 21st century India. Epitomizing the struggles of women in Indian society, Sita relates her own experiences to those of women today.

'Brilliantly written, and an absolute must-read!'

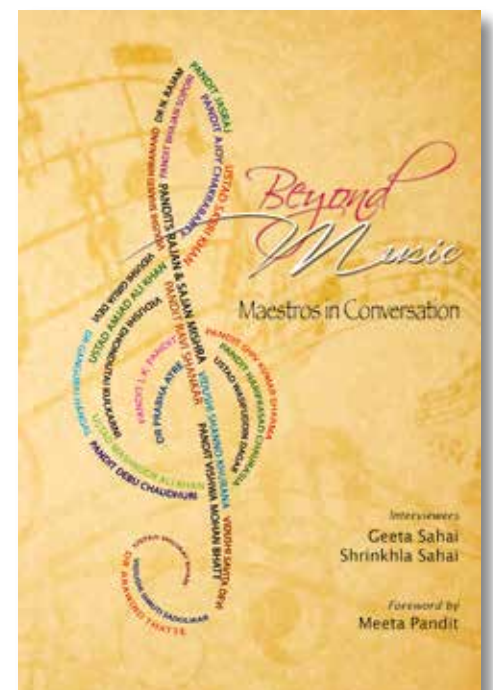
– New Indian Express



Positions features a careful selection from K. Satchidanandan's essays on Indian literature that look for paradigms based on Indian textual practices and reading traditions, while also drawing freely on Indian and Western critical concepts and close readings of certain texts.

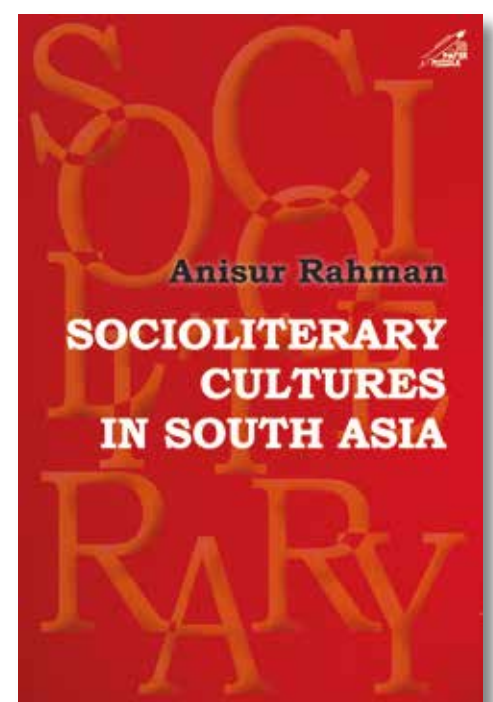
'K. Satchidanandan combines the wide sweep of a polyglot scholar with theoretical sophistication and the keen sensitivity of a fine poet. This book distils a lifetime of his exploration of a vast and vital field.'

– Dr Harish Trivedi,
Professor, University of Delhi



Beyond Music – Maestros in Conversation delves into candid opinions on issues, revealing thoughts on music-making and emotional sagas of some of the most accomplished, revered classical musicians—Dr Prabha Atre, Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Dr N. Rajam, Vidushi Shanno Khurana, Pandit Jasraj, Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma, Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, to name a few.

This book is not just about music; it is an exciting journey into the minds of the musicians, bringing alive the fragrance of their musical thinking. A must-read for all Hindustani classical music connoisseurs.

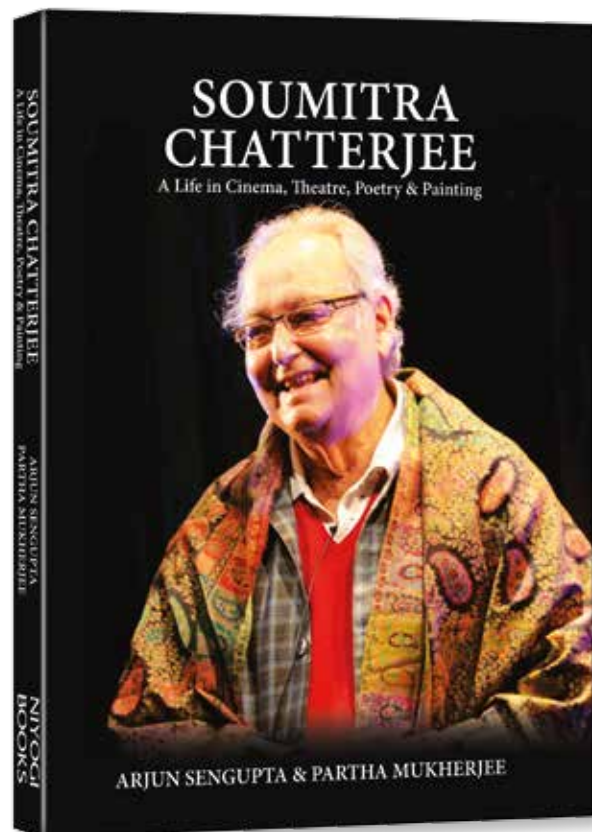


Socioliterary Cultures in South Asia by Anisur Rahman presents seventeen studies on authors, texts, and issues under three sections that represent different secular traditions, imaginative landscapes and realistic configurations. It examines social, political, secular, and cultural texts from five South Asian sites—India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Sri Lanka—to represent a larger kaleidoscope of ancient and modern heritages.

The merit of the book lies in how it develops a larger view of South Asia as a veritable cultural space marked for the richness of its diversity rather than the illusion of its unity.

Soumitra Chatterjee: A maestro in the world of theatre and cinema

(Extract given from *Soumitra Chatterjee: A Life in Cinema, Theatre, Poetry & Painting*)



Soumitra Chatterjee was a man of many pursuits, a true artist, who was a thespian, poet, and performer. Above all, Soumitra was the foremost representative of what is best in Bengali culture and perhaps its greatest ambassador. This book explores the making of Soumitra Chatterjee through his early years and his relationships with Sisir Bhaduri and Satyajit Ray.

