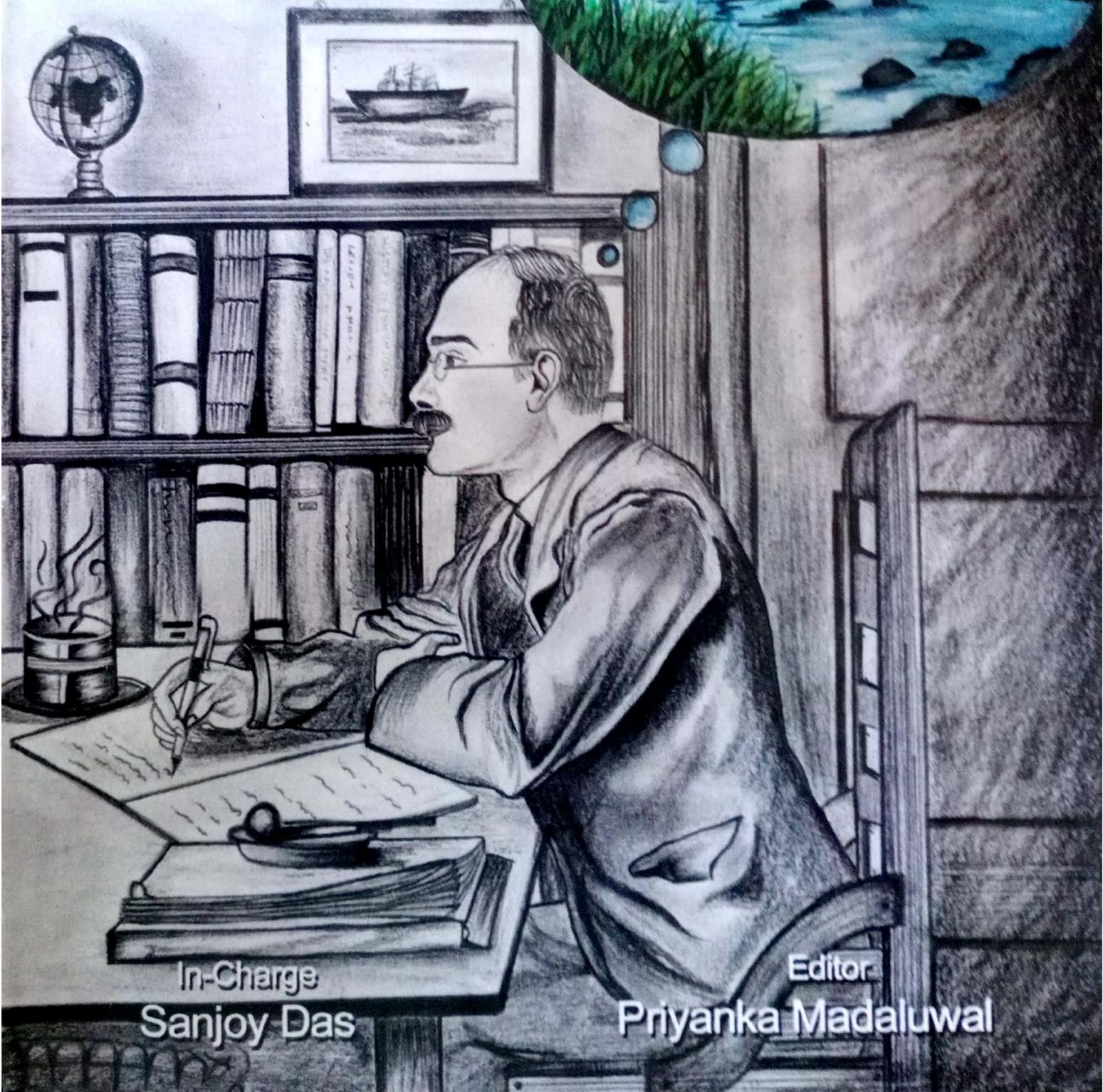
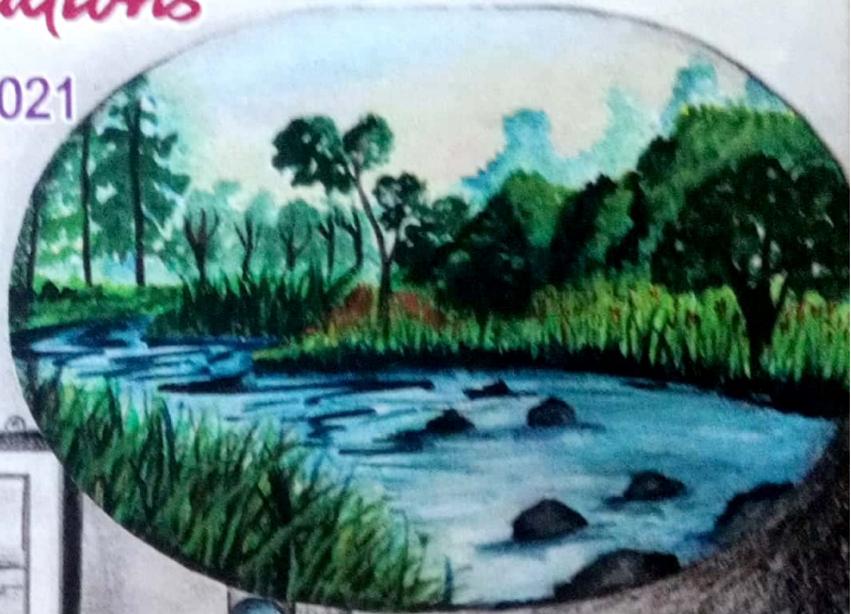


# Literary Ruminations

Second issue, Dec 2021



In-Charge  
Sanjoy Das

Editor  
Priyanka Madaluwal



*If you would not be forgotten as soon as you are dead, either write something worth reading or do something worth writing.*

- Benjamin Franklin



# LITERARY RUMINATIONS

An Annual Literary Magazine

Second Issue : December, 2021



Department of English  
Digboi College, Digboi, Assam

In-Charge  
Sanjoy Das

Editor  
Priyanka Madaluwal

Second Issue : 13th December, 2021

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Publisher : Dept. of English, Digboi College, Digboi-786171

Printed at : Surobhi Flex Printers, Borbil No. 1, Digboi, Assam.

Mobile No. : 8473868001



*Dedicated  
to  
all those whom Covid  
took away and tribute to  
all first responders and  
front-line workers*

## Message

It gives me immense pleasure to write a few words as prologue for our in-house departmental magazine 'Literary Ruminations'. It is exclusively meant for bringing out the potential writing talent as a part of ones overall personality development. I am sure that this magazine will help to acquire knowledge and skills, build character and enhance employability to our young talented students to become globally competent. It is indeed a matter of great pride that our students have made outstanding progress in academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. I feel proud of being the HOD of such a magnificent department fully dedicated for the betterment of students. I congratulate all the contributors and the editorial board for bringing out such an outstanding departmental magazine.

As HOD of the Department of English, Digboi College, Digboi, it gives me a profound privilege and pleasure to inform that this department is putting consistent, insistent and persistent efforts to serve the student fraternity at its best. The main focus of the department is to empower the students with sound knowledge, wisdom, experience, life values in the highly competitive global market. I extend my wishes to all the readers of this message and invite you to join hands with us in our noble mission.

Wishing you the best for scaling bigger success and achieving newer heights in the coming days.



Mr. Jayantadeep Dutta, HOD  
Department of English  
Digboi College, Digboi



ডিগবৈ মহাবিদ্যালয়  
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## Message

*"Learning gives you creativity, creativity leads to thinking,  
Thinking provides knowledge, and knowledge makes you great"*

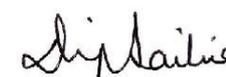
*Dr. A.P. J. Abdul Kalam*

It gives the utmost pleasure to know that the Department of English, Digboi College is bringing out its 2nd issue of "Literary Ruminations".

The annual departmental magazine forms an integral part to reflect the scholastic and non scholastic achievement of the department of the education institute.

It is about the generation of new knowledge by young people with energy and talent and interpretation of culture in the form of words and visuals to create a world that the youth probably want to inherit.

I take the opportunity of conveying my best wishes to the editorial team as well as the department for a grand success in their mission.



**(Dr. Dip Saikia)**

## A Postcolonial Forward to *Literary Ruminations*

“তোৰে মোৰে আলোকৰে যাত্ৰা..অব্যৰ্থ..অব্যৰ্থ” — জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালা



**Jaydeep Chakrabarty**

Asst. Prof., Dept. of English  
Assam University

I am immensely happy to hear that *Literary Ruminations* – the Journal of the Department of English of Digboi College – is going for its second issue. I am also humbled by the offer of writing this “Foreword” for it, for which I am really thankful to all concerned. As a professional of English studies who has been associated with research and teaching in the field for more than a decade now, I must say that this is really an achievement, and all concerned deserve a hearty applause for the job. For one thing, English is not our native tongue, an undeniable reality for the entire nation but truer of non-metropolitan space. In all such ventures therefore, to quote Raja Rao, there has to be an arduous effort “to convey in a language that is not one’s own the spirit that is one’s own.” Equally important it is to take note of the fact that for about two years now, humanity has been facing one of its gravest ordeals in its battle against covid-19. The fact that the Journal is going for its second issue braving these odds, therefore, is unequivocally laudable.

At a personal level also, I am happy with this achievement, because years ago I started the journey of my life from Digboi only. Capitalising on the key word in the title of the journal – “Ruminations” – I must say that I am reminded of my tender years at my mother’s place at Digboi. Digboi College therefore, being the prime intellectual repository of my place of birth which is famous for the twin distinctions of being the oldest operating oil refinery of the world as well as the oldest refinery of Asia, always has a special place in my memory. It was the College where my mother, along with her sisters and cousins, got educated for their graduate degrees years ago. Indeed, as I am writing this, my associations with the place and its milieu, to quote from a poem by D. H. Lawrence, are “taking me back down the vista of years” and reminded of all the anecdotes associated with the

College passed on to me by my mother years ago. I feel compelled to quote the concluding lines of the poem here for obvious reasons:

The glamour  
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast  
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the  
past. (“Piano”)

These anecdotal connection has been strengthened by the happy coincidence of some great friends of mine choosing the Digboi College as their workplace, not only in English but in other Departments as well. They form inseparable parts of my PhD days at Dibrugarh University, and I am happy to see and hear that they are giving their best to add to the excellence of the prestigious institution.

Memories are actually what we are primarily made of, though not everyone is always aware of it. All our knowledge, for instance, are memories of past experiences and information; to add to the existing body of knowledge also memory needs to play a pivotal role. “Ruminations” – literary or otherwise – are often fit tributes to the phenomenal role of memory in our lives, especially when they are invoked for the pleasure of the act of remembrance itself (utilitarian invocation of memory keeps happening every moment though). All great pieces of literature known as “great books”, especially epics and classics, are nothing but well-organized rewritings or “ruminations” of things past. Taking a cue from this, I sincerely believe and wish that *Literary Ruminations* will, in due course of time, stand out as an archive dedicated to the cultural memories of its immediate area of operations, and even beyond. I shall be humbled if approached for leads and suggestions in this regard. I have in fact written a little more than is generally expected from “Forewords,” but that is what is necessary, and not only for my personal connections with Digboi and Digboi College. I actually mean it to be an experimentation with and transformation of the protocols of “Foreword” writings itself, foregrounding my belief that we must break free of the strictures and structures of colonial modes of writings even as we continue to use English as a medium of communication which is till date the most widely used language of both specialised and general communication globally.

All my choicest wishes for the Journal as well as the Institution.

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***Editorial Note...***

Being a student of literature, we learn to appreciate words and their power. So, here, we have made an attempt to demonstrate the enormous power of literature to the world with the assistance of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Departmental Annual Magazine "Literary Ruminations", published by the Department of English, Digboi College, Digboi.

"Literature is an expression of society just like the word is the expression of a human being." – Louis Gabriel Ambroise. Literature gives us an insight into the condition of a society. Specially at a time when our society is plagued by a menace called COVID-19, literature provides an outlet to spark our creativity and let our imagination run wild.

As the Editor of "Literary Ruminations", I feel delighted to present yet another platform for the students of our Department to showcase their skills and creativity.

I feel privileged to have witnessed the creativity of so many individuals associated with our institution. I will try with the best of my efforts to spread the joy of literature all across our realm.

I would also like to thank everyone who have contributed into creating this piece of literature. Their efforts are greatly appreciated. Literature teaches us to seek joy in the saddest places, to simplify what is complicated and to pursue beauty at its best. And I am sure literature will continue to hold this historical place in our heart. In the words of Henry James –

" It takes a great deal of history to produce a little literature."

**Priyanka Madaluwal  
B.A. 6th Sem.  
English (Major)**

## Word of Thanks

Dear Readers,

Department of English is coming up with the second issue of annual literary magazine 'Literary Ruminations'. Here I put pen to paper so as to offer my sincerest forms of gratitude and regards to all the contributors of the magazine.

First, I on behalf of the Department of English, take the opportunity to extend deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Joydeep Chakrabarty, Asst. Professor, Dept. of English of Assam University, Silchar for his resourceful 'forward' message to the magazine.

I am honoured and humbled by Prof. (Dr.) Mridul Bordoloi, Dept. of English, Dibrugarh University for his helpful and valuable research article.

I am equally filled with gratitude and bow down in reverence to Dr. Madhumita Purkayastha, Deepasree Das Sarkar, Shyamolima Saikia, Dr. Suryya Kumar Chetia and others for their noble gesture.

My sincere regards are also due to the hon'ble Principal of Digboi College, Dr. Dip Saikia for his wholehearted support in materialising this noble dream.

I also take this opportunity to extend my regards to all those Alumni of our Department who have contributed with their write-ups for the magazine. Last but not the least, I express my sincere gratitude to our HoD, Mr. Jayantadeep Dutta and all other departmental colleagues for their constant support and motivation.

Finally, due acknowledgment is also to all the staff of Surobhi Flex Printers, Digboi for timely publication of the magazine.

**Sanjoy Das**  
Magazine In-Charge

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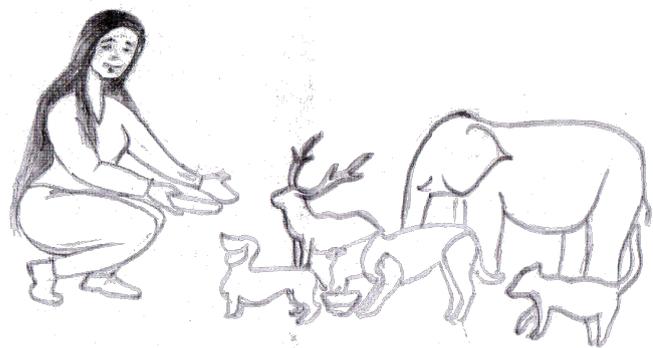
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## Animal Rights : When Innocent Souls Fall



**Chimpy Baruah**  
**B.A. 6th Sem.**

**M**onsters aren't real, but humans are. Ever wondered how it feels to be hungry, scared, beaten to death or death by cruelty and still unable to utter a single word. I am dog person. I have got three dogs and I am trying hard enough to give them a life where they are provided with the basic necessities of any living being. But often in rainy days or may it be the harsh cold winter nights I wonder about those who are struggling to survive a night on the streets or in the farms. Yes, I wonder about the strays, the hunger stricken ones, whose innocent eyes make my heart ache. May it be dogs, cats or any other animals. We, as human beings only think about our survival. The fundamental wrong is the system that allows us to view animals as our resources, they are here for us-to be eaten, surgically manipulated, hunted down for fun or exploited for sports. But they too like the humans are living beings. They too have emotions like that of us even though they are the voiceless ones and we, the real monsters are gifted with voice by the supreme creator. Such a shame! The cruelties done on the animals reflects how human moralities have degenerated from 12th century to present century. To all those who see animals as toys to play with whenever they want to. Let me make it very clear for you all, you might be the superior ones to them but not the ultimate being. I firmly believe in animal rights. The humans must stop any kind of abuse may it be mental or physical. You have no right! Everytime I sit in my dinner table with a plate full of meat I feel guilty knowing that I shouldn't but then I am bound and used to it. Sometimes when I see

## ORIGIN AND DESCENT OF INDIAN LANGUAGES

**Bipasa Saha**  
**B.A. 6th Sem.**

The Indian dialect is colossally complicated and assorted and has been formed, like most things in India, by a long time of social assortment, territorial contrasts, race, money, religion and war. The beginnings of the dialects of India bring with them extraordinary stories and history which mixes in with the ponder and puzzle that makes India so difficult to characterize. According to Census India report of 2011, India is home to a total of 121 languages and 270 mother tongues. Out of these, 22 languages have been recognized in the eighth schedule of the Indian Constitution which include Punjabi, Marathi, Maithili, Kashmiri, Manipuri, Tamil, Sindhi, Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Kannada, Konkani, Malayalam, Nepali, Odia, Sanskrit, Santali, Telugu, Urdu and Dogri.

