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## *Literature Across Mediums: The Aesthetics and Politics of Medial Boundary* edited by Gourhari Behera and Shayeqa Tanzeel, Dhauli Books, 2023, 167 pp, INR 495, ISBN 9788195941124

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### 1. Introduction-

*Literature Across Mediums: The Aesthetics and Politics of Medial Boundary Crossing* is an attempt in contemporary literary studies that tries to study the intersections of canonical and noncanonical boundaries of literature transcending medial limits of representations. Behera and Tanzeel take the foundational ideas from Irena O. Rejewski's essay "Intermediality, Intertextuality and Remediation: A Literary Perspective on Intermediality" where Rejewski introduces the three ways of relationship of a text with another medium which are medial transposition, media combination and intermedial references. Divided into nine chapters, the anthology critiques on various modalities of crossing medial boundaries of literature and media. The first chapter "The Photograph and the Filmic Images: Subhas Chandra Bose in Shyam Benegal's *Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: The Forgotten Hero* and Other Cinematic Representations" by Mohammad Asim Siddiqui embodies an act of medial transposition. The narrated historical facts and contemporary stories about Subhas Chandra Bose have been transposed into filmic

representation. The film with its additional visual and sound effect makes the message of the writer (of the script) long lasting. The chapter proposes a dialogue with different discourses Subhas Chandra Bose arguing 'what if he had survived' (28).

The second chapter "Gesture in Sacco's *Palestine: Affective Trauma and Human Rights Advocacy*" by Beerendra Pandey analyses how literature combines three other disciplines with literature; medical science, graphics or drawing and Human Rights.

The third chapter "*Kathakali Othello: Shakespeare in Kerala Traditional Theatre*" by Manju V. Vallath is another example of medial transposition. The author observes and investigates into the "Malayalam literary poly-system" (63) in order to explore how Shakespeare has been assimilated "through different modes of appropriation" (63) like "interlingual renderings" (63), rendering "into transcultural and trans-generic forms" (64) and "several indigenous performance formats" (64). It further questions the socio-political agenda of British empire to establish and sustain its colonial pursuits that appears now as mimicry of the

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standardization of tragedy, of purity of English language and of colonial power.

The fourth chapter “The History of Pandemic Art” by Babitha Justin is an example of the implication in the backdrop of pandemics like black death, cholera, Spanish Influenza, Plague in literature and painting. Through her subtle analysis of different literary and visual depictions of epidemics and diseases, Babitha “testifies the anxieties during pandemics” (79) and India’s complex combination of the helplessness of Indian populace under colonial politics that is represented through the British project of mass immunization on the colonial bodies.

The fifth chapter, “Mischiefs Managed: Role of Rowling in the Reels of *Potter*” by Khushi Pattanayak deals with “a lesser discussed cinematic adaptation” (93) of *Harry Potter* where the “the role of the author is limited to the credit titles only” (94) and is “completely side-lined in the creative process” (94) in other media formats.

The sixth chapter “Adaptation of the Myth of Orpheus and Remediation of Rock Music in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*” by Shayeqa Tanzeel explores how Rushdie combines rock music with myths in literary art through animation. In this chapter, Tanzeel explores Salman Rushdie’s “adaptation of Orpheus-Eurydice myth to analyze the novel [*The Ground Beneath Her Feet*] as an expression of verbal music that ... uncovers the cosmopolitan features of music and other arts” (106) in Rushdie’s attempt in successfully “subverting the imperialistic undertones of a Western cultural product” (106).

The seventh chapter, “The Consummate Artist: A Study of Inter-mediality in the Works of William Blake” by Anjita Singh traces creative spirit of Blake in his poems which have been linked with his drawing of Westminster Abbey, old churches and Gothic art during his apprenticeship to engraver James Basire at the age of fourteen. In this chapter, Singh seeks to explore William Blake’s “consummate skill in amalgamating the two mediums of expression, poetry and art, in a way that was complementary to each other” (129).

The eighth chapter, “*Junoon*’s Anglo Indian Connection” by Sarvajit Mukherji talks of the representations of a woman of the Anglo-Indian community, “a micro-minority”, “in both literature and cinema” (133) in India. Through a postcolonial analysis of the film *Junoon* and relocation of a white woman, Ruth, and Indian Hindu and Muslim women in the broader trajectory of Indian culture in making of the post-Independence phase, Mukherji analyses the film as “an excellent example of a remembered narrative being embodied as a written text” appropriated “cinematically, gathering nuances and meaning with each telling” (139).

And the ninth chapter, “Things Fall Apart; the Center cannot hold’: Decoding Shakespeare in Srijit Mukherji’s *Zulfiqar*—An Introspective Disclosure to Contemporary Socio-Cultural Politics” by Chayan Dutta and Sunita Murmu embarks upon construction of Shakespeare’s source “manuscripts in the contemporary socio-cultural contexts” (141). In the chapter, Dutta and Murmu discuss the adaptation of Shakespeare’s selected plays in to Indian films that represent “the

murky political scene of Kolkata of the twenty first century” (142).

The book in all its latent prospects and scopes elaborates the intermedial boundary crossing of literary texts into other media forms of representation from canonical to popular cultures and literatures of India. Also, by exploring extensively the adaptations of popular and literary

texts into films with postcolonial, cultural and intersectional perspectives, the book becomes a welcome addition in the fields of adaptation and media studies.

**References:**

1. Behera, Gourhari and Tanzeel, Shayequa. (eds) *Literature Across Mediums: The Aesthetics and Politics of Medial Boundary*. Dhauli Books, 2023.

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