Analyzing the most important roles of his career, and charting the singleminded dedication and passion that he brought to each one of them, this work reflects on Soumitra Chatterjee's stardom and longevity in an industry that saw great changes during his lifetime.

Featuring unique photographs, the book is a visual treat and illuminates the versatile facets of a towering artist—a Renaissance man—who along with Ray, brought Bengal to the cinematic world.

Here is an extract from *Soumitra Chatterjee: A Life in Cinema, Theatre, Poetry & Painting*, page 99–107

'*Ashani Sanket* [1973] took [Satyajit] Ray away from the city (his last few films had all been on life in the big city) and gave Soumitra one of the most significant acting challenges in his career. Satyajit Ray's biographer Andrew Robinson said that the director had wanted to make a film on the disastrous famine of 1943 ever since the mid-1960s. Soumitra himself was very keen to take on the role of Gangacharan, the village Brahmin whose life is turned upside down by the famine. He prepared harder for this role than for any other in his life, and it helped him to deliver one of the strongest performances in his career.

This role was personally important for Soumitra because he still vividly remembered the suffering and death the famine had caused all around him in Krishnanagar. It helped that the setting of the film was a village in Nadia (Krishnanagar is part of the Nadia district). He went along with Ray while he went location hunting and saw the people there very closely. They went to several villages, and Soumitra fell back on his natural training as he closely observed the way the Brahmins carried themselves, their way of squatting on the ground, the general almost absent-minded habit of touching the *poite*. Ray used to joke that he should really make *Ashani Sanket* soon

considering they had someone who looked so much like a Brahmin. Yet, there was need for preparation. He had taken up this project because it seemed to him of some serious social significance. He was going to portray a character caught in the midst of one of the worst calamities in the history of Bengal. What was more important was that it affected the poor in the villages much more than it did the ones living in Calcutta...

It probably propelled him [Soumitra] to put in a lot of hard work while shooting. He wrote copious notes on the character, a practice that had held him in good stead ever since those green fledgling days when he had played Apu. He created the character from the foundation, keeping a record of his education, the subjects he would be teaching at his *paathshala*, and the kind of medicinal advice (Ayurveda or homeopathy) he would be dispensing to the villagers. He looked upon his preparation as a work in progress, and he says that it was really only on the last day of shooting that he thought he was well prepared to perform the role...

Soumitra's research allowed him to inhabit the skin of the character in a way rarely replicated in Indian cinema. His slightly smug complacency, his fondness for the small indulgences of life, and his confident, starchy appearance (complete with a prim little moustache) at the beginning of the film quickly establishes Gangacharan as an extremely believable character – the kind you would have recognised immediately in any of the villages in Bengal. Soumitra had reservations about the moustache because he did not think that Brahmins had them at the time. Ray agreed but insisted on this bit of anachronism. His face was an easily recognisable one and had certain associations too because of his stardom. The wispy little moustache changed his face enough to differentiate him from how he looked in commercial cinema. Soumitra got a period-appropriate set of glasses as well from Chakraberia Hawkers' Corner. The combination of the moustache and the glasses along with his astute understanding of body language went a long way in creating verisimilitude of character...

Considering the challenges of physicality and language, along with the complexity of the character and the journey it undertakes, Gangacharan was among the most challenging roles of Soumitra's career. The film itself is deceptive in its low-key, understated treatment of its subject. Ray probably thought that the subject matter was poignant and tragic enough and did not need cinematic emphasis to underscore its pathos. The sweep of the devastation in which the collapse of order in the village is almost a synecdoche for the desolation all over Bengal gives the story an almost epic grandeur. Soumitra's Gangacharan stands right in the middle of it, his journey echoing the awful loss of life and suffering of millions of people. The protagonist, an everyman figure like any other, acquires epic resonance because he goes through an experience that completely uproots his world leaving him to reconstruct an identity in an unrecognisable world. Soumitra plays Gangacharan with tremendous sympathy and authenticity, ensuring that he is the medium through whom the audience understands what he himself remembered of those terrible years when famine ravaged Bengal.'



Soumitra receiving the Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur (Chevalier of Legion of Honour) from the French Ambassador in 2018
Photo courtesy: Supriyo Nag



Soumitra as Gangacharan in *Ashani Sanket* (1973)
Photo courtesy: Ray Society



There would be huge crowds of people waiting to catch a glimpse of the shooting of *Joy Baba Felunath* (1979) in Banaras
Photo courtesy: Ray Society

Miniature paintings from the Himalayan foothills to the museums of the world and the pages of your favourite books...

Closely allied to the Rajasthani schools, both in subject matter and technique, is the Pahari style, so named because of its prevalence in the erstwhile hill states of the Himalayas, stretching roughly from Jammu to Almora and Garhwal, in the sub-Himalayan India, through Himachal Pradesh. Pahari painting was patronized mostly by the Rajput kings who ruled many parts of the region, and gave birth to a new idiom in Indian painting.

Today, exemplary works of Pahari paintings are housed and featured in the many museums of India, across its many states. Niyogi Books, sharing with museums the common objective of preserving the history of humankind by

the preservation of their art and culture, often collaborates with them to publish illustrated titles showcasing precious art from different genres, for instance: *The Great Mysore Bhāgavata: Complete Study of a Manuscript from the Binney Collection in the San Diego Museum of Art*; *Nainsukh of Guler: A great Indian painter from a small hill-state*; *Buddhist Paintings of Tun-Huang in the National Museum, New Delhi*; and many more.

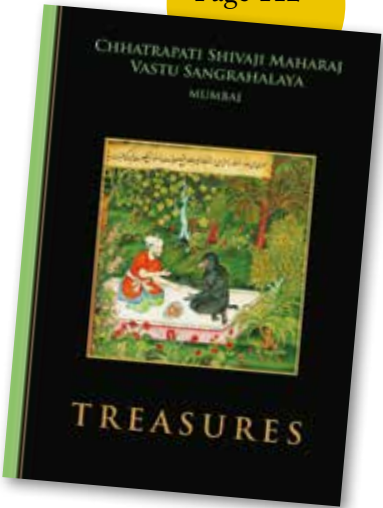
Here we present some Pahari paintings, treasured by our *Treasures* series in collaboration with major Indian museums, aimed to create a lasting interest in Indian art and inspire people to enjoy the wonders of India's great cultural legacy.



