



Yoga

Corporeal and Spiritual Bodies in India

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Actividades Culturales

- Film: *Sadhaka. La senda del yoga* (dir. Nicolas Gauthier). Presentado por Antonio Ballesteros.
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Conferencias Plenarias

María Tausiet (Independent scholar): "The Symbolic Body in Yoga and Hindu Mysticism."

Since ancient times, Hinduism has postulated the existence of an intermediary element between the physical body and the soul. The so-called subtle or energetic body, invisible and immensurable, but a faithful reflection of the individual's mind and emotions, was described by the Vedantic and Tantric philosophies in terms of obscure symbolism. The concept of an energetic body, considered as a privileged vehicle of consciousness, led to the development of a sophisticated allegorical anatomy. According to this, the vital force (*prana*) flows in each body through a wide web of channels (*nadis*) and converges in specific centres or circles (*chakras*). Although the number of *chakras* could be infinite in theory, the *Upanishads* mention six and some yoga treatises extend them from six to fourteen. Lined up from the base of the spine to the crown of the head, the *chakras* were seen as a focus for meditation and were represented as different pictorial diagrams (*mandalas*). From the end of the 19th century onwards, some scholars have established a connection between these symbolic centres and the endocrine glands. Today, the widely accepted standard number of *chakras* is seven.

Guillermo Rodríguez and Mónica de la Fuente (Casa de la India) "Bhakti: The Temple in the Body"/"Bhakti: el Templo en el Cuerpo".

Actividad cultural a cargo de la coreógrafa y bailarina Mónica de la Fuente y Guillermo Rodríguez, director Casa de la India en Valladolid.

PANEL 1: Body Representations in Indian Art, Chair: Virginia Nieto-Sandoval.

Nieto-Sandoval, Virginia (Universidad Antonio de Nebrija, Madrid). “Ascetics, Gurus and Sages: Yogiic Bodies in Pallava Art”.

Pallava rulers acted as patrons of the first rock cut temples dedicated to main hindu deities in Tamilnadu from vi century; they were also supporters of the first structural temples in stone from vii century. The scenes depicted in their caves, open air narrative panels and stone built temples are rooted in the panindian tradition of Epic literature and Puranas, as well as in tamil literary sources.

Some Pallava images convey specific perceptions of the yogiic body: human figures absorbed in yoga practices, ascetics involved in severe austerities and divinities depicted as human ascetics. One of the best depictions of yoga power in Indian art is represented in a relief carved in a vast rock facing the sea in the village of Mamallapuram. In the stone built temples in Kanchipuram, the ancient Pallava capital city, abound images of Siva depicted as an ascetic, either as a guru teaching the sacred texts to the sages, or as a divine wandering beggar, among others. These images reflect influences from different philosophical and religious trends.

At the same time, Pallava literary sources offer countless references to the asceticism. In the inscriptions issued by Pallava kings, mythical genealogies include ascetics ancestors taken from the epic tradition. Courtly literature and devotional tamil poetry describe ascetics from different contemporary religious currents.

In the present talk we will explore the depiction of yogiic bodies in the Pallava art and the different traditions used for the iconographic creation of most important images.

Kazmi, Nuzhat (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi). “The Body and its Realistic Realizations in Mughal India”.

Realism as a visual language may have serious limitation when it comes to rendering a narrative. However, its power to capture the imagination, to engage

its audience and in some respect afford a certain historicity to the object or theme it renders, is without doubt. Realism can convince and be popular in a manner that could be beyond other dialects of visual language. Mughals understood this power and therefore there is an inclination for a kind of realism that reminds one of European High Renaissance. However the format and the technique was different and more suited to the Mughal emperors' individual tastes and political compulsions.

The paper would select a range of Mughal paintings to highlight the tremendous potential to represent the body in realistic language and its ability to generate an audience that appreciated the human body, seeing it as a tool to express emotions, material milieu and social hierarchy.

Jahangir in particular had a great sense of the aesthetics that could be appreciated around the theme of body and its corporeal nature.

In this paper the especial case of Inayat Khan, the noble addicted to opium, and how his body wastes away and the need to record this physical changes in his body were recorded, on the order of Emperor Jahangir. This, apart from many other related issues, does throw some interesting contradictions, when body is removed from its emotional content and it becomes the medium to study as an observer its physiological dimensions.

Alone, Y. S. (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi). “Image Representation: Contesting Hegemony”.

