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Dr. Bishwajit Bhattacharjee

Editor:

Tapas Kumar Barman



On 8 and 9 April 2025, a Two-day International Seminar titled "Horizons of Literary Creation: Dialogues on Theory and Practice" was organized by the Departments of English and Bengali of Samsi College, Malda, West Bengal in collaboration with Uttarsuri, Assam. The articles published in this special issue are selected papers that were presented at the seminar.



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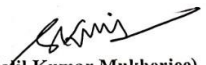


It gives me immense pleasure to extend my warm greetings to *Uttarsuri Publication*, a distinguished branch of the registered society *Uttarsuri*, Sribhumi, Assam, for its commendable initiative in the promotion of literature and culture. The belief that the foundation of human progress lies in the sustained practice of literature and culture finds meaningful expression through such dedicated scholarly endeavors.

I sincerely appreciate *Uttarsuri Publication*, registered under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (UDYAM-AS-18-0012611), for its meticulous commitment to the study, research, and dissemination of cultural and literary knowledge since its inception. Their initiative to publish the research articles presented at the Two-day International Seminar on "Horizons of Literary Creation: Dialogues on Theory and Practice", held on 8th and 9th April, 2025, jointly organized by the Department of Bengali & English, Samsi College, and *Uttarsuri*, Assam, is indeed praiseworthy. This effort will not only preserve valuable academic insights but also ensure their wider reach among scholars, researchers, and students.

On behalf of the Samsi College family and the Governing Body, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to *Uttarsuri Publication* on the successful fruition of this significant academic endeavour. Such an initiative reflects a shared commitment to intellectual excellence and scholarly collaboration.

On behalf of Samsi College, I further extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to *Uttarsuri Publication* for this noble academic venture. I am confident that such collaborative initiatives will strengthen interdisciplinary dialogue, encourage a vibrant research culture, and contribute significantly to the enrichment of literary and cultural studies. I wish the publication every success in its future endeavors and look forward to continued academic collaboration in the years to come.


(Dr. Safil Kumar Mukherjee)
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Preface



A two-day international seminar on the theme “**Horizons of Literary Creation: Dialogues on Theory and Practice**” was held on 8–9 April 2025. The seminar was organized by the Departments of English and Bengali of **Samsi College, Malda, West Bengal** in collaboration with **Uttarsuri, Assam**. In this seminar, Professors and Researchers from India and Bangladesh presented their research papers. Vice-Chancellors and distinguished professors from various universities of West Bengal attended the seminar as invited speakers.

The two-day programme was rich in education, culture, and aesthetics. Although Uttarsuri has organized numerous seminars and discussions, including national and international webinars, this was the first time it formally participated in an in-person academic seminar. In this regard, the warm hospitality of Samsi College deserves special appreciation. The principal and the faculty members of the college graciously received us at the railway station early in the morning and kindly arranged our accommodation at the college guest house. Their generosity deeply moved us and bound us with a sense of gratitude. The articles published in this special issue are selected papers that were presented in the seminar. Before publication, every possible effort has been made to ensure that the papers are free from any errors. The **Editor** of this special issue is **Tapas Kumar Barman**, Associate Professor of the Department of English at Samsi College. On behalf of Uttarsuri, we extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to him.

The Principal of Samsi College, **Dr. Salil Kumar Mukherjee**, has kindly sent a message of goodwill for publication in this issue, which has significantly enhanced the dignity of this special number. We also express our heartfelt gratitude to the President of the Governing Body of Samsi College and all those who worked behind the scenes for the publication of this issue.

We are delighted to publish the valuable contributions of the professors and researchers who enriched this issue with their articles. We firmly believe that through such collaborative efforts we will continue to move forward together and build a healthy academic environment in the future.

Finally, we extend our sincere gratitude to all the teaching and non-teaching staff of Samsi College and to everyone who was associated with this International Seminar.

Dr. Bishwajit Bhattacharjee
Secretary, Uttarsuri, Sribhumi, Assam

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Editorial Note



It gives me immense pleasure, as Editor, to present this volume emerging from the Two-Day International Seminar titled “**Horizons of Literary Creation: Dialogues on Theory and Practice**” Organised by the **Department of English & Bengali, Samsi College** in collaboration with **Uttarsuri**, Assam, on 8th and 9th April, 2025.

The title itself opens a wide intellectual landscape. The word ‘Horizons’ suggests expansion, an ever-widening field of inquiry where literature transcends boundaries of nation, language, and discipline. ‘Literary Creation’ foregrounds the imaginative and critical processes that shape texts and traditions. Meanwhile, ‘Dialogues, Theory and Practice’ signals a dynamic engagement; between texts and contexts, between creative writers and critics, between established theoretical frameworks and lived social realities. The seminar thus envisions literature not as a static archive, but as an evolving conversation, responsive to history, culture, politics, gender, ecology, and identity.

It is with immense pleasure that we extend our warm greetings to Uttarsuri, Assam, for their valuable collaboration in organizing this two-day International Seminar on the 8th and 9th of April, 2025. This academic gathering marks a significant step in strengthening intellectual exchange and fostering meaningful scholarly partnerships.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to our Honorable Distinguished Guests, esteemed Speakers, and the Keynote Address Speaker, including the respected Vice-Chancellors, whose insightful deliberations have enriched the seminar profoundly. Their scholarly reflections have illuminated diverse aspects of contemporary literary studies and inspired critical engagement among participants.

The present volume brings together a rich collection of scholarly works addressing various literary and social issues from multiple perspectives. The range of topics; spanning theory, textual analysis, gender discourse, cultural studies, postcolonial inquiries, and emerging interdisciplinary approaches, demonstrates the vibrancy and diversity of contemporary literary scholarship. Each contribution reflects rigorous research and thoughtful engagement, collectively shaping a meaningful academic dialogue.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the paper presenters for their valuable contributions. It is a matter of pride that altogether twenty-one selected papers, after careful review by subject experts, are being published in this issue. The process of peer review ensures the academic integrity and quality of the publication, upholding the standards of scholarly excellence.

Our sincere thanks go to the Governing Body and Seminar Organizing Committee for their meticulous planning and tireless efforts in making this event a success. Special appreciation is due to the faculty members; Sk Mofazzal Hossain, Neelanjana Chowdhury, Sudeb Sarkar, Masiur Rahaman, Mahidur Rahman, whose dedication, coordination, and

academic commitment have played a pivotal role in the successful execution of the seminar and the publication of this volume.

We hope that this collection will serve as a valuable resource for researchers, scholars, and students, and that it will continue to inspire further dialogues and explorations across literary horizons.

With best wishes for continued academic engagement and collaborative scholarship.

Tapas Kumar Barman
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A Study on Economic Significance of Moving Theatre of Assam

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Abstract

The Moving Theatre of Assam, also known as "Bhramyamaan Natak" or " Travelling Theatre", is a unique and traditional form of theater that has been an integral part of Assamese culture. This concept of this 'Moving Theatre' was initiated by Achyut Lahkar in Pathsala (Bajali District) of Assam. He founded the 'Natraj Theatre' with his brother Sada Lahkar in 1963. This form of theater is characterized by traveling troupes of actors, musicians, and technicians who perform plays and other forms of entertainment in various towns and villages across Assam, which reflects the social and cultural life, historical phenomenon of the region and across. Though this theatre is engaged in uplifting socio-cultural happenings but it also has a deep economic significance in the economy of Assam, specifically to employment and revenue generation. At present more than 50 theatre groups are actively performing in Assam where not less than hundreds of families in each group are depended for their livelihood. Using secondary data sources and necessary statistical tools we will try to analyse the economic significance of these moving theatres of Assam.

Keywords: Moving Theatre, Socio-Economic- Cultural, Employment Generation, Livelihood

Introduction:

The state of Assam, with its rich tapestry of culture, language, and tradition, has nurtured various forms of art. Among them, Bhramyaman Theatre stands out for its wide popularity and grassroots impact. More than a source of entertainment, it serves as a livelihood for thousands and stimulates local economies wherever it goes. This paper examines the economic contributions of moving theatres in Assam, exploring both direct and indirect benefits.

The state of Assam, nestled in the northeast corner of India, is a melting pot of diverse ethnicities, languages, and cultural practices. Among its vibrant cultural expressions, theatre holds a special place as a medium of storytelling, social commentary, and artistic innovation. Over the decades, the people of Assam have nurtured several forms of theatre – from traditional folk dramas like *Ankiya Naat* to modern proscenium theatre. However, one of the most dynamic and economically impactful formats to emerge in the latter half of the 20th century is the *Bhramyaman Theatre*, or moving theatre.

Bhramyaman Theatre refers to mobile theatre troupes that tour towns and villages across Assam during the theatre season, typically from August to March. These troupes travel with their own crew, performers, equipment, and large makeshift tents that serve as temporary auditoriums, capable of seating up to 2,000 spectators. Unlike stationary theatre companies, these groups bring drama directly to the people, especially in rural and semi-urban areas where cultural infrastructure is often limited.

This format emerged in the late 1960s, with early pioneers like Nataraj Theatre and Kohinoor Theatre paving the way for what would become a full-fledged cultural industry. With its roots in both entertainment and social engagement, moving theatre quickly gained traction across Assam. Over time, it evolved not only as a popular art form but also as a powerful economic engine that sustains a wide ecosystem of artists, technicians, support staff, and local businesses.

Despite its popularity and cultural relevance, the economic significance of Bhramyaman Theatre has received relatively little academic attention. Most analyses tend to focus on its artistic merit or its social messages. However, the economic dimension is equally compelling. Each season, dozens of troupe's tours across the state, generating substantial revenue through ticket sales, creating seasonal employment for hundreds, and stimulating local economies wherever they perform.

In this context, the present paper aims to investigate the economic impact of moving theatre in Assam. It seeks to explore how this unique cultural industry supports livelihoods, boosts rural economies, interacts with other sectors, and adapts to changing audience preferences in the digital age. By highlighting the economic underpinnings of a cultural institution, this study hopes to contribute to a more holistic understanding of how traditional art forms can sustain and enrich regional economies.

History and Evolution of Moving Theatre in Assam:

The history of moving theatre in Assam, known locally as *Bhramyaman Theatre*, is a fascinating story of cultural innovation, grassroots engagement, and artistic resilience. It emerged out of a need to decentralize access to theatre and provide quality entertainment to people living beyond the urban centers, particularly in the remote towns and villages of Assam.

The Birth of a Cultural Movement (Late 1960s):

The seeds of moving theatre were sown in the late 1960s, a period marked by political unrest, socio-economic changes, and a growing appetite for accessible entertainment among the masses. At that time, theatre in Assam was largely confined to urban proscenium stages and seasonal festivals. There was a distinct cultural gap between rural audiences and mainstream theatre performances.

This gap inspired pioneers like Achyut Lahkar, regarded as the father of Bhramyaman Theatre, to experiment with a mobile format that could bring drama directly to the people. Lahkar established the Nataraj Theatre in 1963, which is widely considered the first organized mobile theatre troupe in Assam. Shortly after, troupes like Kohinoor Theatre, Rajtilak Theatre, and Abahan Theatre followed suit.

These early ventures were modest in scale but rich in vision. They combined folk elements with modern theatre techniques, presenting plays that reflected the hopes, fears, and realities of the common people. Importantly, these troupes were self-contained units—equipped with their own tents, stages, lighting systems, and transport—which allowed them to set up shows in any open space.

Growth and Popularization (1980s–1990s):

The 1980s and 1990s were a golden era for moving theatre in Assam. As rural literacy improved and audiences became more engaged with storytelling forms beyond cinema and folk traditions, the appeal of mobile theatre skyrocketed. Troupes began to expand their scale and professionalism. During this time, moving theatre performances became grander in scale—both in terms of stagecraft and content.

Several innovations took place in this period:

- Use of elaborate lighting and sound systems, enhancing the production value.
- Incorporation of mythological, historical, and contemporary themes, allowing a mix of tradition and modernity.
- Introduction of film and TV actors into the theatre space, which drew massive crowds.
- Experiments with special effects and rotating stages, making the format even more engaging.

These developments contributed to the rapid spread of mobile theatre culture throughout Assam. Audiences from both rural and semi-urban areas flocked to the performances, often turning theatre nights into festive, community-wide events. For many, it was not just about watching a play—it was about experiencing a rare moment of collective joy and social interaction.

Format and Operational Model:

The unique format of Bhramyaman Theatre sets it apart from traditional theatre groups. These are fully mobile units that tour for 6 to 8 months a year, covering up to 100 destinations during a season. The troupes travel in large convoys—comprising trucks, buses, and trailers—that carry everything from stage equipment and lighting to tents, props, costumes, and sleeping quarters.

Key features of the format include:

- **Temporary Infrastructure:** Large tents capable of seating 1,000 to 2,000 people are erected at each location, often within a day.
- **Self-sufficiency:** Most troupes have their own technical staff, cooks, electricians, and mechanics, making them independent of local resources.
- **Seasonal Planning:** The theatre season typically begins in August or September and continues till March or April, avoiding the monsoon months.
- **Script Rotation:** Each troupe prepares 2–4 new plays every season, rotating them based on audience preferences at different locations.

This model allows theatre to reach places where permanent theatres do not exist, making it one of the most inclusive cultural formats in the state. Moreover, the mobile nature of these troupes ensures that they are constantly in touch with diverse audiences, allowing for rapid feedback and adaptation of content.

Direct Economic Contributions:

The Bhramyaman Theatre industry in Assam is a vital driver of economic activity, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas where employment opportunities in the formal sector may be limited. While its primary identity is artistic, the economic functions of mobile theatre are wide-ranging and deeply embedded in local economies. This section highlights the key direct economic contributions made by the moving theatre industry in Assam.

Employment Generation

One of the most significant contributions of moving theatre is its role as a seasonal employment generator. Each troupe operates as a fully self-sufficient unit, requiring a variety of skilled and semi-skilled personnel to ensure smooth operations throughout the touring season. From table 1 we can see that on average, each troupe employs between 80 to 150 individuals. These include:

Performers: Lead actors, supporting cast, dancers, and singers.

Technical Crew: Sound and light technicians, set designers, and special effects experts.

Logistics and Support Staff: Stage hands, drivers, cooks, cleaners, and security personnel.

Marketing and Administration: Ticket sellers, local agents, PR personnel, and financial managers.

In this type of theatre although the employment is primarily seasonal (6–8 months per year), it offers a stable and often repeatable source of income for many workers. In regions with limited industrial or service sector jobs, mobile theatre provides a dependable livelihood. Many workers gain hands-on experience in live event management, stagecraft, and performing arts. Some technicians and actors have built long-term careers solely through this platform, later transitioning into film, television, or urban theatre. While traditionally male-dominated, recent years have seen an increase in female actors and backstage crew, contributing to gender inclusivity within the cultural workforce. In essence, Bhramyaman Theatre acts as a decentralized micro-industry, promoting local employment and skill-building in areas where formal opportunities may not be easily accessible.

Moving theatre in Assam also plays a major role in creating lucrative earning opportunities for artists, especially during the off-season in other entertainment sectors. Leading troupes often hire well-known film and television actors on seasonal contracts. These contracts can range from ₹5 lakh to ₹20 lakh per season, depending on the actor's popularity and the troupe's budget. For many artists, this income rivals or even exceeds what they earn from film or television projects. For up-and-coming actors, moving theatre serves as a launchpad. The exposure to live audiences and the intense touring schedule help actors hone their craft and gain recognition across the state.

Diversity of Roles: Artists often perform in multiple genres and roles—from mythological characters to contemporary social figures—expanding their artistic repertoire and marketability. Composers, lyricists, costume designers, makeup artists, and choreographers also benefit from these seasonal productions, often taking up parallel assignments in music albums or films.

Thus, the economic impact on artists extends beyond salaries – enhancing visibility, skillsets, and career prospects in the broader entertainment ecosystem.

Revenue from Ticket Sales

Ticket sales constitute the primary source of income as shown in table 2 for moving theatre troupes, and they generate substantial seasonal revenue, especially when compared to conventional theatre formats in India.

- **Audience Attendance:** Each show typically attracts between 800 and 2,000 spectators, depending on the popularity of the play, the troupe’s reputation, and the location.
- **Ticket Pricing:** Prices usually range between ₹100 and ₹300, with premium seats sometimes going as high as ₹500 in popular shows. Many troupes adopt tiered pricing to cater to a wider demographic, ensuring affordability for rural audiences.
- **Daily Revenue Potential:** On average, a well-attended show can earn ₹1–3 lakh per night in ticket sales.
- **Seasonal Earnings:** Over a full season of 6–8 months, a successful troupe may perform 150–200 shows, leading to estimated revenues ranging from ₹1 crore to ₹2 crore or more.
- **Pre-Booking & Sponsorships:** In some locations, advance bookings and local sponsorships from small businesses add to the revenue. Popular troupes are sometimes invited by local committees or clubs to perform during regional festivals or public events.

The consistent audience turnout, combined with relatively low overhead costs (compared to film production), makes moving theatre a profitable cultural enterprise with strong grassroots support and from table 2 we can find that on an average the income generation of a theatre ranges from ₹3.5 – 4.2 crore.

Heads	Economic Contribution
Employment	80–150 people per troupe per season
Employment Type	Seasonal (6–8 months), skilled & semi-skilled
Artist Contracts	₹5–20 lakh per actor (lead roles), ₹1–5 lakh for support staff
Daily Attendance	800–2,000 spectators per show
Ticket Price Range	₹100–₹300 (sometimes ₹500 for VIP seats)
Daily Revenue	₹1,00,000 to ₹3,00,000 per show
Seasonal Revenue	₹1 crore to ₹2+ crore per troupe
Total Troupes (est.)	35–40 active troupes across Assam
Local Spending	Tent rentals, electricity, water, food, logistics, hiring local services

Areas	Estimated Income (INR)
Ticket Sales	₹3 – 3.6 crore
Local Sponsorship & Ads	₹20 – 30 lakh
Food/Merchandise Concessions	₹5 – 10 lakh
Digital Rights & Recordings	₹2 – 5 lakh
Govt. Grants/Subsidies	₹1 – 5 lakh
Special Shows	₹2 – 10 lakh
Total	₹3.5 – 4.2 crore

Indirect Economic Benefits of Moving Theatre in Assam:

The economic footprint of Assam's Bhramyaman Theatre extends well beyond the operational revenues of the troupes themselves. As a dynamic cultural enterprise that physically moves across the state, the mobile theatre acts as a **stimulus for local economies**, particularly in rural and semi-urban regions. This section examines the indirect economic benefits, focusing on how this unique form of entertainment revitalizes small businesses, generates temporary employment, and contributes to the broader cultural economy of Assam.

Local Business Boost:

One of the most visible economic impacts of Bhramyaman Theatre is the temporary surge in economic activity that it generates in the locations it visits. Local food vendors, refreshment stalls, and souvenir sellers benefit directly from increased foot traffic. On performance nights, vendors report a two- to three-fold increase in sales, particularly in areas where entertainment options are limited (Baruah, 2021).

Restaurants, tea stalls, and small eateries (locally known as *dhabas*) near the venue experience higher demand before and after shows. In addition, public transport operators, including auto-rickshaws, shared taxis, and cycle rickshaws, observe increased ridership as spectators travel to and from performance locations. The short-term demand for services and goods translates into higher earnings for local business owners, enhancing community-level economic resilience.

Rentals and Local Services:

Troupes typically rent open grounds, school fields, or community spaces to set up their performance infrastructure. These rentals provide direct financial benefits to landowners, municipal bodies, or school committees. Rental rates vary by location and venue size, with payments ranging between ₹10,000 and ₹50,000 per stint.

In addition to land use, troupes hire local electricians, plumbers, and water suppliers for essential services such as lighting, power connections, and sanitation. These transactions inject liquidity into the informal service economy.

Moreover, local labor is often engaged for erecting tents, constructing temporary seating, handling logistics, and providing security. Workers are usually hired on a daily wage basis, with pay ranging from ₹500 to ₹800 per day. These opportunities are significant in regions where seasonal unemployment is prevalent, especially during the agricultural off-season.

Contribution to the Cultural Economy:

The mobile theatre also plays a pivotal role in enriching Assam's cultural economy. Each new season brings a demand for original content, creating opportunities for regional playwrights, lyricists, and composers. These artists often derive their stories from local folklore, historical events, or contemporary social issues, thus nurturing Assamese literature and oral traditions.

Furthermore, the inclusion of indigenous music and dance forms – such as *Bihu*, *Ojapali*, and *Ankiya Naat* – within theatrical productions helps in reviving and recontextualizing traditional art forms. Costume designers, folk musicians, and set artists are frequently sourced locally, contributing to the monetization of artistic skillsets that otherwise remain underutilized.

This content production cycle ensures that local creative workers remain engaged throughout the theatre season. It also leads to the preservation of intangible cultural heritage by adapting traditional performance styles to modern narratives (Deka, 2020).

Economic Multiplier Effect:

The cumulative effect of these interactions results in a substantial, though often underreported, economic multiplier effect. For every rupee spent directly on theatre operations, several more circulate through the local economy via spending on food, lodging, transport, and services. In towns that host multiple shows over a week, the theatre's presence can contribute upwards of ₹5–10 lakh to the local economy (Assam Cultural Affairs Department Report, 2022)

Government Role:

The Bhramyaman Theatre industry, though privately managed and rooted in grassroots cultural entrepreneurship, operates within a socio-political ecosystem where government involvement can significantly enhance its sustainability and growth. Despite being a vital cultural asset and economic driver in Assam, the mobile theatre sector has historically received limited institutional support. This section evaluates the current governmental engagement with the industry and outlines policy recommendations aimed at strengthening this cultural economy. At present, the Government of Assam, primarily through its Department of Cultural Affairs, engages with the mobile theatre sector on an ad hoc basis. Occasional grants, cultural awards, and logistical assistance are extended to theatre groups, particularly for:

- Commemorative productions,
- Participation in state festivals,
- Showcasing Assamese culture in national or international events.

Some troupes also benefit from access to government-owned performance grounds, although these allocations are not formalized or uniformly distributed.

Additionally, organizations such as the Sangeet Natak Akademi and the Ministry of Culture (Government of India) provide funding for the preservation of traditional art forms, under which some mobile theatre projects qualify. However, the lack of a dedicated policy framework means that most support is inconsistent, inaccessible to smaller troupes, or heavily reliant on individual bureaucratic facilitation (Gogoi, 2021).

Challenges in the Existing Framework

Several challenges persist in the integration of mobile theatre into formal cultural policy, including:

- **Absence of Regulatory Recognition:** Mobile theatre companies are not classified under a distinct category for cultural industries, which limits their access to institutional finance, insurance, and legal protection.
- **Lack of Infrastructure Support:** Despite being a seasonal industry, mobile theatre lacks designated performance zones, subsidized equipment, or storage infrastructure.
- **Unequal Access to Subsidies:** Larger troupes with political or media connections often monopolize access to grants, leaving smaller or rural troupes under-resourced.
- **No Skill Development or Capacity Building:** Actors, technicians, and support staff operate with limited formal training. The absence of a structured curriculum or workshop series restricts professional development.

These systemic gaps underscore the need for comprehensive policy intervention to ensure the viability of Bhramyaman Theatre as both a cultural and economic institution.

Suggestions and Policy Recommendations:

To address the limitations and unlock the full economic and cultural potential of Assam's mobile theatre, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

- The state government should formally recognize Bhramyaman Theatre under the "Cultural and Creative Industries" sector.
- Establish a licensing or registration system to enable better policy delivery and regulation.
- Provide legal backing for copyright protections, performer rights, and insurance schemes tailored to the industry.
- Develop state-owned portable infrastructure banks—sound systems, lighting rigs, stage components—that can be rented at subsidized rates.
- Allocate dedicated land parcels in major towns for seasonal use by touring theatre troupes, with water, electricity, and sanitation facilities in place.
- Offer transportation subsidies to reduce logistical expenses for remote tours.
- Expand access to low-interest cultural entrepreneurship loans through state banks and microfinance institutions.
- Institute annual grants based on transparent metrics such as show count, audience reach, and employment generated.
- Provide tax exemptions on inputs like costumes, musical instruments, and construction materials for stage setups.
- Launch a Mobile Theatre Training Program under the Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM), focusing on:
 - Acting
 - Set design
 - Sound and light engineering
 - Scriptwriting and direction
- Collaborate with universities and performing arts institutes for certified short-term courses and workshops.

- Create an official digital archive of performances, scripts, and oral histories to preserve the legacy of Bhramyaman Theatre.
- Encourage troupes to explore digital distribution platforms (e.g., Doordarshan, OTTs) through financial and technical support.
- Promote cross-border cultural exchange with other regions and countries, showcasing Assamese theatre at global festivals.
- A multi-stakeholder governance framework is essential for policy success.

Conclusion:

The Bhramyaman Theatre of Assam represents far more than a mobile form of entertainment. It is a living cultural institution that travels across the state, weaving together narratives of tradition, innovation, and local identity. Embedded deeply in Assam's socio-cultural fabric, it has demonstrated an extraordinary capacity to blend artistic expression with economic dynamism, reaching audiences across rural and semi-urban geographies that remain underserved by mainstream cultural industries.

Throughout this study, it has been demonstrated that the moving theatre industry contributes significantly to the state's economy – not just through direct revenue via ticket sales and employment generation, but also through its robust indirect impact on local businesses, microenterprises, and the cultural economy at large. From providing short-term employment to rural artisans and vendors to supporting local writers, musicians, and technicians, the mobile theatre system fosters distributed economic participation while preserving and reinterpreting the cultural heritage of Assam.

Despite its potential, however, the sector continues to operate in a precarious policy vacuum. Existing support mechanisms are fragmented, often reactive rather than proactive, and insufficiently aligned with the real operational needs of theatre troupes. The lack of formal recognition, access to finance, training infrastructure, and digital modernization poses serious constraints on the long-term viability of this culturally and economically significant industry.

To transform Bhramyaman Theatre into a sustainable cultural enterprise, what is needed is a strategic, multi-tiered policy framework that recognizes the unique operational model of mobile theatre while supporting its evolution in a rapidly changing socio-economic landscape. This involves not only financial and infrastructural investment but also capacity building, digital integration, and legal safeguards for content and performers.

Moreover, the theatre's touring model – bringing culture to the people rather than waiting for people to come to culture – offers a replicable blueprint for decentralized cultural entrepreneurship across other regions in India. In an era where rural depopulation and urban migration are pressing concerns, Bhramyaman Theatre proves that cultural industries can thrive outside urban centers, and even serve as engines of community resilience, identity preservation, and economic development.

With collaborative governance, meaningful public investment, and community engagement, the Bhramyaman Theatre industry has the potential not just to survive – but to thrive – as a national model for inclusive, grassroots cultural economies. Investing in its future is not merely a matter of preserving tradition; it is a step toward crafting a more equitable, creative, and economically vibrant rural India.

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Narratives of Social Transformations in Indian Literature

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Abstract

The paper examines how Indian literature has emerged as a tool of social change and a mirror of the society, starting with ancient reformist poetry and moving up to the present-day narratives which deal with intricate caste, gender, class and identity issues. Indian literature has always been connected to the moral and cultural awareness of the country as it addresses the issues of strongly rooted hierarchies and inequalities. Literary works in the pre-independence period like that of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore were used to stir nationalism and reform against colonialism and social evils. This tradition is carried into the work of post-independence and contemporary authors, who focus on the inequalities of caste and gender that have persisted since independence, the psychological impacts of urbanization, and the identity crisis that globalization has produced. In specific Dalit and female writings have made the voices of the marginalized seen and dignified and the literature has become a platform of resistance and power. Indian literature is not only recording the changes in society but also motivating the moral insight, social awareness and progressive developments through critique, empathy, as well as imagination. It promotes diversity unity and creates a pluralistic national identity, which cherishes equality, justice, and inclusivity. Finally, Indian literature is a crucial tool towards imagining and implementing social change, in the continual realization of human dignity and social justice in the country.

Keywords: Indian literature, social transformation, caste, gender, nationalism, globalization, Dalit writing, reform movements, identity, equality

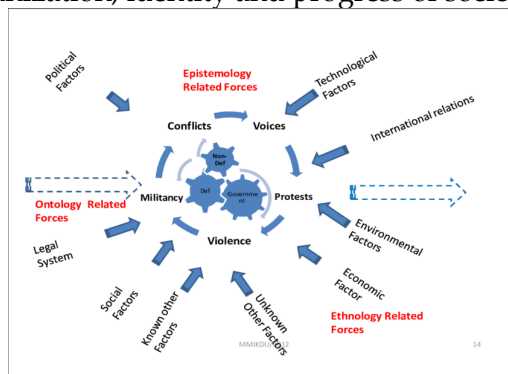
Introduction:

The introduction to *Narratives of Social Transformations in Indian Literature* sets the main point that Indian literature has been a mirror of the social change and a catalyst of the social change all over the history of the country. It maintains that literature that is articulated through poetry, novels, drama in the diverse languages of India is not an artistic or aesthetic activity but an essential place to be involved and redefine social realities. The introduction discusses the manner in which stories, characters and literary movements like the Bhakti movement and Dalit literature have defended against the deep-rooted caste, class and gender hierarchies to instill equality and justice. It places this literary development within the context of the wider historical period, including the ancient world and the colonial, postcolonial, and globalized world, and how authors have

always reacted to such issues of the freedom struggle, industrialization, urbanization and modern identity crisis. It recognizes the significance of regional literatures and Indian Writing in English in giving voice to the marginalized and its social issues by highlighting the variety in the linguistic and cultural manifestations in India. Finally, the introduction establishes the role of the Indian literature as an evolving and changing phenomenon, representing the moral and cultural process of the nation and playing an active role in its socio-political development and the sense of community.

Definition of Social Transformation:

Social transformation is the profound, radical, and radical transformation of the structures, institutions, values and norms of a society that causes sweeping changes, which are often irreversible and affect all spheres of life, including culture and politics, economics and human interaction. Social transformation, in contrast with the rest of social change, which is gradual, transforms the very basis of society and establishes new systems of thought and behavior. It is holistic and it influences many dimensions, i.e. technology, economy and the collective consciousness and is motivated by the narrows and the broads of the forces like the political movements, the scientific discoveries and the cultural revolutions. The shift to industrial societies as opposed to agrarian societies, the abolition of apartheid in South Africa, the development of the internet all over the world is an example of how societal change redefines the organization, identity and progress of societies on a large scale.



Social Transformation:

Social Transformation in India through Literature

The Indian literature has always been used as a reflection of the social reality, as well as a means of the social change. Narrative art has been employed by writers to address various challenges like caste discrimination, gender inequality, poverty, and post-colonial identity through the usage of different languages and historical settings. Literature not only records the changing consciousness in the country but also influences the state of mind among people in terms of justice, equality and reform.

Pre-Independence Era: Nationalism and Social Reform

Under the British colonial rule, literature developed into the important tool of awakening national awareness and recognizing the colonial oppression and domestic social injustices. Prose, poetry, and oral storytelling were among the tools of writers and reformers to develop unity and criticize regressive traditions.

- **Nationalism and Identity:** Literature was also used to curb patriotism and self-awareness by writers such as Rabindranath Tagore and Bankim Chandra

Chattopadhyay. *Gitanjali* and *Gora* by Tagore touched the issues of humanism and Indian identity, and *Anandamath* by Chattopadhyay presented *Vande Mataram* that was used as a protest song and as a song of national pride.

- **Challenging Social Evils:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar are social reformers who preached against systems like sati, child marriage and caste rigidity through their writings. Their social reformative and literary activity formed the moral basis of the social justice movements in India in the future.
- **Early Anti-Caste Narratives:** Authors such as Mulk Raj Anand were able to represent the oppressed. *Untouchable* (1935), a novel by him, was a touching account of humiliations meted on a young sweeper, Bakha, with caste-based discrimination being shown as cruel and leading to national and international sympathy.

Post-Independence Era: Documenting the New Nation:

Following the independence of India in 1947, literature was influenced by issues of nation-building, trauma of Partition and modernization. Authors explored the contradictions of liberty, democracy and inequality in an ever-evolving society.

Caste and Dalit Literature: The persistence of caste discrimination inspired powerful Dalit voices that sought self-assertion and justice.

- *Bama's Karukku* (1992) portrays a Dalit woman's spiritual and social struggles.
- *Omprakash Valmiki's Joothan* (1997) exposes the humiliations endured by Dalits, calling for equality and human dignity.

Gender and Patriarchy: Women writers questioned traditional roles and the oppression of patriarchy.

- *Ismat Chughtai's Lihaaf* challenged societal taboos around female sexuality.
- *Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things* (1997) exposed how caste and gender intersect to marginalize women who defy norms.

Urbanization and Economic Inequality: Post-independence literature also explored class disparity and the psychological toll of modernization.

- *R.K. Narayan's The Guide* (1958) depicted the conflict between tradition and modernity.
- *Aravind Adiga's The White Tiger* (2008) critiqued corruption and inequality in contemporary India's economic boom.

Contemporary Themes: Globalization and Identity:

In the 21st century, Indian literature continues to evolve, addressing globalization, migration, and identity politics.

- **Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*** explores the emotional and cultural struggles of the Indian diaspora adapting to Western life.
- **Amitav Ghosh** examines the intersection of history, environment, and politics, tracing how colonial trade and modern conflicts shape human experiences.

Themes of Social Transformation in Indian Literature:

Indian literature is a rich tool of exploring and motivating social change to reflect the essence and dynamics of caste, class, gender, identity, and modernization. By using a wide range of stories, authors address the manner in which a person and an extended group can

be formed by historical, economic and cultural pressures, as well as the means of criticizing oppressive structures and envisioning a more just society. These repeated themes are testimonies to the way in which literature reflects social realities and is a driving force behind change of thought and action.

Caste and Class

The Indian literary discourse revolves around the issue of caste and class differences which is a manifestation of the social stratifications and the financial inequalities existing in India. Through their characters and stories, authors tend to depict the oppression, rebellion, and dreams of the discriminated. An example that comes to mind is *Untouchable* by Mulk Raj Anand and *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga that show the harsh truths of lower classes and criticizes the hypocrisy and corruption that perpetuate class divisions. These two sources highlight the ongoing social stasis and make the readers think about the ethical implications of structural inequality.

Gender and Patriarchy

The Indian literature is characterized by the theme of gender inequality and resistance to the oppression of the patriarchal social order, which is prominent in the works of female authors. These stories help to explain how women are opposing, strong, and seek their identity in a society dominated by men. *Lihaaf* by the Ismat Chughtai and *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy do not just challenge gender norms but they further the thought of feminism by showing women as the agents of change, but not mere victims. Such literature marks a more general cultural change of appreciating gender equality and giving a voice to women.

Urbanization and Globalization

India has been redefined by the twin aspects of the globalization and urbanization and literature best reflects these changes. Authors such as Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga explore the paradoxes of the fast modernization process that promises development and opportunity and increases both social and economic disparity. This psychological and moral price of urban living can be found in their works, and characters have to balance both rural culture and urban dreams in the society between affluence and lack of it.

Identity and Nationhood

The issues of identity and nationhood became the concern of Indian literature in the post-independence period. R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao are the authors who are interested in discussing the co-existence of tradition and modernity, and spirituality and materialism in the changing Indian consciousness. Their characters and stories question the definition of being Indian in the fast-modernizing world, as they connect the everyday problem with the national and cultural issues. These writings play part in the still going on debate of India identity in modernity and globalization.

Subaltern Voices and Marginalization

The Indian literature also serves as a voice of marginalized and subaltern voices, which were historically suppressed by the social, economic and political exclusion. The writers of the region and Dalit shine light on the lives of oppressed, who are urban poor, rural farmers, and tribal societies. With the help of these stories, the authors challenge exploitation and injustice within the social institutions that are reflected in the Karukku of

Bama and Joothan of Omprakash Valmiki. These writings are not just documentations of misery but even resistance and assertion of manhood.

Social and Political Change

In its simplest form Indian literature serves as social awakening and reform. A lot of authors employ their art to educate people on injustices and promote equality, freedom and human rights. Literature goes beyond narrating stories by covering such themes as caste oppression, poverty, nationalism, and corruption, and transforms into a moral and political agent of change. In colonial or more modern times, Indian writers have always attempted to impact society and words were the tools of empathy, criticism and transformation.

Role of Indian Literature in Social Transformation:

Social change has always been an effective process in Indian literature. It acts as an inspiration in bringing a change and also as a mirror to the realities of the society. Literature has constantly fought injustice and urged developments through various themes covering caste discrimination, oppression of women, class struggle and nationalism. Through changes in time, ancient spiritual books and medieval reformation poems and modern novels, the Indian authors have spoken out and encouraged the realization of a more equitable society to think critically, to have compassion and visions.

Historical Role:

- **Challenge of rigid norms:** Early literary personalities, Kabir, Mirabai and Tukaram, challenged the societal hierarchies and caste divisions that had strong roots in the Indian society through their poems. Their poetry promoted spiritual equality and humanism and denounced ritualism and hypocrisy. These literary pieces established the basis of more not exclusive and egalitarian world view.
- **Fueling social reform movements:** In the 19 th century and the early 20 th century, literature played a crucial role as a tool of social reforms. Other writers such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar created essays and treatises that challenged social evils such as sati, child marriage, and gender inequality. Their works evoked the movements of reforms, aimed at the modernization and humanization of the Indian society.
- **Advancement of nationalistic and social intellect:** In the context of the struggle of freedom, literature became a means of political awakening and self-identification. The writings of writers and poets like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi were used to instill moral courage and patriotism. Such journals as Young India and Harijan were very instrumental in bringing the people into self-rule and non-violent resistance, strongly shaping the nationalist psyche of India.

Contemporary Role:

- **Mirroring the social reality:** The Indian literature of the modern era reflects the intricacies of the modern life: the process of urbanization, migration, inequality, and clash of cultures. Fiction writers such as Arundhati Roy, Rohinton Mistry and Aravind Adiga break the vise of modern India, in corruption, class stratification, etc., and as such, this reflects the changing social landscape (Nagaraj, 2024).

- **Responding to current problems:** Contemporary authors are dealing with the urgent problems, including gender inequality, environmental degradation, political instability, and globalization. Such pieces of writing as Anita Desai *Clear Light of Day* and the poetry of Arundhati Subramaniam deal with the emotional and social alienation of contemporary people, and encourage the readers to reconsider the progress and humanity.
- **Motive of change:** Literature nowadays does not only describe, it challenges. It makes people wonder about society and reform it as the author brings to light injustices and contradictions and invites readers to imagine change. It generates awareness and empathy and affects social attitudes and even policymaking.
- **Raising the voices of the marginalized:** Indian literature has also turned into a platform where the marginalized groups (Dalits, women, tribal communities and LGBTQ+) can talk about themselves. Authors such as Bama, Omprakash Valmiki, and Mahasweta Devi introduce the issue of systemic oppression and challenge prevailing discourses to give a voice and dignity to voices that are suppressed.

Transformational Processes

- **Critique and commentary:** Literature reveals those injustices that are concealed or normalized to make a reader face unpleasant realities. Authors have used satire, realism and social commentary to criticize political systems, caste systems and gender biases.
- **Empathy and insight:** Through offering the readers different social worlds, the literature creates the feeling of emotional connection and empathy. It makes people look beyond their lives and learn to be tolerant and common humanity in spite of caste, religious, and social differences.
- **Re-inventing futures:** Imagination allows the writers to provide the alternative view of the society- the one in which equality, justice, and compassion reign. Utopian and reformist literature offers hope and a way forward to society, and it evokes activism and moral action.
- **National identity:** Indian literature has played a significant role in the development and the strengthening of pluralistic national identity. It glorifies the regional languages, folk traditions, and cultural diversity, and also fosters unity in diversity. Literature therefore fosters the sense of the pride in the heritage and the wholesome feeling of belonging.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Indian literature is one of the most powerful sources of thought and social change, a blend of art and activism to confront the most firmly established hierarchies and fight for justice, equality, and human dignity. Since the spiritual egalitarianism of the Bhakti poets to the comfortable cries of Dalit and feminist authors, literature has always been able to remake social consciousness and induce reform. It has recorded the history of the country under colonialism, independence, and globalization that sheds light on the plight of identity, classes, and gender. Indian writers have not merely reflected the changes in the society but have also fostered empathy and awareness and moral development by voicing the oppressed and addressing the issue of oppression. Therefore, Indian literature is still alive - linking the past and the present, keeping the spirit of democracy alive, and showing a more accepting and human future to the country.

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Delineation of women in Bengali Household: A brief foray into Sailabala Ghosh Jaya's *Janma Aparadhi*.

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Abstract

Contemporary creative literature always receives an upperhand as it was considered to be the only public discourse that facilitated women specially from Bengali households to give vent to their long-repressed desires. What becomes significant was the 'exodus of Bengali women from the socially constructed invisible confinements that contributed to a great extent to the omission or trivialization of women. Impediments pertaining to fields like education and marriage have given a new dimension to the way women view their life living in these households. This paper explores the scenario of a Bengali household and attempts to understand the issues that contribute to various kinds of treatment meted out to women through the lens of a women, as she pens it down in her much-celebrated work. This paper also explores the way language has been used by a female author which can further our studies into the field of gynocriticism which talks about analysis of literature from a female perspective.

Keywords: Bengali Household, Contemporary Creative Literature, Delineation, Exodus, Gynocriticism, Trivialization

Introduction:

Rightly did Swami Vivekananda point out "Just as a bird cannot fly with one wing only, a Nation cannot march forward if the women are left behind". Etymologically the word 'woman' means half of man. It has been very well illustrated in the 'Nyaya Darshan' that man and woman are closely associated with each other as the soul and body. Therefore, women ought to be respected. Feminist historians who complain about the omission or trivialization of women in traditional history advocate the construction of women's history from their own perspective and collection of information about them primarily from themselves i.e their writings, oral transcripts etc. One can trace the evolution, albeit slow, of new beliefs shaping their goals, attitudes and activities. An attempt to change women's subordination began to emerge in an embryonic form. This paper centres around one such woman called Sailabala Ghosh Jaya who decodes the notion of 'guilt' in her novel *Janma Aparadhi*.

I have relied for sources primarily on her life and her own novel entitled *Janma Aparadhi*.

Contemporary creative culture and imaginative writing by women has always been given importance as it was the only public discourse in which women spoke on issues otherwise not discussed by them. An emblematic example is Sailabala Ghosh Jaya's *Sheikh Ando*, a daring novel which discusses women's sexuality and an attachment between a Muslim boy and a Hindu widow, something which was forbidden in Hindu tradition (Ray 3). While writing this novel, Ghosh Jaya could not assume that her desire to write would be accepted by her extended family. Another significant aspect that almost debarred her from writing novels was lack of support from her in laws. A Hindu woman after marriage is usually taken to her husband's joint family, where most of the time she remains occupied with household chores. She had even altered her name to 'Ghosh Jaya' (wife of Ghosh) to camouflage her identity. Writing for her was a precious source and it is through her writings that she has been able to imagine new collectivities. One can also trace the evolution of 'Gyno criticism', a branch of feminist criticism that focuses on women's art with the aim of developing a 'women's poetics. Not only does it develop women's poetics, it also ensures the articulation of voices hitherto silenced, expressing that which has not been expressed. (Mukhopadhyay 46) Ghosh Jaya was a dynamic lady who endeavoured to show the discrimination and the prevalent patriarchal domination in the society. Ghosh Jaya's undaunted pen has succeeded in upholding the long-repressed desires of women.

1. Janma Aparadhi:

What Ghosh Jaya deals with in *Janma Aparadhi* has received a great deal of attention. The novel revolves around a woman called Opera. A simple, sober and dedicated housewife who hardly objects to what her husband says. Constant subjugation and repeated negligence had rendered her tolerant towards the brutal treatment meted out to her. As the title itself suggests, the purpose of this novel has been to trace the ways a 'woman' is considered to be an 'aparadhi'.

What becomes significant in this novel is the constant fear of Opera of being insulted or rebuked by her husband, Binod. Binod's indifferent attitude towards his wife reminds us of the deep-seated prejudices that are associated with women. Being labelled as an 'aparadhi' (guilty) since birth is perhaps what Opera has also been subjected to and this is what we find dominating Binod's mind as well. His constant insult, repeated negligence during her illness, showing no gratitude and holding back letters addressed to Opera gave him immense pleasure, as the narrator says. According to Binod, this is something that a woman is destined to face owing to the 'guilt' she has been carrying since birth.

Opera's simple yet thought provoking comment 'meyer manusher lekha pora sekhata bujhi boro Aparadh?' (Is it an offence for a girl to seek education?) reminds us of the prejudices that people harboured about educating a female child. Binod's jeering reply, 'je meyemanush lekha pora shikheche, tar ki bhodrostho achhe? Se toh beshya!' (A girl who educates herself is nothing but a 'whore'.) indicates that Opera's husband also belonged to the same category and thought in the same vein. Educating a girl child was not only an offence but also an omen, as it was thought to bring bad luck to the family and at times even cause the death of the husband.

2. Ghosh Jaya's Take on Educating Girls:

This is what Ghosh Jaya had also tried to establish. Education is the only weapon which could help women proceed from a world filled with darkness and oppression to a world

filled with light. The revolutionary zeal that education was expected to inculcate in the minds of the women is also something which needs to be taken care of. Women's education in India found its rapid development in the late nineteenth and twentieth century. Sailabala Ghosh Jaya was one of them who developed the process. Coming out of the stereotypical thoughts and positing themselves in a world where enlightenment prevails, is itself like coming out of the 'zenana' that women were subjected to.

