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Certificate of Presentation

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Shilpita Gine, Doctoral Fellow (UGC-SRF), Dept of Sociology, Pondicherry University, Puducherry for Presenting a paper entitled “Global Pandemic and Social Exclusion” in the International Online Conference on “COVID-19: Emergence and Resurgence of Communicable Diseases from Social Sciences Perspectives”, held during 21-22 July 2020, organized by the School of Social Sciences & Humanities, University of Science & Technology, Meghalaya, India in collaboration with the RC-12 of Indian Sociological Society; Dept of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT-Guwahati; Dept of Anthropology, University of Delhi; FLAIR-Delhi & TRIBAC-Agartala.

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Dt.26.11.2021

File No: 08-05/2021/Seminar/75 Special Lectures

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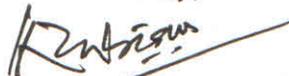
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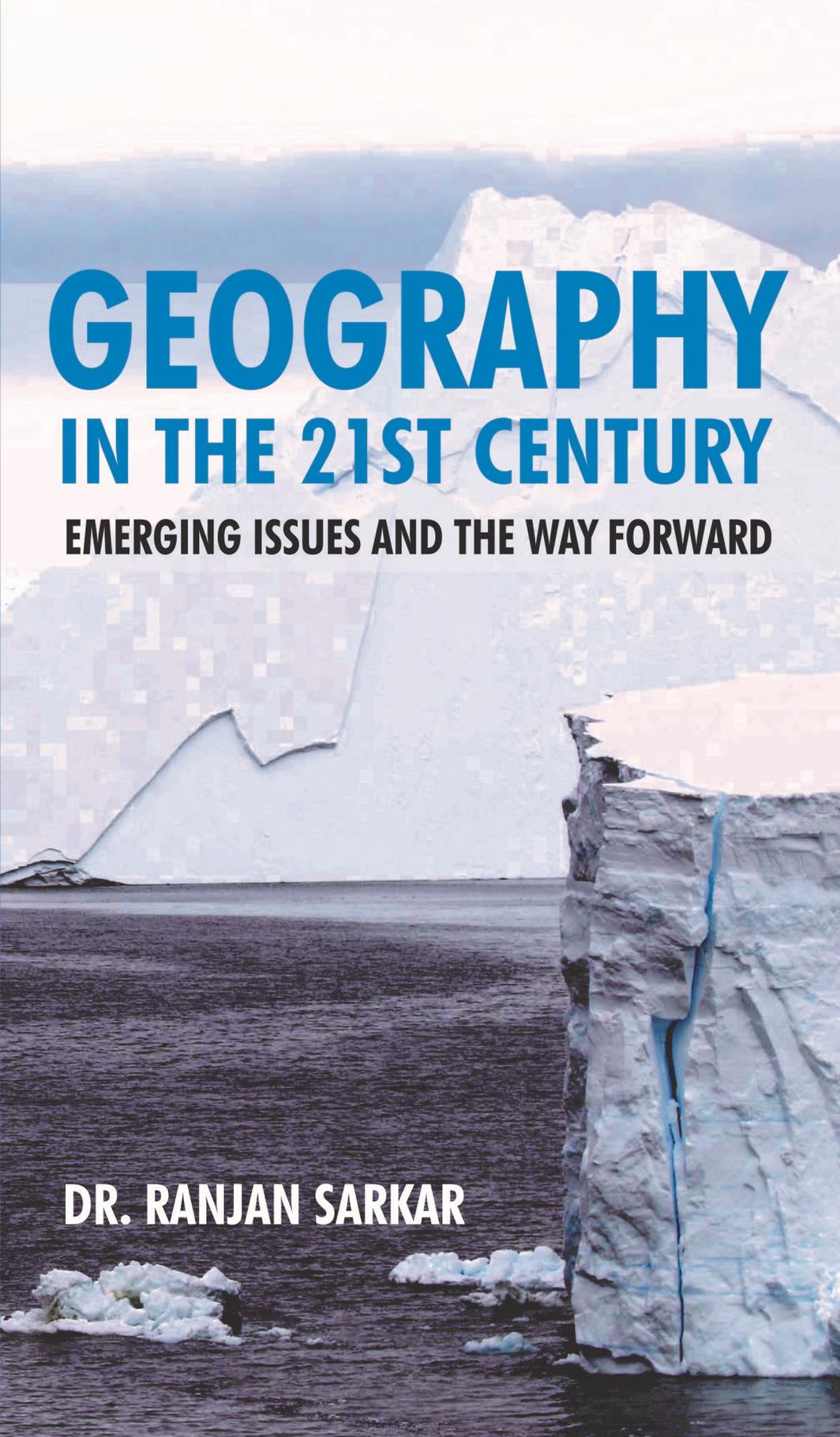
Under this programme, I am delighted to invite you to deliver a lecture on **28.12.2021 at 03:30 p.m via online mode through Google meet**. We earnestly hope that you would kindly accept our invitation. Looking forward to receive a positive response from your end at earliest possible.