Representation is no more understood in the context of imitation and a mere figure representation. Image representation is equally embedded in social facts. Often image is read as symbolic representation, but their natures of understandings are related with the nature of consciousness. As and when they are contested, it causes tremendous anxiety. The psychoanalysis of sub-conscious has been used to decode representations, however, being conscious manifestation, it defies the logic of sub-conscious. Consciousness is embedded in the social realities and therefore, one will have to investigate the issues of representations from different perspectives. The meta-narratives of modernity have been engaged with the formalistic language alone but defiance of the aesthetic canon has been the most sustained engagement in the politics of the subtle bodies. The subtle bodily representations in the contemporary India moves away from many accepted aesthetic canons and attempts to create alternatives. Here brings the

appropriate ideas of identifying the fragments and dismantling of presuppositions. Presuppositions have created many meta-narratives over a period of time, and though there have been claims of dismantling of presuppositions, but in reality, many presuppositions are re-legitimized. The fact that how do painters make an attempt to come out of certain presuppositions, image representation is an interesting act to be looked into. It forms a case waiting to be analyzed. Pertinent question here would be why an idealization of aesthetic canon does not forbid the practice enclosed perception. Vulnerability is often seen from the aspect of power relationship, and the so-called order. Order in this situation is ordained by the religious injunctions that have created the hegemonic aesthetic canon. Photography is another medium that captures the natural make-believe images observed by the naked eye. Whereas there are some who would prefer to explore the realities of social life, a quest to capture bodily representation as tormented life of disgust where there is a blind eye to their existence. The paper explores such visual art practices that defies hegemonic canons.

Rosso, Francesca (Università Pontificia Salesiana/Independiente). “The communicative dimension of dance in Bollywood movies of the last two decades”.

In Indian culture there is no dichotomy between physical structure, mind and soul, and dance expresses the connection between corporeal and spiritual dimension of the body.

In Bollywood movies, dance is the most authentic part because it exists only if someone dances: dance is embodied in the performer.

Dance gives movies the opportunity of being totally reliable: if words can lie, bodies can only say the truth. That is why dance in movies expresses feelings, dreams, desires, spiritual needs; and it makes emotions bigger or more intense.

Following Laura U. Marks (2000), in my PhD dissertation I claim that dance in Bollywood movies functions as “the skin of the film”.

If eyes and ears can be considered as “objective sensory organs”, touch, smell and taste are the “subjective” ones, the most connected with our inner parts because what we eat, smell and touch becomes us. According to Yoga, the senses are connected with the spirit. The same is valid for dance.

Bollywood dance seems very easy to learn but it takes time because it's fast and technically complex. It comes from classical and folk Indian Dance mixed with western dance like Hip Hop and Jazz. During my fieldwork, I spent 3 months in Mumbai with Saroj Khan, the legend of Bollywood, visiting sets and learning choreography. I also interviewed young choreographers, asking if Bollywood is art or industry, tradition or westernization, expression or entertainment. In this paper I introduce the results of my research.

PANEL 2: Contemporary Approaches to Yoga. Chair: Víctor Vélez.

Vélez García, Víctor L. (Universidad de Huelva). “Madhya Pradesh: Cuerpos Espirituales y Diamantes”.

En 2015 se celebró el Primer Día Mundial del Yoga, una propuesta del gobierno indio para afianzar la Marca India y su proyección como país emergente y arraigado en sus tradiciones espirituales. Madhya Pradesh es un estado del centro de India. Sólo allí hay establecidos más de 40 centros pertenecientes al *trust* de Sahaja Yoga, pero se extienden al resto del país y Bangladesh. Sin embargo, conviven al mismo tiempo con otra actividad de la mano de la clase política: la explotación minera. India es un país rico en Hierro, Uranio y sobre todo Diamantes. En la zona del Bunder (Chattarpur) se encuentra la mayor reserva de diamantes del país y allí intenta por todos los medios establecer su *modus operandi* la corporación internacional de origen británico Riotinto Group. Una centenaria empresa que comenzó en las minas de Río Tinto (Huelva, España) a finales del XIX y que, convertida en un gigante internacional con una larga lista de demandas y denuncias por parte de organizaciones internacionales, ha apostado fuerte por este proyecto. Esta ponencia revisa a través de publicaciones y plataformas digitales las acciones que Riotinto lleva realizando en los últimos años en India. Analizaremos la actualidad de este proyecto e incidiremos sobre el debate del impacto que supondría en los intereses materiales y capitales que coexisten con la espiritualidad y tradición de la India.

Riestra Camacho, Rocío (University of Oviedo). "Yet Another Western Commodity: Yoga to Lose Weight (and its Transcendental Meaning)". *pos Espirituales y Diamantes*".