The 'pardah' system for girls was considered the worst possible social hindrance for female education. Ignoring this, no appropriate and fruitful way could be identified for spreading female education. Declaring war against confinement or Pardah system could bring no success (Manindranath et.al., 1330, p.82). Besides this, girls were made to leave school after primary education because of child marriage and after marriage they had to stay in the inner part of their house. But comparing to child marriage, Pardah system or confinement was the worst sort of hindrance for female education (General Report 35). To get rid of this condition various thoughts were developed among the missionaries and they started to think deeply and held discussions on how education could be made available to the females staying in the inner part of their house allowing full respect to the confinement System or Pardah system. Thus, they gave birth to a special system of education, 'Zenana education'. The missionaries faced financial crisis while delivering institutional education and at that time a huge number of Missionary Schools closed down due to the scarcity of fund (Murshid, 1938, p.30-32; Sonia, n.d., p.145; Jogesh, n.d. pp.27-29). For this reason, 'Zenana Education' was introduced to the women as a cheap alternative to the institutional education. (Masum 11)

At this critical juncture mentioned can be made of Rousseau's *Emile* where he gives a sketch of his character of woman. Sophia, says Rousseau, should be as perfect a woman as Emilius is a man, and to render her so, it is necessary to examine the character which nature has given to the sex. Mary Wollstonecraft in her much celebrated *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* has critically commented on the verdicts of Rousseau. Wollstonecraft says,

He then proceeds to prove that woman ought to be weak and passive, because she has less bodily strength than man; and hence infers that she was formed to please and to be subject to him, and it is her duty to render herself agreeable to her master—this being the grand end of her existence. (Wollstonecraft 99)

3. Discussion:

In *Janma Aparadhi*, Ghosh Jaya has not explicitly talked about the oppressive treatment meted out to women. Although, Opera is not a direct victim of domestic violence, we can find traces of it in the narrative. Binod's indifferent attitude towards his wife, not giving her proper treatment during her illness, rebuking her saying she has faked her illness are synonymous with the oppression meted out to women. In a country where women were considered to be even worse than a 'shoe' (choti jutaro odhom), where her birth itself is a 'guilt', breaking free of a marriage which brings nothing but misery was still considered to be one of the wildest dreams of many women. True that even Opera once thought of breaking free of this marriage, but she is immediately reminded of the possible consequences associated with it. The

maltreatment reaches its highest development in the 'blow' she receives from her husband which ultimately leads to her miscarriage. It is a sense of wrongdoing associated with 'leaving a husband' that does not allow her to object nor leave her husband forever.

Lack of access to health care, proper education and ill treatment meted out to women is still a pertinent issue in some parts of the world. In this regard, Government interventions in terms of Sustainable Development Goals have played an important role. Issues related to maternity health and gender inequalities form a significant part of these goals.

Goal 5, pertaining specifically to women empowerment and gender equality, has proven to be particularly challenging for many countries, including India. Significant gains have been achieved on a few parameters, such as an improving sex ratio, more girls having access to education and more women serving in positions of leadership. However, these improvements are not reflected in the status of women belonging to the Adivasi and other marginalised communities of the Northeast region. These women, who comprise some of India's most vulnerable and disadvantaged, are subjected to multiple levels of discrimination and abuse, and suffer from abject poverty, sexual exploitation and lack of access to basic healthcare.

Similar reverberations have been found in seminal texts like Bible as well. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar while analysing 'the monstrous Eve' in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* have made a few observations. They argued against the notion that women have always been associated with guilt. They say that Satanic Victor is Eve-like. He is curiously female. He is consumed by a fervent longing to penetrate the secrets of nature. They also say that his 'guilty' observations and his passion to understand the structure of human frame-recalls the criminal female curiosity that led Psyche to lose love by gazing upon its secret face, Eve to insist upon consuming 'intellectual food'. It is precisely at this point that Gilbert and Gubar make a remarkable comment. They say,

If so, it seems likely that what this crucial section of *Frankenstein* really enacts is the story of Eve's discovery not that she must fall but that, having been created female, she is fallen, femaleness and fallenness being essentially synonymous. (Gilbert and Gubar 328)

This comment made by Gilbert and Gubar once again reminds us of the comment made by Opera's husband when she asks for equal opportunities for education. The fact that women are 'guilty' since birth and fallen are hinted at even in Bible. It is Eve who has always been blamed for committing the 'sin' of eating the forbidden fruit. There is always a sense of wrong doing that lurks behind the birth of any girl.

4. Conclusion:

Opera in Ghosh Jaya's *Janma Aparadhi*, the woman that we have been dealing with, belong to a society where women are being questioned repeatedly for the actions they take. Fear of being persecuted, both by the society as well as by the family members refrained her from taking any drastic step. Opera's tolerance towards her husband's behaviour substantiates this fact. Opera is a passive yet sensitive woman. Opera's internalization of the deep-seated prejudices, her husband's indifferent attitude towards her and also the fear of being abandoned did not let her 'come out of her shell'. It is only in her tragic death that she experiences her emancipation. She is no more confined within the imaginary walls created by her husband. She is a free bird, flying higher, without any fear. What becomes a

significant aspect of Ghosh Jaya's writings is emancipation. It is through her undaunted pen that she has been able to emancipate her thoughts and help others also emancipate their thoughts. Through the present study, we have been able to analyse how this almost forgotten yet dynamic author has contributed significantly to the growth of literature. According to me, Ghosh Jaya is a 'must-read' to know how women have been able to discuss issues which earlier remained unnoticed. She has been a source of inspiration to many and will remain so for the generations to come.

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From Literature to Philosophy: Exploring Sartre and the Path of Existentialism

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Abstract

A review of history shows that whenever a crisis arises in human society, literature becomes the primary weapon to overcome it. This very literature teaches people how to fight against the crisis and how to live anew. Such literature does not contain abstract ideas, but rather the essence of human life. Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980) was a French philosopher, playwright, novelist, and critic, widely regarded as one of the leading figures of 20th-century existentialism. During the Second World War, when humanity had nearly forgotten its own existence, literature became a means to reanalyze and reconsider the past. Among such literary works, Sartre's writings were particularly significant, as they opened up a new world of philosophical thought. This article offers a clear look at how Sartre's novels, plays, and stories, such as *Nausea* (1938), *No Exit* (1944), and *The Flies* (1943), played a central role in building his ideas about freedom, choice, and the meaninglessness of life. Rather than simply retelling his philosophy, Sartre's creative works acted as a space where he explored and shaped the core of existentialism: the belief that we exist first and define ourselves through our actions. By examining these books, this study shows how storytelling helped Sartre craft a philosophy that still resonates today. This paper argues that Sartre's books were more than examples—they were tools for building his philosophy. Drawing from earlier writers like Dostoevsky, he used fiction to blend their insights with his own, creating something new. Through clear analysis, we'll see how his stories turned abstract thoughts into vivid experiences, from Roquentin's dread to Orestes' resolve. This study not only sheds light on Sartre's process but also suggests that books can do more than tell tales—they can spark big ideas. It invites readers to consider how Sartre's blend of story and thought offers a fresh way to understand life's challenges, making existentialism less a puzzle and more a practical lens for today.

Keywords: Existentialism, Essence, Freedom, Choice, Bad faith, *Nausea*, *No Exit*, *The Files*.

Introduction:

Human history is replete with instances where profound societal disruptions have catalysed a surge in literary output, serving as both a mirror to turmoil and a blueprint for recovery. Far from detached abstraction, such writing captures the pulsating core of lived experience, guiding individuals through adversity toward renewed purpose. At the

forefront of this tradition in the mid-20th century stood Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980), a towering intellect whose roles as philosopher, storyteller, dramatist, and activist intertwined to define existentialism. In the grim shadow of World War II, with its erosion of human dignity and certainty, Sartre's key literary contributions— the novel *Nausea* (1938) and the plays *No Exit* (1944) and *The Flies* (1943)—functioned not as passive vehicles for ideas but as dynamic arenas for their development. Sartre's philosophical ideas on existentialism are centred in the book *Being and Nothingness*. Sartre is in the inheritance and development of Husserl's irrationalism, and then pushes the boundaries, and constantly develops and forms his unique philosophical ideas of atheistic existentialism, but also to promote the development of existentialist philosophy, so that it has entered a completely new stage. Sartre's life is full of legendary colours. He was born in the darkest era of human history, when the world experienced the impact of war, and everywhere was full of violence. Sartre was conscripted into the army at the outbreak of the Second World War, and spent ten months of his life in enemy camp. It was these ten months that brought about a great change in Sartre's thinking. Sartre's thinking shifted from individualism to concern for the state of society and the masses of people, and he began to use the pen as a gun, using literature to rescue the people in dire straits. In Sartre's doctrine of existentialism, he was more concerned with the value of man as a being, and fundamentally established the unshakeable status of the human subject. Sartre fully expressed his existentialist views early on in his famous work *Nausea*, a diary novel of an autobiographical nature. Afterwards, Sartre published his academic masterpiece *Being and Nothingness*, which created a considerable wave in the philosophical and intellectual circles at that time. Later, in his speech 'Existentialism is a Humanism', Sartre elaborated the basic ideas of his existentialist philosophical conception to the public, magnificently demonstrating the 'Sartrean Existentialism'. At the heart of Sartre's existentialism is the idea that human existence requires finding the true self. The central idea of existentialism is responsibility through freedom. The basic argument of existentialism is that existence precedes essence. The three basic principles of Sartre's existentialist philosophy are: 'existence precedes essence', 'the world is absurd, life is painful' and 'free choice'. These three basic principles not only perfectly interpret Sartre's existentialist philosophy, but also, to a certain extent, become Sartre's guide to action in life. This paper dissects *Nausea*, *No Exit*, and *The Flies* to reveal their seamless integration with Sartre's thought, while juxtaposing it against the perspectives of existential kin such as Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, and Albert Camus. These comparisons underscore Sartre's unique emphasis on engaged humanism. In sum, Sartre's writings invite us to reframe existentialism as an actionable ethic, vital for addressing modern dilemmas like isolation in a digital age or ethical voids in global conflicts.

Sartre's Philosophical Foundations: Freedom, Bad Faith, and Absurdity:

Understanding Sartre's literary innovations requires grounding in his ontological blueprint, most fully articulated in *Being and Nothingness* (1943). He bifurcates reality into 'en-soi'—the opaque, self-sufficient matter of the universe—and 'pour-soi'—the reflective, freedom-wielding consciousness that disrupts and reconfigures it. For the pour-soi, life unfolds as an unending endeavour to transcend given conditions, devoid of preordained roles or cosmic mandates. As Sartre says, "Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself"¹, a formulation that burdens every decision with profound accountability.

'Bad faith' (*mauvaise foi*) emerges as the chief evasion tactic, wherein one feigns determinism to sidestep freedom's vertigo. Sartre's classic vignette of the overzealous waiter, who embodies his profession to the point of caricature, exemplifies this abdication². Freedom, in turn, breeds anguish, confronting us with an absurd expanse where no external arbiter validates our paths. This absurdity is not a cul-de-sac but a launchpad for invention, demanding authentic engagement over resignation.

Sartre's prose and drama operationalize these principles, embedding them in character arcs and conflicts that demand reader complicity. Diverging from Kierkegaard's faith-mediated individualism or Nietzsche's Dionysian exuberance, Sartre's vision incorporates a relational ethic, where autonomy intersects with communal stakes. Heidegger's existential analytics provide the phenomenological scaffolding, yet Sartre infuses it with political urgency, evident in his underground publications. Camus, by contrast, diagnoses the absurd similarly but prescribes defiant endurance rather than Sartre's value-creating labour. These tensions animate Sartre's texts, pushing philosophy toward narrative vitality.

Nausea: The Visceral Grip of Contingency and Absurdity:

Sartre's inaugural novel, *Nausea*, released in 1938, masquerades as introspective memoir while dissecting the raw underbelly of being. Antoine Roquentin, an aimless archivist ensconced in the dreary port town of Bouville, undergoes a cascade of revelations that shatter his perceptual equilibrium. This titular 'nausea' manifests as a gut-wrenching awareness of existence's superfluity, mundane entities—a bench, a chestnut root—assert their unbidden presence, defying categorization. Roquentin confesses, "The word abscess is there, but beyond the word... the abscess itself, the magnitude, the color, the horror"³, capturing language's inadequacy against being's onslaught.

This episode dovetails with Sartre's dual ontology: nausea signals the *en-soi's* relentless encroachment on the *pour-soi's* fragile sovereignty. Roquentin muses, "Everything is gratuitous, this garden, this city, and I myself... I thought I was living, and I am only existing"⁴, embodying the precedence of existence over essence. Sartre heightens Heidegger's *Angst*—that disquiet revealing our thrownness—into a corporeal upheaval, a rebellion against the world's reifying drag.

The diary format, with its staccato reflections, echoes the *pour-soi's* elusive negativity, thwarting tidy resolutions. Roquentin's dalliance with Anny, haunted by illusory perfect moments, unmasks bad faith's siren call. Redemption glimmers in artistic resolve as a melodious recording spurs him to pen a tale that endows "strange objects... no place in the world"⁵ with narrative heft. This pivot resonates with Nietzsche's imperative to affirm recurrence, yet Sartre layers in moral exigency—creation as defiant solidarity.

Kierkegaard's despair in *The Sickness unto Death* (1849) anticipates nausea as existential malaise, but his antidote is divine surrender, not Sartre's secular fabrication. Camus's Meursault in *The Stranger* (1942) mirrors Roquentin's estrangement, though his serene apathy contrasts Sartre's proactive forge. Infused with Dostoevskian introspection, *Nausea* pioneers a genre where phenomenology meets fiction, making the abstract viscerally immediate.

Now, 'Existence precedes essence' is the basic principle of Sartre's existentialism. Sartre elaborated on this in his series of writings, asserting that there is no God who predefines

the model of human nature, and that there is no so-called 'universal human nature' as advocated by classical philosophy. Sartre began his 1945 lecture 'Existentialism as a Humanism' by stating that the purpose of the paper was to defend himself against several existentialist charges. Sartre begins this speech with a defence against three accusations of existentialism. Firstly, existentialism does not encourage a despairing attitude of inaction towards life. Secondly, existentialism does not emphasise the dark side of the human condition, depicting things that are vile, dirty and nasty, while ignoring certain things that have and are beautiful and belong to the bright side of human nature. Finally, existentialism does not seek to deny the truth and seriousness of human endeavour. In his essay 'Existentialism as a Humanism', Sartre elaborated on 'existence precedes essence': "If God does not exist, there is at least one being in the world that can be proved to be 'existence precedes essence'; and this one being can be proved to be 'existence precedes essence'; and this one being can be proved to be 'existence precedes essence'. If God does not exist, then there is at least one being in the world that can be shown to be 'being before essence'; a being that existed before it could be defined by any concept, and that being is man; or, in Heidegger's words, the reality of man"⁶. 'Existence precedes essence' can be broken down into three layers: 1) life is limited, everyone has to end his life one day; 2) life itself is meaningless, we have to find the meaning of existence for our own life; 3) loneliness is eternal, because your inner feelings are unique and cannot be truly understood by others. 'Existence precedes essence', first of all, man exists, and then he can explain himself. Objective idealism holds that man is the product of God, and how man's essence depends on God's stipulation; whereas atheists deny the existence of God, and in their thinking, essence precedes existence, i.e., man completes the stipulation of his own essence before he exists in the world. Sartre's atheistic existentialism argues that "there is no human nature in the world because there is no God in the world who set human nature"⁷. In the beginning, man is empty, but as he seeks and obtains certain things, he makes himself according to his own will. In other words, according to Sartre, man first 'exists' as a being, and at the beginning of his life he is empty, without any innate characteristics, without any essential provisions, and then he creates his own essence according to his own will. The human being, as a special being, must first exist, and then clear his essence. Man is thrown into the world, and when there is no existence of him, the world is nothingness to him; and when he exists himself, this self is empty, and the essence is empty of all, so that he is still confronted with nothingness.

Sartre also says that the World is Absurd, Life is Misery, as he once said, the world is absurd, life is painful, life is meaningless, the pessimism between the lines is overflowing. 'The world is absurd', this absurdity is not an ironic denial of all the rules and regulations of society, but refers to the existence of human beings. Is the absurdity a pejorative irony of the rules of society, the absurdity is simply a description of this existence of man. Sartre argues that existence precedes essence, and that for man, a special being, man exists simply because man is what already exists, for no reason whatsoever. There is no natural essence of man, not because any philosopher, God defined man's essence and then created him. Man exists just as he already exists, so man's existence is absurd, so the world is absurd. And the reason why life is painful is because man exists in a meaningless world, and man is in a state of enmity with the world. Sartre believes that subjectivity occupies the vast

majority of social ideology, i.e., man is free to choose, free to act, and to take control of his own life through subjective initiative. Man is therefore subjective and dominant, so others are objects in relation to the 'I', but how can objects exist when everyone is a subject? According to Sartre, it is because of the subjectivity of man's own existence, and because he struggles with others in order to preserve his subjectivity. Therefore, it is inevitable that there is a conflict between human beings, and the conflict is the primordial meaning of existence for him. Man, as a being prior to his essence, slowly creates all kinds of conflicts, brutal wars, hideous crimes, are caused by such conflicts, and the Other is the source of the conflict. This is another important point made by Sartre: "The other is hell", which means that we must live in the gaze of the other. The self and the other are opposites, subject and object, and both, through the gaze, make the other the object of their consciousness, or even virtualise the other as a being. In order to let the readers feel the horror of 'gaze' more intuitively, Sartre quoted the Greek myth: Medusa in Greek mythology would turn others into stone whenever she was gazed at by them. 'The other is hell' is from Sartre's play *The Confinement*, which is about three ghosts who are waiting to go to hell and keep on deceiving and torturing each other, and finally realise that they don't have to wait to go to hell, because they are already in hell. In other words, the present world is undoubtedly 'hell', and it is painful for people to live in such an environment, which can only bring sadness and despair to people, both the poor and the rich.

Sartre's novel, *Nausea* (1938), serves as the literary bedrock upon which his existential ontology is erected, most notably establishing the cardinal principle that 'existence precedes essence' through its unflinching portrayal of the world's profound absurdity. Antoine Roquentin, the novel's introspective protagonist—a historian adrift in the banal provinciality of Bouville—embodies this reversal of traditional metaphysics, where human beings emerge not as preordained artifacts with inherent purposes but as contingent entities compelled to forge their significance amid an indifferent cosmos. Sartre, drawing from his phenomenological encounters in Berlin, crafts Roquentin's diary as a raw chronicle of this awakening, transforming abstract speculation into a narrative of existential dread that prefigures the systematic exposition in *Being and Nothingness* (1943). The novel's absurdity crystallizes in Roquentin's encounters with the sheer gratuity of being, where objects and sensations assert their unmotivated presence, defying any teleological rationale. This is no intellectual abstraction but a somatic upheaval: the titular nausea erupts as Roquentin grapples with existence's viscous superfluity, as seen in his confrontation with a chestnut tree root during a rain-soaked reverie. He records:

"Suddenly there was a great noise of roots, a sound like a gasp of pain. The tree was groaning. I saw its roots, black and twisted, writhing under the earth like the tentacles of an octopus. It was hideous, this black, slimy thing, covered with mud and dead leaves. And it was alive. It was alive and it was suffering. I thought of the men who had planted it, who had watered it, who had watched it grow. They thought they were giving it a meaning, a destiny. But it had none. It was there, gratuitous, absurd."⁸

This passage encapsulates the world's absurdity as an ontological scandal: the tree root 'exists' without necessity, a brute eruption of en-soi (being-in-itself) that mocks human projections of essence. Roquentin's revulsion stems from recognizing contingency's tyranny—things simply are overflowing with pointless plenitude, unanchored by divine or

rational order. As he elaborates elsewhere, “The essential thing is contingency. I mean that one cannot define existence as necessity. To exist is simply to be there.”⁹ Here, Sartre inverts Aristotelian teleology: essence does not precede existence for humans, who, like the root, arrive gratuitously and must retroactively impose purpose through anguished choice. Roquentin's historical labors—meticulously reconstructing the life of the Marquis de Rolleston—crumble under this insight, revealing biography as futile bad faith, a vain quest to essentialize the inessential.

Yet, Nausea's establishment of these tenets aligns seamlessly with Sartre's broader philosophical humanism, offering not nihilistic resignation but a prelude to authentic creation. Roquentin's misery—his isolation from Anny's illusory ‘perfect moments’ and the café's jazz-fueled banalities—forces a pivot: “I wanted the moments of my life to follow one another without any gaps, to be like beads on a string... But now I know: it's all a farce.”¹⁰ This despair births resolve; inspired by a phonograph's ephemeral melody, he vows to author a novel that endows the absurd with invented heft: “It would have to be beautiful and hard as steel and make people ashamed of their existence.”¹¹ Thus, existence's precedence demands freedom's exercise—choice as rebellion against absurdity—echoing the engaged praxis in Sartre's later plays like *The Flies* (1943).

In the context of 20th-century crises, Nausea resonates as a diagnostic tool, prefiguring existentialism's therapeutic role. As Roquentin's epiphany unfolds, it invites readers to confront their own contingencies, transforming literature into a mirror for philosophical self-fashioning. This novel, then, is no mere prelude but the existential forge: absurdity unveiled, essence deferred, freedom inexorably claimed.

***No Exit*: Intersubjectivity, Bad Faith, and the Hell of the Gaze:**

Debuting in 1944 amid Vichy France's stifling censorship, *No Exit* (*Huis Clos*) distills Sartrean drama into a suffocating salon, where eternity unfolds sans implements of torment. The arrivals—Garcin, the spineless journalist; Inez, the venomous seductress; and Estelle, the vain murderess—unwittingly forge their inferno through reciprocal scrutiny. Garcin's epiphany, “Hell is other people!”¹² crystallizes the regard's tyranny: external eyes petrify our becoming into static identity.

Bad faith permeates the ensemble's machinations. Garcin importunes Inez for exoneration—“Only believe me... I am not a coward”¹³—while evading his desertion's truth. Inez's predatory insight lacerates illusions: “I'm your lurer... I'm the one who'll be with you”¹⁴. Estelle's vanity, chasing reflections and admirers, epitomizes escapist denial. Their vicious interplay—accusation laced with desire—illustrates Sartre's thesis: “Hell is other people because most of us are cowards and knaves.”¹⁵

The play's economical staging—dialogue as scalpel—forces confrontation, evolving philosophy into performative critique. *No Exit* interrogates existentialism's social fissures, affirming literature's power to unsettle complacency.

The core themes of *No Exit* are ‘Bad Faith’ and the ‘Hell of the Other’. Sartre's existentialism warns that true freedom breeds anguish, as we must constantly choose our essence amid absurdity. Yet, to flee this vertigo, humans resort to bad faith: a pernicious self-lie where we deny our agency, pretending to be fixed roles or victims of circumstance rather than authors of our lives. In *No Exit*, this manifests in a bare, locked room serving as the afterlife for three damned souls: Joseph Garcin, a cowardly journalist executed for

pacifism; Inez, a sadistic postal clerk who destroyed a love triangle; and Estelle, a glamorous socialite who smothered her illegitimate child. No pitchforks or flames await—their torment is each other.

The play's genius lies in its distillation of Sartre's intersubjective ontology from *Being and Nothingness* (1943): our *pour-soi* (fluid, choosing consciousness) seeks transcendence, but the regard (gaze) of the Other reduces us to *en-soi* (inert object). Garcin's plea—“So that's the arrangement, is it? A pure mind can see the truth, but a pure mind can't act”¹⁶—exposes his bad faith; he begs validation from Inez to rewrite his cowardice as heroism, all while the door remains unlocked. Inez, with predatory lucidity, mirrors his denial back: “I'm your lurer... I'm the one who'll be with you at the resurrection of the flesh.”¹⁷ Estelle, addicted to admiration, ignores her victim's accusing shade, embodying narcissistic evasion. Their sadomasochistic triangle—accusations laced with erotic tension—culminates in Garcin's despairing cry: “Hell is other people!”¹⁸ Sartre clarifies in his philosophy: hell arises not from isolation but from mutual objectification, where “the Other's look fashions my body into an object.”¹⁹, perpetuating inauthenticity. Freedom lingers—escape demands mutual honesty—but bad faith prevails, a wartime allegory for Vichy's moral abdication.

This setup establishes bad faith as relational pathology: unlike solitary nausea, it's a social contagion, where we co-conspire in our chains. Sartre's drama forces confrontation—no exit from self-awareness. *No Exit* operationalizes bad faith through confined theatrical economy—90 minutes of escalating dialogue mirroring existential entrapment—making it more immediate than the sprawling phenomenology of *Being and Nothingness* or the mythic sweep of *The Flies* (1943). It builds on *Nausea's* (1938) absurdity but shifts to interpersonal dynamics, influencing Sartre's later ethics of engagement. The play's brevity amplifies its punch: audiences leave questioning their own deceptions, as Sartre intended for ‘committed literature’.

In contrast to Kierkegaard's inward bad faith as sin against the self or Nietzsche's resentment as herd weakness, Sartre's is dialogic and political—echoing Heidegger's *Das Man* (the anonymous ‘They’) but ethicized toward solidarity. *No Exit* endures as existential theater's gold standard, probing why we choose hellish complicity.

The Flies: Mythic Reclamation of Freedom and Responsibility:

Sartre's 1943 adaptation of the Oresteia, *The Flies*, alchemizes ancient lore into a manifesto for emancipation. In remorse-choked Argos, tyrannized by Aegistheus and Clytemnestra, Orestes and Electra orchestrate vengeance against Agamemnon's slayers. Zeus, remorse's divine puppeteer, deploys guilt-flies to subjugate the masses—metaphors for internalized oppression. Orestes's filicide shatters the spell, but bequeaths him the swarm's eternal chase, a badge of unyielding duty.

Liberty's anthem resounds in Orestes's proclamation: “I am my liberty... Human life begins on the far side of despair.”²⁰ Departing from Aeschylus's divinely adjudicated Orestes, Sartre's avenger owns his deed: “I have taken Electra's place... I have chosen. Henceforth, I am no longer free”²¹—a ‘bondage’ of chosen fidelity, aligning with “Man is condemned to be free... responsible for everything he does.”²²

Veiled as mythic fable, the drama lambasts collaborationist France; Zeus embodies coercive authority: “You can always choose to love me... or hate me.”²³, mocking illusory

options. Orestes's atheism reclaims myth for humanism, spurning godly fiat for human edict. Nietzsche's tragic Dionysus in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) celebrates mythic surge, but Sartre weaponizes it against tyranny, recasting flies as assumable remorse rather than vengeful specters. Kierkegaard's teleological suspension in *Fear and Trembling* (1843) justifies faith's isolation; Orestes's solidarity, however, galvanizes the collective: "You must take your past upon yourselves... Dirty hands, that's the truth."²⁴

The philosophical core themes of *The Flies* is 'Freedom as Choice and Responsibility'. Sartre's philosophy insists that humans are "condemned to be free"²⁵, thrust into existence without predefined paths or excuses—divine, social, or otherwise—forcing us to invent ourselves through unrelenting choices. This freedom is anguishing because every decision forges our essence and implicates others, yet it is the ground of authenticity. In *The Flies*, Sartre dramatizes this through Orestes, the exiled prince of Argos, who returns to avenge his father Agamemnon's murder by killing his mother Clytemnestra and her lover Aegistheus.

The play's Argos is a stifled polis haunted by guilt-flies—swarms symbolizing the oppressive remorse imposed by Zeus, the god of order and manipulation. The citizens, paralyzed by collective bad faith (self-deception to evade freedom), wallow in staged remorse, allowing tyrants to rule unchallenged. Orestes, initially detached and seeking only escape, encounters his sister Electra and confronts his heritage. In a climactic act of choice, he says the usurpers, declaring: "I am my liberty... I have chosen. Henceforth, I am no longer free."²⁶ This paradox captures Sartre's essence: true freedom binds us to the consequences of our acts. Orestes embraces the flies—not as divine punishment, but as self-assumed guilt—liberating Argos and himself. He tells the people: "You are free! Elect freedom and bear it, like a wound"²⁷, urging them to choose responsibility over subjugation. This establishes freedom of choice as revolutionary praxis: against Zeus's deterministic theology, "You can always choose to love me... or hate me."²⁸ a false binary mocking authoritarianism, Orestes's act affirms human sovereignty. The play critiques Vichy collaboration, where 'choice' meant acquiescence; instead, Sartre posits choice as rebellion, echoing his wartime ethos that inaction is itself a choice.

The Flies predates Sartre's popularized lecture *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1946) and builds on *Being and Nothingness* (1943), but it uniquely enacts freedom through theatrical immediacy—characters' dilemmas unfolding in real-time, compelling audiences to reflect on their own choices amid occupation. Unlike *Nausea* (1938), which probes absurdity's nausea in isolation, or *No Exit* (1944), which traps freedom in interpersonal hells via the gaze, *The Flies* celebrates choice's emancipatory potential. Orestes's arc—from tourist-like observer to committed actor—mirrors Sartre's shift from phenomenological description to engaged ethics.

Scholars like Thomas R. Flynn note the play's role in politicizing existential freedom, influencing post-war thinkers from Simone de Beauvoir to Frantz Fanon. By play's end, Orestes departs into exile, flies in tow, embodying freedom's cost: "Dirty hands, that's the truth"²⁹. This isn't despair but a call to action—choice as the forge of meaning. For deeper reading, Stuart Gilbert's 1946 English translation preserves the mythic intensity. Sartre's drama here reminds us: in a world of contingencies, to choose is to live.

Conclusion:

Jean-Paul Sartre's *Nausea*, *No Exit*, and *The Flies* transcend generic boundaries, constituting a philosophical odyssey where fiction forges thought. Through Roquentin's visceral absurdity, Garcin's intersubjective hell, and Orestes's burdensome liberty, Sartre vivifies freedom's terror and triumph, bad faith's seduction, and responsibility's imperative. Aligned with his ontology, these works affirm existence's gratuity, urging readers to author meaning amid void. Sartre forges an ethics of implication—literary in form, revolutionary in aim.

Yet, in the stark light of present era, Sartre's legacy demands a realistic appraisal, unvarnished by romanticism. Our world—riven by cascading climate disasters, the unchecked sprawl of artificial intelligence that commodifies human choice, resurgent authoritarianisms from Eastern Europe to the Global South, and a lingering post-pandemic fatigue that amplifies isolation—mirrors the absurd contingencies of Roquentin's Bouville more than ever. Algorithms curate our gazes, trapping us in *No Exit*-like echo chambers of misinformation and performative outrage, where bad faith manifests not in wartime salons but in viral thread and deep fake diplomacy. Freedom of choice, Orestes's hard-won prize, feels increasingly illusory amid economic precarity and surveillance states that preempt agency, turning existential anguish into systemic exhaustion.

Sartre's humanism, for all its optimism, falters here without adaptation: his call to “act as if the freedom of all was at stake in our acts”³⁰ rings hollow if unmoored from intersectional realities—racial inequities, gender-based violence, and ecological debt—that his Eurocentric lens often overlooked. Still, his literature offers pragmatic anchors: *Nausea*'s nausea as a cue to dismantle AI-driven essentialisms; *No Exit*'s relational hell as a warning against polarized social media, where the Other's gaze fuels cancel culture's cruelties; *The Flies*' mythic resolve as inspiration for grassroots resistance, from climate strikes to digital detox collectives, where we shoulder “dirty hands” to reclaim collective liberty.

Realistically, existentialism won't solve these crises—Sartre himself grappled with Marxism's materialist corrections to his idealism, as in *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1960). Nor does it promise utopia; it equips us for Sisyphean persistence, acknowledging life's misery without paralysis. In present era's flux, Sartre's blend of story and thought compels a grounded praxis: read, reflect, resist—not as isolated leaps, but as networked choices that humanize the absurd. Literature, then, remains our unflinching ally, sparking not grand revolutions but daily authenticities amid the grind.

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Critiquing Post-War Social Anxieties and “apotheosis” in D. H. Lawrence’s “The Fox”

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Abstract

In the works of D.H. Lawrence, there are subtle reflections of human instinct and primal survival instincts. His characters are artistically woven and psychologically garnered. This article examines Lawrence’s 1922 short story “The Fox” as a profound critique of post-World War I social anxieties and the “mechanistic degradation” of Western civilization. It posits that the Great War served as a transformative catalyst for Lawrence, shifting his literary focus from the domestic realism and “zest for life” found in early works like *Sons and Lovers* toward a darker preoccupation with power and the “apotheosis” of the individual will. Central to this analysis is the concept of apotheosis – the deification of instinct as a radical response to the spiritual wasteland of post-1918 Europe.

The article explores how Lawrence uses the unproductive Bailey Farm to symbolize a stagnant society, where Nellie March's and Jill Banford’s failing efforts represent the inadequacy of “mind-consciousness.” The narrative tension is driven by the arrival of Henry Grenfel, a soldier who functions as the human incarnation of the predatory fox. Through Henry’s psychological and physical displacement of Banford, Lawrence depicts the brutal destruction of the old, decadent world by a primordial “blood-consciousness.” Attempts have been made to show that “The Fox” serves as a definitive bridge in Lawrence’s career, articulating a radical rebirth through the transference of fatalistic authority. Ultimately, the work is presented as a haunting autopsy of the post-war condition, exploring the ruthless path toward human wholeness amidst a landscape defined by distrust and survival.

Keywords: World War I, Social Anxiety, Apotheosis, Psyche

The impact of World War I (1914-1918) on the social, cultural, and historical life of England was enormous. It also had a profound and transformative impact on the intellectual and literary career of D. H. Lawrence. The reflections of World War I are evident, both directly and indirectly, in his writings, particularly through the portrayal of characters and the description of the surrounding landscape. In his writings, the war not only appears as the reflection of political conflicts but also as the offshoot of the mechanistic degradation of Western culture. His long story “The Fox” (1923) was first published in *The Dial* in 1922. It is a serious critique of the post-World War I era and its impact on society. What D. H. Lawrence has primarily attempted to do is portray the rapid change in society during the post-World

War era, and the effect of which was also very prominent in the rural parts of England, and along with that, what is seriously observable in the narrative is the psychological changes among the characters. Lawrence has marked the point at which not only a deep sense of distrust among the characters but also a constant, invisible threat from the other characters emerges.

A close reading of D. H. Lawrence's texts before 1914 reveals expressions of vitality, enthusiasm, liveliness, and a rare willpower. *Sons and Lovers* is one such example in which there are elements of zest for life and narratives of personal growth. There is also an ardent zeal for binding family ties, which, however, was already in question due to the corrosive effects of industrialisation, and for new aspirations for individual freedom to unfurl its wings gradually. His 1911 debut novel, *The White Peacock*, was a pastoral romance. The novel depicts a changing countryside in Nottinghamshire and focuses exclusively on nature, social class, and the tension between instinct and intellect. Lawrence's second novel, *The Trespasser* (1912), primarily concerns the inevitable failure of transgressive love and is largely disconnected from the practicalities of social responsibility, becoming intertwined with the destructive forces of the human psyche. Lawrence's meticulous presentation of the dilemma between the romanticised world and the harsh, rude, mundane world looms large in the text. Lawrence's debut collection of poems, *Love Poems and Others* (February 1913), significantly bridges the early identity of D. H. Lawrence, his journey as a schoolteacher, and the ongoing transformation of his intellectual and writing career as he finds his own voice. Most of the poems in this collection are experimental in nature; however, there is an urge to find the path to a distant destination. Written in 1909 and published in 1911, Lawrence's celebrated short story "Odour of Chrysanthemums" established the popular notion of the time that a "genius" had been born who could unveil the new meanings and secrets of human emotions. The new dimensions of human psychology that Lawrence articulated in this story offered readers a fresh approach.

Nasrullah Mambrol's essay "Analysis of D. H. Lawrence's Novels" is an evocative and nuanced piece of writing that delves into the texts of D. H. Lawrence and uncovers the internal coherence and recurring transformations of thought that unfolded across the different phases of Lawrence's writing career. World War I necessarily played a significant role in this context. Mambrol has also pointed out the anxiety and angst through which D.H.Lawrence underwent, attempting to find a solution by going back to the past and seeking shelter in the ancient European myths and cultural histories. The great enemy of "human wholeness", Mambrol points out as Lawrence evinced, was "modern life itself." Mambrol further continues in his essay:

Industrialization had cut man off from the past, had mechanized his daily life and transformed human relations into a power struggle to acquire material commodities, thereby alienating man from contact with the divine potency residing in both nature and other men and women. Modern Europe was therefore an accumulation of dead or dying husks, fragmented and spiritually void, whose inevitable expression was mass destruction. For Lawrence, World War I was the apotheosis of modernization. (Mambrol)

The use of the word "apotheosis" in the previous quotation demands special emphasis while dealing with the philosophical oeuvre of D.H.Lawrence. Derived from the Greek word "apotheoun", which means "to deify", is in its most significant meaning is the moment of a

character or an idea in which it reaches to the highest, most transcendent and quintessential state. It is interesting to point out that in the deeper philosophical undertone in the writings of Lawrence, it becomes prominent that he was of the belief that World War I was instrumental in the decadent status of human being and following the trauma of the World War I, Lawrence found in Europe a spiritual wasteland that was separated from the true existence of a proper human living. It was cut off, disjointed and disorganized living, a shadow of one's own living, not a proper one. The true European spirit, as Lawrence wanted to perceive was decaying and dying. The only solution that Lawrence found was a radical rebirth, manifested in the deification of individual identity or the reclaiming of a god-like state within the self. There was already a radical shift in Lawrence's 1920s novels, particularly in *Aaron's Rod*, *Kangaroo* and *The Plumed Serpent* in which it was reflected that from the domestic struggle of *Sons and Lovers*, it was towards an obsession with power, authority and the divine human.

In the "The Fox", the idea of apotheosis is more psychological and internally manoeuvred and functions more symbolically than the literal deification found in Lawrence's later Mexican writings. In "The Fox", apotheosis occurs through the transference of power from a predatory animal to a human male, Henry, who assumes a god-like, fatalistic authority over the lives of March and Banford.

D. H. Lawrence's "The Fox" is a well-crafted, multilayered, haunting narrative with a deep undertone of post-World War reflections on trauma and anxiety. Written in the immediate wake of the Great War, the story captures a world in flux – a landscape where traditional gender roles have been diluted, and the "vitality" of the human spirit struggles against the stagnant, "mechanistic" degradation of modern society. The story is not merely a pastoral tale of farm life; it is a brutal exploration of individuation, sexual politics, and the primal instincts that lie dormant beneath the thin veneer of civilization.

The narrative of "The Fox" starts in a bleak, unproductive, and mismanaged setting, despite the best efforts of two young women. Two women, Nellie March and Jill Banford, have started a life of independence by working together in this farmhouse. They are "New Women" of the era, attempting to survive without male intervention. However, their venture is failing. The farm is barren, the hens are not laying, and the women are physically and emotionally exhausted. Following description from the text would emphasise the condition of the farmhouse:

They had numbers of chickens, black Leghorns and white Leghorns, Plymouths and Wyandottes; also, some ducks; also, two heifers in the fields. One heifer, unfortunately, refused absolutely to stay in the Bailey Farm closes. No matter how March made up the fences, the heifer was out, wild in the woods, or trespassing on the neighbouring pasture, and March and Banford were away, flying after her, with more haste than success. So, this heifer they sold in despair. (Lawrence)

Lawrence portrays this failure as a symptom of a deeper spiritual crisis. Banford, as portrayed in the narrative, is nervous, frail, and deeply tied to social conventions, while March is the "physical" labourer and is hardworking, authoritative, and strong. Into this atmosphere of stagnation enters "the fox", a literal predator that begins to haunt the farm, stealing their poultry and, more significantly, captivating March's subconscious.

March's response to the fox, as found in the narrative, is quite unusual. It seems that March is both annoyed and fascinated by the presence of the fox close to their farmhouse. To her, it is not merely a pest to be shot; it is a manifestation of a wild, vital "otherness" that she lacks in her domestic life with Banford. When she finally encounters the fox face-to-face, she is "spellbound." Lawrence describes the fox's eyes as possessing a "daemonic" intelligence. This encounter marks the awakening of March's latent instincts. March is found to be deeply attracted to the fox by its presence-absence. She begins to dream of the fox, its golden fur brushing against her, symbolizing a buried desire for a more potent, perhaps even predatory, form of existence that her sanitized life with the intellectual Banford cannot provide.

The arrival of Henry Grenfel, a young soldier returning from the war, transforms the symbolic threat into a human reality. Henry can be read as a symbolic representation of the post-World War generation. A character who is now deprived of the inquisitiveness and the innocence of the pre-World War era. A soldier returning from the war and who is alive is necessarily a transformed human being who has become a witness to the brutality and the meaningless butchery of the commoners. So, through Henry's eyes, the world the reader sees is a changed world, devoid of fellow feelings and one that has to be crushed and snatched away. Henry, with a transformed psyche, knows how to destabilise the norms and to disrupt the peace of human relationships. The post-World War psyche knows well how to corrupt and malfunction a balanced system. Henry is the human incarnation of the fox. He is lithe, observant, and possesses a "quiet, predatory" patience. Initially, he claims to be the farm's former owner's grandson, but he quickly becomes the "intruder" who disrupts the equilibrium between the two women. Henry recognizes in March a woman who is "waiting" to be claimed, and he recognizes in Banford a social obstacle that must be removed. The core of the story's tension lies in the struggle between Henry's "blood-consciousness" and Banford's "mind-consciousness."

Doris Lessing's essay "'The Fox' of D.H.Lawrence" is a highly significant essay that conceptualizes Lawrence's core philosophical understanding and how Lawrence maintained the enigmatic intellectual tradition in the long story "The Fox" as he did in his previous texts. Lessing comments that "The story, *The Fox*, first published in 1923, is quintessential Lawrence, on the cusp, as it were, of the light and the dark" (Lessing). It is true that the chiaroscuro in the narrative of "The Fox" has made it more meaningful. The binary of descriptions gets coalesced with the binary of emotional exchanges. Lessing presents, in her inimitable way, a possible background to the tale that probably played an instrumental role in magnifying and heightening the basic tension. In the words of Lessing:

It must be 1919 because the great flu epidemic has victims in the near village. We have had another postwar grimness since then: poor food, cold, bare sufficiency, endurance. This one preceded what some of us remember by thirty years. Food is short. So is fuel. Winter is coming. (Lessing)

This crisp analysis of the background by Lessing necessarily reminds the readers that "winter" is coming, and every creature on earth is too alert to find prey for its own survival. It is a basic survival instinct. So, the behaviour of the physical fox is no surprise. It does so only because of the primitive instinct it has. And it is similarly true that way, March is alert to kill the enemy of the farm, the physical fox, but what is more ironic is that she becomes the prey of a larger "fox", Henry, who is returning from the war. It is the ancient tale of the

social, cultural pyramid of existence on earth. Henry is returning from war for a larger prey, and as Lessing said, "winter" is coming, and he is in necessity of a home, food, safety, warmth, companionship, physical union, and a perfect shelter of which he was devoid for so long during the war season.

In conclusion, it is evident that D. H. Lawrence's story "The Fox" serves as a definitive bridge between his early interest in domestic psychological realism and his transformation into a radical obsession with the "apotheosis" of the individual will. The Great War did not merely serve as a historical backdrop for Lawrence; rather, it was the "apotheosis of modernization". In Lawrence, we come across a catastrophic peak of mechanistic degradation that effectively shattered the Victorian and Edwardian illusions of progress. The "spiritual wasteland" that Lawrence perceived in post-1918 Europe is perfectly encapsulated in the stagnant, failing environment of Bailey Farm. In reaching the conclusion of this narrative, what is significant is that Lawrence does not offer a traditional romantic resolution but rather a ritualistic displacement of the old world by a new, predatory will. The transition from the literal fox to the human intruder, Henry, represents a shift from a symbolic threat to a physical manifestation of that ancient European myth of which Lawrence took refuge.

The climax of the story—the felling of the cedar tree and the subsequent death of Jill Banford—stands as the most visceral moment of "apotheosis" within the text. Banford, representing the "mind-consciousness" and the decaying social structures of the past, acts as the final barrier to the "blood-consciousness" that Henry seeks to establish. Henry first establishes her position by killing the literal fox and then by removing Banford's existence. Her death is not a mere accident of fate but a symbolic necessity in Lawrence's philosophical framework. For Henry to reach his quintessential state of authority, the "mental" and "nervous" remnants of the old world must be cleared away. When Henry "allows" the tree to strike Banford, he is executing a judgment on a version of humanity that Lawrence believed was no longer relevant to a changed post-war society.

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Creation of Bangladesh Out of the Chaos of Pakistan: Showing Religious Theory of Nationhood as a Hoax

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Abstract

At the threshold of Indian independence, the internal politics of the subcontinent took a bizarre turn when religion became one of the determining factors. The British and the leaders of Indian National Congress and All-India Muslim League were entrapped in an imbroglio of indecision. Ultimately, Gandhian brigade had to swallow the bitter pill of Partition to rein the unbridled stallion of communal violence. But within a quarter-century, the erstwhile successful two-nation theory proved to be a fiasco when East Pakistan revolted against its western wing and seceded from it to shape a sovereign country called Bangladesh in 1971. The corrosive policies of West Pakistan lacerated the ethnic integrity of the Bengali Muslims and gashed the idea of Islamic brotherhood preached in 1947. My research paper intends to show how the liberation of Bangladesh falsified the two-nation theory. It will also try to analyse why and how the brittleness of religious theory dismantled the idea of building a nation based on only religion.

Keywords: Congress, League, Partition, Two-nation theory, West Pakistan, Bangladesh

The British ruled the Indian subcontinent for nearly two centuries with the accurate reading of the pulse of the complex native societies. The colonists understood that the subjugated people's obsession with religion and caste could be a boon to boost their empire-building aspiration. On the other hand—despite the presence of many internal conflicts—diverse castes, cultures, cuisines, races, regions, and religions strengthened the idea of a syncretic and pluralistic India for centuries. The foreign rulers were bent on spoiling that very great Indian melting pot with the introduction of various nefarious schemes. “The British saw and discussed Indian society and politics in terms of Hindus and Muslims as separate political and cultural entities” (Singh 9). After the revolt of 1857, the coloniser became more cautious about Hindu-Muslim unity of the natives. Moreover, the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 became a stumbling block for them. They shrewdly started to dismantle this secular political spine so that they could rule India unchecked. To calibrate their imperial agenda, they introduced and implemented ‘divide and rule’ policy.

Since the nineteenth century, Bengali intelligentsia were playing a major role in the country to shape social and political opinions of the masses. The rulers were thinking to throttle the growing Bengali nationalism. They declared the division of Bengal in 1905

citing the need for better administrative handling of the large province. Clearly, the scheme was a sham and was originally designed to divide Bengalis along religious lines and thereby to weaken Hindu-Muslim unity. The decision sparked vehement protest among the Bengalis across religions and compelled the conspirators to repeal it in 1911. Though the nasty British attempt to divide Bengali Hindus and Muslims failed, it did not fail to scratch a communal line on the body of harmonious Bengal.

