

A Tantalising Introduction to One of the Most Accomplished Personalities in Eighteenth-century Britain

OVERS and admirers of Sir William Jones in particular and orientalism in general will be much delighted by a recent publication of a very judicious and convenient selection of his works entitled "Sir William Jones: A Reader", edited by Introduction and notes by Satya Sheel Pachori, Chairman and Professor of English, Department of Language and Literature, University of North Florida, Jacksonville, USA. It is a very timely publication since Jones has been out of print for nearly 200 years, although there was a particular demand for his works which were not very easily available to modern readers and enthusiasts of Jones.

Sir William Jones was the greatest orientalist of the eighteenth century and one of the greatest of all times. He was born in London on 28th September 1746. His father, a mathematician, a friend of Newton and Halley and vice-president of the Royal Society, hailed from Anglesey, an island in North Wales. Jones was sent to Harrow in 1753 at the age of seven, and studied there until 1764, where, among several other European languages, he also learnt Hebrew and the Arabic writing system. He was admitted to University College, Oxford, in 1764 and elected Bennet Scholar. Here, inter alia, he studied Arabic and Persian as well. Jones became a private tutor of Lord Althorp, the future Earl Spencer, in the summer of 1766. On 7th August this year he was elected to a fellowship at University College. The Duke of Grafton, hearing of his proficiency in Arabic and Persian, offered him the post of interpreter for the Eastern Languages which he modestly refused. He met Anna Maria Shipley whom he married years later. In 1767 Jones visited Europe and started learning Chinese. By then he had acquired some fame as an orientalist and it was reinforced by his translation of *L'Histoire de Nader Chah* in 1770. It included an essay on Oriental poetry and 13 Ghazals in French. Jones studied law from 1770 to 1774 and became a barrister. His *Grammar of the Persian Language* was published in 1771 and his noteworthy book of verse *Poems, Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatic Languages* in 1772. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1772 and a member of the famous literary club of Dr Johnson in 1773.

His magnum opus — *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentarium* (*Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry* in six books in Latin) was published in 1774. 1779 saw the publication of his translation of a law-book *The Speeches of Isaeus in Causes Concerning the Law of Succession to Property in Athens*. His other publications during this period were *Essay on the Law of Bailments* (1781), *The Principles of Government* (1782), *The Mohammedan Law of Succession* (1782) and *The Moallakat* (1782). Jones was appointed a judge of the High Court of Bengal on 4 March, 1783 and he married Anna Maria Shipley on April 8. He reached Calcutta in September the same year. His monumental achievement in India was the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784. Jones' important publications from the Sanskrit: the *Hitopadesa* (1786), *Gitagovinda* (1789), *Sacontala* (1789), and *The Ordinances of Manu* (1794). He started the publication of the *Asiatic Researches* in 1788. His other publications during this period were translation of *Hafiz's Laili Majnun* from the Persian (1788) and *Al Sirafiyah*; or, the *Mohammedan Law of Inheritance*; with a *Commentary and The Seasons*; a *Descriptive Poem* (1792).

Jones' works are thus numerous. But for nearly 200 years many of these were not available to the readers. In this context S S Pachori's *Sir William Jones: A Reader* has a special importance and significance since it will enable present day readers to have an easy access to many works of Jones. The book has obviously an oriental bias for it mostly includes Jones' oriental publications which are rather much sought for by readers, scholars and researchers interested in oriental studies all over the world. Pachori, himself an orientalist in his own right, has done a very commendable job by bringing out this book.

Besides the brief *Acknowledgements* and *Invocation of Ganesh* (by Jones), the *Foreword* by Rosane Rocher and *Preface* by P H Salus, the book contains three sections under three different headings such as: I. Literature; II. Language and Linguistics; and III. Religion, Mythology, and Metaphysics. The first section has three sub-sections: (i) *Poetry*, (ii) *Drama* and (iii) *Criticism*. Under *Poetry* Pachori includes: *The Palace of Fortune*.

