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Books

All Families Are Psychotic,
Douglas Coupland

Survivor, Chuck Palahniuk

The Mulching of America,
Harry Crews

*Shattering The Stereotypes:
Muslim Women Speak Out,*
Fawzia Afzal-Khan

Quote

“There never were in the world two opinions alike, no more than two hairs or two grains; the most universal quality is diversity.”

Montaigne

What do you think?

Philosopher of Note

Bernard Williams

Word

Luck

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Postmodern Monopolies: Portrayals of Corporate Abuses and Strangleholds in the Fiction of Douglas Coupland, Chuck Palahniuk, and Harry Crews

By Jennifer Lee

One of the defining characteristics of the postmodern era is the upsurge in corporate monopoly. In the 1980's the American media (visual and written) was run by roughly 50 companies, and, by the 1990's, that number had dipped below 25 (Landay 20). The number continues to diminish as corporate monopolies increase. In a socio-political environment such as this, the commercial and the political are inextricably linked. The corporate

monopoly of the postmodern age has ensured this. Ultimately, America is dangerously close to the end of its free market. These are frightening changes, and their implications for society as a whole have not been ignored in recent literature.

Along with his other works, Douglas Coupland's *All Families Are Psychotic* features a notable satire of consumerism and corporate monopoly within America. Ultimately, as the title would imply,

Coupland largely focuses his content on the contemporary American family. However, a blatant theme that permeates this discussion is the way that Americans function as consumers and the ways in which corporate culture affects society.

While Douglas Coupland presents many characters that are critical of excess materialism in *All Families Are Psychotic*, it is Florian (last name unknown), a private captain of industry within pharmaceuticals,

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who provides an interesting contrast by which such consumer critiques can be judged. Florian explains of himself, “I’m not immoral, I’m merely very, very rich, and because I’m very, very rich I live by different rules. It’s the way things work” (Coupland 189). However, despite the way that his character is first presented, despite the societal critiques and commentaries that precede this moment, and despite the character that readers would expect a “Florian” to be, he is not quite loathsome. Florian is, in fact, a very charming individual – one who is “filthy rich” and of what can only be deemed as “questionable” morality – but charming nonetheless. It is he who will provide the “insider” tips of Corporate America that are the only facet of Consumerism left unexplored by the time of his fully-fledged, personal appearance in the novel.

Through his dialogues with Janet, a sixty-something divorcee who struggles to understand the world as it has been reborn around her while she was otherwise occupied, Florian provides a synthesis of the medical industry in corporate terms. While Janet has already discovered the “[i]nventive field of banned diet medications,” Florian’s version is somewhat new and confusing to her (Coupland 36): “Curing a huge disease like cancer would effectively wipe out the insurance industry and consequently the banking system. For each year we increase the average life span, we generate a massive financial crisis” (Coupland 210). In a way that no “average” character could, Florian is able to define the health industry as a business. He is a moral enough man to know the dangerous implications of this fact, but he is corrupt and avaricious enough to allow himself to remain within the system, helping it toward its monetary goals.

The monopoly of the pharmaceutical industry is certainly as undeniable as it is a risky proposition, and the relatively recent development of patent rights has been hugely influential to the medical industry:

The pharmaceutical industry is another area where corporate monopolies have increased. Pharmaceutical corporations don’t lobby for ‘free’ markets; they lobby for patent controls to drive up their profits. With patent protection, pharmaceutical companies gain a monopoly over the sales of ‘their’ drugs, excluding others from competition. The nine largest multinational pharmaceutical companies made an average return on investment of 40.9 per cent between 1991 and 2000, while the average across all business sectors was 15 per cent. (Engler par. 3)

Florian is well aware of the monopoly that pharmaceutical giants hold over the market and of their power over the economy. Florian is a representation of a social trend of corporate monopoly: one that can have potentially dreadful repercussions. Florian is an exaggerated portrait of pharmaceutical companies like Pfizer, a subsidiary of Warner Lambert that own patents on pharmaceuticals like Viagra, Lipitor, and Zoloft, along with numerous other brand name and generic anticonvulsants, antidepressants, and cholesterol thinners (Pfizer). At a time when even the human genome is being patented (“Capitol Hill . . .” par. 15), and outside research companies will have to pay usage fees, the perspective that Florian provides of the insurance industry is greatly needed and ripe for satiric critique. The underlying message is that current pharmaceutical monopolies are unconscionable.