There is no parallel in history to the paradox that while in 1905 a majority of the people of Bengal rejected the British-directed partition of their land and fought against it, only four decades later, in 1947, the same majority asked for a partition of Bengal between Muslim majority and Hindu majority areas. (Sengupta, Preface ix)

The establishment of British-sponsored All-India Muslim League in Dhaka in 1906 was intended to make it an able contender of the Hindu-dominated Congress. In the coming decades, both the parties would be at loggerheads on various issues and communal politics would show its worst.

The seed of two-nation theory gave a harvest on the threshold of Indian independence. The country was besmeared in the blood of communal riots. Mohammad Ali Jinnah's call for direct action on 16 August 1946 showed the worst of religious intolerance. "The Calcutta Killings reinforced, in a graphic way, the *idea* that Hindus and Muslims were incompatible, and planted this seed in the minds of British and Indian policy-makers" (Khan 66). Consequent Noakhali and Bihar riots accelerated the fall of Hindu-Muslim unity bastion. The diversity and degree of these violence paved the way for an irrevocable communal discord in the Indian subcontinent. M. K. Gandhi said, "[T]o me the sins of the Noakhali Muslims and the Bihar Hindus are of the same magnitude and equally commendable" (qtd. in Guha 822-23). However, the decision-makers failed to address the abhorrent religious politics and resorted to severing the soul of Indian diversity. In the decisive elections of 1945, ninety-six per cent Bengali Muslims voted for Pakistan whereas it was only forty-nine per cent in case of Punjabi Muslims. Bengali Muslims hardly imagined not to achieve the entire Bengal with all its beauties and bounties but they had to eat the humble pie. "But just when Pakistan had become a certainty as also the inclusion of the whole of Bengal in it, a totally unforeseen development took place, namely, the idea of partition of Bengal, which, paradoxically, Bengal had rejected half a century ago" (Sengupta 147). Maloy Krishna Dhar remarks how Partition crushed Bengali ethnicity: "Our culture and tradition was split into many pieces" (Author's Note ix-x).

Jinnah's religious theory of nationhood fructified and Pakistan came into being comprising West Punjab and East Bengal. Karachi became the capital of the new country. Bengali Muslims who were the majority populations were denied their first natural right of having the country's capital. Jinnah, *Quaid-i-Azam*, addressed the people of Pakistan on 11 August 1947,

You are free. You are free to go to your temples. You are free to go to your mosques or any other place of worship in the State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed, that has nothing to do with the business of State . . . ect., etc., etc. *Pakistan Zindabad!* (Sidhwa 144)

His overt liberalism towards people of other religions somewhere hinted at his inherent secular or atheistic nature. He hardly took religion seriously but for his ego and political

aspiration. But his cultural insecurity came to light after some months. "Jinnah declared Urdu the Pakistani national language in 1948, deaf to the passion of Bengali linguistic patriotism and the complaints of the majority of Pakistanis who could not speak the language" (Khan 189). Jinnah undemocratically ignored Bangla or Bengali, the language of the majority population of the country. The declaration created a cultural commotion in East Bengal because the alien Urdu culture was feared to annihilate the centuries-old cultural inheritance of the Bengalis.

Gradually, East Bengal was deprived of its economic opportunities. People from West Pakistan had control over government jobs. Army and other administrative posts had no openings for the Bengalis. "From a look of the things it seems that East Bengal has been reduced to the status of a colony. Everything is run by West Pakistanis" (Gangopadhyay 1: 104). The Bengalis were exploited by their coreligionists who promised a better future for all the Muslims of Pakistan after being freed from the clutch of Hindu-dominated India. Reality ruled out the religious theory of betterment. "For each single rupee spent in East Pakistan they spent ten in the West. Employment ratio was one to ten. East Bengal exported goods, the imports all went to the West" (Gangopadhyay 1: 166). Muslims wanted a separate homeland as they no longer wanted to be treated as second-rate citizens in India. Now the majority Muslim population of Pakistan are being treated as second-rate citizens by their minority coreligionists. It exposed that religious theory was a hoax. The step-brotherly attitude of the West towards the East caused much ire among the Bengalis.

On 25 February 1948, Begum Ikramullah stated in the Constituent Assembly that, 'A feeling is growing among the East Pakistanis that Eastern Pakistan is being neglected and treated as a 'colony' of West Pakistan'. This shows that along with the Bengali language, the alleged discrimination against East Bengal and her economic exploitation was also becoming a major issue. (Sengupta 172-73)

Noticing the discontents of the Bengalis against the people and policies of West Pakistan, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan resorted to the tested formula of religious politics and raised baseless propaganda that Islam was in danger and to save it, Pakistan needed the unity of its citizens. An anti-India campaign was launched throughout the country and it was equated with anti-Hindu sentiment so that aggrieved people of the country could be consolidated on religious lines. Bangla was marked as part of Hindu identity and it must be replaced by Urdu to authenticate pure Islam in Pakistan. A section of the Bengalis first tried to adapt to the alien language but soon the Bengalis felt the thirst for their mother tongue.

Before Partition Jinnah had been cautioned by several experts that it would be difficult to manage both western and the eastern wings separated by twelve hundred miles of foreign territory and 'inhabited by people different in their habits, customs and lifestyle'. But he had such confidence in the supremacy of his leadership that he believed that he would be able to put everything right. Now he became aware that neither he nor the bond of Islam would be able to knit together two such diverse peoples. The gulf in every respect—political, economic and social—was so wide that even Islamic brotherhood could not keep them together. (Mukhopadhyay 150)

Very soon language became a bone of contention between two parts of Pakistan. A voice of protest started smouldering in the hearts of the Bengalis. On 21 February 1952, students and common people organised huge rallies and meetings in Dhaka to register their demand ignoring the government's ban on public gathering. Five protestors were killed and many were injured in the repressive action taken by the callous government. Leaders like A. K. Fazlul Huq were also injured. The incident was unparalleled in the history of the world where people were ready to let down their lives for the dignity of their mother tongue. The incident raised a question about the efficacy of the idea of an Islamic brotherhood while Muslims were killing Muslims. The totalitarian action broke the hallucination of the Bengali Muslims and it showed that their West Pakistani coreligionists could never be their co-citizens only because of religious proximity.

Religion alone cannot alone forge a tie . . . strong enough to unite a nation. Muslims also killed Muslims. Muslims too exploited fellow Muslims. Pakistan was created so that Hindu dominance could end, but even in the newly formed state emerged a class of exploiters – there was a clear division between tyrants and their victims. The fact was that tyrants and exploiters had no religion-they were everywhere. (Gangopadhyay 1: 166)

Failing to thwart the protest, the government gave Bangla the recognition of a state language on 7 March 1954. The protest and its success somewhere set the tone for larger movements in near future. "There can be no doubt that the language movement played a leading role in weakening the Muslim League and in building up a secular/linguistic Bengali nationalism in East Pakistan . . ." (Sengupta 179).

In 1953, the Awami Muslim League, the main political party in East Bengal dropped the word 'Muslim' to attract Hindus. Next year, Pakistan's first provincial general election to the East Bengal Legislative Assembly was held. Awami League emerged as the representative of Bengali nationalism against the military and political establishment of West Pakistan represented by Muslim League. Fazlul Huq-led coalition United Front formed the cabinet and Huq became the Chief Minister of East Bengal. The liberal Muslim leader thought to withdraw the passport system launched in 1952 between India and Pakistan so that people could freely meet their near and dear ones across the borders. He also took measures to establish Bangla Academy in Dhaka. Huq's secular bent of mind and activities led to his dismissal within two months of the cabinet formation. He was sent behind bars on a charge of sedition. It was an attempt on the part of the government to abolish Bengali political upliftment.

If the geographical distance dividing the two halves of Pakistan would be great, however, the psychological distance between the two peoples inhabiting them would be staggering. Apart from a common faith in Allah the One, the Merciful, Punjabis and Bengalis shared nothing. They were as different as Finns and Greeks. Neither history nor language nor culture offered a bridge by which those two peoples might communicate. Their marriage in the common state of Pakistan would be a union created against all the dictates of logic. (Lapierre & Collins 163-64)

In 1955, East Bengal was renamed East Pakistan to scrap out the Bengali identity. "The demand of their language was conceded but at the cost of their Bengali identity. The word 'Bengali' smacks of Hindu religion, at least this is what the West Pakistani leaders felt"

(Gangopadhyay 1: 300). In 1956, Pakistan got its constitution which declared the country as the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The demand for regional autonomy was becoming loud and clear in East Pakistan but the new constitution of 1956 denied it. It enraged the Bengalis and somewhere sent the message that the government was not interested to fulfil its promise of 1940 Lahore Resolution. Bengali nationalist leader Maulana Bhashani declared in 1957, "If you keep up your exploitation, if you do not give autonomy to East Pakistan then there is only one thing we have to say to you – Asalam Alaykum, you go your way, we'll go our's" (Gangopadhyay 1: 364). It was definitely a clarion call for the secession of East Pakistan. Once Bengali Muslims responded to Jinnah's call to get respite from the socio-political and economic exploitations by the Hindus. Ironically, now their coreligionists were demolishing their dream of a dignified life. Bengalis were now out of the frying pan into the fire. Repeated repressive actions by the government reinforced the notion of a separate Bengali nation.

All of a sudden President Iskander Mirza imposed martial law on 7 October 1958. On the 27th of the same month, General Ayub Khan ousted Mirza and became the President. For the next four or five years, the military rule silenced all kinds of political activities in East Pakistan. "Anyone could be arrested any time. All the political parties are banned and the leaders are put under the bars" (Gangopadhyay 1: 502). The Bengalis never expected that they would have to pay such a huge price even under an Islamic regime. Somewhere a desire of liberal democracy like India lurked in their heads and hearts but it was completely choked by the despotic rulers of West Pakistan. Suddenly Ayub Khan wanted to wear a mask of democracy but his project of 'Basic Democracy' with a limited franchise of eighty thousand affluent people failed in 1960. People demanded universal suffrage and this time he launched a political party called Pakistan Muslim League to fight elections. Leaders of other parties were released to contest elections. To allure the students, he formed a students' wing called National Students Federations whose members created anarchy in the education system. "Students most loyal to the government would be rewarded with scholarships up to one thousand rupees" (Gangopadhyay 1: 544). It was an attempt to make a whole generation of educated Bengali youths' sycophants of the government.

The final fissure in the West and East Pakistan relations came when the assault on the Bengali language and culture became unbearable. The West Pakistani regime never liked the Bengali culture because Hindu poets, artists, singers, writers had many contributions to it. Urdu-cultured Muslims hardly had the capacity to understand the syncretic cultural experience of the Bengalis across religions. The writings of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, Rabindranath Tagore and other Hindu writers were targeted and pre-Partition books were discarded. Sanskrit words were replaced with Arabic and Persian words. Singing Rabindra Sangeet was treated as sin and accordingly, it was banned. They feared that Tagore's songs could invigorate Bengali nationalism. The nihilistic government curtailed the cultural connections of the Bengalis across borders and religions. British perforated the wall of the common cultural heritage of the Bengalis by dividing it and now the Pakistani regime was bulldozing it. People of East Pakistan were angered and disgusted at the chauvinistic attitude of West Pakistanis towards the shared Bengali culture. The cord of common religion failed to be the saviour in this regard and proved to be bogus. "The Ayub Khan government's prohibition in 1961 of the celebration of the birth centenary of Rabindranath

Tagore and the ban imposed on singing of Rabindra Sangeet were bitterly resented by the public in East Bengal, which defied these orders" (Sengupta 206).

The constitution of 1962 reinforced the idea of a pure Islamic state by denying rights to people from other religion except Islam to be the president of the country. Hindu-influenced and liberal Bengali minds could not digest the radicalisation or Islamisation of politics. It was a clear aberration of the dream of *Quaid-i-Azam* who hardly dreamt of an Islamic country though he fought the entire Pakistan Movement on its basis.

However, it seemed that East Pakistan was doomed to be ruled by the military anarchy of West Pakistan. Amid all this chaos, India defeated Pakistan in the 1965 war. Though the war was fought on the western border of India, people of East Pakistan realised that the government had not made adequate security arrangements in their region to ward off any foreign attack. The feeling of insecurity more intensified the master-slave attitude of the government. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman became more vocal for greater autonomy of East Pakistan and on 5 February 1966, he presented Six-point Programme in Lahore underlining the need for restructuring the government to give it a proper shape of an unbiased federation. The activities of Mujibur Rahman and many like-minded Bengalis were divisive in the eyes of the government and they tried to gag it by arresting the leader on 8 May 1966. A general strike in the support of the Six-Point Programme shook East Pakistan on 7 June. Ruthless authoritarianism descended on the innocent people, including students, children and women. "Ayub Khan is going to use the language of weapon if anyone utters the six-point demands" (Gangopadhyay 1: 975). Subsequently, Rahman was released but later in 1968, he and his associates were arrested in Agartala Conspiracy Case and was charged with encouraging sedition with the help of Indian government. As a matter of fact, Bengali leaders were suppressed so that they could not be at the helm of the country. This very attitude raised doubt about the integrity of the West Pakistani leaders to incorporate Bengali Muslims in the political process of nation-building. The failure of religious attachment was conspicuously visible. However, the incident led to a mass uprising in the initial months of 1969 and compelled the government to withdraw the case and release Rahman and others. On 25 February 1969, Ayub Khan resigned from his office and General Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan took over the charge under martial law.

After the Partition, Muslims from West Bengal and Bihar chiefly chose East Pakistan as their destinations. The arrivals of the Muslim refugees had many social implications in East Pakistan. Native Bengali Muslims could not accept the alien culture and language of the migrants. On the other hand, Bihari Muslims thought that their Bengali neighbours were less Muslim than the West Pakistanis. Interestingly, Urdu-speaking West Pakistanis had a superiority complex towards their Bengali and Bihari coreligionists. To build a nation religion cannot be the sole stakeholder as other connections of life like culture, tradition, language play vital roles.

The Biharis looked different, spoke a different language and practised social rituals and habits that were alien to the Bengalis. They flaunted long and complicated Arabic names. A new and strange culture invaded us. . . . People with fair skin and knowledge of the language of the Muslim rulers demanded social superiority. The dark-skinned Bengali Muslims, they said, were half-Hindus and were inferior to the direct inheritors of the Mughals and Pathans. (Dhar 140)

Bhola cyclone caused havoc in East Pakistan on 12 November 1970 and killed nearly half a million people. Surprisingly, President Yahya Khan showed indifference to cyclone-affected Bengalis. In the general election that took place in December, Mujibur Rahman-led Awami League clinched a sweeping victory both in the National Assembly of Pakistan and the Provincial Assembly of East Pakistan. When Mujibur Rahman claimed to form the government, opposition leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan People's Party and Yahya Khan opposed it as they did not want a Bengali prime minister. This was utterly a gross violation of the electoral mandate and the democratic aspiration of the Bengalis. Bengali Muslims got the clear message that political animosity was stronger than religious affinity.

On 20 December, Z. A. Bhutto, referring to Mujibur Rahman's majority in the National Assembly, made an uncharitable remark that 'majority alone did not count in national politics'... That the dominant political group in West Pakistan was not willing to hand over political power at the national level to the Bengalis became clear from Bhutto's statement. (Sengupta 219-20)

Bengalis were quite disappointed with the high-handed attitude of the West Pakistani leaders. Socio-economic and political exploitation reached a boiling point in 1971 and Bengalis took to the streets with the candid demand for independence. On 7 March 1971, Mujibur Rahman delivered a historic freedom speech in Dhaka and appealed to his people to brace for a final assault on the tyrannical government. As expected, government crackdown came down heavily on Bengalis and many lost their lives. Operation Searchlight was launched on the midnight of 25 March to weed out Bengali intelligentsia, academics, students, armed personnel, and politicians and kill them so that the brutal intimidation would halt the ongoing freedom movement.

Then all of a sudden General Yahya Khan left for Karachi on the evening of 25 March, leaving the army a free hand to eradicate the Awami League... This was the signal for the Pakistan army to virtually declare a war on the entire population of East Bengal. There were en masse dishonouring of Bengali women, murder of Bengali nationalist activists and destruction of property. (Sengupta 224)

The plan of the military clampdown was to kill as many as possible and annihilate the Bengali Hindus as they were thought to be the real instigators of the independence movement. Minority Hindu population became a major impediment to absolute Islamic rule in East Pakistan since the Partition. Unlike the Muslims of East Pakistan, West Pakistani Muslims were not tolerant of the Hindu cultural heritage and its influence.

From 1947 to 1971 West Pakistan's ruling elite blamed the disaffection in East Pakistan on the province's Hindu population and their influence on Muslim Bengalis, whom they considered insufficiently Islamised. What the latter had failed to do in 1947, because they were 'bad' – Hinduised – Muslims, the Pakistan Army was brainwashed into attempting in 1971. (Haq)

Before his arrest on 26 March, Mujibur Rahman declared East Pakistan to be a free and sovereign country called Bangladesh. Civilians and Bengali armed forces united and formed Mukti Bahini to fight against the Pakistani military. Bihari Muslims living there

colluded with West Pakistani oppressors. Religious theory of nationhood was completely shattered as Muslims were killing Muslims to grab political power.

People in these two areas are completely different from one another from every respect except religion. It is one of the greatest frauds on the people to suggest that religious affinity can unite areas which are geographically, economically, linguistically and culturally different. (Azad 248)

Surprisingly, common people of West Pakistan remained the mute observers of the unbound atrocities incurred on their Bengali coreligionists. They somewhere felt no religious attachment for their Bengali brothers and sisters.

Indian government supported the freedom movement of the Bengalis and extended all possible help to make their dreams realise. The joint force of India and Bangladesh fought a severe war for two weeks. Pakistani military staged a full-scale genocide in the region and killed millions of Bengalis with the intention that it would break the backbone of the movement. Women and girls were raped extensively to make a whole new generation of Bengalis fathered by West Pakistanis. All attempts were futile to stop the freedom wheel of the Bengalis and ultimately Pakistan surrendered before the Indo-Bangladesh joint command in Dhaka on 16 December 1971.

Each area developed its own special character because of historic reasons. For instance, Bengalis are politically more conscious than the West Pakistanis because political and social movements have started in Bengal from the mid-nineteenth century. The Bengalis have tasted democracy already, the people of West Pakistan do not understand the meaning of the word. West Pakistan has still remained largely feudal, there is hardly any reaction to army rule, unlike in the east. (Gangopadhyay 2: 209-10)

Right from the Partition, West Pakistanis always thought that the Bengali-speaking Muslims were 'hinduised' and did not deserve to be the equal citizens of the country. The imposition of the Urdu language and culture was aimed at their purification to make them real Muslims. Religious proximity proved to be nothing more than a hoax to politically capture a huge landmass. The much-propagated two-nation theory was crushed to dust within twenty-four years. Amartya Sen remarks in his book *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*: "Bangladesh's separation from Pakistan was not based on religion at all, since a Muslim identity was shared by the bulk of the population in the two wings of undivided Pakistan. The separatist issues related to language, literature, and politics" (15). A quarter century of religious exploitation ended with the culmination of a sovereign Bengali identity. An impractical religious theory of nationhood tried to impose a singular identity on the majority population of a country in the garb of religion and it was a gross mistake. Prejudice and hunger for power snapped the thin line of religion that was used to tie the two wings and accelerated the fall of Pakistan and rise of Bangladesh.

East Bengali Muslims were cornered on social, lingual, cultural, economic, political fronts to undermine the existence of a separate Bengali identity. Religious monopoly does not always define the geography of a nation but sometimes embitter relations among the inhabitants of the land to such an amount that no ties can keep them together. Creation of Pakistan on religious theory and an ardent attempt to yoke two distinct cultures and distant geographies well anticipated the fall of the nation. The hoax and hallucination of

religion could not sustain for a long time and showed its inefficacy and irrelevance when people became more conscious about their rooted culture and society.

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Capitalism, Exploitation, and Human Sufferings: A Marxist Rereading of Mulk Raj Anand's *Coolie* (1936)

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Abstract

Mulk Raj Anand is credited with establishing the basic forms and themes of modern Indian Literature written in English. He is recognised as the figure who established the foundational forms and thematic concerns of modern Indian literature in English. His *Coolie* (1936) offers a powerful literary critique of capitalist exploitation within the socio-economic framework of colonial India. This paper undertakes a Marxist rereading of the novel to examine how capitalism perpetuates class oppression, economic inequality, and human suffering among the working poor. Focusing on the life of Munoo, a marginalised child labourer, the study analyses the mechanisms of surplus extraction, alienation, commodification of labour, and class hierarchy that shape his tragic existence. The novel foregrounds the dehumanising effects of industrial capitalism, where human beings are reduced to expendable instruments of production under colonial and bourgeois authority. Through a Marxist lens, the paper also explores the intersection of capitalism with caste, colonial power, and social stratification, demonstrating how structural exploitation intensifies the suffering of the proletariat. Anand's realist narrative emerges as a form of social protest, exposing the moral bankruptcy of capitalist systems and advocating for human dignity and social justice. The study argues that *Coolie* remains a significant Marxist text that documents the lived realities of exploitation and underscores the urgent need for socio-economic reform.

Keywords: Marxism; Capitalism; Exploitation; Proletariat; Colonial India; Human Suffering

Introduction:

In the twentieth century, the industrial world dominated the lives of working-class people, and its peak was all over the world. The bourgeoisie and the working class, the have-nots, were subjected to considerable oppression. The workers continued to exist like machines in the factories, deprived of fundamental rights and the freedom to live independent lives. At this juncture, under the influence of Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi, Indian writers began to expose the exploitation practised by the British capitalist class, as well as social inequality and economic oppression. Mulk Raj Anand was one of the prominent voices among them. The intellectual and literary impact of his *Coolie* (1936)

is integral to discourse on colonial subjection, class oppression, and the development of Indian English literature as a medium for social commentary. Its intellectual and literary influence is profound. At this juncture, under the influence of Karl Marx, Mahatma Gandhi, and Indian writers, they began to highlight British capitalist exploitation, social inequality, and economic suppression in their writings. Mulk Raj Anand is one of them. *Coolie* tells the story of Munoo, a young boy from rural India who becomes a symbol of the exploited working class, navigating a brutal colonial economy and a deeply stratified social order. Munoo, a young boy from the countryside, is the central figure in *Coolie*. His journey, set against the backdrop of a cruel colonial economy and a rigidly hierarchical society, turns him into an emblem of the exploited working class. A Marxist reading of the novel highlights the pervasive class struggle and economic exploitation faced by Indian labourers under both indigenous feudal structures and British capitalist imperialism. Munoo's movement through various exploitative labour environments, rural estates, urban factories, and colonial households mirrors the alienation and commodification of labour central to Marxist theory.

A Marxist reading of the novel highlights the pervasive class struggle and economic exploitation faced by Indian labourers, a struggle rooted deeply in the interaction between entrenched indigenous feudal structures and the encroaching forces of British capitalist imperialism. The protagonist, Munoo, becomes a focal point through which this systemic oppression is analysed. His relentless, forced movement through a series of exploitative labour environments, from the archaic, personalised oppression of rural estates, to the dehumanising machinery of urban factories, and finally to the insidious, veiled exploitation within colonial households, serves as a devastating narrative mirror. This movement perfectly encapsulates the fundamental processes of alienation and the commodification of labour, concepts central to core Marxist theory. In each setting, Munoo's inherent human value is systematically stripped away, and he is reduced to a mere 'factor of production' or a disposable cog in the relentless machine of profit generation, thereby illustrating the corrosive, universal logic of capitalist exploitation across disparate socio-economic backdrops in colonial India. From a postcolonial perspective, *Coolie* critiques the dehumanizing effects of British colonial rule and its collaboration with Indian elites. The novel exposes how colonial capitalism reinforced existing hierarchies while introducing new forms of oppression rooted in race, class, and economic dependency. Anand's work challenges the myth of colonial benevolence, revealing the systemic violence at the heart of empire. Set in the context of 1930s India, during a period of growing nationalist sentiment and labour unrest, *Coolie* also engages with contemporary debates on identity, resistance, and reform. Anand combines literary realism with political advocacy, portraying Munoo not only as a victim of circumstance but also as a representation of the broader suffering and resilience of India's working poor. Through this multilayered critique, *Coolie* emerges as a powerful indictment of colonial capitalism and a call for social justice. From a postcolonial perspective, Mulk Raj Anand's novel, *Coolie*, offers a profound and incisive critique of the deeply dehumanizing effects of British colonial rule in India. The narrative meticulously exposes the structural violence inherent in colonial capitalism and, crucially, the insidious ways in which it collaborated with and empowered existing Indian elites. This collaboration was not merely a side effect; it was a mechanism that reinforced and ossified pre-existing social hierarchies while

simultaneously introducing novel forms of oppression. These new oppressions were fundamentally rooted in a complex interplay of race, class, and debilitating economic dependency, ensnaring the protagonist, Munoo, and millions like him.

Munoo's journey, from a Himalayan village to towns, factories, and urban slums, maps the economic geography of colonial India. Each stage of his movement corresponds to a specific mode of labor exploitation: agrarian servitude, domestic service, industrial factory work, and informal urban labor. Anand's narrative thus mirrors the historical processes of proletarianization and migration generated by colonial capitalism. Rather than presenting Munoo's suffering as exceptional or tragic in a sentimental sense, the novel insists on its typicality, suggesting that Munoo represents millions of similarly dispossessed laborers. Critics such as K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar and Meenakshi Mukherjee have acknowledged Anand's commitment to social realism and compassion for the underprivileged (Iyengar 347; Mukherjee 129). However, such readings often prioritize ethical sympathy over ideological critique. This article contends that *Coolie* must be read not merely as a humanitarian novel but as a Marxist text deeply invested in exposing the political economy of colonial exploitation. By situating the novel within Marxist and postcolonial theoretical frameworks, this study aims to recover its radical political vision.

Critical Reception and the Limits of Humanist Interpretation:

Early critical responses to *Coolie* primarily celebrated its documentary realism and moral urgency. C. D. Narasimhaiah viewed the novel as an ethical protest against injustice, emphasizing Anand's universal humanism and moral outrage (102). Similarly, M. K. Naik and Ramesh Mohan praised Anand's vivid portrayal of poverty and suffering, reading *Coolie* as an appeal to the reader's conscience. While such interpretations played a crucial role in establishing Anand's literary reputation, they also tended to depoliticize the novel. By framing exploitation as a moral issue rather than a structural condition, humanist readings risk obscuring the systemic nature of capitalist oppression. Suffering becomes an object of pity rather than a symptom of historically produced class relations. Later critics began to reassess Anand's ideological commitments. Iyengar acknowledges Anand's engagement with Marxist thought during his years in England and his association with leftist publications such as *Left Review* (347). Saros Cowasjee describes Anand as "a writer with a cause," whose fiction consistently seeks to expose structural injustice. Priyamvada Gopal goes further, situating Anand within a tradition of anti-colonial Marxist writers who used literature as a form of ideological intervention (72-75). Despite these reassessments, sustained Marxist analyses of *Coolie* remain relatively rare. Much Marxist criticism of Indian literature has focused on vernacular texts or post-independence writing, leaving early Anglophone works, such as *Coolie* under-theorized. This gap necessitates a renewed Marxist reading that foregrounds class relations, labor exploitation, and ideological domination within the colonial context.

Colonial Political Economy and Historical Materialism:

British colonialism in India was fundamentally an economic enterprise structured around extraction, accumulation, and labor control. As historians such as Bipan Chandra and Amiya Kumar Bagchi have shown, colonial policies dismantled indigenous industries, intensified agrarian distress, and integrated Indian labor into global capitalist circuits (Chandra 219; Bagchi 44). These processes produced widespread displacement, unemployment, and

poverty. *Coolie* reflects this political economy with remarkable clarity. Munoo's displacement from his village is not the result of personal failure but of structural impoverishment. His subsequent migration to urban centres mirrors the historical movement of rural populations forced into wage labour. Each labour site Munoo inhabits represents a different manifestation of colonial capitalism's exploitative logic. From a Marxist perspective, Munoo exemplifies the alienated labourer. His labour generates value for others while denying him dignity, security, and agency. Marx's theory of surplus value is particularly relevant here: Munoo's labour power is extracted without adequate compensation, ensuring profit for employers while perpetuating his misery (Marx 31-40). Anand thus exposes the exploitative foundations of colonial accumulation.

Labour, Alienation, and the Proletarian Body:

One of *Coolie's* most striking features is its focus on the labouring body. Munoo's physical exhaustion, illness, and eventual death foreground the corporeal cost of exploitation. Labour is depicted not as a means of self-realisation but as a site of dehumanisation.

In the Bombay cotton mill, Munoo encounters industrial discipline that reduces workers to mechanised units. Long hours, dangerous conditions, and authoritarian supervision exemplify what Marx describes as the transformation of human beings into "appendages of the machine." Anand's realist narration underscores how industrial capitalism erodes individuality and agency. Munoo's episodic movement across labour sites reflects the instability of proletarian existence under colonial capitalism. His lack of continuity or security highlights the absence of class solidarity among workers fragmented by migration, caste divisions, and ideological conditioning. The novel thus exposes not only material exploitation but also the conditions that prevent collective resistance.

Ideology and Colonial Subject Formation:

Louis Althusser's concept of the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) provides a crucial framework for understanding how exploitation is sustained in *Coolie*. According to Althusser, capitalist systems reproduce themselves not only through repression but also through ideology embedded in institutions such as family, religion, education, and language (85-86). Munoo's internalisation of inferiority exemplifies ideological domination. He often blames himself for his suffering and expresses gratitude toward abusive employers, revealing how ideology masks exploitation as fate or duty. Colonial discourse normalises hierarchy, making inequality appear natural and inevitable. This ideological conditioning prevents the emergence of class consciousness. Munoo's inability to recognise exploitation as systemic rather than personal reflects the success of colonial ideology in sustaining capitalist relations. Anand thus dramatises the psychological dimensions of domination alongside material oppression.

Postcolonial Marxism: Fanon and the Subaltern Condition:

Postcolonial theory enriches Marxist analysis by foregrounding the psychological and discursive dimensions of colonial domination. Frantz Fanon's analysis of internalised inferiority illuminates Munoo's experience of alienation and self-negation (Fanon 18-25). His humanity is consistently denied, rendering him socially invisible despite his economic usefulness. Gayatri Spivak's concept of the subaltern further clarifies Munoo's predicament. As a subaltern subject, Munoo lacks access to discursive agency; his voice is repeatedly ignored or misrecognised (Spivak 28-30). His silences and failed assertions of dignity expose

the limits imposed on marginalised subjects within colonial-capitalist structures. Together, Marxist and postcolonial frameworks reveal how economic exploitation is reinforced by ideological and psychological domination.

Intersections of Class, Caste, and Gender:

While *Coolie* foregrounds class exploitation, it also gestures toward intersections with caste and gender. Munoo's vulnerability is inseparable from his likely lower-caste status, even though caste is not explicitly foregrounded. As Gail Omvedt argues, caste and class often function conjointly within Indian capitalism (53). Gendered labour appears in the novel through domestic service and the marginal presence of exploited women. Feminist Marxists such as Silvia Federici and Angela Davis emphasise how reproductive and domestic labour sustain capitalism while remaining undervalued (Federici 33; Davis 98). Anand hints at these dynamics, suggesting a broader matrix of oppression.

Coolie and Global Proletarian Literature:

Coolie belongs to a broader tradition of global proletarian literature, sharing affinities with Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* and Maxim Gorky's *Mother*. Like these texts, Anand's novel critiques industrial exploitation and capitalist alienation. Its distinctiveness lies in its colonial setting, where racial hierarchy and imperial domination intensify class oppression. Anand offers a uniquely Indian articulation of proletarian suffering that is simultaneously local and global.

Conclusion:

This article has argued for a renewed Marxist reading of *Coolie* grounded in historical materialism and colonial political economy. While earlier criticism emphasised Anand's realism and humanism, such approaches often obscure the novel's structural critique of capitalism. By synthesising Marxist and postcolonial theory, this study demonstrates that *Coolie* is not merely a narrative of compassion but a politically charged exposure of systemic exploitation and ideological domination. Anand's novel stands as a foundational text of Indian proletarian literature, affirming the enduring relevance of Marxist criticism in understanding literature as a force for social transformation.

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Visual Representation and the Making of Darjeeling in the Colonial Period: Power, Landscape and the Colonial Gaze

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Abstract

This paper explores how visual representation shaped European ideas about Darjeeling and the Himalayan region during the colonial period. It argues that photography was not a neutral record of reality, but a powerful tool that supported colonial power, imagination and control. Through photographs that appeared truthful and objective, Darjeeling was presented as a peaceful, beautiful and healthy hill station.

The study focuses on the works of two important British photographers, Samuel Bourne and John Claude White. Bourne's photographs followed the Romantic idea of the sublime, showing the Himalayas as grand and spiritually uplifting landscapes where nature dominated and human figures appeared small. These images suggested the reach and authority of the British Empire over distant and majestic spaces. In contrast, John Claude White's photography served official and administrative purposes. His images of landscapes, rulers, monasteries and local communities transformed people and cultures into visual records that supported colonial knowledge and governance.

The paper also examines how colonial photographers constructed an exotic image of Darjeeling by highlighting scenic beauty while ignoring labour exploitation and social hardship. Circulated widely in Europe, these photographs shaped popular imagination and helped justify colonial presence. The paper concludes by stressing the need to read colonial visual representation and critically analyse their political meanings and recover marginalized voices.

Keywords: Colonial photography, Darjeeling, Colonial gaze, Himalayas, Imperial power, Exotic landscape

Introduction:

Darjeeling is often remembered through visualised images like green rolling hills, tea gardens, cool climate, green forest and distant snow peaks. These images appear natural and timeless. However, most of these visual ideas were formed during the British colonial period, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century. Photography played a major role in shaping this visual memory.

Colonial photographs of Darjeeling were not neutral records. They were created by European photographers for colonial audiences using European ideas of beauty and landscape. These images helped define how Darjeeling was seen, written about, projected and governed. They presented the region as a calm and healthy retreat for Europeans and as a landscape improved by British rule. In this way, photography became a tool of imperial power. Thus, there is a need to analyse critically how the visualisation and photography contributed to the making of Darjeeling under colonial rule and how images framed landscape, people, culture and history to support colonial authority and imagination.

Colonial landscape and visual strategies:

Hill stations were one of the most important colonial inventions in South Asia. The British developed towns in higher elevations as places of recreation and health for Europeans and for retreat from the heat and disease of the plains. Darjeeling, acquired by the British in 1835, was soon promoted as a sanatorium due to its cool climate and high altitude.ⁱ

British officials who visited Darjeeling early often described the hills as empty, wild, uninhabited or unused tract of land. They reported and proposed to the authority as the best tract for health sanatorium for British soldiers. The officials also realised the strategic importance of the place to keep an eye on northern frontiers of the British Raj. This idea justified colonial occupation. Roads, bungalows, botanical gardens, club houses, churches, missionary schools, military cantonments were constructed soon followed by tea plantations and narrow-gauge railway. The landscape was reshaped to resemble European hill towns, especially the Alps.ⁱⁱ These visual representations echoed and amplified these material changes. Pictures that showed neatly terraced tea gardens and European-style buildings conveyed the sense that colonial rule brought order, improvement, refinement and civilisation to a wild or backward place. In short, images participated in a politics of improvement which emphasised that empire had transformed nature into a productive and beautiful landscape.ⁱⁱⁱ

Colonial gaze: Power, politics and people:

Visual representation helped stabilise this transformation. Paintings, engravings and later photographs presented Darjeeling as clean, ordered and beautiful. Photography arrived in India in the 1840s and quickly became an important colonial tool. It was used for surveying, documentation, science and tourism. By the 1860s, photography was widely used to record landscapes and people across British India.^{iv} It carried the authority of science and truth. Because photographs appeared mechanical and objective, they were trusted more than drawings or paintings. However, photographers still made choices – what to include, what to exclude, where to stand and how to frame the scene. These choices were guided by colonial values. Thus, thereafter images began to manifest that the British had improved nature and created civilisation in the hills.

Landscape photography followed European aesthetic traditions, especially the picturesque and the sublime. The picturesque preferred balanced compositions and gentle scenery, while the sublime focused on vastness and veneration. Himalayan photography combined both, making the mountains impressive but also visually controlled.^v

Colonial photographs of Darjeeling were circulated widely in Europe and outside. They were sold as album prints, displayed in exhibitions and reproduced in books and journals. British audiences consumed them as images of exotic beauty and imperial success.^{vi} These

images shaped public opinion. They justified colonial presence by showing order, beauty and prosperity. They also shaped tourism, encouraging Europeans to visit hill stations. Thus, photography did not remain in albums rather it actively shaped colonial policy, economy and memory.

One of the most cited photographers of nineteenth century India was Samuel Bourne. Between 1863 and 1870, he produced hundreds of photographs of northern India and the Himalayas. His works were widely sold by the firm Bourne & Shepherd and circulated in albums and exhibitions.^{vii} His images of Darjeeling and nearby mountain scenes are often cited as exemplary of Victorian landscape photography in South Asia. Bourne's work is notable for its careful composition, technical mastery of the wet-plate collodion process, and strategic use of viewpoint to dramatize mountain forms and human presence.^{viii} The following photograph can be taken as glaring example of the visual strategy.



Darjeeling, Observation Post by Samuel Bourne c.1880

(Source:[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chowrasta_\(Darjeeling\)#/media/File:Darjeeling_MET_DP71_242.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chowrasta_(Darjeeling)#/media/File:Darjeeling_MET_DP71_242.jpg))

Here Bourne presents a carefully composed view of Chowrasta, heart of the town. The photograph shows a clear pathway in the foreground, European-style buildings on the slopes, and mist-covered hills in the distance. There is no sign of congestion or disorder. The image suggests calm, health, and control. The Mall Road, a key colonial social space, acts as a visual guide into the scene. Indigenous settlements are absent. This absence is important as it visually removes local life and centres European presence. The photograph constructs Darjeeling as a European space, suitable for leisure and governance. It turns a contested colonial town into a peaceful resort.

Local people appear in many colonial photographs, but rarely as central subjects. They are often unnamed, uncaptioned and placed at the edges of images. In some photographs of Joh Claud White, the indigenous figures are posed in traditional dress. The image appears

ethnographic. The subjects are presented as types but not as individuals.^{ix} Such images supported colonial anthropology and racial classification which attempted to suggest that local people belonged to nature while Europeans belonged to culture and progress.

Visual representations did not simply reflect existing change rather they also encouraged investment and migration that transformed Darjeeling physically. Photographs circulated in exhibitions, periodicals, post cards and travel albums in Britain and India, where they evoked interest among planters, civil servants, entrepreneurs and middle-class tourists. Pictures that showed neat tea gardens and comfortable European houses helped sell the idea that Darjeeling was a good place to invest and to live. As tea estates expanded in the 1840s and 1850s and transport links improved, the town's image as a prosperous colonial hill station became self-reinforcing where images stimulated settlement and settlement produced more images and thus the cycle continued.^x

Colonial planning and sanitation projects also used visuals as proof of progress. Photographs of cleared slopes, planted trees and new buildings were used in official reports and promotional brochures to demonstrate the benefits of British rule. In this way, images played a public-relations role for the empire as evidence that colonial governance brought health, industry, prosperity and civility to regions like Darjeeling.^{xi} These images began to shape public opinion which tried to justify the colonial presence. They also shaped tourism encouraging Europeans to visit hill stations.

The Orientalist Frame:

It is important to place Darjeeling's visual history within the broader theory of Orientalism and colonial representation. Works on Orientalist photography show how images often produced a binary between the modern West and the timeless Orient by representing colonized places as exotic, backward or picturesque in ways that justified colonial intervention. In the case of Darjeeling, the Orientalist frame was modified, the hills were presented as akin to European landscapes, an Alpine Arcadia transplanted to Asia. But even this transformation reproduced colonial hierarchies, the presence of European-style buildings, the centrality of British visitors in photographic frames and the marginalization of local subjects as scenery all reinforced a racialized order. Thus, even when the hills were made to look European, the underlying message remained imperial and the colonizer could remake and manage nature and people alike.^{xii}

Scholars have pointed out that Orientalist photography is not a simple story of domination but local actors and viewers also engaged with photographs, buying prints, posing for studios and using images for their own networks. In Darjeeling, local labourers and tea workers appear within many images where they were essential to the material economy being represented. Yet the visual logic of many published views minimized their agency and transformed them into components of a colonial scenicity.^{xiii}

Conclusion: Enduring legacy:

The images produced in the colonial period have had long-term consequences. They helped to fix a popular image of Darjeeling that persists in tourism brochures and postcards with popular imagination of neat tea gardens, mountain views, rolling hills and cool atmosphere that seems timeless. These visual memories shaped tourist flows and economic choices well into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Even after independence, the visual archive continued to influence how Darjeeling is marketed and remembered.^{xiv} Contemporary

debates about heritage, conservation, local identity and history of the area often take place against this older visual legacy.

At the same time, contemporary scholars, curators, and activists have worked to re-examine and complicate these visual histories with recovering marginalized voices, challenging simplified picturesque readings and recognizing the environmental and social costs of colonial transformation. Such efforts aim to broaden public understanding of Darjeeling's past and to make visual heritage a site for more inclusive histories.^{xv} Moreover, not all images conformed to the picturesque ideal. Some photographers recorded hardships, ruins or scenes that unsettled the neat story of improvement. Building a full visual history means attending to the diversity of images and to the ways that different viewers read photos differently. Still, the prevailing visual logic in widely distributed views favoured representations that supported colonial aims.

Thus, Darjeeling's colonial visual history shows how photography and related visual practices helped to create an image of the hill town that supported colonial ideologies of health, and aesthetic mastery. Photographers like Samuel Bourne produced powerful views that combined the sublime and the picturesque with signs of human order and these images were circulated widely and fed investment and tourism. At the same time, the visual record is complex as the local actors participated in photographic economies and not all images served the same ends. Recognizing both the power and the limits of colonial visibility helps us to understand how Darjeeling was perceived and projected and how those processes shape the present.

Visual analysis therefore offers a crucial tool for historical understanding. By reading photographs alongside official reports, travel writings, memoirs, family letters etc and material changes on the ground, historians can trace the many ways representation and power worked together to produce landscapes of empire.^{xvi} For Darjeeling, the result was an enduring image an *Alpine arcadia* of tea gardens and peaks, whose origins lie deep in the photographic and colonial practices of the nineteenth century.

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Tagore's Concept of Social Change: A Comprehensive Analysis

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Abstract

This article explores Tagore's wide view of social change - highlighting transformation through education, creative rebirth, rural uplift, yet guided by moral values. Pulling ideas from his stories, thoughts on life, and real-life efforts at Santiniketan, it breaks down how he saw growth as a natural flow tied to personal liberty, imaginative output, plus balanced blending of old ways with new times. It claims his take on reshaping society still matters today, bringing light to lasting progress, open-access schooling, along with diverse cultures coexisting.

Keywords: Rabindranath Tagore, social change, education reform, rural reconstruction, cultural nationalism, humanism

1.Introduction:

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) made history by becoming the first person from outside Europe to grab the Nobel Prize in Literature- though he was way more than just a writer or dreamer; instead, he probed hard into what's wrong with societies and how they might heal, dishing out ideas that still hit home now. While Britain clamped down harder, unrest bubbled up politically, traditions bumped heads with modern shifts all over India, and Tagore cooked up his own flavour of advancement- one ditching mindless nationalism, leaning toward global kinship, but never losing touch with hometown values or time-worn practices.

His answers were the opposite of fast change or aping Western models: he supported slow growth - first educational, then cultural; but also, personal emancipation. To him, to change society was to fight against all these things: livelihood, teaching, tradition, and for personal development. This article goes into various aspects of his perspective, including why he challenged old systems and proposed new paths, and why his thoughts are still relevant today.

2. Theoretical Framework: Tagore's Philosophy of Change:

2.1 Humanism as the Foundation

Underpinning Tagore's vision of social transformation is his deep humanism. It was his belief that any significant social change would have to be based upon the affirmation of the innate dignity and creative potential of every human being. Tagore disregarded determinist

views of social change based on economic materialism or cultural traditionalism, and instead introduced noble ideas of human agency and freedom.

In his essay "The Religion of Man," Tagore expressed this faith as the transcendence "in the surplus in man" – that dimension of humanity which lifted it beyond sheer biological existence (Tagore, 1931). This surplus, in the form of artistic expression, empathy and a search for meaning, makes possible the transformation of society. Tagore contended that society must be so organized to enrich and transmit this human surplus instead of stultifying it through the ruts of machinery or convention.

2.2 Synthesis of Tradition and Modernity

Tagore's attitude towards social change was marked by a synthesis between the traditional and the modern. He was opposed to both such blind traditionalism and uncritical modernization. In "Nationalism," the lectures he delivered in Japan and America, during (1916-1917), Tagore cautioned his listeners against the deification of nation-states, as abstract political concepts out of touch with human values (Tagore 1917). He noted the nationalism and imperialism of 'the West,' as an expression of a mechanical civilization that disregarded human well-being in a favour of political and economic power.

At the same time, Tagore had been scathing in his criticism of orthodox Hindu society with its caste order, gender oppression and ritual obscurantism. In countless essays and creative works, among them the novels 'Gora' and 'the Home and the World,' he laid bare the contradictions and brutalities of India's old social order. His vision of social alteration called for selectively maintaining life-affirming traditions along with absorbing secular values of freedom, equality, and scientific rationalism.

2.3 Organic vs. Mechanical Change

A unique factor in Tagore's theory of social change was his contrast between organic and mechanical movements. He held that real social change had to be the product of inner consciousness, not something that could be imposed from above by legislated fiat or revolutionary violence. Tagore has written 'The Creative Unity' emphasizing on the value of balancing the individual and collective, between freedom and order (Tagore, 1922).

This naturalist view of life inspired Tagore to promote change through education and cultural rejuvenation rather than swift political revolution. Although he was a sympathizer of the Indian freedom struggle, he was suspicious of a political liberation devoid of wider cultural and spiritual regeneration. This philosophical distinction was presented in his well-known debates with Gandhi about the true nature of social evil and the best ways to eradicate it- while Gandhi sought moral and political action as a solution, Tagore emphasized educational policy and cultural renovation.

