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Caucasian Literatures Meet South Asian Literatures:

Exploring the “Indian Caucasus”

Shelley’s *Prometheus Unbound* features a place named “Indian Caucasus” (Acts I and II). This imaginative merging of the Hindu Kush mountain range in Central and South Asia and the Caucasus Mountains is Shelley’s departure from the Greek source as well as his invocation of places related to civilization. Referencing this rather unusual coupling of South Asia and the Caucasus, the present paper aspires to explore the connection and inter – animation of the literatures of Caucasus and that of South Asia. The Caucasus region chiefly incorporates South Caucasia or Transcaucasia (Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) and North Caucasus („Russian“ republics including Chechnya, Adygea, Ossetia and Dagestan) while South Asia comprises eight countries including Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. The paper unfolds in two ways. On the one hand, it traces the typological affinities (similarities without factual contact) between Caucasian and South Asian literatures; for example, due to the Caucasian countries’ complex interactions with several imperial invasions (from Sasanian and Persian to Russian), their literatures are informed by Persian and Arabic literatures, a trend which is evident in South Asian literatures as well. It is thus worth noting how the Persian poet Jami has been postprocessed in, say, Georgia and Azarbaijan, and India and Bangladesh as well. On the other hand, this paper explores the genetic contact (similarities due to factual contact) between and the inter – animation (or lack thereof) if any of Caucasian and South Asian literatures; for example, it is worth inquiring the amount and nature of translation (and lack thereof) of Caucasian literature in the South Asian languages and vice versa. The paper contends that in the context of the increasingly mutating world relations, in what Shashi Tharoor and Samir Saran dubbed the New World Disorder, it is important that South Asia explores and initiates fresh areas of cross – cultural exchange, brings interliterary relations in more productive conversations, and accentuates a globalectic ethic.