It is believed that the parent language has been differently named Aryan, Indo-Germanic and Indo-European. Of the first two, there have been few and scarce prominence of their relationship with all leading languages. Therefore it is believed that Indo-European is the best possible designation. By 2000 B.C.E., or a little later, it is believed that the Indo-European language split up to eight distinct language groups or dialects. Some of the prominent descendants are English, German, French, Spanish, Russian and Polish in addition to Indo-Iranian languages like Persian and Hindi, and ancient ones which include Sanskrit and Greek. "To the untrained ear, languages like English, Dutch, Spanish, Russian, Greek and Hindi might all sound very different from each other but in fact, they show remarkable

similarities because of which scholars concluded that these languages and hundreds of others across Europe and Near East are in fact all related, having sprung from a common source," said Michael Dunn from Radboud University in the Netherlands and one of the authors of the study.

The majority of Indian languages belong to the Indo-Aryan or Dravidian language families. Indo-Aryan is a subdivision of the Indo-European language family and it is spoken by seventy percent of the Indian population- mostly in North India. North Indian languages are said to have been originated from an extinct language spoken by pre-historic farmers who lived in modern day Turkey, almost 8,000 - 9,500 years ago. Indian languages like Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Oriya, Kashmiri, Marwari, Bhojpuri and Urdu can trace their origin back to "Anatolia" (Turkey). Dravidian languages are only spoken by 22% of the Indian population and are predominant in the South. The Dravidian languages are divided into South, Southcentral, Central and North Groups — these groups are further organised into 24 subgroups. The four major languages, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada are recognized by the Constitution of India and are also the official languages of the states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka, respectively. Tamil is one of the oldest languages dated back to the 5th B.C.E. Tamil was declared as the classical language of India in 2004 because of its ancient origin, it's independent tradition and it's possession of a considerable body of ancient literature. Other Indian languages like Oko-Juwoi, Önge, Jarawa and Munda language family belong from the Austroasiatic, Sino-Tibetan (also included-Tibeto-Burman) and Great-Andamanese linguistic families. Although it is believed that Sanskrit is the mother of all languages, linguist Shikaripur N Sridhar from the State University of New York challenges this theory. According to him, "Sanskrit is the origin of only a few

languages in North India, such as Hindi, Marathi, Kashmiri, Oriya and so on. It is neither the origin of the 26 Dravidian languages spoken in the South of India nor of all the world's languages. The origin of Sanskrit is a 6,000-year-old language." He believes that the four ancient languages — Sanskrit, Latin, Persian and Greek — have a single origin, whose source is a language that is still undiscovered. Despite popular beliefs, India does not give the status of National Language to any of the languages due to the diversity of the country. Hindi is spoken by only 44% of the Indian population. The Indian Constitution, thus, doesn't give rights to any language as the National language of India. Instead, Hindi and English are acknowledged as the official languages to be used for official purposes throughout the country.



"To be or not to be, that is the question".

-- William Shakespeare, "Hamlet"

"Good decision come from experience. Experience comes from making bad decisions."

-- Mark Twain

"There is only one way to avoid criticism : do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing."

-- Aristotle

"The pain of parting is nothing to the joy of meeting again."

-- Charles Dickens, 'Nicholas Nickleby'.

# Feminism in India

**Priya Dey**  
**B.A. 3rd Sem.**

Feminism in India is a set of movements aiming at defining, establishing, and defending equal political and economic rights for women in India. Like their feminist counterparts all over the world, feminists in India seek gender equality; the right to work for equal wages, the right of equal access to health and education, and equal political rights.

The history of feminism in India can be divided into three phases: the first phase, beginning in the mid-19th Century, initiated when reformists began to speak in favour of women rights by making reforms in education, customs involving women; the second phase, from 1915 to Indian independence, when Gandhi Incorporated Women's Movements into the Quit India Movement and independent Women's Organisations began to emerge; and finally, the third phase, post-independence, which has focussed on fair treatment of women at home after marriage, in the work force, and right to political purity.

Despite the progress made by Indian feminist movements, women living in Modern India Still face many issues of discrimination. India's patriarchal culture has made the process of gaining land-ownership rights and access to education challenging. In the past two decades there has also emerged a trend of sex-selective abortion. To Indian feminists, these are seen as injustices worth struggling against.

Indian feminists face certain obstacles in Indian Society that are not present or prevalent in Western Society. While Indian feminists have the same ultimate goal as their western counterparts, their version of feminism can differ in many ways in order to tackle the kind of issues and circumstances they face in the modern-day

headlines of elephants or deers hunted down by poachers for the ivory and antlers respectively I am consumed by rage of not being able to raise voice and take revenge on those monsters. But deep down I am a monster too. I rear and breed the voiceless ones for filling my stomach. People driving recklessly on the streets, hitting innocent ones, beating the stray animals imposing cruelty should be punished by the authority. But who cares, right ? They are just animals. I see millions of posts showing injustice on animals but out of millions there are some posts where I see certain people working hard for securing animal rights. Hats off to them. Such heroes amidst the monsters are what this 21st century really need. Through this article I am expressing my firm gratitude to Hyderabad based Pradeep Nair who is actively related in rescuing injured animals, who started "Animal Warriors India" to exten care to voiceless beings by training more and more youngsters to become true animal activists. Lastly, all I want to say is that if you see any animals who is in needs of help, help them. They can't express their emotions but we can.



"It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."

-- Jane Austen, "Pride and Prejudice."

"We are asleep until we fall in love"

-- Leo Tolstoy

"The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page"

-- Augustine

## The Cotton of my life!

**Rimpi Sonowal**  
**Session : 2011-2014**

Since childhood my wide opened eyes had been carrying the dream of getting admitted in Cotton College. Fortunately I got selected there and took admission in B.A. first Semester in the department of English. But it remained as dream only because my parents did not allow me to go to Guwahati as I was not selected for hostel accommodation in the first list of hostel accommodation in 2011. Then I took admission here in this department. Though my parents attempted their best to avail me all the facilities here but I was already under depression which took one whole year of my life i.e., 2011-2012 to overcome from the depression of not getting the chance to pursue education from Cotton College. Even as result of it I got back in my major subject (English) in second semester also which again happened for the first time in my academic career. Gradually the teachings, caring of all the teachers of the department of English made me overcome from my inner storm in mind. Their constant support all the time made me more responsible towards them to do some good result. Gradually I took participate in the college events and once I got selected to represent the college in Rangoli event of Youth Festival which then took place at Tinsukia College. I could make some good friends in this college also who are still so supportive and caring. The farewell day of our batch will always be a memorable day in my life. When I saw all the efforts to make us special was done by our respective teachers then I felt blessed at the decision of my parents who forced me to study here because it is rare to see teachers organising any event for their students and preparing dishes by their own hand in the morning.

Keeping aside their busy schedule. Not only this, even after leaving the department whenever I am stuck at any crucial point I feel free to seek advice from any of the teachers in the department all of whom are like Jesus for me whose hands are always wide-opened to bless us, support us for sure. I will always be indebted towards this department who helped me gain not only academic knowledge but also moral lesson for life which I always attempt to carry with me all the time. Lastly, thank you so much for giving me an opportunity to pen down my feelings for the department. Wish a healthy happy life for my respected teachers and for the department as well. I have found my dream Cotton College here in this college and still feel blessed for this.



"If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

-- P.B. Shelley, 'Ode to the West Wind'.

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter"

-- John Keats, 'Ode on a Grecian Urn'.

"I kept always two books in my pocket, one to read, one to write in."

-- Robert Louis Stevenson

"A good writer possesses not only his own spirit but also the spirit of his friends."

-- Friedrich Nietzsche

- (x) Effective communication skills in English helps by opening up a broad spectrum of career opportunities.

Rigorous practice and drilling helped them overcome their fallibilities to a great extent.

DRILLS/PRACTICES :

- (I) Translating simple, difficult, very difficult words gradually from mother tongue and regional languages to English
- (II) Translating small phrases
- (III) Translating sentences, smaller, bigger, complex ones gradually
- (IV) Making students learn English words and phrases used daily, courtesy words, words of etiquettes, wishes, greetings etc.
- (V) Making students get involved in one to one discussions on simple topics
- (VI) Pairs of students were made to form groups for further group discussions on everyday issues or global issues
- (VII) Students were called up to the dias individually and made to speak on extempore topics
- (VIII) Made to read aloud English texts
- (IX) Assessments and practices were given based on listening skills
- (X) Made to speak to oneself before the mirror for a couple of minutes.

And so on and so forth....

They hesitated, they refused to open up, dumb and inarticulate for minutes together as I waited enduringly, finally, they wined up surrendering to their failures despite my persistent motivation and gearing up. Though all my efforts seemed futile I, was determined to make them speak up or at least open their mouths irrespective of what they spoke or how correct they were, for which all they needed were a bulk of motivation and encouragement. Their greatest weakness I analyzed was lack of confidence so, keeping my failure and disheartenment at bay, I persistently kept elevating and boosting their morale.

Here, I prefer to cite some of my analytical reasoning rather analytical answers to the question as to why, even after, so many years of English

patriarchal society of India. Indian Women negotiate survival through an array of oppressive patriarchal family structures, age, ordinal status, relationship to men through family of origin, Marriage and Procreation, and patriarchal attributes. Examples of patriarchal attribute includes dowry, kinship, caste, community, market and the state. It should, however, be noted that several communities in India, such as the Nairs of Kerala, Shettys of Mangalore, certain Marathi clans, and Bengali families, exhibit matriarchal tendencies. In these communities, the head of the family is the oldest woman, rather than the oldest man.

The heterogeneity of the Indian experience reveals that there are multiple patriarchies, contributing to the existence of multiple feminism. Hence, feminism in India is not a singular theoretical orientation; it has changed over time in relation to historical and cultural realities, levels of consciousness, perceptions and actions of individual women's oppression and exploitation in society, at work and within the family, and conscious action by women and men to change this situation.

Though men and women are physically not same, it doesn't make a woman less capable than a man. Treating both the genders equally would make a difference in the society, which is an essential step towards development, and it costs only a mentality to change.



"The first draft of everything is shit."

-- Ernest Hemingway

"Love the life you live. Live the life you love"

-- Bob Marley

"Time and Tide wait for no man"

-- Geoffrey Chaucer

## Indelible memories of my early experiences of Spoken English and PD Sessions

**Rashmi Sarkar**  
Session : 1998-2001

“When can we speak fluently? We so wish to...”

“How do we grasp the language?”

We feel shy because we fumble for words and stammer...”

“In spite of clearly framed thoughts in our minds we fail to get the right words while speaking...”

Volley of innocent queries thrown by my first gang of girls on a welcome note when I entered the college premises as a resource person for a month long course on spoken English and PD. Two of Guwahati’s respected academicians had offered me this opportunity to communicate and help sort out the problems these bunch of students were facing in the aforesaid domain although being major students of English. Generally speaking, this is a problem with many schools and colleges where pupils have grown up speaking and communicating only in their mother tongue or other local dialects and English has remained confined to only as a subject of the curriculum to be studied and scored from exam point of view.

So, naturally I had to communicate with them in the languages they were comfortable, for the first couple of days even though it was a communicative English class, in order to earn their faith and confidence in me. It was very much necessary to make them believe that I was there to literally and truly help them, by least displaying or trying to showcase my own oratorical skills. I must admit and acknowledge the fact that they were a bunch of sweet, loving girls whom one can shower his/her love in entirety for being so sincere, obedient and hardworking.

It is easy to teach a few words, a few grammatical rules, few texts of literature in a limited tenure of twenty-five (25) to twenty-six (26) classes (in a month), but teaching someone to speak up spontaneously in a

foreign language which he/she has not been able to grasp properly, is more or less a very challenging job, a herculean task to accomplish.

I sorted out my three- hour session per day into lecture sessions, counselling sessions and practice sessions of one-hour duration each.

### LECTURE TOPICS :

- (I) Importance of learning to speak English in the present day world
- (II) Ability to speak English enhances one’s personality
- (III) Helps students pursue further studies abroad
- (IV) Helps in career opportunities abroad
- (V) Helps in travelling around the world
- (VI) English serves as a “language mediator” enabling people speaking different languages to understand and communicate with each other
- (VII) Helps in getting good jobs

And so on...

Here, I would like to add that it was vehemently necessary to drive home the point that speaking English fluently and correctly is of utmost importance in present days.

### IMPORTANCE OF SPOKEN ENGLISH FOR LEARNERS/STUDENTS :

- (i) A class language that enhances one’s class
- (ii) Only medium of communication in many foreign countries
- (iii) Main language for studying any subject all over the world and also for appearing in any competitive exam anywhere in the world.
- (iv) Possibility for further studies and specialization in the best universities of the world.
- (v) Improves quality of life by providing good job opportunities
- (vi) Most of the books are written in English
- (vii) Helps in speaking effectively and creating good impression with good communication skills.
- (viii) Good communication skills lead to confidence which in turn enhances personality development
- (ix) Effective English language skills helps in meeting career goals and targets early

## “Pandemic is just not a word to use carelessly”

**Sagarika Sen**  
**B.A. 3rd Sem.**

Isn't this term “pandemic” more common to us now-a-days? Whenever we use the term, it automatically creates a terror in our mind. This pandemic i.e., the “COVID-19” is just not only a curse to our health but also a curse to our usual living. The WUHAN city of the CHINA, indeed the parent of COVID-19 has given the curse to us and also to other countries. Almost a year passed in this terror that we may test positive today or the next very day and took our life as granted. Each and every people were praying to have a safe and normal living like before. Has anyone ever imagined this situation, a situation/phase full of fear like fear to shakehands, fear to hug our loved ones?

No, ofcourse not! But now the scenerio is totally different of what we imagined, now people are scared of each other.

Likewise, none of us have ever thought of welcoming our guests with sanitizers in hand? If by any chance anyone sneezes infront of us we just can't resist our mind to not have a thought of losing our life in seconds.

Although this pandemic made us realise our worth. And ofcourse the social media played a vital role in this Pandemic, be it making aware of people about the losses or be it entertraining people undoubtedly.

Yes, we almost lost a huge number of people throughout our world, which was too tough to accept and besides that we found a way more better and worthfull live now.

This Pandemic made us much more likely to some of the random words like QUARANTINE, SANITIZERS, WORK FROM HOME etc. etc.

Moreover, Pandemic is not just a word to talk about and only make others aware of it, we must not forget to take care of ourselves and our close ones. □□

learning and education, the students are not able to speak English language fluently?

### PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED:

- (i) Even after learning and practicing grammar, they fail to utilize grammatical rules correctly while speaking. They fail to apply the basic rules of tenses and parts of speech while constructing sentences.
- (ii) They are nervously gripped by lack of confidence, fear and shyness while trying to speak before people.
- (iii) Too much of worrying about making mistakes leads to lack of confidence, fear and shyness.
- (iv) Their unwilling attitude is also responsible as they choose to remain in their comfort zone.
- (v) Last but not the least, our education system lays more emphasis on bookish learning rather than oral communication or practical application.

Overcoming these problems were a great challenge and we (me along with my girls) did take the challenge. There seemed to be no end to their efforts and endeavours, which really paid off at the end. They tried to follow and do to whatever extent possible, all that was suggested, like reading English newspapers and books, listening to English news, documentaries, talking to friends in English during leisure hours. This helped them shake off their shyness, overcome nervousness and fear to some extent. In a couple of weeks, they started speaking with ease and I witnessed the change in my three-hour session everyday along with the feedbacks that poured in from the other departments and their faculty members. I was immensely glad and so were my students themselves though not fully satisfied as the course was almost nearing its closure just when the class had started showing some positive results.

Just two days to go and I was informed about a brief and formal closing ceremony of the month long session. This information struck me with an idea, and accordingly, as a typical conventional Guru, I demanded a 'gurudakshina'(fees) from my loving and doting bunch of girls. I hadn't the least notion that this difficult task I assigned them would jerk them up with a sudden impulsive excitement and profound

interest and energy. They outrightly and wholeheartedly got involved in the task of preparing a drama in English – created a plot, chose characters, framed dialogues, winding it up with a befittingly convincing message to the society- it was all about women education, a drama in English from the beginning till the end, created, enacted and hosted by my girls during the closing ceremony. The seminar room reverberated with applause, claps and cheering, with the organizers, faculty members and heads of various departments and the institution itself greeting and congratulating their loving students and at the same time expressing their immense satisfaction at the achievement of the girls. On one side they were highly impressed and on the other, I was overwhelmed and speechlessly motivated and inspired in return, both at the tireless efforts made by my pupils and equally by the love and warmth showered by the members of the institution. It was equally my achievement too, where the love, warmth and success of my pupils mattered the most, more than the bucks I was rewarded with at the end. While bidding me farewell with due felicitation and thanksgiving, the head of the institution announced that the play would be enacted and replayed during their annual program. My happiness knew no bounds as I was also happy to discover the fact that the children of that district ( Mirza, Kamrup Rural) have a particular penchant for dramas as they grow up watching “Rash”( Plays dedicated to the divine love of Lord Krishna and Radha). This was a blessing that unknowingly helped me and my students achieve what seemed an unattainable accomplishment.

“ALL WELL THAT ENDS WELL!”

The month long session winded up replacing frowns and skepticism with beautiful smiles of ecstasy and success, and most importantly, with the promise of meeting again the next year.



“Reader look, not on his picture but his book”

-- Ben Jonson

“The purpose of literature is to turn blood into ink.”

-- T.S. Eliot

## Good Things often Come in Small Packages

Priyanka Debnath

B.A. 3rd Sem.