BOOK REVIEW

Sir William Jones: A Reader

Edited by Satya S Pachori

Oxford University Press
Delhi, Oxford, New York,
1993

Pages-230 Price Rs 350

an Indian Tale; The Seven Fountains, an Eastern Allegory; Caissa, or the Game at Chess; An Ode in Imitation of Alcaeus; The Muse Recalled; Damsels of Cardigan; The Moallakat; Jones' Argument to The Poem of Amiriolkais; The Poem of Amiriolkais; Lines from the Arabic; On Parent Knees; The Concluding Sentence of Berkeley's *Siris*, Imitated; After a Perusal of The Eighth Sermon of Barrow, 1786; The Enchanted Fruit; or, The Hindu Wife; An Antediluvian Tale written in The Province of Bihar; A Hymn to Camdeo; The Hymn; A Hymn to Narayana; The Hymn; A Hymn to Seresawty; The Hymn; Jones' Original Version of a Sanskrit Hymn to Sarasvati; A Hymn; to Ganga; The Hymn; a Hymn to India; The Hymn A Hymn to Surya; The Hymn; A Hymn to Lachsmi; The Hymn; Two Hymns to Pracriti; The Hymn to Durga; The Hymn to Bhavani; Gitagovinda; or, The Songs of Jayadeva. The sub-section under Drama includes — *Sacontala*; or *The Fatal Ring*; An Indian drama by Calidas; *Preface*; *Sacontala*; or *The Fatal Ring*. The following appears under sub-section *Criticism*: *Essay on the Arts*, commonly called *Imitative*; *An Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations*; on the *Mystical Poetry of the Persians and Hindus*; on the literature of the Hindus, from the Sanskrit; Jones' English Advertisement to His Printing of the *Ritusamhara*.

The second section — Language and Linguistics — includes the following: A *Grammar of the Persian Language*; *Proposals for Re-printing by Subscription*: A Dictionary of the Arabic, Persian and Turkish languages; A Dissertation on the Orthography of Asiatic Words in Roman Letters; A Discourse on the Institution of a Society for Inquiring into the History, Civil and Natural, the

Antiquities, Arts, Sciences, and Literature of Asia; The Third Anniversary Discourse. The following have been included in the third section — Religion, Mythology, and Metaphysics: On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India; On the Antiquity of the Indian Zodiac; Discourse the Eleventh on the philosophy of the Asiatics; Institutes of Hindu Law, or, The Ordinances of Manu, According to the Gloss of Cut-tuca comprising the Indian System of Duties, Religious and Civil; The Preface; The Laws of Manu, Song, Brahma; Extracts from the *Vedas*; *Isavasyam*; or, *An Upanishad from the Yajurveda*; Translation of the *Mohamudgara*; or *The Ignorant Instructed*. Apart from these the book also includes a *Selected Bibliography* and an *Index*; both of which will be of much use for pursuers of further studies on Jones.

About the *Reader*, the author himself says: "This *Reader* contains selected representative works of Sir William Jones... the prominent British philologist, poet, translator, orientalist, jurist, and father of comparative studies. His works have not been published since a six-volume edition of 1799 and a thirteen volume edition of 1807. Also they have never been critically edited and annotated; this is the first volume of its kind". Professor Pachori has thus emerged as a pioneer in respect of Jones scholarship by bringing out such a *Reader* of Jones and has set a commendable example for other scholars to emulate. In the Foreword, Rosane Rocher has rightly said, "The author of *Sir William Jones: A Reader* is a Professor of English, and in a position to highlight the features of Jones' works which are of the greatest relevance for the general reader and the college student today. He is a life long student of Jones, and