Vasakasajja Nayika

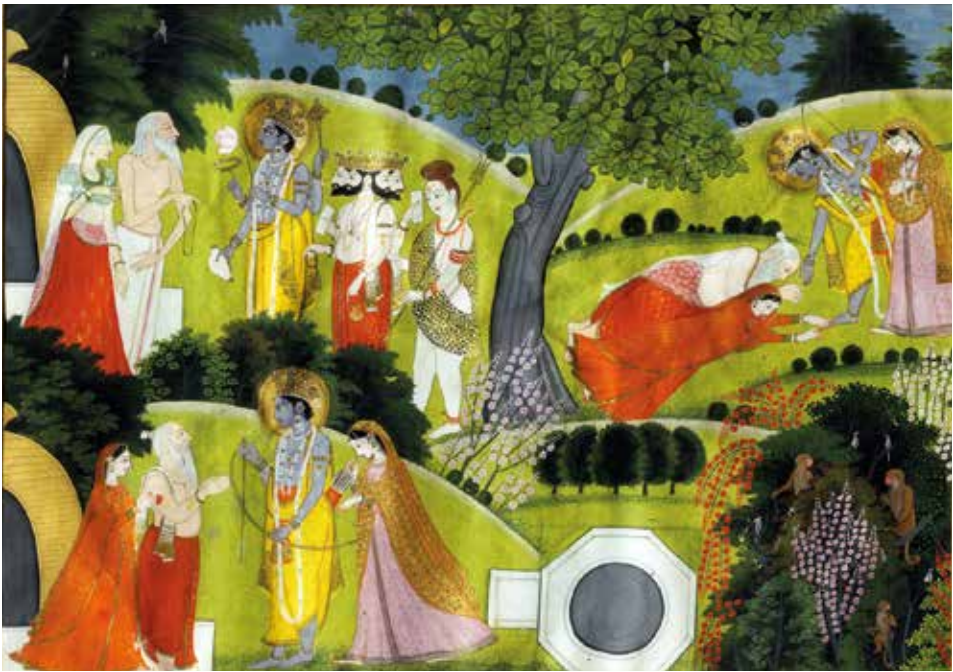
The *nayikabheda* (moods of the heroine) are vividly described in the *Gita Govinda*. A *nayika* who is waiting for her lover to arrive is called the 'Vasakasajja Nayika'. In this painting, with two panels in the same frame, Radha, clad in a lovely green full-sleeved costume, awaits Krishna, to approach her. Nature is in full bloom, heavy blossoms droop from the branches, and flowers are strewn on the garden-floor. On this starlit night she has prepared a bed of leaves and decorated it with a garland of flowers. Her averted glance indicates her nervousness about the approaching moment. On the other side, a graceful messenger begins to usher Krishna towards Radha. The presence of bird-pairs on the trees accentuate this tender and romantic moment.

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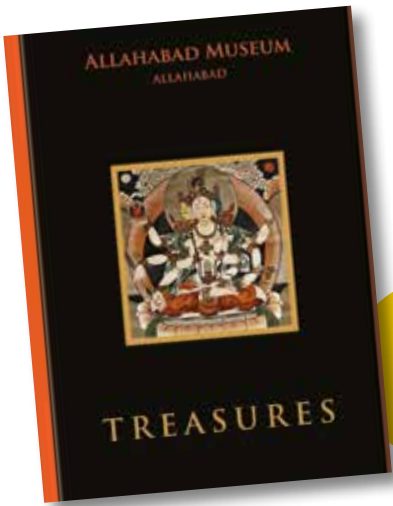


Manu and Shatarupa

The painting illustrates the Puranic story when kings Manu and Shatarupa obtained a boon from Vishnu. On the left top corner Manu and Shatarupa are seen standing at the door of their hermitage. Vishnu, Brahma, and Siva are standing in front of them and offering boons. On the top right, both are seen lying prostrate on the ground, near the feet of Vishnu, along with Lakshmi. Below on the left corner, Manu and his wife are seen standing before the God with folded hands. On the right side monkeys and birds are playing in a blossomed grove.



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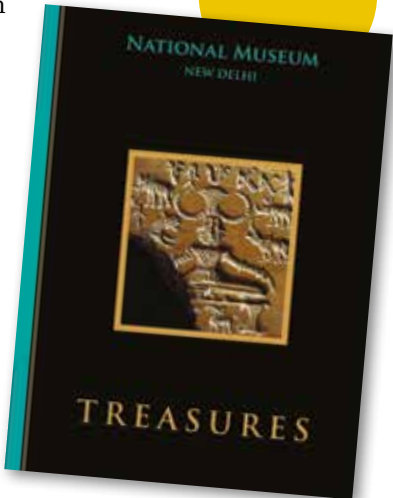


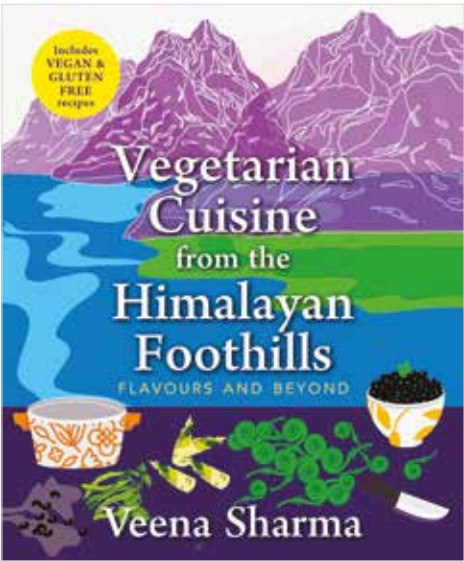
Sage Angiras paying homage to Sage Bhrighu

Sage Bhrighu and Angiras are considered the *manasputras* or mind children of Brahma—the Creator in Indian mythology. There is a popular belief that a work in Sanskrit on Hindu astrology entitled *Brighu-Samhita* was written by Sage Brighu.