Everything that you like, does it always have to be big ? Sometime the little things in life, give us the utmost pleasure that even the good things in life can't give us. Sometimes, we find happiness in reading a book, laughing with our friends, watering the sun set, listening to a melodious song or just sitting alone, enjoying nature,

People believe that BIGGER IS ALWAYS BETTER, and immediately take for granted the smaller wonders in life but as one says 'Count your blessings, name them one by one, see what God has done and it will surprise you what the Lord has done'. Therefore we should just take sometime to look around us, our family, our friends, nature and everything with a feeling of joy and happiness inside us.

While we believe bigger things to be better, in doing so, we miss out the precious joys that life offers. We experience inner joy, when we gaze at the ripples on the surface of water, enjoying the raindrops fall on our face while we are getting drenched in the rain or when we're basking in sunshine.

Size doesnot determine the amount of happiness. Small abstract things often bring us immense pleasure. For example, when a baby smile, we cannot stop ourselves from smiling either. This is probably why they're called “bundles of joy”. It is from these small little angels that we need to learn the most important secret of happiness is to be happy and content with the smallest of things, not to be too expectant in life. Its expectancies can often lead to disappointment. So, its rather better to be happy with the things we have, whether big or small, than to be expectant and then get disappointed because we can't/didn't have it.

We must learn to live life in the present, we must neither ruminate over the past nor worry about the future, but take a day as it comes our way and enjoy the small wonders of life. This is how we can be happy and also be able to spread happiness. □□

## **FICTION**

**Tejashree Baruah**  
**B.A. 6th Sem.**

lamented that the category of literary fiction' has sprung up recently to torment people like me who just set out to write books, and if anybody wanted to read them, terrific, the more the merrier.... I'm a genre writer of a sort. I write literary fiction, which is like spy fiction or chick lit . Likewise, on The Charlie Rose Show, he argued that this term, when applied to his work, greatly limited him and his expectations of what might come of his writing, so he does not really like it. He suggested that all his works are literary, simply because they are written in words". "Literary fiction often involves social commentary, political criticism, or reflection on the human condition. In general it focuses on "introspective, in-depth character studies" of "interesting, complex and developed" characters. This contrasts with genre fiction where plot is the central concern. Usually in literary fiction the focus is on the "inner story of the characters who drive the plot, with detailed motivations to elicit "emotional involvement" in the reader. The style of literary fiction is often described as "elegantly written, lyrical, and ... layered". The tone of literary fiction can be darker than genre fiction, while the pacing of literary fiction may be slower than popular fiction. As Terrence Rafferty notes, "literary fiction, by its nature, allows itself to dawdle, to linger on stray beauties even at the risk of losing its way".

Realistic fiction "typically involves a story whose basic setting (time and location in the world) is real and whose events could feasibly happen in a real-world setting; non-realistic fiction involves a story where the opposite is the case, often being set in an entirely imaginary universe, an alternative history of the world other than that currently understood as true, or some other non-existent location or time-period, sometimes even presenting impossible technology or defiance of the currently understood laws of nature. However, all types of fiction arguably invite their audience to explore real ideas, issues, or possibilities in an otherwise imaginary setting or using what is

Fiction generally is a narrative form, in any medium, consisting of people, events, "or places that are imaginary - in other words, not based strictly on history or fact. In its most narrow usage, fiction refers to written narratives in prose and often specifically novels, though also novellas and short stories. More broadly, fiction has come to encompass imaginary narratives expressed in any form, including not just writings but also live theatrical performances, films, television programs, radio dramas, comics, role-playing games, and video games.

A work of fiction implies the inventive construction of an imaginary world and, most commonly, its fictionality is publicly acknowledged, so its audience typically expects it to deviate in some ways from the real world rather than presenting only characters who are actual people or portrayals that are factually true. Fiction is generally understood as not fully adhering to the real world, which consequently leaves its themes and its context, such as if and how it relates to the real world or real issues, open to various interpretations. Characters and events within some fictional works may even exist in their own context entirely separate from the known physical universe: an independent fictional universe. In contrast to fiction is its traditional opposite: non-fiction, in which the creator assumes responsibility for presenting only the historical and factual truth. Despite the usual distinction between fiction and non fiction, some modern works blur

the boundary, particularly ones that fall under certain experimental storytelling genres--including some postmodern fiction, auto-fiction, or creative nonfiction like non-fiction novels and docudramas—as well as “deliberate” frauds, which are falsely marketed as nonfiction. Traditionally, fiction includes novels, short stories, fables, legends, myths, fairy tales, epic and narrative poetry, plays (including operas, musicals, dramas, puppet plays, and various kinds of theatrical dances). However, fiction may also encompass comic books, and many animated cartoons, stop motions, anime, manga, films, video games, radio programs, television programs (comedies and dramas), etc.

The Internet has had a major impact on the creation and distribution of fiction, calling into question the feasibility of copyright as a means to ensure royalties are paid to copyright holders. Also, digital libraries such as Project Gutenberg make public domain texts more readily available. The combination of inexpensive home computers, the Internet, and the creativity of its users has also led to new forms of fiction, such as interactive computer games or computer-generated comics. Countless forums for fan fiction can be found online, where loyal followers of specific fictional realms create and distribute derivative stories. The Internet is also used for the development of blog fiction, where a story is delivered through a blog either as flash fiction or serial blog, and collaborative fiction, where a story is written sequentially by different authors.

Fiction is commonly broken down to a variety of genres: subsets of fiction, each differentiated by a particular unifying tone or style set of narrative techniques, archetypes, or other tropes: media content, or other popularly defined criterion. Science fiction, for example, predicts or supposes technologies that are not realities at the time of the work's creation; Jules Verne's novel *From the Earth to the Moon* was published in 1865 while in 1969 astronauts Neil

Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first persons to land on the Moon.

Historical fiction places imaginary characters into real historical events. In the 1814 historical novel *Waverley*, Sir Walter Scott's fictional character Edward Waverley meets a figure from history, Bonnie Prince Charlie, and takes part in the Battle of Prestonpans. Some works of fiction are slightly or greatly re-imagined based on some originally true story, or a reconstructed biography. Often, even when the fictional story is based on fact, there may be additions and subtractions from the true story to make it more interesting. An example is Tim O'Brien's 'The Things They Carried', a 1990 series of short stories about the Vietnam War.

Fictional works that explicitly involve supernatural, magical, or scientifically impossible elements are often classified under the genre of fantasy, including Lewis Carroll's 1865 novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, and JRR Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. Creators of fantasy sometimes introduce imaginary creatures and beings such as dragons and fairies.

Literary fiction is a term used in the book trade to distinguish novels that are regarded as having literary merit, from most commercial or genre fiction. Neal Stephenson has suggested that while any definition will be simplistic there is today a general cultural difference between literary and genre fiction. On the one hand literary authors nowadays are frequently supported by patronage, with employment at a university or a similar institution, and with the continuation of such positions determined not by book sales but by critical acclaim by other established literary authors and critics. On the other hand, he suggests, genre fiction writers tend to support themselves by book sales. However, in an interview, John Updike

## Lockdown - A time of Relaxation Or Introspection

**Sonali Saha**  
**B.A. 5th Sem.**

Lockdown means restrictedness to certain places or all over the country. It is imposed in bad hours, when people have danger over them from enemies or any disease. Actually, it is imposed for the welfare of people to save them, but many people think it as a burden on them.

A lockdown can also be used to protect people inside a facility from a threat or other external event. A full lockdown means that people must stay where they are and may not enter or exit a building or rooms within it.

Recently, in 2020, lockdown starts from 22nd March, due to the tragic effect of Coronavirus and people have suffered a lot of problem due to this.

Lockdown is a time of relaxation, because the workers get rid from their day and night labour, they stay at home and spend time and enjoy with their family. But the human society needs money for their livelihood too. But in lockdown, they don't do their work and hence don't earn for their livelihood, for which people have to suffer a lot. So, it is a difficult time too.

Lockdown is also a time of introspection, as people get time for themselves. They have full time to spend with themselves. They get time to think about themselves. They get time to do things which they love to do in this way they enjoy their own company.

Hence, we can say that lockdown is a time of relaxation and introspection. □□

understood about reality to mentally construct something similar to reality, though still distinct from it.

In terms of the traditional separation between fiction and non-fiction, the lines are now commonly understood as blurred. Showing more overlap than mutual exclusion. Even fiction usually has elements of or grounding in, truth. The distinction between the two may be best defined from the perspective of the audience, according to whom a work is regarded as non-fiction if its people, places, and events are all historically or factually real, while a work is regarded as fiction if it deviates from reality in any of those areas. The distinction between fiction and non-fiction is further obscured by an understanding, on the one hand, that the truth can be presented through imaginary channels and constructions, while, on the other hand, imagination can just as well bring about significant conclusions about truth and reality. Literary critic James Wood, argues that "fiction is both artifice and verisimilitude", meaning that it requires both creative inventions as well as some acceptable degree of believability, a notion often encapsulated in poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge's term: willing suspension of disbelief. Also, infinite fictional possibilities themselves signal the impossibility of fully knowing reality, provocatively demonstrating that there is no criterion to measure constructs of reality.



"The only disadvantage of an honest heart is credulity

-- Philip Sidney

"Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all"

-- Alfred Tennyson

"Happiness is but a mere episode in the general drama of pain"

-- Thomas Hardy

## 5 Important Life Lessons, as taught by William Shakespeare

Shahnaz Farhin  
B.A. 6th Sem.

"We can say of Shakespeare, that never has a man turned so little knowledge to such great account," said T.S. Eliot.

It's been more than 400 years since William Shakespeare passed away. But the words of the famous actor and playwright, which have been translated into more than 100 languages, will live on forever. The Bard's 16th century work on life, love, happiness and hate still has meaning today.

Below, five prominent Shakespeare quotes that still hold significant meaning and valuable insight.

1. "Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice." - Hamlet.

Translation - Listen to everybody, but only talk to a few. All too often, people listen to reply instead of listening with the intent to understand. Try actually hearing what somebody has to say - listening is one of the sincerest forms of respect.

2. "There is no darkness but ignorance." - Twelfth Night.

Translation - Ignorance is not bliss. Sure, ignorance has its place in life. But so does curiosity! Educate yourself. Knowledge equals power, right ?

3. "Let grief convert to anger. Blunt not the heart, enrage it."

- Macbeth.

Translation - Turn your sadness into readiness. In this particular scene, Macduff's family has just been murdered, and Malcolm is pushing him to seek revenge. Now, we're not saying to go off and kill everyone. But, when something bad happens, don't sit around moping ! Let the sadness fuel your fire to do something bigger than yourself.

4. "For there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."

- Hamlet

Translation - Nothing is good or bad in itself. It's all what a person thinks about it. Perspective matters, people ! Ask yourself, "Is my glass half empty or half full ?"

5. "Nothing will come of nothing." - King Lear

Translation - If you want to be successful, do something about it ! Nothing will ever happen in your life if you sit around waiting for it to happen. Take action, and live a fulfilling life.



"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread"

-- Alexander Pope

"Think in the morning. Act in the noon. Eat in the evening. Sleep in the night."

-- William Blake

"Nature never did betray the heart that loved her."

-- William Wordsworth

## 10 Shortest Creepiest Horror Stories

- Poonam Rajkumari  
B.A. 5th Sem.

1. I was watching a horror movie with my friend when she grabbed my wrist after a jump scare. I was about to tell her "It's okay" when she asked if I was hungry, her voice coming from the kitchen.
2. The face stared at me through my bedroom window. I froze: the matted hair and shallow skin doesn't belong to my wife or either of my daughters. It would have been terrifying enough. But one fact made it even worse. I was standing outside.
3. I place a doll in front of the bathroom to scare my girlfriend. We had a good laugh about it afterwards, at least until we realize the doll was laughing too.
4. As the first shovelful of dirt landed on my chest, I finally managed to whisper "I'm not dead!" At first I thought they hadn't heard me, but then one of them smiled and said "We know."
5. When I was little I'd always used to talk to an old woman next door. When I was older I realized that the same house was burned down when I was only a baby, killing an old woman.
6. I slowly woke up and yawned, then got out of bed. I opened the door and turn to the living room, then saw my wife playing with my son. I turn to the bathroom door I realize both my wife and son were dead 1 year ago.

## Youth and Sexual Assault

- Archika D. Borah  
B.A. 6th Sem.

There is no documentation for these narratives. Call them what you wish, this cannot be fast checked. Sexual assault can be verbal, visual or anything inappropriate. Molestation and sexual assault have recently been widely acknowledged to be common yet still largely under-reported.

Rates of sexual violence against youth aged 12-18 are very high and the survivor normally knows the person who committed the offense. Nationally, about 8% or 10 million girls and 0.7% or 791,000 boys under the age of 18 have experienced sexual abuse. Youth who experience this horrible encounters are more likely to be victimized by a peer or someone they know. Being immaturated, they have no idea what they are going through. But that hell-like incident leaves behind psychological trauma. They fall vulnerable, unloved, worthless, powerless and has trouble trusting people and may also lead to serious mental health issues.

Trafficking victimization share risks and consequences associated with sexual assaults on teenagers or youg kids. Perpetrators often target victims who are already vulnerable. Dysfunctional family or typically stereotypical family are often found to be the one selling their children off for mere money. Although girl victims are relatively more than boys in this case.

Sexual assault is notoriously difficult to measure as there is no single source of data that provides a complete picture of the crime. This crime is under-reported and is under-recognised. We have to be more vocal about this issue to relinquish this crime from our society.

## Importance of Love in English Literature

- Prerona Bhowmick  
B.A. 3rd Sem.

Love is one of the most universal themes in literature, as in life. Love has an immense impact and importance in literature. This strong emotion defines characters relationship with family, significant others and even God. Love in literature also helps a reader become not only closer to the characters of a novel but also more involved and interested in the plot. A reader can relate to situations pertaining to love because it is something that everyone knows and experiences on many different levels. Love can be as much forceful that it can inspire people to sacrifice themselves for others, or a toxic force that drives people to madness or violence. Different flavor of love as a literary theme include --

- ◆ Forbidden love : Yearning and disapproval collide in forbidden love stories, which often find star-crossed lovers hurtling towards a tragic fate. Examples include : Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare and Atonement by Ian Mc Ewan.
- ◆ Unrequited love : The pain of loving someone who doesn't return your affection is a frequent subject in literature. Examples include : The Phantom of the opera by Gaston by Ernest Hemingway.
- ◆ Friendship : The power of friendship to carry people through hard times and change them whether for better or worse is an especially common theme in young adult literature. Example : The body by Stephen King (adapted into a film, stand by Mc) and the lord of the rings by J.R.R. Tolkien.



## Covid-19 Lockdown & Nature

- Raja Bhattacharjee  
B.A. 6th Sem.

The Covid-19 pandemic has spread around the world at lighting speed, killing hundreds of thousands of people, infecting millions and forced us to stay indoors. But the Covid-19 Lockdown has been a boon for the nature as a dramatic decrease in industrial activities, road traffics and tourism is seen around the world. Every possible abuse has been done to the nature by human beings. In India a drastic change has been noticed in the environment and nature during the lockdown. Rivers like Ganga and Yamuna started to purify their water on its own. The report says that the water of Ganga is sparkling clear, the surface of river Ganga is seen and the water is clear then it was in 1986. The government launched schemes and invested a huge amount of money to clean the river but satisfactory results were not received. This Covid-19 lockdown helped the rivers to revive them. After many years clear skies and clearer skylines has been seen due to the limited movements of vehicles on the roads and shut down in the industrial sectors. The air pollution level is decreased and the Air Quality Index (AQI) also improved. For the first time in decades the peak of the Himalayan mountain ranges are visible from the northern Indian states of Punjab as the lockdown erases air pollution. Carbon emissions by developed and underdeveloped countries is an important cause of Global warming, seventeen percent decline in the global carbon emission is recorded during the Covid-19 lockdown. In Mumbai Pink Flamingos returned in huge numbers to Mumbai beach as there is very less interference of human beings in the beach. Nature activated its rejuvenation mode during this Covid-19 lockdown. □□

## TO EVERY WOMAN AND MAN WHO WANTS TO BRING CHANGE

**‘Each time a woman stands up for herself, she  
stands up for all women.’**

- Maya Angelou

**Anindita Hazarika**

Session : 2013-16

There are tremendous challenges for a woman to stand up, to be bold for a change and to bring the best version of one’s true self. It is very rare to see a woman trying to achieve something for herself without her having to justify the need for achievement. This article isn’t a call for seeking attention or even a cry for sympathy or pity, rather an alarm, for everyone to start seeing us, the world and things through a gendered lenses.