It is a humble request to you to please provide your research paper/ manuscript/ etc. for the above said programme (Format of research paper enclosed).

Warm regards,

Yours Sincerely,


(Kumar Ratnam)
Member Secretary

A large, jagged iceberg floats in the dark blue ocean. In the foreground, a smaller, rectangular piece of ice with a vertical crack is visible. The background shows a hazy horizon under a pale sky.

GEOGRAPHY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

EMERGING ISSUES AND THE WAY FORWARD

DR. RANJAN SARKAR

Geography in the 21st Century

Emerging Issues and the Way Forward

Editor

Dr. Ranjan Sarkar

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Dr. Ranjan Sarkar, M.A. (Geography-Gold Medalist), B.Ed., M.Ed., NET, Ph.D. (Geography), is an eminent academician. He has completed his M.A. Degree in Geography & Applied Geography from the University of North Bengal, Siliguri, West Bengal, India, in the Year 2003 and secured 1st Class 1st Position. He has Successfully qualified University Grants Commission (UGC)-NET in June,2004. He also obtained B.Ed. and M.Ed. degrees. He has been awarded Ph.D. Degree in Geography & Applied Geography from the University of North Bengal. He is the recipient of North Bengal University Gold Medal in Geography-2003, Bidhu Ranjan Adhikary Memorial Trust Award-2003, Dr. S.B.Chatterjee Memorial Trust Award-2002, National Talent Search Award-1995. Since 2006, he has been working in the post of Assistant Professor in Geography (Senior Scale) of Ananda Chandra Training College, (Through The West Bengal College Service Commission), Jalpaiguri, West Bengal, India. Before that he had served as an Assistant Teacher in Geography for H.S. Section in Kushkari K.B.B.S. High School (H.S.), Kushkari, Dakshin Dinajpur, West Bengal (Through The West Bengal Central School Service Commission). He has been acted as Nominated Member, Governing Body of various Colleges, Selection Committees, NAAC Coordinator, Academic Counsellor-Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU) & Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), DIET Subject expert and so on. He has participated more than 110 Regional, National and International Seminars, Workshops, Conferences, Webinars and UGC-HRDC courses actively and Chaired numerous Technical Sessions/Occasions. He has also contributed more than 20 research papers in UGC Approved/Enlisted/CARE National, and International Journals of Repute and edited volumes with ISBN.He has Edited and Published Eight Books with Separate ISBN as Hard Back and E-Book on 'Socio-Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability: The Indian Perspective', 'Geography in the 21st Century: Emerging Issues and The Way Forward', 'Environmental Sustainability in the 21st Century: Emerging Issues and The Way Forward' and 'Education in the 21st Century: Emerging Issues and The Way Forward'.His research areas of interest are Socio-Economic Development, Population Studies, Environmental Sustainability, Technology in Education and Teaching, Modern Trends in Education, Digital Learning and Teaching, Pedagogy of Teaching, ICT. etc. He is an Effective Teacher, Academic Writer, Motivational Speaker, Academic Counselor and Expert Consultant in Educational Supervision and Administration.