In this beautiful painting, Sage Bhrighu is shown seated on a blackbuck skin in front of his hermitage. The sage is welcoming the guest Sage Angiras with a gesture of blessing. The hermitage is set within a colourful natural surrounding teeming with various species of domestic and wild animals.

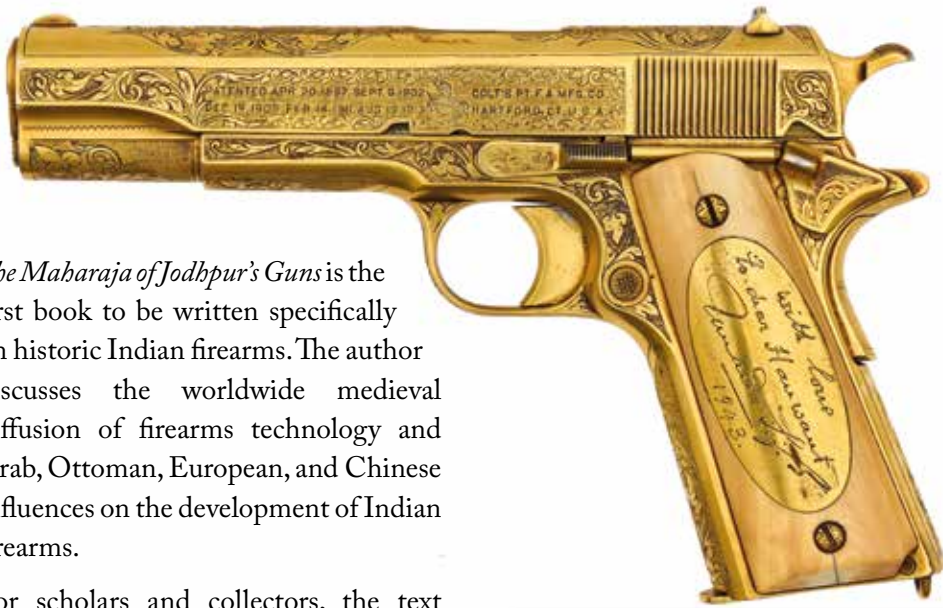
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The past year 2020 has taught us many life skills, especially under lockdown, when everyone had to be completely self-reliant for almost everything, and cooking was definitely one of them! If the value of eating home-cooked meals was not understood before, surely the last few months have opened our eyes to it. Uncountable social media posts showcasing the newly developed culinary skills of people all around the world stand testimony to that. If you are one of them, or even if not, Veena Sharma's *Vegetarian Cuisine from the Himalayan Foothills* promises a delectable experience for all gastronomes, as it delves into mouth-watering recipes that draw upon the local bounties from the Himalayan heights.

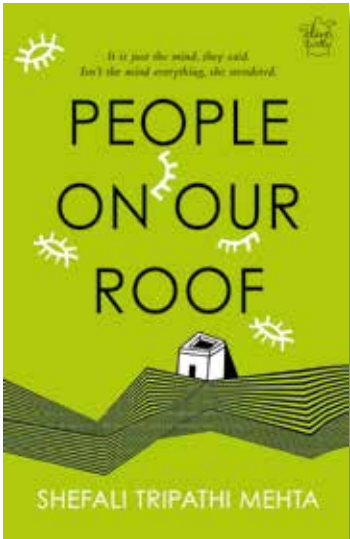
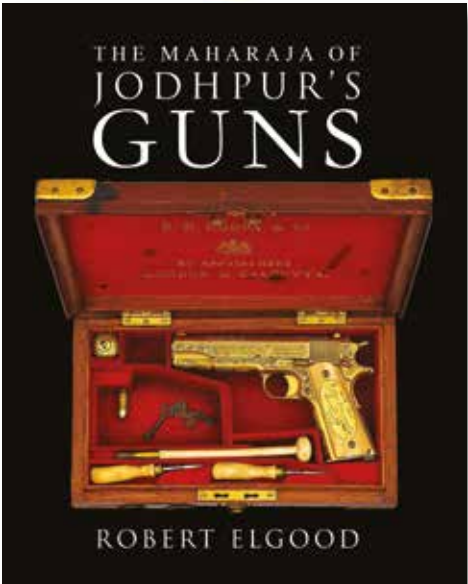
Traditional produce, dressed and enhanced to enrich the urban table, will cater to your taste buds, nurturing your bodies and minds. With several vegan and glutenfree recipes included, this book is sure to feed your deepest cravings.



The Maharaja of Jodhpur's Guns is the first book to be written specifically on historic Indian firearms. The author discusses the worldwide medieval diffusion of firearms technology and Arab, Ottoman, European, and Chinese influences on the development of Indian firearms.

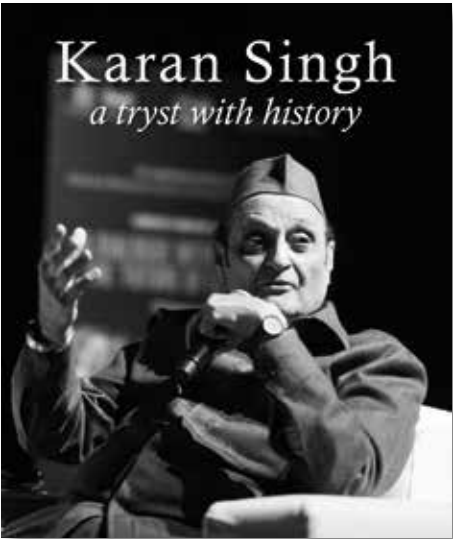
For scholars and collectors, the text offers the opportunity to see the superb Jodhpur collection that includes the best Indian matchlocks, modern British and American sporting guns, shotguns, revolvers, and automatic pistols by many of the great makers of the 20th century.

The book features more than 350 unique images of guns and Rajput paintings from private collections showing their use, as well as explains Rajput traditions relating to hunting and war.