For a woman, it is not easy to fight gender role expectations, since women are considered as the ‘second class’ human beings, in almost all walks of life. Our society is deeply rooted in patriarchal dogmas, if a woman speaks out, they are seen as ‘too bold’, which leads to a negative connotation in our society. “she’s such a good kid, never talks back or say anything” is positive reinforcement for silence. These highly influential children grow into adults who often have a hard time expressing how they feel because to them: expressing feelings = bad and saying nothing = good. Gender roles in society means how we are expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct ourselves based upon our assigned sex. For instance, girls and women are generally expected to dress in typically feminine way and be polite, accommodating, and nurturing. Men are generally expected to be strong, aggressive, and bold. Some people are quick

7. One day as I was surfing through my old photos in my phone, I saw a bunch of photos of me sleeping. The scariest part of the photos was that I live alone.
8. 2 weeks after moving into our 1903 house, we watched our cats’ one downstairs, sit and act like they were being stroked. We were the only ones home.
9. My parents went for a vacation; I and my dog were only ones at home. I always check all the doors and windows before going to sleep. My dog sleeps under my bed, when I reach out my hand he always licks it. One night I woke up to a sound coming from downstairs, I checked but nothing was wrong. Came back to my room as I reached down my hand for my dog to lick it, he licked it and I went to sleep. Suddenly I woke up again to the sound of water dropping from the bathroom, I went to check and found my dog brutally killed with blood all over the bathtub. A message was written in the mirror. “Humans can lick too!”
10. Every night my girlfriend says it’s too cold and that she couldn’t sleep, I wanted to comfort her but I couldn’t. This went for a couple of weeks until I went to the graveyard where she was buried with a blanket and some hot cocoa. ☐☐

“If thou must love me, let it be for naught except for love’s sake only.”

-- Elizabeth Barrett Browning

“From the beginning men used God to justify the unjustifiable.”

-- Salman Rushdie

## WE LIVE IN DEEDS, NOT IN YEARS.....

**Arpita Debnath**  
**B.A. 5th Sem.**

Long life is determined by all. One may even live for hundred years or more, but if one does not do any noble deed, then such a life has no worth. He is soon forgotten because he lived in years, not in deeds.

The mission of life is not simply to eat, drink and be merry. One should have noble aim. A selfish person may live long, but nobody has any regard for him or remembers him after his death. A man lives a true life if he fulfills a noble mission.

Life does not mean merely existing. A person may die young, but if he does something that contributes to mankind, he is remembered forever. Famous people like Keats and Shelley died young, but they are remembered for their contribution to the world of poetry. Great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Abraham Lincoln and many others are remembered by people even after so many years of death. People still take inspiration from their life styles and preaching. It is only the great deeds of these leaders which has inspired many generations.

One does not have to live long to make an impression. A lily flower lives just for a day, but it is remembered for its fragrance and sweetness. Life should be counted by deeds, not by years. No man is immortal. Respect is earned by actions and not acquired by years. Life becomes exciting when it does something beneficial to mankind. The worth of a thing depends upon quality and not quantity. Similarly a successful life is measured by noble deeds and not by years. There are many who served their fellow beings and become immortal. Mother Teresa devoted her life for the poor and needy. Though she is no more, still she is immortal in our hearts. Hence the saying, "We live in deeds, not in years," proves to be true.



## Covid-19 and it's impact on our lives!

**Steffi Gomes**  
Session : 2016-19

The year 2020 was indeed, the darkest year of all times. It shook the entire globe, taking the countries in the grips of virus. This virus came as a shock, tearing every human apart with fear and anxiety. It's still an ongoing pandemic and has broadly affected almost every sphere of life. Though the hit of this pandemic brought great sorrows, it also added some positivity in the world. The environment, which was actually degrading, healed slowly during the lockdown period. We saw a different beauty that the nature unfold. We saw a clearer sky, free from smoke and dust. We saw the birds that had been lost in the world full of pollution. They sang loudly, they flew high, filling the nature with its marvellous beauty. We never had the privilege to have a clean, pure view of the rivers and the seas before. The marine life was, in literal sense, "brought to life" in this entire period of lockdown. There was greenery, there was healing everywhere. The pandemic was sought as a blessing in disguise for the environment as well as for the people. People who seemed to have lost their originality in the midst of technology, were brought closer with their families. We connected with our family, we shared our joys and sorrows like never before. Unity, harmony and gaiety loomed in the families, and it was a ecstatic feeling for each and everyone of us. The connection that was lost, found its way because of the pandemic. Though the hit brought pain, it also blessed us with many more opportunities. The older generation, who weren't that accustomed to the use of mobile phones and laptop, showed their keen urge to learn how to use the devices. This learning helped them connect with the younger generation and try out new things. Not just that, the education system got a little better, for the students felt less pressurized by the hectic syllabus. It was made easy and the teachers imparted learning, fully, while they were at home. The newness which loomed all over, brought 'life' in the lives of the people. The impact was such that we saw a change, not only in the society, but also in the environment. Covid-19 pandemic added positivity and a hope that the world can be a better place to live in. □□

## 'THE NEW DAWN'

**Arpita C. Brahmachari**  
**Session : 1998-2000**

As Ramen was stepping out his feet for the 'ghat', his seven years old daughter Riniki started shouting, "Papa, today bring my dress, ha papa. I will wear it in puja no!"

"Ok beti, don't worry", was his reply but he breathed a deep sigh after coming of the gate.

Things were not like this earlier. Last year too he bought five dresses for the apple of his eye even before a fortnight of the puja and two sarees for his beloved wife.

But this puja is the cruelest one for him and his family.

Ramen was the owner of a launch which used to run between Dholla and Sadiya. As the launch was very heavy and spacious so it could carry a huge number of passengers and vehicles in it and because of his skilled hand, Ramen could drive very fast and in a perfect way.

But when Mr. Narendra Modi came to inaugurate the world famous Bhupen Hazarika Setu that day, then everyone of Seujpur Gaon went and became a part of Assam's pride. But Ramen was the only exception as this bridge has snatched away his means of livelihood as everyone goes by the bus through the bridge.

He went on thinking of what to do, how to run the family. At first he opened a road side hotel but it did not work because many others choose the same profession. Then the next few months he ran with the saved money. But now the things are out of his reach and he does not know what to do; how to come out of this danger.

to assume that teachers and nurses are women, and that pilots, doctors, and engineers are men. Extreme gender stereotypes are harmful because they don't allow people to fully express themselves and their emotions. It is harmful for masculine folks to feel that they're not allowed to cry or express sensitive emotions. In the same way, it is dangerous for feminine folks to feel that they're not allowed to be independent, smart or assertive. Breaking down gender stereotypes allows everyone to be their best selves. However, gradually, changes are taking place. Age old notions of binary constructions of male and female and caste based prejudices are changing. Nonetheless, challenges are everywhere. But then there are possibilities also. It requires being able to know, expect and demand the effort needed to achieve the goals to bring about meaningful changes, for one's self and others around you. Having the guts to say NO to prejudices, inequality, and violence against women and girls, to be bold enough to go against the prevailing wisdom, which often serves the status quo in our society, will help us to stand against those oppression or stand alone, if required. Once we realise these simple rules and practice them, there might be changes happening around us. Remember, there wouldn't have been any change in the way the world is if people didn't start a revolt. The world will always try to suppress you and your voices will feel muffled at times. Your ideas, at that moment, would feel worthless, but you just have to remember that you are strong and your ideas are revolutionary. Scream, yell, and find ways to make them listen because you are not worthless. You deserve the world, and the world needs your ideas. You are the change; stand for yourself, and the rest of us. To all the women who wants to bring a change, step up, talk about your ideas; the world is a better place with you in it. If you seriously want to change, you have to go through uncomfortable situations. Stop trying to avoid the process. It's the only way to grow.

## The Struggles of Our Life - Short Story

**Tania Phukan**  
**B.A. 3rd Sem.**

Once upon a time a daughter complained to her father that her life was miserable and that she didn't know how she was going to make it.

She was tired of fighting and struggling all the time. It seemed just as one problem was solved, another one soon followed.

Her father, a chef, took her to the kitchen. He filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire.

Once the three pots began to boil, he placed potatoes in one pot, eggs in the second pot and ground coffee beans in the third pot. He then let them sit and boil, without saying a word to his daughter.

The daughter, moaned and impatiently waited, wondering what he was doing. After twenty minutes he turned off burners.

He took the potatoes out of the pot and placed them in a bowl. He pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. He then ladled the coffee out and placed it in a cup.

Turning to her, he asked, "Daughter, what do you see?"

"Potatoes, eggs and coffee," she hastily replied.

"Look closer" he said, "and touch the potatoes." She did and noted that they were soft.

He then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard - boiled egg.

Finally, he asked her to sip the coffee. Its rich aroma brought a smile to her face.

"Father, what does this mean?" She asked.

He then explained that the potatoes, the eggs and coffee

had each faced the same adversity - the boiling water. However, each one reacted differently. The potato went in strong, hard and unrelenting, but in boiling water, it became soft and weak.

The egg was fragile, with the thin outer shell protecting its liquid interior until it was put in the boiling water. Then the inside of the egg became hard.

However, the ground coffee beans were unique. After they were exposed to the boiling water, they changed the water and created something new.

"Which one are you?" he asked his daughter.

"When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a potato, an egg or a coffee bean?"

Moral of the Story :

In life, things happen around us, things happen to us, but the only thing that truly matters is how you choose to react to it. Life is all about learning, adopting and converting all the struggles that we experience into something positive.



"That's the thing about books. They let you travel without moving your feet."

-- Jhumpa Lahiri

"A wise man can be a fool in love"

-- Chetan Bhagat

places. You will be given a handsome salary during the probationary period and then you will get a permanent salary along with all other facilities. I hope it will help you”.

Ramen’s eyes brightened with great joy, “Yes sir, it will be a boon for me. You have appeared as an angel to me. Now again I will be able to bring smile in everyone’s face”. Mr. Kashyap went inside and came out with an envelope. Giving this to Ramen he said him, “Ramen, take this rupees five thousand as advance and come tomorrow to the godown; the address is written here and take the appointment letter; and after the Durga Puja, join the work. Till then have a refreshed and peaceful life. Good luck”.

Ramen took a deep breath of relief and came out of the hotel like a bird. Instead of going home, he went to the market and bought dresses, sweets for his daughter and wife. When he was coming out of the shop, he heard the beating of the dhak in a nearby Durga puja pandal and he felt like Maa Durga is blessing him and wishing him a bright future.



Little Riniki is too young to understand all these complexities of life. So when she is unable to get her earlier luxury and comfort, she protests and starts shouting, “Mumma, I won’t eat without chicken”.

This anger grew very high as even before five days of puja, her father has not brought dress for her. So with a tone of sentiment she asked her mom, “Ma, papa won’t bring dress this time no ? And my bindi, hair band, bangles ? How will I move Maa ?

Her mother Niru, hiding her tears, consoled her. “Don’t get upset beti. Papa will bring today”. But this today is not coming even one day before Durga puja.

While brooding over all these things by sitting on the planks of his launch, suddenly Ramen heard a man approaching him saying “O brother, will you make a luxury safari of the river ?

Ramen was so shocked that he could not utter even a single word. He took some time to comprehend the matter and after getting back to senses he saw a well dressed man with a laptop bag and a briefcase asking him again, “Hello young man, will you take me for a ride please. Ramen answered with a stammering, “Yes, of course. Actually after many days, I heard these words, so it took me some time to act accordingly. By the way, why don’t you go by bus ? It saves a lot of time. The man replied, “I think you have not heard me properly. I told I want to have a luxury ride of the river to see it properly”. Ramen, understanding the purpose said, “Yes sir. Now I understand. Ok sir. You board on it, I switch on the engine.

The man said, “How much will you take for that”. Ramen making a sorrowful smile replied, “Earlier I used to take rupees five hundred for this luxury ride. But those days are gone. Now whatever you give, I will gladly accept that”. The man making a broad smile replied, “Ok, you don’t worry. I will not cheat you”.

Then, more than after eight months Ramen gave start to the engine and some sort of nostalgic feeling engulfed his mind. While sailing, the man asked Ramen a lot of questions about his family, income and many more.

After making a ride for two hours, at last they set on the shore and Ramen switched off the engine. The man with a satisfied look gave him two notes of rupees five hundred. Ramen hesitating a bit, said, "I don't need so much; give me one note only. Actually that was the fare". But the man smilingly replied, "Ok, you buy some sweets for your daughter with the other note".

Thereafter the man got down and went for his own way.

After sitting in the launch for another half an hour and brooding over the past, when Ramen was planning to go to market and buy a dress for his daughter with the money, then suddenly he saw the wallet of that man lying on the wooden seat of the boat. He understood that while taking out the money, it slipped out from the hand of that man. After opening it he saw that the wallet contained a number of notes of rupees two thousand. Suddenly a feeling came into his mind. Let me take out two pieces. It will help me to fulfill all the demands of Riniki. But suddenly a prick of conscience prohibits him from doing that. Then seeing a card inside, Ramen went to that address to return the same.

Reaching the hotel 'Blue Horizon' in the southernmost part of Dholla, he went to the reception and asked for Mr. D.K. Kashyap, the owner of the wallet and getting to know that he was in Room No. 407, Ramen went to meet him. When he knocked the room 407, Mr. Kashyap opened up the door and became surprised to see Ramen there. "What happened Ramen?" Ramen took out the wallet and gave it to

Mr. Kashyap. "Sir, by mistake, you kept it in my boat today. When I saw the card, I got the address and so come here to return it".

Mr. Kashyap while stretching his hand to take that, asked Ramen, "Why don't you take it as you are running through hard times now a days?" Ramen replied, "I won't lie sir, once I thought likewise. But again thought that this stolen money will not last long and if once I spoil my nature, I won't be able to rectify it anymore. But sir, if you don't mind would you gift me a note of rupees two thousand. If I get this I can buy cloths and other things for my daughter so that my little princess won't cry during this puja or it will be like every year for her".

Mr. Kashyap replied, "But what will you do in the next puja?"

I don't know sir. This bridge has snatched everything from me. "answered Ramen by looking his hand.

"Ramen", said Mr. Kashyap, with a smiling face, "I willingly kept the wallet there to test your honesty I knew everything of you and your present situation. So to test you I made this plan." Ramen was so greatly shocked that he could only utter the word. "Why?" "Because" Mr. Kashyap replied, "I have the business of exporting handmade Assamese products through water route to different parts of our country and abroad. This time I have extended my area of business and for this I need some expert launch drivers. When I made a search I got to know of you and so I came, interacted and tested you.

Ramen was totally dumbstruck, "What will be my duty?" Mr. Kashyap replied, "I have set up a godown in Dholla and hand made materials from various towns and villages like Margherita, Digboi, Makum, Rupai, Kakopathar, Phillobari, Arunachal Pradesh etc., will be stored here and then those will be loaded in your ship and you take them to Dholla and from there it will be shifted to many other

# I AM A GIRL

- Arpita Debnath  
B.A. 5th Sem.

*Yes, I am a Girl  
I am a girl born in India  
But not as free as the media,  
A country that follows unity in diversity  
But the people now lack sensitivity  
Wishing on Women's Day is not enough,  
As the other days are made tough.  
In childhood the boy is handed a pencil,  
The girl sees her mother in kitchen with utensils.  
Boys are told, "larka rota nahi hain."  
Girls are told, "larki parti nahi hain."  
"Larko ko hain aram karana  
Larkiko baas kaam hain karna."  
People are embracing modernity,  
But are they starting to lack humanity?  
Short dress determines one's character here,  
Only because you are a girl, you need to fear,  
Not allowing strangers to come near,  
Not uttering but silently thinking, "How can I live here?"  
People start to check out your curvy shape.*

# Self - Love

- Kiran Kalita  
B.A. 5th Sem.

There was a boy with rosy red cheeks and a smile so wide, he fell in love with everything easily. From the flowers in his backyard to Van Gogh's paintings, we would fall in love with the smell of freshly made samosas and steaming cups of chai. Everyone loved him for how he could appreciate everything and everyone in life. But late at night when he boy went to sleep he would constantly wonder. "If I am so good at loving othes, why do I struggle to love myself"? One sunny day, he met an old man eating ice-cream. He went to the bench where he was sitting and said,

"You look so happy, uncle." The old man laughed and said - "I am eating ice-cream how can I not be happy?"

They kept talking about everything going on in their town and about each other's lives. Just when they were about to part ways the boy asked the old man the question that was always on his mind "why is it so difficult to love ourselves?" The old man first smiled and pointed at the sky "most times this sky is plain blue, isn't it. So easy for the sky to define itself as plain but we all know how glorious it can be, right?" Next, he pointed to his almost finished ice-cream and said, "everybody loves chocolate ice-cream, but these are people who love strawberry ice-cream as well or almond ice-cream. "Just because you don't fit in all the usual things that people love doesn't make you any less beautiful". Next, he pointed to himself and said "on somedays I fail to appreciate the trees around me that something as sweet as ice-cream exists in this world, that I'm surrounded by a few people that love me so much in the same way, it's okay to fail at self love too on some days just like life.

Your graph of self love doesn't have to keep going up always. It can fall on some days and the best thing you can do on days like that is to have patience with yourself and ....."

"and what?" the boy asked!

"and eat an ice-cream ofcourse" the old man replied. □□

## **A POET**

– Priyanka Madaluwal  
B.A. 6th Sem.

*A poet is born,  
He be the son of a hostler,  
But aspirations he had high.  
For romanticism in his blood did soar,  
Emotions were his paints, nature his canvas;  
So apt his creations would be,  
Enchanted would anyone's heart be.  
But Alas! As with all special things,  
It must end, but it ended all too soon,  
Still we reminisce,  
Might it be through an ode or through  
Sleep and poetry;  
English literature did he change,  
The change only a romantic like him  
Could usher.*



## **LIFE IS A HIGHWAY**

– Anamika Mandal  
B.A. 6th Sem.