3. Education as the Instrument of Social Change:

3.1 Critique of Colonial Education

Tagore's deepest work for social change was in the field of education. He was extremely scathing of the colonial education system being force-fed to India, which he believed was geared towards creating clerks and orderlies as opposed to freethinking, original minds. In his essay *The Problem of Education*, Tagore contended that the British system of education in India were "like an immense organization... with all its wheels and belts and shafts", but had no soul or object (Tagore, 1906).

In the base of Tagore, colonialism stripped students of their culture; it made them despise their own heritage and fed them a way of dependence instead of self-worth. It outsourced rote memory at the expense of creativity, competition to the exclusion of cooperation and intellectual growth abandoned both moral judgment and aesthetic reflectivity. Tagore was convinced that this type of education could never create individuals who could induce real social change.

3.2 The Santiniketan Experiment

Tagore's alternative educational vision took concrete application in Santiniketan (later Visva-Bharati University) that he established in 1901. His philosophy of education was that it should be happy in an environment close to nature, rooted in the culture of its idyllic surroundings with properties for a universal outlook and aid to harmonious development through fullness of life and not for mere career preparation.

Educational experiments explored by Tagore include the Five Formal Training Centres in Santiniketan (1902) which was an integration of formal and non-formal education that is relatively close to the "open air" classrooms, also made extensive international contacts for a few decades; Yeats's experience as described by his biographer and the school in Bolpur inspired and influenced him greatly. Tagore thought this education would create men adapt for creative independence, cultural confidence and humanistic values which are the preconditions of a productive social revolution.

In "My Life in My Words, 1941, Tagore states "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life, in harmony with all existence". This statement clearly reflects his educational philosophy. Tagore believed that education should not be limited to the acquisition of facts or vocational skills. Instead, it should help in the development of character, moral values and deep sense of connection with nature and humanity. This broader understanding of the role of education in character and consciousness education as opposed to skills training set Tagore's model apart from both the traditional Indian models of education, as well as those adopted by modern West.

3.3 Education and Social Reconstruction

Education was not for Tagore, an espousal of the cause of individual development in isolation from society. He believed that education could create agents of change at both the individual and community levels, particularly in rural Nepal. The Institute of Rural Reconstruction (Sriniketan), founded in 1922 at Santiniketan, was the materialization of this dream. It was here that educated youth laboured side by side with the villagers concerning themselves in the areas of agriculture, cottage industries, health and literacy.

Tagore's ideal for rural reconstruction in education was close to the views of many who have been thinking about participatory development, and also about community schooling today. He enjoined upon the gentry's educated urbane youth an obligation to impart knowledge to rural dwellers, not in condescension but in cooperation and learning from them. It was a frontal assault on the urban educated elites-rural masses hierarchy of the colonial society.

4. Cultural Renaissance and National Awakening:

4.1 Cultural Nationalism vs. Political Nationalism

In contrast to the predominant sociological view, which significantly informed Bandyopadhyay's reading of Gora, Tagore conceived of social transformation as

inseparable from his understanding of cultural nationalism. While political nationalists stressed the role of the state and territorial sovereignty, Tagore called for a cultural nationalism that encouraged the creative reworking of India's civilizational past. In "The Spirit of Japan", he argued that "Japan has modernized herself, but has not westernised herself; she has modernised her body, but Westernise her soul" (Tagore, 1916).

Tagore had no time for shallow patriotism. He believed that a true national awakening entailed a strong cultural self-assertion and creative response to tradition, not mere political independence. He was afraid that political freedom without cultural and spiritual regeneration would only substitute native tyrants for foreign ones, while the underlying issues of social injustice, cultural deprivation, and spiritual debasement would remain. What set him apart from the colonial modernizers - as well as many of the nationalist leaders - was his belief in cultural renaissance as a basis for social transformation.

4.2 Language and Literature as Instruments of Change

Rabindranath Tagore realized the potential of language and literature as effective tools for social change. His own contribution was in the form of Bengali literature- poetry, novels, short stories, plays and essays responded to contemporary concerns such as caste oppression, religious orthodoxy, subjugation of women and rural poverty in Bengal. In gripping stories featuring unforgettable characters, he invited readers to challenge traditional assumptions and to envision new possibilities for social frameworks.

Works such as 'Gitanjali,' "The Home and the World" and, indeed, as one of his earliest plays "The Post Office" not only reached out to literary excellence but they also articulated social criticism and vision. Tagore's pioneering use of Bangla, Indian vernacular rather than Sanskrit or English, is credited with freeing verse and prose from traditional models based on classical Sanskrit. His achievement confirmed for the indigenes that modern ideas and sensibilities were able to be expressed in their language and it added beingness to indigenous pride (so disabusing them from absorbing imperial myths about English superiority).

4.3 Art and Aesthetics in Social Transformation

Tagore realized that social change was inextricably connected with arts and aesthetics. He thought exposure to beauty- in nature, music, visual arts or literature- forged sensibilities necessary for the construction of a humane society. At Santiniketan, music, dance, drama and visual arts all received equal attention vis-a-vis the curriculum and this again underscored that education of the aesthetic was as vital for individuals to be both culturally literate and socially responsible.

According to Tagore's book 'Sadhana: The Realisation of Life,' he claimed that artistic creativity was not just for the sake of entertainment but for achieving individual self-realization in universal particularity, linking individual consciousness with cosmic being (Tagore, 1913). Kropotkin assumed that the recognition of this fact would induce compassion, social concern and ethical behaviour. Arts education was therefore not a luxury but an articulation of what is required if any form of genuine social transformation was to take place.

5. Rural Reconstruction and Economic Change:

5.1 Critique of Urban-Centric Development

Rabindranath was extremely worried at the issues of rural poverty and exploitation of peasants by Colonialists. He took a bonk at the urban-centric model of development that poured resources, opportunities and cultural capital into cities while largely ignoring the villages where most people lived. he explained that 'City and Village' he castigated the parasitical relationship between city and village, fostered by colonial capitalism which had robbed rural economy of its industry and converted it into producers of raw materials or agricultural produce while cities monopolised industries, education and political power (Tagore, 1928).

Adducing much of this, however forceful it may be, did Tagore also not counsel balanced development that ensures economic revitalization for the rural and cultural and social uplift. He argued against the view that modernization equated with city-building and industrialization, offering an alternative development model as a way of improving rural life without breaking up community ties and damaging ecological integrity.

5.2 The Sriniketan Model

Sriniketan, or the Institute of Rural Reconstruction which was 'a practical experiment in rural reconstruction' and expresses a closer synthesis with Tagore's development ideas. With cooperation of agriculturists economist Leonard Elmhirst and Tagore's lifelong friend Kalimohan Ghosh, Sriniketan (abode of welfare) was based on the ideal that it could contribute to the rural welfare by cooperative attempts in different spheres.

Activities at Sriniketan included experimentation with improved agricultural methods; the creation of cottage industries and cooperatives; teaching, reading, and illustration on adult literacy and health matters; renovation of traditional crafts and village treatises for students; and cultural activities. Crucially, however, these interventions were not intended as charity but rather as collaboration between educated volunteers and rural communities based on equality and learning together.

Rabindranath Tagore's rural reconstruction was to foreshadow various recent developments in the field of development: participatory development, intermediate technology, integrated rural development and sustainable livelihoods. These aspects of the program are important in and of themselves, but what is significant about IETP is that it recognizes that rural development must be social, not economic.

5.3 Cooperative Economics

Tagore's alternative to individualistic, exploitative capitalism was the idea of socially conscious community-based enterprises and cooperative entities. He argued that cooperatives embodied the concept of 'unity in diversity,' permitting individual measures while securing the well-being of all. As part of his scheme for rural regeneration, cooperative banks and marketing and producer cooperatives would shield peasants from usurers and middlemen - and raise productivity.

This collaborative approach is a microcosm of Tagore's social philosophy advocating for voluntary association and mutual aid, rather than force and competitive individualism, as the means to change society. He viewed cooperatives as fostering ethical economic practices founded in solidarity rather than profit, serving both material and moral ends.

6. Social Reform: Gender, Caste, and Religion:

6.1 Women's Emancipation

Tagore had been a life-long campaigner of women's emancipation through his writings and personal initiatives. Many stories and novels – including 'The Home and the World,' 'Chokher Bali' and 'Shesher Kobita' – were studded with female protagonists who were thwarting subjugation at the hands of patriarchy. These characters addressed much-debated contemporary issues, including female education, widow remarriage, purdah and women's financial independence.

In Santiniketan, he championed the cause of co-education and equal opportunities for girls, not a small matter in mid-twentieth century India. He was convinced that women should be educated, involved in the arts and public life for the good of both themselves and society. In his essay 'Woman', he contended that the stifling of unitizing power would debase society as a whole, whereas their unleashed freedom would revitalise social change (Tagore 1918).

The feminism of Tagore was not about turning women into men but embracing and valuing the attributes and perspective that is feminine. It would be one in which masculine and feminine would interpenetrate to produce a more humane, less exclusionary social system.

6.2 Critique of Caste System

Tagore was an outspoken critic of Kolkata's caste system and untouchability. His novel "Gora" asked some angry questions about caste-based identity, as did many of his short stories which showed the terrible consequences of caste discrimination. In 'Chandalika,' a dance-drama from a Buddhist story, he paid tribute to the dignity of an untouchable woman who has religious experience.

Tagore consciously set the example at Santiniketan of disregarding caste restrictions for dining, learning and participation in all activities. He would call people from lower castes to cultural performances and claim that true Indianness was above caste. In his essay 'Caste and India,' he contended that the caste system had degenerated into a fossilized, life-denying institution- opposing the dynamic spirituality of India's profound ancient legacy (Tagore 1916).

6.3 Religious Humanism

Tagore propagated a religious humanism that did not hide its face behind the cloak of sects while making spiritual values paramount. He opposed religious orthodoxy, ritualism and communalism, which in his opinion were retardants of social progress. In his writings, including *The Religion of Man* and countless songs and poems with which he sought to revive the then moribund sense of humanity when partition based solely on religious distinctions took root.

This religious humanism was the basis of Tagore's approach to social transformation. He felt that if material progress was to go hand in hand with a moral and spiritual development, the key lay in a change of mind-set "for which slow and cautious coercion will have unfortunately very limited effect." He was highly critical of the idea that spirituality consisted of evading worldly concerns, urging rather that engagement in social issues could and should be itself a form of spiritual work.

7. Internationalism and Global Consciousness:

7.1 Critique of Nationalism

Rabindranath internationalism, linked as it was with his ideas on social transformation. In his polemical lectures on nationalism, he lambasted the belligerent nationalism accompanying modern nation states, which he believed both glorified selfishness and was a harbinger of endless warfare. He predicted that political nationalism cut off from humanistic principles would become totalitarian and bring wars– all of which came true in the two World Wars and the twentieth century's totalitarian systems.

Tagore challenged that India had a contribution to make to world-civilisation; not as another aggressive nation-state, but through co-operative federation sensitive of values and cultures." What he championed could be called cosmopolitanism now – loyalty to universal human values along with local cultural identities, involvement in global communities and yet rootedness in the local.

7.2 East-West Dialogue

Tagore was a vocal advocate of dialogue between Eastern and Western civilizations, which he felt was necessary for universal social transformation. By travelling the East and the West, America and Asia throughout his life, and talking to intellectuals from various regions of world, he attempted to open up understanding between them all. He conjectured that Western cultures could contribute superior material products in exchange for Eastern contributions to a superior spiritual tradition and holistic worldview, making possible a global civilization that incorporated the best elements from both traditions rather than choosing one or the other.

At the renamed Visva-Bharati, to emphasize its internationalism, Tagore invited scholars from across the world and sent Indian students overseas, forming a cosmopolitan community. This practical internationalism expressed his conviction that if social change in the contemporary era was to be achieved it had to be integralist transnational and global solidarities among men and women of all continents based upon a common humanity.

7.3 Peace and Non-Violence

Tagore was a lifelong proponent of peace and non-violent means for social change. Though sympathetic to national liberation struggles, he was against militarism and violent revolution. His idea of social change was based on moral-suasion, education and constructive labour as against coercion and conflict.

Ironically, in spite of their closeness, Tagore also occasionally differed with Gandhi on the method and character of social transformation. Both were advocates of non-violence, but Tagore was more sceptical of mass movements and wanted gradual reforms through education and cultural work. Their disagreements on the nature of social evil, reason versus faith, and means and ends enlivened Indian discussions of social change.

8. Relevance and Contemporary Significance:

8.1 Education and Human Development

Tagore's philosophy of education is highly pertinent for an age obsessed with standardized testing, credential inflation and greater commodification of education. In his focus on all-round development, creativity and connection to nature and interlinking of arts with

sciences he suggests alternatives to an instrumentalist, narrow technocratic education that manufactures skilled workmen but not cultured human beings.

Modern trends in alternative education, natural learning, artistic schooling and child-centred methods echo Tagore's critique. His complaint about the "job training" theory of education finds an echo in those who lament the decline of liberal education and the transformation of knowledge into marketable qualifications. The Santiniketan model has influenced several hundred such humanistic educational initiatives around the world.

8.2 Sustainable Development

Tagore's dream of rural reconstruction and sustainable development owed much to current concerns about sustainability, community resilience, and intermediate technology. His focus on local knowledge, traditional skills, cooperative economics and ecological balance dovetail with contemporary thought on sustainable living and community-based development.

In the time of climate crisis and rural distress, Tagore's critique of urban-based industrial development and his alternative vision premised on energized self-reliant villages assume relevance. His work at Sriniketan had proved that rural development was not synonymous with leaving villages and moving to cities, but could also mean improving the standard of living in rural areas by means of suitable projects.

8.3 Cultural Pluralism and Globalization

Tagore's vision of cultural nationalism that supports to the affirmation of particularity alongside common humanist values offers resources for negotiating paradoxes between globalization and localization. His condemnation of homogenizing nationalism coexisted with celebration of various forms of cultural diversity, and has a clear relevance for contemporary debates around multiculturalism, identity politics and cosmopolitanism.

At a time when the world is witnessing religious fundamentalisms and ethnic strife, Tagore's Doorji-Manabatawa (religious humanism) and his emphasis on dialogue between civilizations have the potential to show ways for co-existence. His concept of planetary citizenship based in local communities but also opened to an all-humanity embraces alternatives both to narrow chauvinism and rootless globalism.

8.4 Social Justice and Humanistic Values

Tagore's preoccupations with social justice— gender parity, caste-based discrimination, economic exploitation— are as pertinent today in India and across the world. His method of uniting a structural criticism with a focus on subjective awareness, connecting material circumstances to cultural values, provides a holistic approach to seemingly inexcusable disparities.

Amidst market fundamentalism, technological determinism and other such deleterious orientations of the age, Tagore's critique is a necessary corrective to one which simply insists on humanistic tenderness, aesthetic intimacies and spiritual luminosities as crucial aspects in the movement forward. This vision of social change as ultimately being about the release of human potential and our ability to build communities of care, creativity, and compassion is as powerful today as it was in Girouard's time.

9. Conclusion

Rabindranath Tagore's vision of social change was complex, subtle, and profoundly humanist. Instead of proposing a comprehensive ideology or political programme, he

articulated an approach to social transformation involving personal development, spiritual renewal and the uplifting of educational, scientific and cultural life coupled with mass mobilization. His method was not that of simple dichotomies— tradition and modernity, individual and community, particular and universal, material and spiritual.

Tagore's focus on organic, growth-based change through the development of human consciousness and culture, in contrast to revolutionary break out or legislative reform separated him from both colonial modernisers and many nationalist leaders. His concrete experiments at Santiniketan and Sriniketan on the ground displayed his determination to make himself a living possessor of it, not to speculate only in social change.

Universal Relevance of Tagore's Vision The eternal significance of Tagore's vision is that it is composite- it is holistic— real transcendence lies in knowing how to integrate and concentrate all aspects of human life (economic, political, cultural, educational and spiritual) at one go. In an age of multiple crises – ecological, economic, political and moral- Tagore's vision of harmonious development, humanist ethics, cultural diversity and awareness of the world are rich resources for thinking through social transformation.

Some of his specific suggestions may be passé, but his central insights are as relevant as ever: that social change must begin with personal awareness, that education is the most potent weapon for change, and that cultural pride and creativity sustain development in ways other things cannot, all without needing to pit particular identities and universal values against one another— and that the final aim of social reform is to create conditions conducive to human flourishing in concert with nature and community.

Further studies could investigate particular details of Tagore's social thought in specifics, juxtapose his ideas to those of other thinkers on sociopolitical transformation, or study the working of institutions he set up. Tagore's writings and his wide-ranging experiments in education, rural development, and cultural work remain a treasure trove for students who seek models of alternate forms of social change.

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Advertising as Modern Storytelling: Theory and Practice in the Marketplace

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Abstract

In the modern marketplace, advertising has emerged as a powerful form of storytelling, blending commercial intent with literary expression. This paper examines advertising as modern narrative practice, where brands employ literary elements such as plot, character, symbolism, and emotional appeal to communicate value and build consumer relationships. Drawing from narrative theory and marketing management, the study highlights how storytelling transforms advertisements from transactional messages into meaningful cultural texts in and around the world. Through a conceptual analysis supported by selected advertising examples, the paper illustrates how narrative-driven campaigns enhance brand recall, emotional engagement, and consumer loyalty. Advertising narratives not only influence buying behaviour but also reflect social values, aspirations, and collective identities, similar to literary works. By aligning commerce with literature, advertising functions as a creative space where economic objectives coexist with artistic expression. The study emphasizes that storytelling is a strategic managerial tool as well as a literary practice, offering interdisciplinary insights for scholars in commerce, literature, and cultural studies.

Keywords: Advertising, Storytelling, Narrative Theory, Brand Communication, Commerce and Literature, Consumer Engagement

Introduction:

In the contemporary marketplace, advertising has evolved beyond its traditional function of promoting products and services to become a powerful medium of storytelling. As consumers are increasingly exposed to an overwhelming volume of commercial messages, conventional persuasive techniques often fail to generate attention or emotional connection. Advertising plays an important role in our everyday life. It determines the image and way of life. An advertisement lays a foundation of a company to build an image in the minds of the people and at the same time informs and educates potential consumers about products, services, ideas, goods and many more (Rashid 2018). Companies spend huge number of resources on advertising and promotional strategies. In response, advertisers now rely on narrative-driven communication that draws heavily from literary traditions, employing elements such as plot, character, imagery, symbolism, and emotion to convey brand meaning. This narrative shift positions advertising at the intersection of

commerce and literature.

From a literary standpoint, storytelling has long served as a fundamental means of constructing meaning, shaping cultural values, and expressing social identities. Similarly, in marketing and management studies, storytelling is recognized as a strategic tool that enhances brand differentiation, emotional engagement, and long-term consumer relationships. Social changes, big or small affect all companies marketing products and services to people. Marketing today is synonymous with Advertising as marketing communications have become quite important and vital for the buying of products and services (Subramanian 2017). By embedding products within relatable and compelling stories, advertisements move beyond transactional communication to create experiences that resonate with consumers' aspirations, beliefs, and lifestyles.

Advertising narratives not only influence consumer behavior but also function as cultural texts that mirror societal norms, values, and ideologies. Like literary works, they reflect collective identities and respond to changing social contexts. This paper explores advertising as a modern narrative practice by integrating narrative theory with marketing management perspectives, highlighting how storytelling operates simultaneously as a literary technique and a strategic managerial tool in contemporary brand communication.

Literature Review:

Kanojia & Rathore (2025) explains that digital marketing helps small businesses grow and succeed. Using simple tools like social media, websites, email, and online ads allows businesses to reach more customers, understand their needs, and increase sales. Digital marketing is affordable and effective, helping small businesses compete better and build strong customer relationships making a close connection with the customer when used in a planned and smart way.

Macru (2025) explains that advertising as modern storytelling with different advertising formats communicate meaning and influence consumer choices in retail settings. Using a quantitative survey method, data were collected from 268 retail customers in Almaty to analyse the impact of online, broadcast, print, outdoor, and product placement advertising. Findings show that online advertising has the strongest influence on purchasing decisions, highlighting the power of interactive and engaging digital narratives. However, the study is limited to one city and focuses on advertising types rather than message storytelling quality. Future research can explore narrative-driven, emotional, and personalized digital advertising across broader markets to understand how storytelling enhances consumer engagement and loyalty.

Sidorenko-Bautista et al., (2025) in their study shows that advertising works as modern storytelling in the metaverse by using Fortnite to create fun and interactive brand experiences instead of traditional ads. Using a qualitative case study of 148 brands, it finds that activities like avatar customization, virtual events, and concerts help brands connect emotionally with young audiences. However, it does not study user opinions directly. Future research can explore how users feel about these brand stories and compare different metaverse platforms.

Baack et al., (2016) in their study portrays that Business-to-business advertising has traditionally focused on rational, fact-based messages, unlike consumer advertising, which often uses creativity and emotional appeal. This study shows that business buyers also

respond positively to creative advertising. Using an online survey with managers exposed to real B2B ads, the research finds that creative messages improve attitudes toward the advertisement and the brand. Creative advertising also strengthens behavioral intentions, challenging the belief that creativity is ineffective in B2B contexts.

Terkan (2014) examines creative advertising as modern storytelling by exploring how creativity, visuals, and persuasive messages influence consumer behavior, using 50 university students as the sample. Through a questionnaire-based quantitative method, findings show that creative advertising attracts attention, builds brand quality perception, reduces distance between businesses and consumers, and supports market growth. However, the limited sample and lack of digital storytelling focus reveal gaps. It suggests future research can explore digital, interactive, and narrative-driven advertising across broader audiences.

Fogg-Meade (1901) in the study supports the idea of advertising as modern storytelling by explaining how advertising educates consumers, shapes desires, and builds meaning around products rather than simply promoting sales. It focuses on consumer goods and middle-class buyers, using a conceptual and theoretical approach to show how repeated messages create familiarity, trust, and emotional connection. However, it does not address digital or interactive advertising methods, leaving a gap for future research on how modern digital platforms and data-driven storytelling enhance engagement, personalization, and long-term brand relationships in today's marketplace.

Objectives:

The study aims to:

1. Examine advertising as a form of **modern storytelling** that integrates literary techniques.
2. Analyse how narrative elements (plot, character, symbolism, and emotion) communicate brand value.
3. Provide an **interdisciplinary perspective** combining marketing management and literary analysis.

Methodology:

This study adopts a conceptual and qualitative approach, combining narrative theory with marketing management perspectives. The methodology includes:

1. Conceptual Analysis– Examining existing literature on narrative theory, marketing communication, and brand storytelling.

2. Visual Case Study Analysis– Selected Indian and international advertisements (Surf Excel, Cadbury Dairy Milk, Asian Paints, Coca-Cola, Nike) are analysed for narrative elements, symbolism, and emotional appeal.

3. Comparative Analysis– Investigating the intersection of literary storytelling and managerial objectives, highlighting how advertisements convey cultural meaning while driving consumer engagement.

The study relies primarily on secondary sources and visual textual analysis without direct primary data collection.

Narrative Storytelling in Advertising: Visual Case Analysis:

Advertising narratives in India and abroad are often strengthened through visual storytelling, where images function alongside text to construct meaning, much like imagery

in literary texts. Advertising is important for every type of business irrespective of its nature and size. The purpose of advertisement is to let people know about the business. It is important to the business as a whole because it enables the business to attract more customers, thus boosting business (Ilyas & Nayan 2020). The following case examples analyse how selected advertisements employ narrative elements through visual and thematic representation.

Surf Excel - "Daag Achhe Hain"

(Figure 1: Surf Excel Advertisement depicting a child helping others and getting dirty)



Source: Hindustan Unilever Ltd.

The Surf Excel "Daag Achhe Hain" campaign presents a complete moral narrative within a short visual frame. The advertisement image typically depicts a child engaged in an act of kindness helping someone in need resulting in stained clothes. Visually, the child occupies the central space of the frame, reinforcing the role of the protagonist, while dirt functions symbolically as evidence of moral action rather than carelessness. This visual symbolism parallels literary narratives where external marks signify inner virtue.

From a managerial perspective, the image shifts consumer focus away from detergent efficacy toward emotional and ethical values. The brand positions itself as an enabler of goodness rather than merely a cleaning agent. Culturally, the visuals resonate strongly with Indian ideals of selflessness and moral upbringing, making the advertisement both emotionally persuasive and socially reflective. This adds an emotional touch with the buyers.

Cadbury Dairy Milk - "Kuch Meetha Ho Jaaye":

(Figure 2: Cadbury Dairy Milk Advertisement showing celebration and shared happiness)



Source: Cadbury

Cadbury Dairy Milk advertisements visually construct narratives of joy, celebration, and emotional connection. The images often portray ordinary individuals celebrating success or happiness through spontaneous acts, with chocolate serving as the emotional catalyst. The visual tone: warm colours, smiling faces, and shared moments creates a narrative

atmosphere similar to literary themes of nostalgia and collective joy.

Strategically, Cadbury uses these visuals to reposition chocolate as an everyday celebratory sweet within Indian culture, traditionally dominated by local confectionery. The narrative image thus serves a managerial function by expanding consumption contexts. At the cultural level, the visuals reaffirm the Indian tradition of sharing sweets during moments of happiness, blending global branding with local emotional practices.

Asian Paints - “Har Ghar Kuch Kehta Hai”:

(Figure 3: Asian Paints showing love and affection)



Source: Asainpaints

Asian Paints’ “Har Ghar Kuch Kehta Hai” campaign presents homes as narrative spaces that carry emotions, relationships, and life stories. The visual storytelling focuses on everyday moments—family interactions, transitions, and memories—transforming walls into silent narrators. This narrative technique parallels literary symbolism, where settings reflect inner emotional states.

Managerially, Asian Paints successfully differentiates its product by emphasizing emotional value over technical features. The campaign demonstrates how storytelling can humanize utilitarian products and create long-lasting emotional bonds with consumers.

Coca-Cola - “Share a Coke”:

(Figure 4: Each bottle carries a name)



Source: Coco-cola

The “Share a Coke” campaign uses personalized labelling as a narrative device. Each bottle carries a name, prompting consumers to participate in a small but meaningful story of sharing and connection. This approach employs interactive storytelling, where the audience co-creates the narrative with the brand.

Managerially, the campaign increases consumer engagement, encourages purchase frequency, and enhances emotional attachment. Literarily, it demonstrates **symbolism** (the

bottle as a vessel of personal connection) and narrative participation.

Nike - "Dream Crazy" (featuring Colin Kaepernick):

(Figure 5: featuring Colin Kaepernick confront adversity and achieve symbolic victory)



Source: Nike

Nike's "Dream Crazy" advertisement narrates stories of athletes overcoming social, physical, and psychological barriers. The narrative is visually and emotionally charged, following multiple characters with personal challenges. From a literary perspective, the advertisement reflects **heroic storytelling**, where protagonists confront adversity and achieve symbolic victory.

From a marketing standpoint, the campaign aligns the brand with values of courage, social justice, and perseverance, reinforcing emotional loyalty among consumers. Culturally, it engages in contemporary social discourse, showing how brand narratives can carry ideological weight beyond product promotion.

Discussion:

Across these five case studies, advertising images operate as narrative texts that combine visual symbolism, emotional appeal, and cultural meaning. Surf Excel employs moral storytelling, Cadbury focuses on emotional celebration, Tata Tea uses social awakening as its narrative core, Nike uses its ideal figure to show confidence and never give up attitude and Coca-Cola shows the bond of sharing love and care. Together, these examples illustrate how advertising adopts literary storytelling techniques while fulfilling strategic managerial objectives. The integration of narrative visuals enables brands to move beyond transactional communication and establish deeper emotional and cultural connections with consumers.

Conclusion, Limitations and Future Perspectives:

Advertising has evolved from simple product promotion to a sophisticated form of narrative-driven communication, combining commercial objectives with literary storytelling techniques. It conveys and connects through plot, character, symbolism, and emotion, advertisements create experiences that resonate with audiences. Case studies such as Surf Excel's "Daag Achhe Hain," Cadbury's "Kuch Meetha Ho Jaaye," Asian Paints' "Har Ghar Kuch Kehta Hai," Coca-Cola's "Share a Coke," and Nike's "Dream Crazy" demonstrate how storytelling builds emotional connections, reinforces cultural values, and enhances brand loyalty. Advertising narratives influence consumer behaviour while reflecting societal norms, aspirations, and collective identities, bridging commerce with culture. Storytelling is the kingpin between creative literary practice and a strategic managerial tool, strengthening brand differentiation and long-term consumer

relationships.

Despite its insights, the study has limitations. It is primarily conceptual, relying on secondary sources and visual case analysis without primary empirical data or direct audience feedback. The case studies are selective, focusing on a few Indian and international advertisements, which limits generalizability across industries, regions, and cultural contexts. Digital and interactive advertising is only partially addressed, leaving emerging platforms like social media and metaverse campaigns underexplored.

Future research can address these limitations by incorporating empirical methods, such as surveys, interviews, or experiments, to measure audience perceptions, emotional engagement, and behavioural impact of narrative-driven advertising. More Studies could explore digital and interactive storytelling on social media, mobile apps, and virtual platforms to understand personalized narrative effects. Cross-cultural comparisons can reveal how storytelling techniques vary globally, while integrating quantitative metrics alongside qualitative analysis would provide a robust assessment of advertising effectiveness. Such research would further illuminate the evolving role of storytelling in contemporary marketing and its interdisciplinary relevance across commerce, literature, and cultural studies.

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Revolution in Narrative Form: The Arab Spring in Contemporary Arabic Novels

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Abstract

At the end of 2010 the Arab world witnessed a series of massive protests across Arab world which have changed the entire region. It started with peaceful protests against the dictatorship, corruption, unemployment and above all to restore democracy but with the passage of time it turned into violence and civil wars. These incidents are known as "Arab Spring". Contemporary Arabic novels played a crucial role to narrate Arab spring incidents. This paper will study Arab Spring as narrated in Arabic novels and the major issues and aspects discussed in those novels.

Keywords: Arab spring, Arab spring revolution, Arab spring in Arabic novels, Narration of Arab spring, Revolution in narrative form, Contemporary Arabic Novels, Arab protests, Unrest in Arab World, Arab spring in Arabic fiction, Arab spring in Arabic literature.

Introduction:

In the beginning of 21st century the world has witnessed many historic protests and revolutions the most significant one was "Arab spring" which has changed a lot, some for the better and some for the worse. The term "Arab spring" refers to a series of protests started in December 2010 for civil rights, freedom and democracy but with the passage of time it turned into violence, killing and destruction and finally it entered into bloody civil wars. Arab Spring attracted worldwide attention since it started. This historic event was discussed, analyzed and criticised by historians, academicians, political and social scientists and intellectuals. It also provided a wide space for poets, authors and writers for writing and describing these events from their perspective. Topics related to Arab spring attracted the contemporary Arabic literature a lot and it produced a huge volume of prose and poetry on various aspects of this revolution. Arabic novel played a crucial role in narrating the unfolding events of Arab spring.

Etymology of Arab Spring:

The "Arab Spring" is a term referred to a series of protests, uprisings, armed rebellions and revolutions that spread in the Arab world at the beginning of 2011.

The term "Arab Spring" was used for the revolutions of 1848 held in Europe. After the Iraq War this term was used by many experts who predicted an uprising for democracy in the Arab World.^[1]

The person who used the term 'Arab Spring' first for the events of 2011 in the Arab world is Dr. Mark Lynch, Professor of Political Science at George Washington University.^[2]

Professor of Modern Arab Politics and Intellectual History at Columbia University, Joseph Massad said: The term is part of an American strategy to control the goals and objectives of the movement and direct it towards liberal democracy on the Western style.^[3]

The Arab Spring is often compared with the revolutions of 1989 that took place in Eastern Europe and the Second World in terms of importance and size.^[4] Although they are fundamentally different.

Brief introduction of Arab Spring:

At the end of 2010 the Arab world witnessed a series of massive protests across the Middle East and North Africa which have changed the Arab region, those protests are referred to as "Arab Spring".^[5]

It was sparked by the protests occurred in a Tunisian town Sidi Bouzid on 18 December 2010 following the self-immolation of a young Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi who set himself on fire on 17th December 2010 publicly on a busy street of his home town Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia. He took this extreme step as a protest against the harassment and humiliation by a municipal official and widespread corruption, irregularity, injustice and dictatorship in the country.

This incident created anger among the masses against the Tunisian government and massive protests erupted across the country and gradually became a revolution resulting in overthrowing the Tunisian president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali on 14 January 2011. The flame of Tunisian revolution spread in many other Arab countries like Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and Sudan.^[6]

So far, these revolutions succeeded to overthrow governments in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen. Arab spring resulted in major social, political and economic reforms in almost all Arab countries.

One of the most popular slogans chanted across the Arab region during the 2011 uprisings "الشعب يريد إسقاط النظام" "Ash-sha'b yurīd isqāṭ an-nizām" "The people want to topple the regime" was an echo of a verse by the revolutionary Tunisian poet Abu al-Qasim al-Shabbi:

إذا الشعب يوماً أراد الحياة فلا بد أن يستجيب القدر

"Idhā ash-sha'bu yawman arāda al-ḥayāta

fa-lā budda an yastajība al-qadar"

"If, one day, the people want to live, then fate must answer their call."

The primary reasons behind this widespread revolution are dictatorship, corruption, unemployment, economic hardship, extreme poverty, human rights violations and a number of demographic structural factors. It is strongly believed that the Arab Spring got such popularity due to dissatisfaction of youth, unions and common people with the local governments.

Arab spring passed through different phases; we can categorise them into three phases:

Pre-Arab Spring phase:

Arab spring revolution did not happen suddenly but it has a historical background also, dissatisfaction and anger of people have been gathering over the time like a volcano which erupted suddenly and burned the entire Arab region. Arab spring was forecasted years

before it happened; as the region witnessed many similar protests against the local governments.

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali ruled Tunisia since 1987 for nearly 24 years. Although he claimed that his government was democratic, but in fact it was nothing except a kind of authoritarian and dictatorial government.

He suppressed political opposition, silenced the dissent and imposed restrictions on the media. Ben Ali's economic policy supported the interests of the capitalists who control industry and commerce. And it paved the way for the establishment of foreign companies in Tunisia, which led to the closure of local companies and made thousands of workers unemployed. Those foreign companies violated the rights of workers. As a result, unemployed young generation began to migrate to Europe in search of work by sea on boats. Many of them drowned. On the other hand, corruption spread in the public sector on a large scale. All this led to unemployment and economic crisis. These incidents brought outrage among the masses against the Ben Ali regime. Meanwhile, the wealth of the Ben Ali family increased rapidly and became the richest family in the country. Many of the unemployed people were young graduates of the leading universities of the country and aspired to better opportunities, but their dreams were shattered when they remained unemployed for years due to corruption and nepotism. This sparked anger among the qualified educated youth.

When some people tried to protest against corruption, unemployment and abuses, the authorities suppressed those protests and arrested the protesters.

Tunisia experienced a series of protests during the three years leading up to the Arab Spring, like *Gafsa* protest against mining irregularity in 2008 which continued for many months.

Hosni Mubarak became the president of Egypt in 1981. He eliminated political opposition and took control of Egypt for thirty years as the head of the state. He dealt harshly with anyone who criticized him and has banned freedom of expression, peaceful gatherings, demonstrations and all democratic activities. His regime became an absolute dictatorship. He eliminated political opposition and abolished all anti-government organizations-imposed restrictions on the media, civil societies and human rights organizations.

Mubarak used the The Emergency Law No. 162 of 1958 to crush the opposition and dissent. The law provides additional power to police, repeals constitutional rights, legalizes censorship and abolishes habeas corpus. It limits non-governmental political activity, including demonstrations, political organizations and unregistered financial donations. The law prohibits exercising democratic rights like protests, public meetings, strikes, demonstrations, and censors all types of print and electronic media. This has resulted in the human right violations, prolonged imprisonment and torture of activists and opposition and the refusal of employment in government jobs on the basis of their political affiliations.^[2]

In the years before the Arab Spring, economic conditions collapsed, unemployment and poverty rose, and public services such as electricity and water supplies and health services became in the worst condition. Corruption spread in all sectors.

Businessmen close to Mubarak enjoyed additional facilities and opportunities and became more powerful in the field of economy; on the other hand, they held high profiles in politics and government. They took control of Parliament and government committees. The government institutions began to operate according to their interests.

These factors led to widespread poverty and unemployment in the country. Which angered the people and they started to protest which turned into the revolution of the Arab Spring.

Egypt witnessed several strong labour movements during years prior to Arab spring, like workers' strike on 6th April 2008 at the state-run textile factories of *Al-Mahalla Al-Kubra*, outskirts of Cairo. Just prior to Arab spring, protesters held a number of rallies, sit-ins and strikes, during which many of them were killed, wounded and arrested.

The first Libyan civil war began in 2011 between the forces loyal to Colonel Muammar Gaddafi and rebel groups backed by the West who were seeking to overthrow the Gaddafi government^[8].

The roots of the Syrian civil war go back to the history of oppression, tyranny and cruelty to the citizens of by the regime of Bashar al-Assad and his father Hafez al-Assad over the last four decades. The history of the Assad regime is full of violence and massacres. Over the past forty years, Assad's forces have carried out many massacres. Both the regimes of Hafez al-Assad and Bashar al-Assad committed serious human rights violations. ^[10]

International organizations such as Human Rights Watch have criticized the deteriorating human rights situation in Syria.^[11] The government gave the security forces ultimate authority to crush anti-government voices. People are arrested without an arrest warrant and without any explanation, they were arrested and imprisoned for years without any trial or legal procedures. Anyone who does not agree with the government's policy suffers the most severe punishment.

Relatives of activists and government opponents have been subjected to various types of torture. Their women, young children and daughters were taken hostage for months or years, and subjected to torture, even rape and sexual harassment. All these things were used as a weapon to force activists and opponents of the government to surrender and stop their activities.

One of the factors of people's anger against the Assad regime is the systematic deprivation of the majority Sunni Muslims of opportunities and equality.

Poor economic conditions also played a role in this war. In 2010, Syria's per capita GDP was only \$2,834, less than poor African countries like Nigeria.^[12]

Unemployment rates were high, especially among the youth. People got rid of these cruelties and oppression and suppression by the Assad regime and the Arab Spring revolution brought hopes for them. Government dealt with the demonstrators with excessive force which turned into a bloody civil war.

Early Arab Spring phase:

The first sparks of the Arab Spring were ignited in Tunisia when twenty-six-year-old Tunisian "Mohamed Bouazizi" set himself on fire and burned himself in the middle of a crowded street to express his anger at his unemployment and government corruption. In fact, he did not set himself on fire alone, but he put the entire Arab world on fire.

This was not an isolated incident but it was a reflection of the frustration of the young generation in Tunisia who were facing crisis like unemployment, corruption, dictatorship, human rights violations and poor living conditions.

Nationwide protests and demonstrations began after the Bouazizi's suicide. Police responded to the peaceful protesters with firings and tear gas.

On November 28, 2010, Wiki Leaks revealed secret files on the corruption and repression of the Tunisian regime. This information added more fuel to the protests that began few weeks later.^[13] The police used excessive force to stop the demonstrators, and on the other hand, many unemployed youths tried to commit suicide following Bouazizi.

Protests continued and the president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was forced to resign on January 14, 2011. He left the country after that a state of emergency was declared in the country. The national army was widely deployed in Tunisia.^[14] About 338 people were killed and more than two thousand were injured during these demonstrations and clashes.^[15] After the end of the Ben Ali regime, the fight for power began.

The flames of Arab Spring reached from Tunisia to the entire Arab region. Massive protests started in Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen and other Arab countries.

After overthrowing Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali after massive protests, many political analysts predicted that Egypt would be the next country in which such revolution would occur. Most Egyptians were tired of Hosni Mubarak, his dictatorship, injustice, failed economic policies and 30-year tyranny. After the successful Tunisian revolution, massive protests erupted across Egypt. Millions of Egyptians occupied many public places throughout the country, including Tahrir Square in Cairo. Thousands began to gather in Tahrir Square.

As the number of demonstrators continues to rise, police tried to crush them with force. Thousands were arrested throughout the country. The government suspended internet and telecommunications services. Several journalists who were covering the protests were arrested and tortured by the government and Mubarak supporters^[16].

After nationwide protests and demonstrations of millions of people on February 11, 2011 the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak resigned from his post and the military took over the rule in the country. This was great news for the demonstrators in particular and the Egyptians in general, so celebrations started throughout the country. Millions took to the streets to celebrate this historic moment. Marches and gatherings went out across the country to express their joy. At least 846 civilians died and more than 6,400 were injured during the Arab spring protest till February 11, 2011.^[17]

The true Arab Spring revolution lasted only for two years and during this period it toppled down the regimes of Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in January 2011, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in February 2011, Libyan ruler Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in August 2011 and Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh in February 2012. In other countries massive protests continued.

Violent protests and Civil war Phase:

In early 2013 massive protests began against Mohamed Morsi the elected Egyptian president came to the power after Arab spring revolution which led to internal conflicts among the supporters of different political entities who were earlier united for Arab spring revolution. Meanwhile armed protests erupted in Syria and other Arab countries.^[18]

The first Libyan civil war began in 2011 between forces loyal to Colonel Muammar Gaddafi and rebel groups supported by the West seeking to overthrow the Gaddafi

government. Some activists and political and human rights organizations held demonstrations on February 17, 2011 against Gaddafi. Pro- and anti-government protests erupted in major cities. In Benghazi, protesters took over the streets, looted weapons from security headquarters and took over the local radio station and started their own broadcast under the name "Voice of Free Libya".

Demonstrators burned and vandalized several government buildings in Tripoli including the national parliament. Clashes took place in Green Square between anti-government and pro-Gaddafi demonstrators.

Gaddafi accused foreign powers of fomenting violence and unrest to fulfil foreign agendas to take control over Libya. NATO started air strikes on pro-government forces, defence airports, army bases, tanks and the government establishments. NATO aircrafts bombed throughout the country on both military and civilian areas killing many civilian as well. Many political experts accused that NATO and allied countries attacked Libya, not to protect civilians but to achieve its goals and political agenda.

On April 24, a NATO air strike destroyed Gaddafi's headquarters in Bab al-Aziziya, which the Gaddafi government deemed an attempt to assassinate Gaddafi. The Libyan government has confirmed that NATO airstrikes have killed 718 civilians and wounded more than 4,000 since the start of the bombing campaign.^[19]

NATO planes fired on the convoy of Gaddafi forcing him to take shelter in a pipe and the rebellions took him out and killed him brutally in public in front of camera.^[20] Several countries and international organizations called for an investigation into Gaddafi's death, considering it extrajudicial killing and a war crime.^[21]

On October 23, the head of the National Transitional Council, Mustafa Abdel-Jalil, officially declared that Libya was "liberated" and that the war would end.^[22]

The Arab Spring protests erupted in several Arab countries since January 2011, but Syria remained calm until mid-March 2011 due to fear of the government. When protests intensified in the Arab world and the governments were overthrown in Tunisia and Egypt, the Syrians dared to protest against the regime of Bashar al-Assad. The protests in Syria began when the police arrested and tortured 15 students who wrote anti-government slogans on the walls of a school in Daraa. Protests spread across the country. The Syrian army fired on the peaceful protests in several places.

As the protests intensified, the government increased the use of force to quell resistance and killed hundreds of protesters. The security forces besieged the city of Daraa, which became the center of the protests and stopped all necessary services such as water supply, food supply, electricity and telephone.

Before the end of 2011, the regime was overthrown in the Arab countries in which the Arab Spring revolution intensified, such as Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya, except for Syria, because the Assad regime used all its power and the government institutions to suppress the protests. The government launched indiscriminate fire on the demonstrators, arrested thousands, and brutally tortured, kidnapped members of the demonstrators' families, bombarded civilians, deployed tanks inside cities and villages, blockaded and stopped essential services such as food, medicine, water, electricity, and telephone. The government prevented the wounded from accessing health services and treatment, and the Syrian government committed crimes against humanity.^[23]

With the passage of time and the increasing repression of the Syrian army, the protests turned into an uprising and an armed rebellion. The opposition fighters became better equipped. On July 29, 2011 "Free Syrian Army" was formed to fight against the Assad regime and seek to overthrow the regime and became the first organized opposition military force.^[24]

With the passage of time Syrian civil uprising entered into civil war due to brutal response from the government and heavy military operations against protesting civilians. In 2014 Houthi militants in Yemen rebelled against Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi's government which came to power with an absolute majority clinching 99.8% of vote in a post Arab spring election. Houthi insurgency pushed the country into a civil war.

Arabic novels described all these developments from various perspectives.

Arabic novels narrating Arab spring:

Literature is the mirror of the society and the contemporary Arabic novel proved it. Since the beginning of Arab Spring in Tunisia then in other sister countries like Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria, Arabic novelists have been observing and recording these events very carefully. Arab spring shook the Arab society as the decades long anger blew up suddenly and this anger is clearly reflecting in Arabic novel and its writing style. It has a great impact on Arabic literature in general and Arabic novel in particular.

Let's have a look on Arabic novels of different phases:

Arabic Novels prepared ground for Arab Spring:

As I mentioned that the Arab spring revolution is a result of decades-long oppression, injustice and dictatorship so there is no surprise that Arab intellectuals have been raising their voices and showing their resistance for a long time. Arabic novels have been addressing those issues and produced many revolutionary novels which played a great role to prepare the ground for Arab spring revolution.

For example, Mustapha Khalifah's *The Shell* (2008) contributed to the Arab Spring in many ways. *The Shell* narrates the imprisonment of a Syrian director just because he made a sarcastic comment against the then Syrian president Hafez al-Assad. *The Shell* uncovered the horrific methods of torture against political prisoners by Assad's soldiers. The novel played a great role in bringing about Syrian revolution 2011 as this novel was widely discussed among the common people and it inspired them a lot.

Muhammad Saleem Hammad's *Tadmur: Witness and Witnessed* (1998) tells stories of the torments of the Assad regime in Palmyra Military Prison. It is an account of oppression, humiliation and insult to the dignity of every inmate in this inhuman prison. Thousands of Arab and Syrian prisoners, including the Jordanian writer Muhammad Salim Hammad, a student of engineering witnessed the inhuman torture and cruelty inside it. The novel describes the condition in Syria in Assad regime prior to the Arab spring.

Sun'a Allah Ibrahim wrote *That Smell* (1966) to criticize the Egyptian regime and its brutality. More than half century passed still it is alive in the memory of people. *That Smell* played a very influential role in raising awareness among the people regarding their rights.