Did you find social-distancing particularly difficult for a few long months during the pandemic? Now, imagine if you had to social-distance for the most part of your life, push everyone away, friends, family, and lovers, because apparently, madness runs in the family, and you are burdened with the responsibilities of both your elders and your youngsters... It would feel claustrophobic, isn't it? In a similar situation, in a once-grand, now down-at-its-heels bungalow in a South Delhi colony, lives Naina with her mother, sister, and the stigma of 'insanity' inherited. When a woman's face peeps in from the mists of her childhood memories, Naina sets out in search of the truth behind her father's disappearance. Then comes a call that begins to unspool the past.

People on Our Roof is a portrait of one woman's undying commitment to her kin; her struggle with relationships, and a heart-wrenching story of indestructible love between two people. A coming of age story, it also explores the world of people whose minds are wired differently.



A man of many parts, Dr Karan Singh is a former ruler of a princely state (the only one to surrender his privy purse, putting the entire sum in the service of the people of India through the Hari-Tara Charitable Trust), a brilliant scholar, an upholder of interfaith harmony, and an environmentalist and conservationist. A cultural stalwart and an educationist, he is associated with many cultural and academic institutions in India and abroad.

He has held various positions of importance across the span of his career and continues to serve the people of his nation with grit, determination, and excellence.

Karan Singh: A Tryst With History was born of a series of exclusive interviews, spread over a year, with Dr Karan Singh featuring his many achievements and life experiences.

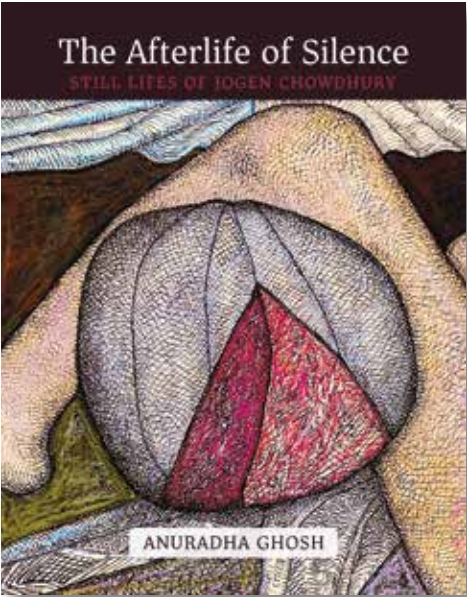
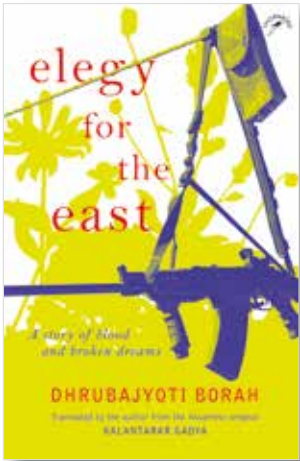
'Elegy for the East is a gripping and unfeigned tale of how common people are enmeshed in a ceaseless web of physical and psychological warfare unleashed by the state and non-state actors in conflict-torn Assam.'

– Teresa Rehman, journalist and author

The sylvan countryside of Assam, with its green paddy fields, hide memories of bloodshed, death, rape, and terror. *Elegy for the East* explores the travails of the people who have had to brave the harsh days of insurgency, through

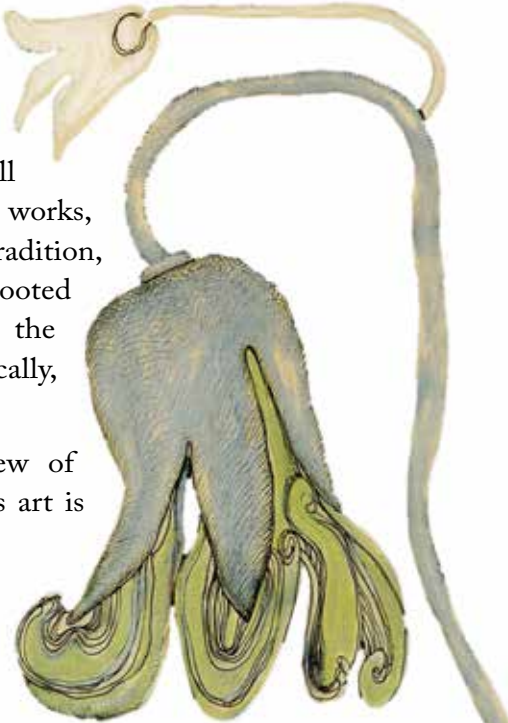
the rise and fall of the ULFA. It is a narrative not far from truth, where an uncaring, anonymous, and overbearing State creates and/or co-creates situations of social and political strife, and where innocent and beautiful dreams of the masses die in the stony bed of terror and counter-terror.

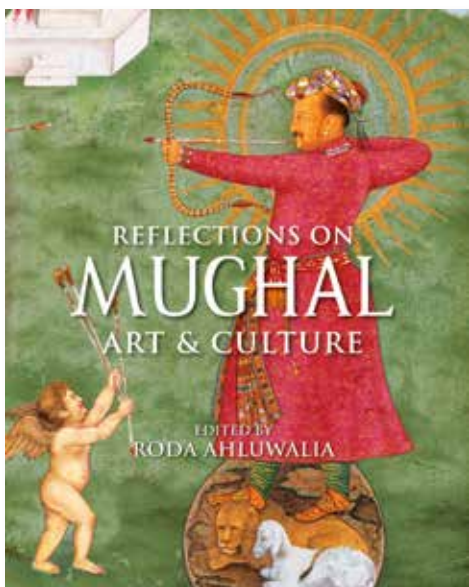
The author's skillful exploration of postcolonial ethos and angst is commendably evident. Perceived from the eyes of the subaltern and the marginalized, this is a powerful narrative that will pull at the heartstrings of every reader.



