

SIBSAGAR GIRLS' COLLEGE DIAMOND JUBILEE SPECIAL EDITION

ECLECTIC

A
MULTIDISCIPLINARY
EXPLORATION

Edited by

SHIVA PRASAD MILI
MADINE HAZARIKA
NIBEDITA BARUAH

ECLECTIC

A Multidisciplinary Exploration

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Edited by

Shiva Prasad Mili

Madine Hazarika

Nibedita Boruah



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Adviser(s) : Dr. Jogesh Borah (President, Governing Body)
Dr. Protim Sharma (Principal)

Editor(s) : Shiva Prasad Mili, Madine Hazarika
& Nibedita Baruah

Members : Dr Kritanjali Konwar
Dr. kakoli Sonowal
Dr .Santana Duwarah Handique

Cover Design : Shiva Prasad Mili

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Acknowledgements

We, the editors of this special Edition of 'Eclectic,' are deeply thankful for the opportunity to contribute to this prestigious publication. Our sincere appreciation goes to Deepjoonalee Bhuyan, Co-ordinator, of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), whose constant support has been instrumental in maintaining the high academic standards that define this volume.

A special word of gratitude is reserved for the esteemed educators from across India who have graciously shared their scholarly papers and articles with us, enriching this volume with their insights on their areas of interests. Their contributions have significantly enriched this volume, adding depth and diverse perspectives that enhance its academic value.

We would also like to acknowledge the writers whose work has shaped the content of this edition. Their dedication to the pursuit of knowledge is evident on every page. Finally, we express our heartfelt thanks to our Governing Body President Sir, and Principal Sir, whose constant encouragement and leadership have been vital throughout this journey, especially during the momentous occasion of our college's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

Editors' Note

The word "Eclectic" signifies gathering ideas, styles, and influences from diverse sources, refusing to be confined to a single approach. It is a celebration of variety, a tribute to the richness that emerges when different perspectives converge

What makes a book unforgettable? Is it the ideas it explores, the stories it tells, or how it sparks something within us? With immense humility, we, on behalf of the Publication Cell of Sibsagar Girls' College, present the special edition of ECLECTIC. This book, true to its name, embraces that essence-bringing together a collection of articles and research papers that defy uniformity and instead thrive in their uniqueness.

This book is not just a compilation of articles and research papers-it is a meeting place for ideas that refuse to be ordinary. Like a kaleidoscope, every page adds a unique piece to the bigger picture, each reflecting the diverse voices that contributed to its creation.

When the first volume of ECLECTIC was published, it was like planting a seed. With this second volume, that seed has grown more decadent, fuller, and alive than we imagined. Each contribution brings its own flavour, and together, they create a collection that is as varied as it is meaningful.

To the writers whose articles and papers enrich these pages-you have made this book what it is. Your passion, insights, and willingness to share your work have been a gift, and we sincerely appreciate your valuable contributions.

If you are looking for a book that keeps you turning pages-not because it follows a single thread but because it celebrates the unexpected-then you are in the right place. Welcome to ECLECTIC, Diamond Jubilee special edition, where ideas find expression and where every piece invites you to think, question, and explore, keeping you intrigued and engaged.

Editors



General Introduction

This book brings together a range of articles, papers, and reviews on varied topics written by individuals deeply engaged in their areas of interest. The aim is to provide readers with meaningful and thought-provoking content that reflects the depth of knowledge and effort the writers contribute. Each piece explores essential themes, presenting relevant and valuable ideas for today's readers. The topics covered are diverse, ensuring that the book appeals to those who appreciate different approaches and areas of study. This collection highlights the importance of sharing knowledge and ideas. The contributors' works represent their dedication and sincere efforts to address significant subjects. It is hoped that this book will encourage reflection, discussion, and a more profound interest in the subjects presented. Below we are presenting a detailed, theme-based categorization which will give a clear picture of the diversity and depth of the content, offering readers insights into the various academic areas explored in the book.

Language and Education

The paper "Development of Life Skills through Language Learning: A Case of Assamese-Medium Students in Assam, India" by **Dr Protim Sharma** explores how language learning, specifically in Assamese-medium schools, can be leveraged to develop crucial life skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, communication, and empathy. The study highlights students' challenges in rural Assam, including limited exposure to modern educational tools and rote learning practices, and provides practical recommendations for educational reforms. It argues that integrating a skills-based approach in the classroom can empower students for real-world success and calls for better resources and interactive methods to bridge gaps.

In her article, "Choice is Yours' **Dr Lalita Bisen** emphasises the significance of choosing soft and respectful language in everyday interactions. She narrates a personal incident involving two aunts-one whose offensive language alienated her from others and another who maintained dignity and respect through her words, earning admiration. The author explores how language, a powerful tool of human expression, can either strengthen relationships or cause irreparable harm. She contrasts harsh words' immediate negative impact with thoughtful language's long-term positive effects. Ultimately, the article serves as a reminder that our choice of words defines how others perceive us and the harmony we create in our surroundings.

Barnali Lahkar's study, "A Study on the Level of Education of Tea Garden Women of Charaideo District of Assam," explores the educational status of women in tea gardens, revealing that socio-economic constraints, parental attitudes, and inadequate educational infrastructure contribute to their low literacy rates. Based on a survey of 50 women from Lengibari Tea Estate, the study finds that 40% of respondents either never attended school or dropped out, primarily due to financial difficulties, parental disinterest, early marriage, and household responsibilities. Poor school facilities, lack of motivation, and traditional practices exacerbate the problem. The paper suggests several measures, including awareness campaigns, scholarships, open and distance education, and skill-based programs to enhance educational opportunities for tea garden women. Despite government initiatives, the study concludes that poor implementation and persistent socio-economic challenges hinder educational progress, necessitating targeted interventions for sustainable improvement.

Literature and Environmental Concerns

In their paper "Safeguarding the Environment through Litera-

ture: An Analysis of Richard Powers's "The Overstory," Mr **Amarendra Mohanty and Maj. Dr Jayadeb Sahoo** explores the connection between nature and literature, highlighting how literature shapes our perception of the environment. Environmental literature, often called nature writing or eco-literature, addresses environmental issues and the natural world, serving as a powerful tool for activism. Authors can amplify the voices of marginalised groups and nature itself, inspiring readers to act on environmental concerns. As global environmental challenges grow, literature offers a unique way to raise awareness and drive action. Through Richard Powers's 'The Overstory,' the study examines how literature can foster environmental conservation. The novel's intricate plot and multidimensional characters illustrate storytelling's potential to evoke empathy, curiosity, and action, emphasising the urgent need for environmental preservation.

Mayashri Das, in her paper "A Study of Eco-critical Perspectives in Anuradha Sharma Pujari's *Eyat Ekhon Aranyo Asil*," 'explores the eco-critical themes in Anuradha Sharma Pujari's acclaimed novel "Eyat Ekhon Aranya Asil." The work examines the human-nature conflict against the backdrop of ecological destruction in Assam's Amchang Reserve Forest, highlighting deforestation, urbanisation, and political negligence. By analysing the novel's shift from a human-centred perspective to a nature-focused narrative, the paper emphasises the role of Assamese literature in fostering eco-consciousness. Das also parallels other eco-critical works in Assamese literature, showcasing the region's rich tradition of addressing environmental concerns through storytelling. The paper underscores the novel's significance as a literary response to pressing ecological challenges and its relevance to the global discourse on environmental sustainability.

Dr. Santana Dowarah Handique, in her essay titled পংকজ গোবিন্দ

মেধিৰ ইকটুৰিজিমূলক উপন্যাস 'চৰাই চুবুৰি' introduces the concept of eco-tourism and offers an analytical discussion on this first Assamese eco-tourism novel. The author highlights how the novel reflects a scientific perspective on nature conservation while also addressing themes like patriotism, the eradication of superstition, and blind beliefs.

Folklore, Gender and Social Issues

The paper titled "Tribal Folklore Of Maharashtra : A Study In Aesthetic" by **Dr. Sanjay Pandit Kamble** and **Dr. Bhagyashri Mallikarjun Patil**, explores the rich tribal folklore of Maharashtra, focusing on the aesthetic aspects of various ethnic groups such as the Bhils, Gonds, Warlis, and Kolis. It examines the intricate relationship between myths, rituals, music, dance, and visual arts within these tribal communities, highlighting how these elements shape their cultural identity and worldview. The study delves into specific examples of folklore, including creation myths, harvest festivals, and traditional art forms like Warli paintings, emphasizing their role in preserving and transmitting cultural values. The paper also discusses the challenges faced in preserving these traditions in the modern era and the efforts being made to document and promote tribal cultures. Ultimately, the research underscores the importance of understanding and safeguarding the aesthetic dimensions of tribal folklore as a vital component of Maharashtra's cultural heritage.

The paper by **Shiva Prasad Mili** "From Panoi to Justice: Challenging Patriarchy in Mising Folktales" explores how Mising folktales critique patriarchy and promote social justice. Through tales like "Lightning and Thunder" and "Origin of the Sago Palm," the author applies feminist and postcolonial theories to highlight resistance against gender and class oppression. The

study shows that these folktales are not just storytelling but powerful tools for challenging injustice.

Probin Sarmah, in his article "Women in the Ahom Kingdom: Governance, Diplomacy, and Cultural Preservation," enumerates the Ahom dynasty, which ruled Assam for nearly six centuries, holding a distinguished place in Indian history. Amidst the tales of warfare, administration, and cultural consolidation, the role of women—particularly queens and a noblewoman—emerges as a nuanced yet underexplored domain. This article examines the multifaceted contributions of women in the Ahom kingdom, emphasising their influence on governance, diplomacy, and cultural preservation. By analysing historical records, including the Buranjis (Ahom chronicles), this research illuminates the agency of Ahom women as pivotal actors in their time's sociopolitical and cultural framework. Through their resilience and adaptability, these women contributed to the Ahom dynasty's sustenance and left an indelible mark on the cultural heritage of Assam.

The paper titled "Unravelling the Representation of Homosexuality in the Select Plays of Mahesh Dattani," by **Sanskrita Krishnatreya**, critically explores the nuanced portrayal of homosexuality in Dattani's works. Through an analytical study of plays like 'On a Muggy Night in Mumbai,' the paper investigates the societal rejection and inner turmoil faced by homosexual individuals in a patriarchal framework. It emphasises Dattani's courage in addressing taboo subjects, challenging the rigid norms of heteronormativity prevalent in Indian society. By spotlighting the marginalised, the paper highlights Dattani's use of drama as a medium for social change, fostering awareness and dialogue.

Cultural Heritage, Identity and Preservation

The paper "**Unsung Heroes of North East India: An Analysis**"

by Mrs Deepjonalee Bhuyan and Mr Plavan Bhuyan" highlights lesser-known freedom fighters from the region who played crucial roles in India's independence struggle. It aims to highlight these figures, whose contributions have often been overlooked. Based on secondary sources, the study examines the lives of individuals like Mungri Mem, Haipou Jadonang, Togan Sangma, and Madhu Malik, who resisted British rule through movements against colonial oppression, forced taxation, and cultural erosion. The paper underscores the need for greater recognition of these forgotten heroes in India's historical narrative.

The paper by Dr Kritanjali Konwar titled "The Prospect Of Assamese Handloom And Textile in The Context Of Cultural Tourism" discusses the potential of Assamese handloom and textiles in promoting cultural tourism in Assam. It highlights the state's rich tradition of silk weaving, particularly Muga, Paat, and Eri silks, and the significant role of handloom weaving in Assam's economy. Despite challenges like blending inferior silk with Muga and environmental threats to silk production, the paper emphasises the importance of promoting these textiles as a global tourist attraction. The author suggests strategies to improve the industry, such as training weavers, enhancing infrastructure, and expanding export opportunities. The conclusion stresses the need to preserve Assam's handloom heritage to boost tourism and economic development

The paper "Impact of Globalization on Culture" by Kakoli Baruah explores how globalization reshapes cultures worldwide, promoting the exchange of ideas and lifestyles but also threatening local identities. While it encourages cross-cultural interactions, it contributes to cultural homogenization, especially through Western media and consumer culture. In India, globalization has altered fashion, entertainment, food habits, and family values, often overshadowing indigenous traditions. This leads to an identity crisis and a rise in consumerism, challenging tradi-

tional values. Despite these issues, globalization also sparks the creation of new local traditions, reflecting a complex mix of positive and negative cultural impacts.

Abhijit Barpuzari, in his article "Plans and Specifications for the Natural Preservation of Rare Books or Manuscripts," writes about how Manuscripts serve as evidence of facts, achievements, ideas, and the necessary work that must be undertaken, as well as the theories that follow. They are vital for human progress and guide younger generations over time. These documents must be preserved for future generations. An archive serves as a repository for manuscripts. These manuscripts and documents offer extensive information to historians; however, they can also present challenges in terms of accessibility.

The paper titled 'Mejankari the secondary host plant for the Muga silkworm' by **Chitralkha Gogoi** discusses, 'Litsea cubeba' (Mejankari), a (**Antheraea assamensis**) which produces highly prized "mejankari silk." This silk is superior to regular Muga silk due to its durability and lustre, commanding a higher price. However, the cultivation of 'L. cubeba' is declining because of low seed germination rates and limited natural propagation. The paper highlights the historical significance of this silk, especially during the Ahom Dynasty, and its medicinal and industrial uses. It calls for research into conservation, propagation techniques, and the plant's genetic diversity to support sustainable silk production.

Scientific Research and Innovation

Gayatri Mohan, in her paper "Testing of the Starobinsky model of $f(R)$ Gravity in galactic scale," explores how Galactic dynamics remain a central issue in modern astrophysics and cosmology, particularly in explaining the anomalous rotational curves of galaxies. General Relativity struggles to account for these

anomalies without invoking dark matter. Modified gravity theories, such as $f(R)$ gravity, offer alternative explanations by modifying the Einstein-Hilbert action. The Starobinsky model, one of the most notable $f(R)$ gravity models, introduces a curvature correction to General Relativity. In this work, we analyse galac-

$f(R) = R - \beta R_c \left[1 - \left(1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right)^{-n} \right]$ variant of the Starobinsky model and investigate whether it can of

fer insights into galaxy rotation curves without dark matter. The study highlights how this modification influences dark matter interpretations and cosmological consequences on the galactic scale.

Nanotechnology, explored by Pranjal Pankaj Baruah, in his article "Nanotechnology: The Tiny Revolution Shaping Our Future" is the manipulation of matter at the atomic scale, offering unique properties like increased strength, lighter weight, and improved conductivity. It holds transformative potential across industries, including medicine, which enables precise drug delivery, and electronics, which contributes to smaller, faster devices. In energy, it enhances solar and battery efficiency while offering solutions for water purification and pollution control in the environment. However, ethical concerns around health risks, environmental impact, and economic inequality require careful attention. The future of nanotechnology promises groundbreaking innovations but requires responsible regulation and collaboration

Local Biodiversity and Conservation

The paper by Zakir Hussain titled "Aesthetic Value of Local Fauna: Perspectives from Northeast India and Assam" explores the aesthetic significance of local fauna in Northeast India, particularly in Assam, highlighting their role in cultural identity, artistic expression, and ecological importance. It discusses how

biodiversity, especially visually and symbolically striking species like the one-horned rhinoceros, golden langur, and great Indian hornbill, inspires folklore, art, and festivals. The paper also examines the role of avian diversity in enhancing the region's scenic beauty and its impact on eco-tourism, which supports local economies. Despite their cultural and aesthetic value, these species face threats like habitat loss, poaching, and climate change, necessitating urgent conservation efforts.

The paper by **Nibedita Baruah** "Certain Aromatic Plants and Their Medicinal Importance" explores the medicinal significance of aromatic plants, which contain essential oils and biologically active compounds. These plants have long been used in traditional medicine, food preparation, and religious and cosmetic applications. In Assam, particularly among tribal communities, aromatic plants continue to play a crucial role in healthcare despite advancements in modern medicine. The study focuses on the Abhoypur Reserve Forest in Sivasagar district, where various ethnic groups rely on these plants for food, medicine, and daily needs. The research documents the ethno-medicinal uses of different aromatic plants through field visits and interviews, highlighting their therapeutic properties and cultural relevance.

In the paper "Plants of Botanical Curiosity Found in North-East India" **Priyakshi Buragohain** explores unique plants in the region, emphasising their rare adaptations, modifications, and ecological importance. With its diverse geography and climate, North-East India is home to several endemic and endangered species. The author lists 16 such plants, detailing their peculiarities, abundance status, and conservation needs. These plants are significant for botanical studies, local economies, and environmental programs. The paper calls for effective conservation strategies to prevent their extinction and ensure sustainable use.

Literary and Theatrical Analysis

The paper by Kaushik Bhuyan 'A comparative study on surveillance as a monitoring phenomenon in *the Trial* and *Prison Break*' explores surveillance as a monitoring phenomenon through a comparative study of *The Trial* by Franz Kafka and the TV series *Prison Break*. It discusses the concept of surveillance as both a tool for control and a violation of privacy, drawing on Foucault's ideas on the Panopticon. In *The Trial*, Joseph K. faces constant, unexplained surveillance, while in *Prison Break*, Lincoln Burrows' wrongful imprisonment leads to a larger conspiracy involving pervasive monitoring. Both works highlight the impact of surveillance on personal freedom, with *Prison Break* offering an escape, while *The Trial* presents a tragic, unresolvable entrapment. The paper concludes that surveillance remains a powerful, controlling force throughout time and media.

In her paper "Exploring The Absurd Elements in Eugène Ionesco's Anti-Theater "The Bald Soprano", **Pooja Bhuyan** discusses the deconstruction of traditional theater through Ionesco's absurdist play. She highlights how the play's circular structure and illogical dialogue reflect the absurdity and meaninglessness of human existence, echoing themes from existential thinkers like Camus and Sartre. Bhuyan explores how Ionesco uses language to expose its failure as a tool for communication, with characters engaging in nonsensical, repetitive conversations. The play's lack of a conventional plot and its surreal elements, such as the indefinite passage of time, challenge the audience's understanding of reality. Ultimately, Bhuyan argues that Ionesco's work invites the audience to question life's absurdity through its comic yet tragic portrayal of the human condition.

Dr Kakoli Sonowal in her article titled "যোগেশ দাসৰ গল্প" studies the contribution of Assamese writer Yogesh Das and his story

telling style. The paper discusses Das's significance as a storyteller during the Ramdhenu era, examining his literary contributions, writing style, major themes, and background influences. It's an academic work that explores Das's approach to realistic story telling and his importance in Assamese literature.

Tourism and Regional Development

In his tasteful article "সমবেশ, পাখিৰালয় আৰু পৰ্যটন" Sanjay Das tells the story of a travelogue. The writer tries to shed light on the holistic development and sustainable management of the tourism industry in the Indian part of the Sundarban Delta. The present model of Sundarban tourism can be ideal in the context of the greater Brahmaputra Valley in Assam.

Philosophy and Belief Systems

In his article, "ভূত আৰু ভগৱান" (Ghost and God" ,Dr Madine Hazarika attempts to present traditional belief systems. Several cases are presented here to establish the basis and logic of arguments about beliefs about ghosts and gods.

The article "**Fathers are the Sun and Mothers are the Moon**" by Kalyani N. Dubey explores the complementary roles of fathers and mothers in a child's emotional and psychological development. Like the sun, the father symbolises strength, guidance, and resilience, while the mother, like the moon, represents nurturing, emotional security, and intuition. Together, they create a balanced environment essential for a child's growth. The article also touches on the astrological significance of this metaphor, linking the sun to leadership and identity (father) and the moon to emotions and nurturing (mother), reinforcing their cosmic influence on a child's destiny.

Workplace and Well-being Studies

In their joint paper titled "Does Workplace Spirituality Lead to Raising Well-being Among Healthcare Professionals: Examining the Role of Gratitude," **Jyotsnali Chetia** and **Professor (Dr) Papori Baruah** examine how workplace spirituality affects the well-being of healthcare professionals and the role of gratitude in strengthening this link. Workplace spirituality, which includes meaningful work and a supportive environment, can help reduce stress and burnout in high-pressure healthcare settings. The study uses PLS-SEM to analyse data from healthcare professionals in Assam, India. Results show a strong positive connection between workplace spirituality and well-being, with gratitude further enhancing this effect. Organisations should promote spiritual fulfilment to improve employee well-being and job

This book, therefore, presents a vibrant assortment of ideas, offering readers a rich and varied intellectual experience in one go. The articles and papers within its pages are designed to keep readers engaged, offering a refreshing break from monotony. Instead of being confined to a single theme, which can sometimes feel tedious, this eclectic mix ensures that there is something for everyone. Whether it's exploring language, culture, social issues, or the environment, the diversity of topics will invigorate the reader's mind. This thoughtful compilation promises not only to capture attention but also to provide a delightful intellectual feast - perfect for those seeking a variety of perspectives to savor.



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Section I

Language and Education

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Development of Life Skills through Language Learning : A Case of Assamese-Medium Students in Assam, India

Dr. Protim Sharma

In the diverse educational landscape of India, one of the most pressing challenges lies in the holistic development of students, especially in rural and semi-urban areas where resources and infrastructure are often limited. Among the most vital skills for students today are life skills-competencies that extend beyond textbook knowledge to include critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and communication. In Assam, where Assamese is the medium of instruction in many schools, developing life skills through language learning presents a unique opportunity for students to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical, real-world applications.

This article examines the role of language learning in developing life skills among Assamese-medium students. Through exploring the challenges these students face and the potential of language education as a tool for life skill development, the article argues that fostering a skills-based approach within the classroom can significantly impact students' ability to navigate the complexities of life in the 21st century.

The Educational Atmosphere for Assamese-Medium Students

Assam, a northeastern state in India, is a region rich in cultural

heritage and home to a diverse population. The education system in the state, especially in rural areas, is often characterised by its reliance on Assamese as the primary medium of instruction. This unique cultural context, while providing a sense of linguistic identity and cultural pride, also presents specific challenges when integrating students into a more globalised world where English is the dominant communication medium.

In many Assamese-medium schools, the focus is predominantly on academic achievements, with less attention given to developing practical life skills. In most cases, the curriculum prioritises rote learning and theoretical knowledge, with limited interactive or experiential learning scope. Furthermore, Assamese-medium students in rural areas often face a lack of exposure to modern educational tools and methodologies, such as digital learning platforms, interactive group discussions, or peer collaborations. This lack of exposure hinders their ability to develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, as these tools and methodologies are essential for fostering these skills in a 21st-century context.

Despite these challenges, language learning in Assamese-medium schools holds significant potential to cultivate essential life skills. Language, after all, is not just a means of communication but a tool for thinking, reasoning, and connecting with others. As students learn their native language, they acquire vocabulary and grammar and develop cognitive and social skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth.

The Role of Language Learning in Developing Life Skills

Language learning is an inherently multifaceted process that, when taught effectively, can contribute significantly to developing life skills. The language classroom, especially in Assamese-medium education, can become a space where students create a

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range of competencies that extend far beyond language proficiency. The following sections explore how language learning can foster essential life skills among Assamese-medium students.

1. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills

Language education encourages students to think critically and analyse information from multiple perspectives. Students are challenged to interpret texts, identify key themes, and develop their arguments through reading, writing, and discussion activities. For Assamese-medium students, who often learn in their mother tongue, using language as a tool for deep thinking becomes even more effective because they can engage with content more intuitively and personally.

One example of this can be found in literature-based activities. When Assamese-medium students read local folktales, poems, or stories, they are not only exposed to the rich cultural heritage of their region. They are also encouraged to analyse these texts' moral lessons. For instance, a story about a hero overcoming adversity can inspire students to develop problem-solving skills by considering how the character approached challenges and what lessons can be applied to their lives. Similarly, a poem that presents a complex issue can stimulate critical thinking as students discuss and interpret its meaning. This learning method encourages a deeper, more thoughtful engagement with content and nurtures critical thinking.

2. Collaboration and Social Interaction

In today's interconnected world, working collaboratively and communicating effectively with others is crucial. Language learning in the Assamese-medium context can play an instrumental role in developing these social and collaborative skills. Group discussions, debates, and collaborative projects in the classroom

allow students to practice these skills.

In rural areas of Assam, where students often belong to tight-knit communities, the ability to communicate effectively within a group is essential. For example, an Assamese-medium classroom discussion on a current event, a local issue, or even a historical topic allows students to articulate their thoughts in their native language, listen to others, and engage in respectful dialogue. This process enhances communication and helps students learn to appreciate diverse viewpoints and work together to arrive at a shared understanding.

3. Empathy and Emotional Intelligence

Language learning also plays a significant role in the development of emotional intelligence, which is essential for students to navigate social interactions and relationships. In Assamese-medium classrooms, the focus on stories and narratives from local culture provides opportunities for students to connect emotionally with the characters and situations described. By discussing these stories, students can better understand the emotions and motivations of others, which fosters empathy.

An example is the teaching of Assamese folktales, where characters often face moral dilemmas or must choose between right and wrong. These tales engage students with cultural values and provide them with the tools to understand the emotional dimensions of different situations. When students discuss these narratives, they practice identifying emotions, expressing their feelings, and learning how to respond to others' emotions in a supportive manner.

4. Communication and Presentation Skills

Language education inherently promotes the development of communication skills. Through storytelling, presentations, and

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group discussions, students can improve their ability to express themselves clearly and confidently. In the Assamese-medium context, the language classroom provides a safe space for students to practice speaking in front of others without the pressure of switching to a second language, like English.

For Assamese-medium students, having a strong command of their native language can significantly boost their confidence in communication. This confidence is key not only in academic settings but also in their future careers, where clear and effective communication is essential. Whether presenting a class project or engaging in informal conversations, students learn how to structure their thoughts and convey their ideas coherently and persuasively.

Challenges to Effective Life Skills Development in Assamese-Medium Education

While the potential for language learning to develop life skills is clear, the educational system in Assam faces several challenges in fully realising this potential. One of the primary issues is students' limited exposure to practical, real-world applications of the language. Often, Assamese-medium students are taught in isolation from the globalised world, which can hinder their ability to develop the skills necessary for success in a rapidly changing, interconnected society. To address these challenges, it is crucial to integrate more interactive and experiential learning methods into the curriculum, provide access to modern educational tools and methodologies, and create opportunities for students to apply their language skills in real-world contexts.

The lack of infrastructure, such as access to digital tools, interactive learning environments, and modern teaching methods, further complicates life skills development. In many rural schools, teachers may not have the resources or training to in-

corporate life-skill-focused teaching strategies into their language curriculum. Additionally, the limited availability of English-medium resources can also pose a challenge, as many global trends and practices in education are based on English.

Furthermore, cultural resistance often exists to shifting from traditional, rote learning methods to more interactive and skills-oriented approaches. In many Assamese-medium classrooms, the focus remains on grammar and textbook-based learning, which may not always encourage critical thinking or problem-solving skills. Overcoming this resistance and embracing a more holistic, skills-based approach to language learning will require significant policy and grassroots changes.

Language learning is a powerful tool for developing life skills that can help Assamese-medium students face the challenges of modern life. By integrating critical thinking, collaboration, empathy, and communication skills into the language curriculum, educators can equip students with the tools they need to succeed in academics and their personal and professional lives. However, realising the full potential of language education as a vehicle for life skill development in Assam requires overcoming significant challenges, including resource limitations, infrastructure gaps, and resistance to change in educational practices. Educators, policymakers, and communities need to work together to create an environment where language learning is not just about mastering grammar and vocabulary but also about preparing students for the complexities of life. By doing so, Assamese-medium students will be better positioned to become confident, capable individuals who can contribute to the growth and development of their communities and beyond.

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Choice is Yours

Dr. Lalita Bisen

'Words are free. It's how you use them that may cost you.'

- Kipling Williams

Humans wish to lead a cherished life full of success, love, affection, peace, etc. But life doesn't provide anything for free. Those who wish to have a perfect life have to make many choices at various time intervals. Our choice decides our path and navigates us to a certain destination. Most of the time, life puts us in such challenging situations where choosing a particular thing/person/situation gets difficult. The 'to be or not to be' thought bewilders us to such an extent that choosing one particular thing seems taxing. Keeping aside challenging situations, simple daily life choices seem arduous for some.

Out of all the choices, according to me, using soft words/language seems easier as well as beneficial as compared to making tough choices.

What are words? Why choosing soft words seem an easier choice as compared to other choices?

Words/language is the powerhouse of human expression, a powerful drug used by mankind. It has the power to keep people intact as well as separate them. The words/language one uses create an instant impact on the listener and show its repercussions in a moment. Other choices- exercising daily, taking less stress, avoiding procrastination, etc. - the list is endless, may

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take time to exhibit their impact. Other choices compound over time and show their impact in the future.

Recently, after four years, I met my maternal aunts at a family gathering. My youngest aunt is highly educated and a retired government employee. I held her in high regard and knew her as a straightforward woman, always ready to help others, a person with a good sense of humour, and many other admirable qualities.

I was about to greet her, enquire about her health, well-being and other matters, but before I could initiate the conversation, she started yelling on her granddaughter in a shrill, cacophonous tone. What surprised me more was not her loud voice but her choice of words. The nasty, derogatory words used by her were competent enough to restrict me from starting a conversation. I was shocked by the slang language used by her which reflected the traits of an uncultured, uncivilized society and family. The girl for whom those obscene words were used became morose as she had done nothing to warrant it.

Feeling embarrassed, she left the place with a heavy heart. I looked at others for their reaction. Everybody seemed shocked but nobody reacted. Throughout the day, I noticed my aunt using slang and repeating the same insulting behaviour with different people, irrespective of their age and relation. This attitude and behaviour tensed the entire atmosphere.

Later I came to know that she had been using disgusting language and a high pitch for many days. My distant relative, on a lighter note, pointed out to her that she was using very degraded language and questioned her education and mental status. He requested her to become polite, speak softly and use respectful terms, if not for her sake, then at least for the sake of the family name. My other cousins were equally stunned by her language

usage.

At the end of the day, I pondered over the repercussions of her language use and realized that her words shook every family member and maligned her identity. Her educational and workplace achievements had converted her into an egoistic person who, under superiority complex, wrongly considered it right to use foul language and loud noise.

Contrary to her was the approach of my elder aunt. Although they were real sisters, but the behaviour was drastically different. I don't remember seeing her using any kind of despicable words in any context. She was always decent, soft-spoken, and used respectful words/language. Even when angry, she maintained her poise, used proper language and tone.

When I evaluated the behaviour of both aunts, I found that the youngest aunt had spoiled her image and identity due to the usage of improper language. All those who liked her earlier avoided conversation with her due to fear that she might quarrel for nothing.

Human nature can change anytime under the influence of various circumstances. Love, affection, respect, optimistic surrounding, negative situations, etc. create their own impact. Sometimes we cannot control the situation and feel handicapped. Changed circumstances create both positive and negative traits in a person's personality. It is not necessary that only positive circumstances can lead to positive personality. It can have a negative impact also, as can be seen in the case of my youngest aunt. She had become arrogant, rude and insensitive due to her achievements. She had many choices in front of her. She could choose to be soft-spoken and more understanding, which would have elevated her respect in everybody's eyes, as using harsh versus soft words, being rude versus sympathetic, choosing wisely to lead a peaceful life or choosing foolishly and being under stress

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is purely an individual's choice. It doesn't take any effort, nor does it require any finances, to make better choices.

Words are the powerful tool which can change the entire world of the speaker as well as the listener. By using soft words, you can boost morale of someone, create self-confidence, make a person feel better, and create a belief that people understand them. Decent language creates an optimistic and growth-oriented environment, encourages positive and constructive conversations, strengthen relationships, etc.

The language we use in communication can deeply influence the quality and outcome of interactions. The conscious decision of choosing soft words ensures that people feel valued and respected, leading to better rapport and mutual trust. A person needs to examine their own behaviour, how they feel, when people speak politely with them. They should treat others accordingly.

Each of us has got two distinct choices to make. What to do is up to us. Other will surely have influence on our choice, but whichever choice we make we will have to face the consequences, as everything that happens to us is the reflection of the choices we make.

We all wish to live in a welcoming surrounding, so why to wait for others to begin? We are capable of choosing. We have a choice: to use soft words/ language or not to use it.

It's easy to be harsh. And it's easy to be soft. And the choice is yours.

A Study on the level of Education of Tea Garden Women of Charaideo District of Assam

Barnali Lahkar

Introduction :

Educating a child today is making a strong nation for tomorrow. The tea tribe community people spread in different areas throughout the state of Assam which form a major percentage of population in Assam. Assam literacy cannot achieve 100 percentage, unless all the children receive education. According to Article 21-A of the Indian Constitution, both the Union as well as State Government is responsible for providing free and compulsory education to the children of age group of 6 to 14 years. Despite of many governmental initiatives some community people especially the tea tribe community of Assam still lagging and the governmental policies are unable to reach the desired goal. Therefore, they are unable to gain higher social status. There are many factors behind their lower literacy rates. Some factors are related to individual level and some other at community level. Therefore, their problems must be identified with well research in order to locate and solve their problem in order to build up a healthy community.

Review of related literature :

Sarma (1994), in her study of education problems of Tea garden labourers in Assam found that the causes of non-schooling of the children belonging to tea tribe are lack of parental attitude and disinterest in education. This is because that they are

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sure and confined to work in the tea-garden only. Therefore, no schooling is needed according to them. Bora (2002) surveyed the tea gardens of Dibrugarh District and found that the enrolment of girl child is lower than boys due to early marriage. He also stated that schools in the tea garden area fail to create a motivating environment to attract the students. Gogoi and Handique (2014) in their study on Girl Child Education among Tea-Tribes in Rajgarh Tea Estate of Dibrugarh District of Assam, stated some factors that causes low educational rates among the girl child belonging to the Tea- Tribe community. These factors as stated by them were household works, parents' unfavourable attitude, financial problems, engagement in tea gardens as tea labourers, lack of facilities. They concluded that still the educational status of girl child is low among the tea tribes. Bora (2017), in his study Education of Tea Tribe Children: A case study of Udalguri District of Assam surveyed tea gardens and found that the enrolment of girl children is lower than boys due to early marriage. He also stated that schools in the tea garden area fail to create a motivating environment to attract students. Kalita (2018) in his study mentioned that alcoholism is one of the shortcomings of their society which hampers their overall development, including their education. Sahu and Bhuyan (2022), in their study on the educational status of the tea tribe community in Assam, stated some factors that cause low educational status. These factors are family duty, early death of their parents, parental support, and child marriage.

The review of related literature reveals that different causes create hindrances towards improving the educational conditions of the tea tribe community. A little research has been done by considering the parameter i.e. education. Therefore the present study intended to study the level of education of Tea Garden Women of Charaideo District of Assam.

Objectives of Study

- i. To study the level of education of the tea-garden women.
- ii. To study the problems in education of the tea-garden women.
- iii. To suggest measures for improving their educational status.

Significance of the study

The present study is significant because the majorities of the women of tea garden community are engaged in the tea industry on a daily wage basis. Moreover, the Govt. of India along with the state government is committed to provide free and compulsory education to all children from 6 to 14 years of age. Therefore it is very much important to know the level of education, causes of dropout and how to improve the educational status of the tea garden women.

Methodology of the Study

The method used for the present study is the descriptive survey method. The present study is conducted through the collection of both primary and secondary data. For collection of primary data, a self-structure interview schedule is used. Data was collected from 50 tea garden women of Lengibar Tea Estate of Charaideo District of Assam.

Level of education :

Table 1.5 Level of Education of the respondents.

Level of education	Number of respondents	Percentage
Primary education	10	20 %
Secondary education	12	24%
Higher education	08	16%
No Education	10	20%
Drop Out	10	20%

Table 1 revealed that 20% of the respondents were in primary class, 24% were receiving secondary education 16% were receiving higher education. 20% have never received any formal education and other 20% have left their education before completion.

Table 2: Causes of Drop-outs and non-attending school.

Causes	No. of respondents	Percentage
Medium of instruction	0	
Financial problem	5	10%
Parents' negative attitude	7	14%
Marriage 5 10%	5	10%
Pregnancy and child-birth	3	6%
Other reason	0	

Table 2 revealed that out of 40% respondents who have never attend school and have left the school, the table shows that majority of students have left education because of parents' negative attitude. 10% of them were facing financial problem and 10% left school due to marriage and 6% due to pregnancy and child birth.

Educational Status :

The educational condition of tea tribe women is not satisfactory at all. Not only of the women but among the entire tea labour community, the educational condition is very poor. They are deprived of basic educational facilities. Women and girls are the worst sufferers in this field. Along with the prevalent social evils of their community and many other factors are responsible for their poor educational condition. Due to their ignorance and poverty they themselves do not show much interest in education. Again because of the poor financial condition of the family, the parents find it difficult to pay fees for school

going children. Also parents' attitude towards girls' education is unfavourable. From an early age girls are engaged in different household activities. They are employed in money earning jobs in the tea gardens. As both the parents work, so in the absence of their mothers, the girls have to look after almost all the responsibilities of family life including taking care of younger siblings. Hence they have no time for study and for that matter attending schools. As a result they perform poorly in examinations and most girls leave study without completion. So the drop-out rate is high among them. Even if some of them wish for education, their home and social environment is not good for education. Higher education is not possible for most of them. Due to poverty, parents are interested in engaging their girls in money earning jobs. Another important factor of unwillingness among girl students to go to school is because of lack of adequate facilities and poor infrastructure of educational institutions, they do not get motivated. The practice of alcoholism in many ways place an obstacle and has an adverse effect on female education. Due to the tradition of early marriage among the tea tribe community, girls are deprived of taking education. Besides all these government's apathy towards quality education among them is another aspect of their poor status in the field of education.

Suggestions :

1. Educational awareness campaigns should be organised specially in the remote areas to make the people conscious and aware about the need and importance of education.
2. Importance should be given to open and distance education, so that working women also can receive education.
3. Awareness about family planning should be made among the tribal community. As the elder son/daughter has to leave school

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to look after their siblings or has to work for financially helping their parents.

4. Sex education should be a part of the curriculum since secondary education.

5. Opportunities for scholarship for the bright students and those who want to pursue higher education should be made.

6. Some skill based programmes should be organized to engage the younger generation, so that they could spend their leisure time in quality and productive work instead of some anti-social work such as gambling, which is not lesser prevalent among them.

Conclusion :

Due to the poor socio economic condition and educational unawareness they fail to maintain better living style. Through some facilities are provided by the garden authorities to the labourer it is not enough to live the life comfortably. Their wages rate is very low to survive in the present economy. Government takes various initiatives or schemes for the upliftment to the socio-economic condition of tea community people and proper implementation of these initiatives will change the life of tea garden workers and their community.

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Section II

Literature and Environmental Perspectives

Safeguarding the Environment through Literature : An Analysis of Richard Powers's The Overstory

**Amarendra Mohanty
Maj. Dr. Jayadeb Sahoo**

Introduction :

In a world where environmental degradation continues to rise, literature has become one of the best means of awareness, raising urgent calls to action in literature. The writer can make the reader reflect on the world and the position of the person within it, often compelling them to question their relationship with nature. Among those, however, was environmental literature known as eco-literature for that matter front and centre as a genre in the portrayal of the natural world but also riffs on ecological crises in advocacy for preservation and stewardship. Richard Powers's Pulitzer Prize-winning Novel 'The Overstory' is, truly, one of the greatest examples of how literature can raise awareness of the environment. It stands not only for its storytelling but also to challenge readers to act toward protecting nature. Its very interlinked narrative structure, unfolds a full discussion on the relationship of humans to nature, pleading that people take some action toward protecting nature's natural world from destruction. This paper examines the relationship of literary work to environmental activism and how narration is used to expose its effectiveness in campaigning for ecological

protection.

Eco-Literature as Environmental Advocacy

Eco-literature forms a unique genre in which the beautiful and fragile, complex nature of the earth is portrayed. Under this sub-category of literature, the writers devise stories that are not only concerning nature but also encompass issues of the ecological type, including the losses of tree cultures, climate change, and species extinction. These narratives from the writers initiate thoughts within the minds of readers as concerns their own exertions on the environment. Eco-literature can touch the hearts, create environmental awareness, and prompt collective action.

The novel wove its tales of trees and how their existence plays a significant role in human survival. The environmental message becomes starkly evident that the exploitation of natural resources to people's alienation from nature, it is unsustainable. Literature makes this work because it generates emotions and connects one to things that he or she may otherwise not be able to focus or identify with.

Richard Powers's 'The Overstory' : An Ecological Epic

The Overstory is more than just a novel, it epitomises an environmental myth where nine distinct lives are narrated to a great degree in relation to trees. It touches on the negative side of mankind but acknowledges and places the way of nature in a higher regard whilst writing. It teaches a special direction that imbibes determination, however, for each of these factors in their relationship with trees, though ultimately goes into one realisation that the environment is in trouble and something must be done about it. This allowed Powers to convey concerns about the environment personally. He expressed that humans relate emotionally and spiritually to nature through the two main char-

acters' processes. It is through this interrelation between human life and nature that *The Overstory* makes environmental protection both existentially necessary and presents it as a fundamental requirement rather than a duty.

The author emphasises that the trees have their histories, not just sets for human activity. The purpose of eco-literature is to encourage the voices that are ignored, including those of nature itself, and this narrative shift gives voice to the environment. Powers develops a sense of kinship with the environment through the use of rich, intricate fiction that allows readers to experience the awe and beauty of the trees.

Themes of Activism and Environmental Preservation

The aspect of activism is one of the key ideas in the novel *The Overstory*. The novel makes it clear that some of the characters in the novel become environmentalists and go out into the streets to participate in rallies, act in civil disobedience, and fight for various campaigns for the protection of the forests. Representative members of such bio criticism - Olivia Vandergriff or Patricia Wester Ford, for example - are the ones who deserve praise for the change accomplished by the eco-literature. They set out as mundane persons, but the things around them influence them so much that they become active participants. It says more about American environmental movements, in particular, the fight to save ancient forests in the Northwest. By drawing such parallels, Powers's writing fills the void between the imaginary and the practical, affirming that imagination can provoke actions in the real world. Indeed, one thinks about how, rather than giving a passing thought to an environmental crisis, one can make up a strategy against it. It challenges the human-centred approach that has contributed to ecological degradation and advocates for a reorientation of humanity's perspective toward a more eco-centric worldview.

mentalism can take root. In our current era of ecological crisis, it is literature such as *The Overstory* that serves to remind us that stories can encourage all sorts of action and particularly so when we widen our circles of empathy out from ourselves and our own times in the present to include other beings and future generations. Writers can change hearts and minds, and storytelling is vital in the cultural transformation required to protect our planet.

Literature Review :

Stewart Garrett in his paper 'Organic Reformations in Richard Powers's *The Overstory*' aims to explain how the novel "The Overstory" by Richard Power explores the important connection between people and nature. He shows how then oveluse sits structure and language to make us see how every thing in nature is linked ,just like the characters and stories. Further to this, the paper refers to how the characters in the novel change, getting more passionate for the environment, and how the author uses words and phrases to help us understand the messages of nature. Powers is found to use a remarkable "organic form" and an interweaving narrative structure that artfully reflect the intricacies inherent in nature, ending with the great theme of interconnectedness. His distinctive and poetic writing style, as well as the skilful use of recurring motifs, contribute much to the impact of the novel as literature. The transformation of characters into ecological passion is conducted as a literary journey from individualism to collective purpose within the scope of the message of the work. This makes Language a pivotal link between humans and the natural world to read into the things of nature. The story then elaborates with some clever language and botanical knowledge to convey a deeper ecological point which in turn pulls the reader even deeper.