Habib Selmi's *Nisa Al-Basateen* (2010) talks about the world of a modest family in a suburb of Tunis struggling for the daily livelihood. The novel discovers the reality of economic crisis

and unemployment in rural Tunisia which is one of the main factors behind the revolt against the Tunisian government.^[25]

Before and During Arab spring period these novels were widely discussed through social networking sites and people were motivated and inspired by those novels. In this way these novels played a key role in preparing ground for Arab spring.

Novels that talk about early phase of Arab Spring:

Arab spring brought about revolution not only in socio-political sector but in Arabic literature also. Since the Arab spring started, Arab authors shifted their attention and engaged more in the socio-political issues targeting the political leadership and its oppression. The involvement of the writers in the Arab spring through their works constructed a platform that challenged the regimes and broke the barriers.

For example, Tahar Ben Jelloun's "*Al-Shararah*" is among the first novels talking about Arab spring especially Tunisian revolution. No doubt Arab spring is the most significant incident of the Arab world in the recent history so the questions like 'who are the heroes of this revolution? How did dictatorial regimes fall within few months? What are the achievements and what are the failures?' are very important and Tahar Ben Jelloun is the first author to answer these questions in his novel.

This novel is the first literary work describes the true life story and self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, the young man whose suicide led to nationwide protests that entered into the Arab spring revolution.

Jelloun's novel narrates the life of Bouazizi before self-immolation. While reading the novel, the readers can imagine the experiences and frustrations of to Bouazizi's and they can feel the pain of the millions of the unemployed youths who are subjected to humiliation, deprivation and ill-treatment by the authority. The novel gives the sense that how Arab spring revolution erupted and what were the conditions in Tunis at the time when Arab spring began. In the novel the writer enters into Bouazizi's life and mind and creates the image of a man struggling for survival and dignity. Bouazizi struggles for a job, he fights for respect and dignity, he fights against corruption and when he found no means to fight against the regime, he makes his body as his weapon and he set himself on fire without knowing if others would see the light illuminated by him. But fortunately, millions saw it and considered it to be the fire in their own bodies and they took to the streets, they made their voices heard. They overthrew repressive governments.

Muhammad had to sacrifice himself due to political corruption that made his life unbearable. The regime became colonial and dictatorial. The novel tells that Muhammad was a street vendor selling fruit in the streets of his town, so he could support his mother and siblings. The local police demanded bribes as usual there. When Muhammad refused, he was assaulted by the police and his cart was confiscated, which deprived him of his source of livelihood. Muhammad got tired of the corrupt system.

The novel describes that the death of Mohamed Bouazizi was not an ordinary death. It was an organized murder, killed by the corrupt regime. The novel tells that there is a lot of injustice in the country, a lot of inequality and humiliation. It does not only narrate the life of the young Tunisian Mohamed, but also describes the social and political conditions in the country.^[26]

Hisham Khesheh's "*Sab'at ayyam fi al-tahrir*" is the first novel which talks about the January revolution in Egypt and its prominent figures and its social backgrounds in a very interesting and attractive fictional method which makes you feel your presence at Tahrir Square. It pointed out that the quest for the democracy and decades-long dictatorship and oppression and social injustice united people from different classes, ideologies and sections for a strong revolution.^[27]

Abu Bakr Al-ayadi's "*Waraqaatun Min Daftaril Khauf*" discovered the pathetic living condition in Tunisia and tells the story of a well-educated Tunisian immigrant who follows the incidents of Arab spring in Tunisia from its day one and the socio-political situation that forced him to migrate. The novel not only narrates events of Tunisian revolution but also portrays the worst kind of living condition under the dictatorship of the government.^[28]

Mohamed Saïd Raïhani's "*Adu-us shams, Al-bahakwan allazi sara wahshan*" is the first novel written about the Libyan revolution in 2011, it tells the painful reality in which Libyan people lived and how situation changed after the killing of Gaddafi.^[29]

Adnan Farzat's "*Kana Al-raeesu sadiqi*" recounts the events that took place in Syria after the revolt against the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The novel speaks directly about the ongoing events in Syria; the main character of the novel is a security officer who reveals the secrets of his work after his retirement, where he was assigned by his seniors to monitor a painting artist who paints for themes related to freedoms and human rights. During this mission he encounters with reality and brutality of his own department and his own government against the protesters. He discovers how the voices of common people were crushed with power and military might, how a head of the state declares war against his own civilians who only demand justice, freedom and dignity. This novel is very important to understand the ground reality of the early phase of Syrian civil war.^[30]

Novels narrating the phase of internal conflicts and civil war in Arab spring:

With the passage of time Arab spring protests entered into violent protests and internal conflicts which caused a massive humanitarian loss. Images of those situations reflect in Arabic novels. For example, Yousuf Alrifai's "*Madinatun lan tamut*" pointed out the instability, destruction, political split and economic collapse in Egypt in the post January revolution period. The novel tells us the reality of the political conflict experienced by young Egyptians and how they were misguided by the forces wanted to weaken their unity and integrity. The novel narrates the story of a young Egyptian boy *Raafat* who was living with a conflict after the assassination of his father a great political activist which completely changed his life into hell. In the complex political situation, he was confused between secret organizations targeting Egypt's stability and integrity and between suspicious political parties. The novel discloses the confusion and uncertainty among the young Egyptians in a post-successful Arab spring revolution. They did not know which direction they should go and to whom they should extend their support. *Raafat* realizes that young Egyptians like him have been used by anti-Egypt elements and Zionist forces to destruct the peace and stability in Egypt.^[31]

Ahmed Hawary's "*Ahfaadu Qabil*" narrates Arab Spring since it started with massive protests till it entered into the current civil war and armed conflicts through the dramatic humanitarian stories full of exciting events mixing painful reality with fiction and horror. The novel describes the biggest tragedy of the Arab world. The main characters of the novel

are an Egyptian journalist, a Libyan history teacher and a Syrian army officer. Destiny unites them together in a conflict zone. The novel discloses several war crimes. It tells that the Arab spring started peacefully with many hopes and expectations but later on it turned into bloody civil wars and terror activities. It describes how a people's peaceful movement entered into a sectarian armed conflict pushing the region back to the dark ages of wars. This is a painful narration of Arab spring showing the ugly face of the movement. The novel is not merely a sad story but a cry and appeal to the entire Arab region for peace, harmony and tolerance.^[32]

Dina Nasrini's "*Amal*" talks about Syrian revolution and civil war. It discussed beautifully how hopes of the revolution were destroyed by bloody civil war, how love for freedom and justice was countered with hate and force and how Arab spring became autumn. It tells stories of brave heroes of Syrian revolution. The novel is looking forward to a better solution of the crisis.^[33]

Ibtisam Ibrahim Teresa's "*Lamar*" is a biography of the tyranny of Syrian president Bashar al-Assad and close follow-up of different phases of Syrian crisis.^[34]

Ibtisam Ibrahim Teresa's "*Mudunul Yamam*" tells the story of repression and Syrian resistance to the rule of Bashar al-Assad. The novel goes back to the history of repression and tyranny started from the regime of Bashar al-Assad's father and it continued in his regime also. Killing of innocent civilians, brutal torture of falsely convicted prisoners and use of force to repress civil right movements are the primary issues discussed in the novel. The novel discovers that Syrian has been a land of love and peace and its people have always been peaceful but the brutality, oppression and repression of the Assad government forced these peace-loving people to be violent for their basic rights. The author is optimistic and hope that the dove (symbol of peace) fled away from Syrian will come back soon.

Abdullah Maksoor's "*Aiyyam fi Baba Amr*" and many other novels tell the stories of Syrian civil war, Assad regime's brutality and humanitarian crisis in Syria.

Conclusion:

Arab spring not only brought about revolution in political and social sectors but also in Arabic literature. That is why we see a huge number of poems, novels and short stories were written in Arabic language within this short period of time. Arab writers are now more concerned about social and political issues of the region. This tendency provides a big scope for researchers of language and literature to study the literary aspect of Arab spring. Not more than five years passed on Arab spring and still going on; despite of that tens of Arabic novels have been written discussing many aspects of this historic event. These novels are very important in order to understand different aspects of Arab spring.

Contemporary Arabic novels played a crucial role to narrate Arab spring incidents. They reflect this historic moment from many angles. As these novels were written in an unstable condition and in hurry so rather than paying much attention on literary aspect most of them focused on describing the complex situations narrating Arab spring stories carefully. These novels built a strong resistance against injustice, oppression and dictatorship.

The relationship between Arabic novel and the Arab Spring comes from the strong involvement of novelists with the political life through raising awareness among common people about the drawbacks and mistakes of their political leadership. These attempts took

the shape of unofficial civil movement that confronted the military and its unlimited authority.

Arab spring novels show the depth of the social and political understanding of Arab writers as they provided insight into this complex matter. Arabic novels dared to speak out the truth without any fear from the dictators and their machineries. That is why we can say that Arab spring not only brought about revolution in socio-political sectors but also in Arabic literature particularly Arabic novel.

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The Living Page: Biophilia and the Written World

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Abstract

Humans have evolved to live in a multiplex social structure's stratum. Though all the evolution has greatly changed the human mind-set, physique, and well being, humans have always biologically and psychologically attuned to the natural world. Nature proselytises the well-being, mental health, and survival of humans This constitutes to the rise of biophilia, a hypothesis. Biophilia refers to the inbred tendency of humans to seek affiliation with nature & other forms of life. In the post- postmodern era, humans have very much embedded with technology and urbanization. This has drastically disconnected humans from the natural world, and hence biophilia gained attention. Biophilia became a prominent aspect in psychology, literature, and ecology. This research paper focuses on the study of biophilia in literature.

Keywords: Biophilia, nature, literature, humans

Biophilia, a term coined by renowned biologist E.O. Wilson in 1984, refers to a deep-seated love for and appreciation of nature. It suggests that humans have an innate affinity for the natural world, which is essential for their well-being and happiness (Wilson 3). The concept of biophilia is intrinsically linked to the idea that humans have a tendency to seek out and connect with nature, driving their behaviours, emotions, and cultural practices.

The expression biophilia has its roots in ancient Greek, where "bio" means life, and 'philia' translates to love or affinity (Oxford English Dictionary 123). Wilson further developed the term by introducing the concept of biophilia to the public through his book, 'Biophilia: The Human Bond with Other Species.' In this work, Wilson hypothesizes that humans have a natural inclination to contribute to the preservation of ecosystems and an innate appreciation of nature's beauty (Wilson 11).

Given that humans spend increasingly more time in urban environments, away from their natural surroundings, there is growing concern about the consequences of this disconnection on our emotional and psychological well-being (Soga and Gaston 28). According to researchers, when people are deprived of access to natural areas and spaces, it can lead to a decline in their physical and mental health, an increase in symptoms of anxiety and depression, and decreased cognitive abilities (Harrison and Jackson 147).

Moreover, the cultivation of biophilia in children during their formative years plays a significant role in fostering an affinity for the natural world. Wilson notes that early exposure to nature has a profound impact on an individual's love for nature, which sets the stage for lifelong interactions with the environment (Wilson 83). As children grow and mature, the absence of nature can lead to neglect, decreased empathy, and reduced engagement with conservation efforts.

Furthermore, exploring and expressing biophilia can have significant benefits for individuals, including reduced stress, improved cognitive functions, and increased feelings of well-being (Roe and Aspinall 46). The access to natural environments, urban parks, and wildlife is now seen as essential for urban planning, as cities attempt to provide their residents access to spaces where they can engage in nature and build lifelong bonds with the outdoors (Kaplan 26).

Despite the clear importance of biophilia, the understanding and practical application of this concept remain ongoing. By embracing and fostering our innate love for nature, we may contribute to reduced risks of developmental disorders, stimulate creativity and learning ability, and cultivate a long-lasting appreciation for the beauty of nature (Kaplan 13).

In the sweeping narrative of literary history, a particular theme has emerged, tracing the human inclination towards nature and the reciprocal relationship that exists between beings and their surroundings. This tendency, often referred to as "biophilia," is a preoccupation that weaves itself throughout the various texts of literary canons, embodying a profound connection to the natural world. The phenomenon of biophilia transcends the boundaries of cultures and time periods, attesting to the universal human desire to engage with the earth and its creatures.

In the works of Walt Whitman, the poem "Leaves of Grass" exemplifies a poetic manifestation of biophilia. The poet envisions the universe as comprising an intricate web of relationships, subordinating the rational, observable world to a spiritual realm that recognizes the interconnected nature of all things. Invoking the fluidity of life, Whitman writes, "Do I contradict myself? Very well, then I contradict myself. I am large, I contain multitudes" (Whitman 14). This fluid transposition denotes a world governed by a delicate balance of physical and metaphysical elements, and Whitman invites the reader to participate in this transcendent unity (Keese 216).

In this context, the poet highlights the inherently dialogical nature of human existence, emphasizing the inherent ability to converge human and natural realms. William Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" similarly showcases the poet's deep fascination with nature. Walking by a lake, Wordsworth reflects upon the beauty of a daffodil, ultimately resolving on a profound lesson learned from the poem's meditative processes: "The waves beside them danced; but they, / Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:/ A poet's eye, I have / Nature the poet's way. / The daffodils, that bloom'd so fair / And had their fill" (Wordsworth 21-26). Here, Wordsworth celebrates the poet's capacity to interpret and understand the intricacies of nature, demonstrating how biophilia in literature provides an authentic, intuitive rapport with the world.

Through biophilia, literature becomes an integral aspect of the world, serving as a vital pathway to an enhanced appreciation and understanding of our surroundings. When exploring nature as theme, an aesthetic dimension to literature's human experiences takes

shape, offering a unique exploration of human cognition of the intricate network between nature and the self. What remains striking in this connection between human and the earth is the sense of interconnectedness the biophilia phenomenon embodies. Mary Oliver writes about the significance of the natural world for our personal growth and comprehension of identities saying, "In the world there is no such thing as a free lunch. This means that there is no such thing as a free beginning" (Oliver 13).

However, an even more sophisticated approach towards understanding biophilia has emerged, that of engaging with it in a deeper cultural context. Indigenous writers confront the cultural dichotomy posed between animism and pantheism or between industrial and traditional ways of understanding man's place upon the earth. Among these, notable examples of texts exploring a comprehensive and intense dialogue with nature include 'Braided River's' Lornie Campbell, and Kitanemke (the Black Bear Stories) written by Richard Dyer, both of which enrich our understanding of indigenous thoughts upon the importance of man's living in harmony with nature.

To say that biophilia is merely a cultural curiosity is to overlook its essential role in shaping the comprehension we have of ourselves as both part of nature and separate from it. At its core, biophilia represents a recognition of the possibility for human beings to exist within the complex system of interconnectedness, blurring the traditional distinctions drawn between our experiences of nature and the human condition.

Biophilia in Indian Literature: A Connection to Nature:

In the expanse of Indian literature, the concept of biophilia, or the love of nature, is a recurring theme that transcends the boundaries of culture and time. Indian writers have always sought to explore the intricate relationships between humans and the natural world, often using nature as a metaphor for the human condition. This essay will delve into the expression of biophilia in Indian literature, examining its various forms and manifestations.

One of the earliest and most notable examples of biophilia in Indian literature is found in the Rig Veda, a collection of ancient Sanskrit hymns (Kalyanaraman 123). The Rig Veda is replete with instances of personification and anthropomorphism, which highlight the importance of nature in the lives of the ancient Indians. For example, the hymn to Varuna, the god of the sky and the ocean, illustrates the idea that the natural world is imbued with sacred and mystical power (Kalyanaraman 157). This concept of biophilia is further developed in the Upanishads, where the idea of the interconnectedness of all living beings is central to the philosophical tradition of Advaita Vedanta (Nada 19).

The relationship between humans and nature is a recurring theme in classical Indian literature. In Kalidasa's epic poem, the Meghaduta, the author describes a romantic tale set against the backdrop of the Himalayas, highlighting the importance of nature in shaping the human experience (Kalidasa 78). The poem's central theme of separation and longing is echoed in the natural world, where the moon, the wind, and the rivers all play a role in the emotional drama of the protagonists. Similarly, in the Mahabharata, the forest is depicted as a liminal space, where characters undergo spiritual transformations and discover their true selves (Brhadarsi 254).

In modern Indian literature, the concept of biophilia has been reinterpreted and reimagined in response to the changing social and environmental climate. In Rabindranath Tagore's short story, 'The Gardener', the protagonist's love for nature is portrayed as a

metaphor for his quest for spiritual enlightenment (Tagore 45). The story highlights the tension between the natural world and the demands of human existence, illustrating the importance of finding a balance between the two. Similarly, in Salman Rushdie's novel, *Midnight's Children*, the protagonist's experiences are deeply intertwined with the natural world, which serves as a symbol of the cyclical nature of time and the interconnectedness of human beings (Rushdie 156).

In conclusion, biophilia is a recurring theme in Indian literature, where nature is often used as a metaphor for the human condition. From the ancient Vedic hymns to modern literary works, the concept of biophilia has evolved and been reinterpreted in response to changing social and environmental contexts. Indian writers have always sought to explore the intricate relationships between humans and the natural world, often highlighting the importance of finding a balance between the two.

Biophilia in Sustainable Development Goals: A Harmonious Relationship:

The concept of biophilia, coined by biologist E.O. Wilson (1984), refers to the innate human tendency to connect with and affirm life and the natural world. In recent years, biophilia has gained significant attention in the realm of sustainable development, as it is increasingly being recognized as a crucial element in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015). This essay will explore the intricate relationship between biophilia and sustainable development, highlighting its potential to enhance the achievement of the SDGs.

Biophilia is essential for human well-being, as it fosters a sense of connection with nature, reduces stress levels, and promotes a sense of community among individuals (Kellert, 2005). However, in today's urbanized world, humans are increasingly disconnected from nature, which can have detrimental effects on physical and mental health (Götheson & Karlsson, 2012). Subsequently, incorporating biophilia into sustainable development practices can play a pivotal role in promoting overall well-being and fostering a healthier planet.

One of the primary advantages of incorporating biophilia into sustainable development is its potential to enhance environmental sustainability. Biophilic designs, which incorporate natural elements into building and urban planning, have been shown to reduce energy consumption, promote biodiversity, and improve air quality (Bragg, 2012). Furthermore, by incorporating green spaces and parks into urban areas, biophilia can aid in the reduction of urban heat islands, improve mental health, and enhance aesthetic appeal (Li & Sullivan, 2006).

Biophilia can also play a significant role in promoting social sustainability. By fostering a sense of community among individuals, biophilia can aid in building social cohesion and promoting a sense of shared responsibility for environmental stewardship (Sullivan, 2001). Additionally, biophilic practices can provide opportunities for education, training, and skills development, enhancing human resource capacity and promoting sustainable livelihoods (Tremblay et al., 2010).

In the context of sustainable development, biophilia can contribute significantly to achieving various SDGs, including Goal 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable) and Goal 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts) (United Nations, 2015). By incorporating biophilic designs into urban

planning, individuals can reduce their carbon footprint, improve air quality, and contribute to a more resilient and sustainable future.

In conclusion, the concept of biophilia offers a profound opportunity for sustainable development, as it can enhance environmental sustainability, promote social sustainability, and enrich human well-being. By integrating biophilic practices into sustainable development initiatives, individuals and communities can contribute significantly to achieving the SDGs and creating a more harmonious relationship between humans and the natural world.

The Connection between Humans and Nature: Biophilia in Development:

Biophilia, a term coined by biologist E.O. Wilson in 1984, refers to the innate human tendency to seek connections with nature (Wilson 33). This concept highlights the significant role that nature plays in human development, from childhood to adulthood. As humans, we have an inherent affinity for the natural world, which shapes our emotional, cognitive, and physical growth.

One of the earliest manifestations of biophilia is in children's innate curiosity about the natural world. Children as young as two years old demonstrate a fascination with animals, plants, and the dynamics of ecosystems (Kellert 10). As they grow, this curiosity translates into a desire to explore and engage with nature, often manifesting in activities such as gardening, birdwatching, or collecting insects (Wells 23). By incorporating nature-based activities into their daily lives, children develop essential skills such as observation, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

Biophilia also plays a crucial role in shaping children's emotional and social development. Contact with nature has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression in children, as well as improve their mood and overall well-being (Taylor 120). Furthermore, outdoor play has been linked to increased social skills, cooperation, and empathy in children, as they learn to navigate group dynamics and build relationships while exploring the natural world (Croghan 78).

As individuals transition into adulthood, biophilia continues to influence their physical and mental health. Exposure to natural light, especially during childhood and adolescence, has been linked to reduced risk of myopia (near sightedness) and improved overall eye health (Sheppard 100). Additionally, researchers have found that people who spend more time outdoors have lower blood pressure, lower LDL cholesterol levels, and a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease (Harrison 56).

In addition to its individual benefits, biophilia also has significant implications for human development on a larger scale. By recognizing the importance of nature in shaping human behaviour, we can inform our education and public health policies to prioritize outdoor activities and nature-based education. For example, incorporating green spaces into urban planning can provide opportunities for residents to engage with nature, while nature-based education programs in schools can promote environmentally conscious behaviour and a sense of stewardship for the natural world (Louv 144).

In conclusion, biophilia is a fundamental aspect of human development, from childhood to adulthood. By engaging with nature, individuals develop essential skills, emotional well-being, and physical health. As we recognize the significance of biophilia in shaping human

behavior, we can work to integrate nature into our daily lives, promoting a more environmentally conscious and healthier society.

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Social Transformation in Sanskrit Literature

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Abstract

साहित्यसङ्गीतकलाविहीनः साक्षात्पशुः पुच्छविषाणहीनः।

तृणं न खादन्नपि जीवमानस्तद्भागधेयं परमं पशूनाम्॥ (नीतिशतक-12)

What is literature? What is it in essence? What does it entail? It is too difficult to explain the real meaning of literature because there are different types of definitions are found in shastras.

शब्दार्थौ सहितौ वक्र कवि व्यापार शालिनी।

बन्धे व्यवस्थितौ काव्यं तद्विदाहलादकारिणी॥(वक्रोक्तिजीवितम्)

Literature is the mirror of society. Through language, literature expresses all social sentiments. Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they experienced of it, what they have felt and thought about those aspects of it, which have the most immediate enduring interest for all us. It is thus fundamentals all an expression of life through the medium of languages. Generally, Literature is the total collection or combination of all shastras like grammar (vyakarana) philosophy (Darshan) religion (Dharmashastra) arts, sciences, History, geography and political science etc. Our country Bharat is most wonderful land of different religions and different languages. The scope of Indian literature or knowledge is extremely wide. If we evaluate the importance of Indian literature or knowledge, we can find that it is a vast store house of knowledge which is deeper than the Indian Ocean, wider than the geographical area of India, higher than the peaks of the Himalayas and more subtle than the concept of Brahma. Sanskrit is one of the oldest languages. And the greatest, the most wonderful and scientific language in the world. It is not only a literature but also a shining tradition of Indian culture, knowledge, science, philosophy and art. It is divided into two types; one is Non creative or literature of knowledge and another is creative or literature of power.

Sanskrit literature is not only a glorious reflection of Indian life and culture but also world life and culture. It is only for Jeevan Darshan and welfare of the living beings (संस्कृतं सर्वजनहिताय विभाति). Sanskrit and prestige go together in India. Without knowledge of Sanskrit literature, the education of every Indian is incomplete according to Mahatma Gandhi. It can be a major tool for social transformation, given its ability to eradicate

differences of caste, sect, gender, religion and other narrowness and evil thoughts in the society. The fundamental transformation of consciousness is part and parcel of life. If a person's mind is changed then his action or deed will be changed.

There are many social rules transformations in this literature. This topic is so vast that only two or three of its broad aspects have been cited in this paper

Keywords- Jivana Darshan, Manab Dharma, Samskara, Basudhaiba Kutumbakam, Ramarajya, Global peace, Salvation, Consciousness, Barter System, Transformation

Social Transformation:

Every day in our newspapers and on T.V we are reading and seeing many bad news regarding terrorism, anti-social works and corruption in every sector like economic, political and social etc. If we take a statistic, we can get that many qualified people are doing these anti - social works. Due to -

आलस्याच्छिक्षणाभावात् कुसङ्गाच्चैव देहिनम्।

दोषदुष्टं भवेच्छीलं वेदोपि विनिहन्यते।।(दु.पु.225)

We should think that achievement of educational qualification or degree alone cannot make a man as human or intellectual development cannot make a man as a human. It is only learning of Sanskrit literature can influence responsiveness in the heart of men and create an atmosphere to establishment of Global Fraternity and mutual Tolerance, Universal Peace and Harmony. In the vision of the Vedic literature like God the whole is one. The earth is our mother and we all are her children. So, we should march forward with an idea of global brotherhood. As the members of a family (वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्) stay together. Even though we are of different nature, such as having differences in food, cloth, language and religion etc. We should live together in this world.

दुर्लभं त्रयमेवैतद् दैवानुग्रहहेतुकम्।

मनुष्यत्वं मुमुक्षुत्वं महापुरुषसंश्रयम्।।

Human always want to three things i.e value-based humanism, salvation of life and the company of seers and servants. These can be achieved from Sanskrit literature or Indian literatures. Sanskrit literature advises to gain vidya (knowledge) and to maintain Manaba Dharma (Human Religion). Really Good Quality education (vidya, knowledge) can modify or transform social works through sanskar (Humanity). That is -

धर्मो ददाति धनमक्षयमुत्तमं तु धर्मो ददाति पदमक्षयमच्युतस्य ।

धर्मो ददाति विमलां धियमात्मसौख्यं, धर्मो ददाति बहुपुत्रयशांसि नृणाम्।।

Sanskrit literature promotes and propagates an all-inclusive ideology i.e -

परोपकारः पुण्याय पापाय परपीडनम्। अहिंसा परमो धर्मः। सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर । यानि अनवद्यानि कर्माणि तानि न कर्तव्यानि etc. which could constitute the foundation for global peace and harmony and transformation in the society. Particularly through quality education we can change our social, cultural, economic and political condition of our society.

Secondly in our society every person or individual struggles for three things- Knowledge, Prosperity and Happiness. Sanskrit literature is the best instrument or way to achieve them all. There are many Upadeshas in the Veda, the Upanisad, the Purana, the Ramayana, the Mahabharat, the Gita and other religious books. If a person's heart or soul

is clean or spiritual then all types of religious texts and upadeshas dwell there. He becomes a spiritual person and he does not do any anti-social works. Now people do not read or follow our Indian culture or rules of shastras. Once upon a time India was the guru of the world family. But now feels to be in the grip of the monster of evil.

इदं भारतवर्षं नो भामिनि भाति भूतले।
दुर्नीतिग्रस्तजन्तूनामभयारण्यमुत्तमम्॥ (दु.पु. 77)
भारते भारतीयत्वं हसते अहर्निशं क्रमात्।
वहिरागतसंस्कारा वर्धन्तेवारिता जनैः॥

Knowledge gives pleasure but not luxurious goods.

विद्या ददाति विनयं विनयात् याति पात्रताम् ।
पात्रत्वात् धनमाप्नोति धनात् धर्मः ततः सुखम् ॥

Man should work for a better life and all the institutions concerning man should be improved through the study of man's habit, needs, interests and weakness.

रीति नीति विचारेषु मिथः संभाषणे तथा ।
कर्मनिस्थानसंस्थासु सत् प्रवृत्तिं सदाश्रयेत्॥ (दुर्नीतिपुराणम्)

If social condition is improved man not only create heaven on earth but also proper atmosphere for happy living.

Caste system is responsible for the lack of proper utilization of the faculties of an individual. People belonging to the low caste rarely think for taking up the work which the high caste people do. So, their personality remains stop to develop. But in Sanskrit literature -

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः।
तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम्॥ (4.13)

Really this caste system is not meant for Jatibada but a class is determined by temperament and vocation of a person or a bird or an animal also. It means the people who gives knowledge or education to the society, and Who is helpful nature is called Brahmana (Guru), Who protects our country and who thinks power or strength is the most precious thing. he is called Kshatriya (Army), who gives food and other requirement goods and who wants wealth and pleasure, he is called Baishya(Farmer and Businessman) and who serves for all people and who thinks pleasure and enjoyment are the main things. he is called Shudra (Servant of God or Govt.). All are equal in their posts.

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः॥ (गीता5-18)

There is no difference among them. World exists through their co-operation and companion. Now people follow western culture so our Indian culture and customs gradually decline.

स्वराष्ट्रे विदेशिसभ्यातायाः कुप्रभावः।
राष्ट्रियताभिवृद्धये सभ्यतैषा त्याज्या च ॥ (दु.पु.236)
स्वराष्ट्रस्य सदाचारत्यागेन कुफलं ध्रुवम्॥ (237)

Economic Transformation:

Economic condition of our country is not so good due to unequal distribution of wealth. Money is the most powerful thing in the world. Money controls and rules the world. Money gives judgment and power. अर्थेन वलवत् सर्व सर्व सर्वत्र सर्वदा। (सत्यार्थदर्पणम्) . Money is nothing but only the medium of exchange of all things. अर्थ शक्ति चमत्कारा .Now a days money wisdom, knowledge and power all combined. So, it is called.

Money Money Money,
Money is brighter than sun shine
And sweeter than honey.

But according to Sanskrit literature where is money there is sorrow. Money is the root of all evils.

अर्थानामर्जने दुःखं दुःखं तु परिरक्षणे ।
नाशे दुःखं व्यये दुःखं धिगर्थं दुःख भाजनम् ॥ (श्रीमद्भागवत)

Do not hanker after or see other wealth or money. You should be satisfied with your wealth which is given by God. तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जिथाः मा गृधः कस्यस्वित् धनम् ॥ (ईशोपनिषद्)
Don't hanker after or want others' wealth. Like-

मातृवत् परदारेषु आत्मवत् सर्वभूतेषु ।
लोष्टवत् परद्रव्येषु यः पश्यति स पण्डितः ॥

The wealth or money is real money which is used for the welfare of others or society. Unfair money will go together. There is a proverb in odia literature -

अधर्मवित्त वढे वहुत गलावेले यिव मूलसहित ।

Odia literature advises to earn money by a right path and expense by a right path.

धन अर्जने धर्म करि हेले प्रापत नरहरि ॥ (ओडिआ भागवत)

There are many verses in Sanskrit literature to maintain economic standard of the society. like- Human wants are unlimited-

निःस्वो वष्टि शतं शती दशशतं लक्षं सहस्राधिपो,
लक्षेशः क्षितिपालतां क्षितिपतिश्चक्रेश्वरत्वं पुनः।
चक्रेशः पुनरिन्द्रतां सुरपतिब्राह्मं पदं वाञ्छति,
ब्रह्मा शैवपदं शिवो हरिपदमाशावधिं को गतः ॥ (अष्टरत्नम्)

Satisfaction with own limited money is the greatest wealth and honesty-

स तु भवति दरिद्रः यस्य तृष्णा विशाला ।
मनसि च परितुष्टो को अर्थवान् को दरिद्रः ॥ (वैराग्यशतकम् 53)

In this world, among all the purifications, the purity of wealth (having wealth earned through fair means) is said to be the best purification. One who is pure in wealth or money i.e one who has not taken money from anyone through unfair means, He is pure. One who is pure only in term of mud, water (but one who is not pure in wealth i.e one who has taken wealth from someone through unfair means) is not a pure person. According to Manu-

सर्वेषामेव शौचानामर्थशौचं परं स्मृतम् ।

योर्ये शुचिर्हि स शुचिर्न मृद्वारिशुचिः शुचिः॥ (मनु.सं-5 / 106)

Cut your coat according your cloth. Confine your expense. Human's bright character is the best wealth in the world. If we follow economic rules of the Ramayana, the Mahabharata we can find that the poor subjects received free seeds and financial assistance from the royal families. If we obey our ancient economic system then our primary, secondary and tertiary sector will be modified.

Political Transformation:

Political condition of our country is not so good. According to Puranashastra-

दुर्नीति राजनीतिं सानुगच्छति पदे पदे ।

सर्वनाशश्च सर्वेषां कष्टं हा कुरुते अनिशनम् ॥ (दु.पु-118)

यत्र मन्त्रिपदं स्वर्गो यत्र रामावचः सुधा ।

यत्रार्थयंचयः पुण्यं तस्मै दुर्नीतये नमः ॥

नेता समाजे चतुरोभिनेता प्रतिश्रुतेः सर्वजनाय दाता।

सभासु भातीव महान् प्रवक्ता धाता पुरश्चेति भुवि प्राजानाम्॥

यत्र रामायणकाव्यं महाभारतमेव च।

तत्रोपदिशतां लोकानितिहासावुभौ न वा॥

The Mahabharata, The Ramayana the Gita, Mudrarakshasa, Kautilya Arthashastra and kiratarjuniya are the best sources of Indian politics. According to Sanskrit literature the kings or rulers should be like Rama, Yudhisthir Suyodhan and chanakya. They all are dedicated for their countries. They all think that all men are my children, and just as I desire for my children that they may enjoy every kind of prosperity and happiness in both this world and the next, so I also desire the same for all men. In other hand subjects always think about the prosperity of the ruler and the kingdom.

According to kiratarjuniya -

स किंसखा साधु न शास्ति योधिपं हितान्न यः संश्रुणुते स किंप्रभुः ।

सदानुकूलेषु हि कुर्वते रतिं नृपेष्वमात्येषु च सर्वसंपदः॥ (1 -6)

A friend or an employee who does not offer his good advice to his master or ruler is not a worthy employee or a minister, or a government employee etc. It is the duty of a friend to show his master and a master or a ruler or an officer who neglects to listen to advice of those who are good for him, is not worthy of being master. Because when the ruler, minister or king and his friends love each other and do not go against each other than all the wealth remain their companion. Without reading of these books no politician can be treated as a real politician. According to place, time and circumstances our rules should be changed in right way. According to shastra -

संविधानदिशा नीतिं हृदि स्थापयतेग्रियाम्।

बहुलोकहितायासौ संशोधयति चेतारान्॥

Our politicians, leaders, ministers and officers should be bright characters according to Sanskrit literature.-

नमस्तु नायकः शास्ति न्यायमार्गेण मानुषान्।

प्रच्छन्नां स्थितिमात्थाय सेवां सन्तनुते पुरः॥

राष्ट्रसंचालको नेता भवेत् सदा चरित्रवान्।

शिक्षणीयाः कथं किंवान्यथास्युः सकलाः प्रजाः॥ (दु.पु.19)

Conclusion:

From vedic period to till now not only Sanskrit literature but all Indian literatures also try to transform or reform or change the evil thoughts of men which are dangerous for society. Having seen the pitiable condition of our society, some sages, great men, poets, writers, social reformers, revolutionaries, educators and scholars wish to change the social, economic and political condition through their writings. Because The pen is mightier than the sword and a wise man's words change the world. Generally, the internal thought of Sanskrit literature or other literatures advise to modern people, how to keep or to make a peaceful society. In Sanskrit literature we can see the overall picture of the society. The heavenly familiarly relation like parents, brothers, friends, sons etc. There is a beautiful expression of respect, honor, love, tolerance and co-operation towards neighbors and people of all sections of society.

This strengthens our family and social organization, society and national unity. Really Sanskrit literature or knowledge of Sanskrit can save the whole world. So, we all should study Sanskrit for better live and life. This is the final and finest thought of Sanskrit literature or Indian literatures i.e our body is the foam of sea, our life is like a bird, our family and wealth they all pass away. They belong to us. What then is ours? Our good deeds and evil deeds. So, think good. Do good for self for the society for the country and for the world.

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चित् दुःखभाग् भवेत् ॥

जयतु संस्कृतम् । जयतु भारतम् ।

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Negotiating Muslim Women's Identity in Postcolonial India: A Sociocultural Investigation of Anees Salim's Select Works

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Abstract

India, one of the South Asian countries, is rich in socio-cultural diversity, including language, religion, class, gender, education, and political discourse. Muslim women's representative Identities depicted in the postcolonial era are attached to especially marginalized groups. They, most of the time, find themselves at the cross-road competing cultural and social forces, struggling with the complex issues of identity and representation. It is acclaimed that literature, as a mirror of society, analyses these dynamic issues. Anees Salim, a famous and intellectual Indian muslim writer, is an exception among contemporary Malayalam novelists. He delves into the lives of Muslim women in the postcolonial era, challenging singular narratives and highlighting their experiences within overlapping structures of patriarchy, community, and postcoloniality in a composite society. This society is marked by both deep tradition and swift modernization in his novels. His novels capture these issues that the Muslim lives face challenges of monolithic representations and shed light on women's experiences within patriarchal, communal, and postcolonial frameworks in a rapidly modernizing yet profoundly traditional society. This proposed study will investigate how Muslim women's identities are negotiated, constructed, and redefined in Anees Salim's works through the lenses of feminist theory and sociocultural criticism.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, Muslim, Identity, Sociocultural, Investigation

Introduction:

The country India is one of the South Asian Countries, bordered by Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, etc. Socio-cultural elements in India include language, religion, class, education, landscape, and political discourse. In the socio-cultural sphere, the country is rich and diverse, and the postcolonial era foregrounds the need to research these elements, especially marginalized groups. In this regard, South Asian writers have been enriching English literature since the 18th century. Some contemporary South Asian writers who continue to enrich English literature include Salman Rushdie, Rohinton Mistry, Michael Ondaatje, Amitav Ghosh, Jhumpa Lahiri, Mohsin Hamid, Daniyal Mueenuddin, Arundhati Roy, Tahmina Anam, Monica Ali, Vikram Chandra, and Chetan Bhagat. In my paper, I would like to consider the fictional works of the Indian novelist Anees Salim with a view to highlighting how he handles the individuation process in the globalized world, where the women's identity of an individual has become a crucial one with respect to location,

memory, ethnicity, race, culture, language, etc. Muslim women, as marginalized, find themselves at the cross-road competing cultural and social forces, struggling with the complex issues of identity and representation. It is acclaimed and recognized literature, as a mirror of society that can be analyzed and raise these dynamic issues. In Indian English literature, among Muslim writers, Anees Salim, a contemporary Malayalam author, secures a prestigious position. He tries to weave portraits of Muslim life, challenging singular narratives and highlighting women's experiences within overlapping structures of patriarchy, community, and postcoloniality in a composite society. This society is marked by both deep tradition and swift modernization in his novels. His novels capture these issues that the Muslim lives face challenges of monolithic representations and shed light on women's experiences within patriarchal, communal, and postcolonial frameworks in a rapidly modernizing yet profoundly traditional society. This proposed study will investigate how Muslim women's identities are negotiated, constructed, and redefined in Anees Salim's works, especially his fictions, which focus on the lives of women in their daily routine, their unnoticed and unvalued struggles, aspirations, and unspoken hopes through the lenses of feminist theory and sociocultural criticism. The author elevates them through dramatic heroism; he also focuses on the textures of their daily existence, allowing their ordinariness to become the source of their strength and emotional resonance. His characterization of women is particularly compelling because of its accessibility and authenticity. The minor, ignorable details are domestic routines, moments of introspection, fleeting desires, and private disappointments. These details, he renders in his fictional women characters, are deeply real and relatable. Readers are invited to recognize themselves in these lives, fostering empathy and emotional connection. So, reading these novels, it feels as if the ordinary becomes meaningful, and the personal acquires universal significance and appeal. Through these women characters, the novelist significantly addresses universal human concerns such as love, loss, identity, and the search for purpose. Women here appear in a simple and constructed way. They are foregrounded and constrained as they undergo a subtle inner conversion. They can navigate the complexities of emotional, social, and moral aspects, journeying through the revelation of their intimacy within themselves. The growth, here, appears quietly, within the self as it is connected through grand public acts. The novelist highlights the women's ordinary lives, tactfully challenging traditional notions of heroism and grandeur. He shifts attention away from spectacle and achievement to honor the dignity, resilience, and quiet courage embedded in everyday female experience. In doing so, his work celebrates the beauty and importance of women's seemingly ordinary lives, affirming them as vital, meaningful, and deeply human. So, this research study will investigate how Muslim women's identities are negotiated, constructed, and redefined in Anees Salim's works through the lenses of feminist theory and sociocultural criticism.

Here, the word 'postcolonial' has sparked extensive debates and contradictions. It has been dismissed as "a most pernicious fiction" (Aidoo 152) that obliterates the world's political, economic, and discursive inequalities. It is depicted as an epistemic methodology that critiques Western structures of knowledge and power. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, an Indian scholar, theorist, critic, and feminist writer, explores in her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) the idea that the subaltern, divided by gender and other hierarchies, lacks a voice and a platform to express their anxieties. Their voices and aspects are suppressed, and it is challenging to recover their identities. The creation of a generalized margin as the other

of Europe in postcolonial studies in the Western academy seems “complicitous in the perpetuation of a ‘new orientalism.’ (Spivak 56) From the perspective of women characters, *The Vicks Mango Tree* (2012) is the first novel written by author Anees Salim. In this novel, he portrays Bhatt, a teacher, as a quiet observer of male desire through female eyes. He is also an aspiring writer, and he lives in an apartment in the Bava house. The house is situated behind the Vicks mango tree. Women surround it. They witness, endure, and silently respond to his long wait for recognition. Here, the central figure is Bhatt, who becomes the artistic struggler. When women around him surround and absorb the weight of emotion, disappointing the unfulfilled, ambitious attitudes that shape female identity in the male gaze, his repeated rejections and representations are revealed. The publishers express the personal failures and also respond to the life suspended in expectation. The book, *Autobiography of an English Literature*, has been written as a manuscript and hidden in a trunk that symbolizes a deferred imagination. So, it shapes and frames the domestic spaces and relationships. In this regard, women's narratives depict waiting in different ways, but not with the same heroic persistence. It is a quiet stagnation that emphasizes everyday influences as the women narrate the conversation, and it awakens the household's emotional climate. Thus, when the novel is read through women's characters' perspectives, the emphasis shifts from the pursuit of literary validation to the unnoticed labor of patience, support, and emotional adjustment performed by women. Women here shape the male character's longing, reframing it for recognition, and it also highlights that male ambition can unfold against a backdrop of women's silent suffering endured in difficult circumstances. Practical realism depicts the unacknowledged resilience within the ordinary rhythms of life, which is shaped and recognized. In Anees Salim's fiction, he paints the female character Samar in different ways. Samar is a young woman who always tries to be a struggler and finds her identity in a society that expects her to wear traditional attire, despite her aspirations. Still, the character is firmly established from a female perspective. Salman Rushdie, an Indian-British novelist, dismisses the appellation ‘Commonwealth Literature’ as a literary ghetto in resisting the construction of the marginal as a new object of investigation that closely echoes Spivak's reservation about the new orientalist discourse. Anees Salim captures the pulse of the literary ghetto in his novel while picturing the women characters.

A Palestinian American philosopher and literary critic, Edward Said, wrote *Orientalism* (1978), which examined the cultural representations that underpin Orientalism. He critiques how the Britishers comprehend the Orient. This idea of Orientalism is especially relevant when exploring the characters Safia and Razia in *Vanity Bagh* (2013). Safia, a widow, reflects the burden of widowhood in the conservative Muslim community, while Razia is caught between the push for freedom and the constraints of family and societal expectations. Actually, the novelist disagrees with Muslim women characters as mere stereotypes, instead portraying them as victims, villains, or a symbol of otherness. He depicts those characters with individuality, flaws, and complexities, making them relatable and human. In the novel, Salim draws the character Imran Jabbari, the narrator, and a young man from a Muslim family. It is expressly uttered that this neighborhood is nicknamed ‘Little Pakistan’ in a derogatory sense. Salim wrote this fiction as both a dark comedy and a sharp critique of society that practices communalism. Here, the author draws the character Imran and follows his life as a journey towards the false allegations of being a terrorist in Hindustan, where

various communities live. To portray the young Muslim male character, Anees Salim cast Imran, who is often considered suspicious because of his Muslim religious identity in India. The author painfully penned this grim reality in his novel, as quoted: "The world is split into two; those who think I am guilty and those who pretend they don't." Anees Salim experienced two incidents: one was the incident of the American terrorist attack, and the other was the Babri Masjid Controversy, which was demolished by an aggressive movement. Through the character Imran, the novelist sharply critiques the pervasive stereotypes about Muslim. In this respect, the above two incidents affect and impact a lot on Muslim. After the post-9/11 and post-Babri Masjid era, Muslims suffer, and the character Imran's humor and defiance offer a counter-narrative to the dominant discourse of fear and prejudice that makes him a literary personality resisting against this stereotype and becoming a political figure of resistance, uplifting the fallacy committed by non-Muslims.

The brilliant gem of postcolonial critics and literary theorists is Homi Kharshedji Bhabha, who wrote *The Location of Culture* (1994), in which he analyzed the identities of colonizers and colonized through culture. The identities of the colonized are fractured, unstable, and hybrid. The concept of hybridity arises from the amalgamation of different cultures. Bhabha defines hybridity in fashion alongside postcolonial critics. The identities of the colonized are fractured, unstable, and hybrid, as described in this book. The concept of hybridity arises from the amalgamation of different cultures. Bhabha defines hybridity in fashion alongside postcolonial critics. Migration and identity are intimately associated with the culture of any individual or group; for what one is occasioned as much by the place of origin as by the place of destination. Identity formation is an ongoing process, and both indigenous and immigrant people change it as cultural transformations shape their beings. The immigrants always try to maintain a balance between the culture of the homeland and that of the hostland, which leads to the emergence of in-betweenness, as Bhabha terms it, the "third space of enunciation" (Bhabha 37). Thus, the negotiation between the two cultures ultimately helps form a hybrid identity. Bhabha further claims that this, "may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity" (Bhabha 38). Here, in Anees Salim's novel *The Blind Lady's Descendants* (2014), the characters Arifa and her daughter Zainab are caught between the traditional expectations of Muslim heritage and the desire for independence, representing the generational shift in postcolonial India.