*Life is a highway  
On which the years go by...  
Sometimes the road is level,  
Sometimes the hills are high,  
But as we travel onward to a  
Future that is unknown,  
We can make each mile we travel.  
A 'heavenly stepping stone'.*



## WORDS

Susmita Paul  
Session : 2009-2012

You're adorable  
You give us meaningful sound  
I can express my pain, grief, joy for you  
You help us make friend and foe  
You help me create noise  
You help me express myself  
You help me answer questions.

You come in two forms—  
Verbal and non-verbal  
I'm lost without you  
You're precious  
I learn you  
I adore you  
I respect you.

You make us creative  
You make us poet  
I can live in you even if i die  
All the writers are alive for you  
There can be no writer without you.



*And with their eyes they rape.*

*But yes.*

*Our hope is not gone low*

*Because before goddesses people bow.*

*She is a girl -*

*I am a girl.....*

*To prove this do I need to hold a talwar ?*

*Treat women with the respect they deserve.*

*But doing so, country's dignity we will preserve.*

*We can all start afresh as the first rain.*

*Let us act and not hope in vain.*



"The colour green always soothed him. It was the colour of escape and solitude."

-- Mamang Dai, "Legends of Pensam"

## Love U Zindegi...

Deepasree Das Sarkar  
Session : 1987-1989

I know I would never  
Find a person strong enough  
To share a shoulder  
When I do need...  
Every relationship doesn't need  
An emblem ...  
It could be merely humanitarian  
Who are you to pierce your eyes  
And scratch the wound with the  
Venom of your tongue  
When you can't embalm it?!  
Person like us who are tall trees,  
Candles and incense sticks...  
Often do weep in silence  
People could never imagine  
How the candle feels when  
Drop by drop it melts...  
The aroma of each incense stick  
Speaks the sad saga of soul...  
How could I say we also  
Need a shoulder to cry...  
We also need a warm hand  
To support, a pat on back  
On the surface we want to showcase  
What we really are not,

Often no words but a warm hug  
Could do a miracle  
A therapy may be  
For those untold stories  
Soften the pillows...  
Why this blame game?  
What would we gain!  
"Dust thou come Dust to return"  
But "Love U Zindegi"  
With this bottom line  
I am moving...  
Moving...  
Moving...



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*(The writer is presently working as Associate Professor,  
Department of English at Margherita College)*

## Family...

Tania Phukan  
B.A. 3rd Sem.

As they enter the room with spirits entwined  
They are a family, uniquely combined.  
The warmth they share seems to fill them with pride,  
They are a family, they stand side by side.  
It doesn't just happen spontaneously,  
This family so close, emotionally.  
They live and they love, always showing they care,  
Through good times and bad, together they share.  
And now at this time, so happily rejoicing,  
Expressing so clearly the love they're endorsing.  
They stand as a family, and always shall be,  
Like links on a chain, like leaves on a tree.  
Connected by feelings of love they all know,  
Filled with trust and respect,  
Through the years as they grow.



## UNBIDDEN

Dr. Madhumita Purkayastha  
Session : 1987-1989

I crouch in a corner of my heart  
Your memory comes  
Relentless...  
Like thick dark bitter smoke  
Of wet firewood

It brings a thousand thoughts in it's wake  
Like dry tinder  
Thirsty for red flames  
I am parched  
I have put out both fires

Like age old fire-core ashen embers  
Scattered...half dead, half smouldering  
Gathered in the palms of Time  
They singe my soul

My life's vessel shattered  
As I slipped from your tender hands  
And history's coveted guest stopped  
and turned away from my hearth  
Starving...unfed...

(Transcreation of Amrita Pritam's "मैं दिल के एक कोने में बैठी हूँ"।)

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Dept. of English at DHSK College, Dibrugarh)*

## The Dusk

Anushka Chanda  
B.A. 1st Sem.

You've walked down the path of the long Day  
Lived through those moments, bright and Gay  
The warmth and the flurry now withers Away  
A shadow so ominous casts on your Way

The voice and chatters now quieten Down  
In the lap of silence your soul Drowns  
You walk down the road quiet and Empty  
The ones once filled with joy in Plenty

You listen to the silence deep in your Soul  
Your inside now turns quiet and Cold  
You wish to stop and lay down on the Side  
The grey sky embraces you with arms open so Wide.



# DIGBOI

**Deepannita Dey**

Session : 2014-2017

Four years ago, I left you  
Expecting a change on my return.  
But there you stand still  
Everything the same, just the way you were.  
That fresh aura of pure blissful nature  
Mixed with the refining smell of crude oil.  
Standing still with a heritage of your own  
Bringing out the nostalgia in all.  
I bet, not one soul have truly left you  
From roaming the busy streets to the silence of the roads.  
I can still see children enjoying the games,  
Just as I did when I was their age.  
The calm presence of the refinery  
Workers rushing to get on their duty.  
That burning fire high up in the sky  
Reminding everyone how you stood high.



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*(The writer is presently working with an IT Company,*

*HR Dept., Guwahati)*

# I WONDER

**Kaberee Gohain**

**B.A. 3rd Sem.**

I wonder, if I can ever surpass you  
to build a world of mine,  
where your presence isn't mandatory  
nor the rainbow of your hue.

Curtains of unknowingness, where  
hides the light of love,  
And the eyes that reflect pain  
gaze another way without fear.

Where the touch of your voice  
remains indifferent to my ears,  
Nor your glimpse burn or heal  
the pain that's already there.

I wonder if I can ever forgive you  
for all the broken promises out there  
that brought miseries to life  
and a chapter full of sorrows, to bear.



into their skin. Multiple stings have been known to be fatal for humans and has in fact accounted for large number of deaths in Japan and China annually. These hornets pose immense threat to honeybees – decimating entire colonies by biting off their heads and feeding off the larvae and pupae in a matter of hours. Red alerts have been issued across U.S. states to detect their presence and find ways of exterminating or containing their spread. It is assumed that their dissemination across the United States could have serious consequences upon their ecological balance. This ecological uncanny – the sighting of a species that was never part of an ecosystem (in recorded entomology) – is attributed to climate change, effected largely by global warming.

### **Aim of the article**

The purpose of this article is to explore such alarming sightings of species that are not endemic to an ecosystem but manifesting their presence increasingly on account of the effect of the Anthropocene. This ecological uncanny pervades Amitav Ghosh's latest novel *Gun Island* (2019). After his non-fictional *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016), it was expected that his next work of fiction would have ecological crisis as an important trope. It turns out to be true. Ghosh's *Gun Island* pushes the environmental agenda to a significant extent. While holding the Anthropocene responsible for present ecological crises, Ghosh attempts to highlight issues pertaining to climate change, refugee crisis and ecological uncanny.

### **The Anthropocene**

Anthropocene, the term introduced by climatologist Paul Crutzen in 2000, stands for "the notion that human beings have become the primary emergent geological force affecting the future of the Earth System" (Angus 9). It signifies the end of the Holocene epoch, which Jeremy Davies in his "Introduction" to *The Birth of the Anthropocene* (2016), has remarked as the "11,700 year span of time

## **Dare To Dream**

**Niva Sarkar**  
**B.A. 5th Sem.**

Close your eyes and let  
your imagination fly away.  
See a picture of where  
you wish to be one day.

Let the colour of your  
heart take command  
to paint the picture of your  
dream and place it in your hand.

Hold on tightly and nurture it,  
but allow it room to grow.  
When you reach your dream,  
open your hand and let it go.

Close your eyes search for  
another, caring for it as before.  
Never stop searching, achieving and  
letting go, for that's what dreams are for.



## Living with Sacrifice

Shimron Chhetri  
B.A. 5th Sem.

Never knowing, when is the last day.  
Never knowing, when the  
enemies would attack them.  
Some got killed on their way To home.  
Some got injured due to the hidden IEDs.  
Life is so unpredictable to the Army man.

But it is also extraordinary  
to see the unity and brotherhood  
that lies among them.  
From sharing their little things.  
Enjoying every festivals  
together as family.  
To taking care as a guardian  
when one gets ill...  
They teach us to live life  
happily until you live.

But beyond this, there is someone.  
Waiting for her son.  
to see him and feed him with her hands...  
Waiting for her husband.  
To let him know how lonely she felt  
without him...  
Waiting for her father.  
To lift her on his arms, kiss her  
and treat her as a princess for  
some days...  
It is not just him  
But his family too  
who has to sacrifice their  
happiness and loved ones for  
the country... □□

## WHAT NEXT ?

Manisha Rajak  
B.A. 3rd Sem.

What can I harbour next ?  
After being shown the way to tranquility,  
moved from the unmoved world  
I seek peace in anonymity.

What can I transform next ?  
After knowing things everchanging,  
Shaken as the tree at tempest  
as moments differ,  
I found myself unbending.

What can I long for next ?  
For I got the things I want,  
unwanted as well  
that has made me exhausted and  
my wishes blunt,

What can I beautify next ?  
After being shown the way to glory,  
moved from the unmoved tag  
I seek for colours, folly and jolly..

What can I argue next ?  
For all my words are my own  
right or wrong, I stand strong  
the way to life after being shown. □□

## The Ecological Uncanny in Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island*

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### Abstract

This article proposes to undertake an environmental reading of Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* (2019). The dangers of the Anthropocene are evident in the form of global warming and climate change. Such changes can cause irreparable damage to some ecosystems. In *Gun Island*, there are many instances of sighting of species in places where they were never seen before. These "strange strangers" (Morton) constitute what has been termed as the "ecological uncanny." This article tries to understand the significance of the presence of such strange strangers in alien surroundings, and what it bodes for ecosystems as well as humans.

Keywords : Anthropocene, ecological uncanny, global warming, climate change, strange strangers.

### Introduction

Recently, social media has been abuzz with news of sightings of Asian giant hornets (scientific name *Vespa mandarinia*) in many parts of the United States (from late 2019 onwards). Known popularly as "murder hornets," these two-inch long creatures (mostly inhabiting East Asia, South Asia and Mainland Southeast Asia) are dreaded for their voracious appetite and deadly sting. Their sting can inject large amounts of potent venom. Victims have noted that its sting caused such excruciating pain that they likened it to molten metal driving

Despite such looming threat, humans most often have failed to see the signs. Climate denialists succeed in framing counternarratives to the phenomenon of climate change and continue to function under the structure of the normative. There is a possibility that in the Capitalocenedeniers are governed by many forms of vested interest to downplay the perils of climate change. For instance, in the novel it is shown that despite tell-tale signs of a looming pathogenic invasion (of bark beetles), people at large were unconvinced with Lisa's apocalyptic warnings. Piya states:

She went to the town council to warn them that they had to do something. But no one paid any attention, not the mayor, nor anyone else, least of all the people who were in harm's way. To them she's just a pushy outsider who doesn't know anything about the mountains and is trying to make a name for herself. (109)

To make matters worse, when a raging wildfire breaks out (as warned by Lisa) which resulted in the state declaring an emergency and calling for deployment of helicopters to douse the fire, Lisa was implicated in it. Piya ruefully says:

You would think that afterwards people would have thanked Lisa for her warnings and treated her as a hero... But no: what they did was that they blamed *her*! A rumour went round that she had started the fire herself because she wanted more funding for her research. Soon it was all over the social media.(109)

Political gaslighting has become a common phenomenon in an increasingly majoritarian and conservative political milieu. In such a scenario, facts are manufactured by different apparatuses of states to muzzle agency of the marginalised. Lisa's plight corresponds to such a targeted policy of victimization by those in power. This wildfire, which foreshadows the raging wildfire that ravages

that in the established version of the geological timescale still continues to the present day" (5). The end of the Holocene epoch is a watershed moment in both human and environmental history as it signified advancements in the field of culture, arts, aesthetics, sciences, innovation, technology, in fact in all walks of life. The advent of modernity and its materialistic trappings are part of the Holocene. Davies observes that "[the Holocene] is the only geological epoch so far in which there have been symphony orchestras and hypodermic needles, moon landings and gender equality laws, patisseries, microbreweries, and universal suffrage" (5). The coming of the Anthropocene signifies a process of negotiation on the part of humans to continue deriving the benefits of modernity's comforts and luxuries, albeit with the disquieting realization that it will be at the cost of radically changed environmental conditions. The red flags seem to be evident everywhere, as seen in various kinds of ecological uncanny manifested with increasing trepidation across the globe. Even though Stratigraphy has not included Anthropocene in its list of geological epochs, the contemporary environmental changes that have come about due to human intervention makes it necessary to characterise an epoch by such a placeholder terminology. It could be defined as an epoch characterised by unmitigated exploitation of the environment for serving utilitarian ends. It is in Otl Aicher's phrase, the "world as design" (Aicher 179), comprising of expressways, cars, trains, skyscrapers, malls, housing complexes, power stations, landfills, sea reclamations, and such other artificial, arterial systems. This world as design is made possible only by decimating nature. This exploitation is rooted to the culture of capitalism, and in that sense, is driven primarily by carbon economy. Tsunamis, tornadoes, wild fires, earthquakes etc., are causing havoc in many parts of the world, and even though these are natural occurrences and should not to be linked directly to human intervention, it has to be acknowledged that climate change effected by global warming due to the prevalence of carbon economy, may have contributed substantially to these natural catastrophes. Perhaps, discourses revolving around

the Anthropocene need to be analyzed from the angle of political economy, which, Jason. W. Moore termed as “Capitalocene” (Moore xi). Examined from this context, certain questions arise: for instance, how have “various human organizations and processes – states and empires, world markets, urbanization, and much beyond – reshaped planetary life?” (Moore 2). Are the climate sceptics and denialists rejecting the climate change hypothesis because they are complicit with the developmental discourse of capitalism? Is this denial part of reluctance to give up the trappings of modernity and rampant consumerism?

However, despite such denialists’ scepticism, the symptoms that anthropocene-induced climate change has produced are there for all to see. Global warming has adversely affected the balance in the biosphere. It has resulted in uncanny manifestations in nature: unseasonal migration of birds, inscrutable beaching of whales and dolphins, miraculous sighting of ‘beings’ that were never part of particular ecosystems, virulent manifestation of certain types of pathogens that pose severe threat to the environment, and so forth. Apart from nature, humans too have been affected by climate change to a considerable degree. These issues need to be addressed in literature, and it is slowly finding traction in the aesthetic imaginary of creative writers. It is heartening to note that Ghosh has taking up the cause of environmentalism in such a big way.

### “Strange Strangers”

When one thinks of ecology, the metaphor that exemplifies its nature and character (according to Timothy Morton) is “the mesh” (Morton 14). What it implies is the interconnectedness of beings and things on a vast, cosmic scale. The interconnected beings function differently, living as parasites or symbiotes, forming rhizomatic bonds, taking recourse to deterritorialization or reterritorialization and other intricate processes under favourable natural conditions.

What the Anthropocene epoch has unleashed is that it has meddled with life forms in such horrifying ways that these ‘strange strangers’ have begun to behave even more strangely; in fact, they have become figures of abjection. Morton coins “dark ecology” (16) as an ecological thought that embraces ugliness and horror, which are important as it “compel[s] our compassionate coexistence to go beyond condescending pity” (17). Such ecological thought that embraces the abject is apparent in *Gun Island* through several instances of sightings of creatures in places where they are least expected: bark beetles, spiders, water snakes, shipworms, and so forth. In a way, recent sightings of the murder hornets in the United States could also be read from the standpoint of natural uncanny engendered by climate change.

### Sightings: The Ecological Uncanny and Climate Change

Anthropocene-induced climate change is causing havoc to the ecology by disturbing the ecosystem in which beings and things are so precariously meshed. Extermination of a species could wreak havoc to the environment as there could be uncontrolled proliferation of other species. In the novel, there are five instances of strange sightings that substantiate the notion of ecological uncanny: bark beetles (Oregon), yellow-bellied sea snake (Los Angeles), rare brown recluse (Venice), shipworms (Venice), and eight species of cetaceans (Mediterranean Sea). What is striking about these sightings is that they are seen in places where they are least expected.

Piya Roy, a marine biologist, notes recent incidences of forest fires in many parts of the world. She feels that it could be due to uncontrolled proliferation of bark beetles. The reason for their increase of population is global warming. Such creatures cannot survive for long in cold climes. However, global warming in the Anthropocene epoch has enabled them to survive in these places, thereby affecting the ecosystem of these regions. Since these insects survive by eating up trees from the inside, their proliferation in places where trees are plentiful pose immense threat to these places.

writers need to show their commitment towards the rapidly depleting ecology as well. It is true that literature tends to be anthropocentric insofar as it emphasises on depiction of the human condition realistically/imaginatively. However, the need of the hour is to address the grave ecological issues confronting humanity, which are paradoxically of their own making. In that sense, Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* is a laudable effort in that direction.

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Los Angeles during the narrator Dinanath Datta (Deen) and his historian friend Cinta's visit to the museum for a conference, indicates the perils confronting climate activists. They are most often dismissed as prophets of doom by denialists or capitalist mercenaries.