SIR WILLIAM JONES

A Reader



edited by

SATYA S. PACHORI

is familiar with the entire range of Jones' oeuvre." About the importance and significance of the *Reader* Rocher commented, "To all who read it *Sir William Jones: A Reader* should be a tantalizing introduction to one of the most accomplished personalities in eighteenth-century Britain, a man superbly described as 'harmonious Jones'. It should foster the interest in interdisciplinary eighteenth-century studies which is gathering strength in the United States and elsewhere". Commenting on the non-availability of Jones' works and materials about him and emphasising the need for such a *Reader*, P H Salus wrote in the Preface, "This is tragic, for not only was Jones of major importance himself, he was a lasting influence in the fields of literature, linguistics, mythology and metaphysics, law, and the history of science. One cannot open a work on historical and comparative linguistics, on Arthur Schopenhauer, on Goethe, without tripping over Jones' influential work. This anthology contains works which illustrate these points." About the significance of Satya S Pachori's achievement and contribution, P H Salus' concluding remarks in the Preface are also worth quoting: "Lady Anna Maria Jones quoted her illustrious husband in her Preface to the 1799 Works: 'The best monument that can be erected to a man of literary talents, is a good edition of his works'. Satya S Pachori, in this *Reader*, has erected such a monument". Professor Pachori deserves ungrudging appreciation for fulfilling a long left need for such a handy and well-thought-out *Reader* of Jones.

Reviewed by

Abu Taher Mojumder

who waited patiently for its mate while time crept on "at a petty pace".

In "Agonised Faces on Wood" one found a series of faces, painted on square pieces of wood, divided by dark painted heavier and carved pieces by wood. The marks of anguish and disappointment were apparent on each distorted face, which carried the theme of ceaseless toil, disappointment, and failure. Shades of green in the backdrop unified the images of the tortuous human faces, portrayed as masks (as is well known that people tend to put on different appearances in public). The faces had been composed with rejected plastic and rubber. The eyes, lips and teeth of each face delineated the theme of the piece quite adequately. The image on the fourth square resembled that of a monkey, and to a passerby it might have appeared like some map of a any country in the Third World. "A man's pain is sometimes expressed by the eye or the lips," Islam explained. "I have, furthermore, deliberately cracked the images. I have not repaired the main frame of my work (which resulted from the side effects of careless conveyance from Khulna to Dhaka) as this damaged piece was related to the concept underlying my work." This relief work was one of the most effective entries at the display.

In another work, "Collage-4" comprising oil-on-canvas, photographs and actual coins, one found the profile of a queen (with flowers on her hair) of the Victorian era, related to the theme of the universal problems of mankind. As found elsewhere, in the artist's work, in the centre forefront of the piece were more photographs, and varied hues, including silver and gold. The anchor, placed in the composition, done in vermilion and cobalt blue, was there to increase the impact of the depiction of human suffering.

Islam, who completed his M A (Fine Arts) from the Dhaka University in '94, specialises in painting but also experiments with sculpture. His works, so far, remain a combination of Impressionism and Realism. For someone relatively young and inexperienced, his creations are promising and praiseworthy.

The Trojan Horse of the Vanishing Americans

by Shamsad Mortuza

We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measures of our lives.

— Toni Morrison

IN her Nobel lecture Toni Morrison tells us of a blind clairvoyance. She tells us how, once upon a time, this old woman was accosted by two youngmen who were resolute to prove her a fraud. One of the two visitors pretended that he was holding a little bird in his hand, and asked, "Tell me whether it is living or dead?" The blind woman replied in silence. At one stage of scoffing, the wise woman said, "I don't know whether the bird you are holding is dead or alive, but what I do know is, it is in your hands".

Morrison interprets the story as a metaphorical one for language. If the little bird is dead, you have either found it that way or you have killed it. If it is alive, you can still kill it. Whether it is to stay alive is your decision. Whatever the case, it is your responsibility. Which means, language is susceptible to death/erasure only by an effort of the will. And she shows how language has become an instrument of the racists, sexists, theists and statists.

Morrison believes that there is, and will be, rousing language to keep citizen armed and arming, diplomatic language to throttle women, and political and historical language calculated to render sufferings of millions mute. In brief, she tells of the oppression of the ethnic minorities in a metaphorical world of language.

This is particularly true to the Native Americans — strangers in their own land — stereotypically branded as the 'vanishing Americans'. Ever since the accidental arrival of Christopher Columbus, over five hundred years back, these indigenous men have been subject to manipulation of language of the 'invaders'. The very name — Indians — attributed to them is actually a misnomer. The coinage is an attempt to conceal a mistake of a lost sailor. The language of history, however, has credited this man as a hero of a colossal feat of the Spanish Empire.