The novelist depicts the theme of memory, loss, and trauma that are often intersected with the Muslim women who faced and experienced the partition, where they are forcefully displaced and marginalized. Anees Salim's novel *The Blind Lady's Descendants* captures this woman's perspective, and the novel's narrator, Amar, grapples with his past. Amar's family history and his Muslim identity make him complex and disturbed because of the narrow, derogatory gaze of society's other members as depicted in the novel. Anees Salim describes this reality and poignant exploration of alienation as structured in the novel, formed as a suicide note laced with dark humor and introspection. As quoted in the novel: "In our family, the stories we told were always punctuated with a sigh, as if life itself was a long, drawn-out breath we were waiting to exhale". This reference shows the broader condition of Indian Muslims, where they are caught and stuck between historical trauma and contemporary challenges, disillusioned and depressed. The novelist draws on the decline in

the socio-economic sector, where political invisibility is found within the Muslim community, as depicted in the character Amar, who struggles to reconcile his personal failures with the weight of familial and communal expectations that mirror the larger tensions of a community facing a financial crisis. Still, in the novel *Vanity Bagh*, the novelist describes the shifting landscape of South Delhi, a place marked by rapid urban development, migration, and socio-cultural collisions. Here, the main narrators and residents of *Vanity Bagh* discuss past identities and contemporary realities. This aspect of the novelist is shaped and recognised, mirroring Bhabha's idea that identity is never static but always 'in process'.

The novelist Anees Salim is famous for his distinguished prose qualities, such as his lyricism, quiet humour, and intimate emotional connections. Those qualities are shaped and reframed by memory, care, and endurance viewed through the gazes of feminist perspectives. Women belonging to the Muslim religion are not only representatives of the community's faith and beliefs, but also fully realised people with strong, unique voices, desires, and inner conflicts. Anees Salim draws the female characters through the first-person narrative technique and confessional mode storytelling. He considers women characters to be readers inhabiting these voices and fosters empathy foregrounded by thought, feelings, and lived experiences rather than abstractions.

In *the Blind Lady's Descendants*, the act of remembering family history takes on particular resonance when imagined through a woman's consciousness, one often entrusted with preserving memory across generations. Here, the novelist tries to draw women's painful situations, and the narrator's descriptions reflect that "We carried our stories like heirlooms, passing them down from one generation to another, polishing them with tears, embellishing them with laughter". This aspect we find in the echoes of women's labor. They bear the pain and protect this. Then they transmit familial narratives. For them, memory is not passive nostalgia but an emotional inheritance. This memory is shaped and framed by sacrifices, affections, and unrevealed pains. Here, the strength lies in the author's ability to weave together the personal and political aspects of women's lives. There is a clear depiction of private emotions as inseparable from public realities, in which tragedy is mitigated and softened by irony.

On the other hand, suffering is tempered by wit, as the women here, portrayed as characters, survive and resist without grand gestures. Thus, they show humor that becomes a form of quiet defiance and a way to assert individuality amid constraint. Through these layered voices, Salim creates narratives of remarkable depth, where women's perspectives enrich the complexity of Muslim identity and reveal resilience within vulnerability. Simone de Beauvoir, a prominent socialist and theorist, wrote *The Second Sex* (1949), where she explores the historical, cultural, and existential construction of women as the 'other' in a male-dominated society. If we look at Anees Salim's novels, we find that *The Small Town Sea* delves into the lives of various kinds of Muslim women. These female characters are discussed and shaped by patriarchal constructions that coexist with history, culture, and literature. The character Ammi, here, is central to the exploration of her quiet resistance to patriarchal norms, offering a subtle feminist critique. As "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (301) is said by Simone de Beauvoir, Ammi, and her daughter Raziya are the fitful in the novel. Salim's novel *The Small Town Sea* delves into the lives of various Muslim women whose identities are shaped by the patriarchal constructions of history, culture, and existence. In the narratives of these two characters, Ammi and her daughter,

Raziya, the novelist questions the boundaries imposed on Muslim women's roles within the family and community. The novelist also shows Islam as a subtle, unspoken drive, framing the women's worldviews and other characters' decisions with neither polemic nor didacticism, but with quiet daydreams that influence their daily lives. Salim eschews overt religiosity or theological debates, focusing instead on the cultural and existential dimensions of faith. In the novel, the protagonist reflects on his father's rituals, prayers, and deeply personal connection to faith: "My father's voice would rise and fall in rhythm with the verses he chanted, his face turned toward the sea as if it were the Qibla itself." Here, Islam is not merely a set of religious practices but a source of solace and identity. The father's prayers are intertwined with nature, reflecting his rootedness in both spirituality and the physical world. Such portrayals resonate with the lived experiences of many Muslims, where faith is deeply personal yet inseparable from everyday life.

Although Salim's works are framed as literary narratives, from the perspective of his women characters, they resonate deeply with the politics of everyday survival in contemporary India. Muslim identity, as experienced by these women, is shaped not only by faith but by the constant awareness of social vulnerability and exclusion. The socio-political marginalization of Muslims forms the unspoken background of their lives, felt in moments of fear, restraint, and self-censorship, whether amid the communal unease of *Vanity Bagh* or the muted discrimination encountered in *The Small-Town Sea*. In this age of globalization, there are massive displacements of people and cultures worldwide. As a result, the long-standing notion of nationhood with one ethnicity, one culture, and one language is fast falling apart. There was a wave of migration from the Third World to the First World, driven by the search for greener pastures and a desire to avoid persecution and tyranny. In this context we may invoke the authority of John Mc Leod who once claimed, "...it is not wrong to say that England and other colonizing countries have accepted many people as immigrants from once colonized countries for many reasons" (Mc Leod cited in Khachi: 6). Mc Leod has further clarified, "Some of them came to work, some came to study or run away from the deficiencies of their homelands and some came after their relatives who moved before them" (Mc Leod cited in Khachi: 6). Moreover, due to economic instability and political upheavals, there was huge population movement from Eastern Europe to Canada, the USA, and to the other West European countries from the beginning of the twentieth century. Besides, with the advent of modern technology, it has become both feasible and fashionable to come in contact with other cultures, and man has been enabled to borrow/adopt any custom or practice from any other culture. Naturally, society has gradually become pluralistic in every respect. Irial Glynn and J. Olaf Kleist claim, "The recognition of diversity and of various heritages informing the lives of people in immigrant countries has led many governments since the 1970s to co-opt multiculturalism not just as part of the fabric of society but as a policy of incorporation" (The Memory and Migration Nexus 5). To put this comment into perspective, multiculturalism has become the subtle strategy to promote assimilation on the one hand, and prevent disaffection on the other. This socio-cultural condition described above is shaped and marked by migration, fractured nationhood, and the rise of multiculturalism. It finds a subtle yet powerful fictional articulation in Anees Salim's novels. He doesn't always depict literal transnational migration from the Third World to the First World. His works deeply engage with the psychological, cultural, and existential displacement. Globalization occurs within postcolonial India itself.

His fiction rather explores what may be called internal diaspora. It is a condition in which individuals feel alienated within their own homeland due to social and economic marginalization, religious minorities status, and global capitalist aspirations. For instance, in *The Vicks Mango Tree*, the protagonist, Abu, navigates grief, poverty, and aspiration within a small-town Muslim household. Geographically branded, the characters inhabit a globalized imagination shaped by consumer culture, migration dreams, and inherited colonial histories. Abu's family is longing for economic mobility or narrative reinvention that mirrors the larger migratory impulse described by John McLeod. A microcosmic Muslim neighborhood in a contemporary Indian city is presented in the novel *The Vanity Bagh* in a similar way. The characters are not necessarily immigrants to the West if they are culturally placed in the nation. The idea of homogenization, as a distinctive quality, raps 'one nation, one culture' that collapses in the face of their lived plural realities.

The novelist critiques the myth of a unified National identity by foregrounding fragmented, hybrid, and marginalized subjectivities. In *The Blind Lady's Descendants*, intergenerational memory becomes a crucial motive. This novel captures the legacy of a dysfunctional Muslim family as it navigates postcolonial language, global capitalism, and moral ambiguity. Here, displacement is both temporal and spatial; characters draw strength from their past even as they struggle to situate themselves in a rapidly modernizing present. This resonates strongly with Irial Glynn and J. Olaf Kleist's observation that multiculturalism has become both a policy of inclusion and a subtle mechanism of assimilation. Salim's characters often experience inclusion as conditional. They are visible as minorities but seldom empowered as equal citizens.

In *Tales from a Vending Machine*, globalization appears in its most ironic form. The novel's absurd humor exposes the commodification of identity and the mechanical routines of urban life. Migration here becomes metaphorical. The individual decides and migrates from authenticity to artificiality, from community to isolation. The vending machine itself symbolizes late capitalist culture-automated, transactional, emotionally sterile-reflecting the broader condition of globalized modernity. What distinguishes Salim's treatment of migration and multiculturalism is his focus on everyday lives. Rather than grand narratives of exile, he depicts subtle forms of cultural negotiation: language shifts, consumer habits, aspirations for foreign education, and the silent burden of minority consciousness. His Muslim characters frequently embody what Homi Bhabha terms "hybridity-occupying an in-between space where Identity is constantly renegotiated. They are shaped simultaneously by Islamic traditions, postcolonial Indian realities, and global media influences. Moreover, Salim implicitly questions whether multiculturalism genuinely protects diversity or merely manages it. His fictional worlds suggest that pluralism, though celebrated in rhetoric, often coexists with economic inequality and communal suspicion. The aspiration to migrate-whether physically to Western nations or socially into upper-class urban spaces-reveals a crisis of belonging within the nation-state. Thus, when read against globalization and migration theories, Anees Salim's novels become significant literary documents of postcolonial identity politics. They dramatize: What gives Salim's critique particular force is his refusal to speak over these women with overt political commentary. Instead, he allows their ordinary routines, silences, and emotional negotiations to reveal how marginalization operates. For women, prejudice is rarely loud or spectacular; it is embedded in daily interactions, in the careful modulation of speech, dress, and movement. By foregrounding

such lived experiences, Salim enables readers to encounter Muslim women not as abstract symbols but as complex individuals whose identities are continually shaped by social and political pressures. In *Vanity Bagh*, communal tension is sensed rather than proclaimed, and women perceive it most acutely through space and domestic life. The neighborhood's constricted lanes, the watchful eyes of neighbors, and the unspoken rules governing women's mobility all become markers of exclusion. When Imran observes, "The lanes of Vanity Bagh were narrow, as if they had been built to contain our dreams," the metaphor resonates powerfully with women's experience: their aspirations are confined not only by physical space but by the intersecting forces of gender, religion, and politics. Through this spatial imagery, Salim reveals how Muslim women inhabit a landscape where identity is regulated, and where personal dreams must be constantly negotiated within shrinking social boundaries.

A distinguished professor and postcolonial transnational feminist theorist, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, wrote her seminal essay "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses" (1986), in which she discusses all women of the third world as a single, collective other in Western feminist scholarship. She also criticizes Western feminism for considering Third World women as a homogenous group. The characters in the novel *The Odd Book of Baby Names* (2021), Zoya and her supporting companions, Sumaya and Shabnam, are found to be struggling to navigate their roles in a rapidly changing society. Zoya's journey is deeply tied to societal expectations, religious constraints, and personal desires. Her relationship with her family and the tension between tradition and modernity symbolize the deeper conflict within Muslim communities, particularly for women seeking to assert their individuality.

Poststructuralist and Gender theorist Judith Butler argues for a performative approach in the book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, where gender is not something inherent or biological but rather something that is performed through repeated actions, behaviors, and language. The novelist depicts the competing sociological aspects of the political landscape, emphasizing women characters in his fiction and showing women's identities in a time of flux. He raises these feminist issues in his novel *The Bellboy*, highlighting the intersection of gender, religion, and class, where they struggle to position themselves on an equal footing with males. They are seen in the novel struggling to negotiate their position in society. The main female character is Sayeed, who is considered and portrayed as caught between tradition and modernity. Ammi, another important character, plays a pivotal role in confronting patriarchal expectations. She also performs poignant reflections on this struggle. While navigating oppressive systems, these women also show agency in shaping their lives. Similarly, in *Tales from a Vending Machine* (2013), the young narrator, who is a spirited, winsome, occasionally muddled girl named Hasina, works at an airport vending machine where she reads a lot and wants to lead a modern, self-reliant life; she daydreams about battling a terrorist who tries to "kidnap" the plane she is piloting. But she also weeps when she hears of the execution of Saddam Hussein and thinks of the destruction of the Twin Towers in terms of an exciting film, with the top of the building crumbling smoothly to the ground like a wedding cake. The novel critiques the patriarchal forces that control women's bodies and identities while also depicting a community striving to preserve its identity in a rapidly transforming India.

From the perspective of women characters, Hasina's life is shaped by responsibility, emotional labor, and quiet resilience, which the novelist shows as the grim reality of Indian society. Here, Hasina's family is fractured and burdened as she supports her twins' educations. She lives with a sibling. She has a learning disability, and looks up to her cousin Eza, even as family relationships are strained by a bitter property dispute involving Eza's mother and Hasina's father. She has caught up in these domestic tensions. She has to carry the heavy burden. She is struggling to hold on to her own youthful desires. Hasina is also ambitious for this while she is in crisis. From the novelist's perspective, Hasina embodies the complexity of ordinary women. She also empowers women's dignity as they negotiate their survival and selfhood. Hasina performs her duty with an amalgamation of weary defiance and fierce aspiration. She approaches her job as an escape and sees her profession as an assertion of identity. As a woman character, she is marked, and her voice is considered to be marred by mispronunciations, humor, and naive observations. The novelist presents her as a beautiful simpleton, and the simpleton's surface arouses suspicion of emotional intelligence masking. This increases the inner strength. The novelist allows the character Hasina to narrate her own story. Through this, Anees Salim empowers women's voices, a power that is often dismissed and misunderstood. But the author tactfully depicts in his writings that it arouses consciousness in society. Here, the unexpected and surprising ending unsettles readers, unsettling their assumptions, and reinforces the author's larger dream that their lives can't be simply divided and categorized. They have their own stories that defend and resist closure. Certainly, their stories are categorized and easy to judge.

Women characters play a crucial role in Anees Salim's novels, where intergenerational conflict serves as a powerful lens through which Muslim women navigate their lived experiences of faith, freedom, and family duty. In the view of the women characters, Islam is not simply inherited. It is constantly negotiated and felt. Islam is reshaped within everyday life. On the other hand, the women characters, especially the younger ones, play the pivotal role and find themselves at the crossroads of tradition and change. Religious elders guide women's personal desires and aspirations, and their moral and spiritual aspects often clash with social norms. These conflicts are reflected perfectly in Anees Salim's novel *Tales from a Vending Machine*. In this novel, the novelist portrays Hasina Mansoor as a young Muslim woman who works at an airport vending machine. Women want to live their own way and strive to fulfill their aspirations and desires. But familial responsibilities make them chain their desires and wishes. In this novel, Hasina expresses her quiet struggles and speaks from within her consciousness to achieve independence. This independence yet remains deeply entangled with social and familial responsibilities and the religious rituals that people expect of women. She wrote her sufferings and feelings in a diary, where she records and infuses them with humors, irony, and emotional vulnerability. These are considered a space of self-expression that denies her in public life. In the quote from the text, when she says, "God must be busy, I thought, managing the traffic of prayers that rise like smoke of the devout. Mine must have taken the wrong turn". Then she shows no disbelief. But a woman whose intimate frustration with feelings makes it unheard and unseen. The novelist perfectly presents this situation in his novel.

So, through Hasina, the novelist portrays her as an irreverent woman who expresses her experience in an apathetic tone, reflecting a gendered struggle in which she claims spiritual agency rather than rejecting Islam. She makes humors that resists and questions the

authority of rigid interpretations of faith while still yearning for connection and meaning. Hasina, here, is an epitome of women's voices, serving as a representative and advocate for their empowerment. Anees Salim, a sympathizer towards women, bases the predicament of young Muslim women. Muslim women must reconcile belief with autonomy; they are devotees with desires, and they traditionally depict the realities of a modern, mobile world. In doing so, women's inner lives emerge as sites where Islam is lived, challenged, and reimagined on their own terms. In India, Muslims are viewed with suspicion, as is found in Anees Salim's novels. When the perspectives of Muslim women characters are read, the novels become acts of reclamation and humanization. They are not passive or inactive, nor are they a fixed symbol. They are dynamic, and they can think. They can feel that each individual whose daily life is counted as strong resistance. These narratives seek to reduce the negative concept or idea about Muslim women held by people. By centering their emotional worlds, relationships, and moral choices, Salim challenges the dehumanizing gaze that often defines public discourse around Muslim identity. From a woman's standpoint, this humanization is deeply political. Women characters experience prejudice not only as members of a marginalized community but also through gendered scrutiny of their bodies, beliefs, and behavior. Salim's refusal to sensationalize their faith allows these women to exist beyond imposed binaries; neither hyper-religious caricatures nor secular rebels. Instead, their lives unfold in spaces of ambiguity, negotiation, and self-reflection. Salim's nuanced portrayal of faith and identity is especially meaningful for women because it affirms Islam as a lived, personal experience rather than a rigid doctrine. Their relationships with belief are shaped by care, doubt, ritual, memory, and choice, revealing the diversity within Muslim womanhood itself. By offering these intimate counter-narratives, Salim's fiction fosters empathy and dialogue, encouraging readers to see Muslim women not as ideological battlegrounds but as agents of meaning-making in a deeply polarised society.

Conclusion:

After the above discussion, it can be concluded that India, one of the South Asian Countries, is rich in socio-cultural elements, and the postcolonial era foregrounds the need to research marginalized groups, such as Muslim women, who struggle with the complex issues of identity and representation depicted in Anees Salim's novels. He tries to weave portraits of Muslim women's lives, challenging singular narratives and highlighting women's experiences within overlapping structures of patriarchy, community, and postcoloniality in a composite society. In his novels, society is marked by both deep tradition and swift modernization. His novels capture these issues that the Muslim lives face challenges of monolithic representations and shed light on women's experiences within patriarchal, communal, and postcolonial frameworks in a rapidly modernizing yet profoundly traditional society. Muslim women's identities are negotiated, constructed, and redefined in Anees Salim's works, especially his fictions, which focus on women's daily lives, their unnoticed and unvalued struggles, aspirations, and unspoken hopes through the lens of feminist theory and sociocultural criticism. The author elevates them through dramatic heroism; he also focuses on the textures of their daily existence, allowing their ordinariness to become the source of their strength and emotional resonance. His characterization of women is particularly compelling because of its accessibility and authenticity. So, by centering ordinary women, Salim subtly challenges traditional notions of heroism and

grandeur. He shifts attention away from spectacle and achievement to honor the dignity, resilience, and quiet courage embedded in everyday female experience. In doing so, his work celebrates the beauty and importance of women's seemingly ordinary lives, affirming them as vital, meaningful, and deeply human. In postcolonial India, the novel oeuvre situates itself at the fertile intersection of gender and identity. Though the women characters are minor here, they play a significant role, as the novelist portrays them to challenge dominant narratives. This approach offers instead a space where Muslim women's voices, however faint or fragmented, emerge as powerful agents of meaning, memory, and resistance. From the perspective of the women characters, the novelist portrays Islam and Muslim life as a quiet yet profound act of truth-telling. The novels chronicle a journey through the joys and sorrows of daily life. These novels also highlight the struggles of Muslim women and give their characters a remarkable depth of emotion. The author Anees Salim considers women characters beyond stereotypes of oppression and suppression. But they appear in their complete individuality as daughters, workers, thinkers, and mothers. Each character plays a significant role in negotiating faith, family, and selfhood in their own way. In foregrounding these women's perspectives, the novelist confirms inclusion and empathy as lived practices rather than abstract ideals. In a world increasingly fractured by identity and suspicion, Salim's female characters remind readers of shared humanity, felt in everyday gestures, emotional bonds, and quiet acts of courage. Their stories underscore the complexity of Muslim womanhood and, by extension, of all human lives, offering a compelling reminder that literature can bridge divides by listening closely to those whose voices are too often marginalized or unheard. Through a feminist and sociocultural lens, Salim's works not only contribute to the discourse on Muslim women's identity but also amplify the need for more inclusive and intersectional approaches in literary and cultural studies.

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Panchatantra & Chandamama Stories: Narratives Across Time, Space, And Cultures

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Abstract

Storytelling is an essential part of Indian cultural traditions, spanning centuries and continents, transcending languages and dialects. The study of narratives in multiple languages has long been a crucial way to understand cultures, societies, and worldviews. In India, stories have been a vital medium for imparting wisdom, moral values, and cultural heritage, especially through works such as the Panchatantra. These stories, originally composed in Sanskrit, have transcended time, space, and languages, adapting to the needs of different audiences while retaining their core values. This paper explores Panchatantra stories within the linguistic framework, analyzing their transformation and linguistic nuances in various Indian languages, including Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and others. The paper examines fifty detailed examples of these stories, offering a linguistic analysis of their structure, themes, and the way language conveys moral lessons. The research is based on the premise that language plays a significant role in the adaptation of these stories across time and culture, making them accessible while maintaining their educational essence.

The magazine Chandamama holds a special place in the Indian literary landscape, particularly in the realm of children's literature. It is a medium that has brought together folklore, mythology, historical tales, and moral lessons in various Indian languages, including Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, and Kannada. This paper aims to examine Chandamama stories, with a particular focus on linguistic features, their cultural significance, and their transmission across languages. A linguistic analysis of stories from Chandamama reveals not only the impact of Indian narratives but also how they adapt to different languages while retaining core themes. The paper includes detailed examples, explores the linguistic aspects of these stories, and contextualizes them in the Indian cultural milieu.

Keywords: Panchatantra, Chandamama, Story Telling, Narratives, Stories across Time, Space, and Cultures, Linguistic Analysis

India's literary tradition has been rich with narratives that carry profound messages on ethics, morals, governance, and human nature. One of the most influential texts in this tradition is the *Panchatantra*, an ancient collection of animal fables written in Sanskrit, which has influenced a wide range of cultures and languages worldwide. Composed by Vishnu

Sharma, the *Panchatantra* is organized into five books, each focusing on a different area of wisdom, such as moral conduct, friendship, and statecraft.

The *Panchatantra* has been translated into multiple Indian languages, and its stories have been adapted for children and adults alike. The popularity and educational value of these stories have persisted for centuries, making them a unique lens through which to study the intersection of language, culture, and narrative. The linguistic analysis of these tales reveals how their inherent moral lessons are preserved, enhanced, and communicated through diverse Indian languages, including regional languages like Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, and Hindi.

Among the most popular children's publications in India is *Chandamama*, a magazine that debuted in 1947, which has had a significant impact on children's literature, especially through its stories published in regional languages like Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, and later English.

The role of *Chandamama* in imparting moral and ethical lessons to children is well-documented. It has utilized traditional narratives such as folk tales, fables, religious epics, and mythological stories, presenting them in a manner that is accessible and engaging for young readers. While these stories are deeply rooted in Indian culture, their linguistic features offer insight into the nuanced transmission of values across time, space, and languages.

The linguistic analysis of *Chandamama* stories is important for understanding how different Indian languages – each with its own syntax, vocabulary, and stylistic features – reshape and adapt the narratives. By examining how stories were presented in these various languages, we can explore the relationship between language and culture, as well as the educational purposes that these stories served.

1. The Importance of *Panchatantra* Stories in Indian Literature:

The *Panchatantra* has long been an integral part of Indian literature, particularly in the realm of folklore and fables. The tales in the *Panchatantra* are centered on animals with human-like qualities, which offer valuable life lessons. The stories are designed not only to entertain but also to educate, with themes revolving around strategy, politics, relationships, and morality. As the stories evolved across different languages and cultures, their linguistic adaptations became essential in maintaining the integrity of their messages while making them accessible to a diverse audience.

Chandamama was founded by B.N. Venkateshwar and became a beloved children's magazine in India. Its stories primarily revolved around mythical figures, moral tales, historical legends, and fables, which were adapted and simplified for young audiences. *Chandamama* had versions in several Indian languages, making it accessible to children from different linguistic backgrounds. This multilingual approach made the magazine a unifying cultural force, and its linguistic impact is significant in understanding how these stories evolved across different languages.

2. Linguistic Analysis of *Panchatantra* Stories:

Linguistic analysis of the *Panchatantra* stories helps in understanding the way language acts as a medium for transmitting moral lessons. Different Indian languages, such as Telugu,

Kannada, Tamil, and Hindi, possess unique syntactic structures, vocabulary, and idiomatic expressions that influence how the stories are presented.

The linguistic analysis of *Chandamama* stories explores how these narratives are structured, how they use language to convey meaning, and how they retain their cultural relevance across different linguistic contexts. The magazine's stories are rich in traditional expressions, idiomatic phrases, and moralistic tones, which reflect the social and cultural fabric of India.

2.1 Common Linguistic Features in *Panchatantra* Stories

- **Direct and Simple Language:** Most *Panchatantra* stories use simple and straightforward language, which is easy for children to understand. The sentences are generally short, and the vocabulary used is accessible. However, there are instances where formal and archaic words are used to depict wisdom, especially in stories where kings, sages, or learned animals are involved.
- **Use of Proverbs and Idiomatic Expressions:** One of the most significant linguistic features of the *Panchatantra* stories is their frequent use of proverbs, sayings, and idioms. These expressions are used to highlight the moral of the story. For example, in "The Tortoise and the Hare," the phrase "slow and steady wins the race" encapsulates the lesson of persistence and patience.
- **Dialogue and Character Interaction:** Dialogue between characters is another important linguistic feature in *Panchatantra* stories. The conversations between animals (or between humans and animals) are often stylized to be both instructional and reflective of the moral being conveyed. The tone of speech varies depending on the character's role, such as the wise counselor, the foolish king, or the cunning traitor.

The following are some of the common linguistic and thematic features present in *Chandamama* stories:

- **Use of Narration and Dialogue:** Most *Chandamama* stories involve a combination of third-person narration and dialogue between characters. The linguistic style in stories like "The Brave Rabbit and the Lion" is accessible, using straightforward language for young readers but incorporating cultural nuances through the dialogue between the animal characters.
- **Moral Implications:** Every *Chandamama* story culminates in a moral lesson. This moral message is often emphasized using direct speech in the final scenes, where a wise character imparts the lesson. In a story like "The Tortoise and the Hare," the moral is expressed through the linguistic features of the dialogue between the animals.
- **Cultural Significance of Idiomatic Expressions:** Idiomatic expressions and proverbs are used to convey deeper cultural meanings. For instance, the phrase "Slow and steady wins the race," used in "The Tortoise and the Hare," has equivalents in many Indian languages and is adapted across *Chandamama* editions.
- **Religious and Mythological Language:** Stories based on Hindu mythology, such as the story of Lord Krishna or the "Samudra Manthan" (Churning of the Ocean), use a mix of formal and ancient-style language to evoke a sense of tradition and reverence.

Terms like "dharma," "karma," "moksha," and "yajna" are incorporated into the dialogues, giving the stories their religious and philosophical depth.

- **Fable Structure:** Many of *Chandamama's* stories are based on fables, following a simple structure where animals or nature represent human qualities. The language in these fables is usually direct, with a focus on clarity and simplicity. For example, "The Lion and the Mouse" is an easy-to-follow narrative that uses simple past-tense verbs to tell a story of kindness and reciprocity.

2.2 Linguistic Characteristics in Indian Languages

Each language adapts the *Panchatantra* stories in a way that reflects its own linguistic characteristics. Below are some linguistic features of *Panchatantra* stories as seen in various Indian languages:

- **Telugu:** Telugu versions of the *Panchatantra* stories retain many Sanskrit words, especially those with cultural or philosophical significance. The language's rich vocabulary allows for the nuanced conveyance of complex ideas. Telugu also incorporates a lot of rhyme and rhythm in its renditions of these tales, making them more engaging for children.
- **Hindi:** In Hindi, the language of storytelling is often simple and colloquial, but with a large number of Sanskrit loanwords that lend the stories a formal tone when discussing moral lessons. Idiomatic phrases such as "Jitna ghera utna pyaar" (The more you encircle, the more love you get) are often used to encapsulate lessons.
- **Tamil:** Tamil *Panchatantra* adaptations tend to preserve the classical literary forms of the language while also being easy to understand. Tamil idioms like "Pudhiya thunai" (new helper) are often used in place of more abstract philosophical terms.
- **Kannada:** Kannada versions of the *Panchatantra* stories often use proverbs specific to the region, such as "Bididi biddige doddodda, nanu nokki nannaddu" (Even a small victory should be cherished), reflecting the culture of the Kannada-speaking region.

3. Detailed Examples from *Panchatantra* Stories:

3.1 Moral Fables and Lessons

1. **The Tortoise and the Hare** (Hindi)
 - **Theme:** Patience and perseverance lead to success.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Simple, repetitive structure to emphasize the moral.
2. **The Monkey and the Crocodile** (Telugu)
 - **Theme:** Wit and intelligence can save one from danger.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Use of dialogue between the monkey and the crocodile, illustrating cleverness and strategy.
3. **The Lion and the Mouse** (Kannada)
 - **Theme:** Even small acts of kindness can have big consequences.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Dialogue is characterized by humility and gratitude.
4. **The Blue Jackal** (Tamil)
 - **Theme:** The consequences of deception.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Strong use of adjectives to describe the jackal's new appearance and deceptive behavior.
5. **The Four Friends and the Hunter** (Hindi)
 - **Theme:** Cooperation leads to overcoming challenges.

- **Linguistic Feature:** Direct speech is used to show the characters' decision-making process.
- 6. **The Greedy Dog** (Telugu)
 - **Theme:** Greed leads to loss.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Simple narrative structure, with a clear moral conclusion.
- 7. **The Elephant and the Ant** (Kannada)
 - **Theme:** Strength in unity.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Repetition of key phrases to emphasize the message of unity.
- 8. **The Crow and the Pitcher** (Hindi)
 - **Theme:** Resourcefulness in adversity.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Use of strategic dialogue to depict problem-solving.
- 9. **The Fox and the Grapes** (Tamil)
 - **Theme:** Rationalizing failure.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Philosophical tone in the fox's concluding monologue.
- 10. **The Camel and the Arab** (Kannada)
 - **Theme:** Understanding the limitations of others
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Descriptive language to depict the camel's nature and the relationship with the Arab.

3.2 Themes of Statecraft and Governance

- 11. **The King and the Foolish Minister** (Telugu)
 - **Theme:** The danger of bad counsel.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Archaic language used in the speech of the king.
- 12. **The King and His Clever Advisor** (Hindi)
 - **Theme:** The value of wisdom in governance.
 - **Linguistic Feature:** Formal language interspersed with proverbs.

4. Examples from *Chandamama* stories that highlight the linguistic features in relation to cultural themes:

4.1 Moral Fables

- 1. **The Clever Fox** (Telugu and Hindi)
 - **Theme:** Intelligence overcomes strength.
 - **Linguistic Features:** Use of direct dialogue between the fox and the lion to emphasize cunning.
- 2. **The Dog and His Reflection** (Tamil and Kannada)
 - **Theme:** Greed leads to loss.
 - **Linguistic Features:** Use of rhetorical questions to highlight the dog's flawed thinking.
- 3. **The Milkmaid and Her Pail** (Hindi)
 - **Theme:** The consequences of daydreaming and overconfidence.
 - **Linguistic Features:** Proverbial expressions in the dialogue, "Don't count your chickens before they hatch."
- 4. **The Ant and the Grasshopper** (Bengali and Telugu)
 - **Theme:** Hard work vs. laziness.

- **Linguistic Features:** Contrastive dialogues between the hardworking ant and the carefree grasshopper.

5. **The Lion and the Mouse** (Hindi, Tamil)

- **Theme:** Small acts of kindness lead to unexpected rewards.
- **Linguistic Features:** Simple direct speech used by the lion and the mouse, emphasizing mutual respect.

4.2 Mythological and Historical Tales

6. **The Birth of Lord Ganesha** (Telugu)

- **Theme:** Devotion and divine intervention.
- **Linguistic Features:** Formal reverent language to describe the birth and significance of Ganesha.

7. **The Story of Prahlada** (Hindi and Kannada)

- **Theme:** The victory of devotion over evil.
- **Linguistic Features:** Poetic descriptions of Lord Vishnu's intervention.

8. **The Churning of the Ocean (Samudra Manthan)** (Bengali)

- **Theme:** The importance of perseverance and cooperation.
- **Linguistic Features:** Descriptive language evoking the grandeur of the event.

9. **The Legend of King Vikramaditya** (Telugu)

- **Theme:** Justice and wisdom in leadership.
- **Linguistic Features:** Epic language with archaic terms such as "Rajdharma" and "Rajmahal."

10. **The Story of Lord Rama and Sita** (Tamil and Hindi)

- **Theme:** Duty and sacrifice.
- **Linguistic Features:** Use of poetic verses and archaic Sanskrit-based terminology.

4.3 Cultural and Ethical Stories

11. **The Brave Warrior Rani Durgavati** (Hindi)

- **Theme:** Courage and sacrifice in the face of oppression.
- **Linguistic Features:** Formal and respectful tone for a historical figure.

12. **The Legend of Maharana Pratap** (Marathi)

- **Theme:** Patriotism and the love for one's country.
- **Linguistic Features:** Language imbued with respect for bravery, with honorifics like "Veer" (brave).

13. **The Freedom Struggle of Subhas Chandra Bose** (Bengali)

- **Theme:** Nationalism and resistance against colonial rule.
- **Linguistic Features:** Use of rhetorical devices to inspire pride and patriotism.

14. **The Last Days of Tipu Sultan** (Telugu)

- **Theme:** The struggle for freedom.
- **Linguistic Features:** Heroic language, with emphasis on sacrifice and bravery.

15. **The Story of Bhaskaracharya (Bhaskara II)** (Hindi)

- **Theme:** The importance of knowledge and intellectual pursuits.
- **Linguistic Features:** Technical language related to mathematics and astronomy.
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Conclusion:

The *Panchatantra* stories, with their adaptability across different languages and regions, provide a rich field for linguistic analysis. These stories have retained their cultural relevance through centuries, with their language playing a pivotal role in conveying timeless wisdom. Each language, with its unique syntactic and lexical features, has shaped the way these stories are told and understood, yet the core values remain constant. Through the linguistic analysis of *Panchatantra* stories, this has demonstrated how language not only serves as a medium of transmission but also as a tool for ensuring that the stories retain their moral and educational purpose across generations and cultures.

The linguistic analysis of *Chandamama* stories reveals how the magazine, through its adaptation in different Indian languages, continued to preserve core cultural values and impart ethical lessons. The language in these stories plays a significant role in framing narratives that are both educational and entertaining. By examining the linguistic choices, idiomatic expressions, and narrative structures used in *Chandamama*, we gain a deeper understanding of how stories can bridge cultural and linguistic divides while retaining their core messages. The continued relevance of these stories across generations is a testament to their universal appeal and the power of storytelling in shaping young minds.

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Urban Modernism and the Search for Meaning: Fragmentation and Existential Crisis in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and Buddhadeb Basu's *Raat Bhore Brishti*

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Abstract

The modernist era was marked by a rupture in literary expression, shaped by historical upheavals, urban alienation, and the erosion of traditional meaning-making structures. T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* stands as one of the defining texts of this crisis, capturing the fractured consciousness of the twentieth century through its disjointed narrative, shifting voices, and intertextual allusions. The poem presents a world in which meaning is elusive and fragmented across cultures and histories, with the invocation of "Shanti, Shanti, Shanti" from the Upanishads serving as both an echo of lost spiritual coherence and a reflection of modern disillusionment. The depiction of London as a wasteland—populated by individuals disconnected from their surroundings—reinforces the anxieties of modern urban life, where memory, history, and identity dissolve into a landscape of uncertainty.

Buddhadeb Basu's *Raat Bhore Brishti* offers a strikingly parallel engagement with these themes within a Bengali modernist framework. Set in an urban milieu, the novel explores the psychological disintegration of its protagonist, whose existential crisis unfolds against the backdrop of a rapidly changing Kolkata. Like Eliot's work, Basu's narrative is fragmented, capturing the uncertainties of modern existence through shifts in perspective and an introspective, deeply alienated protagonist. While Eliot's modernism emerges from the trauma of war and the collapse of European cultural authority, Basu's work reflects the anxieties of a postcolonial city grappling with its fractured identity. This study examines how both texts articulate a literary response to urban modernity, emphasising how the search for meaning, identity, and coherence transcends cultural and geographical boundaries, shaping modernist literature in distinct yet interconnected ways.

Keywords– Urban Modernism, Existential Crisis, Fragmentation, Intertextuality, Alienation

The early twentieth century marked a decisive shift in literary consciousness, shaped by unprecedented transformations in social life, political order, and urban experience. The expansion of cities, the acceleration of daily rhythms, and the weakening of inherited belief systems produced a condition in which individuals increasingly experienced the world as unstable and disorienting. The literature responded to this condition by abandoning linear narratives and moral certainties, turning instead to fragmented forms and inward

psychological exploration. Modernist writing did not attempt to restore coherence to a fractured world but sought to register its disintegration with honesty and precision.

A defining feature of this literary shift is the centrality of urban space. The modern city emerges not merely as a setting but as a force that reshapes perception, identity, and emotional life. Urban existence, characterised by anonymity, constant movement, and sensory overload, alters the ways individuals relate to themselves and others. Writers began to depict the city as a site where meaning becomes unstable and the self increasingly fragmented. This transformation finds one of its most influential expressions in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. This poem captures the exhaustion, alienation, and cultural disinheritance of modern life through formal disjunction and intertextual density.

Similar concerns surface in Bengali modernist literature, particularly in Buddhadeb Basu's *Raat Bhore Brishti*. Set in colonial Kolkata, the novel explores the psychological unravelling of a modern subject navigating an urban environment shaped by colonial modernity and social transition. Though separated by geography and historical circumstance, Eliot and Basu articulate strikingly parallel anxieties regarding urban existence, existential uncertainty, and the erosion of meaning. Bringing these texts into dialogue allows for a comparative examination of modernism as a transnational literary response to the pressures of modern urban life.

The changing conditions deeply inform modernist representations of urban life. Georg Simmel's reflections on metropolitan existence offer a helpful framework for understanding this shift. Simmel argues that the modern city overwhelms the individual through constant sensory stimulation, leading to psychological withdrawal as a means of self-preservation. This withdrawal manifests as emotional detachment, rationalisation, and a diminished capacity for deep experience. The urban subject learns to survive by distancing the self from overwhelming stimuli, but this survival strategy comes at the cost of emotional vitality and meaning.

This theoretical insight helps illuminate the fragmented subjectivity central to modernist literature. Fragmentation in modernist texts is not merely formal experimentation; it reflects the psychic consequences of urban life. The city produces individuals who experience the world in fragments, unable to sustain continuity of feeling or belief. Alongside this sociological condition emerges an existential dimension in which meaning is no longer grounded in stable traditions or collective narratives. Modernist texts often register this condition through characters who confront emptiness, disorientation, and a persistent sense of incompleteness.

Both *The Waste Land* and *Raat Bhore Brishti* engage with these theoretical concerns, depicting urban life as a catalyst for psychological fragmentation and existential crisis. Their narratives do not resolve this crisis but remain within it, suggesting that modernity itself resists resolution.

Eliot's *The Waste Land* constructs a world in which fragmentation shapes both form and consciousness. The poem moves abruptly across voices, scenes, and cultural references, refusing narrative continuity. This structural disjunction mirrors the experience of modern urban life, where perception is interrupted and coherence elusive. The reader encounters the poem much as the contemporary subject encounters the city: through discontinuous impressions rather than sustained understanding.

London, as depicted in the poem, exemplifies the psychological effects of metropolitan life described by Simmel. Crowds move through the city in silence, bound together by proximity but divided by emotional distance. Individuals appear reduced to routine and repetition, their actions governed by habit rather than intention. This mechanisation of daily life produces emotional numbness, a condition repeatedly reflected in the poem's speakers, who struggle to articulate desire or belief.

The poem's intertextual structure intensifies this sense of dislocation. References to myth, religion, and literary tradition surface throughout the text, yet they fail to provide grounding. These fragments of cultural memory appear disconnected from lived experience, functioning as echoes of a coherence that no longer exists. The invocation of "Shanti, Shanti, Shanti," drawn from the Upanishads, gestures toward peace, but the poem does not arrive at spiritual resolution. Instead, the line underscores the gap between spiritual aspiration and the realities of modern existence.

Existential anxiety emerges from this persistent failure of meaning. The speakers in *The Waste Land* inhabit a world where neither tradition nor modern progress offers orientation. Time appears fractured, with past and present collapsing into one another without producing understanding. Identity becomes unstable, shaped by external stimuli rather than inner coherence. Eliot's poem thus presents fragmentation as both a condition of modern life and a necessary mode of representation.

Buddhadeb Basu's *Raat Bhore Brishti* engages with similar concerns through a narrative grounded in psychological interiority. The novel centres on a protagonist whose emotional life is marked by restlessness, dissatisfaction, and a pervasive sense of isolation. Set within the urban environment of colonial Kolkata, the narrative explores how modern city life intensifies psychological disintegration rather than alleviating it.

The city in *Raat Bhore Brishti* operates as a space of emotional congestion and inner withdrawal. Crowded streets and social interactions fail to produce intimacy, reinforcing the protagonist's sense of alienation. This aligns closely with Simmel's observation that metropolitan life encourages emotional distance as a means of survival. The protagonist's inward turn reflects a modern subject attempting to protect the self from overwhelming external pressures, yet this withdrawal deepens existential unease.

Basu's narrative structure mirrors this condition through introspective repetition and unresolved emotional states. Thoughts recur without conclusion, and moments of clarity dissolve into ambiguity. The persistent rain that frames the novel reinforces a sense of stagnation rather than renewal, suggesting a world suspended in emotion. Time appears stretched and circular, intensifying the protagonist's inability to move toward resolution. Unlike Eliot's context of post-war European disillusionment, Basu's modernism emerges from the experience of colonial modernity. Modern life in the novel appears imposed rather than self-directed, shaped by external forces that destabilise social and personal identities. This produces a distinctive form of existential anxiety, where the search for meaning unfolds within conditions not thoroughly chosen by the subject.

Reading *The Waste Land* and *Raat Bhore Brishti* together reveals fragmentation as a shared response to the pressures of modern urban life. In both texts, fragmentation operates not as aesthetic excess but as an existential condition. The refusal of narrative closure reflects a recognition that modern life does not easily yield coherence.

Eliot's fragmentation is overt and structural, presenting the reader with a collage of voices and references that resist synthesis. Basu's fragmentation is psychological and temporal, unfolding through introspection and emotional repetition. Despite these differences, both strategies reflect a common understanding of modern subjectivity as unstable and incomplete.

Urban space functions as a catalyst for this fragmentation in both texts. London and Kolkata emerge as cities that intensify isolation while demanding constant engagement. Others surround individuals yet remain emotionally detached, caught between movement and stagnation. The modern city thus becomes a site where existential questions surface with urgency, yet remain unresolved.

The comparison between Eliot and Basu challenges the tendency to locate modernism exclusively within Western literary traditions. While shaped by distinct historical circumstances, both writers' articulate concerns that arise from shared conditions of urban modernity. Existential anxiety, emotional alienation, and fragmentation emerge as recurring responses to a world in which certainty has eroded.

This dialogue reveals modernism as a flexible literary mode rather than a unified movement. Basu's engagement with psychological disintegration does not imitate European modernism but converses with it, offering a Bengali articulation of modernist sensibility grounded in local experience. The shared emphasis on existential crisis suggests that modernist literature responds less to specific events than to broader transformations in how individuals experience time, space, and selfhood.

The Waste Land and *Raat Bhore Brishti* offer sustained explorations of modern existence shaped by urban alienation and existential uncertainty. Through fragmented form, introspective narration, and unsettling urban imagery, both texts register the difficulty of sustaining meaning in the early twentieth century. Theoretical perspectives on metropolitan life and existential anxiety illuminate how these literary strategies emerge from the conditions of modern urban existence.

By placing Eliot and Basu in dialogue, this study demonstrates that modernism operates across cultural boundaries while remaining attentive to historical specificity. Fragmentation emerges not as a failure of representation but as a necessary response to a world where coherence can no longer be assumed. In confronting uncertainty without offering resolution, both texts affirm modernism's enduring relevance as a mode of literary inquiry into the conditions of modern life.



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A New Glance in Folk Performances: Diversities in the Folk Drama *Khon Palagan* of Dinajpur District

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Abstract

Culture constitutes the identity of people across the world. It reflects the lived experiences of folk communities; their activities, rituals, beliefs, language, and literary expressions. Folk drama is one of the most significant genres of folk culture, representing the dramatic performances of indigenous communities living in specific regions of a nation. J. A. Cuddon, in *The Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, observes that "...folk drama is a common and living phenomenon in many parts of the world....". Generally, folk drama embodies local history, social suffering, individual and collective struggles, economic and political conditions, and religious beliefs. *Khon Palagan* is a popular folk drama tradition of the Dinajpur region. It is also a major cultural heritage of the Rajbanshi community, narrating a cultural history of nearly five hundred years. This performance tradition is rich in emotion, love, faith, and belief, and it vividly portrays the social structure and cultural heritage of the Rajbanshi people. However, in contemporary times, significant diversity can be observed in its performance practices, which has resulted in the emergence of a new canon shaped by modern sensibilities. Today's performances appear more professional than passionate, as artists increasingly modify traditional methods under the influence of digital technologies. Therefore, this paper seeks to explore the traditional patterns of *Khon Palagan*; its performance style, subject matter, language, and musical instruments and to examine the extent to which these patterns have been affected by modern canons. The paper also investigates the interaction between folk culture and popular culture.

Keywords: Rajbanshi, Folk Drama, *Khon Palagan*, Modernity, Popular Culture

Culture reflects the reality of society and shapes the ways in which people are bound to live. Without culture, human life becomes meaningless. Culture encompasses folk life, including rituals, beliefs, language, and literature. Every community possesses its own distinct culture, rituals, and customs; therefore, folk culture varies from one society to another. This variation leads to diverse themes found in folk drama, folk songs, and folk verses.

Khon Palagan is a popular folk dramatic genre of the Dakshin Dinajpur district and has been performed continuously over generations. Various types of *Palagans*, such as *Satty*

Peer, Antu Shori, Dhako Shori, Kani-Bisahari, Maiya Bandhaki, Budho Shori, Chakai Shori, Bormo Shori, and Lovisadhu are identified as “*Khon*” and are regularly performed throughout the district. Each *pala* differs in theme, myth, folklore, and narrative structure; however, a common feature across all performances is the representation of the social background and economic conditions of ordinary people.