Western culture of the nineteenth century got embedded with the values of Romanticism and Parnassianism, of which perhaps the most visible one was the incorporation of "exotic" and "oriental" elements coming from the Chinese or Hindu communities. With the advent of modern society and capitalism, however, those cultural incorporations have, in many cases, become mere *commodities*. In the case of Yoga, there has been a recent tendency to reduce its spiritual value in favour of a bodily functionality: namely transforming it into a weight-loss product.

This new conception or rather, *appropriation* of Yoga can be analyzed from the perspective of applied somatechnics. Focusing on an exploration of health publications of online journals and blogs, I would attempt to prove how this new functional conception of Yoga has succeeded over spiritual ones, and those emphasizing non-corporeal aspects. It is remarkable how, for example, blogs continuously expose the benefits of Yoga as a weight-loss tool, and leave as an *incidental comment* the fact that it can also help you reduce mental stress. This I would study next to the incorporation of fashionable "specialized" Yoga clothing for "optimum slimming results", sold in brand stores offering sports equipment (e.g. *Oysho*), so as to ultimately show the latest *subversion* of Yoga by western socioeconomic interests.

Bannerjee, Rohini (Halifax University). "From Meno-pause to Meno(play): New Delhi and the Indian Tango".

Since 1989, Ananda Devi, one of Mauritius' most prolific Francophone writers, has been writing female protagonists who go beyond what Roland Barthes says is the deformed and mythical image of the female, and in the case of Ananda Devi's 2007 novel, *Indian Tango*, of the aging female. Set in modern New Delhi, a city tugged herself in multiple directions by politics, religion and globalization, we will examine how Subhadra, mother, wife, daughter-in-law and soon to be grandmother, attempts to reclaim her individuality now replaced by the social isolation of menopause, that is, « par la représentation du vide... ». Subhadra exhumes her female body ignored by her husband and shamed by her mother-in-law along the streets of India's capital and consequently undergoes a sexual (re) awakening for which neither she nor her family is prepared.

This paper will examine how Devi's female protagonist-outcast uses the sounds and rhythms of the urban complexities of New Delhi to denounce ideologies rooted in patriarchal traditions and restrictions and thus rejecting assumptions menopausal women are asexual and undesirable and consequently underlining how a simple walk around a New Delhi block in fact (re) defines menopause for Subhadra as a time of liberation and sexual discovery.

PANEL 3: Violence in Indian Literature.
Chair: Jorge Diego.

Diego Sánchez, Jorge (University of Salamanca). "Corporeal and Spiritual Violence in Anuradha Roy's *Sleeping on Jupiter*".

Nomi, a girl torn away from her family in the north of India at midnight, later abused in an ashram, and almost gang-raped in a train station on her return to India as an adult woman is the protagonist of Anuradha Roy's *Sleeping on Jupiter* (2015). This paper aims at studying how Roy represents the social, cultural and political structures of Indian society as a hypocritical assemblage that promotes that Nomi suffers both corporeal and spiritual violence throughout the twenty years the novel spans in time. In this sense, Roy depicts the emotions of pain, hate, fear and disgust in Nomi but also in the characters of Gouri, Latika and Vidya who show how the relation to bodies, language and emotion have been outlined socially and imposed politically and religiously upon them for the sake of being women.

Roy exposes how these four women face, experience and silence communal violence, family rejection, physical beatings, spiritual dominance, child abuse and overpower of pedestrian religious leaders. Similarly, the novel shows how Indian and international society prioritise family, political and religious structures that allow and take advantage of this corporeal and spiritual violence inflicted upon women. Accordingly, and following the pioneering work by Sarah Ahmed in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004) about emotions and politics and by Emma Dawson Varughese in *Reading New India. Post-Millennial Indian Fiction in English* (2013) in relation to new topics in Indian literature in English, I believe that a further study about how emotions are embroidered, described and entren-

ched upon women throughout the novel will let us understand how dominating political, cultural and literary structures are defied by Roy as a female writer who appeals to a vast international audience to denounce the “entrenched devil” (Kandasamy) that women in India and elsewhere must face.

O'Connor, Maurice (University of Cádiz). “Violating the Sacred Body: Anuradha Roy’s *Sleeping on Jupiter*”.