Over the years, the racist language has distorted the faces of the tribal men. They were called (and are still called), as Ines Hernandez puts it, as 'savage', 'heathen', 'drunkard', 'squaw' or 'chief'. They are always projected as exotic and savage, albeit sometimes noble. They are stripped off their original names and ascribed with Christian ones or with English, Spanish and French meanings.

In the nineteenth century, the United States government and Christian missionaries worked together to mould a tribal education system. With an aim of assimilation and de-tribalisation, the new system attempted to eradicate by force the use of native language. Christian stories were offered to remake the image of the Native Americans after the Euro-Americans. Mandatory boarding schools were installed for them to have an educational environment away from the family and tribal community.

But, there has always been a resistance to this cultural extirpation. A motive of fighting back was harboured by many Native Americans. Among them the Pushcart Prize winner Simon Ortiz is remarkable.

"When I began school in 1948 at the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) day-school in our village I was armed with the basic ABC's and the phrases, 'Good morning, Miss Olemann,' and 'may I please be excused to go to the bathroom', recalls Ortiz in his autobiographical essay, *The Language We Know*. The statist language was thus imposed upon a struggling sect of people who deemed to uphold a heritage, culture and language of their own. Quite reasonably, the government found this desire as a dire threat to the process of Americanisation. So, the government 'slow-poisoned', 'brain washed' or 'reprogrammed' the Native Americans in a bid to Un-Indian them. Eventually, the government party succeeded in transplanting the idea of Gaimu American, which in Acoma expression means the 'fortune' of being an American. And the inculcation was done so deftly that many of the Indians became ashamed and uncomfortable with their own past. In the world of words, the past of these native men have placed them on the shelves of anthropology along with other primitive men.

Interestingly, in recent days we have some growing up native Americans (the epithet is borrowed from the title of Patricia Riley's recent anthology) These new Indians have managed to parry the cultural extirpation, adding voice to

the voices of their ancestors. They assert their presence in a society that stresses on assimilation and underrates primordial qualities. With the newly-learned art of language they try to maintain a delicate balance with the world they are living in.

"I don't remember a world without a language... what would I be without language? My existence has been determined by language, not only the spoken but the unspoken, the language of speech and the language of motion," the Acoma descent Ortiz informs us about his world. The fundamental strength of his writings, however, lie not in English but in an older one. That is why, he adds, "I can't remember a world without memory. Memory, immediate and far away in the past, something in the sinew, blood, ageless cell. Although I don't recall the exact moment I spoke or tried to speak, I know the feeling of something unutterable uttered into existence."

Ortiz is certainly aware of the power of words that can conjure the collective memory. This is in Jung's term — the collective unconscious — which is identical in all men and thus constitutes a common psychic substrate of a superpersonal nature which is common in every one of us.

Many of the Native American writers thereby tend to be autobiographical bringing in family history, mythology and reminiscences in their writings. And they convey their own tales in English which they were forced to learn and by which they were later fascinated, to some extent. But the tension between the two languages remained.

"I feel like yelling at one of

those brash kids — Hey, you little son of a bitch, listen to me!" conceded the Lakota holy man (John) Lame Deer. He knows such shoutings would make his grandsons listen to him. But he cannot do so. After all, "that's White man's talk."

Lame Deer in his memoir says: I am a man of the earth. Our people don't call them Sioux or Dakota (Lakota's birthplace). That's white man's talk. We call ourselves Ikce Wicasa — the natural humans, the free, wild common people. The wind has changed. These Native Americans now come out of the grinding mill of language. They have the new words to utter. They have the new urge to settle the course of history — of course by dint of words. Among them is Scott Momaday, a Kiowa descent, who earned the Pulitzer prize for his novel *House Made of Dawn*. Momaday, with a Whitmanesque ambience can claim: I invented history. In his memoir, *The Names*, he conjures his grandfather from an old manuscript. He plays upon words like Joycean hero Stephen Daedylus and says: I trace the words, I touch myself to the worlds, and they stand to me.