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Status of Rural Women in Agricultural Society: A Case Study on Purba Banasgaon Kismat Village of Phansidewa Block of Darjeeling District, West Bengal, India

*Biswajit Das¹, Goutam Mandal²,
Lamhu Dolma Tamang³ & Shantanu Paul⁴*

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²M.A. in Geography & Applied Geography, Department of Geography & Applied Geography,
University of North Bengal, Siliguri, West Bengal, India

Abstract

India is a developing country. In most of the developing countries agriculture is one of the main occupations, the Indian the scenario is more or less similar. As per the FAO report 2017-2018 agriculture and is allied source is the largest source of livelihood in India. In India about 70 percent of rural population is still depended on the agriculture among them a large number of populations is women. About 82 percent of the farmers are small or marginal farmer although India is the largest producer of Milk, Jute, pulses in the world and 2nd largest producer of rice, wheat, sugarcane, cotton and groundnuts. According to 68th round of National Sample Survey in 2013 indicate that in rural area 59 per cent men and 75 per cent women are engaged

¹Corresponding Author



Hindol Chakraborty is a musician, traveler, teacher, and observer. He has done his M. A. in English literature and had been associated with a number of premier institutes as a lecturer of English. Hindol's Ph. D. thesis is on Longinus's concept of the Sublime. His areas of interest include Metaphysical Poetry, Classical Criticism, and Postcolonial Discourse. Hindol is currently attached as an Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Salesian College, Siliguri.

“ Why must I cling to the customs and practices of a particular country forever, just because I happened to be born there? What does it matter if its distinctiveness is lost? Need we be so attached to it? That's the harm if everyone on earth shares the same thoughts and feelings, if they stand under a single banner of laws and regulations? What if we can't be recognized as Indians anymore? Where's the harm in that? No one can object if we declare ourselves to be citizens of the world. Is that any less glorious? ”

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Pritha Das (Chakraborty) is a dancer, scholar, research fellow, and explorer. Completing her graduation from Presidency College, Pritha did her M. A. from the University of Calcutta. Her M. Phil. is on Bengali Science Fiction, and currently Pritha is pursuing her doctoral degree from the University of Calcutta. Her areas of interest are Rabindra Sahitya, Katha Sahitya, Science Fiction, Modern Literature. As a dancer, Pritha specializes on Kathak, Rabindra Nritya, and Contemporary Dance.

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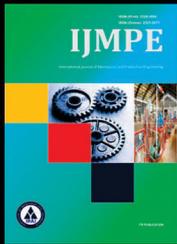
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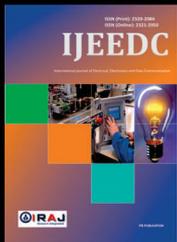
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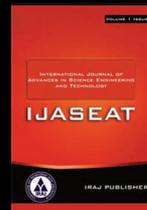
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PRESENCE OF THE 'SUBLIME' IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY OPERA: A LONGINIAN PERSPECTIVE WITH GRANDEUR, ATTEMPTED AND FAILED

HINDOL CHAKRABORTY

Ph. D. Scholar, Jharkhand Rai University, Ranchi, India
E-mail: hindolonline786@gmail.com

Abstract - (Longinus's *On the Sublime* is a treatise on style, a doctrine on the effects of writing and oratory. Longinus, in this phenomenal work, advocated proudly that sublimity is a quality that cannot be earned by everyone, only special artists can bring sublime effects in their products of art. He established that there was a technique of creating sublime effect. According to him, bold thinking capacity, enormous passion, elevated figures of speech, proper diction, and capacity to create a colourful composition are five elements for creating sublimity when they are amalgamated perfectly. Later, thinkers and critics like Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant presented the theme of sublimity in relation to horror, fear, and pain; but sublimity, as a concept of loftiness and beauty, lies everywhere, it deals with almost every artistic product like sports, movies, theatre, science, music, architecture and so on. In this paper, I shall try to present the concept of sublimity and its relevance in terms of Nineteenth Century Opera, an extremely popular and distinguished form of classical vocal performance. Besides, this paper will also attempt to show the failures that have become prominent in showing the sense of sublimity in actual performances.)