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In the study titled "The Overstory: Plant Life and Richard Powers." In their in-depth examination of Richard Powers' "The Overstory," Dr. M. Raja Vishwanathan and Jismy K. Joseph highlight Patricia Westerford's role and her groundbreaking studies on the emotions and communication of trees. The author creates a comparison of early Western science with the work of Jadesh Chandra Bose, the scientist who believed that plants had emotions almost identical to humans. The quotation throws light on Westerford's total investment in research and her employing, among other things, gas chromatography-mass spectrometry to demonstrate that trees are social beings and can signal each other about dangers. These results challenge the traditional picture of trees being merely passive entities and stress their interdependence. The writer also realizes the difficulties Westerford confronts in her struggle for scientific recognition, particularly because of her womanhood. This indicates that even the general issues faced by scientists and green activists who have been trying to warn the world of the forthcoming climate catastrophe but their alerts were mainly neglected. Here, the writer is comparing the problems of Westerford with those of other scientific colleagues like Dan Shechtman who were exposed to doubt before proving their findings. Therefore, the commentary gives an account of the resistance to the introduction of a fresh idea in the scientific community. Moreover, the citation evaluates the critique of scientific partiality charges by Powers and promotes a need for a balanced method of study with the inclusion of literature and humanities. As a result, it also proposes that the research of metaphysical and ethical elements may be resolved not only by science. On one hand, it is a mixed review of "The Overstory," which exhibits its major themes like science, nature and societal biases. Alongside is the portrayal of Richard Powers as an activist who is longing for a unified relationship between the environment and man." The article further takes note of the author's bias issues in the science sector and hints at the possibility that science can be brought together with

literature and humanities. The statement that can be drawn from the whole novel is that science, nature and social problems are rarely mixed in a way that would force you to think.

Research Methods and Approach

This study employs literary analysis as its primary research method, aiming to explore and interpret the themes, symbols, characters, and narrative techniques present in 'The Overstory.' The chosen research approach is qualitative, emphasising an in-depth examination of the novel's content rather than quantitative data collection.

To identify and analyse pertinent themes, 'The Overstory' underwent multiple readings, with a particular focus on themes relating to the environment, nature, human-nature relationships, and ecological concerns. A detailed analysis of characters within the novel was conducted, with a specific emphasis on their roles in environmental advocacy and their journeys of ecological awakening. This study adopts Ecocriticism as a foundational critical framework. It provides a lens through which the environmental themes present in 'The Overstory' can be comprehensively explored. This study also considers the responses of readers to the novel and its environmental messages. It involves an examination of critical reviews, reader comments, and discussions to gauge the novel's impact on readers' environmental awareness and consciousness. The application of close reading, comparative analysis, and reader response analysis serves as specific tools to enhance the depth and breadth of the analysis, ultimately contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the environmental themes within the novel.

Environmental Themes in Richard Powers's *The Overstory*

In *The Overstory*, Richard Powers brings trees to life as central characters, each with a distinct personality and history,

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emphasising their connection to human lives. For instance, Mimas, an ancient chestnut tree, and Avatar, a giant redwood, highlight the profound bond between humans and the natural world. The novel explores the interconnectedness of ecosystems, portraying trees as living archives through Nicholas Hoel's study of tree rings and climate patterns, which illustrate the intricate web of life. Environmental activism is another key theme, exemplified by Patricia Westerford's transformation from scientist to advocate after discovering trees' ability to communicate chemically, and by other characters' efforts to protect forests through protests and acts of civil disobedience.

Powers also addresses the destructive impact of human activities, vividly depicting the devastation caused by deforestation in the Redwood Forest and its emotional toll on the characters. This destruction underscores modern humanity's disconnection from nature, a detachment challenged by characters like Olivia Vandergriff, who experiences a transformative reconnection with the environment. The novel underscores the ethical responsibility of stewardship, with characters embodying the commitment to preserve forests and highlighting the moral obligation to protect the planet.

By contrasting the fleeting nature of human existence with the longevity of trees, such as the millennia-spanning redwoods, Powers invites readers to consider the long-term consequences of their actions. Despite its depiction of environmental degradation, *The Overstory* offers hope, portraying efforts to replant and restore forests as symbols of resilience and the potential for renewal. This narrative ultimately serves as a powerful call to reimagine humanity's relationship with the natural world and embrace the role of environmental stewardship.

In *'The Overstory,'* Richard Powers skilfully weaves these environmental themes into a narrative that challenges readers to re-

reflect on their relationship with the natural world. Through the novel's intricate characters and their journeys, Powers explores the profound interconnectedness between humans and nature, urging us to consider our role as stewards of the environment. Let's explore how 'The Overstory' has had an impact on environmental discourse, activism, and its reception among critics, environmentalists, and the general public, as well as any real-world initiatives or movements it has inspired :

Influence on Environmental Discourse and Activism:

Increased Environmental Awareness : 'The Overstory' has played a significant role in raising environmental awareness among readers. Its vivid portrayal of the natural world and the interconnectedness of ecosystems has prompted many to re-evaluate their relationship with the environment.

Promotion of Tree Conservation: The novel's focus on trees as central characters has contributed to a heightened interest in tree conservation and the vital role of forests in mitigating climate change.

Inspiration for Environmental Activism : The novel has inspired individuals to become more engaged in environmental activism. Readers have been moved to take action to protect trees and forests, whether through tree-planting initiatives, protests against deforestation, or support for conservation organisations.

Environmentalists' Praise : Environmentalists and conservationists have lauded the novel for its accurate portrayal of ecological concepts and its ability to convey the urgency of environmental issues.

Varied Reader Responses: While many readers and environmental enthusiasts have praised the novel for its environmental

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themes, its length and complexity have led to mixed reactions among the general public. Some readers have found it challenging but ultimately rewarding, while others have struggled with its narrative structure.

Real-World Initiatives and Movements :
Tree-Planting Campaigns: 'The Overstory' has inspired tree-planting campaigns in various regions. Communities and organisations have organised tree-planting events to promote reforestation and combat deforestation.

Forest Conservation Efforts : Some environmental organisations have used the novel as a platform to raise funds and awareness for forest conservation projects. This includes efforts to protect old-growth forests and fragile ecosystems.

Novel Clubs and Discussions: Numerous novel clubs and reading groups have chosen 'The Overstory' as a discussion topic. These discussions often lead to conversations about environmental responsibility and activism.

Educational Programs : Educational institutions have incorporated 'The Overstory' into their curricula, using it to teach students about environmental literature, ecology, and the role of literature in environmental advocacy. 'The Overstory' has had a profound impact on environmental discourse and activism by inspiring readers to appreciate and protect trees and forests, fostering a deeper understanding of ecological concepts, and sparking conversations about our environmental responsibilities. Its critical acclaim and recognition by environmentalists have helped elevate the importance of literature as a medium for addressing environmental issues, mak-

ing it a significant contribution to both literature and environmental advocacy.

Conclusion:

This research explores the strong impact of Richard Powers's *The Overstory* on environmental discussions and activism. By looking closely at the novel's themes, symbols, and messages about the environment, as well as its effect on critics, environmentalists, and the public, it is clear that *The Overstory* holds an important place in environmental literature.

The main findings highlight how powerful literature, especially *The Overstory*, can be in encouraging environmental protection. The novel's ability to give trees a voice and show how all life is connected has made readers more aware of the need to care for the planet. The recognition it has received, including the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, shows its role in helping people understand environmental issues and take action.

The impact of *The Overstory* goes beyond its literary value. It has inspired tree-planting efforts, supported environmental activism, and sparked discussions about how we can protect the environment. It proves that literature can change the way we think, build empathy, and inspire action.

Looking ahead, it becomes apparent that the relationship of literature to environmental protection is worth exploring further. Future studies can compare *The Overstory* with other environmentally focused novels to determine what makes some works especially powerful in conveying their environmental messages. Understanding readers' responses to *The Overstory* and how it might change their actions over time may provide insight into its impact over time. Another area of study could be how the novel like *The Overstory* can be used in environmental educa-

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tion to help people better understand and address environmental issues. Working together with ecologists, environmental scientists, and literature experts could also give us a better understanding of how literature helps protect the environment. The Overstory has shown us why the natural world is worthwhile and how literature can be leveraged to create awareness as well as inspire action toward change. It demonstrates literature's power to support the protection of the environment, but its impact keeps growing further. As we look to the connection between literature and environmental advocacy, we are once again reminded that novel can inspire positive change and urge us to live in harmony with the earth.

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A Study of Ecocritical Perspectives in Anuradha Shrama Pujari's *Eyat Ekhon Aranyo Asil*

Mayashri Das

Eco-criticism is one of the literary and cultural theories that explore the linguistic and literary representation of the physical environment. The area of ecocriticism in literature which started as an Anglo-American literary movement is now acknowledged in many other countries, including India. Writings on ecology and nature are not new in Indian literature. Starting from ancient literature like Veda, Purana, Sangam literature, Doha, Pad, and various short stories up to the literature of the contemporary period carried the portrayal of human-nature relationships. And among this reservoir of Indian Literature, works on Assamese Language and culture also have an important place in contribution to the field of ecological literature.

The area of ecocriticism which initially started as an Anglo-American literary trend later spread to all over the world. In case of Indian literary traditions this area of study paved a way to develop new perspective in literary analysis. Specifically, the regional literary works from the reservoir of Indian literature holds a strong affinity towards ecological environment. In such, the literary works in Assamese also offers a plethora of gems in respect to the ecological literacy.

Contemporaneously, a good number of Assamese novelists write novel on the basis of eco-critical perspective cautiously. In novels like *Xukula hatir khuj*(2012) Prabhat Goswami draws attention towards human and elephant conflict. *Rumyang*(2016) by

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Gobin kumar Khound is a novel based on the life of 'Forest man of India', Jadav Payeng. In the novel *Eyat Ekhan Aranya Asil* (2018), Anuradha Sharma Pujari discovers herself in between the conflict of human, nature, and city-life. This novel is based in the backdrop of eviction in Amchang Reserve, Guwahati. In ecocritical research analysis on Anuradha Sharma Pujari's *Iyat Ekhan Aranya Asil* (Anviksha, Department of Assamese, Dibrugarh University, Vol VI, 2021, p.85-93, J. Das placed an extensive analysis of the novel in respect to the eco-consciousness and eco literacy.

In addition, there are some more works on Assamese Literature from the perspective ecocriticism have done by the researchers. Such as, Dr. Gitirekha Bhuyan's research article 'The Reflection of Ecocriticism in the stories of Gobinda Prasad Sarma: A Critical Analysis' (SSRG-IJHSS, Vol 7 Issue - 4, 2020, p94-96) discusses on exploitation on natural resources and eco-consciousness in her research.

The novel *Eyat ekhon aronya asil* by Anuradha Sharma Pujari is a masterpiece in Assamese literature published in the year 2018 and won the prestigious Sahitya Akademy Award in 2021. This novel has been translated into English under the title *The Forest Wails* by Bhaswati Parasar published by Walnut Publication in 2021. The central setting of the novel is set on a real ecological area which concerns with the ecological destruction of Amsing Forest of Assam, India. The author successfully placed and presented some major issues of ecology through the central themes and characters of the novel.

The setting of the novel is placed in a real ecological region of Assam, that is the Amsing forest and nearby areas of Guwahati. The Amsing Forest which was later recognised into Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the eastern side of Guwahati, Assam, India. It is a habitat of many rare and endangered spe-

cies of birds and animals. This forest faced a massive deforestation and exploitation which now holds a land area of 78.64 square kilometres at present time. In the novel, the Author A. Pujari highlights on various reasons such as population burst due to economic immigration, advancement of the metro city Guwahati towards the forest area, and political motives which lead to a massive and rapid deforestation of Amchang Forest.

Narrative of the novel

The narrative of the novel takes a gradual shift from an anthropocentric attitude to a more nature centric version. At first the story centres more on the human miseries. Through the narratives the author tries to mark the people's sufferings happening due to the eviction. As Malati, one of the narrator's neighbours says:

"I feel pity for these people too. Where will they go? And government has not offered any alternative place also where they could move! No rehabilitation, only eviction. How can that be a solution?" (P. B, 22)

The narrator later shifts to a more eco-centric narrative and expresses her worries for the birds, animals and trees of the forest. This eco-centric narrative technique of the novel attempts and succeeds in creating a sense of eco-consciousness among the reader. However, the eco-centric narrative which took a shift after the anthropocentric narrative in the novel, develops without showing any anti-anthropocentric attitude towards the poor immigrants of the hills. While discussing on a serious issue of Human-nature conflicts that often occurs in the forest sites, the narrator tries to compare the importance of forest and human lives where she expresses her concern towards the forest and the trees;

"It is not a matter of competition whether people are important

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or the forest. It is about existence, about survival now. People will survive when there is the forest. Who can tell this better than the people living in the countries of the expanding deserts! ...When will we understand that importance of what we have! It will be too late if we don't step out even now to protect whatever we are left with." (P.B, 181)

The narrative of the novel also makes use of various ecological elements as imageries which make this text an ecstatic piece of art in the field of ecological literacy. For instance, in one part of the novel the author beautifully captures the paradoxical imagery to describe the sense of home and homelessness through a pair of doves sheltering on the roof of the author's house and the carpenter Babla making a house for the pair of pigeon when the character himself is living in a fear of losing his house due to the eviction in the forest areas started by the government. The expression of disgust in Babla's face which turned into an expression of pleasure while making a house of the pigeon pair, the character of Madhuri's young cousin crying to turn a dead butterfly alive carries a sense of development of eco-consciousness among the common people.

Moreover, the pair of pigeon and a pair of owls sharing the same nest in also carries an important meaning in the novel. Owl, which belongs to the category carnivorous and nocturnal species of birds sharing the same nest with the herbivorous pigeons in day and night shifts shows the situation of people living in 'shift rent houses' in crowded metro cities like Guwahati. Even after belonging to a noticeably different species, the owl and the pigeon living in harmony reflect the adjustable lives of people in bigger cities regardless of their caste and religion. The author further draws this imagery of owl and pigeon living in harmony to describe the necessity of harmony and understanding between countries like India and Pakistan.

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chapter three the narrator expresses her empathy for the people living in the forest areas :

"Home does not mean only the four walls or the tin roofs- it is the repository of memories. Madhuri had to come to that house as a bride; her children were born and raised in that house; ... Madhuri may be poor but her memories are not! Four porters may be able to carry the physical belongings but how will they carry the burden of these memories? All the people like Madhuri will be homeless; will be stripped off their memories from tomorrow. Were these people at fault?" (P.B., 27)

On the other hand, through the characters like Ranjan, a guard from forest department, the author throws light on the miseries of birds and animals. As the character of Ranjan bursts with anger and expresses his worries for the deforestation and endangerment of many rare species of the forest due to the illegal occupancy of land in Amching forest, a sense of eco-consciousness can be seen in the narrator's words. And in the later parts of the novel the author shares more emphasis on ecological issues as the Amching forest is considered as the lung of a crowded metropolitan city Guwahati. The homelessness faced by the birds and animal was also portrayed through several incidents in the novel. One of such depiction can be seen as the narrator witnessed an unnatural phenomenon as a pair of pigeon shares their nest with a pair of owls because their natural habitats were destroyed in deforestation. This shows how destruction affect lives and can push beyond their natural limits.

Besides, the author takes the theme of homelessness to another level by extending its meaning from external or geographical homelessness to the sense of internal or mental homelessness. In the fourth chapter of the novel, the narrator compares the lives of her maid Madhuri, with her friend Juti to express the distinction between physical and emotional homelessness. In

one hand, Madhuri who is living in an uncertainty of losing her house due to the eviction in the forest yet living a content and peaceful life whereas on the other hand Juti, after having a proper house, identity, financial status suffering from a constant sense of emotional homelessness due to the mental and emotion turmoil resulted from the unstable relationship with her husband Sashank. The narrator pondered her friend Juti's pain of emotional homelessness as she says;

"A lady who had everything in life is completely shattered now- I never thought that the pain of devastation could touch people who had everything in life in plenty. The devastation of emotions -love, trusts can destroy a person- can make him homeless even when he has one."(P.B., 49)

At the end of this chapter the narrator clearly states that the sense of emotional homelessness can lead a person or human to lose his humanity and empathy towards life.

The role of political leaders, government is also boldly reflected on the novel. The novel portrays the burning issues of deforestation, animal poaching which started with illegal occupancy of forest areas aided and supported by the political leaders to increase the vote bank in their favour. The responsibility and politics of some public leaders has been revealed in the novel as the narrator questions an officer holding an important position at the Municipal Administration by asking him about the schemes and benefits provided to those so-called illegal residents. Through the character of Ranjan, the author expresses the anger and frustration of forest guards and ecological activists whose urge to protect the forest, the trees and the animals have been constantly discouraged and suppressed through some suspicious role played by the government.

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Deforestation and Eco-consciousness

The whole storyline of the novel revolves around the theme of deforestation and eco-consciousness. Even the title "Eyat ekhon Oronyo Asil" literally translates to disappearance of a forest. Besides, a commendable portion of the novel has been devoted to bring out the issue of deforestation and its impact on the flora and fauna of a particular habitat. As the narrator recalls the time when she shifted to her new house, she shares some memories of seeing chubby fat foxes in her backyard, different species of birds in her front yard which are no longer available in her neighbouring places. The horrible exploitation of the forest has been expressed in the novel as Ranjan, one of the dedicated forest guards brings forth and explains the real picture of deforestation to the narrator; "The people who are staying in the hill of Amchang forest were brought and settled there by a minister. To safeguard his seat in his area, he did this.... These people killed the trees by planting chemicals beside the roots of the trees. They would cut these trees, chop them off into smaller logs and wrapping inside huge plastic sheets, they would place them in holes already dug for the purpose of hiding them from the forest department." (PB, 86)

In the novel one of the important characters Rajbonsi justifies his reason by saying that if a person builds a house and settles in the forest, it is obvious that he will have to face the trouble created by the wild animals. Through his character, the writer criticises the judicial system and media for focusing more on the issues faced by the people rather than the forest. As the population is increasing and demanding the land of forest as their own by building house, schools, mosques, temples, the forest is shrinking day by day. Rajbonsi reflects the miseries of the ecological elements and cruelty of the human race through his expressions as he says:

"I have seen the human cruelties with my very eyes!. I have seen in front of my eyes how a tree falls to the ground with their cruel strokes...I have seen the nests of birds with eggs falling to the ground with those trees. I have seen people ripping apart the belly of a pregnant deer!"(tr P.B., 165)

The narrator in the novel focuses on the issues of deforestation. And in addition to the issues of deforestation she also emphasises on the effects of deforestation on the various species of flora and fauna of the region. It reflects the misery of animals in the clash of man and nature through the lines;

"These animals perhaps would never come near the humans if they had their sheltered territory. But, their habitats, the forests have been turned into villages, the villages have turned into towns and the towns have progressed to become cities. But, the only movement of forest is towards its withdrawal from existence. They have turned still, helplessly silent at the cruel atrocities done to them. Men versus Forest! ...Humans have declared their aggressive war against the wild animals, the trees, the hills. Except the humans, all the other animals have become weak, feeble."(tr P.B., 28)

However, the author of this novel differentiates the people living in the forest into two categories. She portrays one category in positive light as they learned to respect and live in the nature in harmony without harming it. On the other hand, the latter category destroys the nature as well the society by destroying the trees, poaching endangered animals and indulging in various criminal activities like drug paddling.

Conclusion

The novel *Eyat Ekhon Oronyo Asil* exhibits several aspects of ecocriticism. Ecological issues like deforestation, homelessness and the conflict between human and nature were included as major themes in the novel. The author mentioned about various causes like corruption, greed of people, role of media and role of administration that acted as catalysts in deforestation of Amchang forest. The plot of the novel develops by taking a shift from an anthropocentric attitude towards a more eco-centric version of narrative. Moreover, the author makes a good use of various ecological elements in the narrative as literary devices to bring forth some serious issues of the society. In other word, this novel can be recognised as one of the masterpieces in the field of Assamese ecological literature.

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পংকজ গোবিন্দ মেধিৰ ইক টুৰিজিমমূলক উপন্যাস 'চৰাই চুবুৰি'

ড° শান্তনা দুৱৰা সন্দিকৈ

ইংৰাজী Ecotourism শব্দৰ অসমীয়া পাৰিভাষা 'পাৰিস্থিতিক পৰ্যটন'। ইয়াৰ অৰ্থ প্ৰাকৃতিক পৰিৱেশৰ ক্ষতি নকৰাকৈ বা জীৱ-জন্তুৰ বাসস্থানত বিৰূপ প্ৰভাৱ নপৰাকৈ পৰ্যটকসকলক অভিজ্ঞতা ল'বৰ বাবে আগবঢ়োৱা সেৱা। ইয়াৰ অন্তৰালত নিহিত হৈ থকা উদ্দেশ্য হ'ল— ভ্ৰমণকাৰীসকলক ভ্ৰমণৰ অভিজ্ঞতা প্ৰদান, পাৰিপাশ্বিক সংৰক্ষণৰ বাবে পুঁজি প্ৰদান কৰা, স্থানীয় সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ অৰ্থনৈতিক বিকাশ আৰু ৰাজনৈতিক সৱলীকৰণক পোনপটীয়াকৈ লাভান্বিত কৰা বা বিভিন্ন সংস্কৃতি আৰু মানৱ অধিকাৰৰ প্ৰতি সন্মান প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰা। আনহাতে, ইংৰাজী Sustainable Development শব্দৰ পাৰিভাষা হিচাপে অসমীয়া 'বহনক্ষম উন্নয়ন' শব্দটো ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হয়। বহনক্ষম উন্নয়নে সেই উন্নয়নক বুজায়, যি উন্নয়নে অতি কম পক্ষেও বৰ্তমান প্ৰজন্মই উপভোগ কৰা জীৱন ধাৰণৰ মানৰ স্তৰৰ সমানে গড় পৰ্যায়ত ভৱিষ্যতৰ সকলো প্ৰজন্মক জীৱন ধাৰণৰ সম্ভাৱনীয় মান লাভ কৰাৰ কথা বিবেচনা কৰে। জাতি সংঘৰ পৰিৱেশ আৰু উন্নয়ন সম্পৰ্কীয় সন্মিলন (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, UNCED) এ বহনক্ষম উন্নয়নৰ সংজ্ঞা দাঙি ধৰিছে এইদৰে— যি উন্নয়নে ভৱিষ্যত প্ৰজন্মসমূহৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তাবোৰ পূৰণ কৰাৰ সামৰ্থ্য ক্ষেত্ৰত আপোচ নকৰাকৈ বৰ্তমান প্ৰজন্মৰ নিজ নিজ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তা পূৰণ কৰে, সেয়াই বহনক্ষম উন্নয়ন।'

অতি সাম্প্ৰতিক কালত পৰিৱেশ শিক্ষা, প্ৰাকৃতিক সম্পদৰ সংৰক্ষণ, পাৰিস্থিতিক পৰ্যটন আদি বহু চৰ্চিত বিষয়। বিশ্বৰ প্ৰায়বোৰ দেশেই কম-বেছি

পৰিমাণে পৰিৱেশৰ প্ৰতি সচেতন হৈ উঠা পৰিলক্ষিত হৈছে। সাহিত্যৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো এই বিষয়সমূহে স্থান লাভ কৰা দেখিবলৈ পোৱা গৈছে। অৱশ্যে ভাৰতীয় সাহিত্যত বৈদিক যুগৰ পাৰ্বই প্ৰকৃতিৰ বন্দনাই গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ স্থান লাভ কৰি আহিছে। আধুনিক অসমীয়া সাহিত্যও এই ক্ষেত্ৰত ব্যতিক্ৰম নহয়। বৰ্তমান তথা একবিংশ শতিকাৰ দ্বিতীয় দশকত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত প্ৰকৃতি বন্দনাই সুকীয়া ৰূপ লাভ কৰা দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। বিশেষকৈ পৰিৱেশ শিক্ষা, জৈৱ-বৈচিত্ৰ্য, প্ৰাকৃতিক সম্পদৰ সংৰক্ষণ, অৰ্থনৈতিক আন্তঃগাথনিৰ উন্নয়ন, ভ্ৰমণ বৃত্তান্ত আদি দিশসমূহক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি গল্প-উপন্যাস ৰচনা কৰা পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। উল্লেখ্য যে প্ৰথম অৱস্থাত অসমীয়া ভ্ৰমণ সাহিত্যত পৰিৱেশ সম্পৰ্কীয় অন্যান্য দিশবিলাকৰ লগতে ইক'টুৰিজিম' ধাৰণাই আত্মপ্ৰকাশ কৰা দেখিবলৈ পোৱা গৈছিল। এইক্ষেত্ৰত পংকজ গোবিন্দ মেধিৰ *চৰাই চুবুৰি* উপন্যাসখন অসমীয়া উপন্যাস সাহিত্যৰ লেখত ল'বলগীয়া উপন্যাস। উপন্যাসখনৰ 'কথা-বন্ধে'ত উপন্যাসিকে ব্যক্ত কৰিছে —“... চৰাই চুবুৰি প্ৰকৃতি কৰ্মীসকলৰ অধ্যায়সায় আৰু তৎপৰতাৰ ফচল। প্ৰকৃতি কৰ্মীসকলে প্ৰকৃতি সংৰক্ষণৰ বাবে কেনেদৰে শিক্ষা লাভ কৰে, ব্যৱহাৰিক দিশত সেই শিক্ষাক কেনেদৰে প্ৰয়োগ কৰে, সৰ্বসাধাৰণ পাঠক সমাজৰ বহুতৰে বাবে অজ্ঞতা।... উপন্যাসখনৰ মাজেৰে পৰিৱেশ সংৰক্ষণৰ বিষয়টোক উপস্থাপন কৰাৰ ধৃষ্টতা কৰা হৈছে। উপন্যাসখনৰ মাধ্যমেৰে অৰণ্য গাওঁ আৰু প্ৰকৃতি পৰ্যটনৰ নতুন ধাৰণা পাঠক সমাজৰ সন্মুখত প্ৰক্ষেপ কৰা হৈছে।” চ

পংকজ গোবিন্দ মেধিৰ *চৰাই চুবুৰি* অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত প্ৰথমখন ইক'টুৰিজিম'মূলক উপন্যাস। উপন্যাসিকে গতানুগতিক কাহিনীৰ বিপৰীতে ভ্ৰমণ বৃত্তান্তৰ আৰ্হিৰে প্ৰকৃতিপ্ৰেমী তথা প্ৰকৃতিকৰ্মীসকলৰ জীৱন যাত্ৰাৰ বাস্তৱ ছবি এখন অংকন কৰাৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰিছে। প্ৰথম অধ্যায়ত ব্যক্তিগত কিছুকথা অৱতাৰণা কৰিছে যদিও নদ-নদী, গছ-গছনি, চৰাই বিশেষকৈ লুপ্তপ্ৰায় বিভিন্ন প্ৰজাতিৰ চৰাই, জন্তু আদিৰ বৰ্ণনাত অধিক গুৰুত্ব প্ৰদান কৰিছে। উপন্যাসখনৰ আৰম্ভণিতে নদীৰ মৰাসুঁতি এটা কেনেকৈ পিতনিলৈ পৰিণত হয় আৰু সেই পিতনিত কিদৰে একোটা শৃংখলা বৰ্তি থাকে তাৰ সূক্ষ্ম বিশ্লেষণ আগবঢ়াইছে।

উপন্যাসখনত বিভিন্ন নৈ, ঠাইৰ নাম বা অঞ্চলৰ কথা উপস্থাপন কৰোঁতে কিছুমান জনশ্ৰুতিমূল কথা, কিংবদন্তি আদিৰ বিষয়ে উল্লেখ কৰিছে। আনহাতে উপন্যাসখনত চৰাই, অন্যান্য জীৱ-জন্তু, গছ-গছনি আদিৰ বৰ্ণনা প্ৰসঙ্গত জীৱ-জন্তুবিলাকৰ বৈজ্ঞানিক নাম আৰু সেই সম্পৰ্কে বিজ্ঞানসন্মত বিশ্লেষণ আগবঢ়াইছে। ফলস্বৰূপে উপন্যাসখনে পাঠকক নতুন তথ্যৰে সমৃদ্ধ কৰি তুলিছে। উপন্যাসখনত চিত্ৰিত হোৱা 'সৌমাৰ দা' প্ৰকৃতাৰ্থত এটা বাস্তৱ চৰিত্ৰ। এই চৰিত্ৰটোৰ জৰিয়তে উপন্যাসিকে বিষয়বস্তু আগবঢ়াই নিছে। উল্লেখ্য যে অসমৰ প্ৰকৃতিপ্ৰেমী তথা প্ৰকৃতিবিদসকলৰ ভিতৰত সৌম্যদ্বীপ দত্ত এটি পৰিচিত নাম। উপন্যাসখনৰ প্ৰথম অধ্যায়ত পাগ্লাদিয়া নৈৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি নামচাং নৈ, বুঢ়ীদিহিং নৈ আৰু সেই নৈৰ পাৰৰ নামফাৰে গাওঁ, সেই গাঁৱৰ টাই ফাকে ইকটুৰিজিম কেম্প আদিৰ জীৱন্ত বৰ্ণনাই উপন্যাসখনক অনন্য মাত্ৰা প্ৰদান কৰিছে। উপন্যাসখনত বৰ্তমান তথাকথিত আধুনিক মানুহৰ বাবে অপৰিচিত বন্য প্ৰাণীৰ নাম, ইহঁতৰ বৈশিষ্ট্যসমূহ দাঙি ধৰাৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰিছে। কিছুসংখ্যক প্ৰকৃতিপ্ৰেমীৰ উদ্যোগত উঠি অহা প্ৰজন্মক প্ৰকৃতিৰ প্ৰতি সচেতন কৰি তোলাৰ লগতে প্ৰাকৃতিক সম্পদ তথা গছ-গছনি, চৰাই-চিৰিকটি আদিক সংৰক্ষণ কৰা আদি দিশসমূহ ফুটাই তুলিছে। মানৱ সমাজ বৰ্তি থাকে প্ৰকৃতিৰ ওপৰতনিৰ্ভৰ কৰি। সেয়ে উপন্যাসিকে প্ৰসঙ্গক্ৰমে গাওঁৰ লোকসকলক সচেতন কৰি বিভিন্ন গছ-গছনি ৰূপন কৰোৱাই গাওঁক অৰণ্যলৈ পৰিণত কৰি নৱ প্ৰজন্মৰ বাবে এখন বাসোপযোগী পৃথিৱী গঢ় দিয়াৰ পৰিকল্পনা কৰিছে। উপন্যাসখন যথেষ্ট তথ্য সমৃদ্ধ। গছ-গছনি, জীৱ-জন্তুৰ বৈজ্ঞানিক নাম উল্লেখ কৰাৰ লগে লগে অৰণ্য সম্পৰ্কীয় বিভিন্ন গ্ৰন্থৰ নাম, চৰাই বিষয়ক গ্ৰন্থৰ নাম, চৰাই বিষয়ক গৱেষক, সৰ্গ বিশেষজ্ঞ আদি বহু তথ্যৰে সমৃদ্ধ উপন্যাসখন। উপন্যাসখনত শগুণ, বৰটোকোলা, কাঠৰোকা, বালিঘোৰা, পানী কাউৰী, কৈলাঙী আদি চৰাই বৰ্তমান বিলুপ্তিৰ দিশে গতি কৰিছে বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছে। প্ৰসঙ্গক্ৰমে শগুণ লুপ্ত হোৱাৰ বাবে উপন্যাসিকে আধুনিক চিকিৎসাবিজ্ঞানক জগৰীয়া কৰিছে। উপন্যাসিকৰ ভাষাত—

“... পশুধন চিকিৎসাৰ বাবে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা বিষনাশক ডাইক্ল'ফেনেক

ছডিয়ামৰ অপৰিমিত ব্যৱহাৰেই শগুণৰ বাবে কাল হ'ল। ডাইক্ল'ফেনেক ছডিয়াম প্ৰয়োগ কৰা জন্তুৰ শ খোৱাৰ ফলত শগুণৰ দেহত পাৰ্শ্বক্ৰিয়া ঘটে। মৃত শগুণৰ পোষ্টমৰ্টেন কৰিলে পাকস্থলীত ঘাঁ জাতীয় কিছুমান বুদ্ধ বুদ্ধ ওলোৱা দেখা পোৱা যায়।” (পৃ.৪৮)

অৰণ্যৰ প্ৰতিটো প্ৰজাতিৰ মাজতে একোখন সমাজ থাকে। প্ৰতিখন সমাজৰো আকৌ একোটা চুবুৰি থাকে। চৰাইবোৰৰো একোটা হাঁত চুবুৰি থাকে। প্ৰকৃতিৰ বুকুত নীৰৱে কঠোৰ সংগ্ৰাম কৰি সিহঁতে জীয়াই থাকে। বিভিন্ন চৰাই চুবুৰিৰ বৰ্ণনাৰ লগতে সাপ, পখিলা আদিৰ বৰ্ণনাও দাঙি ধৰিছে। সাপৰ বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে এইদৰে—

সাপবোৰ দেখিবলৈ চুঙাকৃতিৰ। সকলো সাপেই দেখিবলৈ চুঙাকৃতিৰ। সাপৰ ঠেং নাই। এইবোৰ আমি জনা কথা। অৱশ্যে কিছুমান সাপৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত লুপ্তপ্ৰায় ঠেঙৰ অৱশিষ্ট দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। সাপৰ ছালত বাকলি থাকে আৰু সাপে বছৰত একাধিকবাৰ মোট সলায়। সাপৰ হাওঁফাওঁ এটা। মাথোন বোৱা নামৰ পৰিয়ালৰ সাপৰ প্ৰজাতিৰ দুটাকৈ হাওঁফাওঁ থাকে।” (পৃ.২৬৫)

এই ধৰণৰ বৰ্ণনাই সাধাৰণ পাঠকৰ মনত সাপৰ প্ৰতি থকা ভয় ভাৱ নিমিষতে দূৰ কৰি, সৰ্প সংৰক্ষণৰ প্ৰতি আগ্ৰহী কৰি তুলিব পাৰিব বুলি ধাৰণা কৰিব পাৰি।

প্ৰসঙ্গসাপেক্ষে ঔপন্যাসিকে জনশ্ৰুতিমূলক কথা বা অন্ধবিশ্বাসজনিত কথাও ব্যাখ্যা আগবঢ়াইছে। প্ৰথম অধ্যায়ত পাগ্লাদিয়া নদীৰ নামৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত কৈছে—

“...সময়ে অসময়ে গতিপথ সলনি কৰা নদীখনৰ প্ৰকৃতি বলিয়াৰ দৰে। বাৰিষা ই ৰুদ্ৰমূৰ্তি ধাৰণ কৰে। দুপাৰত তাণ্ডৰ চলায়। সেইবাবে অতীজত হেনো কোনোবাই নাম থলে পাগ্লাদিয়া।.....নদীখন পাগল কাৰণে নদীখনৰ নাম পাগ্লাদিয়া নহয়। ভূটান পাহাৰৰ পৰা পাগ্লা আৰু দিয়া নামৰ দুটা জুৰি বৈ আহি ভৈয়ামত লগ লাগিছে, লগতে সিহঁতৰ নাম দুটাও জোৰা লগাই নদীখনৰ নাম খোৱা হৈছে পাগ্লাদিয়া। পাগ্লা আৰু দিয়া জনজাতীয় ভাষাৰ শব্দ।” (পৃ.১০)

উপন্যাসখনত বিভিন্ন প্ৰজাতিৰ চৰাইৰ উপৰিও নেউল, কেৰ্কেটুৱা, চুলিয়াফেঁচু, কাঠ ফুলা, হলৌ বান্দৰ, বিভিন্ন প্ৰজাতিৰ সৰ্প আদি সকলোবিলাকে উপন্যাসখনত স্থান লাভ কৰিছে। উপন্যাসিকে প্ৰসঙ্গসাপেক্ষে ভগৱত, পুৰাণ, ৰামায়ণ আদি পৌৰাণিক গ্ৰন্থসমূহৰ বিষয় উপস্থাপন কৰিছে। উদাৰহণস্বৰূপে কাজিৰঙাত গাড়ীৰে ভ্ৰমণ কৰি থাকোতে দেখা পোৱা বনৰীয়া গাহৰীৰ প্ৰসঙ্গত বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে এইদৰে—

“... চাচ্‌স্ক্ৰফা কৃষ্টেটাচ্‌প্ৰজাতিৰ গাহৰিবিধৰ এই প্ৰতিনিধিক সন্মুখত দেখিবলৈ পাই উদয়শংকৰৰ ভাল লাগি গ’ল। পেলিঅ’লিথিক যুগৰ পৰা এই প্ৰজাতিটোৱে আজিলৈ আদিম প্ৰাণীকুলৰ প্ৰতিনিধিত্ব কৰি আহিছে। ভীমবেতকৰ গুহা চিত্ৰত দেখিবলৈ পোৱা গাহৰিটোৱেই এই বন গাহৰিৰ পূৰ্বজ। ব্ৰাহ্মনত যে লিখা আছে অসুৰৰ পৰা ইন্দ্ৰই এটা গাহৰি চুৰ কৰিছিল আৰু বিষুৎক প্ৰদান কৰিছিল ভগৱানক অৰ্পন কৰিবলৈ—সেই গাহৰিটো এই গাহৰিটোৰ পূৰ্বজ। ...ৰামায়ণ আৰু পুৰাণত বিষুৎ অৱতাৰ ধাৰণ কৰা বৰাহ —অইন গাহৰিৰ প্ৰজাতি নহয়, সেইটোৱেই আছিল চাচ্‌ স্ক্ৰফা কৃষ্টেটাচ্‌ প্ৰজাতিৰ এই বনগাহৰিটোৰ পূৰ্বজ।” (পৃ.১৫১)

মনকৰিবলগীয়া যে এই ধৰণৰ আলোচনাই পাঠকক পুৰাতন ধ্যান ধাৰণাৰ কাষ চপাই প্ৰকৃতিৰ প্ৰতি, প্ৰকৃতিৰ প্ৰতিটো সম্পদৰ প্ৰতি এক বিশেষধৰণৰ আত্মিক সম্পৰ্ক উপলব্ধি কৰোৱাই বুলি ক’ব পাৰি।

আলোচ্য উপন্যাসখন প্ৰথম অধ্যায়তে ইক’টুৰিজিমৰ ধাৰণাৰ সুন্দৰ প্ৰতিফলন ঘটিছে। বিশেষকৈ জয়পুৰৰ টিপামফাকে গাঁৱত অৱস্থিত টাই ফাকে ইক’টুৰিজিম কেম্প পাঠকক সহজেই আকৰ্ষণ কৰিব। জয়পুৰ অঞ্চলৰ কেইজনমান শিক্ষিত নিবনুৱা যুৱকৰ প্ৰচেষ্টাত গঢ় লৈ উঠিছে টাই ফাকে ইক’টুৰিজিম কেম্প। পৰ্যটকসকল থাকিব পৰাকৈ ঘৰবোৰ স্থানীয় ভাৱে উপলব্ধ টকৌ পাত, বাঁহ, বেত, কাঠ আদিৰে সাজি উলিওৱা। সচৰাচৰ প্ৰকৃতি ধ্বংসকাৰী সামগ্ৰী ইয়াত ব্যৱহাৰ হোৱা নাই। আনহাতে এই কেম্পত পৰ্যটকসকলক গুৰু দি ফিকা ৰঙা চাহ, টোপোলা ভাত, উৰিয়াম পাতেৰে ভজা বাদাম, বিবিধ বন

পাতেৰে সিজোৱা আঞ্জা, আলু পিটিকা আদি সুস্বাদু খাদ্য সম্ভাৰেৰে আপ্যায়ন কৰা হয়। ইয়াৰ ফলত স্থানীয় লোকসকল কিছুপৰিমাণে আৰ্থিকভাৱে লাভৱান হৈছে আৰু তেওঁলোকৰ (ফকেসকলৰ সংস্কৃতি) সংস্কৃতি দেশী-বিদেশী পৰ্যটকসকলৰ মাজত পৰিচিত হৈছে। ই জনগোষ্ঠীটোৰ বাবে আশাৰ বতৰা কঢ়িয়াই আনিছে। ইক'টুৰিজিমৰ ধাৰণাত প্ৰাকৃতিক সম্পদৰ সংৰক্ষণৰ ওপৰত গুৰুত্ব দিয়া হয়। সেয়েহে টাই ফাকে ইক'টুৰিজিম কেম্পত প্ৰকৃতি ধ্বংস হ'ব পৰা কোনো বস্তুৰে ব্যৱহাৰ কাৰ হোৱা নাই।

ইক'টুৰিজিমৰ এটা গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ দিশ হৈছে পৰিৱেশ শিক্ষা। আলোচ্য উপন্যাসখনত এই দিশটোৰ ওপৰত গুৰুত্ব দিয়া দেখা গৈছে। বিশেষকৈ বিভিন্ন প্ৰশিক্ষণ শিৰিৰবিলাকৰ বৰ্ণনা, সেই প্ৰশিক্ষণ শিৰিৰবিলাকত জড়িত ব্যক্তিসকলৰ আত্মত্যাগ, দুখ-কষ্ট, তেওঁলোকৰ নিষ্ঠা, একাগ্ৰতা আদিয়ে উপন্যাসখনক এক সুকীয়া মাত্ৰা প্ৰদান কৰিছে। উপন্যাসখনৰ আদিৰ পাৰ অন্তলৈকে প্ৰাকৃতিক সম্পদৰ সংৰক্ষণ আৰু সংবৰ্ধনৰ দিশত যথেষ্ট গুৰুত্ব দিয়া দেখা গৈছে। লগতে অৰ্থনৈতিক আন্তঃগাঠনি আৰু জৈৱ বৈচিত্ৰ দিশটোৰ সূক্ষ্ম পৰ্যবেক্ষণ কৰাও দেখিবলৈ পোৱা গৈছে।

উপন্যাসখনৰ শেষৰফালে **Tourism policy** ধাৰণাৰ বিষয়ে উল্লেখ পোৱা যায়। সাধাৰণ পৰ্যটকৰ লগতে ব্ৰেণ্ড এম্বেচেডাৰৰ যোগেদি অসমত **Tourism policy** বিকাশ ঘটোৱাৰ বিষয়ে কিছু বক্তব্য দাঙি ধৰিছে। ঔপন্যাসিকৰ ভাষাত—

“...প্ৰকৃতি প্ৰপৰ্যটন বা ইক'টুৰিজিম কোৱাৰ সুবিধাৰ বাবে মই ইক'টুৰিজিম শব্দটো ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিম। বৰ্তমান ইক'টুৰিজিম অকল ব্যৱসায়-বাণিজ্যই নহয়, বহুতে ইক'টুৰিজিমক বন সংৰক্ষণ, বন্য প্ৰাণী আৰু পৰিৱেশ সংৰক্ষণৰ ‘মেনেজমেণ্ট’ অংশ হিচাপেও গণ্য কৰে।” (পৃ. ৩৭৭)

এইদৰে ঔপন্যাসিক পঞ্চজ গোবিন্দ মেধিয়ে উপন্যাসখনত অসমত ইক'টুৰিজিমৰ সম্ভাৱনীয়তাৰ বিষয়ে বহু কথা উল্লেখ কৰিছে। লগতে অনেক সম্ভাৱনা থকা সত্ত্বেও সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ সচেতনতাৰ অভাৱ, চৰকাৰ-প্ৰশাসনৰ অনিহা