Another instance of the ecological uncanny is observed while encountering rare serpents in a bustling metropolis like Los Angeles. Deen, in one of his e-mail chat conversation with Tipu (the foster-son of Piya) is cautioned by the latter to be careful of snakes on his trip to LA. This is dismissed by Deen with the words, "I'm going to LA. There aren't any snakes there...Don't be silly. I'm not going to get bitten in LA" (112). However, on a visit to Cinta's cousin's daughter Giselle (Gisa) who resided on a house near Venice beach (LA) with her girlfriend along with two adopted orphaned refugees, Deen is shocked by the sight of a "two-foot snake...its colour darkly metallic with a bright yellow underbelly (131), dead with its head crushed to a pulp by Gisa's golden retriever. The coast guard identifies the serpent as the venomous "yellow-bellied sea snake" (132) and says that these were never a common sight before, but they "had a bunch of yellow-bellies washing up here in the last few months (131). When Deen enquires Piya about the strange invasion of serpents in LA, she replies that such sightings were reported just a day before at Ventura Beach, California. She further states that these snakes generally inhabited warmer waters to the south. Their sightings in Southern California could be logically explained under the assumption of global warming and climate change. She explained that "their distribution was changing with the warming of the oceans and they were migrating northwards" (134). Thus, the presence of these venomous reptiles in LA could be accounted for due primarily to global warming.

Yet another instance of the ecological uncanny is the sightings of deadly spiders in Venice. Deen travelling to Venice to document the presence of Bengali migrants comes across a spider in Cinta's house. Though spiders are rare in Venice, he chances upon a rare brown recluse (*Loxosceles reclusa*). Piya cautions him that "its venom

is more potent, by weight, than that of a rattlesnake; it breaks down the skin and eats into the flesh" (203). The surprising thing about this sighting was that it was the first recorded sighting of this species so far north. Piya's friend Larry indicated that "the brown recluse has been increasing its range very quickly because it's getting so much hotter in Europe" (204). Thus, global warming is disturbing the ecological balance in such profound ways that manifestations of creatures that were never expected in certain places are now seen in alarming numbers.

The infestation of these creatures/critters can create a condition of ecoprecarity, be it drought, famine, wildfires, and so forth. Such a surreal manifestation of a "different kind of monster" (230) is shown to Deen by Cinta on their walk down the street towards the Fondamente Nove. Pulling out a hairpin, Cinta dug into wooden pilings, picking at the rotten wood. Suddenly, a "creature plopped out and fell on the pier... It was about two inches long, the colour of congealed coconut oil. Its tapering body widened into a funnel-like mouth that was ringed with tiny filaments" (230). Cinta identified the creature as a shipworm. She said that these creatures posed immense threat to the city of Venice. Thus, despite the apparently innocuous nature of infestation of these termite-like creatures which was not visible on the outside, the harm that it did on the inside was frightening, to say the least.

Global warming could be regarded as the sole factor behind such uncanny manifestations. Towards the end of the novel, a "miracle" is seen. Of the known total eight species of cetaceans inhabiting the Mediterranean Sea, seven are seen simultaneously, which is an unprecedented event. Piya observed exultantly: "Sperm whales ... pilot whales ... fin whales ... bottlenoses – they're all there!" (276). This miracle can be considered as another manifestation of the ecological uncanny happening due to climate change. Even though the novel celebrates this event, it is worth pondering why such a "miracle" happened. Does such ecological uncanny auger well

for humans and non-humans? Going by the logic of the novel, such sightings could be ominous. Therefore, ecological thought embracing horror, or subscribing to the notion of dark ecology, seems to be the need of the hour. It could be one of the ways by means of which the normalizing strategies of denialists be countered. The unfortunate thing to note here is that people do not seem to be making concerted efforts to address the various issues humanity is confronted with on account of climate change. Emissions of Carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases have increased in the atmosphere leading to global warming and climate change. Even though people realise this, they are quite reluctant to give up their everyday comforts.

Such a denialist position makes the task of conservation difficult. Meanwhile, both human and non-human life forms must suffer nature's fury in the form of winds, hailstorms, tornadoes, etc. Even though such events are supposed to be 'natural,' the increasing frequency of occurrence is "thought to be an effect of changing weather patterns" (263), which could eventually be attributed to global warming. Carbon economy being the prime mover of capitalism, its rampant use has significantly propelled this materialist ideology. However, in wake of the massive thrust to consumerist ethos (which demands newer technologies/innovations), the relinquishing of carbon footprint is becoming more and more difficult.

### **Conclusion**

Global warming is becoming a global menace. It is impacting climate change, which in turn is posing immense threat to the ecological balance. It is affecting both human and non-human. The curse of the Anthropocene is looming large. If timely steps are not taken to redress the wrongs committed by humans in their quest for material comforts and luxuries, the consequences could be disastrous. Therefore, raising consciousness about the perils of the Anthropocene is a task that is not meant only for climate scientists, climate activists, stratigraphers, ecologists, geographers etc. Creative

## Origin of Assamese Media

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The history of printing press in India dates back to 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Portuguese Missionaries published the first book in 1557 from a printing press established in Goa. The language of the book was Portuguese. The printing press in Calcutta was established in 1717, almost two hundred years later of the earlier. The press was established by Sir Charles Wilkins, an American Baptist Missionary. The Bengali fonts used in the press were prepared by one Panchanan Karmakar. The first newspaper in India, the Bengal Gazette was printed in this press on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 1780. The editor of the newspaper was James Augustus Hicky. The newspaper was consisted of only two pages. The motto of the newspaper was "A weekly political and commercial paper, open to all parties, but influenced by none".

The first newspaper in regional language of India was published in the month of May, 1818. It was the 'Digdarshan', published from Shrirampur Press in Bengali language. It was quite short lived. After one month of the publication of Digdarshan, another weekly paper namely 'Samachar Darpan' was published from the same press under the editorship of J.C. Marchman. This newspaper contributed a lot to the Bengali literature and society.

Though 'Orunodoi' has been recognized as the first Assamese newspaper, the tradition of disseminating news was prevailing in different ways even before it. In earlier times, the kings used to inform some important news to the public by sending a drummer along

## THE HEALING EFFECTS OF STORYTELLING

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An increasing mechanisation of life has affected all areas of life including the medical scenario. The relation between a patient and a doctor is one of empathy and trust which requires a patient hearing and lending of moral support on the part of the physician. On the other hand, the patient feels the urge to place his confidence and trust on someone who he believes has got all the solutions to his ailments. Unfortunately, due to increasing use of technology, constraint of time and a stressful work environment, on the part of the medical fraternity, the patient is sometimes not given the due attention. One sometimes finds apathy and a lack of concern on the part of the physician to listen to what the patient has to say, no matter how trivial. On the other hand, not all patients disclose the facts of their illness before the doctor due to embarrassment, fear among other reasons. In fact, it needs a kind of skill on the part of the physician to bring out these facts by listening attentively to, questioning and comforting the patient.

Every patient has a story that throws light on how the individual got ill, the point at which they felt they needed medical help and most significantly, the social challenges they face in getting cured. These stories can help the physician from just merely treating the disease to something like helping the patient. Knowing or learning how to make patients share and then listen to these stories can bring about crucial change in healthcare. It is because medical practice can be fruitful only when medical care incorporates the skill of listening

or absorbing and interpreting and then acting on the stories and plights of patients.

It is out of this necessity and against the backdrop of the changing medical technology and practices that the concept of 'Narrative Medicine' has emerged. The program in Narrative Medicine at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons is an interdisciplinary master's program which seeks to improve clinical care through narratives. In brief, narrative medicine utilises the study of art and literature to increase students' skill of listening and observation and thereby tries to broaden their view of patients so as to include more than simply medical histories. In the words of Rita Charon, MD, PhD, executive director of the Narrative Medicine Program, "Narrative Medicine is a commitment to understanding patients' lives, caring for the caregivers, and giving voice to the suffering."

To be specific, Narrative Medicine is a new discipline and clinical practice in close reading of literature and grounded in philosophy, literary theory, psychoanalysis and social justice theory. It is designed to improve the delivery of healthcare. An important approach of narrative medicine education is "close reading" wherein one learns how to thoughtfully and critically analyze a text which in turn helps students to inculcate good listening skills and thereby becoming more caring, compassionate and empathising towards the patient. A fundamental philosophical assumption of this field is that stories are the primitive means through which we experience and convey the meaning of our lives. It shares the belief of Paul Ricoeur, the noted French philosopher, that our lives are always already interwoven in stories, from the most personal to the institutional and socio-political. Ricoeur challenges the rigid, clear-cut distinction between stories and life. The relation between living and narrating is fundamentally mysterious: from the beginning we experience life *in*

stories and stories in life. Indeed, Ricoeur asserts that life is the process of constructing a narrative identity. This is crucially important in the experience of illness and disability, where there is a kind of interruption of story. Those listening to a patient's story need to understand the on-going lived experience of the story, as well as the clinician's role in that story's co-construction.

When we read a novel or watch a film, we belong, at the same time, to the world-horizon of the work in imagination and the world-horizon in which the action of our "real life" unfolds. Each new narrative work opens new horizons in which we might experience, explore and try on alternative realities, new ways of being-in-the-world. One cannot hope to respond to the lifeworld-altering aspects of illness without close attention not only to the "objective" conclusions of the different diagnoses but to the singular, specific stories of each patient. Close reading and discussion of stories give us tools to understand how stories work and work on us. Narrative skills enhance critical self-reflection, resulting in more effective clinical engagement and a more critical eye focused on the scene of care, the institutional and social structures in which we work and live.

A programme such as Narrative Medicine is very much necessary in India and therefore needs to be introduced in the higher institutions of learning. It is because the healthcare professionals might be armed with the right degrees but lacking in the human touch which is perhaps not taught in any institution. Medical treatment requires utmost care, compassion and empathy in dealing with the patients and therefore, Narrative Medicine can adequately fulfil these needs. It goes without saying that no matter however advanced the medical scenario is today in terms of technology and new drugs, some part of the effectiveness of clinical care can only be brought about by lending an ear, providing a healing touch and rendering moral support to the sick and the infirm. □□

that they were working for the welfare of Assamese society, the path of propagating Christianity in Assam would be much easier for them.

The objective of the publication of the periodical 'Orunodoi' is clear in the statement in the print line that it is a monthly paper dedicated to science, religion and general intelligence.

The print line of Orunodoi reflected that the aim was to propagate Christianity, science and general knowledge. They designed it in such a way that it became the mouthpiece of the missionaries in Assam.

The meaning of 'Orunodoi' is 'sunrise'. There was controversy regarding the spelling of the title of the paper 'Orunodoi'. Hemchandra Boruah criticized the use of certain letters for which in 1861 the spelling was changed. Samachar Darpan (1818) a Bengali newspaper was the ideal followed by Orudodoi.

According to Dimbeswar Neog, Orunodoi stopped publishing in 1882. On the other hand, Benudhar Sharma had the opinion that it lasted for 37 years, that means till 1883. According to Banikanta Kakati, the Sibsagor Mission Press was sold to Assam Tea Company in 1882. So, the paper was published till 1880. But Mrs. S. R. Ward in her 'Glimpse of Assam' mentioned that, "The useful sheet came to an end in December 1880". In such a situation most of the critics acknowledged that Orunodoi was being published till 1880 as mentioned by Mrs. Ward in her book in 1884.

Before the publication of Orunodoi, the medium of writing in newspapers and magazines by Assamese writers was Bengali language. But after the publication of Orunodoi, they had the opportunity to express their thinking in their own mother tongue. As a result of their writing a new group of people emerged as writers. Moreover, a few Assamese persons educated in the western education system received inspiration to publish newspaper like

with a person who read out the information. The drum attracted attention of the people. Apart from it the stone edicts and copper edicts were also used frequently to inform the people about some important incidents.

During 15<sup>th</sup> century, there was another way of collecting and disseminating news in Assam. It was the tradition of 'Batori Sodha' (Asking for news) introduced by the exponent of Neo-Vaishnavite movement in Assam Srimanta Sankardeva. In this process the news were noted down from the conversation with the wandering devotees and then those were made public for common people. Lack of good communication system, scarcity of educated persons at that time and as it required much toil and time; the process could not gain popularity. Yet, this created a sense of news among the people in those days.

Writing history is the one of the remarkable contribution of Ahom rule in Assam. Right from 1228, the first Ahom king Chao-lung Siu-Ka-Pha ordered the officials to write down everything seen and heard. That was the preliminary stage of History of Assam popularly known as 'Buranji'. The seed of newspaper in later centuries lied in those Buranjis. Later, the Buranjis carried the information for other people and the next generation. The burning of Buranjis by Kirtichandra Borboruah, an official of Ahom court is a remarkable incident during that period. But some Buranjis escaped from the wrath of Borboruah. The histories written in that time played the role of media. The hand written histories slowly disseminated the information among the people at that time.

Till the first three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was no newspaper published in Assam. Moreover, the decision to introduce Bengali as medium of education in school level in Assam too attracted a few literate people towards Bengali literature and newspapers. As a result, a readership of Bengali newspaper was

created in Assam. The newspaper published from Calcutta, The Friend of India, Samachar Darpan, Samachar Chandrika, Sanjivani Kakat etc. covered news from Assam. For example, the appointment of Haliram Dhekial Phukan as magistrate of Guwahati district was published in Samachar Chandrika in 1832. The death of his news was published in Samachar Darpan in 1832.

Some Assamese writers too contributed to the Bengali newspapers. Jaduram Dekabaruah was one such writer who wrote for Samachar Darpan and Samachar Chandrika.

The attempt of Maniram Dewan to bringing back Kandarpeswar Singha, the dethroned king of Assam into power and the contemporary political scenario was discussed in some articles of Bhaskar and Samachar Chandrika published from Calcutta.

In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Baptist missionaries from America started their mission of propagating Christianity in Assam. According to the treaty of Yandaboo, Assam went to the hands of British. But even after that the Khamtis and Singphos were in constant clash with the British in Sadiya. British government invited the Baptist missionaries to teach the principles of Christianity to those warring tribes so that peace prevails in that region. On 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1835 Agent of Assam appointed by the Governor General Captain Jenkins wrote a letter to the then Civil Service Official E.C. Trevelyan inviting the Baptist missionaries. In the letter he wrote that he was willing to subscribe Rs. 1000 to the family if they settle as a mission at Sadiya. He also said that he would double the amount if the family spends six months working there, publishing books from a press and if he remains in charge of Assam.

This was the catalyst which brought the missionaries to work in Assam. It may be mentioned here that since 1833, only British missionaries were conducting their activities under the Territory of East India Company in India. But in 1833, all the territories under British

Empire were opened for all the Christian missionaries by a charter. After this decision, the American Baptist missionaries were invited to Sadiya. Accordingly, a group of American Baptist missionaries reached Assam crossing a long hazardous way. The American Missionaries had a dream to propagate Christianity in China. For that they made several desperate attempts. They thought that the languages of Khamti and Singpho communities are similar to the language of the people of South China known as Shan. They had the notion that if they could learn languages of both the tribes in Sadiya, then it would have been easier to proselyte Chinese people. Significantly, the American Baptist missionaries christened the mission as 'Mission to Shan'. On December 16, 1834 the American Baptist Board accepted the invitation Jenkins officially. According to the decision of the Board, Nathan Brown with an associate Oliver T. Cutter started the journey through the river Brahmaputra. After a long tedious journey by boat, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1836 they entered Sadiya.

In the same year 1836, the British government set a rule that in the schools and in the courts Bengali language would be used instead of Assamese language. On the other hand, due to the adverse situation the missionaries had to transfer their mission at first to Jayrampur and in 1841 to Sibsagar. They understood that it is impossible to convert the Assamese people without knowing their knowledge. So, they started learning the Assamese language and with a few Assamese literate persons they struggled to reestablish it. After setting up a centre at Sibsagar, the missionaries started collecting hand written books. A press was also brought by them and established at Sibsagar. They started publishing Assamese books. A meeting was held in December 1845 in which the remarkable decision of publishing a newspaper in Assam was taken. According to the decision of the meeting the first Assamese periodical 'Orunodoi' started publishing from the month of January 1846. They had the notion that the periodical would become a permanent link between them and the people of Assam. If they could give the impression

*Gita* has been finely delineated in the famous apocalyptic poem of Yeats – ‘The Second Coming’. In the Indian text, Lord Krishna says:

*Yadâ yadâ hi dharmasya glânirbhavati Bhârata*

*Abhyutthânam adharmasya tadâtmânânam sâjâmyaham.*

[Whenever there is decay of righteousness O! Bharata

And a rise of unrighteousness then I manifest Myself!] (*The Bhagavata Gita*)

It implies that when the hydra-headed sin takes control of the universe, God incarnates himself in human form to rid the innocent souls. The re-incarnation of Rama or of Krishna was in sheer response to evil symbolized by Ravana or Kansa. In “The Second Coming” Yeats deals with the re-incarnation of God to restore balance to the world torn by spiritual conflict and religious chaos. He talks of God’s reincarnation when -

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,

The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and every where

The ceremony of innocence is drowned;

In such spiritual crisis, Yeats envisions the coming of ‘a rough beast’ with lion body and the head of a man’ which perfectly reminds Indians the Nar-Simha (human and lion) avatar of Lord Vishnu.

**Eliot’s depiction of Indian mythic and mystic vision:** T. S. Eliot’s poetry is likewise imbued with wisdom of ancient literature of India. Indian influences, both Hindu and Buddhist, are scattered everywhere in the work of Eliot. His opportunity to live in close contact with Charles Lanman, James Woods and Babbitt, the authorities on

Orunodoi. Thus it prepared the ground so that a number of Assamese newspapers to would follow the first one.