Language has given these Native Americans a new sensibility. They are no longer the vanishing Americans. They now assert what they want to assert. As Lame Deer says: That Christian name, John, don't call me that when I'm gone. Call me Tahcha Ushte — Lame Deer.

The little bird in the hands of the Native Indians has certainly grown up; it has become none less than the Phoenix.

The writer is a Lecturer in English at the Jahangirnagar University.

Viewing Video

by Lenin Gani

STARGATE is a futuristic action thriller set in Egypt. Never did the archaeologists in Giza in 1928 realise the gravity of their discovery.

Many years later at a secret US army base a team of scientists were struggling to unravel the inscriptions. One of them hires the services of an Egyptologist James Spade.

Within a couple of weeks he unlocks the code that is a gateway to the stars.

Then Spade and a group of soldiers headed by Kurt Russel undertake a reconnaissance mission. They befriend the inhabitants who treat the visitors like gods. They also learn there is an alien who enslaves the natives.

The Americans tell their hosts to rise up against the alien.

Eventually Russel and his group are drawn into a full-scale conflict.

The special effects are outstanding. No wonder the film is doing well in the States.

Wisdom is the tale of an average American boy who wanted to do something in life but ultimately paid the price.

Emilio Estevez is John Wisdom in this romantic comedy which also stars Demi Moore (Karen Simmons) and Tom Skerrit (Pickett Fenn's father).

Wisdom dreams of being a hero. First he tries to get a job but every time his criminal record has the last say.

So after failing to do it the honest way he turns to crime but he can't decide on what type because each has its own drawbacks.

Wisdom tells his girlfriend (Moore) about his frustration. She tries to persuade him to keep on looking. Even Wisdom's parents, in particular his father (Skerrit) urge him on. However their efforts come to nothing as Wisdom trains in how to use a gun.

His mission will be to burn property deeds. His first job almost ends disastrously when he bumps into his girlfriend. He even lets her in on crusade.