আদি বিভিন্ন কাৰণত ইক'টুৰিজিমৰ ধাৰণাই অসমত উপযুক্তভাৱে বিকাশ লাভ কৰিব পৰা নাই বুলি ঔপন্যাসিকে আক্ষেপ কৰিছে। ইক'টুৰিজিমৰ ধাৰণাত প্ৰাকৃতিক সম্পদৰ সংৰক্ষণ দিশটোত গুৰুত্ব প্ৰদান কৰা হয়। আনহাতে ভ্ৰমণৰ সময়ত সেই অঞ্চলৰ প্ৰাকৃতিক বুৰঞ্জীৰ জ্ঞানৰ লগতে সেই অঞ্চলৰ মানুহৰ আৰ্থ-সামাজিক দিশৰ প্ৰতিও গুৰুত্ব আৰোপ কৰিব লাগে। ঔপন্যাসখনৰ শেষৰ ফালে এই দিশতো সুন্দৰকৈ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। বিশেষকৈ কাজিৰঙা, নলবাৰীৰ বাৰকুৰিহা গাওঁত অনুষ্ঠিত কৰা বিভিন্ন প্ৰকৃতি শিৱিৰবিলাকত অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰা স্কুলীয়া ছাত্ৰ-ছাত্ৰীৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি সেই সেই অঞ্চলৰ বয়োজেষ্ঠ লোকসকল, ডেকা-গাভৰু সকলোকে পৰিৱেশৰ লগত অতি নিবিড় সম্পৰ্ক এটা গঢ়ি তোলাত ঔপন্যাসিক সার্থক হৈছে।

ঔপন্যাসিকে অহৰহ মনৰ মাজত এক সপোন কঢ়িয়াই লৈ ফুৰিছে — গাওঁক অৰণ্য কৰাৰ। তেওঁ কৈছে দুটা বিষয়ত পৰিকল্পনা কৰিছে: ১. অৰণ্য গাওঁ আৰু ২. প্ৰকৃতি পৰ্যটন। ঔপন্যাসিকে অনুভৱ কৰিছে গাওঁ অৰণ্যই সমাজলৈ আশাৰ বতৰা কঢ়িয়াই আনিব। সেয়ে ঔপন্যাসখনৰ এঠাইত কৈছে—

....গাওঁবাসীৰ সহযোগত এই গাওঁত এখন ধুনীয়া অৰণ্য গঢ় লৈ উঠিব পাৰে, অৰণ্যই মানুহখিনিৰ বাবে জীৱন-জীৱিকা হ'ব পাৰে। তেওঁলোকে গছ পুলি ৰুব, প্ৰতিপালন কৰিব, সেয়া হ'ব তেওঁলোকৰ সম্পত্তি। ফলৰ গছ ৰুব, উৎপাদনে তেওঁলোকক ব্যৱসায়িক ভাবে লাভবান কৰিব। গছে ছাঁ দিব তেওঁলোকক, শুকান ডাল-পাতে ইন্ধন জোগাব তেওঁলোকক, বয়স্ক গছে কাঠ দিব আৰু গাওঁৰ অৰণ্যৰ পৰিৱেশে জলবায়ু নিয়ন্ত্ৰিত কৰিব আমাৰ সকলোৰে।গাওঁবাসীক সজাগ কৰিব লাগিব। গছ ৰোৱাৰ বাবে অনুপ্রাণিত কৰিব লাগিব।

....সেই গাওঁ অৰণ্যৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰিয়েই গঢ় লৈ উঠিব মোৰ দ্বিতীয় চিন্তা প্ৰকৃতি পৰ্যটন। দেশী-বিদেশী পৰ্যটক আহিব, গাওঁ অৰণ্যৰ মাজত জীৱনৰ কেইটামান দিন অতিবাহিত কৰিব। সচৰাচৰ অৰণ্যৰ মাজত গাওঁ থাকে, কিন্তু গাওঁখনকে অৰণ্যলৈ পৰিণত কৰাৰ বাবে সপোন দেখিছে। অৱশেষত কবিয়ে সেই সপোনৰ বাস্তৱত সন্তোদ পাইছে।

তেওঁ বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে এইদৰে—“... অৰণ্য গাওঁৰ সম্ভেদ বিচাৰি মই
 গ্ৰন্থৰ পিছত গ্ৰন্থ চলাথ কৰিলোঁ। ... অৰণ্যৰ মাজত গাওঁ থকাৰ কথা
 পঢ়িবলৈ পাওঁ। ... কিন্তু গাওঁখনকেই অৰণ্যলৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন কৰাৰ কথা
 ক’তোৱেই নাপাওঁ দেখোন। ময়েই তেনে ধাৰণা সৃষ্টি কৰা প্ৰথমজন
 ব্যক্তি হিচাপে আত্ম-সন্তোষ লভিবলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰিলো। মোৰ চিন্তাত
 য’তি পৰিবলৈ সবহ পৰ নালাগিল। মই পৃথিৱীৰ এখন দেশৰ বিষয়ে
 পঢ়িবলৈ পালো যিখন দেশত অৰণ্য গাওঁৰ ধাৰণা আছে। সৰু এখন
 দেশ। নাম ‘লাও পিপ’লচ ডেম’ক্ৰেটিক ৰিপাব্লিক’, লাওচ।”
 (পৃ. ৩১৮)

পংকজ গোবিন্দ মেধিৰ ‘চৰাই চুবুৰি’ বিষয়বস্তুৰ ফালৰ পৰা অসমীয়া
 সাহিত্যত এখন নতুন উপন্যাস। ইয়াত গতানুগতিক কাহিনীৰ বিপৰীতে
 প্ৰকৃতিপ্ৰেমী এচাম লোকৰ জীৱন যাত্ৰা তথা প্ৰকৃতিক সুৰক্ষিত কৰি ভৱিষ্যত
 প্ৰজন্মৰ বাবে সুন্দৰ কৰি গঢ়ি থৈ যোৱাৰ বাবে কৰা অহৰহ প্ৰচেষ্টাৰ এখন ছবি
 প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। তদুপৰি উপন্যাসখনত প্ৰকৃতি প্ৰেমৰ সমান্তৰালভাৱে
 দেশপ্ৰেম, অন্ধবিশ্বাস, কুসংস্কাৰ আদি দিশবিলাকো বৰ্ণিত হৈছে। উপন্যাসখনৰ
 মুখ্য উদ্দেশ্য হৈছে বিজ্ঞানসন্মত দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীৰে পৰিৱেশ সংৰক্ষণ কৰা। যি কি
 নহওক, একবিংশ শতিকাৰ দ্বিতীয় দশকত ৰচনা কৰা পংকজ গোবিন্দ মেধিৰ
 ‘চৰাই চুবুৰি’ নিঃসন্দেহে অসমীয়া উপন্যাস সাহিত্যত অনবদ্য সংযোজন।

পাদটীকা

১. Ecotourism theory Practice Ross pg.123

গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জী

মেধি, পংকজ গোবিন্দ : চৰাই চুবুৰি, বনলতা, ডিব্ৰুগড়, প্ৰথম সংস্কৰণঃ
 নৱেম্বৰ, ২০১৬।

দত্ত, জয়ন্ত, শইকীয়া, গীতাত্ৰী (সম্পা.) : একবিংশ শতিকাৰ অসমীয়া উপন্যাস,
 অসম বুক ট্ৰাষ্ট, গুৱাহাটী, জানুৱাৰী, ২০২০।

Section III

**Folklore, Gender
and
Social Issues**

TRIBAL FOLKLORE OF MAHARASHTRA : A STUDY IN AESTHETIC

Dr. Sanjay Pandit Kamble
Dr. Bhagyashri Mallikarjun Patil

INTRODUCTION :

The ethnic societies of Maharashtra have extended been an important part of the traditional material of the state, with their exceptional backgrounds, performs, and customs of life backing meaningfully to the state's varied ethnic background. "Tribal Folklore of Maharashtra: A Study in Aesthetics" investigates into the rich domain of folk tales that has been accepted down through generations within these societies. The study emphasizes not only on the sections, folklores, and myths of the communities but also on their beautiful language the rituals, harmony, dance, art, and other forms of ethnic exhibition that practice the basic of their individuality.

Maharashtra, with its diverse topography, is home to numerous diverse ethnic crowds, counting the Bhils, Gonds, Warlis, and Kolis, each enjoying separate ethnic and artistic traditions.

This work explores how these tribes use folklore to express their worldview, social values, and spiritual beliefs, reflecting their deep connection to nature, deities, ancestors, and the land they inhabit. The aesthetic aspect of ethnic folklore is a dominant facet of this study. Folklore is not simply a source of stories; it is also a manifestation of traditional aesthetics that figures the tribe's social command, ethical codes, and communal identity. Through an investigation of verbal traditions, songs, dances, ceremonies, and pictorial arts, the study highlights how aesthetics are complicatedly intertwined into the very fabric of ethnic life, generating an interrelated web of representation and sense.

By investigative ethnic folklore through the lens of aesthetics, this study pursues to expose the covers of traditional implication surrounded in these customs. It highlights the character of folklore in supporting the traditional and communal morals of tribal societies while also discovering how contemporary encouragements and exterior burdens are redesigning these customs. This work purposes to link the gap among academic dialogue and the survived understandings of tribal societies, proposing a profounder gratitude for the animated and multi-layered world of ethnic folk tales in Maharashtra. In essence, "**Tribal Folklore of Maharashtra: A Study in Aesthetics**" delivers a inclusive examination of the energetic connection of custom, art, and ethnic identity in Maharashtra's tribal societies, contributing to a greater appreciative of their role in the larger cultural tale of India. This comprehensive review dives deeper into the intricacies of the tribal folklore of Maharashtra, investigative the precise aesthetic essentials such as myths, rituals, music, dance, art, and how these artistic terminologies form the ethnic fabric of tribal societies in the state. We will break down the cultural contributions of precise tribal groups like the Bhils, Gonds, Warlis, and Kolis, and how their folklore is essentially related to aesthetics.

Introduction to Tribal Folklore of Maharashtra

Maharashtra is a state with a rich variety of tribal societies, each contributing unique components to the ethnicscenery. The main ethnic clusters in Maharashtra comprise: **Bhils:** Found in counties like the Western Ghats, these are one of the biggest tribes in Maharashtra. They have a rich practice of verbal storytelling, ceremonies, and a profound association to environment. **Gonds:** A Dravidian-speaking tribal crowd typically situated in Vidarbha, Gonds have a treasure of allegorical and ancient stories interweaved with their artistic forms like dances, portraits, and songs. **Warlis:** Original to the northern part of Maharashtra, Warli art and rituals are well-known for their symmetrical canvases and their association to cultivation, creatures, and divine being. **Kolis:** Mainly a fishing community originate alongside the Konkan coastline, Kolis have their own exclusive legends including water gods, nature spirits, and seaside customs. These people use folk tales to communicate their morals, communal standards, cosmology, and contact with the atmosphere, and the learning of these customs through the lens of aesthetics discloses the deep cultural reputation of these stories.

Core Aspects of Tribal Folklore

Myths and Legends: Ethnic mythologies are not mere stories but are connected to the tribe's appreciative of formation, deities, and the usual ecosphere. These stories form the aesthetic expressions contained by the tribe. **Bhils:** The Bhils' folklore comprises many folklores, together with those about Bhagwan Gora, who is often deliberated the inventor and protector god of the Bhil people. One widespread story includes the origin of the Gora carnival, which is related with the god's legendary combat against wicked forces. **Example:** The story of "Gora and the Tiger" illuminates the association between people and environ-

ment. Gora is said to have controlled a wild tiger, representative the musicalcohabitation of human beings with the natural world. This tale is a vital part of Bhil folk aesthetics, influencing their art, music, and presentation. Gonds: Gondi legends is occupied with stories of gods, mystical beings, and the formation of the world. The story of the god Gunda and his fight against the demon is a dominantfable. Gondi folklores are also thoughtful of the mysticalfaith in the company of gods in natural elements like trees, animals, and highlands. Example: The "Madai" carnival, held by the Gonds, imitates these folklores. It comprises storytelling, music, and representative dances that recite the myths of the gods and their communications with the public, which is an importantfeature of Gondi aesthetics.

Rituals and Festivals : Ceremonies are another importantelement of ethnic folklore in Maharashtra. These rituals characteristically syndicate mythicalrefrains, inheritedrespect, and the aesthetic of presentation. Warlis: Warlis are known for their intensely mysticalceremoniesthat rotatefrom place to placecultivation and the adoration of the Nature Goddess. One significantcentenary is "Adivasi New Year", which is distinguished with traditional dances and songs, comprising the "Warli Dance". The dances are escorted by singing, and the activities of the dancers reproduce animals or natural components. Example: The "Harvest Festival" includes the ceremonial of "Nirwahi", where the tribe proposalsdevotions for a good harvest. In the course of this event, Warli art is decorated on the ground as part of the traditional aesthetics. The symmetricalthemeseptomize the interconnectedness of life, periods, and the heavenly forces controlling nature. Kolis: The Koli tribe has a singleceremonialrehearsalsprintednearby the adoration of water gods, replicating their linking to the sea. The "Nagpanchami" ritual, which reveres serpents, is one such instance. The aesthetic attractiveness of the ceremoniesdeceits in the exciting donations and dance presentations done by the Koli

women. Sample: The Koli Dance is frequently accomplished as a portion of the carnival celebrations, where females wear complicated jewellery and bright clothing, adding an aesthetic flair to the devotion rituals.

Songs and Music : Songs are dominant to the communication of legends through groups. These songs not only assist as entertaining but are also used to relate chronological occasions, folklores, and everyday lifecycle. Gonds: The Gonds' folk songs reproduce their mythical dogmas, mainly adjoining the deities, morale, and environment. Songs connected to the yield period, recognized as "Bhadra Padh", express devotions to the gods for a bountiful harvest. Instance: The "Bhadra Padh" songs syndicate sentimental storytelling and call-and-response designs. The aesthetic request lies in the rhythm and communal contribution, which generate a common logic of community and linking to the earth. Warlis: Warli songs are frequently cantered around farming work, public life, and spiritual subjects. Their traditional music is accomplished using drums and modest musical gadgets prepared from ordinary resources. Instance: The "Dhol" (drum) and "Tasha" are used in ceremonies, pattern the aesthetic mixture of music and dance. These gadgets are measured blessed and are essential to together story telling and ceremonial presentations, where they help set the quality for the share drecital of myth and recollection.

Oral Traditions : Oral storytelling is a dominant feature of the old-fashioned stories of ethnic societies. The use of vocal sound, body language, and occasionally devices adds covers to the aesthetic knowledge of the folklore. Bhil Folklore: Bhils often narrate stories of their gods and brave man through a form of presentation called "Bhetali", in which a narrator melodramatically describes the exploits of mythical figures. Instance: The "Story of Gora and the Wild Boar" is an oral tale accepted down for generations, narrated through theatrical telling by village elders.

The aesthetics of this story telling development comprise vocal distinction, body signals, and the addition of simple beating devices.

Aesthetic Dimensions of Tribal Folklore : The aesthetics of tribal folklore are not limited to tale alone but include the complete traditional manifestation, from pictorial arts to dance and community participation.

Art Forms-Warli Art : Warli portraits are symmetrical in environment, concentrating on environment, ceremonies, and day-to-day life. These canvases are mainly made with rice paste on mud walls, and their aesthetic significance lies in their simplicity and representative symbols. Sample: Warli Paintings are recognized for their "circle, triangle, and square" themes, signifying the sun, earth, and the divinity in that order. These paintings are not just attractive but aid as a system of storytelling, portraying the formation of the world and the sense of balance between humans and Mother Nature. **Gond Art:** The Gonds, too, have a rich custom of art, primarily using the medium of tribal murals and paintings. Gond art is known for its vibrant and elaborate depictions of animals and deities. These paintings often incorporate bright colours derived from natural elements like natural resources. Instance: Gond paintings often depict myths, such as the "Creation Story", in which animals, trees, and divine forces come together in a melodious symbol of the cosmos.

Dance and Performative Arts : Warli and Bhil Dance: Dance is a central part of both Warli and Bhil ethos. The "Warli Dance" is accomplished for the duration of carnivals, harvests, and other ceremonies. The aesthetic movement of the dance, which includes spherical waves and recurring phases, imitates the movement of environment-of water, animals, and wind. **Gond Dances :** The "Madai" dance is accomplished in honour of their deities. It comprises fast foot movements and an enthusiastic body po-

sition. The dance's aesthetics are extremely knotted to the public's association with heavenly forces and natural components, with each movement representing a divine expedition.

Challenges and Preservation of Folklore-In the contemporary age, the conservation of ethnic legends, expressions, encounters like development, outside traditional inspirations, and generational changes. On the other hand, efforts are being prepared to manuscript these customs. **Anthropological Efforts:** Scholars like G.S. Ghurye and V.S. Agrawal have studied Indian tribes broadly, documenting the verbal ethnicities and ceremonies of Maharashtra's tribal societies. Their works arrange for necessary orientations for thoughtful ethnic folklore and aesthetics in an ancient background. **Traditional Renewal:** Current enterprises by administration and cultural administrations aim to manuscript and encourage the imaginative customs of tribal societies. Warli and Gond art, for instance, have found a widespread spectator in town settings, backing to the existence of these ethnicities in modern India.

Conclusion "Tribal Folklore of Maharashtra : A Study in Aesthetics" climaxes the profound interconnection between legends and aesthetic terminologies in ethnic societies. The myths, ceremonies, songs, dances, and pictorial arts form a traditional environment that not only reserves past but also connects vital morals and dogmas. By continuing to revision and guard these civilizations we safeguard that the ethnic abundance of Maharashtra's ethnic societies tolerate.

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From Panoi to Justice : Challenging Patriarchy in Mising Folktales

Shiva Prasad Mili

Folktales have always had a unique way of captivating young minds, sparking curiosity and imagination. From an early age, I was surrounded by stories that felt larger than life—tales of heroic deeds, moral lessons, and ancient wisdom. Growing up, I would sit by my grandparents as they shared these stories, each one more intriguing than the last. It was through these moments that I first became aware of the power of folklore. These stories were not just entertainment; they conveyed deeper truths about the world around us.

As I got older, I began to understand how tribal folklore, like the Mising folktales, holds significant relevance in today's world. These stories' themes of resistance, social justice, and the fight against patriarchal dominance took on new meaning for me. What once seemed simple tales now felt like influential commentaries on the ongoing struggles for equality and justice. This realization deepened my fascination with how these ancient narratives remain relevant and essential to understanding our current societal challenges.

When I started reading the oral traditions of the Mising people from Assam, India, my interest was immediately drawn to these themes. These stories, passed down through generations, are not just relics of the past; they offer sharp critiques of social hierarchies and oppressive systems. The more I read, the more I felt a growing sense of intrigue about the layers of resistance within these narratives, especially regarding social justice and equality. What began as curiosity soon turned into a deeper understand-

ing-these stories hold powerful lessons that still speak to the struggles for justice we face today.

Mising folktales depict individuals who challenge societal norms, resist oppression, and seek justice in the face of overwhelming power. These folktales offer a lens into the community's values while critiquing social, gender, and class-based inequalities. Through these stories, the Mising people pass down essential wisdom about morality, social harmony, and personal integrity—timeless themes that continue to resonate in contemporary struggles for equality and justice. My reading of these folktales became even more fascinating when I applied literary theories, which helped provide more precise readings and deeper insights into the complex layers of resistance embedded in these narratives.

One particular tale that captured my attention was "Lightning and Thunder" (Taid 31), which follows Panoi, a female character who refuses her brother's incestuous advances. Her resistance to male dominance is striking, as it challenges not only the patriarchal authority within the family but also represents a broader fight against gender-based oppression. Panoi's transformation into lightning and her brother into thunder at the story's conclusion is a powerful metaphor. It suggests that defying injustice has far-reaching consequences, symbolically mirroring the electrifying power of standing up for what is right. My analysis of this tale became more illuminating through the lens of Elaine Showalter's gynocriticism concept, which focuses on the representation of female experiences within literature (Showalter 248). Applying this theory allowed me to see Panoi's defiance as an act of empowerment, resisting the traditional patriarchal narrative that often silences women. Her transformation not only subverts the gender dynamics within the tale but also offers a feminist critique of the dominant power structures of her society. This application of literary theory to the folktale helped to clarify the

more profound significance of Panoi's actions. It gave a richer understanding of her role as a symbol of resistance.

Another folktale that speaks to the Mising people's resistance to unfair treatment is the "Origin of the Sago Palm" (Taid 38). In this narrative, a woman demands the right to proper attire before running an errand for her master. The story places this demand in the context of dignity and self-respect, which resonates with modern movements for women's rights. The woman's simple act of asserting her autonomy in the face of exploitation challenges the patriarchal structures that sought to marginalize and silence her. When analyzed through the lens of postcolonial theory, particularly Gayatri Spivak's notion of the subaltern, this tale becomes a poignant example of how folklore can give voice to marginalized groups within a patriarchal society (Spivak 271). In "Origin of the Sago Palm," the woman's refusal to be treated as inferior critiques both gender and class-based oppression, emphasizing the agency of the subaltern to resist societal expectations and demand dignity.

The motif of resistance against unfair treatment is also explored through the story of "Karpunpuli" (Taid 36), in which two sisters, Karpun and Puli, endure and resist external pressures while maintaining their moral integrity. This tale intrigued me because it portrays resilience in adversity and grapples with intergroup conflict. The sisters embody strength and spiritual fortitude, symbolizing the Mising community's reverence for those who maintain their principles during the trial. This theme of resisting assimilation and oppression aligns closely with critical race theory, particularly the work of Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, who argue that cultural narratives play a significant role in perpetuating or challenging dominant power structures (Delgado and Stefancic 7). In "Karpunpuli," the sisters' resistance to forces of domination reflects the power of stories to critique and dismantle racial and social hierarchies.

As I continued my exploration of Mising folklore, I found that the stories also offered valuable insights into the dynamics of social harmony. The theme of intergroup conflict, seen in tales such as "Karpunpuli," speaks to the broader social forces that shape the relationships between different social groups. These folktales suggest that social justice cannot be achieved through domination and subjugation but must be built on mutual respect and recognition of shared humanity. The idea of achieving justice through social harmony is echoed in critical race theory, which emphasizes that true equality requires dismantling oppressive systems and the recognition of diverse perspectives (Delgado and Stefancic 45). In these folktales, conflict resolution is not through the victory of one group over another but through reconciliation and understanding, which resonates with modern ideas of inclusivity and diversity.

Representing marginalized voices, especially those of women and lower-status individuals, is another crucial aspect of Mising folktales. The stories often feature women who, like Panoi and the unnamed woman in "Origin of the Sago Palm," assert their rights and stand up against social injustice. This portrayal of women as active agents rather than passive subjects challenges the patriarchal narratives that dominate much of the cultural landscape. Using Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality, we can analyze how these folktales reflect the multiple, overlapping forms of oppression women face, particularly those of gender and class (Crenshaw 1241). The women in these folktales often face dual oppressions, which enriches our understanding of the complexities of social justice, demonstrating how different systems of power intersect and compound each other.

In addition to offering a critique of gender and class-based oppression, Mising folktales highlight the importance of solidarity and collective action. Stories like "Karpunpuli" demonstrate how

characters find strength in community and shared moral values. The emphasis on collective resistance against injustice aligns with the ideas of social solidarity in modern social justice movements and traditional community values. As I analysed these stories, it became clear that Mising folklore not only focuses on individual resistance but also underscores the power of collective action in overcoming social inequalities.

While Mising folktales provide a wealth of insight into the nature of social justice, there are challenges in directly applying these traditional narratives to modern contexts. One challenge lies in interpreting the symbolic elements of the stories, such as the transformation of characters into supernatural forces, in a way that can be translated into practical strategies for change. The metaphorical transformations in stories like "Lightning and Thunder" convey profound messages about resistance, but the supernatural imagery may need careful interpretation when applying these ideas to real-world situations. Furthermore, as noted by Clifford Geertz in his work on interpretive anthropology, we must recognize the importance of cultural context when interpreting these folktales (Geertz 93). It is crucial to avoid oversimplifying or romanticizing these stories and instead engage with them in a manner that respects their cultural specificity and complexity.

Another challenge is the rapidly changing social landscape of the modern world. Issues such as digital privacy, climate change, and the impacts of globalization are not directly addressed in traditional folktales. While these stories offer timeless lessons on justice, they must be adapted and reinterpreted to address contemporary challenges that arise in an increasingly interconnected and rapidly changing world. Nevertheless, by drawing on the moral principles and social critiques embedded in these tales, we can gain valuable insights into how to confront the current systemic issues of inequality.

Thus, Mising folktales offer a rich source of cultural knowledge and social critique deeply relevant to contemporary discussions about justice and equality. Through their exploration of resistance, marginalized voices, and social harmony, these tales offer valuable lessons that can inform modern social justice movements. By analyzing these stories through the lens of literary theories such as postcolonial theory, feminist criticism, critical race theory, and intersectionality, I have gained a deeper understanding of how these folktales speak to both historical and modern struggles for justice. These narratives are a repository of cultural wisdom and a powerful tool for imagining more just and equitable futures. As we continue to address the challenges of inequality in our contemporary world, we can look to these traditional stories for inspiration and guidance.

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Women in the Ahom Kingdom : Governance, Diplomacy, and Cultural Preservation

Probin Sarmah

Introduction

The Ahom dynasty, established by Sukapha in 1228, remained a powerful force in Assam until British annexation in the 19th century. While the rulers-kings, generals, and administrators have been widely studied, the roles of women in the kingdom deserve closer scrutiny. Women were not only integral to the familial structures of royalty but also served as key figures in governance, diplomacy, and cultural preservation. Ahom queens and noblewomen wielded substantial influence, challenging contemporary patriarchal norms and leaving a lasting legacy in Assam's history.

The Ahom queens acted as more than mere consorts; they engaged actively in decision-making processes and ensured the stability of the royal lineage. Moreover, their diplomatic marriages played a strategic role in maintaining political alliances. Similarly, their contributions to cultural preservation, particularly through patronage of art, literature, and religious practices, demonstrate the depth of their impact on society.

This article explores the critical yet often overlooked roles of Ahom women by drawing upon primary sources and historical analyses to underscore their contributions.

Women in Ahom Governance Queens as Political Advisors

Ahom queens were not passive consorts but often acted as advisors to their husbands and sons. The royal court, or "Dangaria Sabha," occasionally included queens in discussions regarding state matters. One notable figure was Queen Phuleswari Devi, the chief consort of King Siva Singha (1714-1744). Known for her assertiveness, Phuleswari played an active role in state administration, including the endorsement of Vaishnavism and efforts to integrate diverse religious practices into the kingdom's sociopolitical fabric (Baruah, 1993).

Phuleswari's influence extended to various aspects of governance, from implementing reforms to promoting courtly decorum. Her support for religious harmony-albeit controversial-reflected her understanding of the kingdom's diverse socio-religious composition. Through her actions, she showcased the potential for women in leadership roles to navigate the complexities of statecraft.

Queens such as Phuleswari often wielded influence over court factions, shaping policies indirectly by counseling their husbands or promoting loyalists to key administrative positions. Their involvement underscores the complex interplay of gender and power in the Ahom polity.

Regency and Leadership in Times of Crisis

Ahom queens occasionally assumed direct control of governance, particularly during political crises. For instance, Mula Gabharu, the widow of Prince Susengphaa, exemplified leadership and valor by rallying troops against invaders following her husband's death. Her military and administrative roles highlight the readiness of Ahom noblewomen to fill power vacu-

ums and protect the sovereignty of their realm (Sarma, 1989). Similarly, regents often emerged during the minority of kings, with queens or dowager queens serving as custodians of the throne. For example, when political instability threatened the succession of young heirs, queens acted as stewards, ensuring the kingdom's resilience. These women maintained stability within the royal court and upheld dynastic continuity, ensuring the kingdom's resilience during transitional periods. Such instances demonstrate their capacity to provide firm leadership amidst challenging circumstances.

Diplomatic Roles of Ahom Noblewomen

Marital Alliances as Diplomatic Tools

Marital alliances formed a cornerstone of the Ahom kingdom's diplomacy. Ahom queens were frequently selected from prominent families, both within and beyond the kingdom, to cement political ties. These alliances not only secured loyalty among local aristocracies but also fostered peaceful relations with neighboring states. For example, the marriages of Ahom kings with Koch and Manipuri princesses served to strengthen alliances with these influential neighbors (Guha, 1983).

The strategic selection of queens illustrates the importance of women as intermediaries in maintaining the kingdom's geopolitical balance. Beyond ceremonial roles, these alliances often provided queens with unique insights into regional politics, enhancing their capacity to act as diplomatic mediators. By fostering mutual trust and understanding between regions, these marital alliances proved vital in preserving the kingdom's territorial integrity.

Mediation and Negotiation

Historical records suggest that noblewomen occasionally acted as negotiators during conflicts. Their involvement in diplomatic

missions underscores their significant role in preserving the kingdom's stability. For instance, women's participation in negotiating peace with the Mughal empire during times of conflict reflects their ability to navigate the intricate dynamics of interstate diplomacy (Bhuyan, 1949).

Additionally, the queens' unique positions enabled them to act as informal mediators in disputes within the royal court. Their diplomatic skills were not limited to external affairs but also extended to resolving internal conflicts, ensuring the smooth functioning of the administration.

Through their direct or indirect participation, Ahom women demonstrated a keen understanding of statecraft and the subtleties of diplomatic engagement, serving as essential actors in maintaining the kingdom's autonomy.

Cultural Preservation and Contributions

Promotion of Religious and Cultural Practices

Ahom queens and noblewomen played a pivotal role in preserving and promoting cultural and religious traditions. Queen Phuleswari Devi, for example, actively patronized the Ekasarana Nam Dharma, a neo-Vaishnavite tradition. Her initiatives to promote religious harmony—though controversial at times—illustrate the influence of royal women in shaping the kingdom's cultural identity (Baruah, 1993).

In addition to patronizing established traditions, noblewomen often served as custodians of indigenous Tai-Ahom religious practices. They played significant roles in rituals, such as Me-Dam-Me-Phi, which honored ancestors and reinforced the community's cultural identity. By participating in and leading these ceremonies, women ensured the continuity of Ahom spiritual heritage.

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Patronage of Arts and Literature

Ahom noblewomen contributed significantly to the patronage of art, literature, and architecture. They sponsored the construction of temples, monasteries, and public works, many of which remain significant cultural landmarks in Assam today. Their patronage extended to literary activities, with queens often commissioning Buranjis or chronicling the kingdom's history themselves.

For instance, several Buranjis document the contributions of royal women in shaping cultural narratives, ensuring their legacy within Assam's historical record. These texts, often initiated or preserved under the guidance of noblewomen, serve as invaluable sources for understanding the sociopolitical dynamics of the period.

Preservation of Tai-Ahom Traditions

As custodians of Tai-Ahom traditions, noblewomen were instrumental in preserving the cultural heritage brought by their ancestors from Southeast Asia. They ensured the transmission of Tai-Ahom language, rituals, and folklore across generations, even as the kingdom assimilated influences from neighboring cultures (Gait, 1906). These efforts not only safeguarded the unique identity of the Ahoms but also enriched the broader Assamese cultural tapestry.

Furthermore, noblewomen's involvement in maintaining traditional knowledge extended to agricultural practices, culinary heritage, and textile arts. Through their efforts, they fostered a sense of continuity and belonging within the community.

Role in Social Reforms

Ahom queens were occasionally involved in initiating social reforms. By advocating for equitable practices within their sphere

of influence, they contributed to the evolution of societal norms. Their involvement in religious reforms and the promotion of education among women underscores their progressive outlook in shaping a more inclusive society.

Challenges and Limitations Faced by Ahom Women

While Ahom queens and noblewomen enjoyed significant influence, their roles were not devoid of challenges. Political rivalries within the court often constrained their agency, as factionalism and male-dominated hierarchies limited the scope of their authority. Additionally, the patriarchal structure of society imposed restrictions on the visibility and documentation of their contributions, leading to their relative marginalization in historical narratives.

Furthermore, the absence of independent records detailing the lives of Ahom women limits our understanding of their full contributions. Many accounts are filtered through male-dominated chronicles, which often emphasize the roles of kings and generals over queens and noblewomen. Despite these constraints, Ahom women demonstrated resilience and adaptability, carving out spaces for themselves within the socio-political framework of the kingdom.

Conclusion

The Ahom queens and noblewomen were far more than ceremonial figures; they were integral to the kingdom's governance, diplomacy, and cultural preservation. Their roles as advisors, regents, mediators, and patrons reflect a dynamic interplay of power, agency, and influence. By revisiting their contributions through historical analysis, we gain a deeper understanding of the Ahom dynasty's resilience and cultural richness.

Future research can further explore these themes by examining

overlooked archival materials and oral histories, shedding light on the nuanced roles of women in shaping Assam's history. Recognizing the contributions of Ahom women not only enriches our understanding of the past but also challenges prevailing narratives that often underplay women's roles in history.

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Unravelling the Representation of Homosexuality in the select Plays of Mahesh Dattani

Sanskrita Krishnayetra

INTRODUCTION :

Mahesh Dattani is an Indian director, actor and renowned playwright. He can be acclaimed as a shining star in the world of Indian drama in English for his attempt to write his plays directly in foreign language and twisting it to suit the Indian audience. He is the first Indian playwright to be awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award in the year 1998. The themes of Dattani's plays deals with present social scenarios and makes an effort to bring out social changes. His plays deals with aspirations of the deprived and the marginalised sections of the society. He raises his voice on issues such as youngster sexual maltreatment, communal tensions, homosexuality and shows profoundly how our psyches have oppressive hindrances regardless of our liberal falsification. In one of his interviews with Times of India, Dattani remarks himself that the function of the drama is to act like freak mirrors in a carnival and to project grotesque images of all that passes for normal in our world. His plays have an universal appeal. They have the capacity to draw attention of the crowd anywhere in the world. He addresses issues that the society turns away from and takes up courageously for the welfare of individuals, whatever has been pushed under the floor covering or ignored. He used literature as an instrument of liberation to challenge the characteristics of the patriarchal and heterosexual social setup.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES :

The aim of this paper is to show how playwright Mahesh Dattani chronicles the issue of homosexuality in his plays. He addresses the unexplored and contemporary issues of sexuality which is constitutive of the contemporary Urban Indian subjectivity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

The research methodology of this paper is analytical and descriptive. The paper is based upon primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are comprised of the plays by Mahesh Dattani concerning the topic and the secondary sources are comprised of edited books, ebooks and online articles.

LITERATURE REVIEW :

Keeping in view the aims and objectives of the research paper, this study has resorted back to the reading of many critical works and articles.

Firstly, this study has been influenced by the reading of Bishun Kumar and Neha Arora's work Mahesh Dattani: Themes, Techniques and Issues (2016). From this book, it has been found out how these writers have extensively dealt on the representation of 'alternate sexualities' in relation to the characterisation in Dattani's plays: Secondly, the study of the articles, such as "Mahesh Dattani: A strategic playwright" (2018) by Shweta Dubey, and another article titled "Mahesh Dattani: Invisible Issues" (1997) by Erin B. Mee helped in analyzing Dattani's viewpoint regarding treatment of homosexuals in the society. This paper has an influence from all the above mentioned works but the analysis is based on the internal understanding of the plays. The analysis is done through reading the plays and an attempt has been made to understand Mahesh Dattani's subject posi-

tion. Although it was said that his sexuality has to do with his writings but he has mentioned that it was never an issue. In an interview he said that, "My sexuality is my business. I could be anything - Gay , Straight, Transgender , asexual and write about what I write. Everyone should have knowledge about it." (n.pag)

ANALYSIS :

Heterosexuality is considered to be a norm for men and women living in a patriarchal setup of the society. At the same time, same sex love is discarded by thinking it is not natural and authentic as heterosexual love. Mahesh Dattani through his writings tried to show this judgement of the society and also portrays the outer struggles and inner turmoils homosexuals have to go through.

Dattani's play *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai* is one of the first Indian plays dealing with the subject of homosexuality. It deals with gay themes of love, trust, betrayal and also specialises on homosexuality among the youth. Homo-sexuality is traditionally considered to be something unnatural, obnoxious and some even consider it to be something disgusting. Specially the Indian society during the time Dattani was writing was not able to accept such kind of relationships. In an interview Dattani says that "One can talk about feminism in India abundantly because in a way that is accepted. But one cannot talk about gay issues because that is not Indian, that does not happen here". (n.pag) So in this play, Dattani aims to depict the social space of humiliation faced by the homosexuals and also discusses the socio-psychological identity crisis of the homosexuals and how they are torn between the social taboos, their personal desires and social consciousness. The play deals with the trials and tribulations of a group of homosexuals who have gathered in a flat in the posh marine drive area of Mumbai. The very use of setting shows how Dattani aimed to depict the fact that even the well

educated, well exposed and urbanized people of the modern world had to face shocking and unaccepting reaction of the society. Dattani was relentless in his portrayal of six men who are homosexual members of the urban, upper class India. Even though they have acknowledged each other's homosexuality they are somewhere being scared of being found out.

Kamlesh, the protagonist shared an unsuccessful relationship with Prakash. The relationship flounders due to societal pressure of homosexuality which made Prakash to believe that he is somehow wrong and should switch to normal heterosexual mode. He then changes his identity to Ed and falls in love with Kiran who turns out to be Kamlesh's sister. This shows how homosexual people had to hide their inner desires and fit into the traditional acceptance of a relationship. Moreover, in the play, Dattani cleverly juxtaposes two contrasting scenarios where there is the gathering of homosexuals in the flat where all the action is taking place and a wedding going on offstage and sounds of celebration are quite loud and clear. The wedding is the endorsement and sanctification of heterosexual relationship and they are acknowledging and accepting the union of two people of opposite sex. But the homosexuals are being looked down upon. The homosexuals up in the flat are under the pressure of societal customs and traditions. Kiran, Kamlesh's sister even says that "I wish they allowed gay people to get married" (58). Dattani through this play raises questions regarding gay acceptability that middle class society would prefer to sweep under the carpet and maintain silence on the topic.

Similarly the plights and sufferings of the eunuchs is foregrounded by Dattani in his play *Seven Steps Around the Fire*. When in the contemporary times, the world has made progress in almost all fields there are still many important issues left unaddressed specially in the Indian sub-context. Besides women related issues one community which has always got step-moth-

erly treatment from the society is that of eunuchs (Hijras) in India. He shows the issues related to their existence, identity and their rights and attempts to provide a central space to them. This play in a way provokes people to think about the eunuchs and also make people aware of the injustice done to them in the society. Dattani tries to speak for the identity and rights of the eunuchs by weaving a narrative on the murder mystery of Kamala, a young and beautiful eunuch. In consequence of the murder, Anarkali, another eunuch is imprisoned, though the police lacked enough evidence against her. Uma Rao who is the wife of the jail superintendent doing her research in sociology resolves to unveil Kamala's murder. Regulating the topic of her thesis she decides to take up the case of Anarkali, to articulate the mute voices of eunuchs by bringing them to the centre from the margins and expose the community of elitists that drags them to margins in order to maintain their class superiority. As Anarkali doesnot conform to the conventional heterosexuality, the police kept her in a male prison even though the other inmates inflict torture upon her. She was addressed with the pronoun 'it' which signifies the fact that eunuchs have no gender identity unlike 'male' and female who are represented by the pronoun 'he' and 'she' . This dehumanized conditions of their existence and the humiliation of sexual abuse even within the prison premises point out how the guardians of law become the perpetrators of crime against the transgenders. Dattani strongly believes that the transformation in the attitude of this community of marginalized is possible through love, compassion and understanding. It gives them hope and confidence to realize their own self and to reconstruct the inner strength of will to resist the forces of oppression.

The play also discusses the socio-psychological crisis of the hijras who are torn between the social customs and their personal desires. On being shown sister like affinity by Uma,

Anarkali says "If you were a hijra, I would have made

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you my sister" (13).

The love and compassion of Uma brings in new rays of hope for Anarkali and she tells her their neglected dwelling place. In the end it was revealed that Mr Sharma who is a minister had hands in Kamala's murder as his son Subbu wanted to marry her. He wanted Subbu to get married to a girl who he considers to be socially acceptable. Subbu goes into depression and kills himself during the marriage. Reputation for his father is so important that his suicide was written off as accident in newspapers. It shows how the society is not ready to accept the eunuchs as a normal part of the society. The play brings to surface the cruelty, humiliation, hypocrisy and denial of basic rights to the eunuchs perpetrated by the rich and powerful people of the society. The hijra community is considered to be the lowest of the low in the rungs of social ladder. The bias they have to suffer does not allow them to lead a normal life. They are not even recognised as members of the society. Their helplessness, fears and frustrations are highlighted in the play. They are human beings with no voice, no right to develop relationships, no love, no justice and probably no hope of acceptability in the society.

The tendency of queer people to hide their relationship can be seen in Dattani's work *Bravely Fought the Queen*. The play showcases a joint family with Baa, the matriarch, her two sons Jiten and Nitin and their wives Dolly and Alka. Both Dolly and Alka leads loveless married lives and Jiten is dominating towards Dolly and Nitin is a queer person. He had to marry Alka to meet societal expectations of a man marrying only a woman, but after marriage, he enjoys secret relationships with other men. Since no normal conjugal relation was possible with her husband, her sufferings were immense and it was clear that her husband had not even the least bit of love or concern for her. Nitin always tried to find way out and meet other men.

Night after night, Nitin met prafulla while at their house, still continues to meet the autoshickshaw driver with powerful arms' at the office, and will go on from now onward at the out- house.'
(page no - 315)

This shows how because of society's judgements he had to hide his relationships with other men . Alka considers every person could have had an inkling of Nitin's attraction to men and yet did not warn her or made any attempt to stop the marriage and she has been used as a scapegoat. Nitin exemplifies the way societal pressure and uncommon social preferences construct a queer relationship behind the facade of his macho public image. He is forced to continue his loveless relationship with his wife Alka, a screen behind which he tries to hide his clandestine queer relationships. He was talked into marrying Alka by his own one time lover. Dattani also tries to show how queers become victim of heterosexual superiority complex in this world of normal men. It aims at tearing the veil of the filthy realities and the gruesome truth lie behind the presence of conservative Indian morality.

Dattani's another play Night Queen is a representation of claustrophobia associated with homosexuality. The play takes place in tiny closed room and shows the helplessness of two homosexual characters Ash and Raghu. The play represents a few hours in the lives of Ash and Raghu who are gay partners for the night. Both of them are caught by the suffocation of their past, their deceptions and their insecurities. The setting of the room with two doors reflects on the spatial limitation which suggests the contraction of space of acceptability of homosexuality. It is only within the tiny space that they can be true to their sexual orientation. The tiny space shows how homosexuals are not accepted in the larger part of the society and it is within the tiny space that they are comfortable and true of their sexual orientation. The privacy of the room is further disturbed

by the interrogating voice of an old woman. Her voice is a reminder of the presence of an institutional social structure. The old woman represents the institutional voice with its doubts and interventions. Moreover, in the story Ash asks Raghu to open the windows. Ash wants the windows to be open as he faces some breathing issues. The pattern shows the world of secrecy and deception and also the choking suffocation related to the same. The claustrophobia is because of the non acceptability. They struggle to get space because of non-acceptability. They are afraid of being caught.

Ash : Help me, Raghu.