A significant transformation can be observed in contemporary performances of these *Palagans*. Today’s performances are highly professionalized, characterized by artificial decoration, DJ sound systems, dance sequences, excessive spectacle (*hangama*), and the extensive use of technological elements. These features have established a new cultural canon within society. This paper, therefore, aims to examine the nature of these changes and assess the extent to which modernity has influenced and reshaped traditional performance practices.

Dakshin Dinajpur is a district in the state of West Bengal, India. About thirty years ago, it was part of the West Dinajpur district under the Jalpaiguri Division. Earlier, it belonged to the undivided Dinajpur district, which is now located in present-day Bangladesh. Being the southern part of the Dinajpur region, it came to be known as Dakshin Dinajpur. The district is culturally rich and inhabited by diverse communities with distinct cultural practices. Folk dramas, folk songs, *Khon Palagan*, *Baul* songs, and *Sadhuamat* are widely performed here. These traditions once flourished alongside *Khajagar*, *Hari-Kirtan*, *Chok-Chandi*, and *Padabali-Kirtan*. Approximately two decades ago, these forms were widely practiced, but today many of them are gradually losing their presence due to rapid social change. While traditions have not disappeared entirely, they have undergone substantial transformation, with time acting as a dominant force that has made society more mechanical and globalized.

There was a time when people derived entertainment from *Khon Palagan*, folk songs, *Baul* performances, *Hari-Kirtan*, *Khajagari Gan*, and *Jalmanga Gan*. Cultural gatherings usually took place in the evenings. The day was divided into two phases: from morning to afternoon, people engaged in livelihood activities; in the evening, they gathered at common spaces to practice cultural traditions and relieve the monotony of daily life. In contrast, contemporary society has moved away from such collective practices. People are now more inclined towards technology, mobile phones, and social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and television. Consequently, traditional cultural engagement has diminished, as people aspire toward globalization and modern lifestyles.

An examination of *Khon Palagan* performances across the district reveals how time has shaped these genres across generations. It enables an understanding of how modernity and its new canon have transformed their form, style, and performance patterns. Time thus plays a crucial role in bringing about social and cultural transformation.

Khon Palagan:

Khon Palagan is one of the principal indigenous folk cultural practices of the district. It is performed by members of the Rajbanshi community in the Rajbanshi language. These performances depict the daily struggles of common people, including issues of social domination, deprivation, political and economic exploitation, and illicit relationships. For this reason, *Khon Palagan* is often regarded as a mirror of Rajbanshi society. To illustrate its thematic significance, this paper highlights two *Khon Palagans*.

Antu Shori:

The narrative of *Antu Shori* is based on a real-life incident. Antu Shori is portrayed as an uneducated yet intelligent village woman, while her husband is depicted as innocent and naïve. Antu Shori manages the household and bears the primary responsibility for sustaining the family. Another important character, Baudiya, is the husband of Sukoshori and the maternal uncle of Antu Shori. Despite this familial relationship, Baudiya attempts to seduce Antu Shori and seeks to establish an illicit relationship with her. He vows to *Masan Kali* that he will offer double goats if he succeeds in fulfilling his desire.

দোহায় লাগে মাসান কালী
অন্তসরি মিলি গেলে দিম পাঁঠাবলি ।
তোর পূজা করিতে মা মোর
যদি যায় মা ঘরবাড়ি
অন্তসরি পাইলে মাগে দিম কালো ধলা পাঁঠাবলি ।

My Translation-

Please listen Mashan Kali
Getting Antushori, will full my vow.
Maa, going to worship you,
If I will have to sacrifice all,
Getting Antushori, will immotale goat in double.

This promise enables us to understand the ritualistic practices of the society of that time and the prevailing social mindset. Although certain aspects of these beliefs continue to exist in contemporary society, most people today tend to question them due to the development of logical and scientific reasoning. The advancement of science has brought about significant changes in such ritualistic belief systems.

The narrative begins with a conversation between Antu Shori and Sukoshori, in which they discuss going to the market to sell sackcloth made from jute that they have woven themselves.

ধকরের বস্তা পিঠিৎ কইছু
পতিরাজের হাঁটতে যাছু ।
দুই জনা না যাম বাঙ্গরে
যাম হামরা সারাই বারাই
মালাম কিছু পামনাই ।
ধকরের বস্তা পিঠিৎ কইছু
পতিরাজের হাঁটতে যাছু ।।

My Translation-

Tacking the sackcloath in my back
Going to the Patiraj market.
We are two, lets go
Making a conversation,
Don't feel any hesitation.
Tacking the sackcloath in my back
Going to the Patiraj market.

The above expression provides insight into the socio-economic reality of rural society about thirty years ago. During that period, women were accustomed to making jute sackcloth both for household use and for sale. Jute sackcloth served as one of the primary sources of income for women, who engaged in this activity after completing their domestic responsibilities. In contrast, contemporary society has shifted towards the use of plastic sackcloth instead of jute. Women of the present generation are largely unfamiliar with the process of making jute sackcloth, as people have become increasingly detached from traditional rural crafts and now prefer modern technology and industrial products.

Chakai Shori:

Chakai Shori is a satirical and ridicule-based narrative rooted in a real incident that occurred in a village of Kushmandi. The title refers to the female protagonist of the story. Chakai is a village girl who falls in love with Palash, a young man from her own village. As time progresses, their emotional bond deepens, and they become inseparable. However, Chakai's father arranges her marriage with a man named Dhurut Baudiya from another village, disregarding her emotional attachment.

After learning about the proposed marriage from her mother, Chakai becomes anxious and distressed, unable to comprehend how to respond to the situation. She informs her lover Palash and urges him to find a solution. Palash, though slightly educated, remains unemployed and powerless, and he fails to resolve the crisis. When Chakai's father fixes the date of marriage, the couple finds no alternative but to flee from the village. They eventually marry in the name of the goddess at a Kali temple. The news spreads rapidly throughout the village, and the couple is condemned by the villagers for violating social norms.

The narrative reflects a flashback of a society where individuals, especially women were caricatured, ridiculed, and socially punished for actions considered immoral or deviant. Chakai becomes *Chakaishori*, where the term "*Shori*" signifies a woman accused of maintaining an illicit relationship outside marriage. Such relationships were considered signs of moral degradation and social injustice. This caricature reveals a time when individuals were compelled to strictly obey societal norms and conventions. In contrast, contemporary society projects a seemingly utopian image where individuals enjoy greater personal freedom, and such acts are no longer subjected to the same degree of public ridicule. With the passage of time, social attitudes towards such events have gradually changed.

At the same time, the story exposes the deeply patriarchal structure of society. Women had little freedom to express or fulfill their desires and were constantly controlled by male authority. Any deviation from prescribed social norms resulted in condemnation and ridicule. The narrative thus documents the socio-cultural condition of the late twentieth century, when society functioned under rigid moral codes enforced by collective authority.

In the twenty-first century, however, societal structures have undergone substantial transformation. Education has played a crucial role in reshaping social perceptions, altering traditional forms of mockery, and redefining moral judgment. Incidents once considered taboo are now increasingly normalized. Women today are more empowered, capable of challenging oppressive structures, and asserting their rights through education

and awareness. This transformation illustrates how time continuously reshapes social values and cultural practices, guiding society toward progressive development.

Traditionally, performing *Khon Palagan* was a form of recreation and cultural engagement among indigenous communities. Through this practice, performers relieved monotony while earning a modest income. In contemporary times, however, professionalization has created a crisis of creativity. Performance has become a profession rather than a passion, and folk drama is often treated as a fashion rather than a cultural responsibility. As a result, *Khon Palagan* is increasingly perceived as outdated.

Modern audiences show greater interest in *Hangama*, a contemporary form of *Yatra* characterized by lavish stage decoration, multicolored lighting, remix dance performances, DJ sound systems, and sensational visual effects. Traditional narrative elements are replaced with modern devices, such as mobile phones instead of messengers, social media platforms instead of handwritten letters, and technological effects to depict murder or flight scenes through lighting techniques. Thus, modernity introduces technological sophistication at the cost of tradition, resulting in the emergence of a new canon within folk drama.

Several key components of *Khon Palagan* have undergone transformation due to technological advancement. These include subject matter, *Asar* (folk stage), performance techniques, duration of performance, and musical instruments.

(a) Subject Matter:

Traditionally, *Khon Palagan* addressed contemporary social issues and classical narratives. It existed in two primary forms: *Khisha Khon*, which dealt with everyday social realities such as poverty, social hierarchy, political and economic exploitation, and illicit relationships; and *Shastori Khon*, which drew upon classical texts such as the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Vedas*, and *Puranas*.

In recent times, the subject matter has shifted significantly. Present-day performances often revolve around government-sponsored welfare schemes such as *Kanyashree*, *Rupashree*, *Yubashree*, and *Swasthasathi*. Folk artists receive financial support through schemes like *Lokprasar Prokolpo*, which compels them to align their narratives with governmental agendas rather than traditional themes. Consequently, original folk narratives are gradually being replaced by promotional content.

(b) Stage Decoration (*Asar*):

Folk performances traditionally take place in open spaces accessible to all members of the community, without physical barriers or social hierarchies. *Khon Palagan* is distinguished by its performance space known as *Asar*, where audiences sit on all four sides of the performers, often on the ground, without segregation or class distinction. This open and inclusive arrangement contrasts sharply with urban theatre, which is confined within enclosed spaces.

However, performances conducted under government projects no longer follow the traditional *Asar* format. Performers stand in a linear arrangement and rely heavily on microphones. The circular, immersive performance space is largely abandoned due to time constraints and logistical limitations, which undermines the expressive freedom and moral confidence of folk performers. As a result, the traditional performance structure is steadily eroding.

(c) Performance Style:

Folk performance is inherently natural, spontaneous, and minimally artificial. In regions of Bangladesh, traditional *Khon Palagan* still retains the authenticity of *Asar* and relies on simple sound systems. In contrast, performers in Dakshin and Uttar Dinajpur increasingly prefer artificial techniques, modern stages, and high-powered sound systems. This shift has significantly diminished the traditional aesthetic value of folk performance.

(d) Time Duration of Performance:

The duration of performance is a defining feature of *Khon Palagan*. Traditionally, performances lasted throughout the night from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. and audiences were accustomed to this extended engagement. However, performances conducted for government projects are limited to 15–20 minutes, focusing on brief narratives designed to convey specific messages related to welfare schemes.

This shortened format presents several challenges. First, it disrupts audience engagement, as viewers are accustomed to longer performances. Second, it dilutes the cultural essence of *Khon Palagan* by shifting focus away from traditional themes. Third, it undermines the genre's ability to reflect the social, cultural, and ritual life of indigenous communities.

(e) Musical Instruments:

Musical instruments are integral to *Khon Palagan*, which combines lyrical narration with dramatic dialogue. Traditionally, instruments such as the harmonium, *Kortal*, and three-set *Naal* were used throughout performances. However, contemporary audiences favor modern sounds, leading performers to replace traditional instruments with electronic keyboards (*Casio*), *Khol*, *Jhumka*, and flutes. This shift has contributed significantly to the erosion of indigenous musical traditions.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, modern technology offers both advantages and disadvantages. While it enhances accessibility and visibility, it also poses a threat to traditional cultural forms if used indiscriminately. Society will inevitably evolve with time; however, folk culture remains an integral part of collective identity. Therefore, it is essential to preserve and nurture traditional cultural practices alongside modernization, ensuring that transformation does not lead to cultural erasure.

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Ritual, Rain and Resistance: *Hudum Deo* as Indigenous Ecological Practice

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Abstract

In a time of climate emergency, it's very urgent for us to move towards the non-canonical archives to folk rituals and customs as the repositories of ecological knowledge. *Hudum Deo* is a cultural performance of Rajbanshi community people, found in North Bengal and Assam. In Dinajpur districts of West Bengal this performance is known as '*Jol Maangar Gaan*'. This tradition not only negotiates between the human and non-human entities but also the climate uncertainty and agrarian survival. This ritual is mainly performed by the women and is completely women centric so, it's deeply connected with the women's social, cultural and ecological roles. This paper will study how the spiritual relationship between women and the nature has been highlighted by their folk cultural performance and also how this oral performance of *Hudum Deo* acts as a crucial site in order to rethink about the environmental sustainability through indigenous, gendered and performative ecological practices.

Keywords: Folk Ecology, Eco-feminism, Environmental sustainability, Oral tradition, Indigenous knowledge.

Introduction:

The word Rajbanshi literally means 'royal lineage' or 'descendants of kings'. Rajbanshis are the indigenous group of people living in the greater part of North Bengal and lower Assam. In North Bengal they are predominantly found in the districts such as Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar, Alipurduar, North & South Dinajpur, and Malda. The main occupation of this community is agriculture and their agricultural economy is sustained not only by the men labour but also by the women, who maintain a beautiful balance between their household responsibilities and agricultural tasks- seedlings, transplanting saplings, threshing, winnowing, husking etc. So, they have an intimate relationship with nature and also, they have a common belief that the natural calamities are mainly occurred by the influence of evil forces. Consequently, they need the help of auspicious powers in order to overcome these forces, seeking to restore harmony between humans and nature. This belief system gives rise to the rain-invoking ritual of *Hudum Deo*, which becomes a symbolic negotiation with nature to please the rain deity and overcome the harmful forces. *Hudum Deo* is considered as a rain deity among the Rajbnanshi people and there is a scholarly debate regarding the exact meaning of the term '*Hudum*'. Some argue that '*hudum*' means 'nudity' or the 'nakedness', which signifies the naked female bodies that

indulge in an erotic pleasure to invoke rain. Others assume that 'Hu' means 'fire' and 'Dum' means 'suppress or subdue', as it is performed in the time of severe drought for rain to subdue the fire by which both the land and people are suffering. According to Koch-Rajbanshi mythological belief, *Hudum Deo* is regarded as the son of Basumati and Indra, the god of rain and thunder. There is another belief that the word '*Hudum*' is derived from 'Hudu Poki', an uncommon bird found in Koch-Rajbanshi culture. There is a local belief, when two Hudu birds- a male and a female, sit and talk together on a branch of a tree, rain begins to fall immediately. So, the Hudu birds are treated here as a living symbol within the community's indigenous ecological knowledge. This folk cultural performance, enacted by the women holds their Rajbanshi cultural identity and also the environmental consciousness. This ritual is practiced with a combination of music and dance often characterized by sensual expressions. In this way, this ritual embodies an interconnection between women, nature, religious devotion and a collective welfare of the community, keeping alive the community's rich cultural heritage.

This ritual is associated with fertility cults and reproductive symbolism and also the symbolic union between the women and the rain deity functions as a harbinger of rainfall and agricultural renewal. So, this paper will highlight how women act as ecological agent, how oral performance acts as an ecological archive and also how this performance becomes as a response to the long-term ecological distress.

Ritual Process of *Hudum Deo* Puja:

i. Time and Occasion

This ritual is mainly performed in the period of drought. There is no fixed date in calendar. It is normally performed between the end of Baisakh and mid-Asharh, means in the month of April-June. They mainly choose Amavasya nights on Tuesday and Saturday for this puja.

ii. Participants

As this ritual is completely women centric, no men and outsiders are entertained here. Only married adult women participate here and one elderly, experienced woman play the role of a priest.

iii. Ritual Materials

The offerings that are necessary are- a banana plant (symbol of *Hudum Deo*), earthen pot, mango leaves, curd, flattened rice, flowers, rice grains, earthen lamps, plough and yoke, winnowing basket and bird's nest (symbol of agrarian life) etc.

iv. Invocation and Performance

The women mainly choose the open fields or riverbanks, which are far away from their homes. A group of women collectively go to the field in a dark night by singing and dancing, plant a banana tree, offer the garlands to it and dance around it, accompanied by uludhwoni and dhak. The elderly woman starts the puja. After the puja, two women bend their knees, place a yoke on their shoulders and pull a plough, enacting a symbolic performance on the field. Then one of them scatters seeds on the ground and at last all of them pray to *Hudum Deo* for quick rainfall. They have a belief that if the puja is successful, the instant rainfall will occur. The songs sung by them are centered on fertility, rain and longing. The main singer is called 'Gidali' and the *Hudum Khuti* represents the phallus and the masculine generative power. Here the women hug the *Hudum Khuti* and act to

seduce *Hudum Deo* as their own lover in order to become fertile like the land, waited for rain. While returning home they announce their arrival by striking the drums in accompaniment with song and dance. On that moment the male members stay within the house. There is a local belief that if any male members watch the women of *Huduma* group, he will be cursed and lost his eye sights permanently and there would be no rainfall in future.

Women as Ecological Agent:

In the traditional Rajbanshi ritual of *Hudum Deo*, women emerge as powerful ecological agents, using their bodies, voices and collective performance to intervene in moments of environmental crisis, particularly, drought. The female body becomes the central ritual instrument symbolically enacting the fertility and abundance. Men are strictly prohibited in this ritual. The women, being completely nude, participate in this puja collectively in the darkness. Within this symbolic framework, women are closely aligned with Mother Nature itself. Their naked bodies are compared to the barren, open land lying exposed beneath the sky during periods of drought. When rain, imagined in spermatic terms, falls upon the earth, figured as a fertile female body, it signifies fertilization and renewal. The ritual thus enacts a cosmological marriage between the sky and the earth, transforming ecological crisis into a performative union of elemental forces. Charu Chandra Sanyal in his book *The Rajbansis of North Bengal* says that- "It is a special puja. When there is protracted draught, the women of the village each with a sharp knife in hand, as a protection against 'bhuts', go in dark night, into a distant paddy field. They make a small image of the rain-god with plantain leaf stalk and instal him on the field. In some places, a plantain tree is planted. Then the women stip off their clothes, untie the hair of the head allowing the hair to hang freely on the back. Thus, completely nude they dance and sing (mostly obscene songs) abusing the rain-God. Two women kneel on the ground like cows and draw a plough to scratch a few feet of the land. Into the furrow thus formed they spread some paddy seeds or plant a few paddy seedlings. They then put on their clothes, tie the hair and come back. It is the general belief that rain invariably falls shortly after this puja is done. No men are allowed to go near the dancing place. If somebody ventures no one will abuse the women if they attack the man with the 'daos' they possess or even kill him" (144).

Music and dance form an integral part of *Hudum Deo*, and these performances are often overtly erotic in nature. This eroticism, however, should not be read as mere sensuality; rather, it represents a celebration of female freedom and bodily autonomy outside patriarchal surveillance. Elaine Showalter conceptualizes such spaces as the "wild zone" - a domain beyond the control of dominant social rules and regulatory structures. In *Hudum Deo*, this wildness becomes a site of resistance, where women temporarily step outside normative boundaries.

The songs performed during the ritual frequently carry double meanings, where erotic expression intertwines with ecological anxiety and agrarian despair. This convergence invites a critical question: can the erotic function act as an ecocritical mode of expression? In *Hudum Deo*, women are not objectified in the conventional sense; rather, their bodies become vessels for rain, harvest, and collective hope. The ritual demonstrates that women do not speak about nature from a distance but speak for and through nature itself. Vandana Shiva observes that women are the first to suffer when ecosystems are destroyed, and they are also the first to know how to regenerate them. *Hudum Deo* powerfully

embodies this insight, foregrounding women embodied ecological knowledge and positioning them as agents of environmental regeneration rather than passive victims of ecological collapse.

Oral Tradition as Ecological Archive:

Hudum Deo also functions as a non-textual ecological archive. The songs performed during the ritual are transmitted orally across generations, embedding knowledge of climatic patterns, agricultural rhythms, and indigenous ecological ethics within collective memory. *Hudum Deo* insists that ecological knowledge need not be written to be legible; climate literacy can be sung, danced, and ritualized. The performative dimension of these songs transforms ecological experience into embodied knowledge, making environmental crisis perceptible through voice, rhythm, and collective participation.

Songs illustrating water scarcity:

Song: 1

Hudum Deo re, Hudum Deo
Hagi acchi, paani deo.
Hamar dyashot nai paani,
Haga tikaay bara baani.

Translation: O Lord Hudum, O Lord Hudum, I have defecated, please give me water. There is no water in our country and we are forced to farm without washing after defecation.

Meaning: This song shows the actual situation faced by the community and their situation is so painful that they do not have water even for their daily necessary activities.

Song: 2

Hilhilachhe komorta mor sirshirachhe gaao,
Kunte kona gele ela hudumer dekha pao.
Patanikhan porechhe khosiya,
Aisek re Hudum Deo.
Tor bade mui achho re bosiya.
Dingsal mor komorta
Tate nai mor vatarta,
Koro ki mui kai ba koy
Konte gele dekha hoy,
Dekha hole dehata juray.

Translation: My waist trembles and I am feeling a shiver throughout my body, where can I have a glimpse of *Hudum*? My *patani* slips down from my body, please come *Hudum Deo*. I am sitting here for you. My waist is *dingsal* and my husband is not present at home. Who can tell me about what can be done, where can I find you? My heart will be pleased to see you.

Meaning: In this song a lady is invoking *Hudum Deo* and expressing her feelings to see a glimpse of him. Here this lady is actually making her sensual plea to Hudum and the union with the rain deity metaphorically ensures agricultural abundance.

Song: 3

Kala meghok pujo mao mui
Kala koitor diya,
Dhoula meghok pujo mao mui

Dhup sendur diya.
Ki meghoraj jomine boiso giya.
Tomar noronok morechhe meghoraj
Pirthibi chhitiya.
Ki meghoraj jomine boiso giya.

Translation: I worship black clouds with black pigeon and white clouds with dhup sindur. Oh, king of clouds, you sit upon the earth. Your people are dying all around the world. Oh king of clouds, you sit upon the earth.

Meaning: Here through this song the women invoke Meghoraj, the king of clouds. They call upon him to respond to the sufferings of the people for the lack of water. The women here act as mediators between a drought-stricken earth and the rain-bearing sky.

The songs associated with Hudum Deo not only represent the water scarcity but also challenge the anthropocentric approaches to climate crisis and by invoking rain through ritual, communities emphasize the reciprocal and non-extractive relationship with the natural world.

Conclusion:

Hudum Deo functions as a dynamic indigenous medium for responding to environmental distress, particularly drought. By centering women's embodied performances and orally transmitted songs, the ritual transforms ecological vulnerability into communal action, turning human, non-human, and spiritual relations into an active site of environmental negotiation. The songs act as non-textual ecological archives, preserving climatic knowledge, agrarian rhythms, and ethical practices across generations. In this way, *Hudum Deo* highlights the significance of ritual performance as a culturally embedded response to ecological crisis, demonstrating how indigenous traditions sustain both environmental consciousness and community resilience.

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Beyond the Boundaries: Decoding the Representation of Femininity in *The Final Solution* and *Meghe Dhaka Tara*

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Abstract

The partition of Bengal in 1947 was one of the significant and sudden political and socio-cultural shifts in the twentieth century. The partition also had a profound impact on the lives of the women of Bengal. The struggle of females during this process was much more challenging and depressing as they faced more brutality than death i.e. rape, suppression, violation etcetera. These challenges have been largely overlooked and unacknowledged by mainstream historical narratives. This research paper critically examines how Manik Bandopadhyay's *The Final Solution* and Shaktipada Rajguru's *Meghe Dhaka Tara* decode the representation of women through the characters of Mallika and Nita. In *The Final Solution* the character Mallika stands up against sexual harassment and refuses to be a victim. Through the exploration of Mallika's narrative, the study delves into the theme of social discrimination, emotional torment, and other challenges faced by women during the partition. While the struggle of Mallika is more obvious, the character Nita, in *Meghe Dhaka Tara*, faced psychological and silent challenges and discrimination in society. Nita represents the class who relentlessly struggle to survive despite all odds. Both the characters, Mallika and Nita, are being marginalized and oppressed by socio-political institutions in the process of their struggle to support their families. This research paper aims to deconstruct the very construction of femininity and challenge traditional gender roles and expectations. It shows that women can be empowered and assertive in the face of injustice and celebrates their resilience in the face of adversity.

Keywords - Partition, Crisis, Discrimination, Femininity

The Indian subcontinent, especially the Bengal and Punjab provinces, faced a sudden and significant political and socio-cultural shift in the twentieth century through the partition in 1947. While Punjab faced more aggressive and brutal consequences, the impact of the partition of Bengal was more peripheral, psychological, and inherent, causing social, economic, and political upheaval. While men were killed and banished from their land, females faced more depressing realities and brutalities inherent in anarchy, such as rape, exploitation, trafficking, harassment, etc. These unfortunate events diminished the taste of independence and pushed an entire generation to their limits of tolerance and resistance. The representation of women as weaker reflects the prevailing societal attitudes and gender dynamics. In most cases, the power dynamics show women as inferior and subordinate to

Beyond the Boundaries: Decoding the Representation of Femininity in The Final Solution and... Shrirupa Das men. Women are mostly equated with traditional feminine qualities such as gentleness, domesticity, and passivity. However, Manik Bandopadhyay's *The Final Solution* and Shaktipada Rajguru's *Meghe Dhaka Tara* deconstruct the meaning of femininity.

Manik Bandopadhyay was one of the prominent avant-garde Bengali writers of the 20th century. He portrayed the struggles and challenges faced by women in *The Final Solution*. Through Mallika's character, Bandopadhyay represents the voice of many women in post-independence Bengal, as she faced challenges due to societal expectations as a woman and as a mother. Mallika is a woman who is oppressed by post-independence incidents. The vision of femininity that Bandopadhyay cherishes is phenomenal. In *The Final Solution*, the female character Mallika is depicted as a strong-willed and independent woman who stands up against all societal harassment and discourse about gender. The story revolves around a refugee family that has migrated from East Bengal and taken shelter at a railway station. Mallika's family suffers from a lack of food, her little child whimpers for milk. When Mallika was searching for food or a job, at that time, Pramatha, a social worker, offered, "Some jobs are still available for women" (Bandopadhyay, 21). The word 'some' vulnerably denotes something terrific. Mallika understands the danger, but as the only breadwinner of her family, no other ways are left for her, so she agrees by saying, "There's no other way out for us" (21). A mother can never see her child in pain. Society always creates a standard for a 'good woman' with respect but never follows it. Society always talks about women's chastity or *lajja*, but in most cases, they fail to maintain it. Mallika says to her sister-in-law Asha, "I would be ready to die if that could keep my child alive" (23). She surrenders, "Okay, I'll do whatever you ask: dance naked if you so wish. But you will find a room for us first, won't you? An enclosed space and a drop of milk for my child, otherwise, he will die." (22). It is not only about Mallika; she is just a symbol that mirrors how so-called social workers like Pramatha target women as sexual objects. Pramatha was ready to engage Mallika in prostitution. Pramatha murmured, "It is how I want you... come and be with me for a while and then you can go back..." (29). This line highlights how patriarchal society pretends to help women, according to them, women are just objects to be used. This dystopian psychology wants women to surrender before them first. Pramatha's desire to exploit Mallika's body is a betrayal of her trust. As Pramatha breaks the boundaries of her patience, she kills him. Here, Mallika breaks the boundaries of so-called societal femininity, which prefers women to be soft, gentle, and to shut down their voices in the face of adversity because, according to society, *lajja* is everything to a woman. Mallika's actions detail the mental trauma and physical trauma that harshly wound women. Mallika's actions convey a powerful message about the importance of speaking out against harassment and standing up for oneself. She says, "What did he take me for? Am I weak just because I'm a woman?" (30).

She does not remain silent or simply accept all the harassment; this is the main point here. Society often expects women to respond in a muted manner, but here is the shift from muted too loud. Bandopadhyay skillfully depicts Mallika's struggles as a mother in a post-independent patriarchal society. Mallika's every decision is dictated by the needs of her family. She boldly says, "Have you all eaten?... We'll never be hungry again... My son will have milk four times a day... I will go to the railway station every evening in my frayed saree. The sharks will come to pick me up for sure..." (46).

She is unable to break free from this cycle of responsibilities. She is weighed down by the expectations and responsibilities placed upon her by society. Bandopadhyay also explores Mallika's desires as a woman, she longs for freedom, independence, and self-fulfilment. However, these desires are constantly suppressed by the patriarchal norms and values of society. Bandopadhyay realistically portrays Mallika's inner conflict as she grapples with societal expectations. Mallika's character reflects the dilemmas faced by many women in post-independent Bengal, which glorifies how women were torn between traditional values and responsibilities. Bandopadhyay's portrayal of Mallika's character is significant, poignant, and realistic, capturing the complexities of women's lives in post-independent Bengal. Mallika's struggles as a mother and a woman resonate with many readers, as they reflect the challenges faced by women in a constructed patriarchal society. Manik Bandopadhyay's novel *The Final Solution* depicts a powerful portrayal of Mallika's struggles as a woman and mother in post-independent Bengal. Through Mallika's character, Bandopadhyay sheds light on the societal expectations and economic hardships faced by women in a patriarchal society. Mallika's story is a poignant reminder of the challenges faced by women in their quest for autonomy, independence, and respect.

After independence, the gender gap in Bengal remained wide, with women facing numerous challenges in terms of access to security, education, and economic opportunities. As society depicted, women were often forced to depend on men for their livelihoods, and for security, and were expected to prioritize the needs of their families over their own personal ambitions and aspirations. Shaktipada Rajguru's *Meghe Dhaka Tara* depicts the struggles of women in post-independence Bengal. It follows the story of Nita, a young woman who is forced to become the breadwinner for her family. Nita was forced to abandon her dreams to support her mother and siblings. Nita's struggles glorify the struggles of many women in post-independence Bengal. Women were often forced to sacrifice their own ambitions in order to care for their families.

Meghe Dhaka Tara mirrors the societal expectations placed on women to prioritize their families over their own personal fulfilment and the challenges they face in navigating a society that is hostile to their aspirations. Through Nita's narrative, *Meghe Dhaka Tara* sheds light on the ways in which women in post-independence Bengal continue to be marginalized and oppressed, focusing on their struggles to assert their agency and independence.

The protagonist, Nita, challenges traditional notions of femininity by taking on the role of a breadwinner for her family. Through her actions and experiences, Rajguru deconstructs the idea that femininity is inherently tied to domesticity and that women are always dependent on men. She creates her own identity against the backdrop of a patriarchal society. Nita's journey as a breadwinner begins when her father becomes ill and is unable to work, which leaves her family in a dire financial situation. Despite societal expectations, Nita's step provides an act of rebellion against traditional gender norms. As Nita navigates the world as a breadwinner, she is confronted with the harsh realities of economic inequality and gender discrimination. She faces multiple challenges and obstacles that test her resilience and determination. She refuses to be deterred by societal expectations of what is and isn't acceptable for a woman to do because there is no option left for her. Through her journey, Nita challenges the notion that women are inherently weaker or less capable than men. As her brother Sankar says, "She is Nita. With Large dark eyes and messy complexion, wearing dingy clothes a girl used to go to the office and tuition, through the path of the colony, daily,

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two times a day." ("সে নীতা । কালো ডাগর চোখ, জীর্ণ মলিন রঙ, আধ ময়লা শাড়ি পরে একটি মেয়ে
দুবেলা যাতায়াত করতো কলোনির পথ দিয়ে আপিস আর টুইশানিতে ।"; my trans.; Rajguru; 128).

Throughout the novel, Rajguru portrays Nita as a multi-dimensional character and blurs the lines between masculinity and femininity. Nita's identity as a woman masquerading as a man challenges the binary understanding of gender. It highlights the fluidity and complexity of identity beyond traditional definitions. By earning as a man, Nita subverts the idea that femininity is synonymous with weakness or dependence. It also proves that gender is not a limiting factor in one's ability to provide for their family. By taking on responsibilities traditionally reserved for men, she challenges the idea that women are inherently dependent on male support.

"Kadambini said- try to schedule a marriage for that girl. There's no avail ny studying. Enough happened" ("কাদম্বিনী বলে ওঠে- ও মেয়েকে বিয়ে-থা দেবার চেষ্টা করো। পড়িয়ে কাজ নেই।
ডের হয়েছে।"; my trans.; Rajguru; 13). This highlights the ways in which gender stereotypes limit women's potential and agency. Through Nita's journey, Rajguru invites readers to reconsider and deconstruct the ways in which society constructs and enforces gender roles. By deconstructing the notion of femininity through Nita's experiences as a breadwinner, Rajguru challenges the idea that women are inherently limited by their gender. It offers a vision of empowerment and liberation beyond traditional expectations. Nita's journey serves as a powerful reminder that gender is not a determining factor in one's ability to succeed and provide for their family. Women are capable of defying societal norms and expectations.

Nita's emotional journey and difficulties are depicted compellingly and poignantly. As the story progresses, Nita faces numerous challenges and struggles, both from her family and from society, which ultimately shape her character and leave a lasting impact on her emotional well-being. "Madhab Babu said- then say, who will marry that dark girl? Even without dowry? Nita stands still just before entering. She has no beauty, yet she has the symphony of youth throughout her body. By hearing those words Nita becomes stunned." ("মাধববাবু বলেন- তা ছাড়া ওই কালো মেয়েকে কে বিয়ে করবে বলো? তাও বিনা পণে? ঢুকতে গিয়ে নীতা
দরজার কাছে থমকে দাঁড়াল। তার রূপ নেই, সারা দেহ ঘিরে যৌবনের ব্যর্থ গুঞ্জন, সেই কথাটাই পুরুষের
কাছ থেকে শুনে চমকে ওঠে নীতা।"; my trans.; Rajguru; 13).

Despite all her efforts for her family, Nita always feels a sense of hopelessness and despair, as she is unable to escape the poverty and hardship that surround her. One of the most significant emotional journeys that Nita goes through in the novel is her love. As Nita grapples with the absence of love and hope, she begins to question her own world purpose in life. She feels lost and adrift, unable to find solace or comfort in the world around her. Her emotional turmoil is made even more poignant by a profound sense of loneliness and longing. "A prayer is going on for the well-being of Mantu. It's called to beg for god's blessings. Nita doesn't in this believe the saying anymore. What has the life given her? What they have gotten from God of Life. There's no gratitude for them." ("মন্টুর কল্যাণে আজ পূজো
হচ্ছে। এর নাম দেবতার কল্যাণ ভিক্ষা! কথাটা আজ বিশ্বাস করে না নীতা। কি দিয়েছে তাকে জীবন? কি তারা
পেয়েছে জীবন দেবতার কাছে? কোন কৃতজ্ঞতা সেখানে তাদের নেই।"; my trans.; Rajguru; 109).

Nita experienced severe mental trauma knowing that Sanat had feelings for Gita, the sister of Nita who has more pretty face than her. Nita hoped to spend her life with him, but the betrayal highlights the complexity of human relationships and the profound impact that they can have on one's mental well-being. The behavioural changes in Sanat also catches the eyes of Madhab Babu, the father of Nita and Gita, and surprised him: "Till then, he only saw them to accompany each other - Nita and Sanat. The sudden changes in Sanat catches his eyes but not in a good way. Everything is changing. Even the heart of man. Otherwise, why people gather glasses instead golds." ("এতদিন ওদের দুজনকেই মিশতে দেখেছেন- নীতা আর সনৎ। হঠাৎ কেমন যেন সনতের এই পরিবর্তন তার চোখেও ভালো ঠেকে না। সবকিছু বদলাচ্ছে। মানুষের মনও। নইলে কাঞ্চন ফেলে কাচ কুড়োবার এত ধুমধাম চলবে কেন চারিদিকে!"; my trans.; Rajguru; 45).

By the end, Nita learns to survive in a state of physical and psychological turmoils and discovers herself to live in the moment even through sacrifices. Even in the face of death, she struggles and deals with her internal soul and sacrifices by herself, making herself detached from others to live in solace. Her distress and helplessness can be seen through her conversation with Shankar, after the discovery of her fatal illness, when she smiles and says: "Now I hope I will get leave from everything, Brother! My job has done - as well as my need" ("এবার বোধহয় সব কাজ থেকে ছুটি পাবো রে বড়দা। আমার কাজও ফুরিয়েছে - সেই সঙ্গে আমার প্রয়োজনও।"; my trans.; Rajguru; 114). In Ghatak's version, there is a line at the end, where Nita Cries by saying, "Brother, I also desired to live..." ("দাদা আমি কিন্তু বাঁচতে চেয়েছিলাম..."; my trans.; *Meghe Dhaka Tara*; 2.00.42-2.02.04). Through the struggle, survival and moreover her death, the novel, *Meghe Dhaka Tara*, skilfully engraves Nita's journey of resilience and self-realization. She becomes a more realistic character who faces marginalization and discrimination from every aspect of life and highlights the sociopolitical and economic exploitation towards the women like her in such a society. Her discovery of solace and relentless struggle depict the unyielding spirit that can't be defeated and diminished.

Conclusion:

Two avant-garde writers of the 20th century, Manik Bandopadhyay and Shaktipada Rajguru, have created a new perspective on femininity, where women are not portrayed as helpless but glorified their strength. This is very different from the so-called narrative that has been around for ages, this new perspective discusses strength and their capability to fight against injustice.

After independence in Bengal, women's conditions remained the same. They continued to be marginalized and oppressed in society. In a patriarchal society, women are expected to fulfill traditional roles, and society denies their access to education and employment opportunities. They are also expected to be submissive, obedient, and muted in the face of violence and discrimination in both the public and private spheres. Here, both texts decode the representation of women by showcasing their strength, resilience, and agency. It challenges the traditional notion of the portrayal of women as passive and weak. Both texts' protagonists are dynamic, multifaceted individuals who have the ability to shape their own destinies which highlight the diversity and complexity of women's experiences, offering a nuanced and empowering portrayal of women in society. As we can see in the story *The Final Solution*, written by Manik Bandopadhyay, Mallika has become a symbol of the entire

Beyond the Boundaries: Decoding the Representation of Femininity in The Final Solution and... Shrirupa Das female race. A mother who can lovingly hold her child in her arms, who can sacrifice everything for her family, can also hold the image of 'Durgatinasini'. Not just women or men, but as a part of society, everyone has the right to maintain their self-respect and protest against injustice. Mallika's twisted protest shows that women are not just objects of consumption, they can raise their voices and know how to fight. This text is open-ended, Bandhopadday does not provide any conclusion or judgment about Mallika's act, even readers are also unable to make any judgment about it. It remains open for feeling, sharing, and celebrating against injustice. Whereas Shaktipada Rajguru deconstructs the process of becoming a woman, Nita's capability to help financially without anyone's help highlights her strength. In Ghatak's adaptation of *Meghe Dhaka Tara*, we come to know that Nita was born during Jagadhatri Puja. In the term 'Jagadhatri,' 'Jagat' denotes 'Earth,' and 'Dhatri' denotes 'Bearer,' it is an incarnation of Goddess Durga. Just as Goddess Durga protects the world by destroying all enemies and negativity, similarly, Nita suppresses all negativity in society and moves forward with all the responsibilities of her family. Yes, perhaps her path wasn't smooth, society and even her own family eventually forgot the struggling Nita, but her loneliness provided her with some relief. Nita understood that loneliness is much better than being surrounded by a toxic environment. Both texts break the traditional stereotype of femininity. Women are not born only to endure injustice, nor they are incapable to handle a family alone without anyone's help, these two characters have proven that. They have broken the traditional construction of femininity.

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Subaltern Voices: Sashi Deshpande's The Dark Holds No Terrors and That Long Silence as Representations of Women Labour and Economic Empowerment

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Abstract

Sashi Deshpande belongs to the Anglo-Indian literary world of India. There are many writers who belong to this era. This paper delves into the representation of women's labour and economic empowerment in Sashi Deshpande's seminal novels *The Dark Holds No Terror* and *That Long Silence* through a critical feminist lens. This research explores how Deshpande's narratives magnify the voices of powerless women, spotlighting their struggle against androcentric oppression, economic exploitation and social marginalisation by scrutinizing the intersection of gender and class in these stories. This article tries to analyze and understand the implications of Sashi Deshpande's stories for policy making and social activism aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment and rights in India from the feminist point of view. By analyzing the intersectionality of these factors, this study reveals the ways in which Deshpande's protagonists navigate the constants of patriarchal society to assert their economic independence and autonomy. This research contributes to the existing scholarship on Sashi Deshpande's subaltern studies, offering new insights into the representation of women's labour and economic empowerment in Indian literature. Furthermore, this study highlights the significance of Deshpande's work in understanding the lived experiences of women in India.

Keywords: Sashi Deshpande, subaltern voices, Economic Empowerment, feminist theory, Intersectionality, Voiceless to voiceness.

Introduction:

Shashi Deshpande, one of India's most celebrated contemporary authors has secured unique expertise within Indian English literature through her thoughtful analysis, the lives and purposes of women in Indian society. Deshpande's individual perspective of resettling from urban hubs to smaller municipalities have substantially shaped her writing which offers a candid portrayal of women's lives. Her novels have received broad recognition for their genuine portrayal of female emotional awareness. Both readers and critics have answered enthusiastically to her work, which sheds light on the inner turmoil encountered by Indian women. Deshpande's perspective on addressing women's issues is notable, and her female characters are often illustrated as the victims of a patriarchal society. Their language sometimes echoes with the heart as it comes out of anger at the long - position challenges of

Indian women. Her writings are outlined by their in-depth exploration of the feminine psyche, their elaborate portrayal of the multifaceted power of family and relationships, and their subtle nuanced consideration of the social and cultural landscape in India. Deshpande has not only given voice to the women but also portrays how women have been enduring suffering in silence for a long time. The purpose of the study is to dig into the literary worlds created by Sashi Deshpande focusing on specially the representation of women's labour and economic empowerment that inhabits in her novels. Traditionally, Indian women are mostly inclined to follow the state norms of society and do not like to think outside the box. They are afraid of breaking tradition. They think that what society has created for them is right and if they go against it, they will suffer bad consequences. Deshpande showed how this patriarchal society has shaped the minds of women in such a way that they believe that if they break the rules, they will be alienated. She is made to think that protecting customs is the solution to lessen her plight. Deshpande's female protagonist is a victim of the pervasive sexism that affects her both as a daughter and later as a wife. She is part of a cohort of women writers who have risen to prominence bringing unique perspective and voices to the four fronts in a rapidly changing world. Education has brought about some improvements in women's lives but various forms of oppression continue to affect them. Deshpande's writing sheds light on the challenges modern women face in establishing their identities, having been marginalised and silenced for centuries. This prolonged suppression has led to a deep-seated lack of confidence causing women to hesitate in asserting their rights.

Subaltern voices:

The term 'subaltern' is common but in a deeper sense it is varied as it encompasses the diverse experiences of individuals residing in suburban areas, revealing a complex tapestry of stories, struggles and aspirations that often remained overlooked. These voices whisper tales of isolation and connection of homogeneity and diversity. The issue related to women liberation in India is very complex because they are traditionally fixed in a particular set up which varies from family to family, region to region and caste to caste. The Protagonist of the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, Sarita's life takes a dramatic turn when she learns of her mother's passing, the same women who had blamed her for her brother's death. Seeking Solace, Sarita returns to her childhood home, hoping for a warm welcome. However, her father's indifferent reception forces her to confront the emotional void in her life. This encounter sets off a journey of introspection, as Sarita becomes increasingly aware of her position within her family and marriage.

In the novel *That Long Silence* the central figure Jaya represents the struggle of females who long to convey themselves, yet are silenced by cultural pressures. As a domestic worker and writer, Jaya pursues stories that amature the endure of women's lives, but her unique perspective is stifled compelling her into a state of thoughtful quietude. Jaya's adversity to assert herself is an impactful observation on the confined responsibilities mandated on women. Despite her education and nurturing, she is bound by the transmission of a gender biased society where her reality is determined by her connections with others. Her life witnesses an oppressive atmosphere of the conventional norms, where intellectual women like Jaya are an endless loop in a cycle of obedience. Community expectations have historically confined women to inferior positions, limiting their experiences to the realms of progeny. In each of these roles, women are expected to prioritize the needs and desires of

others-fathers, husbands or sons while their own aspirations and emotions are often disregarded. women are frequently marginalized, treated as inferior, and denied agency.

Family and Relations:

Marriage and family are given maximum importance even today but with the education and awareness the relation and domestic life has undergone change. Women are gaining financial Independence Day by day, but so far, the Indian women have not achieved the highest goal. They suffer a lot in their family lives and fight against many inside and outside problems. The novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is a poignant exploration of saritas introspective journey. As a successful doctor, Sarita appears to have it all, a fulfilling career and a loving family. Her husband, Manohar, a lecturer in English and a former poet, was once the object of her affection, and she had defied her parents' wishes to marry him. Together they have two children and Manohar presents himself as a devoted husband and father. However, beneath this facade, a Sinister reality emerges. Manohar's insecurities are fueled by saritas professional triumphs, and he becomes increasingly resentful of her accomplishments. While he publicly flatters his wife's success, privately he unleashes his pent-up envy, subjecting Sarita to physical and emotional abuse. As the darkness of night descends, Manohar's demeanor transforms and Sarita is confronted with a monster's version of her husband. She is trapped in a living nightmare, unable to escape the terror that has become her reality.

In *That Long Silence* the protagonist Jaya navigates the complexities of her marriage to Mohan, she is compelled to confront the disparities in their relationship. While she is expected to be a pillar of support, sharing her joys and sorrows, the same expectations do not apply to Mohan. This imbalance weighs heavily on Jaya who begins to question that very fabric of existence. Her education and sensitivity render her acutely aware of the injustices she faces, yet she is bound by the rules of a society that denies her agency. Women's identities are often erased through the sacrifices they are socialised to make. Jaya's experience is no exception; despite her efforts to meet the expectations of Mohan and his family, she feels a profound sense of disconnection from her own identity. The contrast between her given name Jaya (meaning 'victory') and her married name, Suhasini (meaning 'soft smiling and loving woman'), serves as a powerful metaphor for the fragmented selves that women experience. As long as Jaya remains silent and subservient, conforming to the expectations of an ideal wife, the status quo is maintained. However, when she attempts to assert herself and express her feelings, she is met with resistance. Mohan's ego and sense of supremacy are threatened, and he reacts by abandoning his responsibilities as a husband and father. In contrast, Jaya, embodying the traditional values of an Indian wife, takes on the burden of holding the family together.

Women's Empowerment:

Female empowerment is a revolutionary momentum that aims to break down the rooted societal obstacles. Monetary challenges and traditional values that have typically held women back. By promoting women's opinions and advocating for equal opportunity, we can unleash the maximum capacity of women. Uplifting Women is not only an ethical necessity but also a driver of economic growth, social advancement, and sustainable practices. As women attain self-determination over their lives, they become change makers, promoting positive growth in their households, social networks and societies. By supporting women's empowerment, we can create a more just balanced and flourishing World for all.