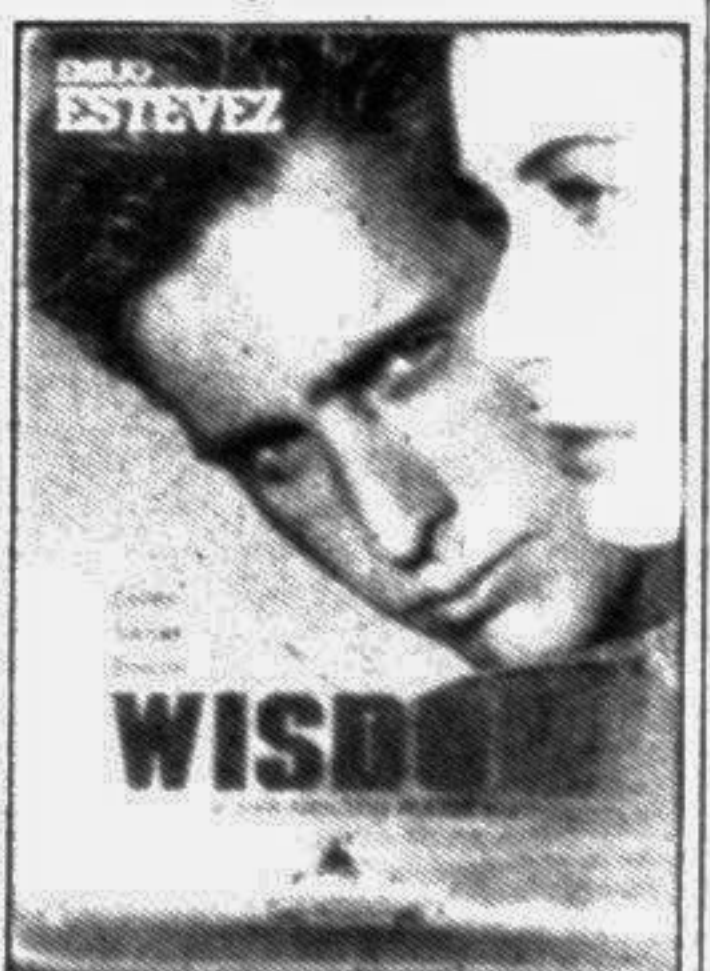
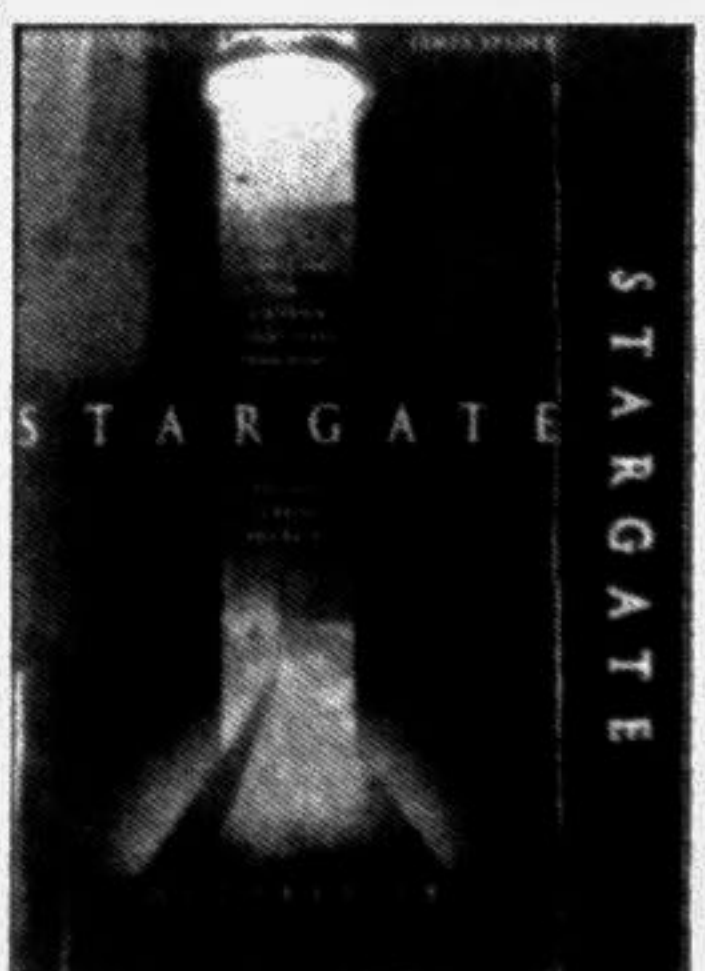
Overnight the pair become national celebrities.

Everything is going well until an accidental shooting, then it doesn't seem like fun and games.

The FBI and other law enforcement agencies who have been on their trail from the start eventually catch up with the bandits.

In the exchange of fire Moore is killed and Wisdom is left to it fight on.

