

# **THE GAME OF DISAPPEARANCE AND RETURN: RANAJIT GUHA'S CASE FOR HISTORICALITY IN HISTORY AT THE LIMITS OF WORLD HISTORY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Ranajit Guha's Italian Memorial lectures collected in "History at the Limits of World History" is both a message and a manoeuvre. The message is about the truth claims of History that Guha establishes as untenable. He achieves this end by performing a deft polemical manoeuvre using archival material to justify T.S. Eliot's idea that History has "many cunning passages." To prove his point Guha exposes the historical judgement of Hegel with respect to India- No prose, so, no history- as harsh, unfounded and irrational. Further, Guha prepares the ground for the writer who uses history to move from Historiography to Historicality. The deliberate inaccuracies that Rushdie uses in "Midnight's Children" and Tagore's transformation of quotidian events into pregnant literary moments are elucidated to suggest the province of historicality. The argument in the essay is built on the Freudian idea that obtains in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" about the child's game of 'the mother's disappearance' and 'her return.' The writer who deploys historical material in fiction is not writing history but creating a fictional narrative that is historical in appearance.

**KEY WORDS:** World History, T.S.Eliot, Maradona is History, Historicality, Guha, Rushdie