At Janet’s naïve and hopeful protest that the health industry cannot possibly place its profit

margins above the needs and well-being of its clients, Florian explains, “I assure you. I run one of the world’s biggest pharmaceutical firms. Glaxo Wellcome or Bayer – or Citibank for that matter – will chop out my tongue for what I’ve just told you” (Coupland 211). The direct mention of these corporations is well fitted for this discussion. Glaxo Wellcome holds large shares of numerous companies. The Bayer group holds an international market, selling “more than 10,000 products across a vast range that includes pharmaceuticals, diagnostic systems, crop protection agents, plastics, synthetic rubber, rubber chemicals, fibers, dyes, pigments, and chemical products” (“About Bayer” par. 1). The multi-market is certainly featured through these two companies. Citibank “effectively controls Visa and Mastercard. It has branches in every country of the world, and can make and break nations with its investments and exchange rate manipulations. Its tentacles are everywhere, and it seeks to write laws to its own satisfaction, including the current push to ‘deregulate’ the banking industry” (Meyers Par. 12). Such conglomerates are huge and influential powers at work within our country, influencing America’s (and much of the “developed” world’s) spending, its media, its health, its job market; virtually all aspects of America have been altered or redefined by such companies.

Coupland’s cynical portrait, particularly of the medical profession, may certainly be viewed as extreme. Nonetheless, it is not implausible, given the recent Neurontin lawsuit, by which Parke-Davis, a subsidiary of Warner Lambert began recommending the anticonvulsant for off-label (unapproved by the FDA) uses – uses for which it had no proven effect – in order to increase its profit margin (Hockenberry par. 15). Unlike David Franklin, the man who quit his job to file suit against Parke-Davis, Florian seems opportunist enough to remain situated where he is (researching cures that will never be sold), but he sustains a bitter disgust that underlies his words and almost justifies his position; quitting or reporting would achieve little in the long run against these medical moguls and pharmaceutical giants.

Ultimately, Florian believes that spending increases production increases wealth increases consumption increases spending. In some unusual way, by the economic reality that pervades and rules America’s economy, his actions and beliefs are justified: “Having lots of fat people eating a lot of fattening food is a good, *good* thing for America,” Florian explains, recounting, as proof of the justifiable nature of his position, all the jobs and equilibrium we have created with our cumulative weight and health (or lack thereof) as a nation (Coupland 234). Florian views the world by the material – by net profit margin – with only a minimal consideration for the human lives involved. Furthermore, his is not a discussion of Wal-Mart or McDonald’s or lay-offs or pay-cuts; he refers to medicine, hospitals, insurance, and pharmaceuticals: social organizations that hold our lives, quite literally, as their overall purpose for existence. For this reason, issues of the corporate monopoly often return to the pharmaceutical industry. Although Florian is embittered by the thought of having cures to every major fatal illness known to man – cures that will never be administered – he tries to rationalize this so that he can continue as he is now: rich and, therefore, by America’s yardstick, successful and happy. Although he is no such thing, he can at least appear to be so. It is not, however, his wealth itself that is demonized, or else his character would be less generous and less guilty

for his job. This is not a wave of communist literature. Florian is criticized for the means by which he obtains his wealth and for his materialism. It is interesting to note that the literature discussed herein as critical of consumerism is not even anti-capitalism: it is against the unregulated, corporate monopolies of the postmodern age.

Chuck Palahniuk's *Survivor* also attacks corporate franchises. When Tender becomes the "last" surviving member of the Creedish Church, he is approached by an agent who has been waiting, ready and prepared, to profit from just such an event. He has planned to build a career and merchandising line for a *Survivor* of any religious suicide cult: "every bit of your career with us is already in place, and we've been prophesying your arrival for more than fifteen years. [The Creedish Church] was just one more predictable mass suicide" (Palahniuk 145; 143). To this agent, Tender is another product that can be sold, and he makes no illusions to the contrary: "Think of yourself from now on as diet cola" (Palahniuk 135).