On the other hand some people started thinking to publish newspaper to propagate Hinduism like the Christian missionaries. As a result several such periodicals got published in the course of time.

Orunodoi created a favourable atmosphere to publish newspapers in Assam. Even during the lifespan of Orunodoi till 1880, as many as eight periodicals got published from different places of Assam. Those were ‘Asam Bilasinee’, ‘Assam Mihir’, ‘Assam Darpan’, ‘Assam Deepak’, ‘Chandrodaya’, ‘Gyanodaya’, ‘Paridarshak’ and ‘Gowalpara Hit Sadhini’. Places of publication of those papers were Majuli, Guwahati, Darang, Majuli, Guwahati, Nagaon, Surama Valley and Goalpara. It is needless to say that publication of Orunodoi encouraged the local entrepreneurs to publish number of newspapers and periodicals in 19<sup>th</sup> century.



“I was looking for the key for years, but the door was always open.”

-- Arvind Adiga, “The White Tiger”

“If there’s a book that you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.”

-- Toni Morrison

# Indian Mythic Vision in English Literature

Dr. Pabitra Bharali

**Introduction:** Indian philosophy with its pacific insights and the great tradition of Indian culture has been a dominant influence on world philosophical thoughts as well as the diverse artefacts of the globe throughout centuries. While on the one hand, it has equipped the regional cultures with suitable structures, on the other hand, it has enriched western cultures including language and literature. In fact, oriental/Indian philosophy, art and culture, belief system, myths and legends have been incessant influences on the culture of the west. English literature as a dominant dimension of western culture has seen and represented these diverse influences especially since the European renaissance and more especially subsequent to British colonialism in India. In one respect, the British through their colonialism exploited India materially (and, of course, brought modernism to India); in the other respect they were spiritually, morally and intellectually enriched with Indian cultural traits. The great poet and critic T. S. Eliot in the seminal essay 'Tradition and the individual Talent' talked of the importance of historic sense and observed that new poetry or literature should be a product of the fine blend individual talent with the great tradition of thought and writing up to the time of the writer. In the broad sense, world cultures serve as persistent influences on the formation of *avant garde* writers. The present article is an interpretative attempt to explore Indian mythic vision as depicted in English literature with special references two prominent modernist writers namely W.B. Yeats and T.S. Eliot.

**Yeats' representation of mythic vision, mysticism and spiritualism:** To begin with, both W.B. Yeats and T.S. Eliot felt irresistibly drawn to the glorious myths of ancient India and attempted to interweave them with those of the West through their immortal works of art. They were influenced by eastern thoughts on theosophy,

magic, Buddhism and spiritualism. Yeats' interests were basically due to affinities between ancient India and Ireland. He believed primitive India and Ireland to be complementary to each other since primitive Ireland like India was a throb with tales of wonder and mystery. Naturally, he felt an inner compulsion to explore the meaning and essence of life in Indian myths. Indian attitude towards rebirth caught the poetic fancy of W.B. Yeats. His vision of all the elements of the temporal world of sense and passion equally as parts of a whole is essentially the primitive vision of India. His mythic vision in "Supernatural Songs" depicting the mystic experiences of the hermit Ribh is distinctly Indian. "Ribh in Ecstasy", "Ribh at the Tomb of Baile and Aillinn" and "Ribh considers Christian Love Insufficient" are surprisingly Indian in feeling and tone or voice. In fact, Yeats' poetic volume "Supernatural Songs" communicates the vision which is recognizably Indian.

**Yeats' representation of Bishnu Avtars (God's reincarnation) :** The Indian myth of God's re-incarnation has been poetized as well as dramatized by W.B. Yeats. The incarnation of Lord Vishnu as a fish, tortoise or boar is symbolic of the manifestation of the Supreme spirit in flesh. In the poem "Leda and the Swan", Yeats' admirably attempts to provide a poetic pattern to the union of the God's spirit and the human matter. Indian sages imagined soul as a swan and its sexual encounter with a mortal beauty. Likewise, Yeats' play *The Hearne's Egg* is symbolic of the Indian conceptions about the idea of Godhead, the attitude to sex, the theme of re-incarnation and Samadhi. In fact, this poetic play is a perfect representation of myth of cosmic creation depicted in the "Swan archetype" and 'Brahmanda' or the cosmic egg.

God's manifestation in human form – *Avtar* – to restore spiritual vision to humanity during spiritual and religious crisis asserted in *The*

## A Study of Indian Adaption of Shakespeare In Vishal Bharadwaj's Trilogy Maqbool, Omkara and Haider

Dr. Chandana Chetia

"Nothing is original. Steal from anywhere that resonates with inspiration or fuels your imagination."

– Jim Jarmasuch

Vishal Bharadwaj who started his career as a music composer is now regarded as one of India's most innovative directors. His passion for filmmaking and his love for Shakespeare encouraged him to compose movies such as Maqbool, Omkara and Haider - adaptations of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, *Othello* and *Hamlet* respectively. Bharadwaj is once quoted saying :

"Shakespeare is the greatest storyteller ever. His stories have layers of spectacular human drama. I think they can be adapted anywhere and in any language. Personally I can live my whole life on Shakespeare".

Vishal Bharadwaj is not the first director to lay his hands on Shakespeare's plays. Many directors both from Bollywood and Hollywood have been working and reworking on Shakespeare's plays adapting them for lovers of cinema and Shakespeare. Though almost all of Shakespeare's plays are being adapted into cinema but Shakespeare's tragedies holds a special place and interest to the filmmakers. There are innumerable instances of Romeo and Juliet being adapted into Indian cinema. For example-Qayamat se Qayamat Tak, Ishaqzaade and Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Ram Leela in 2014.

In an interview with Nasreen Munni Kabir , Bharadwaj expressed his love and admiration for Shakespeare in the following words :

".....Shakespeare has been my favourite because his dramas are

Indian thought and tradition, led to deep influences of Indian mythic vision on him. Eliot admits that he studied Sanskrit under Lanman and that Wood enlightened him with mystic vision. (Drew: 40-41). Again, his association with the ancient religious thought and poetic tradition is not through 'romantic misunderstanding' but through "an intellectual identification combined with an emotional detachment" (Jain 1969: 67). In spite of the fact that he does not like to cease 'to think and feel as an American,' he communicates mystic vision which is amazingly Indian. The idea of Sir Claude in *The Confidential Clerk* bears a striking similarity to the Advaita Philosophy. Sir Claude says:

*I want a world where the form is the reality of which the substantial is only a shadow . (464).* The poet suggests that the form alone is real, because it expresses a pattern of the divinity. Substance is the concretization of that divine design. The abstract, and not concrete is real. Appearance is concrete but reality is abstract. This philosophical concept is as much Bradleyan as Advaitic.

Eliot has highlighted the importance of mythic and mystic vision in life which is tune of Indian mystic vision. In the attempt to focus on the vital importance of myth in the modern world which has been reduced to a "heap of broken images" (61), he has recreated the myth/mythic vision in famous poems such as *The Love song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, *Gerontion* and *The Wasteland*. As modern humanity is cut off from the vital roots of myths, they see nothing but vast panorama of moral anarchy and spiritual drought. The intimate bonds of connections between human life and natural life achieved in mediaeval period have been snapped in the modern world where Alfred Prufrock, a representative of the modern humanity says: "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons". (12) The mechanical image of "spoons" is suggestive of the predominance of scientific knowledge on the modern life. This has compelled Gerontion to rationalize his "ghosts" away. T.S. Eliot believes that people can regain

spiritual vitality which has been sapped by the growth of rationalism, provided they develop the primitive mode of feeling and thinking. That is, the key to spiritual salvation. He, therefore, enjoins upon the reader to follow the three-fold path of salvation indicated by Prajapati in the Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad.

**Eliot's use of Upanishadic structure:** The closing words of *The Waste Land* signifies Indian upanishadic influence on Eliot. The three *shantis* (i.e. peace blessings) that close this poem turns it into an Upanishad, for in the Indian tradition only Upanishads are permitted the triple benediction at the end. While acknowledging the Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad, Eliot changes the advice of Prajapati to the three kinds of intelligent forms who came to him as disciples: gods, anti-gods, and man. In the original Sanskrit, the gods are given the final advice by Prajapati to be disciplined, to control themselves, because gods tend to be victims of arrogance; the anti-gods are advised to be compassionate, because they tend to be brutal and vicious; and the men are asked to be giving, because they tend to become victims of selfishness. Eliot turns the sequence into *datta* (give), *dayadhvam* (be compassionate), and *damyata* (be self-controlled). He has switched the order of the shastra (rule), and shastras are best not tampered with. What appears to have the words of an Upanishad is therefore not an Upanishad, but a Christian re-creation.

**Eliot's reworking of the concept of "Do not think of the fruit of action.":** In Four Quartets ("The Dry Salvages" section) Eliot reworks the advice of Lord Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, "Do not think of the fruit of action." While talking to the Allied soldiers in the Battle of Britain (Eliot was an ARP warden), Eliot, like Krishna advises the soldiers that one should fight but forget that one is fighting to save democracy from Nazism and Fascism: "I sometimes wonder if that is what Krishna meant... Fare forward... Not fare well,/ But fare forward, voyagers." Similarly, in the poem "To

the Indians Who Died in South Africa," written at the request of Miss Cornelia Sorabjee for Queen Mary's Book for India, Eliot writes: "...action None the less fruitful if neither you nor we know, until the judgment after death, What is the fruit of action".

**Conclusion:** It is evident from the above interpretation that both Yeats and Eliot have borrowed ideas from Indian myths and mystic lores and have re-interpreted them in their own poetic contexts. They have on the one hand made use of the mythic and mystic structures, and on the other hand, symbolically or allegorically depicted the ideas from the Indian texts. At the root of their mythopoeic creation is their desire to create an ancient mode of response to modern life. In other words, spiritual restlessness of modern life impels them to seek haven in the mythical world of India that ascertained peace in not only with God's reincarnation but also through human *karma*. These aspects points to a greater truth and that is the unending sustenance ancient Indian wisdom can and will provide not only to modern generation but to generations to come.

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him and escapes. Tormented by the fact that Haider has killed her father , poor Arshi commits suicide. And by the time we reach the climax the white snow is turned all red with blood. Ghazala too commits suicide and Khurram is badly injured, pleading Haider to kill him. Haider wants to shoot him as per his father's last wish, but is reminded of his mother's words' revenge only results in revenge'and thus he decides to leave Khurram...

Like other adaptations of Vishal Bharadwaj, Haider too is a commendable film. The Shakespearean roots aside, it is an authentic narrative of Kashmir, the horrors of crackdown, the abuse of being treated as an alien in one's own land, the obsession with identity cards, the half widows and the unending search for the disappeared people. The movie beautifully mirrors the true picture of Kashmir. The author of Curfewed Night, Basharat Peer, who has also written Haider's screenplay, sums it up aptly :

".....I have always written about Kashmir but it was really brave of Vishal Bharadwaj to go along with a story like this. It is the longest, bravest journey any Indian filmmaker has made on Kashmir".

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just so juicy. The conflict is so universal that you can find those conflicts in any society- they are basic human conflicts".

Tragedy and conflicts are synonyms. They are inseparable from one another. Be it *Macbeth*, *Othello* or *Hamlet* conflict remains at the centre of the plot. The conflict is heightened by the mystery and suspense which ends with comic relief , that too for a span of few minutes, only to pounce back with more intensity resulting in ultimate tragic end.

"Maqbool (2003), the first of Bharadwaj's trilogy is an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The movie won Vishal Bharadwaj huge critical acclaim and established him in the list of the finest filmmakers in Bollywood. In *Maqbool* Shakespeare's classic tale of greed and ambition is transplanted to Mumbai's criminal underworld. One of Bollywood's versatile actors Irfan Khan stars as Maqbool. The right hand man of underworld Don Abbaji, played by Pankaj Kapur. Maqbool is abbaji's most loyal man. He can do anything on Abbaji's command. He serves Abbaji without any selfish motives and engenders his own life on several occasions. But destiny has other plans for him. His deep rooted ambition for power and glory further instigated by Nimmi (Tabu )and the two corrupt policemen compels him to murder Abbaji. The two police officers Pandit and Purohit ( Om Puri and Nssaseerudin Shah ) predict that Maqbool will loose the battle of power (as were the prophecies of the witches in *Macbeth*). They are equally involved in compelling Maqbool to commit the heinous crime. But killing Abbaji does not help Maqbool. His conscience keeps pricking him. Bharadwaj's adaptation of the dagger scene is commendable. Maqbool's guilt is further intensified by looking at Nimmi's plight. She becomes insane cleaning the walls and washing her hands again and again. She ultimately dies in Maqbool's lap leaving him alone.

Vishal Bharadwaj as the director of the film has taken certain liberties to mould the story. But as regards the theme and essence of

the play he remains very true to it. Therefore, unlike the original story, in Bharadwaj's adaption the order is restored in the end, with Guddu and Sameera taking care of the new born child. There are many other such deviations from the original story but the Shakespearean essence is never lost. *Mqabool* is a path setter and is a winner in terms of its presentations and style.

*Omkara* (2006) is Vishal Bharadwaj's adaption of *Othello*. *Othello*, set in the rural areas of the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. This time also Vishal stays honest to the essential theme of the story but makes a few changes. He transplants the action from Venice and Cyprus to a rural town in North India. Instead of a dark and alienated Moorish general among Italians, *Othello* is now *Omkara* (played by Ajay Devgan) a half-caste gangster employed under the local leader Bhai-Saab (Naseeruddin Shah). In the opening scene *Omkara*'s men break up the wedding of his beloved Dolly ( Kareena Kapoor Khan as Desdemona) with Rajju ( Roderigo's character) resulting in a verbal clash between *Omkara* and Dolly's father. Though *Omkara* and Dolly are madly in love with each other, he is stung by the parting words of her father, which echo Shakespeare's :

"Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: she has deceived her father, and may thee" ( *Othello* I, iii).

In the meantime as *Omkara*'s status rises in the wake of Bhai-saab's release from jail, he needs to choose a replacement leader from among his lieutenants. He elevates student leader Kesu (Vivek Oberoi as Cassio) neglecting Langda Tiyaagi (Saif Ali Khan as Iago). Not happy with what has happened he hatches a conspiracy to turn *Omkara* against Kesu and Dolly by convincing him that they are having an affair. *Omkara* though a brave warrior, is not experienced in love and as in the original story he is unable to judge a character. Langda weaves a web of trickery with the aid of the dancer Billo (Bipasha Basu as Bianca), Rajju as well as by using his own wife Indu (Konkana Sen as Emilia), resulting in the tragedy. *Omkara* inflicted with jealousy

and suspicion strangles his innocent wife and on knowing the truth commits suicide.

Though *Omkara* stays true to the spirit of *Othello*, Desdemona's misplaced "handkerchief" which led to the tragic end in the original story is replaced by a "waist band" in the adapted version. However such changes on the part of the director does not take away the credibility of the film.

With *Haider* (2014) Vishal Bharadwaj completes the trilogy . The film is a modern day adaption of Shakespeare's famous tragedy *Hamlet*, set amidst the insurgency hit Kashmir conflicts of 1995 and civilian disappearances. It stars Shahid Kapoor as the protagonist and co-stars Tabu, Shraddha Kapoor and K.K Menon, with Irfan Khan making special appearance. *Haider* returns from Aligarh to Kashmir at the peak of the conflict to seek answers about his father who has disappeared and ends up tugged into the politics of the state. Expecting his mother (Tabu as Gertrude) to be in a state of shock and grief, he on the contrary finds her with his uncle (KK Menon as Claudius) singing and enjoying. This led him to think that his mother hardly cared for her husband. And in no time she proves his suspicion to be true by marrying her brother-in-law. Now his only pillar of strength is Arshi (Shraddha Kapoor as Ophelia) a journalist by profession and his beloved, who tries her level best to help him in searching his father. While visiting jails in hope of finding his father *Haider* witnesses crude horrors of custodial killings. Roohdar ( Irfan Khan) who helps him in finding the truth about his father 's disappearance and ultimate death, further narrates to him the harsh realities of the torture chambers. On finding the truth about his uncle, he plans to shoot him but stops himself finding him in prayers. Next morning he meets his mother who confesses that it was she who had disclosed about the terrorists hiding in their house out of fear to Khurram unknowingly that he was an informer of the Indian Army. In the meantime Arshi's father as (Polonius) traces them and is about to shoot him when *Haider* shoots

It can be somewhat assumed that Milton's case for gender bias is more or less influenced by his own personal life. He was not a happy man throughout his life. Even his own wife and children were unkind or rather hostile to him. This kind of treatment has some influence in his portrayal of Eve. Though apparently there are lot of passages which signifies the praiseness or good qualities of Eve but beneath the surface there is a case for gender bias as for as Book IV and Book IX of 'Paradise Lost' are concerned. Milton's unhappy relationships with women may have influenced his assessment of women in general. While an artist like Milton was able to transcend the personal in his art, in his portrayal of Eve he was clearly labouring under a gender bias. While he describes her beauty and softness, he indicates that beauty could be fickle and harmful. This kind of judgement is initiated not by Eve's particular set of circumstances alone, but by Milton's greater experience of women throughout his life. It follows that his attitude percolates into his art.