The Afterlife of Silence: Still Lives of Jogen Chowdhury is the first-ever comprehensive book on the still lifes of one of India's leading modern painters. The book takes a close look at the essentials of the European tradition of still life painting and argues that Jogen Chowdhury's works, while sharing certain common concerns of the tradition, also differ significantly from it, and are firmly rooted in his indigenous situatedness. It analyzes the development of the artist's still lifes chronologically, featuring many impactful images of his work.

The book also includes an in-depth interview of the artist himself that reveals how the painter's art is permeated by his universe of ideas and ideals.





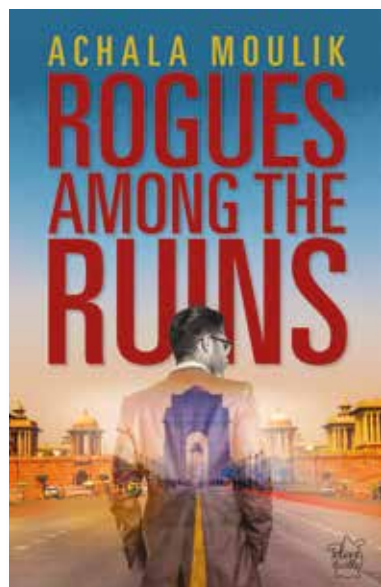
Enter the splendid world of Mughal India and explore its rich aesthetic and cultural legacy through fresh insights offered by 13 eminent scholars. Recent scholarship in this field has offered deeper analysis into established norms, explored pan-Indian connections and drawn comparisons with contemporaneous regions of the early modern world. Further studies along these lines were encouraged in a seminar held by the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, Mumbai, and the formidable scholarship presented by contributors forms the content of this volume.

Themes as diverse as portraits of royal women, sub-imperial patronage of temples, word-image relationship, the lapidary arts and the Imperial Library of the Mughals, a reconsideration of Mughal garden typologies, murals painted on architectural surfaces, the textile culture of the city of Burhanpur, changes in visual language and content of painting, and Imperial objets d'art have been discussed, challenged and analyzed. The final three articles are groundbreaking comparisons across Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal spheres. This beautifully illustrated book is sure to appeal to connoisseurs, collectors, and scholars alike.

Roda Ahluwalia, the editor, is an independent scholar of South Asian Art, with an interest in painting and the book arts, religio-philosophical thought and the material culture of South Asia. She is currently a visiting scholar of Jnanapravaha, Mumbai, where she lectures on Mughal, Deccani, and Pahari painting for the 'Indian Aesthetics' programme.



New books...
New beginnings



Rogues Among the Ruins by Achala Moulik portrays the conflict of civil servants caught between ideals and thirst for success.

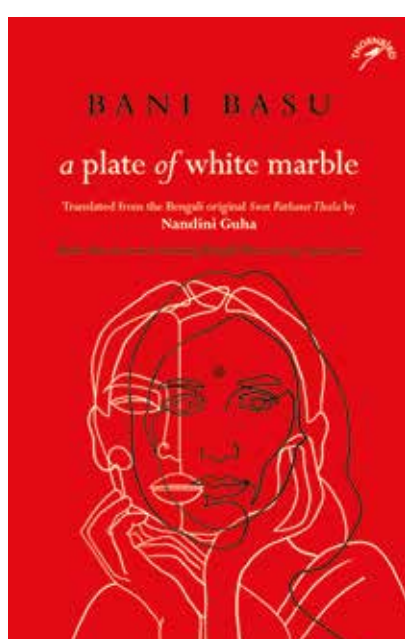
A satire on the workings of the Indian civil service machinery, the novel uses irony, humour, and sarcasm to unveil the reality of powerful men and women who think they rule the country. Not betraying any bitterness, the novel adopts the style of great masters like Cervantes and Gogol who in search of truth and justice, always evoke laughter through tears.

First published in 1990 in the original Bengali, this novel tells the story of the 'new woman' of the post-Independence era. Bandana, though grieves over her husband's early death, never conforms to the social connotation and ideals of 'widowhood'. She dares to begin her life afresh, but she faces bitterness and opposition from many quarters of the society. She leaves behind the concrete walls of her house and joins a children's home to work for those who need her the most.

This first translation brings this significant Bengali novel with important social concerns to a wider audience.

'The portrayal of Bandana's split identity is the crux of the novel - a silent rebel against widowhood practices, Bandana is also trapped in her own hesitance in breaking social codes.'