Through Tender, the agent will be able to profit from entire lines of merchandise, including, but not limited to: "the *Peace of Mind* television show The Tender Branson Dashboard Statuette The board game Bible Trivia [and books such as] *Money-Making Secrets of the Bible* [. . .] *Sex Secrets of the Bible* *The Bible Book of Remodeling Kitchens and Bathrooms*" (Palahniuk 95-4). Here, the multi-market corporation is depicted in its shallowest extreme. These unfortunately true-to-life products portray America as a shallow, consumer nation that will buy anything its companies have to sell. Not only such products' existences, but their success creates an image of Americans as mindless sheep, bleating out to the media for more-more-more, anything with Tender's face, because Tender is what they have been told to buy. Like any actor, singer, musician or model, Tender is a commodity to be sold to the public: only he cannot act, he does not sing, and he is naturally ugly.

Tender's agent, who "comes packaged in a medium-weight gray wool suit and is equipped with only his briefcase," is an icon of production (Palahniuk 147). Like Tender, the agent himself is a product to be "bought" and "sold," but to the corporate world, rather than the American Masses. The bulk of his job is to sell people: their talents and their images, and to create these things if they are lacking. He explains the idea behind his job to Tender by explaining his role in the pharmaceutical industry. He patents medication names for drugs that are not available on the market; when the drug is produced, the drug company will have to pay his company royalties for using any of a number of copyrighted names: "Our job is to create the concept. You patent a drug. You copyright the name. As soon as someone else develops the product they come to us, sometimes by choice, sometimes not" (Palahniuk 146). This agent is another embodiment of the corporate monopoly in literature, and, again, as in *All Families Are Psychotic*, the medical industry becomes an easy target for the worst-case scenario of the corporate way. Just as the human genome has a patent number, the agent patents medications that are not even yet in existence.

Perhaps the most unique "product" the agent sells is the Pornofill: "According to the agent, we need to get people panicking about the porno threat. We're going to push for government action that makes it mandatory to dispose of porno in safe, clean ways. Our ways. The same as used in motor oil or asbestos," and of course, there will be a mandatory fee, payable to Tender Branson En-

terprises (Palahniuk 98). The agent has created and cornered a useless market that exists for no reason other than to make money.

Anne McClintock writes of a soap empire and of its creation and cornering of a market, and it is this manipulation of the market place that the agent embodies. While soap was infrequently used at the start of the nineteenth century, “A few decades later, the manufacture of soap had burgeoned into an imperial commerce; Victorian cleaning rituals were peddled globally as the God-given sign of Britain's evolutionary superiority, and soap was invested with magical, fetish powers” (McClintock 129). She further explains that, once brand names became involved in the 1880s, the beginnings of corporate monopoly emerged; by the turn of the next century, all soap came from ten companies. In the same way, the Pornofill comes alive. These are products that were not particularly needed or wanted, but they are marketable, and they become ingrained into the social landscape, until there are no longer unusual. They become useful.

As Jack Strauss explained to *Time Magazine* in 1965, “The luxuries of today are the necessities of tomorrow” (Qtd. in Cohen, 245). Products *become* useful. They *become* a part of life. This icon of production that is the Pornofill has no moral boundaries, and Tender's agent uses the acreage of the Creedish Church as the site of his dumping grounds. Here, the entire “scheme” depends on government mandates that will force Americans to use (and pay for the use of) the Pornofill, thereby illustrating the dangers of government mandates that will force Americans to use (and pay for the use of) the Pornofill, thereby illustrating the dangers of government favoritism toward corporations that exist today. Palahniuk portrays a corporate America whose incestuous ties between companies and government create a powerful force in this country.

In *The Mulching of America*, Harry Crews examines characters that are crushed by and lost to the corporate reality presented by the Soaps for Life Company. Hickum Looney, the novel's protagonist is the model consumer, blind to the workings of consumer culture. A man whose favorite happy-time song is a Coca-Cola jingle, Hickum's life centers itself on the Company's existence (Crews 22).

As one of the salesmen who represent the Soaps for Life Corporation, Hickum Looney notices that the building in which he works is “of some brutal design, full of sharp edges and abrupt angles [. . .] Every regional office of the Company throughout the country was of this design. The design had originated with the Boss. The little hairlipped demon had his tough on the pulse of everything in the Company” (Crews 34). This is only the beginning of Crews' discussion of corporate monoculture. The Company buildings are all identical, much like Starbucks or McDonalds, or any of a number of national and international corporations. They create a landscape that is of harsh, artificial edges. The employees themselves are a homogenous bunch. All the secretaries of the Soaps for Life corporation are women, “blond, blue eyes, [who] wore no makeup on the pale flesh of their faces that looked as though they had never seen the sun” (Crews 74).. These women are personally selected for their appearances – a spirit-crushing realization for each of them – in order to create a company image.

