

Title: ‘Colonial Resistance through the Indian Landscape in *Black Narcissus* (1939)’

Abstract:

The novel *Black Narcissus* (1939), written by Rumer Godden, follows a group of Anglo-Catholic nuns who travel north to Darjeeling to set up a convent school and clinic in a disused palace half-way up a hill, looking over the Himalayas to Kanchenjunga. The nuns’ mission can be interpreted as their imperial agenda to subjugate the Indian land and its people. The paper examines how the Indian people, landscape and spaces mentioned in the novel resist, challenge, and eventually defeat this reforming mission. It further explores how Godden subverts traditional colonial narratives about women and colonised people through alternative representations of the local people and their landscape, highlighting their resilience to imperial rule. The discussion concludes by highlighting how Godden gives active agency to India and provides an alternative, and perhaps a more holistic, view of the Indian-British interaction which positioned India beyond its view of subalternity within mid-twentieth-century English literature, in the immediate context of the British-mandated partition of India.

Keywords: ecofeminism, postcolonial studies, colonial resistance, English expatriate author, British India

Bio: Mubashara Khan is an MA student of English Studies at ELTE, specialising in English Literature. Her current research interest is in ecofeminist exploration of postcolonial literatures, examining how traditional colonial narratives have been countered in literature through indigenous modes of resistance, primarily landscape and local customs. She won second place in OTDK for her paper ‘Haywood and Reeve: Oriental Female Archetypes in the Occidental Literary Imagination’ and the Outstanding Thesis Award for her BA thesis.