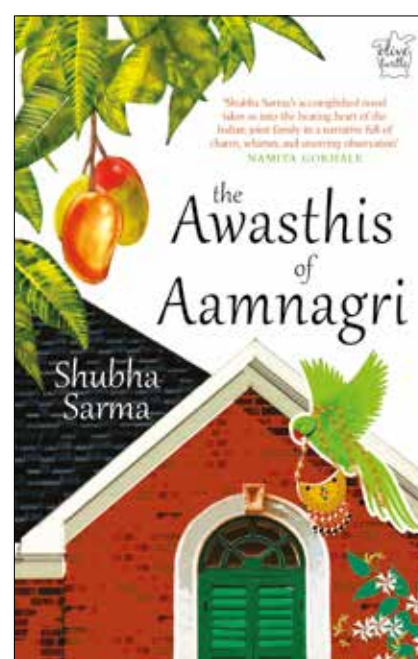
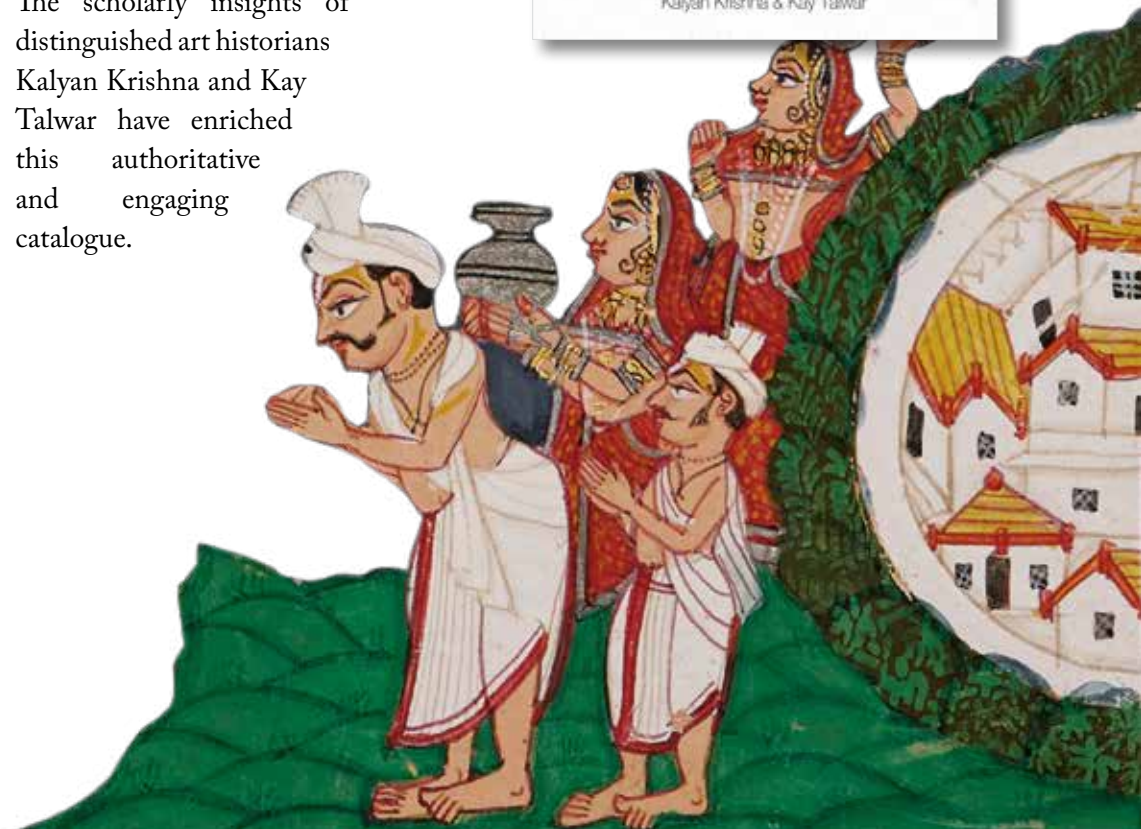
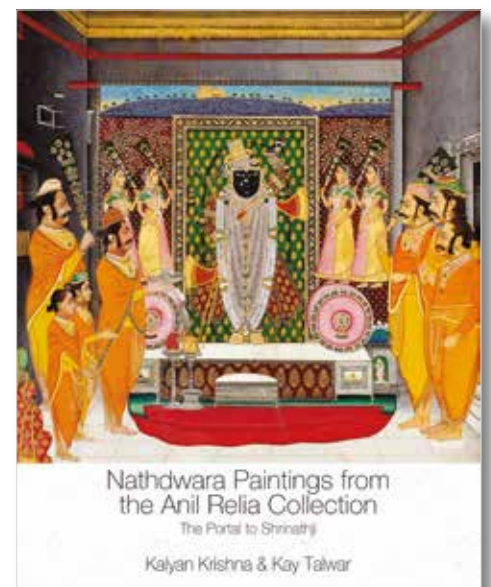
— Dr Malashri Lal, *Outlook*



This catalogue explores Anil Relia's comprehensive collection of Nathdwara paintings and sketches, celebrating the wide-ranging talents of various artists. The painters acted as story tellers by recounting the exploits of Krishna while also documenting important historical events and personages at the Nathdwara temple, Rajasthan.

A prominent artist showcased in this collection is Ghasiram Hardev Sharma, a master draughtsman with a penchant for naturalism.

The scholarly insights of distinguished art historians Kalyan Krishna and Kay Talwar have enriched this authoritative and engaging catalogue.



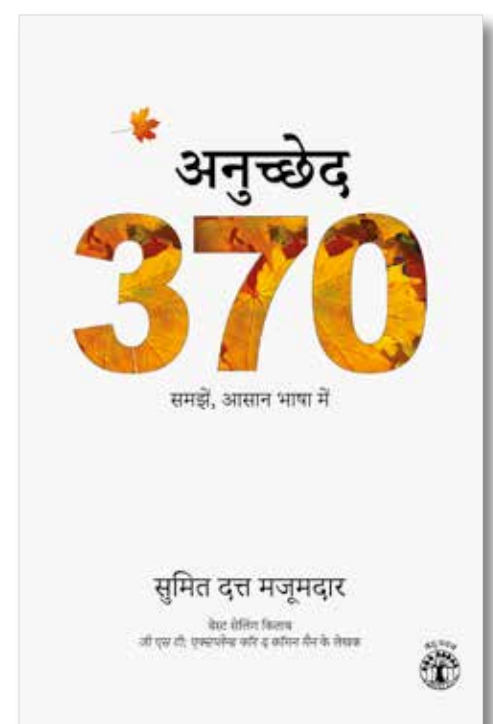
Families are like the sweet mangoes of Aamnagri—messy, filled with juicy secrets, and sticking together through all times.

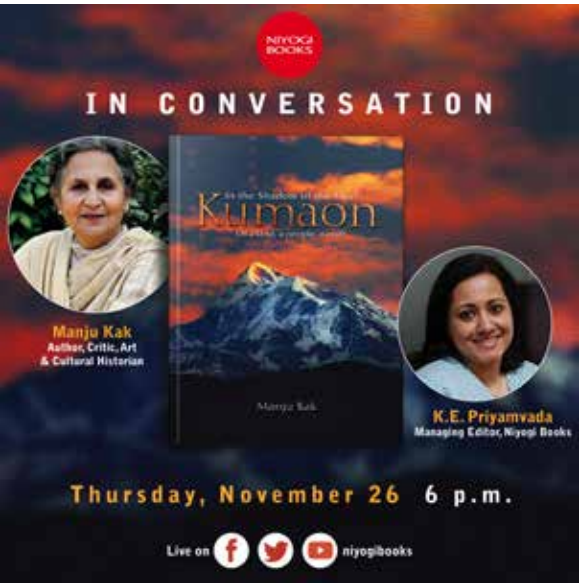
The Awasthis of Aamnagri are the quintessential Indian family, who bumble through their lives encountering missing jewels and stolen eggs, deaths foretold, averted, and a suspected suicide with no body. The mysteries are solved by the inquisitive minds of young Lakshmi and Guddu and the saffron-clad Guruji.