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"Your Best Teacher is Your Last Mistake".

-- A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

## **Milton's Portrayal of Eve : A Case for Gender Bias**

**Sanjoy Das**

John Milton was an English poet, pamphleteer and historian and was considered the most significant English author after William Shakespeare. Milton is best known for 'Paradise Lost', widely regarded as the greatest epic poem in English. Together with 'Paradise Regained' and 'Samson Agonistes'; it confirms Milton's reputation as one of the greatest English poets.

The objective of this paper is to study Eve, the mother of mankind as portrayed by John Milton in his book IV and IX of 'Paradise Lost'. Milton possesses a kind of belief that there is no equality between man and woman and it appears that Milton's treatment of Eve is coloured by a gender bias. The paper aims to study this supposition. Upon study of book IV of Paradise Lost, some notions of gender bias are very much conspicuous which are mentioned below :

1. Eve was made out of a rib taken from the left side of Adam when he complained of his loneliness.
2. Eve is designed for coy submission and modest pride. She was made for softness and sweet attractive grace in contrast to Adam's thought and acts of valour.
3. Woman was made in the image of Man whereas Adam was made in the image of God.
4. When Eve happens to look at her own image in a clear lake of water, she for sometime forgets everything around her as she is enchanted by her own image.
5. Satan forges dreams and illusions in the mind and imagination of the sleeping Eve. For that he sits close to the ear of Eve in the shape of a toad. Eve is portrayed as the weaker of the two - both physically and mentally. She is more susceptible to temptation.

6. Eve would have gazed at her own image in the placid water had not a heavenly voice warned her. Later when she meets Adam she finds him less handsome and less attractive than herself.

7. Eve yields to Adam. She experiences herself imperfect without the companionship of Adam.

The case for gender-bias shown by Milton is also somewhat apparent in BK IX of 'Paradise Lost'. For instance, the following points may be taken for consideration --

- 1) It was Eve who first gets the idea of working separately.
- 2) Eve disobeys the order of Adam and insists on working alone in the garden.
- 3) Satan, the eternal enemy to God tries to seduce Eve and tempt her to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree i.e. the Tree of Knowledge.
- 4) Milton presents Eve as a typical human being susceptible to flattery and inclined to curiosity.
- 5) Eve easily falls victim to the temptation of Satan and is thereby responsible for the fall of entire mankind.
- 6) Eve's eating of that fruit brings sin and death to this world.
- 7) Milton points out Eve's trivialising nature and lack of resolution for which she could be easily seduced by Satan. The following points show her triviality of mind -
  - a) She is susceptible to flattery.
  - b) She is 'unwary'.
  - c) She hopes that God will not be angry at 'such a small trespass'.
  - d) She foolishly imagines that perhaps her transgression would remain hidden from God.
- 8) Eve shows a sense of selfishness and jealousy as far as Adam is concerned. She wants to keep the secret within herself and deny the knowledge and thus claim equality or even superiority over him. Her self-regard is in sharp contrast to Adam's selflessness.

9) Eve is also responsible for the 'original sin' committed by Adam. She seduces Adam to taste that fruit which once again gives pain to nature.

So, Milton's portrayal of Eve indicates that he has by and large a bias against woman. Eve is held mainly responsible for the Fall of Man. Milton assumes that Eve has an innate inherent weakness which Satan takes advantage of. That is why, Satan, in the guise of a toad, chooses to forge dreams and illusions within Eve's hearing. As for gender-bias, Milton seems to have a low opinion about Eve. He projects Eve as an inferior or subordinate to Adam.

"He for God only, she for God in him."

So far as BK IX of "Paradise Lost" is concerned Milton puts all the blame upon Eve for the Fall of Man. It is Eve's triviality of mind that leads to the Fall of Man. Her little disobedience to Adam's saying is paid for immensely by all of us. But it would be unjust to put the entire blame on Eve because Adam is equally worthy of blame for this downfall of mankind, Eve accuses Adam like this --

"Being as I am, why didst not thou the head  
command me absolutely not to go,  
going into such danger as thou saidst?"

So, Eve accuses Adam of not exercising his authority with a firmer hand. And this kind of abuse is right because this type of misfortune would not have happened had she been firm in her withstanding of temptation. It gives us the impression of his fulity over woman. But then the question of 'free-will' arises. Paradise is a place where 'Free Will' is maintained, so how can he stick to his own principles without giving her full freedom. It would obviously be the violation of the rule of nature. It means that his consent to her proposal is right. Further, his decision to share her predicament implies his use of 'free will'. He is willing to accept the consequences with full consciousness and volition.

the other. The result is a new type of poetry which seeks to triumph not by the profundity of its meaning but by the unity of its form and impression; not attempting to create order in a world of chaos, but mainly by reflecting the chaos and tension.

The characteristic features of modern English poetry are complexity, allusiveness, irony and obscurity. On the basis of these qualities the rise of modern English poetry might be dated somewhere between 1910 -1920. The reference would be to the early poems of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot; the realistic war poetry of Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, Edmund Blunden and Isaac Rosenberg; the hardening and maturing of W. B. Yeats' style as seen in poems like *Easter 1916*. Mention must also be made of G. M. Hopkins, a poet of the 1870's but whose poems were first published in 1918.

T. S. Eliot's poem *The Love Song of Alfred J. Prufrock* written in 1910 may be referred to as indicating a consolidated beginning of the modern movement. Eliot's originality partly arose from his being thoroughly bored with his contemporaries. Similarly, with Ezra Pound too, boredom drove him to restless and unceasing experiment. The Imagist Movement, in which Pound played a great part, reflected impatience with conventional diction and metres. Critics rightly agree that around 1910, something new crystallises in Pound, Eliot and Yeats, and that indicates the beginning of the modern.

The inspiration for the Imagist's Movement came from the ideas of T. E. Hulme (1886-1917) who was an anti-Romantic, believing that words were being used by poets to obscure emotions instead of to clarify them. The Imagist's principle maybe summarised as follows: use the language of common speech, but use it exactly; create new rhythms for new moods; allow complete freedom in

## Modernism in English Poetry

Baby Ritu Phukan

The term modernism has become a word loaded with a wide variety of meaning. It is a value word as well as a word to describe the technique or literary vogue in the 20th century. It has also become synonymous with the word contemporary. But it is to be remembered that all poetry within the 20<sup>th</sup> century may not be modern.

One of the basic ingredients of the modernist outlook is its self-consciousness; and this is not a peculiar quality of the 20<sup>th</sup> century alone. Wordsworth and Coleridge could be called modern when they self consciously committed themselves, to a type of poetry, which they thought fitted their times. But, it is not until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that modernism emerged as a commitment in itself or as a slogan for a radical change of outlook. It was a French poet who used the phrase " You must be absolutely modern." Rimbaud envisaged this as a terrifying commitment. He said, "The soul has to be made monstrous." He meant that the poet must extend his spiritual experience to include both rational and irrational impulses –in his own words- to include every form of love, of suffering, of madness- by a rational disordering of all his senses. Rimbaud was writing in the 1870's, a period in literary history when decadence had set in French and English literature, and as commercialism and materialism had penetrated sufficiently into all layers of society to deprive the poet and the artist of his traditional role of the singer or the priest. Since then the poets and artists have been playing a defensive role and much of the poet's aggressive modernism comes as a new challenge for renewal of inspiration, for revitalisation of forms. Rimbaud's comments that the poet would define the amount of

unknown awakening in the universal soul, provides almost a spiritual justification for the experimentation and complexity of modern art and poetry.

It is assumed by almost all contemporary artists and poets that the struggle to be modern is a struggle to penetrate the mystery of one's own surroundings and one's time. Psychology has taught that this is like mapping the underworld and penetrating into layers and layers of meaning. But the modern poet can do this in the traditional prophetic style- the modern man has lost that confident tone, too much knowledge confuses the poet's findings and the lack of an audience makes him hesitant and tentative both in understanding and in communication. Locked in his own sensibilities the modern poet- like Eliot's nerve-wrecked lady in *The Wasteland*, often fails to answer direct questions. This poem is important because one characteristic which we have noticed in a modern poet is his sense of isolation and a consequent tone of hesitation. A salient feature of the modern mind is tension and this is reflected in the poetry of the time, in its themes, structure and style. An ideal symbol of the predicament of the modern mind is perhaps Eliot's character Prufrock. He is a middle-aged lover of modern sensibility who is inordinately aware of his limitations- his bald head, his social inferiority, and his fear of refusal. The fear that his proposal may be rejected and that he might be miserable leads him through a deflationary process of generalisation which consequently leads him to a final affirmation of defeat.

Pessimism is another characteristic feature of modern poetry. There is something abrupt, restless, mocking and dissatisfied about the poetry. The modern pessimistic outlook is inextricably connected with the acute self-consciousness which is the hall mark of the modern

age. This self-consciousness has many historical causes behind it and there is no doubt that it is a reflection, on the whole, of the human situation in which the modern man finds himself. The 20<sup>th</sup> century is utterly different from the previous ages, at least with regard to the fact that never before did so much change take place in such a short period of time. Most significant of these changes is the change in the channels of knowledge. Among these, the one of greatest importance is the discovery of psychoanalysis and the application of its numerous implications in our day to day life. It is commonplace now that our unconscious motives are as active as our conscious ones. Much of our literary criticism derives from such general assumptions. William Empson, for instance, argues that good poetry is usually written from a background of conflict. Such a view implies that a poem is not necessarily the outcome of spontaneous and powerful feelings, but is the result of artistic efforts in finding structure and weaving a medley of conscious and unconscious feelings and thoughts. This also explains why a modern poet relies more on images and other suggestive indirections than on logical narrative in giving shape to his poems. . in fact, many modern poems are but a sequence of images; and this is so not because the poets are perverse or trying to be deliberately difficult, but because the modern world itself gives the impression of being a 'heap of broken images'.

Modernism in poetry partly derives from a conscious radicalism on the part of the poets, and partly as a natural outcome of changes in the channels of knowledge. It represents a combination of the French poet Rimbaud's flamboyant gestures of defining the unknown awakening of the universal soul, the development of psychological approach, and the reliance on symbol and imagery as the basis of poetic organisation. We can also notice the prophetic urge on one hand and the hesitancy and the uncertainty of tone on

Rajib Rudra Tariang & Dr. Kishor Haloi.  
Dept. of Zoology, Digboi College.

4) Inter-College Online Talk on --

“Postcolonialism : An Overview” An Initiative of Alumni English Digboi College, organised by Department of English in association with IQAC, Digboi College on 17/06/2021.

Speaker : Dr. Giteemoni Saikia  
Faculty, Dept. of English  
Margherita College.

5) National Webinar on --

“Seeing From The Margins of Space : Identity at The Intersections of Gender, Caste and Sexual Orientation” organised by Dept. of English in association with IQAC, Digboi College on 20/06/2021.

Resource Person : Prof. Anita Singh, Dept. of English  
Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.

Coordinator : Baby Ritu Phukan,  
Asso. Prof., Dept. of English.

6) International Webinar on --

“Pedagogy of Performative Silence” organised by Department of English in association with IQAC, Digboi College on 26/06/2021.

Resource Person : Dr. Sayan Dey  
Postdoctoral Fellow, WITS Centre for Diversity Studies.  
University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Coordinator : Baby Ritu Phukan, Asso. Prof.,  
Dept. of English.

speech; present an image but avoid vagueness; produce poetry that is hard and clear; and that concentration is the essence of poetry. Pound, though he subsequently abandoned the Imagist's Movement, played a significant role in bringing the principles to focus. He used the diction of everyday speech with a subtle ear for its rhythms. He abandoned the logical continuity of prose in favour of a juxtaposition of ideas and images whose continuity appears through their psychological association. Like Eliot, he also used quotations frequently, thereby relating his treatment of his themes with the treatment accorded by earlier poets to similar themes and thus illuminating the fundamental alternatives in outlook and assumption brought in the course of history.

Though traces of the Imagist's principle is found in Eliot's *The Wasteland*, the work in Eliot's and Yeats' are more closely related to the Symbolists' School which originated in 19<sup>th</sup> century France, mainly in the works of Mallarme and Rimbaud. It constituted a development from romanticism in as much as it was poetry of the feelings as opposed to the reason, but it was a reaction against romanticism in as much as its conception of the ways poetry operates. This intellectualism doesn't imply that the content of poetry should be one of what is ordinarily called ideas. Mallarme's affirmation was that "Poetry is not made with ideas; it is made with words." Since states of mind and feelings, which are central to poetry, are ultimately mysterious and elusive, the Symbolists emphasised a suggestiveness of poetic language, but though this emphasis on suggestiveness makes much of their poetry obscure, their care for the organisation and operation of language, prevented it from becoming vague.



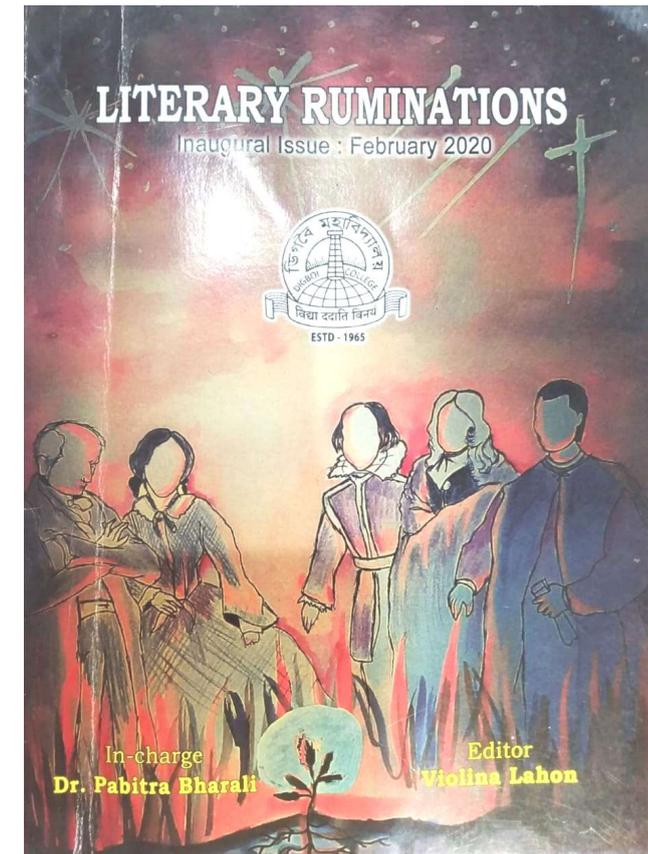
## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

<b>2020</b>	:	Amrita Sharma -- 1st Class (71.71%)
		Shreyoshee Chakraborty -- 1st Class (70.29%)
		Reeya Sarkar -- 1st Class (67.64%)
		Kriti Ghimire -- 1st Class (66.93%)
		Radha Pradhan -- 1st Class (65.21%)
		Violina Lahon -- 1st Class (63.29%)
		Khonlee Samon -- 1st Class (63.14%)
		Kajal Dey -- 1st Class (60.86%)
		Koyel Ghosh -- 1st Class (60.71%)
<b>2021</b>	:	Chimpy Baruah -- 1st Class (73.43%)
		Bipasa Saha -- 1st Class (72.36%)
		Tejashree Baruah-- 1st Class (67.79%)
		Shamima Yasmin-- 1st Class (67.64%)
		Deboshree Bhattacharjee -- 1st Class (67.21%)
		Archika D. Borah -- 1st Class (65.43%)
		Jevitoli Sema -- 1st Class (65.43%)
		Priyanka Madaluwal -- 1st Class (64.71%)
		Raja Bhattacharjee -- 1st Class (64.36%)
		Anamika Mandal-- 1st Class (63.36%)
		Niharika Sharma -- 1st Class (63.36%)
		Jahnabi Khaleen -- 1st Class (60.64%)
		Mohima Tanti -- 1st Class (60.21%)
		Akashitara Nath -- 1st Class (60%)

## Departmental Activities (2020-2021)

- 1) Webinar on --  
“Coping with Issues and Challenges of Mental Health” organised by Department of English & Department of Education in collaboration with IQAC, Digboi College on 08/07/2020.  
Resource Person : Dr. Brinda Baruah Sharma, Asst. Prof., Centre for Behavioural Science, Dibrugarh University.
- 2) National Webinar on --  
“The Pandemic Dilemma : Gendered Contexts.” organised by Department of English in association with IQAC, Digboi College on 21/07/2020.  
Resource Person : Dr. Madhumita Purkayastha, Asso. Prof. & HOD  
Dept. of English, D.H.S.K. College, Dibrugarh.  
Jt. Coordinators : Sanjoy Das, & Dr. Chandana Chetia  
Asst. Professors, Dept. of English.
- 3) Three Day National Workshop on --  
“Managing Stress with Yoga : Theory and Practice” organised by Department of English & NSS Unit in association with IQAC, Digboi College on 10-12th Aug., 2020.  
Resource Person : (1) Mahamaya Roy, National Yoga Judge.  
Yoga Teacher at Patanjali, Haridwar.  
(2) Anindya Kr. Das, Yoga Therapist,  
Senior Faculty, Netaji Subhas Open University.  
(3) Jayanta Hore, Writer and Yoga Therapist.  
Joint Coordinators : Baby Ritu Phukan, Dept. of English

# Cherished Moments



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