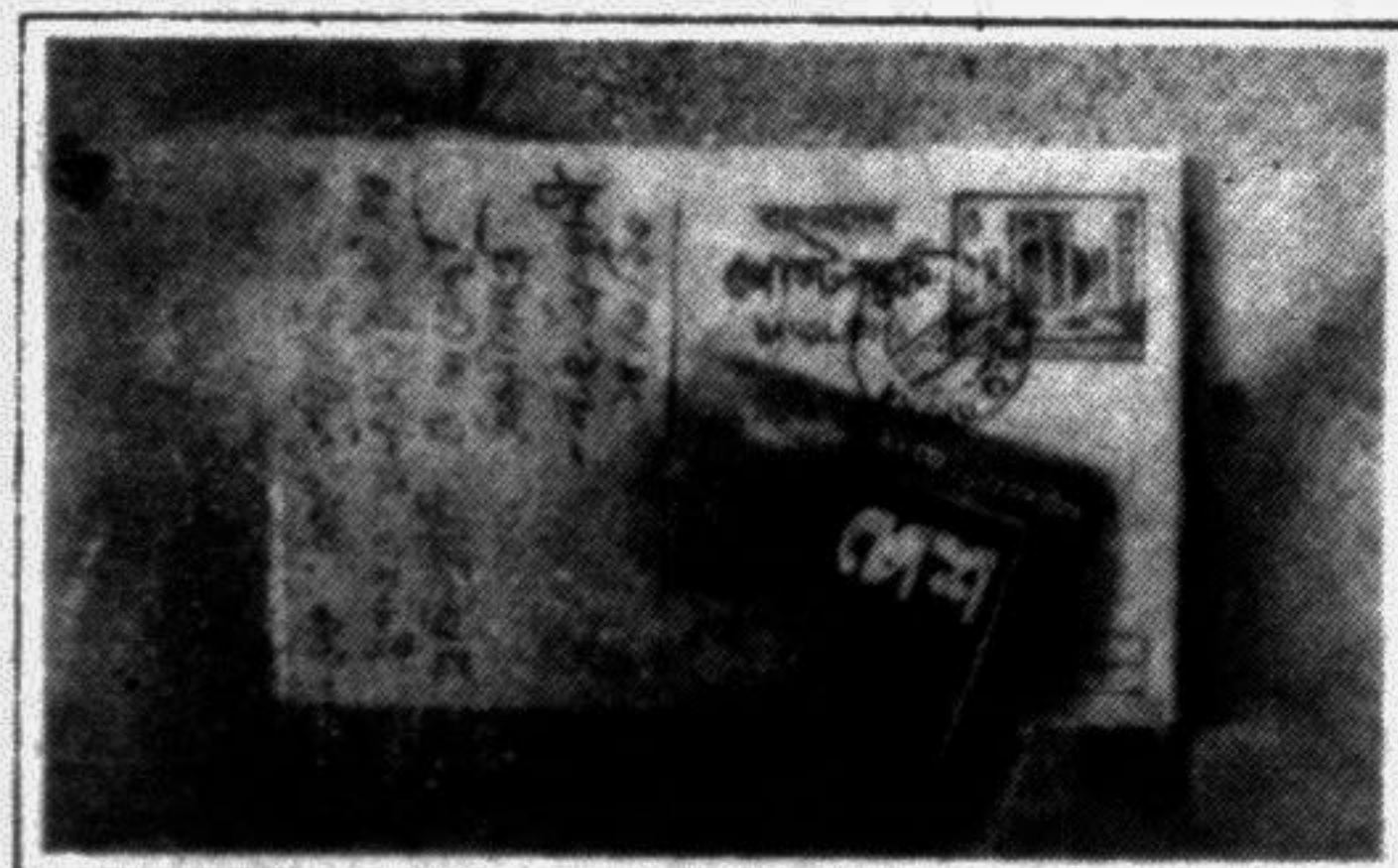
Before I end, last week I said the film *Getting In* was a murder thriller but actually it is a comedy.



NAME	TYPE	CAST
1. Stargate	(Sci-Fi/Thriller)	Kurt Russel/James Spade
2. The Road to Wellville	(Comedy)	Anthony Hopkins/Bridget Fonda/John Cusack/Matthew Broderick
3. Only You	(Love Story)	Marisa Tomei/Robert Downe Jr
4. Fatherland	(War/Thriller)	Rutger Hauger/Miranda Richardson
5. The Blue Max	(World War II)	George Peppard
6. Circus World	(Western)	John Wayne/Rita Hayworth
7. Delta Force II	(Action)	Chuck Norris
8. Indecent Behaviour II	(Romantic/Thriller)	Shannon Tweed/James Brown
9. The Flight Of Penguins	(Nat'l Geography)	
10. Yokozuna	(Wrestling)	
11. Air Heads	(Comedy)	
12. Private Lessons II	(Romantic)	Source:
13. Ghost River	(Romantic)	Film Fair and other clubs

A Promising and Praiseworthy Painter

by Fayza Haq



NAZUL Islam, at a recent exhibition entitled "Letters", held at "La Galerie", had a number of good works, which failed to find adequate buyers (due to unavoidable circumstances prevailing then) despite the good quality of all the pieces.