Keywords - Opera, Music, Longinus, Sublime, Vocal Performance, Grandeur, Art.

I. INTRODUCTION

Longinus introduced sublimity as a type of eminence or excellence of discourse, especially in oratory. In ancient times, poetry was believed to be the finest product of art and this can be traced in the writings of great Greek thinkers like Aristotle, Plato and Longinus too. Longinus advocates for the assimilation of certain qualities which, together, produces sublime feelings or expressions. It should be noted that there is distinction between grandeur and sublimity; grandeur produces amazement and wonder, but sublimity encompasses a combination of wonder and astonishment.

II. HECTOR BERLIOZ AND HIS MEMOIRS

The general inclination to adapt Longinus continues to be evident in contemporary writings about nineteenth-century opera. Hector Berlioz, in his *Memoirs* (1870), makes extensive use of the notion of sublimity. According to him, sublimity's primary application is to music, it evokes an intense physical and emotional subjective response, and it gives rise to a reflexive judgment on the artist's own power and significance.

In Longinus, the concept of the 'sublime' is artistic, but here it is generalized to all sorts of art, not just literature, as is evident from his experience of a visit to Saint Peter's in Rome:

I had hardly arrived before I was rushing off to St Peter's. Sublime, overpowering! Michelangelo, Raphael, Canova on this side and that; underfoot precious marbles and rare and beautiful mosaics. And the intense stillness, the

solemnity, the cool atmosphere, the bright, clear colours, rich and harmonious: an aged pilgrim, kneeling alone in the immense space;^[1]

But of all the arts it was music that, for Berlioz, constituted the purest instance of the 'sublime'. He was hugely impressed by Beethoven's slow movements, which evoked for him the imagination of an eagle that was soaring aloft:

in one of those unearthly adagios where Beethoven's spirit soars vast and solitary like the huge bird above the snows of Chimborazo ...^[2]

As Burney did before him, Berlioz also found the immense sense of sublimity in massive performances of inspiring vocal music. He writes about one concert he conducted, with 1022 performers, two sub-conductors and five chorus masters who, together, performed the *Blessing of the Daggers* from Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*. Berlioz writes that the concert

... staggered the audience. Here I had multiplied the solo voices by twenty, so that Saint-Bris and the three monks were sung by eighty basses. The effect of this sublime piece on the performers and on those listeners nearest to the orchestra was quite extraordinary. As for me, I was seized with such a fit of nervous trembling that my teeth chattered as though I had a raging fever. Despite the non-resonance of the hall I do not think anything like this can often have been experienced, and I regretted that Meyerbeer was not there to witness it. It was if the whole tremendous piece – written, one might have said,

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Chapter - 9

Clean Energy at the cost of Food? Effect of Hydro-Electric Projects on Local Agriculture in Sikkim

Bickey Sharma *

Abstract

Sikkim is a hilly state in North-East India with a large hydroelectric generation potential. The Sikkim government had entered into 29 MOUs with private power developers to build and operate Hydro Electric Projects (HEPs) in the state. So far, five of them are already completed and another 10 are at various stages of completion. However, the remaining 14 HEPs are terminated due to strong agitation put up by local communities against construction of dams and tunnels for HEPs. Studies on the exact nature and causes of resistance by local people in Sikkim HEPs are conspicuous by its absence in the public domain. This study was taken up to understand and measure the negative externalities of HEPs on local farming households based on a primary survey of 190 households in two HEP locations in Sikkim. This study arrives at its finding by comparing the current agricultural performance of farming households across "control" and "treatment" groups. The study found that the productivity and profitability of agriculture is significantly and adversely affected by construction of headrace tunnels for these HEPs that divert the water of the local rivers. The diversion disrupts the aquifers in the hills and affects the water flows in small local streams which are the lifeline of local agriculture. The study estimates a loss of Rs.24,000 annually of an average household located in an affected village compared to its unaffected counterpart. The finding calls for government intervention for rectification of this negative environmental externality of HEPs. The finding also calls for more careful design improvements in tunnelling through hills, such that it does not affect the water flow local streams as it does with the present technology.