Hinduism, unlike its Abrahamic religious counterparts, is unique in the fact that there is a marked absence of hierarchical and institutional bodies that impose a moral and political organizing structure upon its followers. In lieu of this lack, it is the singular *guru-shishya* relationship, established within the walls of the *ashram*, which forms the backbone of the Hindu faith. Here is framed the transmission of ancient mystic-religious teachings, a relationship understood through the principle of *bhakti*, the devotional surrender to the guru, who takes on a God-like semblance. Within this context, my paper shall provide a close reading of Anuradha Roy’s *Sleeping on Jupiter* in conjunction with this guru tradition and, through the central character of Nomita Frederiksen, I shall examine this mentoring tradition and how it can be open to perversion. Central to principal theme in *Sleeping on Jupiter* is the question of sexual abuse, and I shall juxtapose this violence against *brachmacharya*, a key philosophy within Hinduism where the practicing of celibacy becomes a vehicle towards spiritual liberation. While the temple town of Jarmuli and the character Guruji pertain to a work of literary fiction, I shall make a bridge between this imaginary locus and other, real-life, locations and actors within contemporary India which evidence the verisimilitude of Roy’s work.

Martínez de Miguel, Rosalía (University of Valladolid). “When Ideology Gets Physical”.

From Meena Alexander’s persona, sporting the scars of migration and exile on her own body, to the mutating incarnations of Vishnu in Rukmini Bhaya Nair’s *Cantos*, Indian English contemporary poetry is filled with body imagery. Fine and brave poets writing their way out of the twentieth and into the twenty-first century eluded propaganda but did not swerve the responsibility and commitment of aware and political poetry.

Ideological, religious and political violence permeates the imaginary of Indian English contemporary poetry. The blurring of the corporeal and intellectual realms, epitomized in the complex relations between ideology and violence, finds a poetic expression. Being it the surgical metaphors of Partition or the martyrdom logic of the human bomb, body imagery is an efficient resource in the pedagogy and transmission of ideology. Equally efficient and powerful is Imtiaz Dharker’s description of antagonistic and bordering countries as distrustful lovers, in a two direction metaphor that turns sex into a battle-line.

Physical expressions of ideology shape and delimit human interaction and body perception in several forms, ranging from daily rituals and religious derived modesty to torture and terrorism. Dharker’s adolescent entering the Purdah system is dispossessed of her own body and starts to carry a sense of sin between her thighs. Dismembered bodies floating in the river in Agha Shahid Ali’s description of Kashmir, or Monalisa Chankija’s envisioning of her own bullet ridden body attest the corporeality of unresolved political conflicts.

This essays aim to identify and analyse such examples as an attempt to understand the use of body imagery in the transmission of ideology in contemporary Indian English poetry, focusing on but not limited to the resource to violence as a way of imposing a set of values or ideas, to the moment when ideology gets physical.

PANEL 4: Gender and Sexualities in India. Chair: Felicity Hand.

Avanzas Álvarez, Elena (University of Oviedo). “Asking for It? Crime Narratives in the 2012 New Delhi Gang Rape”.

On the 16th of December 2012, Jyoti Singh, a twenty-three year old woman was beaten, tortured and gang raped in a bus in the south of New Delhi. Singh died three days later. The attack was perpetrated by six men, one of them the driver of the bus who were subsequently punished for their crime. However, the incident became worldwide news due to the brutality of the attack

Rape culture has become one of the main issues for 21st intersectional feminism, in which women of all cultures seek to escape a cultural and discursive construction by which their own bodies are articulated as a temptation for men, and a source of risk for the women themselves. In this presentation I aim to explore how rape culture constructs women's bodies before and after a sexual assault. My aim is to explore the intersection between rape culture and the representation of Jyoti Singh as an Indian female body victim to an orientalist (Said 2003) and patriarchal discourse in the press. In order to do so, real-life reports need to be contextualised as narrative constructions related to the Western tradition of crime fiction in which the corpse – usually female – is the *raison d'être* of the genre (Mizejweski 2001). But, what happens when the crime does not end with a corpse, but leaves behind a body and a mind? What are the consequences of a lived experience as a survivor that patriarchal culture insists on re/labelling as guilty? What happens when you are told you were asking for it?

Feminist crime fiction and women's writing from the 21st century are already inscribing rape culture and the risks of an embodied female lived experience (Grosz 1994, Young 1999) in contemporary crime fiction. For this paper I will explore two Western explorations of rape and the assaulted body: *All the Rage by Courtney Summers* (Canada), and *Asking for It*, by Louise O'Neil (Ireland) both published in 2015. These two crime novels will serve as a fictional framework from which to explore the real-life narratives that emerged during the press' reports of the 2012 Delhi gang rapes. The ultimate goal is to use the novels as tools of deconstruction for the real-life narratives and reports in order to analyse the construction of Jyoti Singh as a mortal victim of sexual assault.

Hand, Felicity (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona). "Corporeality in Indian Crime Fiction. Kalpana Swaminathan's Aunt Lalli and the Corpse as Text".

