

Interview qaisra shahraz

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Aquaria Sahara visited many places in India and gave talks on her two books. Her trip was made possible by her Indian publishers Penguin. I chanced to read her work and I found it interesting. Later my colleague and the co-editor of this book Professor A. R. Sidwalk suggested that we could interest many people to contribute essays on the art and craft of Aquaria Sahara. The response simply overwhelmed us. In almost no time we received the consent of a great many colleagues in India and elsewhere in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Europe and the United States to write for this volume. Most of them have kept their word.

We are indeed grateful to them for their interest. Out of so many post-colonial Indian and Pakistani writers writing in English, what, in your opinion, is special about Aquaria Sahara as a remarkable fiction writer? Of the postcolonial writers it is only Indian writers who hog all limelight. The Resides, the Gosh, the Despise. The fact is a lot of new and interesting writing is emerging from unlikely places. From Pakistan, from Bangladesh. And whatever be the image of Pakistan in the media, Western and Indian, an interesting thing is that a lot of new writers are emerging from Pakistan.

Most of this writing is very political which is not surprising since Pakistan faces problems which are essentially of political nature. However, there are some writers who focus attention on issues of a different nature. Aquaria Sahara is one such writer. She has charted a different territory. Issues of identity-rural, regional, gender -are her basic concerns. How has she contributed to the discourse on the gender issue with specific reference to Pakistani society, especially in view of her being based in the UK/West?

Most writers maintain their link with their country of origin. Pakistan never disappeared from Aquaria Ashram's imaginative space. As a woman who has lived her life in two countries her writing is only enriched by her experience. The diasporas identity has its own advantages. In her case it is not lack of something but rather the an open eye. In her work she shows the limitations of both Western and non-western feminism. Does Aquaria Sahara typify the Feminist perspective? She goes farther than that. She redefines feminism for Pakistani society.

Call it Islamic feminism, Muslim feminism or by whatever name she does not mindlessly indulge in Islam and Muslim bashing which is the motif in lots of , what has been called, oppressed women's novels. Her target is rather the agrarian system, some oppressive customs in kinds and the subversion of Islam to serve one's own interest. What is Aquaria Ashram's attitude to patriarchy which is rife in Pakistani culture? She has a very critical view of some patriarchal institutions. Some of her characters are self-consciously feminist. Professor Night Sultana, for instance.

Even Karri Banjo's supposedly meek capitulation to a patriarchal institution can be read as a criticism of patriarchy. In this instance she shows both the power and the evil nature of patriarchy. What are your comments on Aquaria Ashram's understanding and depiction of Pakistani village life and Islamic culture? For a person who has mostly lived in cities Aquaria Sahara shows remarkable understanding of rural life. The character of Kanji, Skull's and Amanita bib' and others are products of rural set-up. While reading her novels I was myself transported back in time and place.

I was thinking of a woman in Titular,(my native place in Attar Pradesh) who passed invitations by word of mouth, fixed matches and spread gossip in her own inimitable ways. I was reminded of the institution of village match maker, a task which is now done on the net. The close- knit community, oppressive customs, force of gossip, the distrust of the corrupting ways of the city-? these are all beautifully captured by Sierra's narrative, especially in Typhoon. Sierra's language is very different from other Indo-Anglican writers like Rushed, Koran Ideas Iranian Ideas for instance.

Could you elucidate? Of course it is different room what Rushed calls citified English. Others have Jokingly referred to the fortification of English. Aquaria has her own share of non English words because she is translating an entire culture. Words like Zeta and Kismet add a richness to English vocabulary. I especially liked the papacy style of Sahara in Typhoon. It is her choice of words and English structures which is responsible for the leisurely pace of the Holy Woman and the fast and furious pace of Typhoon - the contrast in the pace of the two books is so remarkable.

How do you think this volume of Critical Essays on Aquaria Ashram's craft will intricate to literature and cultural studies? I must confess that the multiplicity of perspectives offered by the contributors has far exceeded my initial understanding of her work. The contributors have analyses her work from all critical angles possible-? pedagogical. The varied backgrounds of the contributors-? British, American, Arab, African, German, Indian and Pakistani-? add some more dimensions to the critical discourse on Sahara.

What are some of the main conclusions of the critical scholarship on Aquaria Ashram's work. This is certainly not the final word on Aquaria Ashram's work. It is just the beginning. Other critics, most certainly students of literature, can take this work forward and explore ideas treated by the contributors to this volume. Some critical opinion quotes on Aquaria Ashram's work. China Aquaria Sahara, a Pakistani-born English writer and scriptwriter, is such a wonderful story teller that readers can hardly put her stories down once they begin them.

Reading her works is like starting a journey with her unforgettable characters to Pakistan and gaining a deep insight into their lives, in particular the poignant lives of Pakistani women. Living in the I-J since she was 9 years old, but deeply rooted in her own Pakistani culture, she bridges the understanding between the East and the West. More importantly, through her excellent novels *The Holy Woman* and *Typhoon*, she clarifies many Westerners' stereotypical misconceptions about the Islamic cultures. I hope that Ms.

Ashram's fascinating works will soon be introduced into China so that they will reach an even wider readership and arouse the academic interest among Chinese academia, also in view of the fact that China also has a large population of Muslims. Tinting Going, Associate Professor of English, Southwest University of Science and Technology (Managing) and translator of *Holy Woman* and *Typhoon*, China Germany My reading of Aquaria Ashram's *The Holy Woman* and *Typhoon* offered me my first real insight into the lives

of women in Pakistani villages and into the types of story which symbolism rural and urban society in that country.