The Company Manual accounts for all possibilities and situations that could arise during a

sale. Like any good con-man of the consumer world, the Manual fosters inaccuracies: “errors and bad diction and greeting-card poetry in an effort to make the salesmen seem more nearly human. The crooked made the straight seems straighter. The rankly false made ordinary truth seem gospel, or so the Company Manual insisted” (Crews 27). This could almost be said of today’s commercials, many of which use self-deprecation and self-effacement as marketing techniques. Jean Kilbourne calls this recent trend of manipulation “anti-advertising,” a ploy in which “advertisers flatter us by insinuating that we are far too smart to be taken in by advertising. Many of these ads spoof the whole notion of image advertising,” Kilbourne explains, citing scotch and shoe ads that exemplify both of these trends (78). As with most commercials or advertising campaigns, the Soaps for Life Corporation interweaves truth and fiction to appeal to a buyer, and all is equipped with whatever “slant” the target needs in order to be convinced and sold the product.

It is not accidental that a growing concern of corporate empires is found among contemporary satirists and fiction writers; corporate monopolies and their byproducts are of primary concern to those who are well aware of their machinations without direct benefit. (Arguably, their problematic implications are becoming worrisome to those who do benefit from their continuance.) Though neither Douglas Coupland, Chuck Palahniuk, nor Harry Crews is able to present a clear and feasible solution to issues of the corporation, the overall message remains clear: the corporate monopoly and its wide-spread avocation of material values have been detrimental, and, unfortunately, will continue to be so.

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Shattering the Stereotypes:
An Interview with Fawzia Afzal-Khan

BY

Dr. Nilanshu Kumar Agarwal

A poet, playwright, singer and actor Fawzia Afzal-Khan draws on both her academic tenure in the US and her insider experience with alternative street theatre groups in Pakistan to develop her critical insight for the secular theatre in the later country. Her book *A Critical Stage: The Role of Secular Alternative Theatre in Pakistan* has been received well. According to Richard Schechner, “Fawzia Afzal-Khan is that rare person who is as fine a thinker as she is artist and activist. A fierce advocate of free expression and women’s rights, her book is a triumph of scholarship—and an exciting, up-close account of what it’s like to do radical street theatre in today’s Pakistan.” This book argues that secular alternative theatre in Pakistan since the late twentieth century is a locus of cultural conflict, wherein concerns such as women’s and minorities’ rights, class and gender issues, language politics and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism are defined and contested in the evolving and often conflictive relationship between the Pakistani State and Pakistani society. Her other book *Shattering The Stereotypes: Muslim Women Speak Out* has been admired by several scholars including Bapsi Sidhwa, who calls it “a timely collection that rings with veracity.” This Professor of English at Montclair University has also authored *Cultural Imperialism and the Indo-English Novel* (Penn State University Press, 1993) and co-edited *The Preoccupation of Postcolonial Studies* (Duke University Press, 2000). This unorthodox intellectual discusses with Dr. Nilanshu Kumar Agarwal several issues related to theatre, feminism and literary theory in a detailed interview.

NKA: The Postcolonial scholars lay a lot of attention on the concepts of hybridity, multiplicity and composite culture. Salman Rushdie in his celebrated book *Imaginary Homelands* talks thus about these concepts: “‘Mélange, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that is how newness enters the world. It is the great possibility that mass migration gives the world, and I have tried to embrace it.... Throughout human history, the apostles of purity, those who have claimed to possess a total explanation, have wrought havoc among mere mixed-up human beings. Like many millions of people, I am a bastard child of history. Perhaps we all are, black and brown and white, leaking into one another...” Will you describe the secular alternative theatre in Pakistan in line with this argument of Rushdie?

FAK: Well, I think the secular alternative theatre in Pakistan, as I have discussed and analyzed it in my recent book, *A Critical Stage*, is very much about a challenge to orthodoxies that I believe Rushdie is talking about here. Many of the productions and street plays I discuss by groups like Ajoka, Lok Rehas, Tehrik-i-Niswan and others, are performances which want to make their audiences uncomfortable in the Brechtian sense—that is, make folks question their pieties and received or conventional ways of seeing and treating the “other” within. This “otherization” includes the second-class treatment accorded to women and to religious and ethnic minorities in Pakistan by a society

where the state and the mullahs of late have tried to claim a rhetoric of “purity” for the country on the basis of Islam.