Crime writing in English is a dominant trend in the development of the post-millennium writing scene in India, with several crime novels appearing in the last ten to fifteen years in particular. The 'Lalli Mystery' series by Kalpana Swaminathan are set in Mumbai, always involve murder and are always cleverly solved by Aunt Lalli, a sixty-year-old former police officer. At the root of these novels there literally lies a body - the corpse - whose identity is the first enigma to be solved. The corpse is a contradictory site being the end of a life but the beginning of the narrative that follows. It challenges textual representation and as such is invariably consigned to the margins of the story and safely translated into symbol. However, the corpse is a text which pathologists, police and detectives

earnestly try to scrutinize in order to read the motives and method of the crime. Paradoxically, as the corpse as signifier is deciphered, its materiality inexorably decomposes. However, corpses are far from being neutral as their socially determined markers of class, gender, sexuality and ethnicity stubbornly remain. The physical body of the detective also plays a vital role in how the murder is read and the cultural baggage of the sleuth must be taken into account as is his or her implication with the social. Thus the importance of corporeality inscribes the crime novel in the material world and this paper will explore how the corpse as a text and the embodiment of the female detective are represented in Swaminathan's novels.

Velayutham, Deepa (Shaheed Bhagat Singh College) "Celebration of Masculinity in C.S.Chellappa's Vaadivaasal / Arena".

Masculinity studies offer a new vision of male body and male view of reality. It significantly differs from the earlier vision of the male and his chauvinistic attitude. This male is highly self-conscious of the male chauvinism, yet wants to assert his masculinity. This masculinity also expresses itself in tune with the culture concerned. Such an attitude could be found in the Modern literature across cultures.

C.S.Chellappa's *Vaadivaasal / Arena* originally a Tamil Novella written in 1940s describes a bull taming contest that takes place in a village in southern part of India. The novel was acclaimed because Jallikattu, a traditional sport with centuries old history made its first appearance in Tamil modernist fiction. The novella 'Vaadivaasal' was translated into English by N. Kalyana Raman in 2013. The author has stated in an interview that Ernest Hemingway's short story 'The Undeclared' had been an inspiration for his novel, 'Vaadivaasal'. 'The Undeclared' (1927) is a story of an aging bullfighter, Manuel Garcia who struggles to maintain pride and dignity in the violent world of bull fighting facing much younger competitors. The protagonist, Manuel Garcia, kills the bull but, in turn is seriously injured and rushed to the hospital, Manuel Garcia is the archetypal Hemingway hero who fights to remain undefeated. This is the point of departure of 'Vaadivaasal' which is portrayed of several subterranean conflicts in a feudal society in India.

Jallikattu is a bull's game event, which happens in Tamilnadu as a part of Pongal celebrations on Maatu Pongal Day. Bulls are bred specifically by a rich person of the village for the event attended mainly by villagers and temple bulls. A sport like bullfighting reiterates a space only for the men who reinforce bravery and valor in a man's body which have been markers of masculinity.

This paper is an attempt to analyze the novel which celebrates masculinity thereby reinforcing the stereotypes which have been operating since colonial times.

PANEL 5: Yoga, Tantra and Buddhism. Chair: Laura Martínez García.

Aguirre de Cárcer Girón, Nuño, Colaborador Honorífico (Universidad Complutense). “Nirodha, nirvana y la ‘tecnología’ de la contemplación en los comienzos del yoga y el budismo”

En esta investigación analizamos algunos paralelismos entre las técnicas contemplativas de la tradición yóguica establecida por Patañjali y la tradición budista tal y como se desprende del Canon Pali.

Como apoyo para el análisis comparativo, analizaremos dos términos clave, como son *nirodhaynirvāṇa*. Ambos ocupan lugares fundamentales en ambas tradiciones: *nirodha* aparece en los Yogasutras y es también la Tercera Noble Verdad, mientras que *nirvana* aparece no solo en el Canon Budista sino también en la *Bhagavad Gita* (2.72 y otros). Al mismo tiempo, analizaremos algunos indicios que aparecen en el Canon Pali acerca de las prácticas ascéticas realizadas por Gotama antes de la Iluminación, especialmente el *Mahasaccakasutta*.

En definitiva, se trata de dar respuesta a la pregunta de Richard Gombrich ‘*How Buddhism began*’, a la luz de las prácticas contemplativas comunes con la tradición yóguica.

Masako KUBO (Universidad de Salamanca). “Elementos de la meditación zen, en sus orígenes budistas en india”.