In "Letter from Islam" (oil on canvas) there were two male figures, one juxtaposed with another, with the one on the left, seen with its eyes glazing, while one hand bore a bamboo-stick. The other one too appeared in a rebellious

mood, bearing a similar weapon. Both were seen in loin-cloth. Vermilion and black smudges seen on the head-band highlighted the under current theme of warfare. These were figures borne on a post-card, which was enclosed in an envelope, sent by book-post. The envelope carried a stamp of Bangladesh, with the symbol of the Shaheed-Minar. An overseas postage mark was also included. The card was meant to be an open message to the Amnesty International, carrying a report about the intermittent political upheavals.



that hamper the socio-economic stability of the Subcontinent, such as the one concerning the Babri Masjid, in the recent past.

One could see the post-card inside the envelope, with layers upon layers of colours, which differentiated the subject from the backdrop. The monogram of the Shilpakala Academy was also apparent. A post-man on a bicycle was included in the composition to

drive home the artist's message. His clothes were done with pale and quick sweeps of beige, pale-green and brown, while the movement of the wheels of the bicycle were carried all, across the canvas, in the form of repeated, balanced circles, as one sees in negatives of action films. A post-box was included too, on the same canvas.

In "Her Open Letter" there were handwritings on the canvas, portraying a sentimental and conventional *billet-doux* spelling out "I have been crying with joy to receive your letter" (Seen on the left). This was balanced with mature handwriting and signature, with crossed marks to bring in subtle texture work. These writings in Bangla were to be seen both in the background and forefront. A shalik had been depicted as the bearer of this message of a young woman's outpourings to her *petit ami*. The birds symbolised and emphasised happiness. The colours at the background were buoyant ones, once again to highlight the element of happiness, conveyed by the painting.

There was a building with a locked gate, with an open window, through which no one could be seen, and with a single shalik sitting and sulking in the foreground in "One For Sorrow". The subject of pain and agony is expressed by the dark dismal and abandoned window, as well as the shalik.

Yet, hunting with the hounds is far less deadly than hunting with a gun and huntersmen with the pack easily declare that they 'manage' the forest. But animal-lovers remain firmly against any form of hunting. "For them, the role of man is no longer to be involved in the big interplay of life and death which would have been the fundamental law of nature", the authors say, "but to protect it as a whole", with man being part of that nature.

In spite of its liveliness, its passionate defenders and the disappearance of certain forms of attack against it, hunting with the hounds is threatened. France is the country in which it is practised the most (while it is banned in Germany or in Sweden) and in Northern Europe people's feelings go strongly against it. With the implementation of European unity, lovers of the hunt would do well to watch out!

— L'Actualite en France

The Sacred World of Hunting

Continued from page 10
pression of finding himself in the middle of a sect, hiding behind a secret language. For the authors of the book, hunting with the hounds is a reflection of society: "the drama which takes place in the forest is like a metaphor for the whole of social life, the eternal starting from scratch again and the struggle for life". There is far more to it than the defence of a traditional leisure activity for those keen on hunting, and far more than compassion for the suffering of the animal among those opposed. They are two different ways of being in the world, beliefs and ethics which are in conflict.

Confirmed opponents cannot understand the logic of the social world proposed by hunting. The urban middle classes from which most of the opponents come, have a far more contemplative view of the

world. In our kind of society, death has almost become taboo. Moreover, hunting is an unequal pursuit as it is every body against one. For a profoundly egalitarian society of law, hunting with the hounds is incompatible with its view of the world. What is more, in spite of an apparent democratisation of deer-hunting, class differences are not forgotten. As soon as the hunt is over, everybody returns to his place. The main hunters take out their baskets while the followers start to cut up the animal with their knives. Opponents, who are very sensitive to social differences, can only be irritated by the aristocratic nature of the hunt.

Today, the main argument put forward by opponents is the suffering of the animal. Much use was made of the ecological argument about the disappearance of wild species.