Raghu : Help me, Ashwin. (Pg no 75)

This lines shows how each of them are equally vulnerable and are in need of support. The story is more than just two men wanting to make love. The four walls of the setting enclose a lot more than just making love. It has shame, guilt, a desire to be accepted and also a will to be part of heteronormativity. There are interrupting voices, a hetero-normal world outside the room and amid all a desire to be loved. Dattani tries to show how they carry the burden of not only shame, but also guilt.

CONCLUSION :

Even today most Indians are uncomfortable in discussing homosexuality but Dattani did not shy away from it at a time when the society was not even ready to listen about it. When asked if he has any mission of bringing out the plights of this marginalised section, he says that he is just doing the needful. To conclude, Dattani managed to bring into centre stage the issue of marginalised identity as well as dealt with it in the most sensitive way with no dogmatism, just a quiet and direct presentation. He wanted to treat subjects which people are wary of to write about as it might make the audience uncomfortable. He also has a positive approach towards bringing a change. He wants

everyone and specially youngsters to be socially and politically aware and believe in equal human rights for everybody. He wanted to write stuff that mirrors society. There are certain aspects of the society that never gets reflected and through his work he wanted to bring those to spotlight. Despite the development in human life, the past is still rooted in Indian mind setup. It will be beneficial if gender studies therefore expands beyond the prescribed roles separately for male and female to assert the socialistic need for humanism. This gender concept in the mind of people should be changed to promote the humanistic concern among the people of different sexes. Finding a partner and to live a gay life is still a taboo. It is very difficult to find a life partner. The emphasis is on the duty towards your family, to keep the name going. Nobody cares for one's sexual preference as long as one is married and have children. No effort is made to understand their sentiments, their pain, their emotions. So Dattani took up plays and theatre as weapons to represent their plights as plays are a display of emotions, representation of relationships and portrayal of different phases of human life. The need to do so came from a space of making the Indian society to come in par with the west where comparatively homosexuals enjoy a respectable and dignified life.

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Section IV

Cultural Heritage and Identity

Unsung Heroes of North East India : An analysis

Deepjonalee Bhuyan
Plavan Bhuyan

Introduction

Every state of the North East India had its heroes in the struggle for independence. They had a vision for the future and a will to execute the toughest plans, yet it's an irony that only a few are known beyond the region. They have been relegated to rusty, sepia-toured memory. The unsung heroes of North East India played an outstanding role towards the independence of India in true sense and their valor was justified properly by the people of North East India.

Objectives

The article aims at livening into light speech unknown fighters of North East India and their contributions towards freeing their land from the foreigners and rising up in areas against the dominant role.

Methodology

The article is based on analytical method. The analysis is basically on some unsung heroes of North East India who had a major role to play in the struggle against British rule in India. Only secondary sources are used in the article like newspaper

cuttings, books, journals, articles etc.

Outcomes

It has often been seen that only some of the heroes/ heroines of Assam are given priority whereas there are hundreds of such heroes/heroines who were hardly noticed or rather received wide-spread popularity in the mainstream freedom struggle of India. Out of all, a few of them notched up tremendous effort to the struggle for independence of India.

Mungri Mem :

Born at Lalmati tea estate in Darrang district of Assam, Mungri Mem was forced to become the mistress of a British officer of the estate. They had two children but both were sent to England against her wishes. She started to become a heavy drinker and insisted her husband to bring back her children. In 1925, When Mahatma Gandhi visited Assam; she started an anti-alcohol movement in Assam. One day, Mungri had gone to Mangaldoi where Congress volunteers under the leadership of Omeo kumar Das, were organizing a dharna in front of Deputy Commissioner's office. When the volunteers saw Mungri, they requested her to stop alcohol. But she paid no attention to their request. It was the Omeo kumar Das addressed her as mad from behind which made a great impact on her. From that day, she gave up alcohol and devoted deeply to the anti-alcohol campaign in the tea estates, especially in Lalmati area. The colonial rulers issued repeated warnings to her but as she did not pay heed to their warnings and continued with the drive, they beat her to death. In such a critical juncture, her dedication and morale is worth mentioning and she became an unsung freedom fighter who did not get the recognition she deserved. She had come from such a backward community that was then considered, yet she considered as a patriot.

Haipou Jadonang

Haipou Jadonang was born at Kambiron village in Tamenglong district of Manipur in 1905. The British government arrested Jadonang on February 19, 1931 and hanged him on August 29 1931 on the bank of the river Nambul in Imphal. He had revolted against the forceful collection of house tax, porter system and spread of Christianity. Jadonang did not have any formal education but he understood the value of cultural heritage, religious beliefs and the traditional practices of his forefathers. Jadonang was brave enough to establish himself as an unsung hero of North East India against colonial domination.

Togan Sangma

The young man fought against the British might when the colonial rulers turned their eyes towards the Garo Hills after having established their hegemony in Khasi and Jaintia Hills. In December 1872, the British attacked Garo Hills from their sides, south, east and west. The Garo warriors had a conflict with the British army who fought with spears, swords and shields at Rongrengiri in East Garo Hills. Togan Sangma who was in command of the valiant Garo warriors, fell fighting with unrivaled heroism.

Madhu Malik

Someone remarked that Madhu Malik was one of the chief instigator behind the revolt of 1857. Malik was a Bengali Muktiyar and an English scholar according to historian Surjya Kumar Bhuyan. He had been sent to Jorhat by Maniram Dewan set up an indigenous factory. Further he met Kandarpeswar Singha and by degrees the entire group proposed to devise a blue print to see off the British from Assam. But unfortunately the plan was exposed and Maniram was arrested in Calcutta, while Madhu Malik was arrested in Jorhat. He was tried by Captain Holroyd, the Magistrate of Jorhat and sentenced to deportation for his life. Nothing is known of Malik after that

incident.

U Kiang Nangbah

The freedom fighter from Jayantia Hills in Meghalaya was known for his organizational skills. In 1860, the British had imposed tax in Jayantia Hills, leading to a rebellion. Towards the close of 1860, they levied income tax on the people. By 1862, the Jayantias rose a fierce rebellion led by young U Kiang Nangbah. In the first rebellion he had kept his identity a secret. The British had no idea of his movements, yet he was finally defeated because of the superior might of the foreigners. Jowai, a permanent place was besieged by the rebels for about three weeks was reoccupied amidst heavy casualties. U Kiang Nangbah was betrayed, captured and hanged in Lawmusiang on 20th December, 1862.

Gopen Roy

Gopen was a freedom fighter at the forefront of the struggle in the Barak Valley. He fought for independence first as a member of an extremist group, Jugantar and later, as a Marxist. He was imprisoned in July, 1934 for six years on charges of consecutively holding up two government vans which had carried cash and arms from sylhet to Comilla armory. After being released from the prison during post independence period, he was jailed in 1948 and during emergency in 1975. An associate of Gopen Roy, Dipak Bhattacharjya said that he was never self centered. He devoted himself to teaching the core tenets of Marxism as well as our legacy of freedom fighting and tried to dovetail these with the economic profile of his time.

Tarit Mohan Dasgupta

Tarit Mohan Dasgupta was a son of a school teacher in Thakurpara under Sonamura subdivision of Tripura. Tarit Mohan did his schooling in Agartala Umakanta Academy. While doing his graduation from the famous Victoria College IN Comilla, he

came in contact with many congress leaders. He was arrested in 1935 for leading students' demonstration in Comilla and sent to jail for two years. After returning from Agartala, he acted as an agent between the Congress leaders of Comilla and the small congress cell that he organized in Tripura. He was arrested in 1942 during the Quit India Movement and was jailed for two years. As soon as Tripura emerged as a state of the Indian union, he became an influential congress leader.

Tileswari Koch :

Tileswari Koch was a young freedom fighter and an active member of Indian National Congress from Dhekiajuli in Assam. She was shot dead at the age of 12 by the British on 20th September 1942 during the Quit India Movement when she and some freedom fighters tried to unfurl the tricolor atop a police station in Assam.

Ratna Bala Bora :

Of the numerous women known and unknown of the Brahmaputra Valley of Assam, who played an important part in the freedom movement of India, mention may be made of Ratna Bala Bora of Guwahati. It was she who one of the first women joined the famous non-cooperation Movement in 1921. She was the wife of Chandradhar Bora. Ratna Bala Bora was an active constructive worker of Indian National Congress. During the time of Quit India Movement of 1942, the women of Assam became very active and were ready to die for the motherland. She joined the movement and visited the different districts of Assam along with Amal Prabha Das. Her labour as an active congress worker bore fruit in time became free from the foreign rule in 1947. Ratna Bla Das passed away in 1975.

Conclusion :

From the above discussion it has clear that a few unsung war-

riors of North East India showed their immense valor, courage and supreme level of dedication for the cause of the nation. Although their scarifies were yet to be highlighted properly but towards the mainstream freedom struggle their efforts were highly rated.

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The Prospect of Assamese Handloom and Textile in the Context of Cultural Tourism

Dr. Kritanjali Konwar

Introduction :

Cultural tourism includes tourism in urban areas, particularly historic or large cities, and their cultural facilities, such as museums and theatres. It can also include rural tourism showcasing Indigenous cultural communities' traditions, values, and lifestyles. This form of tourism is also becoming more popular worldwide, and a recent OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) report has highlighted the role that cultural tourism can play in regional development in different locations around the world. The cultural tourism sector covers various aspects of travel, where people or tourists know and learn about each other's way of life and thoughts. In the case of Assam, various cultural components and resources have played a significant role in enhancing the entire tourism scenario. Cul-

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tural components like fairs, festivals, performing arts, visual arts, traditions, customs, lifestyles, physical artifacts, handicrafts, and religious practices have contributed towards the development of cultural tourism through which foreign and domestic tourists can know about the cultural entity and background of Assam. The moment a tourist steps into Assam, he notices the different forms of arts and crafts prevalent in the state. Every single item that one can see on the walls and windows of homes is a perfect example of the state's tradition in arts and crafts. The tourist must have seen similar items produced in other parts of the world, but only a few are as original and creative as the articles he finds in Assam. The tourists go on a shopping spree to get hold of the most magnificent handicraft items that come into their sight. Notably, Assamese handloom weaving and textile designs in the handicraft sector have enough potential to draw the tourist's attention due to their uniqueness.

Maintaining the traditional look, the Arts and Crafts of Assam have been mesmerizing the world from time immemorial. Making a statement on the world stage, the silk textiles of Assam are the most renowned product of Assamese Handicrafts. The Assamese has been traditionally a craftsman from time immemorial. However, Assam is mostly known for its exclusive silks and bamboo and cane furniture. Here, several ethnic groups live in complete harmony and offer many unique cultural and traditional objects in this wonderful State.

Handloom of Assam is famous for the various silk types produced here. The most renowned silk type is the Muga, the golden silk. Its kind is only found in Assam, which makes it more exclusive and sought after. There are other forms of silk as well, like Eri and Pat. Assam also has the most significant number of weavers in the country. Many industries have come up in the state but don't come even close to the demand created by hand-made textiles in the global market. The tradition of handlooms

has stayed alive through the many tribes residing in the state. However, there are immense variations in the styles of weaving and designing that have been retained and perpetuated by the people because of their distinct cultural traditions and socio-cultural lives. The present paper provides a reasonably detailed idea of the motives and designs used in Assam's textiles and the potential for promoting them as a major tourist attraction.

OBJECTIVES :

- (i) This is an attempt to briefly discuss the potential of Assamese handlooms and textiles to promote cultural tourism in this area.
- (ii) It is also an attempt to explore the probable areas for popularizing the Assamese handloom and textile in front of the world community. And,
- (iii) This study will also illuminate the present scenario of Assamese hand looms and textiles in the context of cultural tourism.

METHODOLOGY :

This study is based on secondary data obtained from various books, journals, newspaper articles, government documents, websites, etc. Natural observation of the concerned area is also important.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION :

Assam has the most extended concentration of weavers in India. Handloom weaving and its vast range of designs reflect the sartorial taste of Assam's multi-faceted composite culture and tradition. There is hardly any village in Assam where one will not hear the rhythmic sound of the looms and shuttles. Designed dress materials produced by weavers of Sualkuchi are highly claimed for their uniqueness and quality standards. Assam is the home of several types of silks, among which the most prominent and prestigious being the Muga silk; Paat and Eri are

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the other types. The latter is used to manufacture warm clothes. The women make mekheles, chadars, rihās, gamochas etc. The famous 'vrindavanivastra,' now preserved in the London museum in a bit and pieces, was woven by Sri Sankaradeva, the great religious and social leader of the 16th Century. The most common patterns woven on the clothes are fairy tales with artistic sensibility. Assam is the home of several types of silks. The golden silk exclusive is the most prominent and prestigious 'muga,' only to this State. Besides that, Pat and Eri can also be found here. Weaving in Assam is not just a commercial venture but a labor of love. The tribal people in Assam have various colorful costumes, some of which have earned international repute through the export market; in a recent govt. A survey has observed that in Assam, more than 17.16 lakhs of weavers are engaged in 14.09 lakhs of looms and produce 167 million meters of cloth annually, against the clothing need of nearly 370 million meters in the state. In Assam, handloom weaving stands next only to Agriculture.

Nowadays, Sualkuchi is one of the world's largest weaving villages, often called the 'Manchester of the East,' a renowned center of silk production. The handloom textiles of Assam attract foreign and domestic tourists. Tourism is recognized as a global instrument that reduces poverty and is a source of income. It is to be noted that the weaving industry of Assam can fulfill the aims of reducing poverty and providing a source of income. Most of the self-help groups choose weaving as an income source. Despite all odds, the positive growth in tourist arrivals registered in Assam during the last few years should add to the optimism that a proper strategy and effective plans can help the weaving industry.

Nowadays, along with the popularity of the folk dance of Assam, i.e., Bihu, which has occupied a separate place in the foreign and domestic tourism markets, the demand for Muga silk is also

becoming visible. So, there is enough scope on the part of the government to encourage new entrepreneurs by providing venture capital, which in turn could open up significant employment opportunities through weaving. The NEC and DONER design many plans to improve the tourism industry. Most of the plans enriched the weaving industry. Various tourist festivals are celebrated, like the tea festival, Dehing-patka festival, elephant festival, rain forest festival, etc. These festivals have succeeded in attracting a large number of foreign tourists to the state. Every festival creates a market in which many handloom textile products are sold. The government of Assam is setting up an international trade centre called NEDFI Hut, which has modern facilities to attract the private sector and provide infrastructure for prospective investors. This trade centre facilitates the sale of handloom.

Workshops are being organized to train the craftsman to keep pace with the ever-changing demands of the national and international markets regarding the material's colors, design, or texture. Potential weavers are being identified for training in modern techniques and handling machines. Some of these weavers have also been sent to Japan to be trained by Japanese experts. Like Kerala, the Assam tourism department has decided to set up model villages to show its ethnic and cultural wealth. The towns of Sualkuchi is on the list because the enhancement of the sale of silk would boost the state's economy. In September 2004, gov^t of India, organized a programme at Sualkuchi to acquaint the people of the area with the most common expectations that the tourists have regarding their silk. If it comes true, it will make its efforts successful.

Present Threat to Muga Industry in Assam

Despite such encouraging efforts of the government, we have obtained quite the opposite picture of the handloom industry in

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Assam. It has been noticed that in upper Assam, many Muga farmers uproot their host plants to replace them with tea gardens due to economic reasons. Simultaneously, 'unscrupulous' traders started blending low-cost Chinese Tasar Silk Yarn (dyeing with Muga-like color) with Mugayarn for weaving fabric. As such, there is nothing to say as a blending of one other yarn goes well in the textile industry for product diversification and to reduce the cost of production. However, blending tasar with Muga and selling the same as pure Muga is fraudulent, as innocent buyers fall prey to such an evil deed. The other negative effect of such an act is that poor muga farmers are not getting buyers of cocoons like in earlier years. Consequently, helpless farmers are ultimately compelled to sell their cocoons at a much lower price than the cost of production. This has discouraged most traditional farmers, who are in dilemma whether to continue with the Muga rearing. Another threat, as noticed here, is that truckloads of bark of 'Som' trees are being transported from lower Assam to outside the State. It is understood that the bark is used to process incensed sticks in Bangalore and other states. Fresh Sombarks are purchased at Rs. 2 per kg, and sundried bark can fetch Rs. 7 per kg. Since some plantations are usually away from the farmers' houses and spread over hills and forests, it becomes easy for interested persons to debark the trees and sell the bark. It is well known that the removal of bark will destroy the plants. And if the present practice continues, there will be hardly any plants available for Muga rearing shortly, thereby jeopardizing the world-renowned muga silk industry, the pride of Assam.

SUGGESTIONS :

We want to suggest a few points for the development and popularity of the Assamese handloom industry :

1. Educating and imparting training for the weavers is necessary.

2. To provide a hospitable welcome to visitors and sufficient knowledge about the weaving industry and products.
3. To organize the 'Sipini' and to offer them awards and certificates -cum -identification cards.
4. To provide various platforms, such as textile exhibitions and sale counters in the state, for weavers and local entrepreneurs.
5. To improve the transport and communication system.
6. To encourage local committees and welfare organizations, including NGOs, to share in the weaving industry in various ways.
7. Giving importance to the international export of Eri (Attaces ricini), Muga (Antheroco Assamese), and Pat (Bombyxtextor).
8. A strong and dynamic tourism policy for trade and travel should be adopted.
9. To develop the form of silk thread into different cost-effective varieties.
10. To provide economic help and proper guidance to the 'spine.'

CONCLUSION :

Assam's tourism has enormous potential to occupy an essential global market position. The weaving industry of Assam, mainly dominated by Assamese women, can create an international position in the cultural tourism industry. Sericulture, the technique of silk production, is an agro-based industry that has played an essential role in the rural economy of Assam. Assam can be proud of and lead towards prosperity through the handloom industry. During his visit to Assam, Mahatma Gandhi remarked, "Every woman of Assam is born weaver. No Assamese girls who do not know how to weave can expect to become a wife. And she weaves fairy tales in cloth.....as I saw these beautiful patterns, I could not help but shed a silent tear over India's past glory and her lost art." Assamese people must survive by retaining their glorious culture of beautiful hand-woven clothes that

enchant the world.

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Impact of Globalization on Culture

Kakoli Baruah

Introduction

The word globalization can be defined as an extensive network of economic, cultural, social and political interconnections and process which goes beyond national boundaries (Yeates 2001). It is a complex and multifaceted phenomena. It is the process of international integration as a product of exchange of world views, products, ideas and other aspects of culture in which worldwide exchange of national and cultural resources occurs in the process. According to the sociologist Roland Robertson, "Globalization as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole, both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the globe whole.

Globalization represents an ongoing phenomenon characterized by the growing connectedness and interdependence among na-

tions, individuals and business worldwide. This process the integration of economic, political, social and cultural systems across borders, resulting in increased flows of goods, services, capital, people and ideas.

The term globalization started appearing in literature from 1980's. Initially it referred mainly the economic transactions and growth of economy. Soon it started penetrating to other fields like political, with weakening authority of states, emergence of global governance order system etc. globalization acquired cultural connotations with global cultural, global civil society etc. and today the cultural connotation of globalization is also widely discussed. Thus the term the globalization acquired all these connotations and exemplifying its influence on different realms of life.

Objective of the study :

- 1) The general objective of this study is to explain the cultural impact of globalization on society.
- 2) To access the definition of globalization.
- 3) To explore the cultural impacts of globalization on society.

Methodology :

This study is based on secondary sources of data and the information are collected from books, journals, magazine, periodicals and internet sources etc.

Impact of globalization on culture :

Globalization has significantly impact on Indian culture by introducing new ideas, technologies and cultural practices from around the world. This has led to increase cultural exchange, adaption of foreign lifestyles and changes in traditional norms and values.

Throughout history, India has embraced diverse cultural influ-

ences, contributing to its enrichment. However recent decades have brought significant cultural changes, sparking concerns about potential dominance of local cultures. Consequently debates have arisen encompassing not only political and economic matters but also changes in fashion, music film, languages and body languages, food habits, festivals marriage etc. With the process globalization, there is an access to T.V grew from 20% of the urban population. (1991) to 90% the urban population (2009). Even in the rural areas satellite T.V has a grownup market. In the cities internet facility is everywhere and extension of internet facilities even to rural areas. There is an increase of global food chain or restaurants in the urban areas of India. Excessive multiplex movie halls big shopping malls and high rise residential area seen in every cities. Entertainment sector in India has a global market. After economic liberalization, bollywood expanded its area and showed a major presence in the global scale. The industry began to explore new ways to become more global and modern. In India modernity is observed with the west. Therefore western philosophy began to be incorporated into Bollywood films. As these new cultural messages began to reach the Indian population. Indian movie goers were pushed to re-evaluate their traditional Indian cultural ideology. Bollywood movies are also distributed and accepted an international level. Big international companies i.e walt Disney 20th century fox and Columbia pictures are investing in this sector Famous international. This brands such as Armani, Gucci, Nike and omega are also making investment in the Indian market with the changing of fashion statement of Indians.

A definition of globalization as "Americanization" or perhaps the "MC donaldization", of the world presents globalization as a process driven by American consumer culture that rolls over other cultures. On the other hand another definition of globalization would highlight its cross cultural impact, taking into account the nature of globalization as a way cultures interact and

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learn from each other. It is very important to mention here that every culture of the world have been affected by the monopoly at western culture. So the planning of the west to homogenize the world in order to rule over it became successful through the instrument and means of globalization. First they captured market then gradually and slowly every field was controlled by them. Every nation in the world has its distinct culture and values which is transmitted to them by their ancestors which can be called ones cultural heritage. Though globalization has some good dimensions also but mostly its benefit goes to well of countries of the world especially to west. Today there is identity crisis ones identity is under threat. Globalization created a materialist culture where everybody is concerned with his own interest and benefit, nobody is bothering about others. A culture at consumerism and pop culture affected., other cultures of the world that were having a glorious and best civilization and cultural values which were based on humanity, tolerance, world brotherhood, social justice, egalitarianism etc.

Findings and conclusion

Globalization has significantly impact Indian culture by introducing new ideas, technologies and cultural practices from around the world. This has led to increase cultural exchange, adoption at foreign lifestyles and changes in traditional norms and values.

The major consequences of globalization have been the transmogrification of traditional religions and belief systems, the beginning of the disintegrates of the traditional social fabrics and shared norms by consumerism, cyber culture, newfangled religions and changing work ethics and work rhythms, the fast spreading anomic forcing an even increasing number of individuals to fall back upon the easily accessible pretentious religious banalities and attributing to religion the creation and acceleration of extremist, fundamentalist and terrorist tendencies

in the third world countries. It is fair to say that the impact of globalization in the cultural sphere has, most generally been viewed in a pessimistic light. Typically it has been associated with the destruction of cultural identities, victims of the accelerating encroachment of a homogenized, westernized, consumer culture. This view the constituency for which extends from some academics to antiglobalization activists (Sheppard and Hayduk 2002) tends to interpret globalization as a seamless extension of indeed as a euphemism for western cultural imperialism. Though globalization has some negative impact but it has got huge impact on cultural sphere too there are also important forms of reproduction, interconnection and time space aspect of these cultures and associated cultural practices, globalization is not only about interplays between local, regional, national and global scales but also about the interconnectedness flows and uneven development in the world.

Culture is not static it evolves and adapts to social changes. Globalization often fosters the development of not only new local traditions but also global ones, creating a diverse tapestry of cultural influences.

Lastly cultural change shown the modification of society through innovation, invention, discovery on contact with other societies (Johnson 2001). Reghunath (2017) concluded that the cultural changes are the function of three elements which are invents, discovery and diffusion. Furthermore industrialization, urbanization, modernization and globalization have contributed to significant changes in the culture of the world. So the impact of globalization is great in on Indian culture.

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Plans and Specifications for the Natural Preservation of Rare books or Manuscripts

Abhijit Borpuzari

Introduction

The irreplaceable cultural legacy of humanity is preserved in the form of documents housed in libraries and museums. In the evolution of contemporary education, ancient and medieval texts are regarded as the most crucial resources. These historical writings serve as invaluable assets in shaping our national and cultural identity. Across the nation, numerous libraries and librarians bear the crucial responsibility of safeguarding manuscripts. This significant task also involves data scientists, archivists, curators, and scholars. All manuscripts and rare books share a common need for specialized care to maintain their condition and structure over time. To address this, libraries and museums have implemented various preservation techniques, worked on preventing future deterioration, and developed innovative solutions for existing issues. While modern conservation methods and chemical treatments are available, concerns about human safety persist. This article explores the use of traditional and natural preservation methods for manuscript conservation.

2. Conservation requirements

The preservation of manuscripts and rare books requires meticulous attention. Given the ephemeral nature of ink, extra precautions are necessary to ensure their new environment does not hasten deterioration or introduce new issues. Books of any age can be harmed by dust, humidity, and even chemicals emit-

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ted from subpar wooden shelving. To properly showcase or safeguard the collection of manuscripts or rare books, certain natural or conventional techniques must be employed. These methods are essential for maintaining the items in an appropriate condition for both display and long-term conservation.

2.1 Climate and humidity

Delicate manuscripts and rare text editions are highly susceptible to minor fluctuations in temperature and humidity. To avoid damage such as paper splitting or defects, it is crucial to maintain a temperature range of 65-70 degrees Fahrenheit and a steady humidity level between 30-50 percent. Many libraries utilize climate-controlled rooms to store valuable old artwork, which can significantly extend their preservation. Interestingly, it is thought that implementing natural temperature control and ventilation methods, rather than relying on modern air-conditioning systems, could be more advantageous and beneficial for humanity in the long run.

2.2 Sunlight

While any type of light can result in long-lasting chemical alterations and book retention on paper, sunlight's ultraviolet (UV) rays are especially dangerous and can degrade old books. Even if the book is taken out of direct sunlight, this UV can still harm it. absolute text drying, paper yellowing or velveting, fabric damage, and binding splits. Reduce the amount of light that books are exposed to in order to preserve them, yet particularly in direct sunshine. Purchase a cover that blocks direct UV rays and keep it in a room with low light levels or near a window.

2.3 Dust

It is quite difficult to keep a library dust-free. To prevent needless interaction with oil or other natural components, texts are typically stored in one location for extended periods of time and are rarely touched. These trash have the potential to accu-

mulate dust, which could lead to an increase in bug infestation because of their immobile character. Dusting should be done on a regular basis to preserve rare texts or manuscripts. Dust should be gently removed from the other side of the spine using a soft-colored brush or cloth, as the top of the book is likely to retain the most dust and debris.

2.4 Materials used in the text

One of the main issues with library collections seems to be the reduction of paper-based items. The majority of the compounds found in wood are acidic wood components. In a similar vein, used resin paper also contains acid salts. Papers made with this chemical technique degrade and get acidic when exposed to high humidity and temperatures. Iron gall, which contains ferrous sulfate, was used to make printing ink starting in the early nineteenth century. It oxidizes to produce sulfuric acid. Along with the acidity of the ink paper, text is removed from the paper. The protective salts that were formerly accessible in leather are absent from the leather used for bindings. This was due to pressure for more leather by the change binder in the tanning method at the bottom. Such leathers become dry over a period of time.

2.5 Biological Agents

One of the main issues with library collections seems to be the reduction of paper-based items. The majority of the compounds found in wood are acidic wood components. In a similar vein, used resin paper also contains acid salts. Papers made with this chemical technique degrade and get acidic when exposed to high humidity and temperatures. Iron gall, which contains ferrous sulfate, was used to make printing ink starting in the early nineteenth century. It oxidizes to produce sulfuric acid. Along with the acidity of the ink paper, text is removed from the paper. The protective salts that were formerly accessible in leather are absent from the leather used for bindings. Food items and organic packaging materials for mechanical or magnetic carriers

shouldn't be allowed in libraries. Because they encourage drying, drainage water leaky pipes should be inspected. It is claimed that the effects of pesticide use are transient. Most nations now forbid the use of thymol and related substances.

2.6 Air Pollutants

Air pollutants, commonly referred to as environmental pollutants in gaseous form, include ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, and emissions from factories or motor vehicles that deteriorate due to corrosion or acid assault. Sand particles and dust sludge are examples of solid pollutants that exhibit the growth of biological agents and are abrasive in nature. These aid in the products' ability to create acids.

3. Traditional methods of preservation

In addition to being a crucial issue for librarians, document preservation is also a delicate one for scholars, archivists, curators, informants, and other kinds of organizations. Our most precious national asset is the ancient manuscripts written in ink or palm leaf, which are a priceless repository of information. These manuscripts are effective tools for preserving our literary, artistic, linguistic, and cultural legacy. The only sources of unknowable information are these. As a result, every attempt must be taken to preserve these monies for years to come.

3.1 Why Indigenous Methods ?

Modern chemical insecticides and repellents are readily available for the secure preservation of manuscripts. More preservation techniques have emerged as a result of technological advancements. Even if manuscripts are preserved using contemporary technology, ancient preservation techniques are still widely used and valued today since they have advantages of their own, like:

1. These are not dangerous to human health.
2. These will not adversely affect the product.

3. The methods do not require much skill, equipment and money

An attempt is made to give an overview of how to prevent insect infestation in the manuscript repository by using traditional methods, Indian herbal pesticides and insecticides.

4. Traditional preservation methods in India :

Indians have a very long history of conservation expertise. Manuscripts have been preserved using a variety of local techniques since ancient times. Because scholars at the time were well aware of the fundamental causes of manuscript deterioration, including thinness, dust, heat, and humidity, manuscripts were typically wrapped with fabric to shield them from these possible elements. Some customs, however, have been preserved and are still followed by the people who looked after the manuscripts. They are

1. Even before the manuscripts are inscribed on the leaves, they are guaranteed safe keeping. In order to protect against pest damage, seasonal leaves were either cooked in water or covered under mud.
2. Typically, the process of binding manuscripts involves perforating the leaves and securing them with thread. To safeguard the leaves from potential damage caused by the threads, they are positioned between two sturdy, flat wooden boards. These wooden boards provide protection by preventing any friction on the leaves from both sides.
3. The manuscripts were safeguarded from dust, insects, and fluctuations in atmospheric humidity, as well as from the absorption of acidic fumes, by being encased in cloth.
4. The manuscripts were protected from dust, insects, and variations in humidity, as well as from the absorption of acidic vapors, by being enclosed in fabric.
5. The manuscripts are encased in silk fabric, as silk is resistant to bookworms, which has led to its widespread application.
6. Bundles of manuscripts are also housed in heavy wooden

chests to minimize harsh climatic changes

7. The scientific understanding regarding the use of palm leaves in the kitchen indicates that the smoke particles possess the capability to deter insect infestations on palm leaf manuscripts. While it is true that the accumulation of smoke may potentially harm the manuscripts, this method has proven to be effective in providing protection.

8. The exposure of foliage to the gentle light of the rising or setting sun inhibits the growth of insects and microorganisms.

9. In some places, underground cells are prepared for the preservation of manuscripts

10. The manuscripts are usually exposed to the sun in the lunar month of Bhadrava i.e. August since the rays of the sun are most favourable in that particular month. It kills the worms under the sun

5. Use of herbal and natural products:

Some plants and their products, which have been recognized since ancient times, have disinfectant properties and reduce insect susceptibility. The following are mentioned:

1. Dried and powdered ashwagandha is stored in small packets, which are wrapped in cloth to protect against insect infestations.

2. Dried ginger pieces are positioned alongside the manuscript fragments to safeguard them against insect infestations.

3. Manuscript leaves are treated with lemon-grass oil to enhance their durability, effectively inhibiting microbial growth.

4. Some libraries use sandalwood or kumkum fruit powder (which is red in colour) which acts as a very good insect repellent.

5. Some natural products such as garlic, sandalwood or clove oil extracts are advantageous in restoring the flexibility of palm leaf manuscripts.

6. Powdered ajwain also acts as an insecticide and fungicide.

7. Corfu powder is used to kill maggots that develop on manuscripts

8. A combination of neem leaves and citronella is recognized

for its insecticidal properties, making it suitable for use in libraries to aid in the preservation of manuscripts.

9. Dried tobacco leaves serve as a protective measure for manuscripts against insect infestations. Typically, these leaves are contained within small cloth bags and arranged on the shelf alongside the manuscript. The presence of nicotinic acid in the leaves acts as a deterrent to insects.

10. Mint leaves also repel ants and cockroaches

11. Black cumin (black cumin) which gives an intense aromatic smell and is also used as an insect repellent

12. Sandalwood dust is commonly used by many libraries for insects

13. Neem oil comprises a category of compounds that function as insect growth regulators. Its application has been acknowledged since ancient times.

14. Wooden boards that are affixed to bundles of manuscripts are susceptible to insect damage; therefore, certain libraries utilize neem wood for these boards, as it offers protection against flies.

15. Corfu oil is also used to protect manuscripts.

16. Application of garlic paste to seasonal palm leaves is well known for its decontaminating effect.

17. In addition, tea leaves, basil, eucalyptus leaves, etc. are used to protect the manuscripts covered with cloth from insects.

5. Conclusion

Library materials, being organic in nature, are inherently subject to degradation over time. Consequently, it is imperative for libraries to utilize indigenous materials for preservation purposes, ensuring that these resources remain functional for an extended period. Local products tend to exhibit greater durability. Manuscripts serve as vital repositories of our culture and traditions, making their collection crucial for the intellectual advancement of the nation. Unfortunately, many manuscripts have encountered numerous challenges in the past, resulting in significant

losses. A primary factor contributing to this issue is a general lack of awareness. Without appropriate care, manuscripts cannot endure; thus, it is our responsibility to safeguard and maintain them. Only through such efforts can future generations gain insight into the history of our country and its people.

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Mejankari- the Secondary host of Muga Silkworm

Chitralkha Gogoi

Muga silkworm, *Antheraea assamensis* Helfer, is a semidomesticated sericogenic polyphagus insect that feeds on a variety of plants. Based on the feeding behavior and food preferences, food plants of muga silkworm were categorized into two groups, viz., primary and secondary. The primary host plants of Muga silkworm are *Persea bombycina* (Som) and *Litsea monopetala* (Sualu). There are several secondary host plants, among which *Litsea cubeba* (Mejankari) is one of the most important one. *Litsea cubeba* (Mejankari) an evergreen aromatic tree is the second most preferred secondary host plant of muga silkworm. The plant is generally found in foothills and plains in forest ecosystem of northeastern India.¹

Sericulture has become an agro-based industry in the region and plays a significant role in economy and employment of the people of northeastern India.²

The silkworm is endemic to Assam and adjoining areas of northeastern India, which produces natural golden coloured exquisite silk. At present the annual production of the Muga raw silk is about 233 metric ton in the year 2019-2020.³

Muga silkworm larvae feed on *L. cubeba* produce a special kind of silk known as 'mejankari silk' which is admired for its durability, luster and glossy creamy white shade.⁴

Only healthy and strong muga silkworm larvae can feed on *L.*

cubeba leaves and survive; worms hatched out of low quality eggs cannot survive on mejankari tree and hence the success on this plant is comparatively low. Interestingly, the muga silkworm when feed with *L. cubeba* plants, the silk produced from it, has been considered superior over Muga silk and it is five times much costlier.⁵

The Ahom Dynasty was established in Assam with the invasion of Tai Ahoms in 1228 AD. During the supremacy of the Ahom rulers, the silk Industry of Assam and especially the muga silk received encouragement from the royal Dynasty as it was perceived as the royal fabric. It was also reported that muga silk produced by silkworm reared on "mejankari" leaves were very much precious and used exclusively by the royal family.

Nowadays, there is no regular cultivation of this tree; it grows from seeds carried out through excreta of birds. The seed has a hard coat, therefore it is highly restricted to some pockets of Jorhat and Sivasagar district only. Consequently, the mejankari silk production has also been decreased.⁶

Although *L. cubeba* has potential as an industrial crop no systematic plantation of *L. cubeba* is available in the country for silkworm farming. Even though mejankari is the costliest silk with high demand, farmers usually do not prefer this plant because seedlings are too difficult to obtain for cultivation. This is mainly due to low seed germination rate even under ideal conditions.

Wild muga silkworms are also found sometimes in *L. cubeba* plants growing in natural forests. Although 20-30 years ago the species was abundant in the region, the population has been dipping in recent years and has become rare due to many anthropogenic factors such as large scale deforestation, floods, agriculture expansion and encroachment.⁷

The other regions for its declining population include its susceptibility to diseases, inability to withstand water logging, strong sunlight, heavy rainfall and self propagation limitations.⁸

The plant is not only popular for silkworm rearing but also for its medicinal and industrial value. All parts of the plant are used for medicinal purposes. Essential oil extracted from the plant (leaf and seeds) has demonstrated antifungal and antibacterial properties. Distribution of any plant species normally depends on mechanisms of seed dispersal and germination success. Therefore efforts should be made to understand seed biology and germination ecology of the plant. Although the methods of vegetative propagation like leaf bud cutting and air layering lacking for *L.cubeba*. Specific breeding goals and conservation strategies of *L.cubeba* plant are of urgent need. Unlike primary food plants of muga silkworm, germplasm resources and effective package and practices for *L.cubeba* are not yet available.¹⁴ Moreover genetic diversity of *L.cubeba* in north-eastern India and the regional variation in terms of plant chemistry have not been explored.

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Section V

Scientific Research and Innovation

Testing of the Starobinsky Model of $f(R)$ Gravity in galactic scale

Gayatri Mohan

Introduction

Galactic rotation curves are one of the most significant observational challenges in astrophysics. Observational data from numerous spiral galaxies show that the rotational velocities of stars and gas in galaxies remain approximately constant far beyond the visible matter distribution, contrary to the predictions from Newtonian mechanics and General Relativity. This discrepancy has been traditionally explained by postulating the presence of missing matter. The discovery of this hidden galactic mass was first proposed by J.H. Oort in the early 1930s when he identified discrepancies in the motion of stars in our galaxy by suggesting a larger mass than visible one [Oort, J.H. (1932)]. Soon after, F. Zwicky in 1933 observed the velocity dispersion of galaxies in the Coma cluster. He suggested that the visible mass could not account for the gravitational effects of galaxies. This suggestion led to the concept of "missing mass" or dark matter [Zwicky, F. (1937)]. Four decades later, Vera Rubin and her collaborators, in a landmark study of galactic rotation curves, further reinforced the notion that the distribution of visible matter in galaxies is insufficient to explain their dynamics [Rubin, V.C. (1983)]. Their research highlighted that the rotational velocity of stars does not decrease as expected but remains flat at large distances from the galactic center, implying the presence of an unseen mass. This phenomenon, where the rotation curve stays flat despite a decrease in visible matter, is consistent with the existence of dark matter. However, the lack of direct detection of dark matter has led to alternative approaches such as modi-

fied gravity theories to explain galactic rotation curves. These gravity theories, including $f(R)$ gravity, propose that these effects could arise from modifications to the gravitational field itself. In this context, the Starobinsky model of $f(R)$ gravity proposed by Alexei Starobinsky [] as an extension of General Relativity presents a promising framework. This model adds higher-order curvature terms to the gravitational action, which could potentially account for cosmic and galactic phenomena without the need for dark matter. In this paper, we explore the dynamics of galaxies in the Starobinsky $f(R)$ framework and analyze its implications for understanding galactic rotation curves.

Our aim is to explore the viability of Starobinsky modified $f(R)$ gravity model in galactic scale by analyzing the implications of this model for galactic dynamics, particularly focusing on the rotation curves of galaxies that arise from the modified equations of motion.

II. Field Equations in $f(R)$ Gravity

A modified theory of gravity extends the theory of General Relativity by generalizing the Einstein-Hilbert (E-H) action. $f(R)$ gravity is a modified gravity theory In which the Ricci scalar R appearing in the traditional E-H action is replaced with a function, $f(R)$ of it [Sotiriou, T.P. & Faraoni, V. (2010), Felice, A. D., & Tsujikawa, S. (2010)]. The action for $f(R)$ gravity in the metric formalism is represented as follows

$$S = \frac{1}{2k} \int \sqrt{-g} f(R) d^4x + S_m, \tag{1}$$

here $k = 8\pi G$; $g = \det g_{\mu\nu}$; $R =$ Ricci scalar, $S_m =$ Action corresponding to matter field. $\sqrt{-g} d^4x =$ Spacetime volume element.

Variation of action (1) applying least action principle results,

$$\frac{\delta f(R)}{\delta g^{\mu\nu}} - \frac{1}{2} f(R) g_{\mu\nu} = k T_{\mu\nu}, \tag{2}$$

here $T_{\mu\nu}$ represents energy momentum tensor or stress energy tensor and defined as

$$T_{\mu\nu} = \frac{-2}{\sqrt{-g}} \frac{\delta(\sqrt{-g} L_m)}{\delta g^{\mu\nu}}$$

Furthermore,

$$\frac{\delta f(R)}{\delta g^{\mu\nu}} = f_R(R) \frac{\delta R}{\delta g^{\mu\nu}},$$

where $f_R(R) = \frac{df(R)}{dR}$. Hence equation (2) leads to the form given below-

$$f_R(R) \frac{\delta R}{\delta g^{\mu\nu}} - \frac{1}{2} f(R) g_{\mu\nu} = k T_{\mu\nu}.$$

The Ricci scalar R is given as

(3)

$$R = g^{\mu\nu} R_{\mu\nu}$$

As $R_{\mu\nu} = R^{\rho}_{\mu\rho\nu}$, δR is obtained from the variation of Riemann curvature tensor R which is defined as

$$R^{\rho}_{\mu\sigma\nu} = \partial_{\sigma} \Gamma^{\rho}_{\mu\nu} - \Gamma^{\rho}_{\mu\sigma} + \Gamma^{\lambda}_{\mu\nu} \Gamma^{\rho}_{\lambda\sigma} - \Gamma^{\lambda}_{\mu\sigma} \Gamma^{\rho}_{\lambda\nu}.$$

Moreover, the variation of connection gives $\frac{\delta R}{\delta g^{\mu\nu}}$ as follows

$$\frac{\delta R}{\delta g^{\mu\nu}} = R_{\mu\nu} - \nabla_{\mu} \nabla_{\nu} + g_{\mu\nu} \square, \tag{4}$$

where $\square = g^{\rho\alpha} \nabla_{\rho} \nabla_{\alpha} = \nabla^{\rho} \nabla_{\rho}$ is the Laplace operator in four dimensions

Equations (3) and (4) yields

$$f_R(R) R_{\mu\nu} - \frac{1}{2} f(R) g_{\mu\nu} - (\nabla_{\mu} \nabla_{\nu} - g_{\mu\nu} \square) f_R(R) = k T_{\mu\nu}. \tag{5}$$

Equation (5) represents the field equations of $f(R)$ gravity theory for a system. These are fourth order partial differential equations in the metric $g_{\mu\nu}$. If $f_R(R)$ is a constant, then, $f(R)$ is a linear function of R and the theory reduces the standard GR. Trace of the equation is as follow

$$f_R(R) R - 2f(R) + 3\square f_R(R) = kT. \tag{6}$$

The form of modified Einstein equations is obtained from equation (6) as

$$G_{\mu\nu} = \frac{kT_{\mu\nu}}{f_R(R)} + g_{\mu\nu} \frac{f(R) - R}{2f_R(R)} + \frac{(\nabla_{\mu} \nabla_{\nu} - g_{\mu\nu} \square) f_R(R)}{f_R(R)} \tag{7}$$

$$\Rightarrow G_{\mu\nu} = k_{\text{eff}} [T_{\mu\nu} + T_{\mu\nu}^E],$$

where

$$k_E = \frac{k}{f_R(R)}, \quad T_{\mu\nu}^E = \frac{1}{k} \left[\frac{f(R) - Rf_R(R)}{2} g_{\mu\nu} + (\nabla_\mu \nabla_\nu - g_{\mu\nu} \square) f_R(R) \right] \quad (8)$$

is introduced as effective stress energy tensor. Equation (7) is the modified Einstein equation of $f(R)$ gravity in metric formalism.