El budismo surgido en India fue llevado hasta Japón a través de los monjes. Aunque Japón tenía su propia religión sintoísta, y una filosofía ligada a la misma, aceptó otros elementos culturales como el budismo, transformándolo para hacerlo compatible con su propia ideología de forma flexible, así como introdujo

otros elementos de la cultura occidental. Esta apropiación de elementos culturales combinada con la base cultural japonesa se puede investigar, entre otras cosas, en la rama budista zen en Japón, incluyendo la práctica del yoga y la meditación en Japón.

Esta comunicación se propone investigar la conservación, modificación y sincretismo de elementos originales de la cultura budista India en Japón a través de la revisión historiográfica y el trabajo de campo con observación participante.

Aikin Araluce, Helena (Universidad de Castilla la Mancha). “El yantra como imagen abstracta del cuerpo físico y sutil en el tantra yoga”.

Los yantras son diagramas sagrados que representan principios universales atemporales en lenguaje arquetípico, y que se encuentran en distintas culturas ancestrales inconexas entre sí. Para plasmar esa esencia pura que subyace la realidad y representar la transformación de la materia densa en energía sutil, desde los tiempos védicos el arte hindú ha recurrido a la abstracción, utilizando formas básicas geométricas cargadas de simbolismo como el punto, círculo, triángulo y cuadrado. De especial interés es el Sri Yantra, considerado como obra maestra de la abstracción y de la visión yóguica, además de ser metáfora de la realidad absoluta macro-cósmica e impersonal y mapa de peregrinaje del ser humano desde su existencia material a la iluminación.

En este artículo exploro la idea tántrica del cuerpo como vehículo espiritual y herramienta de gran poder transformador, a menudo considerado *el mejor de los yantras* (Rawson 2010). Analizaré imágenes clásicas hindús y tibetanas donde se representa el cuerpo físico y el cuerpo sutil de forma abstracta, prestando especial atención al Sri Yantra: formado por nueve triángulos superpuestos rodeados por dos círculos dentro de un cuadrado, este diagrama sagrado se divide a su vez en nueve circuitos que simbolizan los diferentes estadios de evolución espiritual, a cada uno de los cuales se vinculan partes anatómicas específicas así como canales energéticos, emociones y tendencias psicológicas. Cuando el adepto alcanza el último circuito, representado por el punto del centro, logra el objetivo final del yoga al trascender su individualidad y fundirse con el Todo Primordial (Khanna 2003).

PANEL 6: Spirituality and Philosophy in India, Chair: Elena Avanzas Álvarez.

Gil Martín, Francisco Javier (Universidad de Oviedo). “Cuerpos en funcionamiento. Experiencias hindúes en los enfoques de las capacidades de AmartyaSen y Martha Nussbaum”.

En obras como *NotForProfit. Why Democracy Needs The Humanities* (Princeton University Press, 2010) y en *Political Emotions. Why Love Matters for Justice* (Harvard University Press, 2014), Martha Nussbaum ha apelado a la obra y la vida de Rabindranath Tagore y, en particular, al proyecto educativo que aquél puso en marcha para defender en nuestros días el carácter indispensable de las artes y las humanidades en el desarrollo integral que se precisa para crear buenos ciudadanos. La centralidad de la relación estética y experimental con el propio cuerpo y la celebración de la alegría de los cuerpos y de la sexualidad lúdica y alegre, facetas que Tagore elabora desde las experiencias con los *baul*, son para Nussbaum una condición para el empoderamiento de las mujeres y más en general para la formación de los ciudadanos libres y críticos que requieren, ahora más que nunca, nuestras democracias. También para AmartyaSen han sido experiencias centradas en el cuerpo, y en las que ha buscado una y otra vez como referencia las realidades plurales de la India, las que han resultado de todo punto determinantes en su enfoque de las capacidades y, por ende, en su concepción del desarrollo y de la diversidad humana. Y de nuevo la figura de Tagore resulta ejemplar, si bien en su caso porque representa una fusión entre lo mejor de las tradiciones india y europea, fusión que es también la visión vertebradora transmitida en sus libros *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity* (Oxford UP, 1999), *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity* (Penguin, 2005) y *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (W.W. Norton, 2007).

Suárez Murias, Samuel (University of Oviedo). “Buddhism: A Cyclical Journey Concerning Subjective Perspectives”.

The aim of this paper will be to prove how Buddhism emerged as a philosophy in a land crowded with philosophies, traditions and religions and secondly how it has managed to travel widely and across borders mingling perfectly

through a clear syncretic process no matter the cultures and traditions encountered.

After a brief explanation and introduction to Buddhism, bearing in mind that it is a philosophy based on subjectivity and the importance of personal views, I will develop how it spread from India to its neighboring countries and later on how it got to Western lands. I will also explore the literary perceptions that arouse from Buddhism due to its arrival and contact with foreign cultures and traditions. The works that will help illustrate this issue are Herman Hesse's *Siddharta*, Tezuka Osamu's *Buddha* and *Fenix*, Dr. Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*, *The Prince of Abyssinia* and some philosophical texts included in Taoist and Shinto texts.