NKA: What is the reaction of the orthodox people for this type of new venture in the country of your origin?

FAK: Obviously, many people do not care for this type of work, and try and make fun of or belittle the importance of these groups; including calling some of them (Ajoka in particular because of its many performances touring India)—spies for foreign governments!

NKA: How is this parallel theatre successful in moulding the sensibility of the people in Pakistan?

FAK: Oh, I think this parallel theatre is definitely successful in raising the level of awareness in the audiences about difficult but important issues affecting different sectors of the Pakistani populace. For urban middle and upper middle class audiences, many are made aware for the first time about the level of injustice and oppression that their less-fortunate rural and lower-class sisters and brothers suffer eg, in plays like Ajoka’s *Dhee Rani*, *Barri* and *Kaala Meinda Bhes*, and Tehrik-i-Niswan’s “Aurat,” and Lok Rehas’ “Saar”—audiences are made aware of the plight of women, and specifically, women who are illiterate and/or poor and from the villages and have little recourse to accessing their rights as human beings—as *Kaal Meinda Bhes* points out—they are ranked even lower than the buffaloes for which they are often traded—especially when the buffalo is healthy and can provide a family with milk to sell and drink!

When the audiences are themselves from rural or low-income urban areas, they are often shocked into recognizing and then possibly questioning their own adherence to unjust systems of living. In the Theatre of the Oppressed techniques championed by the former Punjab Lok Rehas—now practiced by their offshoot, Interactive Resource Center (IRC)—different communities in far-flung areas of Pakistan are encouraged to form their own theatre groups in order to role-play their problems and issues and in so doing, find possible solutions for them.

NKA: Do people still visit the theatre in this advanced age of Information Technology? Is not the ancient art of theatre dying a slow death due to the onslaught of Internet and TV channels? What do you say?

FAK: Surprisingly, people still like going to see live theatre in Pakistan, since it is a rare occasion to “go out” and many theatrical venues really try to keep their ticket prices affordable for people of varying classes. Many of the “parallel” theatre groups of course, provide “free” theatre to different audiences in lower-income areas, because their work is underwritten by NGOs who want certain issues to be highlighted. This also leads to charges of these theatre groups being lackeys or mouth-pieces of foreign powers/the west being lobbied against them!

NKA: Did you find any difficulty in finding a proper publisher for your book *Shattering the Stereo-*

types, due to its unorthodox subject?

FAK: As a matter of fact, yes! The Feminist Press had initially expressed interest in seeing the manuscript. But when they read, I think, Nawal el Saadawi's rather strong-worded condemnation of the U.S. and of President Bush—they withdrew their interest. One of my original contributors also withdrew her essay for that reason.

NKA: What will you say about the author publisher relationship? Sometimes, the mutual understanding between the two is missing. Do you prefer the sub-continental publishers or their counterparts from the West? Please make an argument.

FAK: Yes, this is a difficult relationship. I find that the most problematic aspect—and this holds true for both US-based and subcontinental publishers—is the issue of promotion and marketing. Both sets of publishers—esp since one is dealing with academic publishers whose budgets are necessarily small—are quite useless in this regard. Another difficulty is the issue of readers' reports. Academic publishers require two solid reviews recommending publication before they will commit to taking the mss—and the problem here is that the reviewers, being busy themselves in their own projects are often very tardy in their responses. So, a book can just sit on the publishers' desk for a very long time.

NKA: What makes the Muslim women speak out? Where do you think are the springs of creativity for the Muslim women? Is it something to do with their age-old repression by conventional male society?

FAK: At this moment in history, I believe it is a combination of this male prejudice from within their societies certainly, against which Muslim women creatively militate—but also, western ignorance and prejudice against Islam in general and Muslim women in particular, which has gotten their creative juices flowing in protest!

NKA: Did the males receive the book favourably? What was their general opinion about the book? Did you find some positive reviews of the book by Muslim men too?

FAK: Actually, now that you mention it, I realized the only reviews—and most have been favorable—have been by women! Wow!

NKA: What are the major themes of your poems and plays?