III. Equation Governing Spherically Symmetric System

We aim to study the rotational curves of spiral galaxies without invoking the presence of dark matter. To achieve this, we model such a galaxy as an isolated system, described by a static, spherically symmetric metric, as presented here

$$ds^2 = -e^{\omega} dt^2 + e^{\vartheta} dr^2 + r^2 d\theta^2 + r^2 \sin^2\theta d\phi^2. \quad (9)$$

The components of Einstein tensor $G_{\mu\nu}$ for the metric (9) can be obtained as

$$G_t^t = -\frac{e^{-\vartheta}}{r} \vartheta' + \frac{e^{-\vartheta}}{r^2} - \frac{1}{r^2}. \quad (10)$$

$$G_r^r = \frac{e^{-\vartheta}}{r} \omega' + \frac{e^{-\vartheta}}{r^2} - \frac{1}{r^2}. \quad (11)$$

$$G_\theta^\theta = G_\phi^\phi = \frac{e^{-\lambda}}{r} \left[\omega'' + \frac{(\omega')^2}{2} - \frac{\omega'}{\vartheta} + \frac{\omega' - \vartheta'}{r} \right]. \quad (12)$$

Here, prime denotes the differentiation with respect to 'r'. By considering matter distribution of the system as dust like, relations (10), (11) take the following form after using equation (9),

$$\frac{e^{-\vartheta}}{r} \vartheta' - \frac{e^{-\vartheta}}{r^2} + \frac{1}{r^2} = k_{\text{eff}} (\rho + \rho^E). \quad (13)$$

$$\frac{e^{-\vartheta}}{r} \omega' + \frac{e^{-\vartheta}}{r^2} - \frac{1}{r^2} = 0. \quad (14)$$

Summation of equations (13) and (14) results,

$$\frac{\omega' + \vartheta'}{r e^\vartheta} = k_E (\rho + \rho^E) . \tag{15}$$

If $\frac{\omega' + \vartheta'}{r e^\vartheta}$ is a well defined differential expression, it should have solution like [Sobouti, Y. (2007)]

$$e^{\omega + \vartheta} = Q(r) . \tag{16}$$

In general relativity, the function $B(r)$ is 1 as in this case $e^\gamma = 1$ [Hobson, M. P. et al.,(2006)]. But we are working with modified gravity where $Q(r)$ should be slightly different from unity. So we assume that [Sobouti, Y. (2007)]

$$Q(r) = \left(\frac{r}{s}\right)^\delta , \tag{17}$$

where δ is small dimensionless parameter, s is scale length of the system. Equation (16) may take the form

$$\omega + \vartheta = \delta \ln \left(\frac{r}{s}\right)$$

$$\Rightarrow \omega' + \vartheta' = \delta \left[\frac{d}{dr} \ln (r) - \frac{d}{dr} \ln (s) \right] = \frac{\delta}{r} . \tag{18}$$

Use of equation (18) in equation (15) results

$$e^\vartheta = \delta [k_E r^2 (\rho + \rho^E)]^{-1} . \tag{19}$$

And g_{tt} component of the metric coefficient can be written as

$$e^\omega = k_E \delta^{-1} s^{-\delta} r^{\delta+2} (\rho + \rho^E) . \tag{20}$$

The effective energy density from equation (8) is obtained as

$$\rho^E = \frac{1}{k} \left[\frac{1}{2} (Rf_R - f(R)) - \frac{\omega' f_R}{2e^\vartheta} + \square f_R \right] , \tag{21}$$

where $f_R = df/dR$. In the next, we will derive rotational velocity equation for a test particle moving around the center of the galaxy by considering a $f(R)$ gravity model.

We consider the Starobinsky $f(R)$ gravity model for our study which is [Starobinsky,

$$f(R) = R - \beta R_c \left[1 - \left(1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right)^{-n} \right], \tag{22}$$

The R_c is in the typical energy scale, the index n and parameter β are chosen to be positive constants. Now

$$f_R = \frac{df}{dR} = 1 - \frac{2\beta n}{R_c} \left[1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right]^{-n-1} \tag{23}$$

Equations (23) and (21) results,

$$= \frac{1}{2k} \left[\beta R_c \left[1 - \left(1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right)^{-n} \right] - \frac{2\beta R n}{R_c} \left[1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right]^{-n-1} \right] \tag{24}$$

Substitution of this equation in (19) gives

$$e^\theta = \frac{\delta \left\{ 1 - \frac{2\beta n}{R_c} \left(1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right)^{-n-1} \right\}}{r^{2k} \left(\rho + \frac{1}{2k} \left[\beta R_c \left[1 - \left(1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right)^{-n} \right] - \frac{2\beta R n}{R_c} \left[1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right]^{-n-1} \right] \right)} \tag{25}$$

In spirals, though the baryonic matters are concentrated in the form of gas, dust and stars in the disk of the galaxies, it can be reasonable that the density distribution of baryonic matter in the halo of the galaxy is approximated to a spherically symmetric model and changes according to power law [Binney, J., & Tremaine, S. (1987), Lobo, F. S. N., & Harko, T. (2018)] given as

$$\rho = \rho_0 r^{-\beta}, \tag{26}$$

where β and β_0 are positive constants with $\beta < 3$ and $\beta_0 = 1$. By using this we can write equation (25) with $k = 1$ in following form

$$e^\theta = \frac{\delta \left\{ 1 - \frac{2\beta n}{R_c} \left(1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right)^{-n-1} \right\}}{r^2 \left(r^{-\beta} + \frac{1}{2} \left[\beta R_c \left[1 - \left(1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right)^{-n} \right] - \frac{2\beta R n}{R_c} \left[1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right]^{-n-1} \right] \right)} \tag{27}$$

Further, e^ω given in equation (20) can now be expressed as

$$e^\omega = \left(\frac{1}{s} \right)^\delta \frac{\delta^{-1}}{1 - \frac{2\beta n}{R_c} \left[1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right]^{-n-1}} r^{2+\delta} \left(r^{-\beta} + \frac{1}{2} \left[\beta R_c \left[1 \right. \right. \right] \tag{28}$$

Differentiation of equation (28) w.r.t. 'r' yields

$$\omega' = \frac{A(2+\delta-\beta)r^{\delta-\beta-1} + Br^{\delta+1}}{Ar^{2+\delta-\beta} + Br^{\delta+2}}, \quad (29)$$

with

$$A = \left(\frac{1}{s}\right)^\delta \frac{\delta^{-1}}{1 - \frac{2\beta n}{Rc} \left[1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2}\right]^{-n-1}} \quad \text{and}$$

$$B = \frac{1}{2\delta s^\delta} \frac{\left[\beta Rc \left[1 - \left(1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2}\right)^{-n}\right] - \frac{2\beta R n}{Rc} \left[1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2}\right]^{-n-1} \right]}{1 - \frac{2\beta n}{Rc} \left[1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2}\right]^{-n-1}}$$

Following the weak field approximation, the tangential velocity of the test particle in spherically symmetric spacetime can be obtained as [Harko, T. (2008), Sefiedger. A. S. et al.

$$V = \sqrt{\frac{r\omega'}{2}} = \sqrt{\frac{r}{2} \left[\frac{A(2+\delta-\beta)r^{\delta-\beta-1} + Br^{\delta+1}}{Ar^{2+\delta-\beta} + Br^{\delta+2}} \right]} \quad (30)$$

We plot this 'V' as a function of 'r' for different values of model parameters and fit the theoretical rotation curves with observational data of two galaxies as shown in figure I. This relationship indicates that the tangential velocity of a test particle within the galactic halo remains constant, which accounts for the flat rotation curves observed for particles orbiting the galactic center. This flatness can be explained without invoking dark matter in the halo region. Observational data suggests that the tangential velocity in this constant velocity region lies between 100-300 km/s .

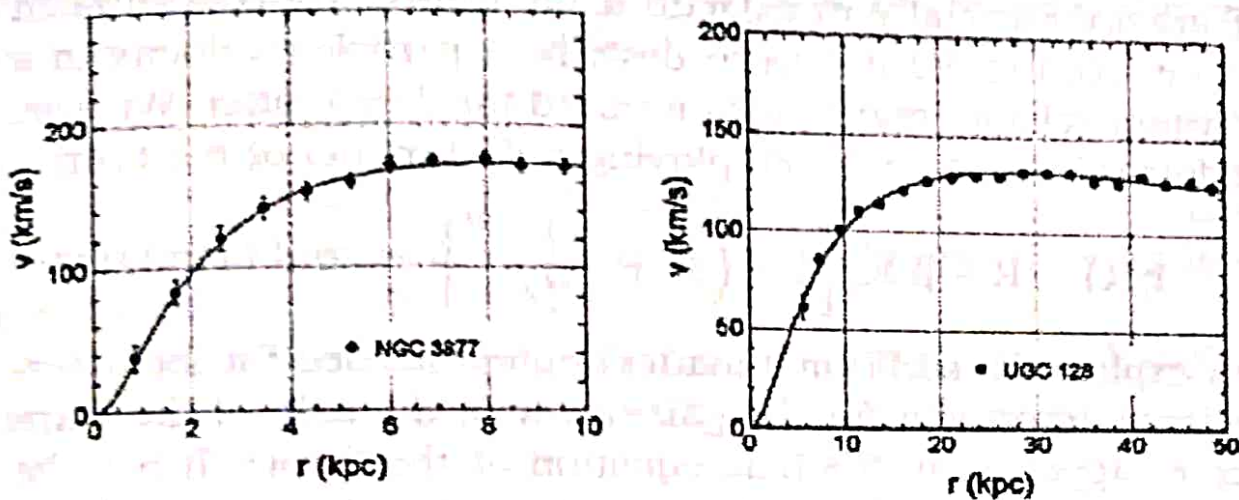


Fig.I: Variation of rotational velocity 'V' with radial distance 'r' (Rotation Curves). The black dots represent observed data points for the rotational velocity of the corresponding galaxies.

IV. Conclusions :

In recent years, there has been growing interest in modified theories of gravity as potential alternatives to the dark matter hypothesis. These theories propose that the observed discrepancies between predicted and actual galactic dynamics could be due to modifications of the gravitational interaction itself, rather than the presence of unseen matter. It struggles to account for observations on larger scales, such as galaxy clusters and cosmological phenomena. Modified gravity models extend Einstein's general theory of relativity by introducing additional degrees of freedom into the gravitational field equations. These include theories such as $f(R)$ gravity, scalar-tensor theories, $f(R, T)$ gravity theories etc. In $f(R)$ gravity, the Einstein-Hilbert action, which governs the dynamics of spacetime, is generalized by replacing the Ricci scalar R with a function $f(R)$. This modification alters the gravitational field equations and can lead to different predictions for the behavior of gravitational systems on large. In this paper, we have developed an approach to address dark matter problem by considering the $f(R)$ modified theories

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of gravity especially in galactic scale. Efforts are concentrated on uncovering the means to describe a particle's velocity in a constant velocity region with no need for dark matter. We have performed the study by employing a $f(R)$ model of the form

$$f(R) = R - \beta R_c \left[1 - \left(1 + \frac{R^2}{R_c^2} \right)^{-n} \right] \quad \text{and found that it}$$

can explain the additional matter content needed for the observational agreement for the galaxies with the help of the extra degree appeared in the field equation of the theory. It is to be noted that we have limited our study within dark matter halo, the shape of which is assumed to be approximately spherical. Indeed, our specified model yields the constant velocity profile which is observed for particles moving far away from the galactic center.

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Nanotechnology : The Tiny Revolution Shaping Our Future

Pranjal Pankaj Baruah

Nanotechnology, often called the science of the small, is a groundbreaking field that manipulates matter at the nano-scale-between 1 and 100 nanometers. To put this into perspective, a nanometer is one-billionth of a meter, approximately 100,000 times smaller than the width of a human hair. At this scale, materials exhibit unique properties-such as increased strength, lighter weight, enhanced chemical reactivity, and improved electrical conductivity-not present in their larger counterparts. These properties make nanotechnology a transformative force across industries ranging from medicine and electronics to energy and the environment.

This article explores the fascinating world of nanotechnology, focusing on its applications in everyday life and its potential to address global challenges. It also delves into the ethical considerations surrounding this rapidly evolving field.

Understanding Nanotechnology

Nanotechnology operates at the intersection of physics, chemistry, biology, and engineering. It involves designing and manipulating materials at the atomic or molecular level to create structures with specific properties. The field gained momentum in 1959 when physicist Richard Feynman famously stated, "There is plenty of room at the bottom," envisioning the manipulation of individual atoms. However, it was not until the 1980s that

technological advancements like the scanning tunneling microscope enabled scientists to observe and manipulate matter at the nanoscale (Roco & Bainbridge, 2001).

At its core, nanotechnology leverages quantum mechanics-the branch of physics that governs behavior at tiny scales-to achieve unprecedented control over material properties. This ability has opened up a world of possibilities for innovation.

Applications of Nanotechnology

1. Medicine: A Revolution in Healthcare

Nanotechnology is revolutionizing medicine by enabling more precise diagnostics and treatments. One of its most promising applications is in drug delivery systems. Traditional medications often affect healthy cells alongside diseased ones, leading to side effects. Nanoparticles can be engineered to deliver drugs directly to targeted cells, such as cancerous tumors, minimizing harm to healthy tissues.

For instance, liposomes-tiny spherical vesicles made from lipid bilayers-are used to encapsulate drugs for targeted delivery. Similarly, researchers are developing "nanoshells" coated with gold that can absorb infrared light and generate heat to destroy cancer cells without damaging surrounding tissues (Ferrari, 2005).

Nanotechnology also plays a crucial role in diagnostics. Quantum dots-semiconductor nano-particles-are being used as fluorescent markers for imaging cells and tissues with high precision. These advancements are paving the way for earlier detection of diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's.

Moreover, nanotechnology is being explored for regenerative medicine. Nano-materials can mimic natural biological structures, aiding in tissue engineering and wound healing. For ex-

ample, silver nano-particles are incorporated into bandages to promote faster healing by preventing infections (Rai et al., 2009).

2. Electronics: Smaller, Faster, Smarter

The electronics industry has been one of the biggest beneficiaries of nanotechnology. As devices become smaller and more powerful, nanotechnology enables advancements in transistors—the building blocks of electronic circuits. Today's transistors are just a few nanometers in size, allowing for faster processing speeds and reduced energy consumption.

Nanotechnology has also contributed to the development of flexible electronics. Graphene—a single layer of carbon atoms arranged in a hexagonal lattice—is being used to create bendable screens for smartphones and wearable devices (Novoselov et al., 2004). Additionally, carbon nanotubes are being integrated into electronic components to enhance their conductivity and durability.

Another exciting application is nanosensors—tiny devices capable of detecting temperature, pressure, or chemical composition changes. These sensors have applications ranging from environmental monitoring to healthcare diagnostics.

3. Energy: Powering a Sustainable Future

Nanotechnology holds great promise for addressing global energy challenges by improving energy production, storage, and efficiency.

Solar Energy

Nano-materials are being used to enhance the efficiency of solar panels by increasing their ability to absorb sunlight. For instance, perovskite nanoparticles have shown remarkable poten-

tial in creating cost-effective and highly efficient solar cells (Green et al., 2014). Researchers are even exploring "paintable" solar cells that could turn any surface into an energy generator.

Batteries

In energy storage, nanotechnology is driving innovations in battery technology. Lithium-ion batteries with nanoparticle-based electrodes offer higher energy density and faster charging times compared to traditional batteries (Tarascon & Armand, 2001). These advancements are crucial for electric vehicles and renewable energy systems.

Hydrogen Fuel Cells

Nanocatalysts are improving the efficiency of hydrogen fuel cells by reducing the amount of precious metals like platinum required for their operation. This makes fuel cells more affordable and sustainable.

4. Environment: Cleaning Up Our Planet

Nanotechnology offers innovative solutions for environmental remediation by addressing pollution and resource scarcity.

Water Purification

Access to clean water remains a global challenge. Nanofiltration membranes are being used to remove contaminants such as heavy metals and pathogens from water sources (Shannon et al., 2008). Additionally, nanoscale materials like titanium dioxide can break down organic pollutants through photocatalysis.

Air Pollution

Nanoparticles are also employed in air purification systems to capture harmful pollutants like carbon dioxide and particulate matter. Metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) are highly porous materials capable of efficiently trapping greenhouse gases.

Waste Management

Nanotechnology contributes to waste management by enabling the recycling of materials at an atomic level. For instance, researchers are developing processes to extract valuable metals from electronic waste using nanomaterials.

5. Consumer Products: Enhancing Everyday Life

Nanotechnology has already made its way into many consumer products:

Cosmetics: Nanoparticles like zinc oxide and titanium dioxide are used in sunscreens to provide better UV protection without leaving a white residue.

- **Textiles:** Nanocoatings make fabrics stain-resistant or water-repellent while maintaining breathability.

- **sports Equipment:** Carbon nanotubes enhance the strength and durability of tennis rackets, golf clubs, and bicycles without adding weight.

- **Food Packaging:** Nanosensors embedded in packaging can detect spoilage or contamination in real time.

These applications demonstrate how nanotechnology is enhancing convenience and safety in our daily lives.

Ethical Considerations and Challenges

While nanotechnology offers immense potential benefits, it also raises important ethical questions and challenges that must be addressed:

1. Health Risks

The long-term effects of exposure to nanoparticles on human health remain unclear. Due to their small size, nanoparticles can penetrate biological barriers like skin or cell membranes, potentially causing unforeseen health issues (Oberdörster et al., 2005).

2. Environmental Impact

The environmental implications of manufacturing and dispos-

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ing of nanomaterials require careful assessment. If not managed responsibly, some nanoparticles may accumulate in ecosystems or disrupt natural processes.

3. Economic Inequality

The high cost of developing nanotechnologies could widen economic disparities between countries or communities with access to these innovations and those without.

4. Regulation

Establishing standardized nanotechnology research and commercialization regulations is essential to ensure safety without stifling innovation.

Addressing these concerns requires collaboration among scientists, policymakers, industry leaders, and ethicists.

The Future of Nanotechnology

The future of nanotechnology is incredibly promising as researchers continue to push boundaries:

- ◆ In medicine, "nanorobots" could one day navigate through bloodstreams to repair damaged tissues or deliver drugs with unparalleled precision.
- ◆ In computing, quantum dots may enable quantum computers to solve complex problems beyond the reach of classical machines.
- ◆ In space exploration, lightweight nanomaterials could reduce spacecraft weight while improving durability under extreme conditions.

As these advancements unfold over the coming decades, they will likely reshape industries while addressing critical global challenges such as climate change and healthcare accessibility.

Conclusion

Nanotechnology represents one of humanity's most exciting scientific frontiers—a tiny revolution with enormous potential im-

pacts on our lives. This field offers transformative possibilities across diverse domains, from revolutionizing medicine with targeted therapies to creating sustainable energy solutions and enhancing consumer products' functionality.

However, realizing its full potential requires responsibly addressing ethical concerns while ensuring equitable access worldwide. By fostering interdisciplinary collaboration among scientists from various fields alongside policymakers' guidance on regulation frameworks, we can harness nanotechnology's power safely yet innovatively toward building a better future for all human kind!

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Section VI

Local Biodiversity and Conservation

Aesthetic Value of Local Fauna : Perspectives from Northeast India and Assam

Zakir Hussain

Introduction

Biodiversity contributes significantly to human well-being, providing both tangible and intangible benefits. One such intangible benefit is the aesthetic value of fauna, which encompasses their ability to inspire awe, creativity, and a sense of connection to nature. Northeast India, including Assam, is known for its extraordinary biodiversity, hosting species endemic to the region. The interplay between fauna and local communities—reflected in folklore, art, and daily life—underscores their aesthetic and cultural significance. This paper examines the aesthetic value of local fauna in Northeast India, emphasizing their contribution to the cultural and ecological identity of the region.

Aesthetic Dimensions of Fauna

The aesthetic value of local fauna, with their unique visual, auditory, and symbolic appeal, is truly a wonder to behold. Their role in landscape aesthetics, impact on human emotions, and influence on cultural expressions is profound. For instance, the sight of a herd of elephants or the vibrant plumage of a hornbill evokes a sense of wonder and admiration, reinforcing the connection between humans and nature (Kumar & Singh, 2020).

Northeast India and Assam : A Biodiversity Hotspot

Northeast India is part of the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot, renowned for its unique ecosystems that range from rolling grass-

lands to dense tropical rainforests. Assam, with its Brahmaputra River and expansive floodplains, is a biodiversity haven supporting various habitats. These ecosystems enhance the aesthetic appeal of the region by hosting species like the one-horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*), which roams the grasslands of Kaziranga National Park; the golden langur (*Trachypithecus geei*), often seen in the forests of Chakrashila Wildlife Sanctuary; and the critically endangered Bengal florican (*Houbaropsis bengalensis*), whose dramatic mating displays add to the region's scenic charm. Additionally, the wetlands, such as those in Dibru-Saikhowa, teem with life, featuring vibrant flora and fauna that create picturesque landscapes (Choudhury, 2018).

Cultural and Artistic Significance

Local fauna have inspired traditional art forms, folklore, and festivals in Assam and the broader Northeast. For instance, the rhinoceros, symbolizing strength and resilience, is often depicted in traditional Assamese silk sarees and handloom designs, highlighting its cultural significance. Folk tales such as "Burhi Aair Xadhu" include characters like tigers and elephants that embody wisdom and bravery, passing moral lessons across generations. During the Bihu festival—a major cultural event—the vibrant dances and songs often incorporate imagery and stories of birds like the hornbill and cuckoo, celebrating their melodious contributions to the environment. Additionally, tribal communities like the Bodos and Mishings craft intricate artifacts and jewelry inspired by local wildlife, emphasizing the deep connection between art and fauna (Das, 2019).

Avian Diversity and Its Aesthetic Appeal

Northeast India is a paradise for birdwatchers, hosting over 850 bird species, many of which are endemic (BirdLife International, 2021). The great Indian hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*), with its striking casque and vibrant colors, is a symbol of beauty and cultural importance. Similarly, migratory birds such as the bar-

headed goose (*Anser indicus*) add seasonal charm to the wetlands of Assam.

Eco-Tourism and Aesthetic Value

The aesthetic appeal of fauna is crucial in promoting eco-tourism in the region. National parks such as Kaziranga and Manas are celebrated for their wildlife, attracting thousands of visitors annually. This influx of tourists not only provides economic benefits to the local communities but also fosters an appreciation for the region's natural beauty. Wildlife photography and safaris, in particular, are popular among tourists, further enhancing the economic value of the region's aesthetic appeal (Bhattacharya & Goswami, 2020).

Challenges to Conservation

Despite their aesthetic and ecological significance, local fauna face numerous threats, including habitat destruction, poaching, and climate change. In 2021 alone, Kaziranga National Park reported 37 cases of rhino poaching, highlighting the persistent demand for rhino horns in illegal markets (Talukdar, 2022). Similarly, the deforestation rate in Northeast India, estimated at 3.6% annually, has led to significant habitat loss for species like the Bengal florican and Hoolock gibbon (Forest Survey of India, 2020). These alarming statistics underscore the urgent need for comprehensive conservation strategies that integrate ecological, cultural, and socio-economic dimensions to protect the region's biodiversity and aesthetic heritage. Loss of avian diversity due to deforestation also diminishes the aesthetic and cultural richness of the region.

Case Studies

1. The One-Horned Rhinoceros: Kaziranga National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is home to the largest population of one-horned rhinoceroses. The park has implemented robust anti-poaching measures, including deploying armed for-

est guards and drone surveillance, which have significantly curbed poaching incidents in recent years. Additionally, conservation programs such as habitat restoration and the establishment of highlands within the park ensure these majestic creatures' survival during the Brahmaputra River's annual floods. The aesthetic appeal of the rhinoceros, with its prehistoric appearance and imposing presence, has made it an iconic symbol of conservation efforts in Assam, attracting wildlife enthusiasts and photographers from around the world (Choudhury, 2018).

2. Hoolock Gibbons: India's only ape species, the Hoolock gibbon (*Hoolock hoolock*), is found in the forests of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Their graceful movements and melodious calls are a source of fascination and aesthetic pleasure (Kakati et al., 2021).

3. Avian Wonders: The wetlands of Assam, such as Deepor Beel, host migratory birds that enhance the region's scenic beauty. The sight of flocks of pelicans and storks in their natural habitat exemplifies the aesthetic value of avian diversity (BirdLife International, 2021).

Conservation Strategies

To preserve the aesthetic value of local fauna, conservation efforts must integrate ecological, cultural, and socio-economic dimensions. Strategies include:

1. **Habitat Protection:** Strengthening the protection of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries to safeguard habitats.

2. **Community Involvement:** The active engagement of local communities in conservation efforts, through eco-tourism and education programs, is crucial. Their involvement not only ensures the success of these initiatives but also fosters a sense of responsibility and ownership towards the preservation of local fauna.

3. **Awareness Campaigns:** Promoting fauna's aesthetic and cultural significance to foster a sense of stewardship.

4. **Policy Interventions:** Implementing strict anti-poaching laws

and sustainable land-use practices.

Conclusion

The aesthetic value of local fauna in Northeast India and Assam is a testament to the intricate relationship between biodiversity and human culture. From inspiring art and folklore to supporting eco-tourism, fauna contributes to the region's identity and heritage. Preserving this aesthetic wealth requires concerted efforts to address threats and promote sustainable practices. By valuing the beauty and cultural significance of fauna, we can ensure that future generations continue to find inspiration in the natural wonders of Northeast India.

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Certain Aromatic Plants and Their Medicinal Importance

Nibedita Baruah

Introduction :

Aromatic plants are those which contain biologically active compounds and essential oils that are volatile at room temperature and give off an odor. They are mostly herbaceous. The odorous volatile substance present in aromatic plants occur either as essential oil, gum exudates, balsam and oleoresin in one or more parts, namely root, wood, bark, stem, foliage, flower and fruit (Joy et al. 2001 a.b 2014). Aromatic plants contain chemicals that produce an aroma and they have many uses as in cooking, aromatherapy and medicine. Because of the pleasant smelling of flowers or leaves, the aromatic plants have been used in different purposes and many of them are also used for medicinal purposes. Many essential oils are extracted from the different species of aromatic plants and these essential oils have good fragrance and most of them have medicinal properties.

Aromatic plants, herbs and their essential oils have been used in traditional medicine, food preparation and preservation, religious observances and cosmetic purposes for thousands of years. In our state Assam, districts having different tribal communities, the traditional uses of aromatic medicinal plants still serve the needs of more than 60% tribal people, in spite of tremendous advancement in the field of modern allopathic. Aromatic plants seem to fulfill the requirements of current demand and future development in livestock nutrition.

It has been recorded that there are more than 1500 known spe-

cies of aromatic plants and out of total 1500 aromatic plant species, nearly 500 species have been studied for their chemical, aromatic and medicinal properties. And out of 500 aromatic plant species studied, nearly 50 species are found as commercial source of essential oils and aroma chemicals while less than 12 plant species are used on large scale in the industry.

Around the world, nearly 3000 aromatic plants have been explored for essential oil extraction, of which however essential oil from 300 aromatic plants are commonly used.

Uses of essential oil in therapeutic treatment are becoming popular around the world. Aromatherapy involves the use of essential oils and aromatics derived from plants to cure diseases, which are far better than most of the antibiotics, due to their safety and wide spectrum activity having less side effects. Due to their aromatic property for aromatic compounds, they have great importance and popular in many human celebrations and festivals in the form of cosmetics, soaps, pharmaceuticals, perfumes, confectionery, ice-creams, scented waters, disinfectants, scented tobacco and agarbathi.

Study Area :

This article is based on my study on aromatic plants of Abhoypur Reserve Forest of Sivasagar districts. Numbers of aromatic plant species are available in the area due to favorable climatic condition. The area is inhabited by number of ethnic people like Tai- Ahom, Tai- Fake, Moran, Motok, Sonowal kachari, Mising, Naga, Miri including Tea garden and Indian Nepalese. These ethnic people of the area use different types of plant species in different aspects of their day to day life such as food, fodder, medicine, wild vegetable, fibre and domestic purposes. Different aromatic plant species available in the area are used by different ethnic people in their everyday life. This knowledge has accumulated through a long series of observations that

are transmitted from generation to generation.

To get information regarding aromatic plants and their ethno-medicinal importance, regular field visits were done in different regions of Abhoypur. Informations were gathered through interview with tribal and rural people inhabiting nearby areas who commonly use herbal medicines for different ailments. It has been found that many plants which grow wild are used by different communities as medicine to cure different diseases. Some aromatic plants having medicinal importance are mentioned below with the parts used for concerned diseases.

Table 1 : Detailed list of enumerated aromatic plant species along with their local name, family, parts used and disease concerned.

Sl. No.	Medicinal Aromatic Plant Species	Local Name	Family	Parts used	Disease concerned
1	<i>Alpinia galanga</i>	Bogi-Tora	Zingiberaceae	Flower, seeds and rhizome	Hiccoug, obesity and diabetes
2.	<i>Amomum aromaticum</i>	Borelachi	Zingiberaceae	Fruits and seeds	Small pox, anti-allergic reactions, gastrointestinal issues
3	<i>Cinamomum cecidodaphne</i>	Gondsoroi	Lauraceae	Fruits	Used as pain killer and ointm-

					ointment relieves aetheritiss
4	C. obtusifolium	Noga-dalcini	Lauraceae	Bark	Blood pressure, diabetics. sto- mach problem and also as liver tonic
5	C. tamala	Tejpat	Lauraceae	Leaves	For cough . fever ,urinary trouble diarr- hea and also significantly used to reduce blood sugar.
6	Clerodendron colebrookianum	Nefafu	Verbenaceae	Leaves	Helpful in reducing blood pressure, abd- ominal pain, dysentery and heart diseases.
7	Curcuma aromatica	Bon-Haldhi	Zingiber- aceae	Rhiz- ome	Used as pain killer and also as antibiotics
8	Cymbopogon nudrus	Citronella	Poaceae	Leaf	Useful for vo- miting and headache, he- adache, ment- uration prob- lem, muscle cramps etc.
9	Eupatorium odoratum	Germony -Bon	Asteraceae	Leaf	Used to stop bleeding in fresh cuts and also good for any stomach disease and post delivery

10	Glycyrrhiza glabra	Jastimodhu	Papilionaceae	Root	problem. Used in cough, respiratory troubles; prevents skin from sun damage; prevents hairfall and also regulate blood sugar level.
11	Hedychium coronarium	Bogi-Champa	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Useful in arthritis, specially used in bone fracture and hiccough
12	Houttunia corodeta	Mosundori	Saururaceae	Plant	Used in stomach problem and dysentery
13	Litsea cubeba	Mejankori	Lauraceae	Leaves and root	Useful in insomnia, urinary trouble, loss of memory etc.
14	Ocimum gratissimum	Ram-Tulsi	Lamiaceae	Leaves and seeds	Useful in the treatment of rheumatism, cold and cough, urinary disorders
15	Paederia foetida	Bhedai-Lota	Asclepiadaceae	Plant	Plants are used for sore throat, roots are used for hepatitis
16	Pandanus odoratissimus	Keteki	Pandanaceae	Fruits	Used specially for chest pain

Conclusion :

By the investigation and interaction with the age-old persons of the area studied, it is clearly understood that different parts of the aromatic plants recorded are used as medicine for different diseases. The people have great confidence on those medicine prepared by themselves on the basis of their traditional knowledge. On the basis of their morphological structure, the parts used for medicine preparation may be different, like for herbs and shrubs, the whole plant is used along with the leaf, stem, roots and flowers etc. and for trees particular parts like only leaf, root, bark, fruit flowers etc. are used. The medicines are applied either as paste, juice, infusion, powder, decoction and in some cases for changing base or test of the medicine, sugar or salt are added. Though. In this article only 16 plant species are recorded, more such plants are available which cannot be used due to insufficiency of proper knowledge and study. It is important to take steps to conserve these plants as most of the plants are going to be endangered, some are already endangered, some are rare, some are threatened etc. due to different anthropogenic factors. For example, Mejangkori is identified as threatened species while Jastamadhu, Naga-dalchini, Gondsoroi, Borelachi etc. are identified as endangered species. The issue of such diversity loss happens due to over-exploitation with natural interference and also by chemical exposure from oil fields of nearby places. So, proper management of these plant species will be helpful in maintaining human health in natural way.

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Plants of Botanical Curiosity found in North-East India

Priyakshi Buragohain

Introduction :

What is Botanical Curiosity?

Plants have always been a source of wonder for many reasons. Being the primary source of productivity, they not only provide energy (in the form of food) to the organisms of other trophic levels, but also uniquely showcase the wonders of nature in many ways. Therefore, several plant species are considered as "Botanical Curiosity" because of their special modifications (both structural and functional) and adaptations (to environment and enemy) [4]. Such characteristics occur to certain plants for different reasons like vegetation type, climate patterns, genetic criteria etc.

Why does North East India harbor such plants?

Around the world, there are 36 biodiversity hotspots including India with four hotspot areas. Again, the North-Eastern part of India is one of the richest in biological values with more than one-third of the country's total biodiversity (flora and fauna) [1, 2,3]. In terms of floristic diversity (flora only), the region is the richest one in India [1]. Takhtajan (1969) considered North-East India region as the "Cradle of flowering plants" as nearly half of the total flowering plants of India were recorded from this region [5]. In fact, it is the geographical "gateway" to much of

India's flora as it is the transition zone between the Indian, Indo-Malayan and Indo-Chinese bio-geographic regions and also a meeting place of Himalayan mountains with that of Peninsular India [Rao, 1994]. The highly humid tropical climate is the remarkable force for the wealthy and diverse flora in the region. The unique bio-geographical position thus provides a profusion of habitats for featuring diverse floristic composition with a high level of endemism. [1]. It also results in the presence of numerous plants with botanical curiosities rarities [2]. Mentionable that, many of such plants are also endemic and endangered[4].

What are the plants?

Though North-East India consists of 8 states viz., Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura and Sikkim; but Handique in 2000 has enumerated 16 plants of botanical curiosities with peculiarities and their status of abundance excluding the state of Sikkim [4]. This article is just an extension of that enumerated list, but it incorporates the plants with updated names, their families and a picture for reference [Table No. 1 & Photo-plate 1].

Table No. 1 : Plants of Botanical Curiosity found in North-East India

Sl. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Peculiarity	Abundance Status	Picture Reference
1	Aeginetia indica L.	Orobanchaceae (Broomrape family)	Holoparasite, foot, parasite on grass	Extremely rare	Pic 1 Source: POWO
2	Balanophora dioica R.Br. ex Royle.	Balanophoraceae	Root parasite	Endangered	Pic 2 Source: POWO
3	Xylanche himalaica (Hook.f & Thomson) Beck	Orobanchaceae	Root parasite on Rhododendron	Endangered	Pic 3 Source: POWO

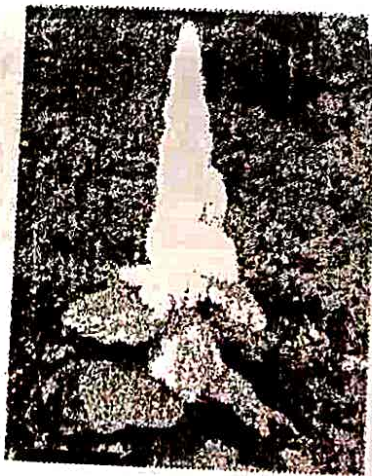
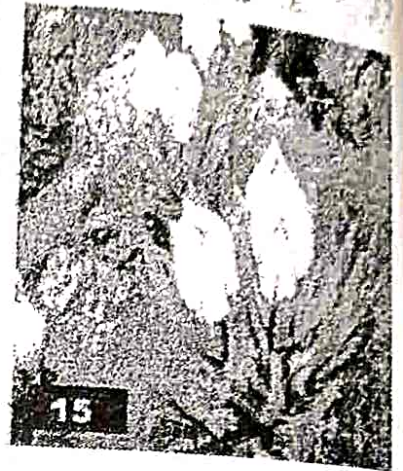
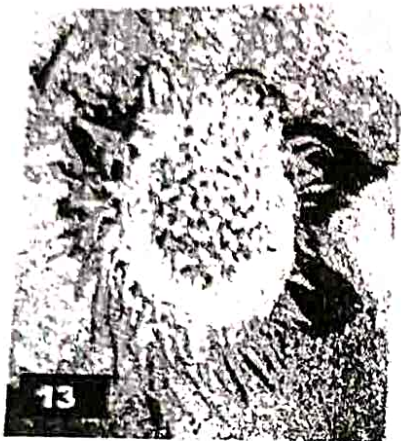
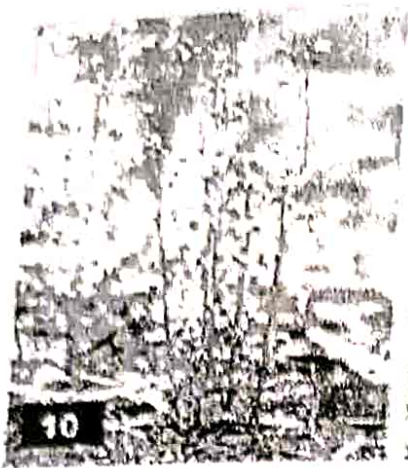
4	Mitrostemon yamamotoi (Makino) Makino	Mitrostemonaceae	Root parasite on Rhododendron	Polyendemic	Pic 4 Source: POWO
5	Rhopalocnemis phalloides Jungh.	Balanophoraceae	Root parasite on Rhododendron	Endangered	Pic 5 Source: iNaturalist.org
6	Monotropastrum humile (D. Don) H. Hara	Ericaceae	Saprophyte	Rare	Pic 6 Source: iNaturalist.org
7	Epipogium roseum (D. Don) Lindl.	Orchidaceae	Saprophyte	Rare	Pic 7 Source : India Biodiversity Portal
8	Crytosia falconeri (Hook.f.) Aver.	Orchidaceae	Tallest saprophytic orchid	Extremely rare	Pic 8 Source: eFlora of India
9	Nepenthes khasiana Hook.f.	Nepenthaceae	Insectivorous	Endemic and rare	Pic 9 Source: India Biodiversity Portal
10	Drosera peltata Thunb.	Droseraceae	Insectivorous	Rare	Pic 10 Source: International Carnivorous Plant Society
11	D. burmannii Vahl	Droseraceae	Insectivorous	Rare	Pic 11 Source: POWO
12	Thylacospermum sp.	Caryophyllaceae	Cushion forming	Rare	Pic 12 Source: POWO
13	Saussurea gossipiphora D. Don	Asteraceae	Snow ball like appearance	Rare	Pic 13 Source: eFlora of India
14	S. graminifolia Wall ex. DC.	Asteraceae	Snow ball like appearance	Rare	Pic 14 Source: eFlora of India
15	S. obvallata (DC.) Sch. Bip.	Asteraceae	Hot house, sheltering inflorescence by bracts	Rare	Pic 15 Source : Flowers of India

16	Rheum nobile Hook.f & Thomson.	Polygo- naceae	Hot house, sheltering inflorescence by bracts	Rare	Pic 16 Source: POWO
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Photo plate 1 : Pictures of the enlisted plants



Pic: 1. *Aeginetia indica*, 2. *Balanophora dioica*, 3. *Xylanche himalaica*, 4. *Mitrastemon yamamotoi*, 5. *Rhopalocnemis phalloides*, 6. *Monotropastrum humile*, 7. *Epipogium roseum*, 8. *Crytosia falconeri*, 9. *Nepenthes khasiana*



Pic: 10. *Drosera peltata*, 11. *D. burmannii*, 12. *Thylacospermum* sp, 13. *Saussurea gossipiphora*, 14. *S. graminifolia*, 15. *S. obvallata*, 16. *Rheum nobile*.

Significance of the plants with 'Botanical curiosity' for a region with special reference to North-East India:

Flora of a country is one of the major economic assets. In case of India as a developing country, plant resources have enormous potential and North-Eastern region is the primary centre of attention. While, covering 7.98% of the nation's land area, the region accounts for 21.08% of the total forest and tree cover of the country [Forest Survey of India (FSI) Report, 2023]. According to the same report, total forest cover of NE Region is 1,74,394.70 Km² which accounts for 67% of geographical area of the region. It is much more than national level i.e., 25.17%. Despite the fact that NE Region has a huge pool of floristic diversity, it is not fully explored till date. Characterization and estimation of these floras into fuller extent is need of the hour and for that a well designed collaboration among concerned stakeholders is must.

Apparently, all the mixed types of flora are equally important. However, as per the plants of botanical curiosity is concerned, these plants are not only significant to the botanical community but also for different stakeholders of the country. Inventorization and popularization of such plants could be a purpose of botanical tourism. At the same time, it will also lead to their effective protection, maintenance, conservation and sustainable utilization [4]. Major chunk of the north-eastern population depends on the utilization of plant resources, thus it is important to make sure that plants of botanical curiosity are not pushed into extinction because most of these are endangered and endemic. Again, such plants could also be the flagship species for different environmental programmes.

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Section VII

**Literary
and
Theatrical Analysis**

A comparative study on surveillance as a monitoring phenomenon in the Trial and Prison Break

Kaushik Bhuyan

Surveillance refers to the monitoring of behaviour and activities. It was believed to be used for intelligence gathering and putting a check on crime. This popular view came to be seen challenged as surveillance is also seen as a violation of privacy. There seems to be an emergence of two groups - the ones who support surveillance and the ones who oppose it. It is believed that society is moving towards mass monitoring with limited personal, social and political freedom. This also suggests the emergence of a Totalitarian state.

A new discourse named 'Surveillance Studies' has come up, which makes it possible for surveillance to be put under the radar of many disciplines, and literature is one of them. The emergence of this discourse could be attributed to Michel Foucault's important work, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (1975). In this book, Foucault discusses about the idea of the 'panopticon' to relate his understanding about surveillance. The idea of 'panopticon' was however introduced by an English philosopher Jeremy Bentham in the 18th century. 'Panopticon' in the simple sense, refers to a prison where prisoners are under surveillance of the guards. 'Surveillance Studies' scholar, David Lyon remarks: "Michel Foucault's celebrated, and contentions, historical studies of surveillance and discipline had appeared that mainstream social theorists began to take surveillance seriously in its own right" (Lyon 6). Although Foucault's book was

published in 1975, his analyses about systems of the modern period were the systems of the modern period were constructed on the basis of historical documents of France. Therefore, literary works written before 1975 and works outside of France can also be studied through his idea on surveillance.

German novelist, Franz Kafka is known to present bizarre predicaments for his protagonists. One such example can be seen in the case of Joseph K., in his novel *The Trial* (1925). In the opening chapter, K. is arrested and what follows is a series of events which makes the reader question about the privacy of an individual, who is under surveillance of a powerful authority.

The novel opens with the lines: "Someone must have been talking lies about Joseph K., for without having done anything wrong he was arrested one fine morning" (7). So, the novel opens with the arrest of the protagonist, but the reason seems unclear. The two warders who came to arrest K. never mentioned the reason. When he asked them the question they simply replied, "We are not authorised to tell you that" (9). This reply makes K. hopeful of getting an answer from the higher authority, but the reason is not disclosed till the end of the novel. He meets higher officials such as the Inspector and various advocates, but they too did not provide an answer.