On each of these works, we can mainly find how Buddha's corporeal and metaphysical concepts were reformed to fit in a set of values and traditions that widely differ from the original source since these new perspectives transcended time and space.

Finally, after these concepts have been established, we will discuss how these works helped Buddhism to reach Western minds and traditions and how Buddhism's “Indianness” has permeated on Western soil in addition to how this Westernized views about Buddhism come back to the land that gave birth to them.

Mena González, Ángela (University of Oviedo). “Ecospirituality As A Crucial Reconciliation With The Inner Self. Uma In Anita Desai's *Fasting, Feasting*”.

The literary work in the Indian narrative in English is a tool to denounce the situation of Indian women as members of a patriarchal society, always subdued to the demands and orders commanded by their males: fathers, husbands, brothers etc. Their voice is silenced and their role in society is abducted. The effects provoked by the theft of their will result in a frustration which is only overcome when those social ties are broken.

Nature, an essential element when looking for serenity, has been linked to the South Asian continent since the beginning of its literary history, both orally and written. Nature has such a relevant role in this culture that Anita Desai, one of the most prolific diasporic Indian English writers, is unable to avoid this crucial constituent of the Indian identity and its influence on our lives in her work *Fasting, Feasting* (1999).

This paper analyzes how ecospirituality, understood as the manifestation of the spiritual connection between human beings and the environment, is the only salvation for Uma. This female character, *enslaved* by her parents, finds her place in the world and her spiritual freedom when on a religious pilgrimage and retirement in a natural and unspoiled location.

PANEL 7: The Supernatural in Indian Narratives. Chair: Alejandra Moreno Álvarez.

Ballesteros González, Antonio (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia). “Espectros coloniales y poscoloniales: espíritus materializados y cuerpos elusivos en cuentos indios de lo sobrenatural”.

El acervo cultural de la India abunda en ejemplos de lo que, en un ensayo fundamental acerca de la esencia de lo fantástico, Sigmund Freud (1919) denominó *das Unheimliche* (traducido en inglés como “the uncanny” y en castellano —en forma derivada del francés— como “la inquietante extrañeza”), manifestados en origen por figuras del folclore ancestral, como los vampíricos *rakshasas*, y por representantes significativos del rico panteón religioso hindú, entre los que destaca Kali, la sangrienta diosa de la destrucción. Tomando como referencia dicha proliferación, y llevándola a un contexto contemporáneo, la presente propuesta pretende analizar un corpus de relatos de fantasmas y otros seres sobrenaturales pertenecientes tanto a la etapa de la colonización británica del subcontinente como a la posterior a la independencia de la India, indagando así en las analogías y contrastes de ese “encuentro (pos)colonial” entre oriente y occidente desde una perspectiva neo-victoriana, dada la influencia ineludible que lo victoriano alcanza en el imaginario colectivo de la India desde el siglo XIX, periodo de eclosión y apogeo de la literatura fantástica y sobrenatural en Inglaterra, con numerosos y destacados exponentes de dicha tendencia, inducida en última instancia por la confrontación ideológica y espiritual de destacables intelectuales victorianos contra el materialismo exacerbado provocado por la Revolución Industrial. A través del análisis de las voces y “presencias” fantasmales y sobrenaturales provenientes de ese espacio imaginado que es la India en autores representativos de la época imperial, como Lafcadio Hearn, Arthur Conan Doyle y Rudyard Kipling, entre otros, contrastado con escritores indios

coloniales y poscoloniales como Satyajit Ray, Sudhir Thapliyal, R. K. Narayan, Ravi Shankar y Jaishankar Kala, por citar algunos, se trazará un esbozo tipológico del cuento sobrenatural en la India, centrado en el diálogo, tantas veces conflictivo, y en ocasiones subconscientemente nostálgico, entre el escritor poscolonial y su traumático pasado.

Somacarrera Íñigo, Pilar (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid). “Religious beliefs and sexuality in Rohinton Mistry’s *Tales from FirozshaBaag*”.