The protagonists of *The Dark Holds No Terrors* and *That Long Silence* exhibit notable similarities in their portrayal. Sarita and Jaya's life journeys propel them toward self-discovery, and upon achieving this epiphany, they resolve to redefine their life paths. Sarita, also known as Saru, chooses to rekindle her relationship with her husband, Manohar and strives to strike a balance between her personal and professional aspirations. Meanwhile Jaya's prolonged silence gives way to a new found assertiveness and inquisitiveness. Indu on the other hand recognises the imperative of cultivating courage and sensitivity to navigate her family's challenges. While the outward transformations in these characters' lives may seem subtle, their internal shifts in perspective are profound.

The novel's title *That Long Silence* is a metaphor for the dominating powers that muted female perspectives. Jaya's final choice to break her silence and exercise her autonomy is the powerful declaration about the significance of women's voices being heard. Jaya's journey is a strong affirmation to the value of self-awareness and reclaiming one's identity. Through her encounters Deshpande highlights the need for women to liberate themselves from cultural norms and create their own ways. Joya's character highlights the need for women to interrogate and disrupt these norms in hierarchy to attain through empowerment. Jaya's education and academic endeavours are depicted as key crucial elements in her empowerment. Education is an effective instrument for women's emancipation, empowering them to think critically and challenge cultural standards. Throughout the novel Jaya struggles with the essential to affirm herself and create her independence. This portrayal of Jaya's journey emphasizes the significance of self-expression and self-governance in attaining genuine empowerment. The novel shows how Jaya re-interpreted her connections with her husband, family, and society, establishing edges and asserting her requirements. This re-interpretation is a vital step of female empowerment, as it facilitates women to found positive and fair relationships. Jaya's change from an unspoken affirming housewife to a self-artistic singular is a powerful symbol of female empowerment, this evolution is necessary for women's freedom and self- fulfillment.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Sashi Deshpande's works, *The Dark Holds No Terrors* and *That Long Silence*, serve as compelling evidence to the challenges of women's economic empowerment and devoted labour of love that frequently goes overlooked. Through her protagonists, Deshpande skilfully reveals the way in which social pressures and male dominated values sustain the exploration of women's labour. Eventually, these novels underscore the critical requirement for a fundamental change in our insights of women's work and its valuable contribution to the economy. By enhancing the voices of women like Sarita and Jaya, Deshpande's work influenced us to rethink a more balanced society where women's contribution is appreciated and honoured. As we move progress, it is necessary that we persist to showcase the intersections of women's labour and, economic enablement, and human rights, and work towards generating a world where female perspectives are significant and their contributions are acknowledged. The present study aims at Deshpande's viewpoint to women not as men, not competitors to a man but women as a woman with equal sensitivity. Sarita's journey is a powerful exploration of feminist angst as she grapples with the fundamental question of Identity. Torn between her roles as daughter, wife, and individual, Sarita's' experiences reflect the fragmented nature of women's lives. Her transformation from a submissive wife to a confident self- assured

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individual is a testament to the human capacity for growth and changes. Through Sarita's story Deshpande challenges the notion that women's identities are defined Solely by their relationships with others. Instead, Sarita images as a strong independent individual, reclaiming her agency and for going a new path forward.

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Echoes of tradition and heritage: The ritualistic music and dance in Santal culture and festivals

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Abstract

Santali music and dance have a profound position in the cultural and spiritual practices of the Santal community. It shapes their customs and ceremonies which continue through generations. This paper explores the significance and value of Santal festivals music and dance, through their religious ceremonies, social bonding, and identity preservation. Festivals like Sorhai, Baha, Karam, and Dasai, represent unique musical rhythms, lyrics and dance patterns that reflect the community beliefs, deep connection with nature and their ancestral heritage.

This research examines the symbolic meaning of the musical instruments like Tumdak, Tamak, Banam, and also analyzes dance movements which convey emotions, blessings, and communal unity. The paper explores how the Santal community transmits its songs and dances through oral tradition. It highlights the challenges of modernization, migration, and changing cultural dynamics that endanger these traditional practices. Additionally, this research explores the modern initiatives to preserve and adapt ritualistic performances, as well as investigates the impact of educational platforms and cultural organization and digital platforms that sustain the survival of Santal cultural heritage.

This research is conducted in Pakuahat, a region with a rich Santal presence, offering a focused study. The paper investigates the evolution of Santal ritualistic music and dance, using field research combined with literary review and ethnographic methodology to address understudied knowledge gaps. The study emphasizes that the activities should continue so the Santal cultural practices become foundational to Santal identity in present day society.

Keywords: Santal culture, Ritualistic music, Traditional dance, Festivals and Ceremonies, musical instruments

Introduction:

The Santal people represent one of India's biggest Indigenous tribes whose cultural legacy grows from spiritual customs and nature traditions merged with group identity. The core features of Santal heritage include their original musical expressions that serve as essential tools for living. All Santal ceremonies from festive events including Sorhai, Dasai, Karam, Baha Parab to marital and funeral celebrations include ritualistic musical performances.

Specific rhythm and song patterns together with dance movements during each celebration lead the community toward their ancestral history through their symbolic value.

The essay analyzes the living nature of Santal musical and dance traditions based on ethnographic research conducted in the West Bengal area of Pakuahat which hosts vital Santal cultural activity. During ceremonial observations researchers recorded how music instruments adjust sounded tones and rhythm patterns to match each occasion while being played in tamak', tumdak', and tiriyo instruments. This song data reveals the deep meaning within Santal compositions since the Dasai song describes the quest for cultural origins through its "dhak" sound imagery.

The research demonstrates Santal music and dance endurance amid contemporary threats of modernization and cultural homogenization because of migration. The study integrates ethnographic research and scholarly works of Onkar Prasad, Rajesh Kumar, Shibasambhu Nandi, and Subhash Hansda to create a detailed understanding of ritualistic traditions that protect cultural identities while building social networks despite modern obstacles. This investigation works to show how essential it is to protect these important living customs for the benefit of coming generations.

Ritualistic music in Santal culture:

Santali music plays a major role in how the tribe shows their traditions and is used through all daily activities and ceremonies. As stated by Onkar Prasad (1995), Santali music stands as more than artistic expression because it helps the tribe uphold its culture by keeping alive ancient legends and present experiences in song. People use diverse songs for different events including festive activities at Baha and funeral ceremonies. The music songs depend on event circumstances yet keep similar instruments throughout.

According to Rajesh Kumar's 2019 article various folk dances are performed at festivals and religious events. The specific songs exist for particular events such as harvest celebration and wedding ceremonies. For example, in the Baha Parab, which marks the beginning of spring, songs of renewal and fertility are sung. The music and dance activities that are observed in my fieldwork in Pakuahat: during Baha, music and dance marked both celebration and spiritual renewal.

During Dasai which occurs during Durga Puja period a special song is:

“Oka duyar redo groho dhak do sadı kan groho rankı rara kan? Dıbi duyar redo groho dhakdo sadı kan groho rınkı rara kan.”

The song narrates a symbolic journey of a community toward the unknown direction of a distant dhak drum as its members pursue the source of its sound. The image expresses several aspects of culture including exploration and living a life filled with cultural meaning. The actual messages within these songs enable them to become more than musical presentations because they connect and unite people through common experiences.

Musical instruments and symbolic meaning:

The Santals use identical musical instruments for various occasions according to your field observations but the actual musical performance changes through different playing techniques. The main instruments include:

The traditional drums called Tumdak and Tamak produce rhythms as a main musical function. The bamboo flute Trio acts as an instrument for emotional communication and serves courtship activities. People play Banam as a story-telling string musical instrument.

Both percussion instruments Dhak and Madal are played during big community get-togethers. The musical instruments extend their function beyond rhythm and melody creation. Rates of these traditional instruments remain essential components within the Santal lifestyle of spirituality and their storytelling practice. According to Hansda (2022) the forest instrumental system functions as “the voices of the forest” that resembles natural acoustic elements such as bird song and leaf movement and rain sounds to form an ionic bond between society and their habitat.

Sohrai brings out the heart pulse rhythm of the Tamak' instrument to represent Earth's heartbeat during the agricultural harvest festival. The Karam dance features procreativity-focused music performed through drum and flute synchronizations that produce a spiritual connection to ancestral divine forces.

The observations during fieldwork showed how using the same musical instruments in weddings and funerals leads to total mood and importance transformations based on rhythm and tempo adjustments and volume changes. The artistic flexibility together with the emotional range of Santal musical traditions finds clear expression through their ability to adapt.

Santhal dance form and their cultural meaning;

Dance operates jointly with Santal music at all times. Dance functions as a shared visual communication system which exemplifies public opinions together with male-female social positions as well as connection to natural environments. According to your field research at Pakuahat the collective festive dance consists of harmonized footwork combined with circular formations and bright traditional clothing that aligns male and female participants as they join hands in formation.

The dance performed in Baha Parab adheres to natural rhythms. In the study by Nandi (2020) readers learn that dancers express harmonious motion with the Tumdak beat which resembles both blooming flowers and flowing rivers. Every part of the dance including steps and postures as well as turns consists of cultural significance. Through dance the performer uses stooping movements to show humility toward natural entities and jumps upward to represent spiritual connection.

Rajesh Kumar (2019) demonstrates that Dasai and Karam festival dances take narrative structures. The community members share unrecorded stories about spiritual entities and migration events alongside philosophical moral teachings. The performance functions as an active repository that exists in the present.

The custom during Santal funeral ceremonies includes ceremonial dancing which takes place both by the fire and at the grave site. The controlled body movements convey reverence as well as the spiritual path the soul takes when it goes to the afterlife. Wedding dances typically consist of merry performances that feature family jesting between the bride and groom. The Santal dance ceremonies serve as active timekeeping mechanisms for recording the vital elements of human memory and religious practices alongside social customs.

Gender and community participation

Gender roles define the performances of Santal dance and music even though performers always collaborate inclusively. The fieldwork documented that performances show active male and female participation yet they occupy different areas of operation. The male

participants in the rituals perform music and women serve as singers while dancing. The performance rules change based on where the occasion takes place but these regulations are not set in stone. The author Hansda (2022) explains that gender harmony makes these performances stand out as one of the few social spaces where people can witness it. During Baha and Karam festivals the specific dance formations alternate male with female participants to signify their complementary role in natural humankind.

The neighborhood participants actively engage in this practice. Observing and practicing after elders teaches children new things. Circular wisdom is obtained through active engagement rather than traditional educational methods. Participation along with continuous practice will provide all the necessary training to become skilled. You witnessed young boys performing their drums when elderly women took the lead in singing during field observations thereby demonstrating how traditions smoothly transfer from generation to generation. Community events and performances only serve the community members because outsiders never participate nor do they generate commercial income. This ensures authenticity and sustainability. Through group rituals the community achieves strength that develops social connections and increases group membership while maintaining cooperative values and respect for each other.

Preservation Efforts and Contemporary Challenges:

Santhal music and dance traditions preserve their traditional character but confront increasing threats because people turn toward modernization and migration as well as cultural assimilation. Youth culture participation in digital and urban existence presents a risk of abandoning traditional practices because they may exist as empty performances without their authentic significance.

Shibasambhu Nandi (2020) demonstrates in his Baha Parab research that numerous youth members have cut ties with their cultural ceremonies. Elder residents at Pakuahat stated their worry about the declining transmission of songs and dances to younger generations. The transmission of traditional cultural knowledge through communal events Baha Sohrai and Dasai is now disappearing.

Still, local efforts are emerging. Students in Pakuahat receive encouragement from cultural groups together with local teachers to take part in traditional holidays and learn artistic traditions of their heritage. Several NGOs together with researchers create documentation of these traditions through their interview and recording processes.

Such initiatives lack sustainability without well-organized backing. Long-term preservation depends on internal community participation and external support which should notably come from government authorities. Lack of official recognition along with insufficient resources and public recognition endangers Santhal music and dance from disappearing from the cultural heritage.

The preservation of these cultural traditions proves vital because it safeguards both Santhal cultural heritage and the total cultural diversity within the region.

Conclusion:

The Santal community builds its beliefs along with its historic identity together with its collective identity through their music and dance forms. At Santal festivals Baha, Sohrai, Karam and Dasai the people perform rituals to express their happiness along with their

suffering and solidarity and opposition against authority. Through cultural expressions the community reveals its worldview and its spiritual beliefs and social framework.

The research conducted in Pakuahat demonstrates that traditional music and dance establish living traditions because they continue through generational transmission along with ongoing transformations. These traditional cultural practices maintain their great value but encounter challenges due to contemporary development and the diminishing cultural connection between older and younger Santhal members.

However, there is still hope. Santhal people actively protect their cultural heritage through their communal work alongside educational initiatives and documentation projects. Broader commitment from external organizations together with governmental support systems would bolster these efforts to maintain the hearty beats of 'Madal' and the profound messages present in their sound compositions.

The survival of Santhal ritual music and dance relies on individual and shared responsibilities from all members of their community. The recognition of these local art forms as cultural legacy will strengthen efforts for protecting their value in addition to celebrating their contributions to India's overall cultural heritage.

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The Spirit of the Land: Folktales of Northeast India and their Ecological Wisdom

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Abstract

Folktales originating from Northeast India play a crucial role in conveying indigenous knowledge, ecological insights, and spiritual beliefs. Based on oral traditions, the stories demonstrate the deep connection among nature, spirituality, and human life. This paper shows how folktales from various ethnic groups, like the Khasi, Mizo, Ao Naga, Bodo, and Meitei-represent ideas of animism, environmental ethics, and moral lessons.

In these folktale stories, nature is frequently depicted as a living being, with mountains, rivers, forests, and animals having sacred importance. Supernatural entities, including guardian spirits and gods, supervise the natural world, reinforcing the idea between humanity and the environment. Animistic beliefs, which suggest that sprits reside in natural elements, influence indigenous perspectives and promote ecological harmony. Through studies of folktales such as The Legend of U Thlen (Khasi), The Spirit Tiger (Naga and Mizo), The Goddess of Weaving (Meitei), and some other references this paper examines how these tales act as means for moral and cultural preservation.

Beyond being mere narratives, these folktales offer ethical guidelines, cautioning against environmental destruction and advocating for sustainable behaviors. As modernization endangers oral traditions, grasping and safeguarding these stories is essential for preserving indigenous identity and ecological wisdom. By investigating the connection between folklore, spirituality, and environmental consciousness, this paper highlights the lasting significance of Northeast Indian folktales in current discourses on culture and environment.

Keywords: Ecological Consciousness, Environmental ethics, Human-Nature Relationship, Northeast Indian Folktales, Animism

Introduction:

Northeast India maintains its identity as a territory which features picturesque backgrounds along with multiple ecosystems combined with cultural diversities through multiple ethnic groups whose heritage extends from nature. The transmission of indigenous knowledge as well as spirit religion and ecological understanding occurs through vital story traditions. Numerous indigenous cultural narratives that span across time have been transmitted from one generation to the next for both educational and ethical and environmental instructional purposes. Mainstream written literature differs from folktales because the community-based

storytelling adapts to changing social circumstances while maintaining their essential messages.

Stories proceed where nature exists as a living force alongside the story's other elements. The indigenous communities see rivers and mountains and trees and animals with respect because these entities embody profound spiritual power in their animistic belief system. The environment has supernatural protectors that observe human conduct toward the natural world. They grant blessings to those who treat nature with respect but impose penalties on people who misuse it. Through their storytelling format folktales provide ethical instructions about sustainable living by teaching people to protect the environment from destruction.

The study evaluates ecological elements found in important folklore from the different ethnic groups across Northeast India focusing on the Khasi as well as the Mizo and the Ao Naga and Bodo and Meitei communities. The paper evaluates moral values and cultural heritage preservation through an analysis of four folklore stories namely The Legend of U Thlen (Khasi), The Spirit Tiger (Naga and Mizo), The Goddess of Weaving (Meitei) and others.

Animism and the Sacredness of Nature:

One of the defining characteristics of Northeast Indian folktales is animism – the belief that all elements of nature, including rivers, trees, mountains, and animals, possess a spirit or soul. This worldview fosters deep respect for nature, reinforcing the idea that the environment must be treated with reverence.

The Khasi Folktale of U Thlen: A Symbol of Greed and Ecological Destruction:

The Khasi mythology presents a legend about U Thlen who embodies the destructive force against human greed. The tale narrates that U Thlen emerged as a dominating being which rampaged throughout the land before its demise. A courageous Khasi warrior obtained victory over the mighty creature until it perished. To stop its return to life villagers needed to complete specific rituals and always keep their words true in trades. The rise of greed led people to hide parts of the serpent while conducting its sacred rituals in order to acquire wealth.

This legend exists to teach people about dangerous results that emerge from unlimited desires. The tale allegorically illustrates the effects of natural exploitation because human interference with the environment for personal dominance leads to environmental collapse. According to Khasi community belief U Thlen represents the importance of ethical stewardship because ecological harmony brings prosperity when humans respect it.

The Spirit Tiger: The Connection between Humans and Nature:

Many among the Naga and Mizo tribes frequently share the folktale about The Spirit Tiger which demonstrates their cultural understanding of human relationship with nature. Certain people within the tale can shift into tiger form which functions as an emblem for their profound spiritual ties to the wilderness. The culture considers these shape-shifters guardians of forests because they connect society to nature through their protective role. The story demonstrates how animal and human beings naturally connect. Through its portrayal of species blurring the story works to reduce wild animal hunting as well as destructive wildlife exploitation. The established conservation practices honour specific animals as sacred beings who may cause misfortune upon injury.

Environmental Ethics in Folktales:

The sacred view embodied by animism coincides with many folktales that serve as lessons about environmental destruction. Warning messages found in these stories encourage humans to maintain balance with the environment through their daily actions.

The Ao Naga Folktale of the River Spirit:

A sacred spirit lives within the river that the Ao Naga community views as sacred. Any community showing respect toward the river and its resources received fertility in their farmlands and rich harvests. People who harmed the river or used it without proper respect would suffer from drought along with famine.

The story warns about ecological risks because it demonstrates the significance of conserving water resources. These tales have the power to teach local people how vital rivers are to their survival thus developing within them a strong sense of responsibility. This story matches traditional water management rules in indigenous communities where ceremonies honour rivers to stop excessive resource removal.

The Man-Eating Tree: A Lesson in Sustainable Resource Use:

The Khasi people of India narrate The Man-Eating Tree which delivers essential messages about environmental responsibility. The story shows how a village tree transformed into a vengeful being after people carelessly destroyed it. People who utilize the tree after failing to show reverence will naturally become its prey.

The narration illustrates how deforestation presents detrimental risks along with a necessity to use resources responsibly. This cultural tradition supports both historical methods of forest protection which includes sacred grove preservation through religious beliefs that prohibit tree cutting activities. This practice, still prevalent among Khasi and other indigenous groups, serves as a natural method of biodiversity conservation.

Spirituality and Nature in Folktales:

The folktales from Northeast India display deep spirituality because they feature divine beings who protect nature and observe anthropomorphic activities. These divine beings make decisions to bless people who adore nature yet mete out discipline to nature destroyers.

The Goddess of Weaving: Honoring Tradition and Nature:

In the Goddess of Weaving Meitei tradition highlights the character of Leimarel Sidabi who showed people how to weave from the fibers of nature. As the tale illustrates, she instructed people to produce fabric from natural fibers while consuming only what was required so they would not damage nature.

The tale demonstrates how Meitei weaving traditions maintain their sustainability by preserving their resource consumption methods. Creativity holds divine value to artisans who understand that nature grants them creative abilities which they must develop through specific care.

The Bodo Folktale of the Forest Spirit:

Several stories exist among Bodo people about forest spirits who watch over both trees and wildlife populations. According to the story a hunter who murdered animals without restraint received a permanent curse from a forest spirit before his collapsing descent. Caters

to those who practice ethical hunting alongside traditional religious procedures because they gain blessings from the spiritual being.

The traditional stories maintain indigenous environmental attitudes which control how people use resources and hunt wildlife according to cultural standards. During the Bodo tradition of Baokhungri Festival people conduct rituals to celebrate forest deities as part of their ecological awareness.

Folktales as Tools for Cultural and Ecological Preservation:

Folktales operate above entertainment value as they contain preservation elements from indigenous knowledge and ethical values. Through their stories ancient cultures used to guide their members in developing sustainable practices for environmental relationships. Modernization actively erodes the conventional customs which may lead to the disappearance of such traditional stories.

Oral Tradition and Its Role in Environmental Conservation:

The Northeast Indian population maintains knowledge transmission through oral storytelling which has existed for generations. Elders throughout different communities transmit folktales to keep cultural values coupled with ecological ethics fully preserved. The youth learn about nature's holiness and environmental damage through these traditional tales that serve educational purposes.

Children among the Khasi community frequently hear the U Thlen legend from their elders because it demonstrates how greed and corruption can cause harm. The Ao Naga people share the River Spirit tale to teach their youth about appropriate waterbody reverence. Through storytelling these folktales make environmental wisdom accessible to children at the time of their young learning stage.

The Threat of Modernization and Globalization:

Rapid urbanization as well as deforestation and industrialization cause many indigenous communities of Northeast India to face both cultural transitions and environmental challenges. The survival of ecological wisdom embedded in folktales remains threatened because traditional living practices together with oral storytelling traditions experience disappearing widespread decline. The younger generation tends to look different from traditional stories because they get their knowledge from the global media alongside their formal education.

Many indigenous languages face extinction thus putting the transmission of folktales at severe risk. The complete disappearance of Languages drains away the collective knowledge about culture and nature which its stories store. The necessity to document these tales through revitalization initiatives becomes clear because their survival is under immediate threat.

Documenting and Revitalizing Folktales:

Documenting and Revitalizing Folktales has become a central priority for scholars and cultural activists and folklorists since they recognized the significance of preserving indigenous folktales during the past few years. Various organizations have begun multiple projects to document these folktales through written and digital records for their conservation purposes. Organizations in Northeast India have taken initiatives to compile folktale anthologies alongside their creation of audio-visual recordings from oral storytelling occasions.

Educational institutions can also play a crucial role in revitalizing folktales. By incorporating these stories into school curricula, students can gain exposure to indigenous knowledge systems alongside their formal education. Furthermore, storytelling festivals, community gatherings, and digital platforms can be leveraged to keep these narratives relevant in the modern age.

Lessons from Northeast Indian Folktales in Contemporary Environmental Discourse:

The ecological themes present in Northeast Indian folktales are not just relevant to their indigenous communities—they offer valuable insights for contemporary environmental challenges worldwide.

Sustainable Living and Ecological Balance:

Modern environmental ethics share a common perspective with the animism worldview through their shared perspective of seeing nature as living. Numerous worldwide organizations advocating for nature conservation have started to defend native wisdom together with traditional ecological strategies.

The preservation practice of Khasi sacred groves shares similarities with present-day biodiversity reserves representing a modern environmental conservation method. Water body worship by the Ao Naga people in their legends demonstrates both ancient and contemporary methods for sustaining natural water resources.

Moral and Ethical Considerations in Environmentalism:

A large section of folk tales from Northeast India demonstrates ethical lessons to humans about their connection to natural surroundings. Literary consequences presented to exploitative characters within the narrative act as warnings about contemporary environmental threats which involve forest destruction and climate change effects and biodiversity decline.

The Khasi folklore *The Man-Eating Tree* demonstrates how destroying forests would create harmful consequences yet the Bodo story *Forest Spirit* supports proper hunting techniques. The stories show that environmental degradation leads to serious repercussions which aligns with modern conservationists working on issues of climate justice.

Indigenous Wisdom and Climate Resilience:

Climate change recognition has grown because indigenous knowledge shows potential to boost environmental resistance against its effects. Traditional ecological practices showcased in folklore provide useful information for developing adaptation plans to address climate change. North-east Indian communities practice shifting cultivation which scientists used to view as damaging to the environment. Appropriate sustainable management turns this system into a type of agroforestry which helps maintain biodiversity and improves soil condition. The use of stories about such practices helps refute wrong perceptions while promoting their proper ethical use.

Conclusion:

Folktales from Northeast India serve as invaluable repositories of ecological wisdom, moral guidance, and cultural heritage. These stories stem from animistic religious practices and display nature as a living being while showing how people stay connected to their environment spiritually. The indigenous communities transmit important wisdom about

sustainability by weaving ethical living practices and respect for nature through their stories The Legend of U Thlen (Khasi) and The Spirit Tiger (Naga and Mizo) and The Goddess of Weaving (Meitei).

The arrival of modernization threatens to erase traditional oral traditions from existence. Protecting ancestral folktales has now grown essential because successive generations tend to lose their cultural origins. The preservation of Northeast India's environmental wisdom in folktales depends on documentation plus educational implementation and contemporary environmental appreciation.

The folktales contain valuable wisdom which addresses global environmental issues above their cultural meaning. Traditional knowledge within these stories warns us about our need to harmonize with nature during the present climate crisis which threatens ecosystems on a global scale. A deeper appreciation of indigenous understanding about nature will support more sustainable methods of environmental protection.

Northeast Indian folktales represent more than stories because they show the fundamental link between people and their environment. The ancient wisdom offers us practice of nature worship alongside adopting sustainable behaviour while maintaining cultural conservation for protecting our ecological equilibrium that stands for centuries.

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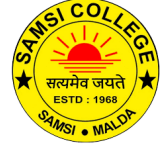


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বাংলা/ইংরেজি উপন্যাসের নিবিড় পাঠের প্রায়োগিক অভিব্যক্তি
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লোক সংস্কৃতি এবং মৌখিক পরম্পরা
7. Theatre and Performance Studies
থিয়েটার এবং কলা বিদ্যা
8. Sequential Evolution of Short Stories: A Critical Study
ছোটগল্পের ধারাবাহিক বিকাশের বিশ্লেষণী পাঠ
9. Comparative Studies on Contemporary Bengali/English Literature
তুলনামূলক সাহিত্য আলোচনার পটে সমকালীন বাংলা/ইংরেজি সাহিত্য
10. Socio-economic and Political Contexts in 20th-Century Drama
বিশ শতকের নাটকে আর্থ-সামাজিক ও রাজনৈতিক প্রেক্ষাপট
11. 20th-Century Political and Socio-economic Contexts in Indian Literature
সমকালীন সাহিত্যে সামাজিক নানা পট পরিবর্তনের ধারাভাষ্য
12. Narratives of Social Transformations in Indian Literature
বিশ শতকের রাজনৈতিক ও আর্থ-সামাজিক প্রেক্ষিত ও ভারতীয় সাহিত্য

Participants may also present research papers on any relevant aspect of the sub-themes.

Papers can be presented in Bengali or English offline or online.

Selected papers will be published in peer-reviewed journals with ISSN and DOI:

Bengali articles in Atmadeep [<https://www.atmadeep.in>]

English articles in Novel Insights [<https://www.novelinsights.in>]

Special issues will be considered if the number of submissions exceeds the limit.

Key Deadlines:

- Submit abstracts by March 10, 2025 (in Bengali or English).
- Full papers must be submitted by March 31, 2025.
- Papers should be of at least 2,500 words.
- Proper citations are mandatory, and plagiarism is strictly prohibited.

Email: internationalseminarsc@gmail.com

Registration Fees (for paper presentation):

- Professors: ₹1,000 (offline), ₹800 (online)
- Researchers: ₹800 (offline), ₹500 (online)
- Students: ₹100

Offline participants presenting papers will receive a registration kit and a certificate. Online participants will receive certificates via email.

Registration fee may be paid through RTGS/NEFT/IMPS to:

Name: **Sudeb Sarkar**

UPI ID: 9064564093@axixbank

UPI Number: 9064564093



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Two-Day International Seminar



On

Horizons of Literary Creation: Dialogues on Theory and Practice

Organized by

Dept. of Bengali & English, Samsi College and Uttarsuri, Assam

Date- 8th and 9th April, 2025

Programme Schedule

8th April, 2025

Venue- Raktakarabi Kaksha

- 10:00 AM: Registration
10:30 AM: Welcoming the Guests (Students)
10:35 AM: Lightening the Lamp by Prof. Pabitra Chattopadhyay, Vice-Chancellor, University of Gour Banga, Malda

10:40 AM to 11:15 AM: Welcome Address

- **Welcome Address:** Dr. Salil Kumar Mukherjee, Principal, Samsi College
- **Inaugural Speech:** Prof. Pabitra Chattopadhyay, Vice-Chancellor, University of Gour Banga
- **Speech:** Dr. Biswajit Das, Registrar (Additional Charge), University of Gour Banga
- **Address:** Mr. Riajul Karim Boxi, President of Governing Body
- **Address:** Dr. Bishwajit Bhattacharjee, Secretary, Uttarsuri, Shribhumi, Assam

11:15 AM – 12:15 AM: Keynote Address 1

Speaker: Prof. Tapadhir Bhattacharya, Former Vice-Chancellor & Emeritus Professor, Assam University

Tea-Break (5 Minutes)

12:20 AM to 2:20 PM: Special Plenary Session

Chair: Prof. Tapadhir Bhattacharya, Former Vice-Chancellor & Emeritus Professor, Assam University

Speakers:

- Prof. Dipak Kumar Roy, Vice-Chancellor, Raiganj University
- Prof. Rajat Kishore Dey, Professor of Bengali & Ex VC of University of Gour Banga
- Prof. Sadhan Kumar Saha, Dean of Arts, University of Gour Banga
- Prof. Rajib Mandal, Professor of Bengali, Jagannath University, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Dr. Samipendra Banerjee, Associate Professor of English, University of Gour Banga

Vote of Thanks by Sudeb Sarkar, Department of English, SMC

Lunch Break (2:20 PM to 3:15 PM)

3:15 PM to 4:30 PM: Technical Sessions 1A, 1B, 1C & 1D (Parallel Sessions)

Session 1A: Raktakarabi Kaksha

- **Chair:** Prof. Sadhan Kumar Saha, Dean of Arts, University of Gour Banga
- **Assistant:** Dr. Anarul Islam, Department of Bengali, SMC

Sl. No.	Name of Presenters	Title of the Paper
1	Dr. Soumitra Mukhopadhyay Assistant Professor of Bengali Harishchandrapur College	মৌখিক পরম্পরা ও আদিবাসী লোকসংস্কৃতির আলোকে মহাশ্বেতা দেবীর উপন্যাস
2	RASARAJ ROY Assistant Professor of Bengali Chanchal College	বিশ শতকের বাংলা নাটকে বিবর্তন
3	Shanti Das Research Scholar of Bengali Raiganj University	বানী বসুর ছোট গল্পঃ মধ্যবিত্তের জীবন আলোচনা
4	Roquea Parvin Department of Bengali Samsi College	সাহিত্যে নারীমুক্তি ভাবনাঃ রোকেয়া সাখাওয়াত হোসেন
5	Dr. Kankan Dutta Department of Bengali Samsi College	হেঁড়াতার: শাস্ত্রের অন্তরালে ভিন্নভাষ্য
6	Aparajita Bhattacharjee Research Scholar of Bengali Assam University	রবীন্দ্রনাথের ছোটগল্পে প্রতিবাদী নারী: এক বিশ্লেষণী পাঠ

Session 1B: Room No. 24

- **Chair:** Dr. Samipendra Banerjee, Associate Professor of English, University of Gour Banga
- **Assistant:** Masiur Rahaman, Department of English, SMC

Sl. No.	Name of Presenters	Title of the Paper
1	Neelanjana Chowdhury Assistant Professor of Philosophy Samsi College	From Literature to Philosophy: Exploring Sartre and the Path of Existentialism
2	Shrirupa Das Student of English University of Gour Banga	Beyond the Boundaries: Decoding the Representation of Femininity in The Final Solution and Meghe Dhaka Tara
3	Mondira Mondal Student of English Literature	Social Transformation in Mahesh Dattani's Dance Like a Man

	Malda College, UGB	
4	Prasenjit Sarkar Student of English University of Gour Banga	The Spirit of the Land: Folktales of Northeast India and their Ecological Wisdom
5	Asit Saren Student of English University of Gour Banga	Echoes of tradition and heritage: The ritualistic music and dance in Santal culture and festivals
6	Karimun Nesha UG Student of English Samsi College	Gender Equality and Sustainable Society through the Eyes of Kamala Das: A Critical Analysis of An Autobiography

Session 1C: Room No. 17

- **Chair:** **Dr. Amar Kumar Paul**, Assistant Professor of Bengali, Patuliputra University, Bihar
- **Assistant:** **Sanjoy Karmakar**, Department of Philosophy, SMC

Sl. No.	Name of Presenters	Title of the Paper
1	Parshuram Rajak Assistant Teacher Ashwintola Primary School	'অশ্বযোনি': নারীর জীবন সংগ্রামের উপাখ্যান
2	Nilima Sarkar Assistant Professor of Sanskrit Samsi College	সংস্কৃত নাট্যসাহিত্য: একটি সমীক্ষা
3	Ranjit Sarkar Department of Bengali Samsi College	নির্বাচিত সমকালীন সাহিত্যে সামাজিক নানা পট পরিবর্তনের ধারাভাষ্য
4	Apurba Roy Research Scholar of Bengali Kazi Najrul University	বিনতা রায়চৌধুরী-র গল্পে সামাজিক সংকট ও তার উত্তরণ
5	Sonali Gupta UG Student of English Samsi College	Present Day Educational System: An Overview

Session 1D: Library Room (Online)

- **Chair:** **Dr. Manoj Kumar Bhoje**, Coordinator of IQAC, Samsi College
- **Rapporteur:** **Sudeb Sarkar**, Department of English, SMC

Sl. No.	Name of Presenters	Title of the Paper
1	Dr. Jagannath Barua Associate Professor of Pali National University, Bangladesh	“বৌদ্ধদের লোকসংস্কৃতি ও মৌখিক পরম্পরাঃ চট্টগ্রাম অঞ্চলের উপর একটি সমীক্ষা

2	REPON SAHA Research Scholar of Bengali Kalyani University	মোহিত চট্টোপাধ্যায়ের কবিতাঃ কল্পনার এক নতুন মাত্রা
3	Monoranjan Urao Research Scholar of Bengali Kalyani University	তারাপদ রায়ের কবিতাঃ স্বতন্ত্র স্বর
4	Dr. Syed Hadiuzzaman Associate Professor of Islamic History and Culture National University, Bangladesh	যশোরের লোকসংস্কৃতি ও প্রবাদ-প্রবচন : একটি ঐতিহাসিক বিশ্লেষণ
5	Tamal Adak Independent Researcher of Political Science Kalyani University	লোকসংস্কৃতি এবং উপজাতি সমাজঃ একটি জীবন দর্পণ
6	Dr. Munshi Mahammad Saiful Ahamed Assistant Professor of Bengali Gauhati University	ফ্যাসিবাদ বিরোধীতা ও অরুণ মিত্রের একটি শক্তিশালী কবিতা
7	Ashit Mandal Research Scholar of Bengali RKDF UNIVERSITY,RANCHI	বাংলা লোকসাহিত্যের ছড়া চর্চা
8	MOUMITA HALDAR Research Scholar of Bengali Kalyani University	সুকান্ত গঙ্গোপাধ্যায়ের সাহিত্যকৃতিতে আর্থ-সামাজিক বাস্তবতার অনুধ্যানঃ আলোচ্য সোনাডাঙ্গার বিল
9	Atowar Hossain Researcher Assam University	হামির উদ্দিন মিদ্যার ছোটগল্পঃ প্রান্তিকতার এক নব দলিল

End of the Day 1

Day 2

9th April, 2025

Venue- Raktakarabi Kaksha

10:30 AM: Welcoming the Guests (Students)

Welcome Address by:

- **Welcome Address:** Sri Tapas Kumar Barman, HoD of English, SMC, Convenor, Seminar Committee
- **Address:** Dr. Salil Kumar Mukherjee, Principal, SMC, after formal inauguration of the seminar

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Keynote Address 2

- **Chair:** Prof. Tapadhir Bhattacharya, Former Vice-Chancellor & Emeritus Professor, Assam University
- **Speaker:** Prof. Amit Bhattacharya, Professor & Head, Department of English, University of Gour Banga

Tea-Break (5 Minutes)

12:05 PM to 1:35 PM: Special Plenary Session

Chair: Prof. Amit Bhattacharya, Head, Department of English, UGB

Speakers:

- Professor Sauren Bandyopadhyay, Vice Chancellor, West Bengal State University
- Professor Pinaki Roy, Department of English, Raiganj University
- Professor Achinta Kumar Banerjee, Department of Bengali, University of Gour Banga
- Dr. Md Abdul Wahab, Principal, Dewan Abdul Gani College
- Dr. Amar Kumar Paul, Assistant Professor of Bengali, Patuliputra University, Bihar

Vote of Thanks by

Dr. Sk Mofazzal Haossain, TCS, HoD of Bengali, Convenor of the Seminar Committee

1:35 PM to 2:35 PM: Technical Session 1A, 1B, & 1C (Parallel Sessions)

Session 1A: Raktakarabi Kaksha

- **Chair:** Prof. Pinaki Roy, Professor, Department of English, University of Raiganj
- **Assistant:** Samadrita Das, Librarian, Samsi College

Sl. No.	Name of Presenters	Title of the Paper
1	Dr. Shiba Prasad Behera Faculty of Sanskrit Samsi College	Social Transformation in Sanskrit Literature

2	Bratati Misra Retd. Associate Professor of English Malda College	In Search of Rabindranath and Victoria Ocampo
3	Mirajul Islam State Aided College Teacher Department of English Chanchal College, UGB	War on Peace: Understanding Israel-Palestine Conflict through Rashid Khalidi's "The Hundred Years War on Palestine"
4	Mini Khatun Student of English Literature University of Gour Banga	Subaltern Voices; Sashi Deshpande's The Dark Holds No Terror and That Long Silence as Representations of women Labour and Economic Empowerment
5	Masiur Rahaman Department of English Samsi College	Negotiating Muslim Women's Identity in Postcolonial India: A Sociocultural Investigation of Anees Salim's Works
6	Madhumita Mandal UG Student of English Samsi College	Environment and Literature: A Critical Review of Henry David Thoreau's Walden (1854)

Session 1B: Room No: 17

Chair: Sri Sabuj Sarkar, Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Gour Banga

Assistant: Winee John Tamang, Assistant Professor of Pol. Sc. Samsi College

Sl. No.	Name of Presenters	Title of the Paper
1	Ankita Sarkar PhD Research Scholar of English Raiganj University	Urban Modernism and the Search for Meaning: Fragmentation and Existential Crisis in T.S. Eliot's The Waste Land and Buddhadeb Basu's Raat Bhore Brishti
2	Sathi Mandal PhD Scholar of English Raiganj University	An Ecocritical Analysis of Hudum Deo: Indigenous Environmental Ethics and Ritualistic Agrarian Practices
3	Labani Sarkar Research Scholar of English Raiganj University	Decolonizing the Mind and Indianization of English: A Critical analysis of the selected novels of Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy and Amitav Ghosh
4	Tamanna Rahman UG Student of English Samsi College	Importance of English Language
5	Mohidur Rahman Department of English Samsi College	Gender Dynamics in the Select Novels of Kamala Markandaya
6	Dr. Sujit Majumdar Assistant Professor of Economics Samsi College	Understanding Socio-Economic and Cultural Transition of Rural-Urban Migration in West Bengal: An Empirical Study

Session 1C: Room No: 24 (Online)

- **Chair:** Tapas Kumar Barman, Department of English, Samsi College
- **Rapporteur:** Sudeb Sarkar, Department of English, Samsi College

Sl. No.	Name of Presenters	Title of the Paper
1	Md Masihur Rahman Assistant Professor of English Sukanta Mahavidyalaya Dhupguri, Jalpaiguri	Quest for a new Identity in Rohinton Mistry's A Fine Balance
2	Dr. Suchitra Das Associate Professor of Economics Karimganj College, Sribhumi Dr. Ritumani Haloi, Assistant Professor of Economics Karimganj College, Sribhumi Mr. Gadapani Sarma Assistant Professor of Economics Karimganj College, Sribhumi Ms. Hema Hazarika Assistant Professor of Economics, Karimganj College, Sribhumi	A Study on Economic Significance of Moving Theatre of Assam
3	Rabi Kanta Roy Assistant Professor of English Kabi Nazrul College	Trauma of Partition in Mulk Raj Anand's Story "The Parrot in the Cage"
4	Dr. Masoom Islam Research Scholar of English L N Mithila University	Robin S Ngangom's Poetry: Repletion (Reflection) of Personal and Political Elements with Probing into the Problems of North-East India
5	Ilius Mondal Research Scholar of English and Modern European Languages University of Allahabad	'Pathogenic Vulnerability' and 'Slow Violence': A Study of Resistance in Indra Sinha's Animal's People
6	Myvizhi. A. Doctoral Scholar of English, Sri G. V. G Visalakshi College for Women Dr. K. Sathyapriya Assistant Professor of English Sri G. V. G Visalakshi College for Women	The Living Page: Biophilia and the Written World
7	NITYANANDA KODALIA Assistant Professor of Philosophy KABI NAZRUL COLLEGE	A CALL FROM LAST LEAF: ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS
8	Shonmirin P. A Research Scholar of English Vels Inst. of Science, Technology, and Advn. Std.	The Fabric of Culture: Significance of Material Culture in Tangkhul Folklore

Lunch Break (2:35 PM to 3:20PM)

3:20 PM to 4:30 PM: Technical Session 1A & 1B (Parallel Sessions)

Session 1A: Room No. 24 (Online)

- **Chair:** Prof. Achinta Kumar Banerjee, Department of Bengali, UGB
- **Rapporteur:** Dr. Surajit Mandal, Assistant Professor of Pol. Sc. Samsi College

Sl. No.	Name of Presenters	Title of the Paper
1	Dr. Surjyasen Deb Assistant Professor of Bengali Radhamadhab College	লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবরুয়ার 'বুঢ়ী আইর সাধু': তুলনামূলক পদ্ধতির আলোয়
2	Dr. Suspendra Nath Roy Assistant Professor of Bengali Rabindrasadan Girls' College	সুচিত্রা ভট্টাচার্যের উপন্যাস : বিশ শতকের শেষার্ধের সময়-সমাজের আলোয়
3	Baby Parvin Student of Bengali University of North Bengal	মহানদী: প্রবাহমান উপাখ্যান
4	Abu Asim Research Scholar of Modern Indian Language Aligarh Muslim University	অপরাধ ও অপরাধী মনস্তত্ত্বঃ প্রসঙ্গ সায়ন্তনী পুতুভুন্ডের গোয়েন্দা উপন্যাস 'সর্বনাশিনী'
5	Pricila Sultana PhD Researcher of Folklore Rajshahi University, Bangladesh	রবীন্দ্র নৃত্যনাট্য, প্রেম বনাম ন্যায়ঃ একটি পর্যবেক্ষণ
6	Sukanya Bera Research Scholar of Bengali Burdwan University	শিশু সাহিত্যিক বিমল ঘোষের নির্বাচিত ছোট গল্পঃ বিশ শতকের বাংলা শিশুসাহিত্যে রাজনৈতিক পট পরিবর্তনের রূপরেখা
7	Dr. Abhijit Bandopadhyay Assistant Professor of Bengali Women's College, Calcutta	বিশ শতকের বাংলা ছোট গল্পে যথাস্থিতবাদী বাস্তবতার প্রসার
8	Dr. Md. Sadekul Islam Assistant Professor of Bengali Manikchak College	চরিত্রের যাপন-দর্শন ও ক্ষেত্র-জরীপঃ প্রসঙ্গ আঞ্চলিক উপন্যাস
9	NIPON DAS Assistant Professor of Bengali ANANDARAM DHEKIAL PHOOKAN COLLEGE	অসমের বাংলা গল্পে অসমবাসী বাঙালিসত্তার আত্মপরিচয়ঃ একটি বিশ্লেষণী পাঠ (দেবব্রত চৌধুরীর 'আক্সাজানের হাড়- একটি প্রামাণ্য দলিল' ও জ্যোতির্ময় সেনগুপ্তের 'শিকড়ের নথিপত্র'- বিশেষ উল্লেখসহ)
10	Suman Ghosh Research Scholar of Bengali Ram Krishna Dharmarth Foundation University, Ranchi, Jharkhand	বুদ্ধদেব বসুর কাব্যনাট্যে আধুনিক জীবনবোধ ও পুরাণচেতনা

Session 1B: Library Room (Online)

- **Chair:** Dr. Md Abdul Wahab, Principal, Dewan Abdul Gani College, Harirampur
- **Rapporteur:** Dr. Indrajit Biswas, Assistant Professor of History, SMC

Sl. No.	Name of Presenters	Title of the Paper
1	DAVID DAS Assistant Professor of English KABI NAZRUL COLLEGE	Exploring chain communities' folk culture and oral tradition
2	RAVINDRA REDDY M. Department of Linguistics Osmania University	PANCHATANTRA & CHANDAMAMA STORIES: NARRATIVES ACROSS TIME, SPACE, AND CULTURES
3	Shampa Chakrabarty Research Scholar of English Adamas University	Exploring Cultural Heritage of the Marginalized Communities of Malda District through Gambhira, Gajan and Charak Festivals
4	Antik Kumar Das Research Scholar of Sociology Adamas University	The Role of Folk Religion in Shaping Sports Practices at Malda District: A Sociological Enquiry
5	Aman Pal Researcher of English Kalyani University	The Hypothetical Categorization of Women in the Early Twentieth Century English Literature: The Socio-Political Issues of Gender, Identity and the Institution of Marriage
6	Brinda Samanta Assistant Professor of English St.Xavier's College Burdwan	Delineation of women in Bengali Household: A brief foray into Sailabala Ghosh Jaya's Janma Aparadhi
7	Arkanil Das Assistant Professor of English Malda Women's College	Bengal's long invisibilisation of caste-based oppression: A study of Dalit Literature in Bengali

Valedictory Session: 4:30 PM

Vote of Thanks

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ABOUT UTTARSURI

Uttarsuri is a registered society under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860, bearing registration number RS/KARIM/258/L/09 OF 2022-23 dated 30.04.2022, located in Sribhumi, Assam, India. The society is also registered with NGO Darpan, bearing the unique ID VO/NGO AS/2022/0314757.



UTTAR SURI
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