It was a revelation and I read both books back to back. The Holy Woman in particular has rightly attracted global attention through its non-partisan portrayal of the ambivalent relationship between Islamic culture and Western consciousness as seen through the eyes of a woman. It is a very significant book indeed and Aquaria Ashram's is a voice of mediation which should be more widely heard. Robert Scrimshaw, Kulturwissenschaftliches Kolleg, University of Constant, Germany. India transmutable.

The migrant imagination produces texts that cross geographic, national, ethnic, and even linguistic boundaries and make connections with the past and the present. Aquaria Sahara who describes herself as a British Muslim of Pakistani origin retains her sensitive understanding of Pakistani society and culture, and in living away from it, benefits from the distancing perspective which enables her in her fiction to nuance characters, situations and events; negotiate with history and memory; juxtapose and examine old traditions and new sensibilities.

She weaves flavors of life and the sense of living into the texture of her writing. Each of her stories becomes a metaphor for complex exploration of identity formations and self-definitions. In her remarkable novels The Holy Woman and Typhoon and in her short stories, fictive imagination and historical inscription blend significantly to produce reared texts that invite deep engagement and innovative strategies of reading. Tunde Musketeeer, Professor of Comparative Literature, University of Hyderabad, India.

Indonesia As a citizen of a country with the biggest Muslim population in the world, I found Aquaria Ashram's works as an eye opener about the diversity of the world Muslims. And I think I am not alone in this opinion, since we witnessed how her two novels, *The Holy Woman* and *Typhoon* got a very good response from the Indonesian readers--that's why we plan to republish the two in a product line that we call Gold Edition (novels).

I do think that the Indonesian readers got the same enlightenment, that even when we are united as Muslims, we might grow on a different soil of culture that very much influences our interpretation about Islam. And because of that, we need more and more constructive dialogue, not only between the Muslim world and the West (non Muslim world), but also between world-Muslims itself - to bridge differences to gain understanding between cultures. Mrs..

Payments Innings, Chief Executive Officer, Mizzen Publishing House -
Indonesia Morocco Aquaria Sahara is a voice of light whose piercing scream faces the dark continent of ultra blindness and patriarchal and ideological manipulation. Her feminist writings vehemently uncover the weight of the patriarchal order in an ideologically- biased Pakistani Islamic context, unveil the misuse of Islam in depriving women of their human and sexual rights and, consequently, invite a complex post-colonial and post-harem critical perspective on women's predicaments in the Arab-Islamic sphere as a whole.

Ashram's feminist commitment calls for an urgent re-consideration of sexual politics and women's involvement in dismantling various areas of masculine animation and building up a modern and gender-democratic Muslim society.

Hosannas Cirri, Professor, School of Humanities, Pakistan Aquaria Sahara is one of the most important category English fiction writer of Pakistani origin. Her fiction writing has created its own distinctive place by virtue of its quality and relevance to the contemporary issues.

She has an extraordinary skill of raising some delicate and fundamental questions related to women issues in general and in particular about those women who are struggling to discover their individual identity in a polarize world. She presents some important aspects of the infiltration of values between different civilizations through her powerfully conceived characters. Though her characters and setting may represent a certain class or section but her themes overwhelmingly remain universal and humanism formulates the basic fiber of her fiction.

Karma Charisma Squid, Editor (English), Pakistan Academy of Letters, Islamabad, Pakistan Turkey The works of Aquaria Sahara, Actual Caddy (The Holy Woman) and Tiffany (Typhoon), have attracted attention with their striking themes and contemporary topics in Turkey. When Ms. Sahara visited our country in 2005 for *Istanbul Book Fair, I got the hence to know her better. I saw that although writers, scientists or intellectuals from the East live in the West, they don't lose touch with their own culture.

Aquaria Sahara is one of those intellectuals, who has the ability and experience to interpret the East truly. She is a writer who can deftly read the East while she lives in the West. In this respect, I can say that her novels are important examples to be analyzed academically. Since they were published in our country at a time when discussions were ongoing on the theme of the

clash of civilizations, they have also been reliable and useful sources of information for those who interpret the West differently from the East.

We hope that Ms. Sahara, who deserves to be praised in terms of her literary insight, will go on writing books which will take their place among Eastern Classics books with their insightful themes. Burk Fuzzy kabuki, Chief Editor Para Publishing House, Istanbul, Turkey Aquaria Ashram's writing, which has delighted and inspired readers all over the world for the past two decades, is finally receiving the scholarly attention it deserves.

This exciting new collection of articles surveys the diverse range of themes and issues treated in Ashram's work - feudalism and modernity; female sexuality, romance and divorce; religious faith and the wearing of the veil; the Pakistani homeland and its Diaspora - and pays tribute to the emotional depth and moral complexity of her gathered from across the globe -? will be of especial interest to non-Muslim readers wishing to understand more about the historical and political context of Ashram's work.

Just as Aquaria Ashram's writing has touched the lives of many thousands of general readers around the world, so will this collection most surely win her new fans within the academic community. Lynn Pearce, Professor of Literary Theory and Women's Writing, Lancaster University, I-J United States of America I was caught by the drama, the romance, the traditions, the shibboleths and the descriptions of town, village, house and home in her novels *The Holy Woman* and *Typhoon*.

I could see so well the settings and characters Aquaria Sahara described so vividly. She let me into and behind the scenes so far from those in western homes but still of common human interest. I hope to read the further adventures of her protagonists! Ann Nicholson, Radio Host/Producer, Little Rock, Arkansas, USA