As Robert Ross points out, Rohinton Mistry belongs to the Parsi community whose Zoroastrian religious beliefs set its members on the edge of Hindu society. In his collection of short stories *Tales from FirozshaBaag*, he not only deals with Zoroastrian beliefs, but also with Hindu and Catholic doctrines, since the three religions peacefully co-exist in India. Mistry himself was educated in a Catholic school, St Francis Xavier, mentioned in the story “Exercisers,” whose protagonist Jehangir represses his homoerotic pulses and replaces them by a heteronormative relationship in which he is also unable to express himself sexually. In this paper I would like to explore how the separation of body and spirit, a traditional dogma of the Christian religion after the teachings of the apostle Paul, informs the stories in this collection. This division between mind and body is also illustrated in stories like “The Ghost of FirozshaBaag” featuring a Parsi-Catholic character, Jacqueline who sees a *bhoot* (ghost) which is a projection of her sexual desires repressed by Catholic rules. This separation of body and mind is at odds with the philosophy of *yoga*, which advocates the union between the two, in a tradition which *is* present in other Christian theological undercurrents such as that of the Spanish mystics Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross.

Juan Ignacio Oliva (University of La Laguna/GIECO-Franklin-UAH/* Research Projects “Relatos para el cambio” [HAR2015-67472-C2-2-R (MINECO/FEDER)] and Ratnakara “The Aesthetics of Remembering” [FFI2015-63739-P]) “Literary Matter: Asanas for a Better Understanding of Humans in the Environment”.

Perception has to do with the dimensional strategy and the position of the onlooker. It has ideological components and subjective implications: It plays down or else exacerbates differences. It arouses uneasiness or comfort depending on the quality of the action undertaken. Either looking down on someone or something, or inversely gazing at it empathetically; either having a glance over

or rather staring open-mouthed at things; either standing watching passively or giving a complicit look at the world that surrounds us is a way to transforming it by changing physical and psychical postures. In this paper, consequently, some of the asanas in yoga –conceived as metaphorical body positions– will help elucidate a better, healthier and more benign understanding of the role of human beings in this planet, deprived of anthropocentrism and delusions of grandeur. Inverted, twisted and contemplative body stills will be described, without forgetting symbolic sutras and pranayama. Thus, by using material (eco)criticism (Alaimo, Tuana, Iovino, Glotfelty, Sandilands...) as the theoretical terrain, an analysis of poetic texts written by Indo-Canadian and Indo-American authors (Suniti Namjoshi, Uma Parameswaran, Meena Alexander, Rienzi Crusz, Himani Bannerji, or Lakshmi Gill, among others) will be offered.

Actividades Culturales

Film: *Sadhaka. La senda del yoga* (dir. Nicolas Gauthier). Presentado por Antonio Ballesteros.

Review from Casa Asia:

Gauthier inicia un recorrido con la figura de Ramiro Calle, uno de los introductores del yoga en España, autor de *El Libro de los yogas* (1999) y con Isabel Morillo, autora de *Aprende yoga. Curso básico de yoga en teoría y práctica* (2005); la experiencia personal de este especialista le sirve para mostrar el interés que suscita el yoga por sus beneficios físicos y mentales.

En el año 2010, a los 66 años, Ramiro Calle contrajo listeriosis en Sri Lanka y fue ingresado de urgencia en Madrid donde, contra el pronóstico que le concedía 4 horas de vida, se recuperó desconcertando al cuerpo médico. A los pocos meses, se encontraba de nuevo dando clases en su centro, el Shadak, por el que han pasado más de trescientas mil personas desde 1971.

Un narrador que sigue los pasos de Ramiro Calle, y de sus 50 años de investigación personal, narra la historia del verdadero yoga; sus virtudes, los beneficios que se le atribuyen, técnicas, claves, teoría y práctica. Sin descartar la polémica, ni a aquellos que más han contribuido a su difusión en Occidente como Mircea Eliade, con *El yoga. Inmortalidad y Libertad* (1998), o Carl Gustav Jung, con *Lo que la India puede enseñarnos* (1939) y *Acerca de la psicología de la religión occidental y de la religión oriental. El yoga en Occidente*, escrito después de su viaje a la India en 1938, trata de reproducir audiovisualmente un viaje al centro del yoga en España y en Rishikesh (India), que pese a contar con tantos adeptos es paradójicamente tan poco conocido.

Nicolas Gauthier no sólo es el director de esta película, sino también este narrador omnipresente que plantea interrogantes esenciales y a la vez da la palabra a practicantes, expertos y profanos, con el ánimo de contrastar desde un entorno neutral las problemáticas que surgen ante un tema tan amplio como complejo, exteriorizando sus dudas e ignorancia sobre una praxis milenaria, que admite toda clase de preguntas que no dejan de estar relacionadas con las pretensiones místico-esotéricas de esta tradición.

Diálogo con José Pazó: Yoga, el camino hacia la trascendencia.
(Universidad Autónoma de Madrid). Presentado por Antonio Ballesteros.