The arrest was itself bizarre as K. was allowed to perform his professional duties in the bank. K. wondered how he could go to the bank if he was arrested. The inspector replied, "You understood me wrong. You are under arrest, certainly but that need not hinder you from going about your business. You won't be hampered carrying the ordinary course in your life" (19). Even if he was told he was free to do his duties, his life was put under surveillance. His privacy at home was lost when the inspector and the two warders made his living place an interrogation room. He was about to lose his privacy in the bank too. The Inspector

detained three men who would work as clerks in the bank where K. worked. In a way, he did not, enter a literal 'panopticon', but his surrounding environment became one.

The invasion of privacy continues in the subsequent chapters. At first, his Sundays became the day of his weekly trial. Again, his office hours in chapter 5 appear to be under the vigilance of the group who arrested K. One evening, when he was still at work in the bank, he witnessed that his office turned into a torture chamber. K. saw three men who he later realised that, "[were] the warders Franz and Willem, and that a third man was holding a rod in his hand to beat them" (80). In chapter 9, even his life at church could be seen to be under surveillance. K. was supposed to escort an Italian visitor to the Cathedral, but in the end found that he was sitting alone. The priest addressed K. by his name which surprised him. His statement- "Do you know your case is going badly?" (194), asserted the fact that the priest was also a part of the mysterious organisation. Foucault said, "Visibility is a trap" (200), and this seems to be applicable in K.'s situation. All the things that were visible were just traps. Everyone who appeared simple like - inspectors, warders, advocates, painters, priests and so on, were all part of an unknown organisation. Against them, K. was all alone, constantly under surveillance.

The Trial was published in the year 1925. A jump to the 21st century will show the development of many sophisticated surveillance devices such as CCTV's and trackers. This makes monitoring over subjects much easier. This seems to be the case in Prison Break, an American Television drama, created by Paul T. Scheuring for Fox in the year 2005. The protagonist here is however not clearly defined like in The Trial. Lincoln Burrows and Michael Scofield seem to exchange roles with the progression of the series. However, Lincoln Burrows is the character who was arrested. He too like Joseph K. was arrested for a crime

he had no idea about. The cause of his arrest is mentioned here unlike in *The Trial*. His arrest was a set up for the benefit of a certain group. He was framed for the murder of Terence Steadman, the brother of the US Vice President in the show. Although the reason is mentioned, Burrows just like K. had no idea why he was framed. Burrows, unlike K., did enter a prison named 'Fox Rivers State Penitentiary'. All his activities were monitored and the only way of being free and proving his innocence was escaping the prison. In the end of season 1, he did so with the help of his brother, but the visible free world turned out to be a bigger trap.

In season 2, he becomes a part of a manhunt. He along with his brother and other convicts were trying to escape from the clutch of prison authorities. The problem became bigger as the FBI took over the case. Towards the middle of season 2, Burrows comes to know about 'The Company', the group that framed him. 'The Company' also had its members in the FBI, which made it more difficult for Burrows. In addition to that constant CCTV footages and news in the TV made things worse. Everywhere he went, there seemed to be an eye watching over him. Just like in the case of K., everyone seemed to be a part of the entity that framed him. Here, FBI agents, lawyers, government officials and others were all discovered to be a part of 'The Company'.

The clear difference between *The Trial* and *Prison Break* can be seen in the fact that the latter reveals the cause of the arrest. However, Burrows only knows about the entire plot in season 4. Joseph K. dies in the last chapter and the reader never knows about the reason of his arrest. Reading Max Brod's epilogue to the novel, a different picture comes out. Brod states that, "Franz Kafka regarded the novel as unfinished" (216). Therefore, it is clear that the events a reader comes across in *The Trial* are not the complete events. Perhaps, there might have been chapters

that would have hinted towards the cause of the arrest. Brod also states, "Before the final chapter, which is here included various further stages of the mysterious trial should have been described" (216).

In *Prison Break*, the viewer remains in the dark about the arrest of Lincoln Burrows in season 1. It is only in season 2; one comes to know of the people who framed Burrows. It is only in season 4 that the entire plot is revealed. So, if *The Trial* was finished perhaps the reader might have come to terms with the entire idea behind the arrest. Interestingly, in his interview with *Digital Spy*, Paul T. Scheuring admitted that the show was only supposed to be of 22 episodes, which means only one season. In the interview he said, "The initial idea was to escape halfway through that 22 episode run and then wrap it all up in the end of 22. But I said, I can double that "I can have them escape at the end of season 1 and wrap it up in the end of season 2." According to him the network asked him to 'stretch it out' and so the show went on for four seasons and was premiered for season 5 in the year 2017, but with a different storyline. This makes it clear that if it was not stretched, the viewer might not have come to terms with the whole idea behind the arrest.

Joseph K.'s death and Lincoln Burrows' escape from it is noteworthy. This maybe a result of their professions, as Joseph K. worked at the bank while Burrows was part of a gang engaged in small crimes. In addition to that, Burrows received help in many ways, especially from his brother Michael Scofield. Michael risked his own life to free his brother. In order to do so, he tattooed the blueprint of the prison in his body, so that it would help him in freeing his brother from prison. In the very first episode when he meets Lincoln, he tells him, "I am here to get you out" (Season 1, episode 1). Joseph K does not get any help from his relatives. His uncle did come to his aid, but he seemed more concerned about his reputation. His concern was more

around himself, "Joseph, my dear Joseph, think of yourself, think of your relatives, think of your good name"(90). Joseph K. also failed to receive help from elsewhere. If he did, he might have been able to tackle the ones who victimised him.

A common trait in both *The Trial* and *Prison Break* can be seen in the power hierarchy for the surveillance systems. In *The Trial* the two wardens seem to be powerful at first. Soon, readers find out they along with the Inspector were just pawns of the Court. Again, the Court too is under the power of a bigger force, and that force is not revealed till the end. In *Prison Break* too, FBI agents Paul Kellermen, Alexander Mahone, Will Kim all seem very powerful, but are just pawns of the US President. The President too is discovered as a puppet of the leader of 'The Company'- General Krantz. Here, the leader is revealed but his position always remains dynamic. In this hierarchical system, if a person of lesser power shows authority he is punished. In *The Trial*, the two wardens were punished for doing things they were not supposed to do. This becomes more serious in *Prison Break*, as FBI agents are either killed or their family members are hurt, just like Alex Mahone's son, when he disobeys.

In both the works, under the surveillance system there seems to be the presence of what Louis Althusser called- the Ideological State Apparatus and the Repressive State Apparatus. In *The Trial*, the Courtroom, advocates chamber, church and others can be cited as examples of the Ideological State Apparatus. These institutions try to control the subjects through ideology and persuasion. On the other hand, the whipping of the two warders could be regarded as examples of the Repressive State Apparatus, as it tries to control subjects with violence. In *Prison Break*- 'Fox Rivers' and 'Sona' are straightforward examples of the Repressive State Apparatus. In addition to them, various private rooms, hotels and others turn into prisons for keeping hostages. *Prison Break* also has courts and offices as forms of the Ideo-

logical State Apparatus. 'The Company' itself is a form of both the apparatuses, as it tries to persuade and punish to win over its subjects.

Both Joseph K. and Lincoln Burrows seem to have dynamic relationship with woman. A closer look may hint the relationships were only meant to gain advantage over the ones who had eyes over them. The Court washer woman and Leni were part of the Court. K. developed a kind of bonding with them, but it ended as both did not seem useful. In Prison Break too Lincoln Burrows had various relationships. In Season 1, his girlfriend was Veronica who tried everything to prove Lincoln innocent. In Season 2, she is killed but Lincoln does not mourn for long. He only takes advantages of her discovery that Terrence Steadman was alive. In Season 3, he developed a relationship with Sofia which started because she too wanted someone out of 'Sona'. In Season 5, again his relationship with Sheba only started in order to accomplish his mission.

Foucault said, "Surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action" (201). It becomes evident in both the works, as the ones under surveillance are never free. Prison Break seems to have a more optimistic side as Lincoln Burrows was able to defeat the system unlike Joseph K. Burrows did have to pay a price, as Michael died at the end of season 4. What is interesting is that, even though both were written in different time periods, and focus on actions based on the legal systems of two different countries, the same effects of surveillance can be seen. This indicates that surveillance is a powerful idea and it was the same even hundred years back. The subjects under it are always at risk, unaware of their future outcomes.

Prison Break shows that one can overcome the power behind surveillance, but not without facing severe consequences. In contrast The Trial shows Joseph K. completely defeated by the

system. He however was not helped like Lincoln Burrows. The Trial was open ended and a reader never finds out whether K.'s death happened after he gained some sort of victory over the court or not. Both the works reveal how surveillance works and how powerful it is. Sometimes, it is possible to escape and sometimes it is not, but monitoring of activities is inevitable. Having eyes over an individual limit their freedom. Both the works highlight it. They highlight the harmful effects of surveillance, and they also tried to show how it is essential to control the mechanisms of surveillance to a certain extent.

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Exploring The Absurd Elements in Eugène Ionesco's Anti-Theater "The Bald Soprano"

Pooja Bhuyan

Anti-theater deconstructs the conventional idea of theater by undoing certain elements such as language, structure, form and the context. Historically, "The Bald Soprano" can be located at a post-Holocaust, post-World War position. But it does not present any such documents of history. However, it is composed of certain word games composed in a circular manner to capture the human condition itself where characters are interchangeable. The theater of the absurd, being a product of the avant-garde raises the shaky status of human civilization. In a musical context, "absurd means 'out of harmony'. Its dictionary meaning is out of harmony with reason or propriety; incongruous, unreasonable, illogical (Chaudhuri, 193).

In an essay on Kafka, Ionesco defined his understanding of the term as follows: Absurd is that which is devoid of purpose...cut off from his religious, metaphysical and transcendental roots, man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless.(Esslin, 23)

Broadly, this sense of metaphysical anguish at the absurdity of human condition is the theme of the plays of Beckett, Adamov, Ionesco, and others. But it is not only the subject-matter that makes it the Theater of the Absurd. Much of the works of

Camus and Sartre too has the themes of senselessness and purposelessness of the human condition. Yet they differ from the dramatists in the sense that - they present their sense of the traditionality of the human condition in the form of...logically constructed reasoning (Chaudhuri, 194), whereas the Theater of the Absurd expresses the senselessness of the human condition by open abandonment of rational devices of logical reasoning. The Theater of the Absurd goes a step further than Camus and Sartre in trying to achieve a unity between its basic assumptions of human condition and the form in which these are expressed (Chaudhuri, 194)

"The Bald Soprano" experiments with all the absurd tools to establish certain fixities of life. But before delving into the absurd elements in the play, we should be clear that the Theater of the Absurd is not a formal school practicing a definite mode of writing. But rather those who are now regarded as Absurdist, were individuals writing from different corners without any connection to each other. It was Martin Esslin, who in his work "The Theater of the Absurd" (1961), innovated a sect of experimental play which includes works of writers such as Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco, Jean Genet, Harold Pinter, and to an extent, Edward Albee, Tom Stoppard and Jean Tardieu. Eugène Ionesco ties up the beginning and the end of his play. It begins where it ends and it ends where it begins. This circular way is similar as in Camus' "The Myth of Sisyphus" (1942). Camus' idea of the "absurd" claims that there is a conflict between what we want from the universe (whether it be meaning, order or reason) and what we find (formless chaos). "The Myth of Sisyphus" talks about living a life devoid of purposes. According to the Greek mythology, Sisyphus was punished for all eternity to roll a rock up a mountain only to have it roll back down to the bottom when he reaches the top. Camus claims that Sisyphus is an ideal absurd hero and that his punishment is representative of the human condition: "Sisyphus must struggle

perpetually and without hope of success." (Cruickshank) Ionesco's personal life, to a great extent, led him to raise such questions of existence. He was born in 1909, in the city of Slatina, Rumania. He moved to Paris with his parents, where he spent his childhood. Ionesco returned to Rumania. He moved to Paris with his parents, where he spent his childhood. Ionesco returned to Rumania at the age of thirteen and stayed for over a decade. He saw the Fascist air blowing, the mass murder of the Jews by his own fellow friends. Ionesco questions the very existence of God; for if there was religion and a God, how had the Holocaust been possible? How could the two World Wars be executed? So, he at once unsettled the entire cultural principles that abide the human existence. This black chapter of history shattered the illusions of so-called civilization, and man began to question his existence. A new form of theater was necessary to authenticate such questions- the anti-theater.

The Theater of the Absurd was illogical, 'conflict-less', surreal and without plot. This is anti-theater where language seemed to convey no meaning: the dialogues conveyed no 'sense'. Language in this world had become a mere amalgam of stereotyped, meaningless and clichéd interactions; words could not possibly express experience- absurd theater mounted its chief assault on language revealing its unreliability. It used everyday speech, technical jargon, wordplay, nonsense slogans, and clichés that distort parody and break down meaning rather than achieve communication. (Chaudhuri, 186)

"The Bald Soprano" expresses the futility of meaningful communication in modern society, which is a key feature of absurdist plays. The idea for the play came to Ionesco while he was trying to learn English with the Assimil method. An idea struck his mind that "the repetitive non-sensical plot of his Lingaphone record" can be compiled into an absurd play. It cynics and satirizes the failure of language as a tool for communication, and

re-imagines the way in which language can be used to communicate meaning. Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" is in fact another absurdist play which enacts the failure of language as a mode of communication. The use of colloquial language makes it extremely lucid. But this lucidity has another purpose to serve. The dangerous lucidity captures the audience into mere confusions. The script of "The Bald Soprano" is such that it gives the impression that the characters are not even listening to each other. Rather they are in a race to make their own voices heard, like :

Mr. Smith (still reading his paper: Tsk, it says here that Bobby Watson died. Mrs. Smith: My God, the poor man! When did he die? Mr. Smith: Why do you pretend to be astonished? You know very well that he's been dead these past two years. Surely you remember that we attended his funeral a year and a half ago. Mrs. Smith: Oh yes, of course I do remember. I remembered it right away, but I don't understand why you yourself were so surprised to see it in the paper. Mr. Smith: It wasn't in the paper. It's been three years since his death was announced. I remember it through an association of ideas. (The Bald Soprano, Act I, page 11)

The association of ideas that Ionesco deals with is no other than our sub-conscious mind. Ionesco often instills a dream situation upon the stage. The world in his play "Amédée" is an example of such a world, where the corpse keeps on growing within the flat of the middle-aged couple and later bursts out. Ionesco was against realist theatre and dreams quite clearly transgress the rules of realistic theatre. Dreams do not develop logically but by associations. This association of ideas communicates the images which carry multitudes of meaning. This one-act play successfully experiments with the plot. There is actually no logical plot in "The Bald Soprano". There are only illogical blabbers ending up with no meanings but just as a tool to pass the time,

to release boredom. He has tried to exteriorize the anxiety...of my characters through objects; to make the stage-setting speak; to translate the action into visual terms; to project visible images of fear, regret, remorse, alienation, to play with words...I have thus tried to extend the language of theatre. (Ionesco, 132) Ionesco made it clear that "use of language to make oneself understood is difficult, but not absolutely impossible." If it would have been impossible, the very act of writing plays would be meaningless. He tried to renew the language of the theatre, and "to renew the language is to renew the conception, the vision of the world". (Ionesco, 132) Through "The Bald Soprano", Ionesco succeeds in explaining the unexplainable gap between language and communication. In theatres or plays of Shakespeare, there are loaded logical soliloquies that try to interpret human psychology. In Ibsen, there is an attempt to showcase the monotonous boredom of life through different situations of irritation and frustration. But, Ionesco, unlike other Absurdists, do not profess through such literary dialogues. He uses simple colloquial language. Like, "Waiting for Godot", "The Bald Soprano" too has one liners. These lines juxtaposed one after the other and then another leads to utter confusion. These elements of confusion are used by almost every Absurdists to highlight the confusion of the human condition itself. Like conventional theatres, Ionesco does not put up heroic characters, but simpletons, who keep on discussing petty issues merely confusing the audience throughout. The clock is another significant absurd element in the play. The time in the play is very indefinite. It keeps on striking without a definite precision. The setting is claustrophobic like in other Ionesco plays. Human life moves in a circular sphere. One generation ends and another begins with the same "obsessions, nightmares, and anxieties". This spherical nature appears in "The Bald Soprano. The final scene contains stage direction to start the performance over from the very beginning, with the Martin couple substituting for the Smith couple. The words cease abruptly. Again, the lights come on. Mr. and Mrs.

Martin are seated like the Smiths at the beginning of the play. The play begins again with the Martins, who say exactly the same lines as the Smiths in the first Scene, while the curtain softly falls. (Act I, 42)

Ionesco successfully loads "The Bald Soprano" with implications that theatre is inadequate to present a human condition which is so confused searching for meaning about his/her existence. The gap between the intended meaning and the meaning that is understood is achieved through the jumbling up of time and space in "The Bald Soprano". Instead of answering the questions, Ionesco provokes his audience to question the absurdity of life. Ionesco has revealed the tragic sense of life through comic means.

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যোগেশ দাসৰ গল্প

ড° কাকলি সোনোবাল

ৰামধেনু যুগৰ এজন উল্লেখযোগ্য গল্পকাৰ হ'ল যোগেশ দাস। যোগেশ দাসৰ গল্পত বাস্তৱবাদৰ সংযত প্ৰকাশ দেখা পোৱা যায়। গল্পৰ মাজেদি বাস্তৱ জীৱনৰ অবিকৃত ছবি প্ৰকাশ কৰাত তেওঁ সিদ্ধহস্ত। আমাৰ সকলোৰে পৰিচিত পৰিৱেশৰ চিনাকী চিত্ৰসমূহক লৈয়ে তেওঁ প্ৰায়ভাগ গল্পৰ বিষয়বস্তু নিৰ্মাণ কৰিছে আৰু তাৰ মাজেদিয়েই জীৱনৰ গভীৰ চিত্ৰ প্ৰকাশিত কৰিছে, যেনে- মধ্যবিত্ত জীৱনৰ সমস্যা, আৰেগ-অনুভূতি, আশা-আকাংক্ষা ইত্যাদি। ইয়াৰোপৰি প্ৰেম, সামন্তত্ব, যৌনক্ষুধা, সাম্প্ৰদায়িক নিদৰ্শন, আধ্যাত্মিকতা, নাৰী হৃদয়ৰ গভীৰতম উপলব্ধি, সামাজিক বাস্তৱবোধ, মানৱতাবাদ ইত্যাদি বিশেষত্বসমূহ যোগেশ দাসৰ গল্পত প্ৰতিফলিত হোৱা দেখা যায়।

যোগেশ দাসে নিজৰ গল্প ৰচনাৰ আঁৰৰ কথা কওঁতে এইদৰে কৈছে 'গল্প সজা কথা হ'লেও ই সঁচা কথাও হ'ব পাৰে।' তদুপৰি ইয়াতেই তেওঁ তেওঁৰ কেইবাটাও গল্প সজাৰ কথাৰ মাজত থকা সঁচা কথাবোৰ আৰ-বেৰ নোহোৱাকৈ মুকলিকৈ প্ৰকাশ কৰি দিয়ে। তেওঁ নিজে এটা কথা উল্লেখ কৰিছে যে, দেউতাক বাগিছাৰ বৰ মহৰী হোৱা সূত্ৰে আধা নগৰীয়া গোক্ৰ ভাৱ কিছু লাগিছিল যদিও মূলতঃ তেওঁ আছিল খেতিয়কৰ ল'ৰা। তদুপৰি গান্ধীবাদৰ আদৰ্শয়েও তেওঁক প্ৰভাৱান্বিত কৰিছিল। সেইবাবে হয়তো সহজ সৰল গ্ৰাম্য জীৱন, নিঃস্বজনৰ দুখ বেদনাই তেওঁক বিশেষভাৱে আলোড়িত কৰিছিল।

যোগেশ দাসে কেইবাখনো গল্প সংকলন ৰচনা কৰি অসমীয়া সাহিত্য জগতলৈ উল্লেখনীয় বৰঙনি আগবঢ়াই থৈ গৈছে। তেখেতৰ গল্প সংকলন কেইখন হ'ল- পপীয়া তৰা (১৯৫৬), আন্ধাৰৰ আঁৰে আঁৰে (১৯৬১), মদাৰৰ বেদনা (১৯৬৩), হাজাৰ লোকৰ ভিৰ (১৯৬৫) আৰু পৃথিৱীৰ অসুখ (১৯৭৯)। যোগেশ দাসে তেওঁৰ গল্পসমূহত সৰজ-সৰলভাৱে কাহিনীৰ বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে যদিও সেইবাবে জীৱনৰ গভীৰ অৰ্থ দাঙি ধৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে। যুগৰ পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ৰ

সাৰ্থক ছবি ফুটাই তুলিবলৈ যাওঁতে তেওঁ সমাজ আৰু ব্যক্তি মন দুয়োকৈ চালিজাৰি চাইছে। ৰোমাণ্টিক স্বপ্নক সজীৱ কৰি তোলাৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে তেওঁৰ গল্পই সঁচা বাস্তৱবোধ প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে।

‘পপীয়া তৰা’ যোগেশ দাসৰ এটা সাৰ্থক গল্প। মধ্যবিত্ত জীৱনৰ সমস্যা এই গল্পটোৰ মাজত স্পষ্ট হৈ পৰিছে। মহেশ্বৰ মাষ্টৰ নামেৰে জনাজাত ব্যক্তিগৰাকীৰ হঠাতে হোৱা আৰিভাৱৰ ফলত এটা মধ্যবিত্ত পৰিয়ালৰ পৰিশীলিত জীৱন যাত্ৰাত কিদৰে ব্যাঘাত জন্মাইছে সেই কথা প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। যোগেশ দাসৰ বহু পঠিত আৰু সমাদৃত এটা গল্প হ’ল ‘কলপটুৱাৰ মৃত্যু’। এই গল্পটোত অসমৰ সামন্তযুগীয় সমাজ ব্যৱস্থাৰ এখন ছবি অংকন কৰিছে। মৌজাদাৰৰ ঘৰত কাম কৰা ছোৱালী ৰূপে থকা ৰূপেশ্বৰী, মৌজাদাৰৰ পুত্ৰৰ কামনাৰ বলি হৈ গৰ্ভৱতী হয়। আনফালে মৌজাদাৰৰ ঘৰত কাম কৰা ধনীৰামেও ৰূপেশ্বৰীক ভাল পাইছিল যাৰ বাবে তাক তেওঁলোকৰ ঘৰৰ পৰা খেদি পঠিয়ায়। আৰ্থিক সংকটত পৰি ধনীৰামে এদিন মৌজাদাৰৰ পৰিয়ালত খাজনা বেহাই দিবলৈ কাকূতি কৰিবলৈ আহি ওলোটাই ধনীৰামেহে মৌজাদাৰৰ পৰিয়ালক মুক্তি দিব লগা হৈছে। “বৰ বোপাৰ কামনাৰ বলি হৈ গৰ্ভত সন্তান ধাৰণ কৰা ৰূপাক আজি বৰ বোপাইয়ে নিজেই চাৰিমহীয়া সন্তান ধাৰণ কৰা ৰূপাক গতাই দিব খুজিছে ধনীৰামৰ হাতত। বিনিময়ত খাজনা মাফ উপৰঞ্চি ভনীয়েকৰ চিকিৎসাৰ বাবে দুশ টকা।” মৌজাদাৰে ৰূপেশ্বৰীক গ্ৰহণ কৰাৰ বিনিময়ত ধনীৰামক সহায় কৰাৰ প্ৰতিশ্ৰুতি দিছে আৰু সেইমতে ধনীৰামেও তাইক গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে। ‘কলপটুৱাৰ মৃত্যু’ গল্পত এনেদৰে সমাজৰ উচ্চ শ্ৰেণীৰ মানুহৰ হাতত নিম্নবৰ্গীয় শ্ৰেণীৰ লোকে লাঞ্চিত আৰু প্ৰৰঞ্চিত হোৱাৰ কাহিনী প্ৰকাশিত হৈছে। লগতে গল্পটোৰ মাজেদি নিপাঁড়িতা, নিৰ্যাতিতা ৰূপেশ্বৰীহঁতৰ দৰে নাৰীৰ প্ৰতিও সহানুভূতি প্ৰকাশ পাইছে।

যোগেশ দাসৰ আন এটা বহু আলোচিত গল্প হ’ল ‘উৰুকাৰ উকমুকৰ পোৱালি’। গল্পটিত অসমৰ সমাজ জীৱনৰ এখন বাস্তৱ দাঙি ধৰিছে। জীৱন জীৱিকাৰ সন্ধানত একে ঠাইতে আহি গোট খোৱা কেইটামান দৰিদ্ৰ পৰিয়ালৰ জীৱনৰ ছবি প্ৰকাশিত হৈছে। মাঘৰ বিহুৰ উৰুকাৰ দিনা ভেলাঘৰ সজাৰ লগতে

ধৰ্মকান্ত, কাদেব, চৌথিন আলি আৰু তেওঁলোকৰ পৰিয়ালৰ অন্যান্য সদস্যসকলে একেলগে বহি ভোজ ভাত খোৱাৰ দৃশ্যই এক সাম্প্ৰদায়িক ঐক্যৰ নিদৰ্শন দাঙি ধৰিছে।

‘গৰাখহনীয়া’ গল্পত গল্পকাৰে অৰ্থনৈতিক সমস্যাই মানুহৰ আবেগ-অনুভূতকো কিদৰে তল পেলাব পাৰে তেনে এখন বাস্তৱ ছবি দাঙি ধৰিবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰিছে। গৰাখহনীয়া নামটোও ইয়াত ব্যঞ্জনাগ্নক ৰূপত দেখুওৱা হৈছে। নৈৰ গৰা খহি পৰাৰ দৰে এক প্ৰকাৰৰ আধুনিক মানুহৰ মূল্যবোধৰো গৰা খহি পৰিব ধৰিছে, সেই কথাকে প্ৰতিফলিত কৰিছে। জীৱেশ্বৰ পণ্ডিতৰ সুখ শান্তিৰে ভৰা সংসাৰখনক দিবাং নদীৰ খহনীয়াই এক অভাৱ-অনাটনৰ মুখলৈ ঠেলি নিছে। আৰ্থিক অনাটনে তেওঁলোকক এনে এক অবস্থালৈ ঠেলি দিছে যে পণ্ডিতে আধা বয়সীয়। বলীন ঠিকাদাৰৰ হাতত জীয়েক অপৰ্ণাক বিয়া দিব বিচাৰিছে, কাৰণ ঠিকাদাৰে তেওঁলোকৰ ঘৰখনক খহনীয়াৰ সময়ত যথেষ্ট সহায় কৰিছিল। অথচ অপৰ্ণাই প্ৰেমিক অৱনীৰ সৈতেহে সংসাৰ কৰিব বিচাৰিছিল। কিন্তু অভাৱগ্ৰস্ত পৰিয়ালটিৰ বাবে অপৰ্ণা আৰু অৱনীৰ মেডিকেল পঢ়া শেষ হোৱালৈ বৈ থাকিব নোৱৰা হল। অৱশেষত অপৰ্ণাও বিয়াত বহিবলৈ সন্মতি প্ৰদান কৰিলে। আনহাতে সকলো জানিও দেউতাকে অপৰ্ণাক বলীন ঠিকাদাৰৰ হাতত তুলি দিছে।

বৰ্তমান সমাজত বস্তুবাদী মানসিকতাই মানুহৰ মনতো খহনীয়া আৰম্ভ কৰিবলৈ লৈছে তাকেই গল্পটোৰ মাজত ব্যঞ্জনাধৰ্মীয়ে দাঙি ধৰিবলৈ বিচৰা হৈছে।

‘গিৰি ওহা মেচ’ যোগেশ দাসৰ আন এটা বহু আলোচিত গল্প। গল্পটোত চঞ্চল আৰু ৰমাৰ প্ৰেমৰ যোগেদি প্ৰথম প্ৰেমৰ এক মনোৰম চিত্ৰ দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে। চঞ্চলক প্ৰিয়লতাই ভাল পাবলৈ খুজিছিল কিন্তু ৰিমাৰ প্ৰতিহে চঞ্চল আকৰ্ষিত হল। গিৰি ওহা মেচৰ আন এক বাসিন্দা কুশলক আকৰ্ষণ কৰিছিল লায়লা নামৰ ছোৱালীজনীয়ে কিন্তু লায়লাই আনৰ লগত বিয়া হৈ যোৱাত মনৰ দুখত সি ক’বলৈ গুছি গল। কিন্তু ক’ত গল কোনেও গম নাপালে। সেই সময় যুদ্ধৰ সময় আছিল। কুশলে মিলিটাৰীত ভৰ্তি হৈছিল। তাৰ পৰা ঘূৰি আহি

সি সৰলা নামৰ এজনী দৰিদ্ৰ ছোৱালীৰ প্ৰেমত পৰে। সেই গিৰি ওহা মেচৰে বাসিন্দা তপনে গান গাইছিল। স্বাধীনতা সংগ্ৰামৰ সময়ত তেওঁ গান গাই কাৰাবাস খাটিবলগীয়া হৈছিল। অৱশ্যে যুদ্ধৰ পিছত এখন কাকতৰ সম্পাদক ৰূপে সংস্থাপন লাভ কৰে।

‘পলৰীয়া’ আন এটি অগতানুগতিক প্ৰেমৰ গল্প। নীলিমাৰ প্ৰতি প্ৰবীৰৰ দুৰ্বলতা আছিল। কিন্তু মনোৰঞ্জন নামৰ অন্য এজন ব্যক্তিৰ লগতহে তাইৰ বিয়া ঠিক হ’ল। যাৰ বাবে সি মনোৰঞ্জনৰ লগত কাজিয়া কৰে। তাৰ পিছত বেলো আৰু ৰঞ্জিতক সি মনোৰঞ্জনক মাৰিবলৈ নানা কথাবে উচটাই দিয়ে আৰু বাগানৰ এচিচমেণ্ট মেনেজাৰ ৰঞ্জনৰ কোৱাৰ্টাৰলৈ পলাই যায়। তাতো সি দুজনী ছোৱালীৰ প্ৰতি আকৃষ্ট হয়। এগৰাকীৰ নাম ফুলমণি আৰু আনগৰাকীৰ নাম ৰূপালী। সি তাৰ পৰা গুছি যাব খোজাত দুয়োজনী দুখত আকুল হৈ পৰে। ফুলুৱে আন্ধাৰতে তাৰ চকু দুটা আৰু নাকটো হেঁচা মাৰি ধৰিলে। আনহাতে ৰূপালীয়ে প্ৰবীৰৰ হাতখন খামোচ মাৰি ধৰিলে। তেনে সময়তে পুলিচ আহি তাক গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ কৰিলে। যোৱাৰ সময়ত প্ৰবীৰে ফুলমণিহঁতক প্ৰতিশ্ৰুতি দি গ’ল যে সোনকালে সি আকৌ তেওঁলোকৰ ওচৰলৈ উভতি আহিব। এনেদৰে ‘পলৰীয়া’ গল্পৰ মাজেৰে সততে দেখা নোপোৱা প্ৰেমৰ ভিন ভিন চিত্ৰ দাঙি ধৰা দেখা গৈছে।

যোগেশ দাসৰ কিছুসংখ্যক গল্পৰ মাজেৰে নাৰী মনস্তত্ত্বৰ কেতবোৰ দিশ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। ‘আন্ধাৰৰ আঁৰে আঁৰে’ শীৰ্ষক গল্প সংকলনটিত সন্নিৱিষ্ট ‘বৰ্ণনানী’ তেনে এটা বিষয়বস্তুৰে নিৰ্মিত গল্প। সংসাৰ কৰাৰ আঠ বছৰৰ পিছত বৰ্ণনানীয়ে এদিন হঠাতে অনুভৱ কৰিছে ‘আমাৰ ঘৰ পুতলা ঘৰেই, তেজ মঙহৰ মানুহ ইয়াত নাই, পুতলাক নচুৱাই ফুৰাৰ দৰে গতানুগতিকতাই আমাক নচুৱাই ফুৰে। দিপ্তী হাজৰিকাই সেই কথা ইবছেনৰ নাটক পঢ়ি বুজিব পৰা নাছিল। দিপ্তী হাজৰিকাই সেই কথা ইবছেনৰ নাটক পঢ়ি বুজিব পৰা নাছিল। কিন্তু আজি আঠ বছৰৰ পাছত দিপ্তী হাজৰিকাই মনিৰ নোৰবা পুতলা ঘৰটোৰ কুম্ভছ ৰূপটো যেন চকুৰ আগত দেখিবলৈ পালে। গল্পকাৰে ইবছেনৰ এই ভাৱাদৰ্শক অতি কৌশলেৰে গল্পটোত উপস্থাপন কৰিছে। গল্পটোত বৰ্ণনানীৰ মনলৈ হঠাতে অহা

কলেজীয়া জীৱনৰ বিমলদাৰ কথা আৰু লাহে লাহে তেওঁ আৱিষ্কাৰ কৰিবলৈ ধৰে। তেওঁৰ মৰমৰ ঘৰখনৰ কুন্ধুছ ৰূপটোৱে তেওঁৰ অপ্রাপ্তিৰ বেদনাক প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে। গল্পকাৰে, এনেদৰে জ্ঞান-বিজ্ঞান, অধ্যয়ন-অধ্যাপনা সকলোৰে ওপৰত মানৱীয় মমতাক এক বিশেষ মৰ্যাদাৰে প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিছে।

‘আন্ধাৰৰ আঁৰে আঁৰে’ নামৰ গল্পটোৰ মাজেৰে যৌন ক্ষুধাৰ এখন বাস্তৱ চিত্ৰ দাঙি ধৰিছে। নিশা হ’লেই সৰোজ আৰু বেণুৱে সদায় ষ্টেচনলৈ যায়, তাতেই তেওঁলোকে প্ৰেম বিনিময় কৰে। যাৰ ফলত বেণুৱে এক অবৈধ সন্তান জন্ম দিয়ে। সৰোজে তৃপ্ত হৈ যোৱাৰ পিছত বেণুক এৰি বহু দূৰলৈ আঁতৰি যায়। তাৰ পিছত এজন আদৰ্শবান আৰু দায়িত্বশীল ব্যক্তি তথা লেখকে বেণুৰ জীৱনৰ কৰুণ কাহিনী গম পাই তাক পত্নীৰূপে গ্ৰহণ কৰে। এই গল্পটোত পুৰুষৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰৱঞ্চনাৰ বলি হোৱা এগৰাকী অসহায় নাৰীৰ প্ৰতি সহানুভূতি প্ৰকাশ পাইছে।

‘আৱহমান’ শীৰ্ষক গল্পত নাৰীৰ মনস্তত্ত্বৰ কথা ক’বলৈ গৈ নাৰী মনৰ দুখ-বেদনা, অনুভৱ-অনুভূতি আৰু সুখ-দুখৰ ছবি অংকন কৰিছে। নাৰী হৃদয়ৰ গভীৰ উপলব্ধি তথা অনুভূতিৰ উমান ল’বলৈ কাৰো আহৰি নাই। যাৰ বাবে সৰয়ু চৰিত্ৰটি বেদনাসিক্ত এক প্ৰস্তৰ শিলালৈ ৰূপান্তৰিত হৈছে।

যোগেশ দাসৰ কিছুমান গল্পত একোটা সামাজিক সমস্যা বা একো একোটা সমাজ ব্যৱস্থাক অতি ব্যঙ্গাত্মকভাৱে উপস্থাপন কৰা হৈছে। ‘এটি নতুন মহোছো’ তেনেধৰণৰ এটা গল্প। ‘মিউনিচিপেল’ৰ এখন সভাক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি এই গল্পটো ৰচনা কৰা হৈছে। চেয়াৰমেনে মিউনিচিপেলৰ এখন সভাত কেনেকৈ বিৰোধী পক্ষ আৰু নিজৰ দলৰ বিসম্বাদী সকলক বৃজাই-বঢ়াই সভাখন পৰিচালনা কৰিব পাৰে তাৰে বৰ্ণনা এই গল্পটোৰ মাজেৰে দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে।

চহৰখনত মহৰ প্ৰকোপ বৃদ্ধি হোৱাৰ বাবে বিৰোধীসকলেহে মহ নাশ কৰিবৰ বাবে ব্যৱস্থা ল’বলৈ আগৰ সভাখনতে এটি প্ৰস্তাৱ উত্থাপন কৰিছিল। এইবাৰ উক্ত প্ৰস্তাৱটো চেয়াৰমেনে নিজেই উত্থাপন কৰি সকলোৰে মন জয় কৰাৰ বুদ্ধি কৰিলে। পিছত সভাখনৰ পৰিস্থিতি এনে হ’লগৈ যে মহ খেদাৰ উপায় হিচাপে কেইবাজনো সদস্যই মহোছো গীত গাবলৈ ধৰিলে। এনে সময়তে

চেয়াৰমেনে সভা স্থগিত কৰি সভাকক্ষৰ পৰা ওলাই গল। এনেকৈয়ে এখন মিউনিচিপাল বৰ্ডৰ সভাৰ অন্ত পৰে। এক অগতানুগতিক টেকনিকৰ গল্পটিৰ উপস্থাপন ৰীতিয়ে গোটেই ব্যৱস্থাতোক কটাক্ষ কৰাৰ লগতে চৰকাৰী ব্যৱস্থাসমূহৰ আভ্যন্তৰীণ দিশসমূহৰ ফোপোলা স্বৰূপটোক উদঙাই দেখুওৱা হৈছে। গল্পকাৰে এই গল্পটোত এনে এটা সামাজিক সমস্যাক বাচি লৈছে, যিটোৰ লগত জনবিশ্বাস, লোকগীত জড়িত হৈ আছে। সেইবাবে জনশ্ৰুতিমূলক লোকগীতৰূপে মহোহো গীতটোক এটা আহিলা হিচাপে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিব পাৰিছে। গল্পটোৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয়তাতে এই লোক উপাদানৰ সাৰ্থক ব্যৱহাৰ হৈছে। উল্লেখযোগ্য আধুনিক সাহিত্যৰ বিভিন্ন উপাদানৰ লগতে চুটিগল্পতো লোক উপাদান ব্যৱহাৰ সম্পৰ্কে নতুন ধৰণে পৰীক্ষা চলিয়েই আছে। যাৰ বাবে কোনো এক বিশেষ ঘটনা নথকাৰ পিছতো গল্পটোৰে এটা সাৰ্থক গল্প পৰিচিত হৈছে।

‘কাকা আৰু যুৱৰাজ’ অসম আন্দোলনৰ পটভূমিত ৰচিত এটা উল্লেখনীয় গল্প। প্ৰথম পুৰুষত বৰ্ণনা কৰা এই গল্পটিৰ মূল চৰিত্ৰ তিনিটা। গল্পকাৰে নিজে, তেওঁৰ শৈশৱৰ বন্ধু কাকা আৰু যুৱৰাজ। গল্পকাৰৰ পত্নী আৰু যুৱৰাজৰ পত্নীয়েও মাজতে ভূমুকি মাৰিছে। তিনিওজন বন্ধুৰ আলাপ-আলোচনাৰ মাজতেই গল্পটো আগবাঢ়িছে। গল্পকাৰে এই বন্ধুসকলৰ কথোপকথনৰ মাজেৰে অসমৰ সমকালীন সমাজ জীৱনৰ কেতবোৰ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ প্ৰসঙ্গক তুলি ধৰাৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰিছে। মূল বিষয়লৈ যোৱাৰ আগতেই সম্পাদকে কৌশলেৰে তেওঁলোকৰ শৈশৱৰ সোণালী দিনৰ কিছু স্মৃতি টানি আনিছে। যাৰ ফলত অসমৰ বিভিন্ন জনগোষ্ঠী আৰু বিভিন্ন সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ মাজত থকা সদভাৱ আৰু সম্প্ৰীতিৰ ছবিখন দাঙি ধৰিছে।

‘ত্ৰিবেণী’ নামৰ সংকলনৰখনৰ অন্তৰ্গত এটি উল্লেখযোগ্য গল্প হৈছে ‘ইপাৰ-সিপাৰ’। এই গল্পটোৰ মাজেৰে আধ্যাত্মিক আদৰ্শ আৰু জাগতিক কৰ্তব্যৰ বিষয়ে এটি ধাৰণা ব্যক্ত কৰা হৈছে। বাস্তৱতাৰ সন্মুখত এক অৰ্থহীন আধ্যাত্মিকতাক দেখুওৱা হৈছে। সংসাৰৰ এটি সমস্যাক গল্পটোত ব্যতিক্ৰমধৰ্মীৰে তুলি ধৰিছে। মুৰাৰিচৰণ চক্ৰৱৰ্তীৰ মাজু ল’ৰা মাধৱচৰণে সন্যাসৰ পথ গ্ৰহণ কৰে। যাৰ বাবে তেওঁ নিজৰ বিবাহিত পত্নীক এৰি থৈ যায়। এদিন হঠাতে

মাথৰচৰণ ঘূৰি আহে। মাথৰে পত্নী দেৱযানীৰ ওচৰলৈ গৈ এবাৰ মাত্ৰ মাত্ৰ এষাৰ দিয়ে আৰু তাৰ পাছত দেউতাকৰ ওচৰতে মাটিত বিছনা তৰি শুই পৰে। পিছদিনা মাথৰচৰণে দেৱযানীৰ ওচৰ চাপে যদিও তাইৰ শৰীৰৰ প্ৰতি কোনো ধৰণৰ দুৰ্বলতা অনুভৱ নকৰিলে। মাথৰচৰণ দেৱযানীৰ ওচৰৰ পৰা আঁতৰি যোৱাৰ ইচ্ছা ব্যক্ত কৰাত তাই মাথৰচৰণৰ ওচৰত এনেদৰে প্ৰশ্ন উত্থাপন কৰিলে আপোনাৰ ভগৱানক সুধিবাচোন ঘৰ সংসাৰ এৰি, আত্মীয় স্বজনক এৰি তেওঁক বিচাৰি ফুৰাটোৱেই যদি একান্ত কাম্য হয় তেন্তে আমাৰ নিচিনাবোৰক কিয় সৃষ্টি কৰিলে, আমাক কামনা বাসনা কিয় দিলে, কাৰোবাৰ খেলৰ পুতলা হ'বলৈ আমাক কিয় এৰি দিয়া হ'ল? মাথৰচৰণে দেৱযানীৰ উত্তৰ দিব নোৱাৰিলে। তেওঁ বুজিলে যে, তেওঁৰ সাধনাৰ সিদ্ধি হোৱা নাই। গতিকে সিদ্ধি বিচাৰি দেৱযানী কথাৰ উত্তৰ বিচাৰি, দেৱযানীক মুক্তি দি তেওঁ পুনৰ আঁতৰি গল। 'ইপাৰ সিপাৰ' গল্পটিত দেৱযানীৰ মনৰ অব্যক্ত বেদনাৰ মাজেৰে মানুহৰ চিৰন্তন কামনা বাসনাৰ ছবিখন প্ৰতিফলিত কৰা হৈছে। এনেদৰে গল্পকাৰে আধুনিক দৃষ্টিভংগীৰে আধ্যাত্মিকতাক দাঙি ধৰিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰা দেখা যায়।

