

Release of *Ambedkar: Oru Prabudha Indyakkayi*. Dr Auswaf Ahsan with Prabhakaran Varapprath

Otherwise

Other Books Monthly Newsletter

Otherword

Besides being a devastation, Covid-19 was also a test of strength for business. Though reading is a vital activity of all cultures, bookstores remained close in the initial stage of lockdown and books hesitantly snaked its way into the list of essential commodities. But going by the trend all over the world, book industry did not fare worse than other industries. This is because turning pages and being lost in the the world of words is one of the sources of comfort for people, whose means of socialisation was thinning out.

Using social media as a springboard, we could deliver books home. The meagre resources and manpower was never a handicap; the team managing store and social media handles were so active as to make the gloom dissipate fast. And we congratulate them for their grit and contagious enthusiasm. And there was a hiatus in the restriction when the pandemic deceptively tapered off. We brought out two titles at that providential break, reprints of Dr Ambedkar's biography by Gail Omvedt in Malayalam translation and of *Annihilation of Caste* in English, the latter being the first in a series of its



translations into many languages (Arabic and Italian editions are in the pipeline).

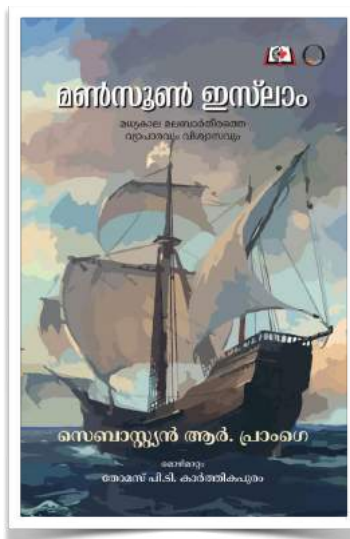
Then, the pandemic ominously rebounded with more vigour. The state was one of the worst-affected in the whole country. Again, we relied on the social media channel to reach out. But it was not easy to deliver books to different destinations with more stringent restrictions in place. Also, the characteristically slow, but steady, pace of our editorial team saw to it that readers have something new to read and store. We bring out the Malayalam translation of Sebastian Prange’s *Monsoon Islam*, which is on how Islam made a distinctive presence in the Indian Ocean littoral. Also the second edition of ‘*Duā Khumail*’ has just reached our store. And the proud news is that we have a new website for you to reach us and buy books.

You read this edition of the newsletter when the restrictions are being loosened and the pandemic shows some signs of weakening its grip on life and mobility. But the future is still unpredictable. In fact, life is always uncertain and dicey; the virus was merely a reminder of that bitter truth. Ours is a destiny to live the short span of our life meaningfully. Books are one of the means to help us in this meaning-making exercise. That is the lesson we have learned during the lock down.

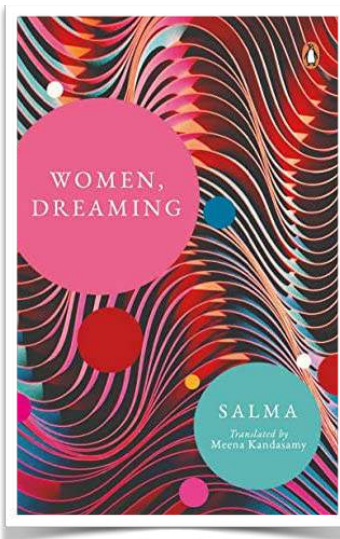
Other Books Team

In the Press

Littoral Islam; And a Reassuring Prayer



Two titles which we have sent to press are *Monsoon Islam* by Sebastian Prange and *Duā Khumail*. *Monsoon Islam* is a fruit of decades-long research on medieval Malabar and Islam being practiced on the Malabar shores. The book quickly became a cynosure in the academic circles. The author contacted us for undertaking the translation project. We have received financial help to bring this out from Sashtri Indo-Canadian Institute, Ministry of Human Resources, Department of Higher Education, Government of India and Social Sciences and



He had already given his heart to Layla before he understood what he was giving away.

Women Dreaming

- ✦ *Author: Salma*
- ✦ *Translated by Meena Kandasamy*
- ✦ *Publisher: Penguin Random House, India*

In a tiny Muslim village in Tamil Nadu, the lives of women are sustained by the faith they have in themselves and in each other, and the everyday compromises they make. Salma's storytelling-crystalline in its simplicity, patient in its unravelling-enters this interior world of women, held together by love, demarcated by religion and comforted by the courage in dreaming of better futures. *Women, Dreaming* is a beautiful novel by writer and activist Salma, translated exquisitely from the Tamil by Meena Kanasamy.

Places Of Mind: A Life Of Edward Said

- ✦ *Author: Timothu Brennan*
- ✦ *Publisher: Bloomsbury Publishing*

Drawing on extensive archival sources and hundreds of interviews, *Places of Mind* is the first comprehensive biography of Said, one of the most controversial intellectuals of the 20th century. In Brennan's masterful work, Said, the pioneer of post-colonial studies, a tireless champion for his native Palestine, and an erudite literary critic, emerges as a self-doubting, tender, and eloquent advocate of literature's dramatic effects on politics and civic life. *Places of Mind* charts the intertwined routes of Said's intellectual development, revealing him as a study in opposites: a cajoler and strategist, a New York intellectual with a foot in Beirut, an orchestra impresario in Weimar and Ramallah, a raconteur on national television, a Palestinian negotiator at the State Department, and an actor in films in which he played himself. *Places of Mind* captures Said's intellectual breadth and influence in an unprecedented, intimate, and compelling portrait of one of the great minds of the twentieth century.