Juxtaposing the old-world values with a new-era livelihood, it is a very exciting read specially for children and young adults, who are looking to have a taste of the simpler pleasures of life.

वर्तमान के राजनीतिक पटल में जो दौर चल रहा है, उसमें अनुच्छेद 370 एक सामयिक मुद्दे के रूप में हमेशा ज्वलंत विषय के रूप में याद किया जाता है। दरअसल, यह जितना राजनीतिक है, उतना ही ऐतिहासिक भी है। ऐसा ना कभी हुआ, ना आगे होगा। अगस्त 2019 को, भारत सरकार ने, जम्मू और कश्मीर राज्य को दो केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों, जम्मू और कश्मीर और लद्दाख के रूप में पुनर्गठित किया, जो कि 31 अक्टूबर 2019 से लागू हो गया। इसके पूर्व, संविधान का अनुच्छेद 370, जम्मू और कश्मीर राज्य को विशेष दर्जा (स्पेशल स्टेटस) प्रदान करता था।

इस निर्णय को लेकर तमाम बारीकियाँ इस पुस्तक में आसान भाषा में दी गई हैं। नियोगी बुक्स की बेस्ट सेलिंग किताब जी एस टी: एक्सप्लेन फॉर द कॉमन मैन के लेखक सुमित दत्त मजूमदार ने उन महत्वपूर्ण बिंदुओं को व्याख्यासहित इसमें उभारा है, जिससे यह आम आदमी की पहुँच तक जा सके। कानूनी शब्दावली का सरलीकरण, सटीक शब्द-शैली, धारा-प्रवाह भाषा, इन सभी का बेजोड़ प्रयास है यह पुस्तक। शोधार्थी छात्रों के लिए भी बेहद उपयोगी एवं कारगर। यह पुस्तक अंग्रेज़ी में लिखी गई बेस्ट सेलर पुस्तक Article 370 का हिंदी अनुवाद है।

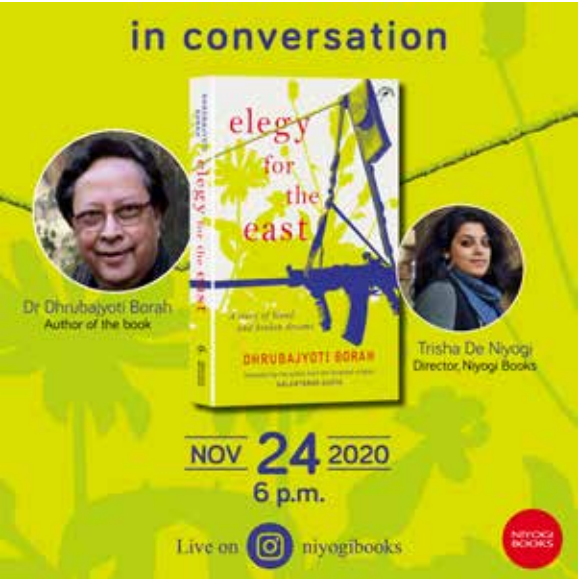




Manju Kak, a writer, critic, and scholar, revealed her personal experiences with Devi Kumaon that inspired her to pen them down into this book.



Mira Gupta, interviewed the author of Paintings of the Kangra Valley, critic and art historian Vijay Sharma. Their discussion threw light upon the beautiful painting styles of Guler and Kangra in the 18th & 19th centuries.



Award-winning author Dhrubajyoti Borah spoke of the exploration of postcolonial ethos and angst that finds voice in his novel Elegy for the East.



The book is an experience in itself—an unrivalled showcase of 16th-century Vijayanagara architecture and art. Scholar Anna N. Dallapiccola shared her personal experiences while researching on the subject.



Author, architect, and academic, Vibhuti Sachdev, took the audience on a vibrant and informative journey through the Hindu seasonal calendar and the year-round panoply of festivity that is special to Rajasthan, particularly Jaipur.



It was an insightful dialogue between the author and Dr Pratibha Roy, Dr Debasis Panigrahi, and Tanaya Patnaik, on this beautiful, witty, humorous, yet mature piece of fiction.



Over so many years, Kitab Khana has helped us increase our knowledge and has been like a safe haven for bibliophiles.

In these trying times, the least we can do is to stand by them. New year or no new year, bookstores like these are perennial.



Dipanjan Rai Chaudhuri, former HOD, Physics, Presidency College, passed away aged 75, in Kolkata, on 24 October 2020. DRC, as he was known, was loved as he ignited many young minds, who later had illustrious careers. Following his arrest for pro-Naxalite activities, he completed his PhD in theoretical physics, at Queen Mary College, London, before returning to Calcutta. Apart from teaching physics he authored *Triptych*, *Triolet*, and *Prabas Jiboner Katha* (4 vols), and many poems and essays on sociopolitical issues. We extend our condolences to his family and pay tribute to this polymath, whose works we were privileged to publish.

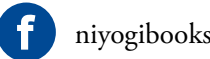
IN REMEMBRANCE

The illustrious Bengali poet, academic, and cultural interlocutor, Alokaranjan Dasgupta passed away on 17 November 2020, in Heidelberg, Germany at the age of 87. His first book of poems, *Jauban Baul* (The Bard of Youth, 1959) created a sensation amongst Bengali readers and his Bengali translation of Goethe's mini epic *West Easterly Divan* is still regarded as a masterpiece. At Jadavpur University, where he taught Comparative Literature, and at Heidelberg, where he taught Indian Literature and Philosophy, students used to sit on the floor and stand outside the classroom to listen to his lectures. His favourite poets were Surdas, Tagore, Jibanananda Das, and Rainer Maria Rilke.



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