যোগেশ দাসৰ গল্পসমূহৰ ৰচনাভংগী সহজ-সৰল, গল্প কোৱাৰ ৰীতি পোনপটীয়া। তেখেতৰ সৰহভাগ গল্পৰ প্ৰধান উপজীব্য হৈছে একোটা সামাজিক সমস্যা। মধ্যবিত্ত শ্ৰেণীৰ বৈচিত্ৰ্যময় চিত্ৰ অংকন কৰাত তেওঁ সিদ্ধহস্ত। যোগেশ দাসৰ গল্পৰ বৈচিত্ৰ্য আৰু গভীৰতা কম যদিও তেওঁ মানৱীয় মমতাবোধৰ দৃষ্টিভংগীৰে এখন বিশাল সমাজক স্পৰ্শ কৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে। বিশেষ নাটকীয়তা বা জটিলতাৰ আশ্ৰয় নোলোৱাকৈ মানৱ জীৱনৰ লগত সংপৃক্ত হৈ থকা ভিন ভিন চিত্ৰসমূহক অবিচ্ছিন্ন ৰূপত ফুটাই তুলিব পৰাটো গল্পকাৰ ৰূপে যোগেশ দাসৰ কৃতিত্ব। সহজ সৰল প্ৰকাশভংগী, উদাৰ মানৱতাবাদী চেতনা, বৰ্ণনা দক্ষতা, চৰিত্ৰৰ সূক্ষ্ম মনস্তাত্ত্বিক বিশ্লেষণ নাৰীৰ অব্যক্ত বেদনা ইত্যাদি তেওঁ গল্পৰ প্ৰধান বিশেষত্ব। এনে বৈশিষ্ট্য সম্পন্ন গল্পসমূহে অসমীয়া গল্প সাহিত্যৰ ক্ষেত্ৰখনক সমৃদ্ধ কৰিছে। যোগেশ দাসৰ ব্যক্তিত্বৰ আটাইতকৈ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ দিশটি হৈছে তেওঁৰ সৰলতা। সৰজ সৰল মনৰ ব্যক্তিগৰাকীৰ সাহিত্য কৰ্মতো এনে সৰল প্ৰকাশভংগী পৰিস্ফুট হৈছে।

প্ৰসংগ সূত্ৰ :

১. বৰা, দিলীপ, 'যোগেশ দাসৰ চুটিগল্প', অসমীয়া চুটিগল্প : ঐতিহ্য আৰু
বিৱৰ্তন, সম্পাঃ অপূৰ্ব বৰা, পৃঃ ২১৫

২. ভট্টাচাৰ্য, পৰাগ কুমাৰ, গল্পৰ প্ৰসংগ আৰু অসমীয়া গল্প সাহিত্য, পৃঃ ২৬৭

৩. বৰা, দিলীপ, 'যোগেশ দাসৰ চুটিগল্প', অসমীয়া চুটিগল্প : ঐতিহ্য আৰু
বিৱৰ্তন, সম্পাঃ অপূৰ্ব বৰা, পৃঃ ২১৫

৪. বৰা, পংকজ কুমাৰ, নিৰ্বাচিত অসমীয়া গল্প আৰু উপন্যাসৰ আলোচনা, পৃঃ
১৬৫

৫. বৰা, দিলীপ, 'যোগেশ দাসৰ চুটিগল্প', অসমীয়া চুটিগল্প : ঐতিহ্য আৰু
বিৱৰ্তন, সম্পাঃ অপূৰ্ব বৰা, পৃঃ ২১৯

৬. বৰা, দিলীপ, 'যোগেশ দাসৰ চুটিগল্প', অসমীয়া চুটিগল্প : ঐতিহ্য আৰু
বিৱৰ্তন, সম্পাঃ অপূৰ্ব বৰা, পৃঃ ২২১

গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জী :

বৰুৱা, প্ৰহ্লাদ, অসমীয়া চুটিগল্প অধ্যয়ন, প্ৰকাশ : ১৯৯৫ চন, প্ৰকাশক: বনলতা,
ডিব্ৰুগড়

বৰা, দিলীপ, সমাজ সাহিত্য সংহতি, প্ৰকাশ ভৱানী অফএচট এন্ড ইমেইজিং
ছিষ্টেমছলি, গুৱাহাটী

বৰা, অপূৰ্ব, অসমীয়া চুটিগল্প : ঐতিহ্য আৰু বিৱৰ্তন, প্ৰকাশ যোৰহাট কেন্দ্ৰীয়
মহাবিদ্যালয় প্ৰকাশন কোষ, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ : ২০১২

বৰা, পংকজ কুমাৰ, নিৰ্বাচিত অসমীয়া গল্প আৰু উপন্যাসৰ আলোচনা, প্ৰকাশক
: কুণ্ডিল জাগৰণ সাহিত্য প্ৰকাশন, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ - ২০১৪

ভট্টাচাৰ্য, পৰাগ কুমাৰ, গল্পৰ প্ৰসংগ আৰু অসমীয়া গল্প সাহিত্য, প্ৰকাশক :
চন্দ্ৰ প্ৰকাশ, দ্বিতীয় সংস্কৰণ।



Section VIII

**Tourism
and
Regional Development**

সমবেশ, পাখিৰালয় আৰু পৰ্যটন

সঞ্জয় দাস

ভূগোলৰ পঞ্চম ষাণ্মাসিকৰ ছাত্ৰীসকলক লৈ এইবাৰ (২০২৪) দুৰ্গা পূজাৰ আগে আগে দুৰ্যোগ সম্পৰ্কীয় এটি প্ৰকল্প প্ৰস্তুত কৰিবলৈ চুবুৰীয়া ৰাজ্য পশ্চিমবংগৰ আন্তৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় সীমান্তৱৰ্তী পৃথিৱী বিখ্যাত সুন্দৰবন ব-দ্বীপলৈ দুই নিশা তিনি দিনৰ বাবে গৈছিলো। ক্ষেত্ৰ অধ্যয়নৰ বাবে পূৰ্বেও সুন্দৰবন ভ্ৰমণ কৰিছিলো। ২০১২ বৰ্ষত দক্ষিণ ২৪-পৰগনাৰ ৰায়দিঘিত থকা ফেৰীঘাটেৰে আমি সুন্দৰবনৰ ব-দ্বীপসমূহলৈ গৈছিলো নেতৃত্ব দিছিল জ্যেষ্ঠ অৱসৰী অধ্যাপক ফনীণ চন্দ্ৰ মাউট আৰু প্ৰয়াত দুগ্ধ শৰ্মা ছাৰে। প্ৰতিটো সন্ধিয়া ৪টা চিলিগাৰযুক্ত লঞ্চখনে নিশাটোৰ বাবে কোনো এক দ্বীপৰ দাঁতিকাষৰীয়া দ' জলৰাশিত লঙ্গৰ পেলাইছিল। লঞ্চত কটোৱা প্ৰতিটো নিশা আমি চৰম নিৰাপত্তাহীনতাত ভুগিছিলো। ৰয়েল বেংগল টাইগাৰ আৰু অন্য জলজ জীৱৰ সম্ভাব্য আক্ৰমণ, জল-দুস্কৃতিকাৰীৰ নৌকাহৰণ, জোৱাৰৰ কোবত লঙ্গৰ চিঙি লঞ্চ সমুদ্ৰত বিলীন হৈ যোৱা, সামুদ্ৰিক ধুমুহা, ইত্যাদি মূলক আৰু অমূলক চিন্তাত আমাৰ নিদ্ৰা বাৰুকৈয়েই ভংগ হৈছিল। অত্যন্ত অপৰিপাটি ব্যৱস্থাপক জনৈক চৈনী ভাইৰ পৰিচালনাত সমাপ্ত হোৱা ৩-দিনীয়া ভ্ৰমণ আমাৰ বাবে আছিল যথেষ্ট শিহঁৰণকাৰী। ৩০টা আসনৰ বাছত ৪৫-জন যাত্ৰীক হাওঁৰাৰ পৰা ৰায়দিঘিলৈ অনা, ৰায়দিঘিৰ কদৰ্যময় বজাৰখনত থকা হোটেলখনত বিশ্ৰামৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰা, নিশা পতিতালয়লৈ ৰূপান্তৰ হোৱা হোটেলখনত গ্ৰাহক আৰু মালিকপক্ষৰ মাজত হোৱা শ্ৰব্যকটু কাজিয়া আৰু অত্যন্ত লেতেৰা ৪-চিলিগাৰযুক্ত লঞ্চখনৰ বিকট কৰ্কশ মাত আৰু ইঞ্জিনৰ পৰা নিৰ্গত কলা ধূৱাই আমাৰ পৰিভ্ৰমী মনটোক সেমেকাই তুলিছিল। প্ৰতিটো মুহূৰ্ততে প্ৰতাৰিত হোৱাৰ সম্ভাৱনাই আমাক খুলি খুলি খাইছিল। প্ৰতিকূলতাৰ মাজতো আমি চেমনীয়া ভূগোলবিদৰ দলটিৰ সহযোগত ক্ষেত্ৰ অধ্যয়নৰ বাবে প্ৰয়োজনীয় তথ্য আৰু নমুনা সংগ্ৰহ কৰিছিলো। তথাপিও, সুন্দৰবন-পৰ্যটনৰ অনাকাঙ্ক্ষিত ছবিখন এতিয়াও কিন্তু সজীৱ হৈ

আছে।

সদা-সমাপ্ত এইবাৰৰ ভ্ৰমণ কিন্তু সম্পূৰ্ণ সুকীয়া আছিল। এমাহমানৰ পূৰ্বে ইন্টাৰনেটৰ জৰিয়তে বিশ্বাসযোগ্য বুলি অনুমান কৰি লৈ প্ৰজাপতি ট্ৰেভেলচ 'কেনিং আৰু গডখালি'-ৰ লগত যোগাযোগ কৰা হৈছিল। এটা বৰ আকৰ্ষণীয় পুৰুষ কণ্ঠই আমাক সুন্দৰবন-পৰ্যটন সম্পৰ্কে এনেদৰে আভাস দিছিল যে আমি প্ৰথমটো কথোপকথনতেই প্ৰায় সন্মতি দিছিলো। যুৱকজনৰ নাম সমবেশ বড়। স্নাতকোত্তৰ উত্তীৰ্ণ এজন অতি ভদ্ৰ, মিষ্ট-ভাষী সু-পৰিচালক। তথাপিও বিদেশত এজন আপোন মানুহ বিচৰা স্বভাৱটোৱে আমাক কলিকতাৰ আসাম ভৱন (চল্টলেক)ত কৰ্মৰত বিশ্বজিত হাতিমুৰীয়া (বেতবাৰী, শিৱসাগৰ) ৰ লগত পৰিচয় কৰোৱাইছিল। নিৰাপত্তা আৰু অধিক বৃদ্ধি হোৱা যেন লাগিছিল। যথাসময়ত শিমলুগুৰি বেল ষ্টেচনৰ পৰা কামৰূপ এক্সপ্ৰেছেৰে ছাত্ৰীৰ এক বৃহত দল লৈ আমি যাত্ৰা আৰম্ভ কৰিছিলো। তৃতীয় দিনা দোকমোকালিতে হাওড়া ষ্টেচনত আমি নামিছিলো আৰু চিটিবাছেৰে পোনে পোনে শিয়ালদহ ষ্টেচনলৈ গৈ তাৰ পৰা কেনিং অভিমুখী লোকেল ট্ৰেইনত উঠিছিলো। সমবেশে আব্দুলক (বাছ-কণ্ডাক্টৰ) আমাৰ সুবিধা হোৱাকৈ কেনিং ষ্টেচনলৈ পঠিয়াই দিছিল। আব্দুলে সাজু কৰি ৰখা ডাঙৰ বাছখনে আমাক উঠাই গডখালি অভিমুখে ৰাওঁনা হৈছিল। প্ৰায় ৩৫ কিলোমিটাৰ দূৰত্বৰ এক সেউজীয়া যাত্ৰামস্ন পথ গ্ৰাম্য ভূদৃশ্যৰলীৰ মাজেৰে আমাৰ কল্পনাবোৰ ক্ৰমশ পূৰ্ণ হৈ গৈ আছিল। গডখালিৰ ফেৰীঘাটত সুভমৰ চেমনীয়া দলটিয়ে আমাৰ অভ্যৰ্থনাৰ বাবে সাজু হৈ আছিল। অকনো সময় অপচয় নকৰি আমি লক্ষত উঠিছিলো। তেতিয়ালৈকে সমবেশ নামৰ বাস্তুয় সত্ৰাটোৰ লগত আমাৰ মুখামুখি হোৱাই নাছিল, কেৱল মাত্ৰ ফোনতেই আমাৰ দলটিক হাওঁড়া ষ্টেচনৰ পৰা সঠিক দিক-নিৰ্দেশনা দি আছিল। সুভমৰ দলটিয়ে শীতল পানীৰে আমাৰ ভাগৰুৱা দেহটোক কিছু সজীৱ কৰি তুলিছিল। চেমনীয়া কেইজনৰ লগতে নাৰিকজনৰ ব্যৱহাৰ আতি মাৰ্জিত আৰু অতিথিপৰায়ণ আছিল। আধাঘণ্টা মানৰ পিছতেই পৰিবেশন কৰা হৈছিল গৰম গৰম ফুলা লুচি, আলুৰ দম, ৰসগোল্লা আৰু একাপ গৰম চাহ। সেইমুহূৰ্ততে ইমানদিনে কেৱল শুনি থকা লোভনীয় সুন্দৰবনৰ আখলৰ লগত আমাৰ পোনপোটায়া পৰিচয় হৈছিল।

ভাল লগা বিৰ-বিৰ বতাহজাকে আমাৰ যাত্ৰাটোত সংগ দিছিল। ছাত্ৰী সকলেও
 প্রতিটো নতুন নতুন মুহূৰ্তত ডুব গৈছিল বঙ্গোপসাগৰৰ পানী, সুন্দৰবনৰ মেংগ্ৰোভ
 জাতীয় অৰণ্য আৰু সৰু-বৰ দ্বীপসমূহৰ বৈচিত্ৰ্যত। দুপৰীয়াৰ আহাৰ পৰিবেশনে
 আমাৰ যাত্ৰাক আৰু অধিক মনোগ্ৰাহী কৰি তুলিছিল। দুবিধ মাছৰ আঞ্জা (বাছ-
 ডাঙৰ মিছা মাছ-ইলিছ), মণ্ড-দাইল, শুকানকৈ ভজা আলু, পুৰৈ শাক-বঙা লাউ-
 আলু-শুকান সৰু মিছা মাছৰ লাৰবা, পাপৰ, মিঠাই আৰু দৈৰে উদৰ পুৰাই লৈ
 লক্ষৰ ভূমি মহলাত থকা সুন্দৰ শেতেলিত কিছু জিৰণীয়ো লৈছিলো।
 সেইখিনিতেই বান্ধনীশালটো। তিনিগৰাকী কৰ্মঠ আৰু হাহিমুখীয়া মহিলাই আমাৰ
 সমগ্ৰ খাদ্যসম্ভাৰ ৰাঙ্কিছিল। প্ৰথম দিনাৰ যাত্ৰাটোত পিছবেলা বালি দ্বীপত আমি
 খোজ দিছিলো। দ্বীপটোত প্ৰায় ১৫০টা পৰিয়াল। ধানখেতি, মাছ পালন, মৌ-
 আহৰণ, হাই-কুকুৰা-গৰু-মহ পালন আদি প্ৰধান অৰ্থনৈতিক বৃত্তি। নৌপথেই
 হ'ল একমাত্ৰ পৰিবহনৰ মাধ্যম। কাষৰীয়া সৰু নগৰকেন্দ্ৰটি হ'ল গোছবা। বিশেষ
 কাম থাকিলেহে বছৰেকত এবাৰমান মূল কলিকতালৈ আহে দ্বীপবাসীয়ে।
 লুণীয়া-মিঠা পৰিবেশটোৱে যেন মানুহখিনিক মোহাচ্ছন্ন কৰি ৰাখিছে, এনে
 লাগিছিল। আন্ধাৰ নমাৰ আগে আগে আমাৰ লক্ষ্যখন পাখিৰালয় নামৰ দ্বীপটোৰ
 ঘাটত লক্ষৰ পেলাইছিল। সন্ধিয়া নীড়মুখী পখিৰ কাকলিত পাখিৰালয়ত যেন
 এটি সুন্দৰ নিশা আগমনৰ আখৰাহে চলিছে। দুই মিনিটমান বজাৰখনৰ মাজেৰে
 খোজ কাঢ়ি গৈ থাকোতেই আমাৰ বাবে সাজু কৰি ৰখা ৰিজৰ্টখন পাইছিলো।
 প্ৰত্যেকেই নিজ নিজ কোঠাত অৱস্থান কৰি থাকোতেই গৰম-গৰম মুৰ্গী মাংসৰ
 পকৰি আৰু কফি পৰিবেশন কৰা হৈছিল। ৰিজৰ্টখন ইমানেই ডাঙৰ আছিল যে
 ছাত্ৰীসকলে বেছিভাগ সময় বাহিৰৰ জিৰণী ঘৰসমূহতেই সময় কটাইছিল। ৰাতিৰ
 সাজত জালুক দি বন্ধা কুকুৰা মাংস যথেষ্ট সোৱাদ লগা আছিল। প্ৰথমবাৰৰ
 বাবে সমৰেশ বড়ৰ লগত আমাৰ মুখামুখি হৈছিল সন্ধিয়া। বাকপটু সমৰেশে
 অনৰ্গল কৈ গৈছিল পশ্চিম বংগ চৰকাৰৰ পৰ্যটন নীতি, শিক্ষিত-অশিক্ষিত পুৰুষ-
 মহিলা সকলৰ সুবিধা হোৱাকৈ সমুদায় ভিত্তিক পৰ্যটন ব্যৱসায় পৰিচালনা আৰু
 অতিথি দেৱ ভৱ মন্ত্ৰৰ উপযুক্ত প্ৰয়োগ সম্পৰ্কে। পিছদিনাখন ৰাতিপুৱাই
 ৰিজৰ্টখনৰ গাতে লাগি থকা ঘাটত আমাৰ বাবে অপেক্ষা কৰি থকা লক্ষ্যখনত

উঠিছিলো। পুনৰ গৰম-গৰম লুছি, সিদ্ধ কণী, আলু-দম, মিঠাই আৰু চাহ। দ্বিতীয় দিনা আছিল সুন্দৰবন ছাফাৰী। এই যাত্ৰাটোত আমি সজনেখালী টাইগাৰ ৰিজাৰ্ভ, বনবিবি মন্দিৰ, সুন্দৰখালী, খোনাখালী, সন্ধ্যাখালী বাৎস টাৱাৰ, নোবাংকী, পাচখন নদীৰ সংগমস্থল, আদি ভ্ৰমণ কৰিছিলো। পুনৰ বেলি ডুবাৰ আগে আগে আকৌ পাখিৰালয়ৰ ৰিজৰ্ট পাইছিলোহি। সন্ধিয়া গৰম পকৰি আৰু চাহ খাই খাই স্থানীয় আদিবাসী চাওঁতালীসকলৰ সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান উপভোগ কৰিছিলো। যত আমাৰ ছাত্ৰীসকলেও অংশগ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল। ৰাতিৰ সাজত পৰিবেশন কৰা খাহীমাংসৰ আঞ্জাখন কিন্তু এতিয়াও আমাৰ জিভাত লাগিয়েই আছে। তৃতীয় দিনা ৰাতিপুৱা পুনৰ লঞ্চত উঠি লুচি তৰকাৰী, মিঠাই, ভজা মাছ খাই হেমিল্টন বাংলা আৰু গোছাবা নগৰখন পৰিভ্ৰমণ কৰি দুপৰীয়া বাহুমাছৰ কালিয়া আৰু মিছা মাছৰ জলা-মিঠা আঞ্জাৰে অন্তিম সাঁজ খাই গডখালিৰ ফেৰীঘাটত উঠিছিলো। হিসমৰেশৰ দূত আব্দুল সৰিনয়ে আমাৰ বাবে সেই ডাঙৰ বাছখন লৈ নিৰ্দিষ্ট স্থানত ৰৈ আছিল। প্ৰস্থানৰ মুহূৰ্তটো আমাৰ কাৰোৰেই কাঙ্ক্ষিত নাছিল যদিও আমাৰ সপোনৰ যাত্ৰাটো এনেদৰেই সফল হৈছিল।

সুন্দৰবনৰ ৪০ শতাংশ ভাৰতত আৰু ৬০ শতাংশ বাংলাদেশত অৱস্থিত ভাৰতস্থ সুন্দৰবন অঞ্চলটোত ৪৮টা দ্বীপ আছে। কুকুৰা ঠেংৰ আৰ্হিত সজ্জিত জলধাৰাৰ পথসমূহে দ্বীপসমূহক বিচ্ছেদিত কৰি ৰাখিছে। এই জলধাৰাসমূহক স্থানীয় ভাষাত খালি বোলা হয়। বঙ্গোপসাগৰত ২৪ ঘণ্টাত দুবাৰ জোৱাৰ আৰু ভাটা হয় যদিও খালসমূহত ইয়াৰ প্ৰভাৱ ৬ঘণ্টাৰ মুৰে মুৰে জোৱাৰ আৰু ভাটা দেখা যায়। সাগৰীয় চুনামীয়েও দ্বীপসমূহক সময়ে সময়ে আক্ৰান্ত কৰে। আমাৰ ভ্ৰমণকালত আমফান বতাহৰ ধ্বংসলীলাৰ অৱশেষসমূহ আমি দেখা পাইছিলো। সুন্দৰীগছৰ লগতে অন্যান্য মেংগ্ৰোভ জাতীয় উদ্ভিদৰ অৰণ্য আৰু জলধাৰাই ভিন্ন জীৱ-জন্তুৰ আবাসস্থল গঢ়ি তুলিছে। জলধাৰাসমূহ লৱনযুক্ত হোৱা কাৰণে দ্বীপবাসীয়ে মানুহ আৰু জীৱ-জন্তুৰ প্ৰয়োজনৰ বাবে প্ৰতিটো দ্বীপৰ কেন্দ্ৰস্থানত মিঠা পানীৰ পুখুৰী খান্দি লয়। ধান প্ৰধান খেতি। লগতে শাক-পাচলি আৰু মাছ পালন বিস্তৃত হাৰত উৎপাদন হয়। পশ্চিম বঙ্গৰ বনবিভাগে সুন্দৰবন পৰিচালনাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত গুৰু দায়িত্ব পালন কৰিছে। এই খাল সমূহেদি ভাৰত-

বাংলাদেশৰ নৌপৰিবহন চলি থাকে, বিশেষকৈ সামগ্ৰী কঢ়িওৱা জাহাজবোৰ। ৪৮টা দ্বীপৰ ভিতৰত ১৫ টা দ্বীপ মানৱ বসতিৰ বাবে মুকলি কৰা আছে। বাকী কেইটা দ্বীপ সংৰক্ষিত এলেকাৰ অধীনত। সৰু-বৰ দ্বীপসমূহৰ পৰিস্থিতিতান্ত্ৰিক বাতাবৰণ একে, কেৱল আকাৰহে ভিন্ন। তাৰ ভিতৰত পাখিৰালয় অন্যতম। পাখিৰালয়তেই ভিন্ন মানৱ ৰিজৰ্টসমূহ গঢ়ি উঠিছে। তাৰ যুৱক-যুৱতী, পুৰুষ-মহিলা সকলক চৰকাৰী আৰু বেচৰকাৰী ভাৱে প্ৰশিক্ষিত কৰি পৰ্যটন উদ্যোগটোৰ লগত জড়িত কৰোৱা হৈছে। সমৰেশহঁতৰ দৰে উচ্চশিক্ষিত যুৱকে পৰ্যটন পৰিচালনাৰ প্ৰশিক্ষণ লৈ উদ্যোগটোক আগুৱাই লৈ গৈছে। সুভম আৰু তাৰ চেমনীয়া দলটোক সমৰেশে আলহী সোধাৰ বা সেৱাৰ উপযুক্ত প্ৰশিক্ষণ দিছে। সমৰেশৰ নেতৃত্বত মহিলা ৰাফনীকেইজনীয়ে নিজ নিজ পৰিয়াল চোৱা-চিতা কৰাৰ উপৰিও আজৰি সময়খিনিত ৰন্ধন-প্ৰকৰণৰ শিক্ষা লৈ পৰ্যটকসকলক মনত থাকি যোৱাকৈ খাদ্য সন্তাৰ পৰিবেশন কৰিবলৈ শিকিছে। সমৰেশৰ অধীনত তেতিয়া ৩খন ৰিজৰ্ট আছিল। নিজৰ নহয়, কিন্তু মালিকপক্ষৰ লগত চুক্তিবদ্ধ কৰি ৰাখিছে। পৰ্যটকসকলৰ আগমনলৈ লক্ষ্য ৰাখি সমৰেশে আৰু দুখন ৰিজৰ্টৰ লগত ২০২৫ চনত চুক্তিবদ্ধ হবলৈ আগবাঢ়ি ছেফলত বিনিয়োগকাৰীসকলে ৰিজৰ্ট নিৰ্মানৰ বাবে সাহস পাইছে। ইয়াৰ বিপৰীতে, পৰ্যটকসকলেও প্ৰতিযোগিতামূলক খৰছতেই ৰিজৰ্টসমূহৰ সেৱা গ্ৰহণ কৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে। যিটো আমাৰ অসমত হৈ উঠা নাই। পাখিৰালয়ৰ বজাৰখনো পৰ্যটকসকলৰ বাবে আকৰ্ষণ হৈ পৰে প্ৰতিটো সন্ধিয়া। বিভিন্ন ধৰণৰ সৰু-বৰ স্মাৰক, গ্ৰাম্য শিল্পৰ সামগ্ৰী, থলুৱা খাদ্য, বস্ত্ৰ ইত্যাদিৰ বিপনীসমূহে পৰ্যটকসকলৰ চাহিদা পূৰণ কৰিছে। সমৰেশৰ পৰিচালনা কৌশল সম্পূৰ্ণ ডিজিটেল। দুচকীয়া বাহন এখনত দিন ৰাতি একাকাৰ কৰি পৰ্যটকসকলক সেৱা আগবঢ়াই থকা সমৰেশৰ ডাঙৰ ভৱিষ্যত পৰিকল্পনা আছে, যদিও কোনো কাৰণতে স্থানীয় কলা-সংস্কৃতি বিঘ্নিত নোহোৱাকৈ সামূহিক আৰু পৰিবেশ অনুকূল পৰ্যটন গঢ়াতহে সমৰেশ বদ্ধপৰিকৰ। সেয়েহে, নাতি দূৰৈৰ অন্য এটা দ্বীপৰ আদিবাসী চাওঁতালী লোকসকলকো নৃত্য-গীতৰ সুবিধা প্ৰদান কৰি জিৱীকা নিৰ্বাহৰ পথ মুকলি কৰাত প্ৰোৎসাহিত কৰিছে সমৰেশে। মিঠাই বনোৱা লোক, শিপিনী, পদপথৰ

চাহ-তামোল বিক্রেতা, মাছ পালক আৰু পশুধন পালকসকলো স্বতস্ফূৰ্ত ভাবে পৰ্যটক সকলৰ সেৱাত ব্ৰতী হৈছে। অৰ্থাত, এই অৰ্থনৈতিক কাম-কাজসমূহ পূৰণি যদিও পূৰ্বে উপযুক্ত পৰ্যটন আঁচনি নথকা হেতুকে সকলোৱে সমানে এই উদ্যোগটোৰ লগত জড়িত হ'ব পৰা নাছিল। কিন্তু আঁচনি আৰু পৰিচালনাৰ পৰিপক্বতাৰ বাবে পাৰ্থিবালয়ৰ টিপ চাকি জ্বলি থকা পৰিয়াল এটাৰ পৰা ধনী বিনিয়োগকাৰী সকলোলৈকে পৰ্যটন উদ্যোগটোৱে চানি ধৰিছে। সমবেশহঁত হ'ল উদ্যোগটোৰ মূল আহ্বায়ক।

আমি ভ্ৰমণ কৰা জল-পৰ্যটনৰ আৱৰ্তটো কেৱল মাত্ৰ ১২-ৰ পৰা ১৫ কিলোমিটাৰ ব্যাসাৰ্দ্ধযুক্ত। তাতেই দিনৌ প্ৰায় ৫০-খন মান ডাঙৰ লঞ্চে পৰ্যটকসকলক অনা-নিয়া কৰে। তেনে জল-আৱৰ্ত প্ৰায় ২০টা মান আছে কেৱল দক্ষিণ ২৪ পৰগণাতেই।

এতিয়া মূল প্ৰশ্নটো হল, সমবেশৰ দৰে সমকক্ষ যুৱক আমাৰ ইয়াতো জন্ম লাভকৰাৰ প্ৰচুৰ সম্ভাৱনা আছে। জলপথসমূহো আছে, বৈচিত্ৰপূৰ্ণ প্ৰাকৃতিক পৰিবেশো আছে, নদীপথৰ কাষত অভয়াৰণ্য-সংৰক্ষিত বনাঞ্চলো আছে, নদী-মাজুলীও আছে, বালিচৰো আছে। বৈচিত্ৰপূৰ্ণ সংস্কৃতিও আছে, খাদ্য-সম্ভাৰো আছে আৰু থলুৱা কিন্তু অসংগঠিত অৰ্থনীতিও আছে। উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে, ডিব্ৰুগড়-তিনিচুকীয়া-লক্ষীমপুৰৰ নৈ আৰু ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ লগত সংযুক্ত ডিব্ৰু-চৈখোৱা অভয়াৰণ্য, শিৱসাগৰ-যোৰহাট-মাজুলীৰ লগত সংযুক্ত বালিচৰ বা নদী-দ্বীপসমূহ, হাজো-পলাশবাৰী-ধাৰাপুৰ-দখলাৰ লগত সংযুক্ত বালিচৰ বা নদী-দ্বীপসমূহ, গোৱালপাৰা- বঙাইগাওঁ-ধুবুৰী-কোকৰাঝাৰৰ লগত সংযুক্ত বালিচৰ বা নদী-দ্বীপসমূহ একো একোটা জল-পৰ্যটন আৱৰ্তলৈ পৰ্যৱসিত হোৱাৰ প্ৰচুৰ সম্ভাৱনা আছে। দৰকাৰ কেৱল মাত্ৰ এক সংহত আৰু সকলোকে সামৰিব পৰা পৰ্যটন আঁচনি।



Section IX

Philosophy and Belief Systems

ভূত আৰু ভগৱান

ড° মেদিনী হাজৰীকা

ভূত আৰু ভগৱান দুটা অদৃশ্য শক্তি। এই দুয়োটা শক্তিৰ স্থিতি সম্পৰ্কে আমাৰ সকলোৰে মাজত আলোচনা হোৱাৰ উপৰিও তৰ্ক-বিতৰ্ক হয়। এই সম্পৰ্কত বিভিন্ন গৱেষণা অনুষ্ঠান চলি আহিছে। বিশেষকৈ History and National Geography নামৰ দুৰদৰ্শন চেনেলে কেইটাই বহুতো গৱেষণা মূলক (বিজ্ঞানভিত্তিক) তথ্যচিত্ৰ ধাৰাবাহিকৰূপে প্ৰচাৰ কৰি আহিছে। বহুক্ষেত্ৰত তেওঁলোকে ভূত আৰু ভগৱানৰ অৱস্থিতি সম্পৰ্কে তথ্য আৰু প্ৰমাণ দাঙি ধৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে। সেয়েহে ইয়াৰ লগত সংগতি ৰাখি ভূত আৰু ভগৱানৰ অৱস্থিতি সম্পৰ্কে ব্যক্তিগত অভিজ্ঞতাৰ পৰা লাভ কৰা কিছু কথা সমাজলৈ আগবঢ়োৱাৰ বাবে এই প্ৰবন্ধটো প্ৰস্তুত কৰা হৈছে।

প্ৰবন্ধটোৰ স্থল হ'ল যোৰহাট জিলাৰ মৰিয়নি স্থিত নগাজাংকা সোনবছা বছা বেহাৰী ৰাজহ গাঁও। নগাজাংকা দুটা শব্দৰ সমষ্টি নগা আৰু জাংকা। নগা হ'ল নাগালেণ্ডৰ নগা জাতি আৰু জাংকা মানে হ'ল প্ৰৱেশদ্বাৰ। অৰ্থাৎ নগাজাংকা মানে হ'ল নগাসকল ওলোৱা-সোমাৱা কৰা দুৱাৰ। সোনবছা বেহাৰীগাঁও হ'ল ভোগদৈ আৰু ইয়াৰ উপনদী জানখনাৰ পাৰত অৱস্থিত এখন ইতিহাস প্ৰসিদ্ধ গাঁও। এই গাঁওখনৰ বাসিন্দাসকলক আহোম ৰজাই সোণ কৰ্মাৰ বাবে স্থাপন কৰিছিল। সেই সূত্ৰে গাওঁখনৰ নাম সোনবছা বেহাৰী গাঁও নামে প্ৰসিদ্ধ হয়। ভোগদৈ নদীৰ পাৰত অৱস্থিত কেইবাটাও ঘাট যেনে - ৰঙাগড়া, তীখাং, কগাই বৰশী বোৱা ঘাট, নাগিনীমৰা, বৰপুং, সৰুপুং, বেউদৈ, চেংদৈ ইত্যাদি ঘাটসমূহত সেই সময়ৰ লোক সকলে সোণ আহৰণ কৰিছিল। সোনবছা গাঁওখন যোৰহাট জিলাৰ দক্ষিণে মৰিয়নি চহৰৰ পৰা ছয় কিলোমিটাৰ দক্ষিণে নগা পাহাৰৰ পাদস্থলিত অৱস্থিত। পূৰ্বতে গাঁওখনৰ মূল বৃত্তি আছিল সোণ আহৰণ আৰু কৃষি উৎপাদন। নগাজাংকা অঞ্চলটো মূলত পাঁচখন গাঁওৰ সমষ্টি। সোনবছা বেহাৰী গাঁও, কল্যাণপুৰ, নগাঁও, গড়মূৰ পাঞ্চোৱাল আৰু কাণখোৱা। ইয়াৰে

সোণবছা বেহাৰী গাঁওক মাতৃ গাঁও বোলা হয়। কাৰণ এই গাঁওৰ জনসংখ্যা বৃদ্ধিৰ ফলত এই গাঁওখনৰ পৰা কিছুমান পৰিয়াল আঁতৰি গৈ কাষৰে ওখ গাঁও সমূহত বসতি স্থাপন কৰিছিল। এই সমগ্ৰ অঞ্চলটো এসময়ত কমলা, কল, পাণ-তামোল, কঁঠাল, কুঁহিয়াৰ, মাটি কঁঠাল আৰু ধান উৎপাদনৰ বাবে বিখ্যাত আছিল। কিন্তু পৰিতাপৰ বিষয় যে বতৰ আৰু জলবায়ুৰ পৰিৱৰ্তন আৰু বান্দৰৰ বাবে ইয়াৰ লোকসকল বৰ্তমান চাহখেতিক প্ৰাধান্য দি আহিছে। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে, এই গাঁওৰ ইতিহাস অনুসৰি গাঁওখন পূৰ্বতে ভোগদৈ আৰু জানখনা নদীৰ সংগম স্থলীত অৱস্থিত আছিল আৰু এই ঠাইখনক বৰ্তমান বৰবাৰী নামে জনাজাত। দশ বছৰৰ পূৰ্বে এবাৰ এই গাঁওখনত অচিন বেমাৰত আক্ৰান্ত হৈ বহু লোক মৃত্যু মুখত পৰিছিল বুলি পূৰ্বপুৰুষসকলে কয়। সেই সময়তে এই ঠাইখনৰ পৰা বাকী থকা লোকসকলে বৰ্তমানৰ ঠাইলৈ গাঁওখন স্থানান্তৰিত কৰে। মানৰ আক্ৰমণৰ সময়ত শদিয়াৰ পৰা পলাই আহি অসমৰ বিভিন্ন ঠাইত অস্থায়ীভাৱে বাস কৰি বৰ্তমানৰ ঠাইত স্থায়ী ভাৱে বসতি স্থাপন কৰা বুলি পূৰ্বপুৰুষ সকলে কয়। তেখেতসকলৰ মতে বৰ্তমানৰ মৰিগাঁও জিলা অন্তৰ্গত বহা জাগী ভকত গাঁও পৰ্যন্ত তেখেতসকলে পলাই গৈছিল।

এই প্ৰবন্ধটোৰ মূল বিষয় হ'ল ভূত আৰু ভগৱান সম্পৰ্কত আমাৰ বিশ্বাস। অঞ্চলটোত এই সম্পৰ্কত বহুতো কাহিনী আছে। তাৰেই কেইটামান কাহিনী এই প্ৰবন্ধটো দাঙি ধৰাৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে। গাঁওখনত অৱস্থিত প্ৰধান স্থান কেইখন হ'ল - বৰতল, কালিস্থান আৰু দেওশাল। দেওশাল বিশেষভাৱে বিখ্যাত হোৱাৰ মূলতে হ'ল ইয়াত কছাৰীসকলে মানুহ বলি দিয়াৰ পৰম্পৰা প্ৰচলন। এই দেওশাল গাঁওখনৰ দক্ষিণে জানখনা নদীৰ উপনৈ বৰভগা জান আৰু জানখনাৰ সংগমস্থলীত অৱস্থিত আছিল। পাছলৈ ইয়াৰ লোকসকলে বিভিন্ন সত্ৰৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰভাৱিত হৈ পূজা-পাৰ্বন বাদ দি হৰিমন্দিৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰি সত্ৰৰ দ্বাৰা পৰিচালিত হয়। তাৰেই চিন স্বৰূপ হ'ল সোণবছা বেহাৰী গাঁওৰ হৰিমন্দিৰ। নামঘৰৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে এই হৰিমন্দিৰ শব্দটো ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা কাৰণ হ'ল ইয়াত মণিকুট নাই। মণিকুটৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে চাৰিখুটাৰ মাজত আসন প্ৰতিস্থা কৰি বাসুদেৱৰ মূৰ্তিক স্থাপন কৰা হৈছে। ভগৱানৰ অৱস্থিতি সম্পৰ্কীয় কেইবাটাও কাহিনী এই হৰিমন্দিৰ

লগত জড়িত। তাৰে মাত্ৰ দুটা কাহিনী ইয়াত উল্লেখ কৰাৰ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে। গাঁওখনত এটা পৰিয়াল আছে হেমধৰ চুতীয়াৰ পৰিয়াল। এই পৰিয়ালৰ পূৰ্বপুৰুষৰ লগত হৰিমন্দিৰৰ ডাঙৰীয়াৰ। সেয়ে বাৰ্ষিক বাৰ্তালাপৰ কাহিনীটো আছিল অতি বহুসংজনক। বছৰৰ ব'হাগ মাহৰ কোনো এটা নিৰ্দিষ্ট দিনত হেমধৰৰ চুতীয়াৰ বাসগৃহলৈ নামঘৰৰ ডাঙৰীয়াৰ আগমন ঘটিছিল। সেই নিৰ্দিষ্ট দিনটোত হেমধৰ চুতীয়াৰ পৰিয়ালে তেখেতসকলৰ ব্যক্তিগত হৰিমন্দিৰ ভাগ চাফ চিকুণ কৰি গাঁৱৰ লোকসকলক তেখেতসকলৰ ঘৰলৈ নিমন্ত্ৰণ জনাইছিল। যথাসময়ত চুতীয়াদেৱৰ হৰিমন্দিৰত ডাঙৰীয়াই আসন গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিলহি আৰু চুতীয়াদেৱে ডাঙৰীয়াক স-সন্মানে আসন গ্ৰহণ কৰোৱাৰ পাছত তেখেতৰ সৈতে বাৰ্তালাপ কৰিছিল। হৰিমন্দিৰৰ ডাঙৰীয়াৰ উপস্থিতি কেৱল চুতীয়াদেৱেহে উমান পাইছিল। কিন্তু দুজন ব্যক্তিৰ মাজত হোৱা বাৰ্তালাপৰ সাক্ষী আছিল উপস্থিত ৰাইজ। বাৰ্তালাপৰ বিষয়সমূহ আছিল এনেধৰণৰ। আগন্তুক বছৰটোও গাঁওখন কেনেধৰণৰ পৰিৱেশৰ সন্মুখীন হ'ব পাৰে, গাঁওখনৰ কৃষি কৰ্মৰ উৎপাদন সেইয়া কেনেধৰণৰ হ'ব, মাৰি-মৰক ইত্যাদি সম্পৰ্কীয় আলোচনা। তদুপৰি হৰিমন্দিৰ ডাঙৰীয়াৰ উপস্থিতি গাঁওখনৰ বহুতো পূৰ্ব পুৰুষে লাভ কৰিছিল বুলি জনপ্ৰবাদ আছে। তাৰ মাজৰ এজন ব্যক্তি আছিল মোৰ স্বৰ্গীয় দেউতা ভূবন চন্দ্ৰ হাজৰিকা। তেখেত পেছাত এজন ব্যৱসায়ী আছিল। সেই সূত্ৰে প্ৰায়ে ৰাতি তেখেতে ঘৰলৈ উভতি আহিছিল। এদিন এনেদৰে ঘৰলৈ উভতি আহোতে হৰিমন্দিৰৰ গেটত শুদ্ধ বগা কাপোৰ পৰিহিত আৰু মূৰত বগা কাপোৰৰ পাগুৰি মৰা এজন ব্যক্তিক দেখা পাইছিল আৰু তেখেতে বুজি পাইছিল যে, গভীৰ নিশা সেইয়া আন কোনো নাছিল সেয়া আছিল হৰিমন্দিৰৰ ডাঙৰীয়া। আমি দেউতাৰ হৰিমন্দিৰৰ প্ৰতি অগাধ ভক্তি আৰু বিশ্বাস দেখিবলৈ পাইছিলো। প্ৰতিটো বিপদতে তেখেতে হৰিমন্দিৰৰ ডাঙৰীয়াক সহায় বিচাৰি এটকা পঁচিশ পইচা আৰু একজোৰা তামোল পাণ, এগছি বস্তি আৰু ধূপ এখনি কলপাতত নামঘৰৰ ডাঙৰীয়ালৈ আগবঢ়াইছিল আৰু তাৰ ফল তেখেতে লাভ কৰা বুলি আমাক জনাইছিল। এবাৰ এটা সকামত নামঘৰত অৱস্থিত বাসুদেৱৰ কাঠৰ আসনখনলৈ চাই শুক শুকাই বান্ধিছিল। তেখেতে এই কথাই সকলোকে জনাইছিল যে আমাৰ হৰিমন্দিৰ ভাগৰ মহিমা

অপাৰ তোমালোকে অৱহেলা নকৰিবা। তাৰ বহু প্ৰমাণ বাইজৰ সন্মুখত তেখেতে দাঙি ধৰিছিল। সেয়েহে কৰ্মক্ষম হৈ থকাৰ শেষৰ সময়ছোৱাত তেখেতে হৰিমন্দিৰ বাবে বহু সময় ব্যয় কৰিছিল।