FAK: I have a lot of poems about mothers and daughters—their often difficult relationship in which so many different emotional and psychological issues get highlighted. I also tend to write about the relationship of politics to the personal issues of a woman's life—including this construct called

“romantic love.” Some of my poems and plays—I have written two plays, and published a lot of poems—also deal with crises of spirituality and its fraught relationship to organized religion and a world of patriarchy and war.

NKA: You are a literary critic, playwright and singer trained in the North Indian classical tradition. What about writing a novel?

FAK: I would like to---but it would require a lot more time than I have at the moment with so many different responsibilities and a full-time teaching career. I have completed a memoir, however, called “Sahelian: Growing Up With Girlfriends Pakistani-Style”—which is under consideration with Syracuse University Press—and which will hopefully also be published by Women Unlimited Press of India. I am keeping my fingers crossed! A recent memoir story from it was published in a collection of Pakistani women writers’s work, in an anthology called *And The World Changed*, edited by Muneeza Shamsie and published by Oxford University Press and recently by the Feminist Press.

NKA: What prompted you to go for Indian classical tradition of Music?

FAK: Well, when I was a young girl growing up in Pakistan, I somehow fell in love with the difficulty and intricacy of our classical tradition in music, and my first ustad, Abdul Haq Qureshi of the Kirana Ghirana, encouraged me in this passion and proved to be a sterling teacher. I went on to compete—and win—many All-Pakistan Classical Music competitions and now am so happy to have had this training, since I can easily perform with musicians from different traditions, esp. jazz. I have a band here in NY called the Neither East Nor West Ensemble and I love performing with them! Now the REAL reason I went in for classical training was rebellion---my mother thought if I could learn to sing some pretty film songs or light ghazals etc, I would attract some good marriage proposals...so instead, I went in for obscure, challenging classical music which few people could appreciate in Pakistan since they lacked the training and sophistication required to appreciate this type of music. I thought this way I would be safe from unwanted proposals!!! And I was right!!! Ha ha!!!

NKA: As an outsider (You are Professor of English at Montclair University), how do you find the condition of English studies in the sub-continent? What will you say about the curriculum of English studies in the Universities of the sub-continent? Does it not require a complete overhaul? Should not we include more of regional literature in English translation in place of the colonial texts of England? It will give national character to English studies in the sub-continent? Please share your views.

FAK: I agree with your views on the fairly pathetic condition of English Studies in our part of the world---I can only speak with some authority on the situation prevalent in Pakistan, where I have had both the privilege and the frustration of teaching at the MA and Mphil level in recent years at two premier institutes of Higher Education in Lahore: Government College University, and Forman

Christian College. I have also given lectures over the years at my alma mater Kinnaird College of Women (also in Lahore), and taught women's studies courses at the International Women's Studies Institute of Lahore.

In each of these contexts, I discovered that faculty especially are very attached to a very old-fashioned and moribund way of teaching, and also that they are constrained, even in this latter day and age, to teach materials that do not reflect these new literatures in English and translation. However, there is some hope for change, I did start a Postcolonial Studies program for MPhil candidates at GCU, and also taught a course in PS for MA students at FCC last fall. I also argued for the inclusion of Pakistani English writers like Taufiq Rafat, Maki Qureshi, Kaleem Omar, Bapsi Sidhwa, Sara Suleri, and a whole slew of younger generation Pakistani writers writing in English like Kamila Shamsie, Nadeem Aslam, and others, to be included in the curriculum at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Some places, like the University of the Punjab, do include some poems and other works by these and other writers—albeit sporadically—in their curricula. Recently, I have read and evaluated a Phd thesis written in Pakistan on Pakistani English poet Alamgir Hashmi's work. So, this means people are beginning to pay attention to the need to turn attention to “native” work, in addition to the usual “canon.” One can only hope this trend will continue and intensify in the coming years.

NKA: How is sub-continental literature received in the west?

FAK: Ever since the ascent of Rushdie in the West—subcontinental literature in English has received a big boost here. Now, the younger generation of South Asian novelists and poets gets much acclaim here—and I have colleagues who love the ghazal form and even attempt to write ghazals in English! Many teach Rushdie, Bapsi Sidhwa, Anita Desai, Monica Ali and others in their courses. There are also many professors who are developing and teaching courses in South Asian Literatures in universities across the USA.

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