দ্বিতীয় কথাটো হ'ল ভূতৰ অৱস্থিতি। মোৰ গাঁওৰ দুজন বয়ো বৃদ্ধলোক আছিল স্বৰ্গীয় যদুমণি গগৈ যাক আমি ডডৌ বুলি সম্বোধন কৰিছিলো আৰু আন এজন ব্যক্তি হ'ল ধৰ্মেশ্বৰ হাজৰিকা। এই দুজন ব্যক্তিৰ মুখে ভূতৰ অৱস্থিতি সম্পৰ্কে অৱগত হৈছিলো। মোৰ দেউতাৰ বাবে ডডৌৱে সন্ধিয়া ফাৰ্মৰ পৰা আহি আমাৰ ঘৰত উপস্থিত হৈছিল আৰু আমাক বিভিন্ন সাধুকথা আৰু ভূতৰ কাহিনী শুনাইছিল। এবাৰ আমাৰ ঘৰত এটা ধৰ্মীয় অনুষ্ঠান হৈছিল। আমি যিহেতুকে একেটা খেলৰ সেয়েহে তেখেতসকল আমাৰ ঘৰলৈ আহিছিল। খেল শব্দৰ অৰ্থ হ'ল গাঁওখনৰ কেইঘৰমান মানুহ একেলগে সামাজিক ভাবে গোট স্থাপন কৰি ধৰ্মীয় কাম-কাজ সমূহ সম্পাদন কৰা। অনুষ্ঠানটোত বিভিন্ন আলোচনাৰ মাজত ভকতসকলৰ মাজত ভূত সম্পৰ্কেও আলোচনা হৈছিল। মই সৰুৰে পৰাই যেতিয়াৰ পৰা জনা হ'লো তেতিয়াৰ পৰাই দেউতাক অনুকৰণ কৰিছিলো। ধৰ্ম কৰ্মৰ প্ৰতি মোৰ অগাধ বিশ্বাস তেতিয়াৰে পৰাই আছে। সেয়েহে মোৰ বয়সৰ অন্যান্য সমনীয়াসকলৰ দৰে বাহিৰত খেল খেমালী নকৰি ভকতসকলৰ লগত বহি তেখেতসকলৰ আলোচনাসমূহ একান্ত মনে শুনিছিলো। এই ধৰণৰ আলোচনাৰ এটা বিষয় আছিল ভূত। আমাৰ গাঁৱৰ লোকসকলৰ ফাৰ্ম হাউচ (কৃষি পাম) আছিল বৰ্তমানৰ কল্যানপুৰ গাঁও। এই গাঁওখন পোৱালীজান নামেৰে এটা জানৰ পাৰত অৱস্থিত। দহ বিঘাকৈ মাটি গাঁৱৰ লোকসকলে ইয়াত লাভ কৰিছিল। এই কৃষি পাম সমূহৰ পৰা যেতিয়া ডডৌহঁতে সন্ধিয়া ঘৰলৈ ওভতাৰ বাবে প্ৰস্তুতি চলায় সেই সময়তে সৰু সৰু কেইবাটাও ল'ৰা-ছোৱালীয়ে তেওঁলোকক আগুচি ধৰা কথা তেওঁলোকে সমাজৰ আগত ব্যক্তি কৰিছিল। আৰু হঠাৎ অদৃশ্য হোৱাৰ কথা তেখেতসকলে ব্যক্ত কৰিছিল। তেখেতসকলৰ মুখৰ পৰাই আমাৰ অঞ্চলটোৰ এসময়ত বনমানুহ তথা চিম্পাঞ্জী উপস্থিতি সম্পৰ্কে গম পোৱা গৈছিল। চিকাৰলৈ যাওঁতে বনমানুহে বাট ভেটি ধৰা বুলি আৰু কেতিয়াবা বনমানুহ লগপোৱা বুলি জনাইছিল। অঞ্চলটোত

বনৰীয়া কুকুৰজাক যাক স্থানীয় লোক সকলে বাংকুকুৰ লগ পোৱা বুলি জনাইছিল। গাঁওখন যিহেতুকে পাহাৰ কাষত নদীৰ পাৰত অৱস্থিত আছিল। সেয়েহে স্বীকাৰ কাৰ্য আৰু মৎস্য আহৰণৰ লগত জড়িত বহুতো ভূতৰ কাহিনী শুনা পোৱা গৈছিল। তাৰ মাজৰ মাত্ৰ দুটা কাহিনী আছিল এনেধৰণৰ। এবাৰ গাঁৱৰ কেইজনমান লোক উমা, কনেকেশ্বৰ, ওচৰৰ পাণ্ডেগৱাল গাঁৱৰ টুপী দদাইদেউ চিকাৰলৈ গৈছিল। ৰাতি তেওঁলোক এজোপা বৰগছৰ তলত কটাইছিল। সন্ধিয়া তেওঁলোকে এটা হুগৰী পছ চিকাৰ কৰি ভাতপানী খাই উমা দদাইদেউক বৰগছ জোপাৰ ফেৰেঙনীত ৰাতিটো থাকিবলৈ দি বাকী দুজনে শৰপছ চিকাৰৰ বাবে ভোগদৈ নদীৰ পাৰত পছৰ পানী খোৱাৰ ঘাটত পছ জুপিবলৈ গৈছিল। তেতিয়াই ৰাতি উমা দদাইদেৱে শুনা পাইছিল যে, গছজোপাত কোনোৱাই তেখেতক উদ্দেশ্য কৰি কিবা কৈ আছে। ভালদৰে কাণপাতি তেখেতে শুনাত কোনোৱাই তেখেতক উদ্দেশ্য কৈছে— ইমান খক? ইমান খক? তেখেতৰ আৰু বুজিবলৈ বাকী নাথাকিল যে সেয়া আন কোনো নহয় বন দেৱতা অথবা ভূতহে। এই কথাবোৰৰ বিশ্বাসৰ স্থল আছে। কিয়নো ধৰ্মীয় অনুষ্ঠানত বিশেষকৈ ভকতসকলে কেতিয়াও মিছা কথা নকয়। কাৰণ সেই সময়ত ভকতসকলৰ শৰীৰত ঠ-ক-ত এই তিনিটা আখৰৰ মহিমা আছিল অতিকৈ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ। সকলো বিচাৰ আমঘৰত বাসুদেৱৰ সন্মুখত হৈছিল। বাসুদেৱৰ সন্মুখত মিছা কথা কোৱাৰ কোনোৱে সাহস নকৰিছিল। সেয়েহে ক'ব পাৰি যে, ভূত আৰু ভগৱানৰ অৱস্থিতি সম্পৰ্কে কোনো পৰিস্থিতিতে নুই কৰিব নোৱাৰি। যিহেতুকে বিভিন্ন গৱেষণাৰ স্তত ই প্ৰমাণিত হৈছে যে ইয়াৰ অৱস্থিতি আছে।



Fathers are the Sun and Mothers are the Moon

Kalyani N Dubey

In the intricate fabric of life, fathers and mothers play complementary yet distinct roles in shaping the emotional and psychological well-being of their children. The metaphor of fathers as the sun and mothers as the moon poetically captures their unique influences. The sun, symbolizing strength, warmth, and guidance, reflects the role of the father, who provides direction, security, and discipline. Meanwhile, the moon, representing gentleness, comfort, and emotional depth, mirrors the mother's nurturing, protective, and intuitive nature. This article explores the depth of these symbolic roles and their profound impact on a child's development.

The sun is often associated with energy, vitality, and unwavering presence. Similarly, a father embodies these attributes in his child's life. His influence is seen in several key aspects. Fathers traditionally assume the role of providers, ensuring the financial and material security of their families. Beyond tangible assets, they provide safety, guidance, and a sense of stability, much like how the sun's warmth fosters life on Earth. Fathers instil discipline and resilience. They often set boundaries, enforce rules, and teach responsibility. Their approach fosters independence, ambition, and perseverance in their children. Just as the sun brightens the day and dispels darkness, a father encourages his children to face life's challenges with courage and determination. His guidance helps them navigate the world with confidence.

The moon, with its gentle glow, represents comfort, love, and emotional intelligence. A mother embodies these traits, providing a crucial balance to the father's firm presence. Her impact is felt in several ways. Mothers are the primary source of love and emotional security for their children. From infancy through adulthood, they provide care, nourishment, and unconditional love, much like the moon's soft light soothing the night. A mother fosters emotional intelligence, empathy, and kindness. She teaches her children how to process feelings, develop compassion, and maintain strong interpersonal relationships. Like the moon's gravitational pull influencing tides, a mother's intuition helps her understand and respond to her child's unspoken needs. She provides comfort, reassurance, and a sense of belonging. A harmonious household requires both the sun and the moon. While the father's strength prepares children for the external world, the mother's warmth shapes their inner world. The ideal upbringing is a blend of discipline and love, structure and flexibility, ambition and emotional well-being. Just as day and night complete a full cycle, the presence of both parental figures creates a holistic and balanced environment for a child's growth.

In contemporary society, traditional gender roles are evolving. Fathers are becoming more emotionally involved in child-rearing, and mothers are taking on financial responsibilities. Regardless of these shifts, the fundamental essence of their roles remains unchanged. Whether in traditional, single-parent, or blended families, children thrive when they receive both the strength of the sun and the comfort of the moon. The metaphor of fathers as the sun and mothers as the moon beautifully encapsulates the complementary nature of their influences. Fathers provide guidance, discipline, and resilience, while mothers offer love, intuition, and emotional depth. Together, they create a balanced and nurturing environment essential for a child's development. Recognizing and valuing both roles ensures a brighter, more harmonious future for the next generation.

The Cosmic Influence in Astrology

Astrology has long connected celestial bodies with human traits and familial roles, with the Sun and Moon holding profound symbolic significance. The Sun embodies the father's presence—radiating authority, vitality, and identity—while the Moon mirrors the mother's essence, representing emotions, nurturing, and intuition. This cosmic analogy extends beyond mere symbolism, profoundly shaping an individual's personality, emotional well-being, and life path.

It is very interesting to explore the astrological significance of fathers as the Sun and mothers as the Moon, delving into their unique roles, impact, and the essential balance they create in shaping a child's destiny.

The Sun, a powerful force in astrology, governs self-expression, leadership, and life purpose. Its placement in a birth chart often signifies the father's influence, shaping a child's core identity. A father's role, much like the Sun, is multifaceted. The Sun represents selfhood and direction. Likewise, a father provides guidance, purpose, and a sense of identity, helping shape his child's ambitions and values. Just as the Sun's rays sustain life, a father instills resilience, confidence, and determination in his child, preparing them to navigate challenges with courage and perseverance. The Sun drives progress and self-actualization. Fathers, through their wisdom and encouragement, inspire their children to reach their full potential and strive for greatness.

In Vedic astrology, the Sun (Surya) is considered the primary significator of the father. It represents authority, discipline, self-esteem, vitality, and the soul. The Sun's placement in a birth chart indicates the father's role, influence, and relationship with the native.

The Sun is the main planet representing the father in a horo-

scope, especially in a male's chart. It signifies father's personality, status, health, and influence on the native's life.

A strong and well-placed Sun (in its own sign Leo, exalted in Aries, or in friendly houses) indicates a powerful, authoritative, and respected father whereas a weak or afflicted Sun (debilitated in Libra, in enemy signs, or with malefic aspects like Saturn, Rahu, or Ketu) may indicate an absent, strict, or weak father figure, health issues for the father, or strained relationships. 9th house is the natural house of the father. A strong Sun here indicates a righteous, disciplined, and guiding father. The Sun in 10th house signifies a father with a strong professional influence, often holding a position of authority whereas the Sun in 4th house may create conflicts with the father or lead to separation. Interestingly, the Sun in 12th House indicates the father's absence, health issues, or foreign connections.

Sun in Leo (Own Sign) reflects strong, powerful, and respectable father. Sun in Aries (Exalted) indicates a courageous and influential father with leadership qualities but Sun in Libra (Debilitated) confirms a weak or absent father figure, potential ego clashes. The Sun with Saturn shows strained relationship with the father, cold or distant interactions. The Sun with Rahu/Ketu may indicate separation or karmic challenges related to the father. The Sun with Jupiter shows a wise and spiritual father, strong moral values.

Chanting the Aditya Hridaya Stotra or Surya Mantras, offering water to the Sun (Surya Arghya) during sunrise, wearing a Ruby gemstone (only after consulting an astrologer) and respecting fatherly figures and following dharma (righteous living) are few tested remedies to make an afflicted Sun turning into powerful. The Sun in Vedic astrology is a key indicator of the father's role, status, and relationship with the native. A well-placed Sun brings support, guidance, and strong leadership qualities from the fa-

ther, while an afflicted Sun may indicate challenges, ego conflicts, or absence of paternal support.

The Moon governs emotions, intuition, and nurturing energy, reflecting the mother's profound influence on a child's emotional world and inner security. Key aspects of the Moon's role in astrology include.

The Moon oversees feelings, instincts, and subconscious patterns. A mother, like the Moon, provides warmth, emotional support, and unconditional love, forming the foundation of her child's psychological well-being.

Just as the Moon governs the tides, a mother's care shapes a child's emotional landscape, fostering empathy, sensitivity, and the ability to connect deeply with others. The Moon's phases influence moods and inner awareness. A mother's intuition enables her to understand her child's unspoken needs, offering wisdom and compassion in her guidance.

Astrology underscores the vital balance between the Sun and Moon. While the Sun (father) directs outward ambition and structure, the Moon (mother) nurtures emotional intelligence and inner harmony. A well-balanced upbringing integrates both influences, fostering holistic development.

In Indian astrology (Vedic astrology), the Moon (Chandra) is considered a crucial factor in determining one's emotions, mind, and maternal influences. The Moon represents the mother, nourishment, mental stability, and emotions, playing a significant role in shaping an individual's personality and life experiences. The Moon is the primary planet that represents the mother in a birth chart (JanmaKundali).

It signifies the nurturing, protective, and emotional bond between

the native and their mother. A strong and well-placed Moon (in exaltation, own sign, or benefice influence) indicates a loving, caring, and supportive mother. A debilitated or afflicted Moon (by malefic planets like Saturn, Rahu, or Ketu) can indicate difficulties in the relationship with the mother, emotional instability, or lack of proper maternal care. The 4th house in the birth chart is the natural house of the mother, ruled by the Moon. A strong Moon in this house signifies a nurturing and protective mother. The Moon in the 10th house can indicate that the mother plays an influential role in the person's career and social status. The Nakshatra (lunar constellation) in which the Moon is placed further refines the qualities of the mother. For example, Rohini Nakshatra often signifies a loving and devoted mother, while Ashlesha Nakshatra may indicate a mother with a more controlling or intense nature. If the Moon is weak, afflicted, or placed with malefic planets, it may lead to emotional distress, psychological issues, or a strained relationship with the mother. Remedies like Chandra mantra chanting, wearing pearls (Moti), and moon-related donations help in balancing the Moon's effects. In Vedic astrology, the Moon's placement in a birth chart profoundly affects not just a person's emotions and mind but also their relationship with their mother. A well-placed Moon indicates a strong maternal influence and emotional well-being, while an afflicted Moon can suggest challenges in these areas.

Astrological Perspectives on Parental Influence

The positioning of the Sun and Moon in a birth chart offers deep insights into parental relationships and personal growth. Sun Sign Influence reveals how the father's presence shapes confidence, ambition, and identity whereas moon Sign Influence reflects the emotional support, habits, and nurturing received from the mother. Sun-Moon Aspects harmonious Sun-Moon alignments indicate a balanced parental dynamic, while challenging aspects may suggest struggles or contrasting influences. In modern times, parenting roles have evolved, yet the fundamental essence of the Sun and Moon remains unchanged.

Whether in traditional, single-parent, or blended families, the interplay of paternal guidance and maternal nurturing continues to shape destinies.

The astrological correlation of fathers as the Sun and mothers as the Moon beautifully illustrates the dual forces that govern human life. Fathers instill strength, identity, and direction, much like the Sun's radiant energy, while mothers provide emotional security, intuition, and care, reflecting the Moon's gentle glow. By understanding and embracing these celestial influences, we gain deeper insight into parental roles and strengthen our connection to the cosmic order. Just as the Sun and Moon harmonize in the sky, their combined energies create well-rounded and thriving individuals.

The astrological correlation of the Sun with the father figure and the Moon with the mother figure are well-supported by historical texts, psychological frameworks, and empirical studies. Whether through ancient traditions, modern astrology, or psychological research, they remain central symbols of paternal influence. Understanding the Sun/Moon's placement in a birth chart can offer profound insights into one's identity, ambitions, emotion, serenity in parental relationships.



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Section X

Workplace and Well-being Studies

Does Workplace Spirituality lead to raising Well-being Among Healthcare Professionals : Examining the Role of Gratitude

Jyotsnali Chetia
Prof (Dr) Papor Baruah

Introduction :

Despite enjoying all the material comforts and luxuries of life offered by advancement of technology, today's people come across a sense of loss and a feeling of meaninglessness. This pervades all corners of life and thus affecting the overall wellbeing of the people. 21st Century employees demand something more beyond material benefits to nourish their whole self. They constantly search for a work environment where they find meaning to their life and nourishment of their mind, body and soul. Spirituality at work has been associated with many individual-level work outcomes. It is an extremely important driving force for the sustainable and healthy growth of any organization. Spirituality is a multifaceted concept and there is no universal definition of this construct. Workplace spirituality is defined as the recognition of an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of a community (Ashmos&Duchon,2000).In the organizational context, workplace spirituality is defined as a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connectedness to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy(Giacalone&

Jurkiewicz, 2003)

For the study, workplace spirituality (WS) is operationalised as a construct consisting of three dimensions. The inner life dimension means the presence of inner strength which aids individuals to carry out their activities at the workplace (Ashmos&Duchon,2000). The meaningful work dimension explains self-esteem, job involvement, intrinsic work satisfaction and affective commitment (Rego, et. al. 2007). A sense of community is the feeling of belonging to a community that is part of what increases the spirituality at work (Albuquerque et. al., 2014)

Gratitude (GRA) is an emotional state of mind in which one feels the appreciation of having received something due to someone's good intentions (Emmons&Crumpler,2000). Gratitude is a complex term and can manifest itself as an effect of emotion. The scope of this study is limited to gratitude as a disposition. Grateful disposition describes the tendency of people to respond with grateful emotions to the role of others in their positive experiences and achievements (Emmons&McCullough, 2003).Gratitude plays a crucial role in enhancing personal as well as social well-being (Bartlett& DeSteno, 2006).

Employee well-being (EW) is an important concern for organizations. It refers to the quality of employees' functioning and experiences in the workplace (Grant et.al., 2007). Employee well-being is a significant topic in organizational life and is one of the greatest challenges facing leaders today (Fry et al., 2008). Employee well-being can take various forms such as physical well-being, physiological well-being and social well-being. Employee well-being is important to organizations because it characterizes organizational health. A healthy organization is one characterized by intentional, systematic and collaborative efforts to maximise employee well-being and productivity by providing well-designed and meaningful jobs, a supportive social and orga-

nizational environment, and accessible as well as equitable opportunities for career and work-life enhancement. The characteristics of a healthy organization are to maximise employee well-being because it affects employee productivity.

In many previous studies spirituality has been found to be significantly and positively associated with grateful disposition because people with high levels of gratitude are more inclined towards spirituality. (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Mahipalan & Sheena, 2019). Further, the relationship between appreciation and spirituality is reciprocal. (Fagley & Adler, 2012). Gratitude as an element of appreciation could be seen as both an expression as well as the cause of spirituality. Gratitude can foster spirituality because spiritual people, experience more gratefulness in their lives than less spiritual people. A study among different age cohorts of adolescents, emerging adults, and other older adults revealed that personal spirituality was correlated with positive psychological traits including gratitude. (Fagley & Adler, 2012). Similarly, while examining the impact of spirituality on all forms of employee well-being and it shared a positive relationship with the emotional, social, psychological, and spiritual well-being of individuals. (Barton & Miller, 2015). It can significantly enhance individuals' feelings of well-being and satisfaction which emerged as a more valuable predictor for well-being than Big Five personality dimensions (Adler & Fagley, 2005; Wood et al., 2009). Individuals bearing a grateful outlook on life experience an escalated sense of physical and psychological well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Thus, from the above discussion, it can be confirmed that gratitude is a crucial element for enhancing physical and mental well-being.

The existing literature on workplace spirituality favourably linked spirituality to various work-related outcomes such as employee engagement, commitment, performance, job satisfaction etc. The growing literature in the field of spirituality at work can be at-

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tributed to the modern workplace environment. Modern employees face many challenges such as burnout, absenteeism, emotional exhaustion and stress-related issues that deteriorate their mental and psychical wellbeing. Workplace spirituality has been suggested to have an influence on employee well-being, but studies that linked workplace spirituality to employee well-being while incorporating intervening variables are not adequate. Many previous researches suggested examining empirically the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee well-being by incorporating mediating and moderating variables in non-profit organizational settings. Healthcare institutions are such a non-profit organizational setting where people demand holistic care from healthcare professionals who contribute to their health, involving patience, empathy and emotional bonding, in a holistic perspective as they are dealing with illness and suffering daily (Kashi & Ganesh, 2006). Health professionals consider that the difference between the healthcare professions to other professions is the authentic caring behaviour and the commitment to quality patient care (Bolton, 2000). Individuals having compassion toward other people, experiencing an inner consciousness in the pursuit of meaningful work is termed workplace spirituality (Petchsawang & Duchon, 2009). However, healthcare professionals often experience unique challenges in their work environment that can affect their job outcomes. Being one of the most sacred professions, healthcare professionals need to experience inner consciousness in pursuit of meaningful work to excel in their vantage care towards serving humanity. Workplace spirituality to a great extent can play a crucial role in creating such a healthcare workforce that can turn all the adversity experienced in their workplaces into positive feelings and step further to achieve a greater purpose for the benefit of society at large. In this context, the present study is an attempt to see how spirituality at work influences employee well-being among healthcare professionals in Assam a state in northeast India. Therefore, to assess the role of workplace spirituality and gratitude in enhancing

the well-being of healthcare professionals this study sets the following objectives.

The objectives of the study are

- a. To investigate the relationship between workplace spirituality and Employee Well being
- b. To find out the relationship between workplace spirituality and Gratitude
- c. To examine the role of gratitude in workplace spirituality Employee well-being relationship.

Research Hypotheses :

H1a: Workplace Spirituality is positively related to Employee Well-being.

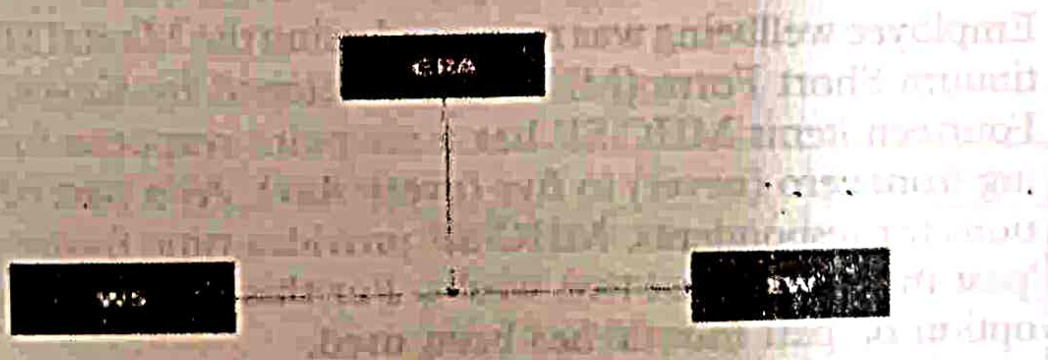
H1b: Workplace spirituality is positively related to gratitude

H2: Gratitude is positively related to Employee Well- Being

H3: Gratitude moderates the relationship between Workplace spirituality and Employee Well-being

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Figure 1: Model depicting the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee wellbeing with gratitude as a moderator.



MATERIALS & METHODS

Population and Sample

The target population of the study are healthcare professionals

consisting of doctors, nurses and employees from administration of healthcare institutions in Assam. The samples were selected on the basis of the convenience sampling technique. The researcher had personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents at their working premises. The data were collected from 358 respondents.

Measures

To measure the workplace spirituality construct three dimensions of workplace spirituality- inner life, meaningful work and sense of community are adopted from Ashmos & Duchon, 2003 and a 21-item scale has been used to collect the data. All the items were marked on a seven-point scale in which seven represent 'strongly agree', and one represents 'strongly disagree'. Represented by these three dimensions of workplace spirituality was analysed as a single variable in this study.

Gratitude was conceptualized and measured using the seven-item gratitude questionnaire developed by McCullough et al. 2002. All items were measured on a seven-point scale with one indicating 'strong disagreement' and seven indicating 'strong agreement'.

Employee wellbeing was measured using the Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF) developed by Keyes, 2009[20]. Fourteen items MHC-SF has a six-point response format ranging from zero (never) to five (every day). As a part of the directions for respondents, MHC-SF provides time frame options of 'past month' or 'past two weeks'. For this study, the time frame option of 'past month' has been used.

Data analysis tools

Based on Partial Least Squares (PLS), SEM has been chosen for data analysis. In recent times PLS-SEM has been gaining popularity among researchers in the field of social sciences due to its

flexibility with smaller sample size and softer distributional assumptions (Chin, 2010) WarpPLS 8.0 was the software tool used for PLS-SEM (Kock, 2017). WarpPLS is innovative PLS-based software for SEM, and it has some additional advantages over any other PLS software. For instance, WarpPLS assumes the data to be non-normal as well as non-linear and auto-corrects the coefficients accordingly. The analysis in PLS-SEM follows a two-step approach wherein the first step is the assessment of the outer model by establishing reliability and validity, which is followed by validation of the structural model through hypotheses testing (Hair et.al, 2014).

Results and Discussion :

Demographic profile of the respondents

The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in Table-1. Among the samples, 43.3 % are male employees and 56.7% are female. With regards to education, 45% are graduate, 48.3 % are post-graduate. 26.7% of employees have less than 5 years of working experience and 73.3% have more than 5 years of working experience. Among the employees 8.3% are below 25 years of age, 55% are 25-35 years of age, 33.3% are 35-45 years of age and 3.33% are above 45 years of age.

Table1: Characteristics of Sample (N=358)

Sl No	Demographic Variables	percentage	
1	Age	Below 25 yrs	8.3
		25-35 years	55
		35-45 years	33.3
		Above 45 years	3.33
2	Gender	Male	48.3
		Female	56.7
3	Education	Graduate	45
		Post graduate	48.3

4	Years of experience	Less than 5 years	26.7
		More than 5 years	73.3

Reliability and validity test

Table 1 shows the correlation coefficients, reliability scores and square root of Average Variance Extractions. One of the standard measures of reliability is Cronbach's Alpha value which is acceptable if equalling 0.70 and above (Nunnally, 1978). A Composite reliability score is also used to assess reliability in PLS-SEM, and the value is interpreted similarly to the Alpha value. Validity includes the establishment of convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is present when the factor loadings and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) are above 0.5 (Chin, 2010). Discriminant validity is assessed using the (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) criterion. Accordingly, the square root of the AVE of every construct should be higher than the inter-construct correlations. The following table reports the correlation coefficients, reliability scores, and the square root of AVE for all the latent constructs.

Table 1: Correlation Coefficients, Reliability Scores and Square root of AVEs

Construct	CR	Alpha	WS	Gratitude	EW	WS*Gratitude
WS	0.93	0.89	(0.831)			
Gratitude	0.88	0.83	0.63***	(0.763)		
EW	0.89	0.87	0.67***	0.51***	(0.811)	
WS*Gratitude	0.85	0.79	0.29**	0.17**	0.25**	(0.724)

Note: WS-workplace spirituality, EW-employee well-being
 ***p>0.001, **p>0.01. The figures in the parentheses indicates the square root of AVEs

The reliability scores for all three latent variables were satisfactory. As far as validity is concerned, factor loadings for all the

constructs were above the threshold of 0.5, and cross loadings were minimal. Further, AVE values were also 0.5 and higher than the inter-construct correlations. Thus, reliability and validity of all the variables were established and thereby validating the outer model. A multicollinearity test was also conducted by the software to ensure that there was no overlapping of the variables. All the VIF scores were below the threshold level of 3.3, which is the norm in PLS-SEM (Kock, 2017).

Results of moderation analysis

Following the assessment of the outer model, the inner model was evaluated. The inner model represented the hypothesised relationship between the constructs. In PLS-SEM, path coefficients, R square values and effect sizes were reported for the inner model. Figure 2 shows the structural model after analysis.

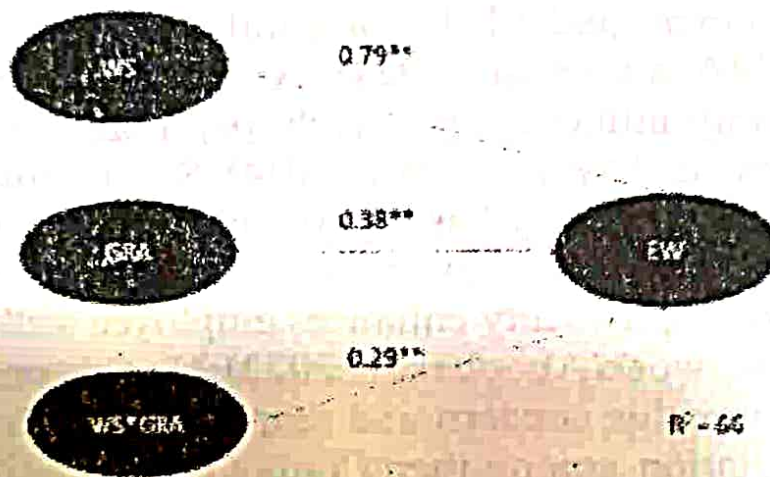


Figure 2: Results of the Moderated Model

Note : WS-workplace spirituality, EW-employee wellbeing, GRA- Gratitude, WPS*GRA-The interaction term which is a product of WS and GRA. **p<0.01

Figure-2 shows the structural model after data analysis. The path coefficients along with effect sizes are reported in Table 2. This clearly shows that workplace spirituality has a significant positive influence on the well-being of healthcare professionals.

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Table 2 : Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Path Coefficients	Effect Size	Conclusion
WPS ? EW	0.79**	0.59 Large	Supported
WPS ? GRA	0.53**	0.28 Medium	Supported
GRA ? EW	0.38**	0.24 Medium	Supported
WPS*GRA? EW	0.29**	0.15Medium	Supported

**p<0.01

That means that healthcare professionals, who experience spirituality are experience more gratefulness in their lives and being happy throughout their life. Research claimed workplace spirituality as a panacea for waning well-being(Srivastava&Gupta, 2022). A study using 214 hospital staff of a hospital in Indonesia reports that WPS had a significant positive effect on employee engagement and EE has a significant positive effect on mental health(Astuti et. al., 2024). Another study found workplace spirituality influences positively psychological well-being through self-esteem[Awan&Sitwat, 2014]. Similar study reported that workplace spirituality has a positive relationship with emotional, psychological, social and spiritual well-being(Pawar, 2016). Also, workplace spirituality enhances employee well-being even during remote work(Aboobaker, 2022). Moreover, workplace spirituality, empathic concern and employee well-being carry a positive association among them(Yadav et.al., 2022).

Workplace spirituality has a significant positive impact on gratitude. Individuals who experience spirituality may express gratitude and appreciation and thus increase positive attitudes and serve as a coping mechanism towards adversity. There exists a positive association between gratitude disposition and employee well-being. Many previous studies have shown the influence of gratitude on various positive outcomes. Expressing gratitude and appreciation is one of the various interventions offered by positive psychology to increase happiness and well-being (Rash et.al.,

2011). Gratitude is one of the most powerful and beneficial character strengths that generate a variety of psychological benefits, including greater life satisfaction, flourishing, optimism, positive emotional style, personal accomplishment, self-esteem as well as reduced occupational stress. Apart from these, gratitude has some physical benefits too. These include improved sleep quality, blood pressure, heart rate and increased psychological coherence (Jackowska et. al., 2016; Lyubomirsky et. al., 2005). Gratitude enhances the enjoyment of positive experiences and serves as a coping mechanism, enabling individuals to view adversity positively and develop resilience (Lyubomirsky et. al., 2005).

In addition, gratitude drives employees to experience overall life satisfaction. Further, the interaction variable shows a significant impact on employee well-being indicates gratitude as a moderating variable in the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee well-being of healthcare professionals. The significant interactive relationship between gratitude between workplace spirituality and employee well-being is supported by the findings of the study. Gratitude generates an atmosphere where individuals feel more satisfied. The results of the study, hence confirmed the moderating role of gratitude between workplace spirituality and employee wellbeing. In the presence of gratitude, spiritual practices enable people to realize their own self-actualization needs. Workplace spirituality promotes an enabling culture for employees by creating an integrated and harmonious life by enhancing employee well-being by fulfilling all types of well-being.

For interpreting effect sizes, Cohen's 'f²' is used. It is an effect size used to indicate the standardized difference between two means where $f^2 > 0.02$ be considered a 'small' effect size, $f^2 > 0.15$ represents a 'medium' effect size and $f^2 > 0.35$ a 'large' effect size (Cohen, 1988). In this study, workplace spirituality was

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found to be positively correlated with both gratitude and employee well-being. Gratitude was also positively related to employee well-being. Additionally, the interaction effect of spirituality and gratitude had a considerable influence on the relationship between workplace spirituality and employee wellbeing. The R-squared coefficient for the current model was 0.66, which indicates that the model including the moderating effect explains 66 percent of the variance in employee well-being. To estimate the changes in R squared due to the moderator, a direct model was run initially, and the R squared of which was 0.58. Thus, gratitude explained a unique variance of 8 percent in employee well-being. Also, the positive sign of the path coefficient for the interaction term indicates that gratitude strengthens the relationship between spirituality and happiness.

The objective of this study was to explore the possible paths between workplace spirituality, employee well-being, and gratitude. The results of the analysis support the stated hypotheses confirming the relationships among the constructs. All the path coefficients were significant, which led to a logical conclusion that significant linkages do exist between spirituality, gratitude and employee well-being. These findings are in line with the limited but insightful findings of the past studies although in different contexts.

Conclusion :

The results of this study provided support for all the hypotheses. These findings make a significant contribution to facilitating organizational health and to the existing literature on employee well-being and workplace spirituality. Employee well-being is an important aspect of a healthy organization. It also constitutes an important determinant of organizational flourishing (Illies et.al., 2015). Hence employee well-being is a con-

cern for organizations which is one of the greatest challenges faced by contemporary leaders (Fry et. al., 2008). Workplace spirituality is a workplace feature that can enhance multiple forms of employee well-being without impairing any other form of employee well-being (Pawar, 2016). The employees could experience long-term happiness if filled with a sense of meaning while doing a job. When employees having inner strength develop interactions with others and experience a sense of community, they might fulfill their need for socialising which in turn is pivotal for their well-being [Davidson&Cotter, 1991). This study also attempted to study gratitude disposition as an intervening variable between workplace spirituality and employee well-being relationship. After analysing the effect of gratitude disposition, it can be concluded that gratitude strengthens the relationship between spirituality and well-being. In other words, spirituality- well-being linkage is stronger for those employees who feel more gratitude than others.

The study holds many implications for the healthcare sector of the state as a whole. The healthcare sector of Assam is confronted with many challenges such as inadequate infrastructure facilities, paucity of funds, and shortage of human resource causing severe impediments to the progress of the healthcare sector in the state. These effects coupled with prolific work schedules leave them disenchanted and dispirited at work. Despite all the hardships faced at the workplace, healthcare professionals display a sense of spirituality towards serving humanity. Therefore, it can be suggested that apart from addressing the external factors, one way to tackle this negativity is to create a workplace enriched with spirituality for enhancing employee wellbeing in the healthcare sector.

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Jyotsnali Chetia is an Assistant Professor and Head in the department of Economics at Sibsagar Girls' College.

Dr. Papor Baruah is a Professor in the Department of Business Administration, Tezpur University, Assam



Know our Contributors

Dr. Protim Sharma is the Principal of Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, and former Head of the Department of English at Dikhowmukh College, Sivasagar. He holds a Ph.D. in Organizational Studies from Dibrugarh University and Post Graduate Diplomas in Teaching English (EFLU) and Journalism & Mass Communication (APA). He is an editor, reviewer, translator, language consultant, and communication trainer. He is also an approved language specialist of Aviation English for the Airports Authority of India. His research interests include language and culture, organizational communication, media studies, identity, migration, and ethnicity. He has participated in many conferences and academic seminars, including one at the Centre for South Asian Studies at the University of Edinburgh, UK, where he was invited to deliver a 90-minute talk. Dr. Sharma has been published in various books, journals, and newspapers and has been a columnist with The Assam Tribune since 1997.

Dr. Lalita Bisen is working as an Assistant Professor at G H Rasoni College of Engineering & Management, Nagpur, Maharashtra. She has more than 18 years of experience. She has handled portfolios such as Dean First Year, Women's Cell Chairperson, Officer In charge for Nagpur University Exams, and subject expert of the Board of Studies of TGPCET Nagpur. She has co-authored a textbook titled 'Communication Skills' and published several book chapters and research papers. Her articles have been published in the newspaper Hitavada. She has translated an NPTEL Course and has completed NPTEL courses 'Soft Skills' and 'Speaking Effectively' with gold and silver certifications, respectively. She is associated with the Airports Authority of India as a 'Language Specialist' at AELTO/ TSP-NIATAM.

Prof (Dr.) Papori Baruah is a Professor in the Department of Business Administration, School of Management Sciences, Tezpur University, Assam

Deepjoonalee Bhuyan is the Head of the history department at Sibsagar Girls' College and the Coordinator of the IQAC. She has more than thirty years of teaching experience.

Dr. Kritanjali Konwar is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Sibsagar Girls' College, Assam. She has 22 years of teaching experience and is interested in American Literature, Gender Studies, and ELT. She has presented several seminar papers at the International and national levels.

Shiva Prasad Mili is the Head of the Department of English at Sibsagar Girls' College under Dibrugarh University. Besides his academic publications in National and International journals and different edited books, His notable publications include "Beliefs Across the River: Chronicles of the Mising Villages," "Run: Drive for Movement and Purpose," "Grammar Made Easy: Fluency Fix for English Learners," "Essential Introduction to English Poetry: A Guide to GEC Students," and "30 Must-Know Keys to Mastering Spoken English." He has also edited "English Language Teaching: North East Perspective." These works are available on platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, Goodreads, and Notion Press in eBook and paperback formats. In addition to his literary achievements, Mili serves as the secretary cum convener of the English Language Teachers' Association of India, Upper Assam Chapter. She has trained over 1000 teachers and students in English proficiency and spoken English. His contributions have significantly enriched the educational landscape, particularly in English language teaching in Northeast India.

Kalyani Naveen Dubey, an Assistant Professor at G H Raisoni College of Engineering & Management, Nagpur, Maharashtra,

is an academician specializing in English Literature specializing in American and British writing. She holds an MA in English Literature, an MBA in HR and Marketing, and a B.Ed. Degree. Currently pursuing her Ph.D. on "Portrayal of Women, Violence and Nature's Dynamics of North-East in the Works of Mitra Phukan," she has contributed several book chapters and published research papers in international and national journals. Her teaching expertise lies in English Grammar, Indian and American Literature. Her professional experience includes teaching at prestigious institutions like Central Schools, Navodaya Vidyalaya, DAV Schools, and degree colleges.

Dr. Jayadeb Sahoo is an Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of English at Maa Manikeshwari University, Bhawanipatna, with twenty-seven years of teaching experience. He has published more than twelve research articles in peer-reviewed journals and edited books. His research areas are Linguistics and ELT, Dalit Studies, Feminism, and eco-criticism. He is also a columnist for Odia dailies and a dramatist. He has presented over fifteen papers at national and international seminars and conferences.

Dr. Sanjay Pandit Kamble has been working as an English language and literature Associate Professor since 2006 at Yashwantrao Chavan (KMC) College, Kolhapur. His fourteen papers are published in International National Journals. His four books have been published. He has been working as an IQAC/NAAC coordinator for the last nine years. He worked as an NSS Programme Officer. He is a member of SUETA Shivaji University English Teachers Association and ELTAI. He worked as a member of the Lion's Club of Kolhapur. He has been awarded many awards from social organizations.

Dr. Bhagyshri Malikarjun has been working as an Assistant Professor of Sociology since 2010 at Yashwantrao Chavan

(KMC) College, Kolhapur. Her fifteen papers are published in International National Journals. She has worked as Coordinator of the Women Empowerment Cell and ICC for the last fourteen years. She worked as an Executive Member of the Marathi Samaj Shatra Parishad. She is a lifetimemember of the Indian Sociological Society. Member of Board of Studies in Sociology, Shivaji University, Kolhapur.

Amarendra Mohanty is a research scholar in the Department of English, Maa Manikeshwari University, Bhawanipatna. He has completed his post-graduation studies at the Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. His areas of interest include Indian English literature, ELT, and Tribal Literature. He has presented three seminar papers at in International Conference and one at the National Seminar.

Dr. Madine Hazarika is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at Sibsagar Girls' College. She completed her Ph.D. from Gauhati University in 2021, specializing in Planning, Development, and LULC Change. With 20 publications, including 5 Scopus and CARE listed works, he has organized various academic programs and currently serves as Vice President of NEIGS. His 28-year teaching career spans multiple institutions, starting from Mariani College and culminating in his present position at Sibsagar Girls' College in 2009.

Nibedita Baruah is the Head of the Department of Botany at Sibsagar Girls' College. She has more than 28 years of teaching experience in the department. Phone No.: 9101491396 Email ID: nibeditabaruwati21@gmail.com

Abhijit Borpuzari is the Librarian at Sibsagar Girls' College. He has 18 years of experience. He is a Life Member of the Indian Library Association (LISPA) and is now General Secretary of the Library and Information Science Professional Association.

He is also a member of Assam college Librarians' Association (ACLA) E-Mail: abhijitborpuzari@gmail.com Mobile No.: 9678427051

Kaushik Bhuyan is an Assistant Professor of English at Dibrugarh University.

Gayatri Mohan is an Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Physics at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam. **Mayashree Das** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Zakir Hussain is an Assistant Professor and former Head of the Department of Zoology at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Probin Sarmah is an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam. He is a Historian and a public speaker.

Pranjal Pankaj Baruah is an Assistant Professor and former Head of the Department of Physics at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Sanjay Das is an Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Geography at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Chitrlekha Gogoi is an Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Zoology at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Dr. Santana Duwareh Handique is an Assistant Professor in the department of Assamese at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Dr. Kakoli Sonowal is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Assamese at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Barnali Lahakar is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Education at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Jyotsnali Chetia is an Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Economics at Sibsagar Girls' College in Sivasagar, Assam.

Mayashri Das is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Sibsagar Girls' College in Sivasagar, Assam.

Plavan Bhuyan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at T.H.B College, Jamugurihat, Assam

Pooja Bhuyan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

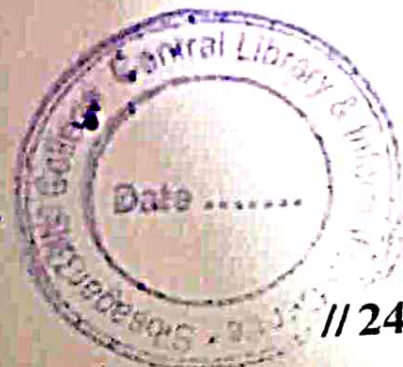
Kakoli Baruah is an Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Priyakshi Borgohain is an Assistant Professor (contractual) in the Department of Botany at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.

Sanskrita Krishnatreya is an Assistant Professor (Contractual) in the Department of Physics at Sibsagar Girls' College, Sivasagar, Assam.



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About the Editors

Shiva Prasad Mili is the Head of the Department of English at Sibsagar Girls' College, Assam. He is also an author and an English language trainer.

Dr Madine Hazarika is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at Sibsagar Girls' College, Assam..

Nibedita Baruah is the Head of the Department of Botany at Sibsagar Girls' College, Assam.



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