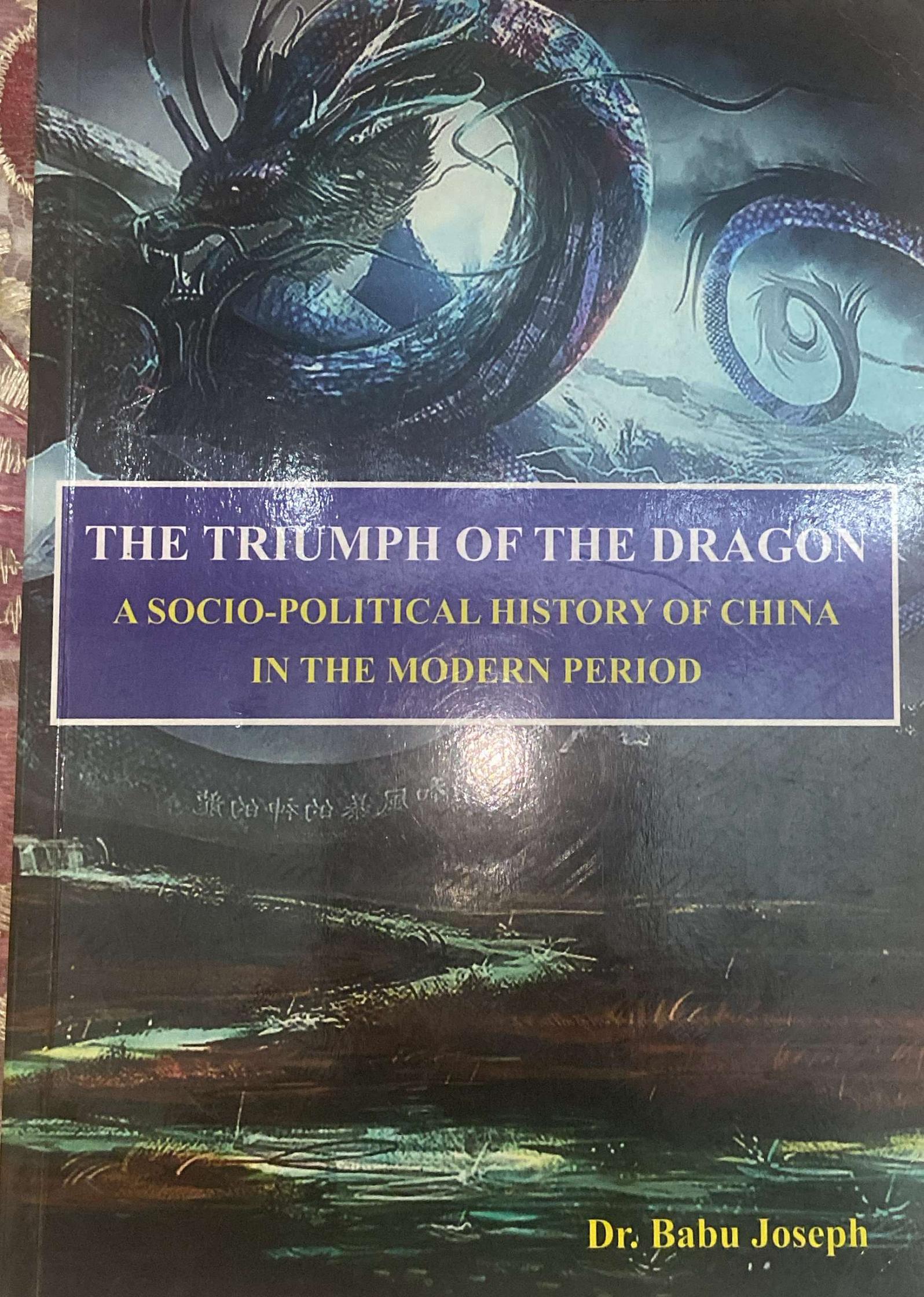
Keywords: Sikkim; Hydro-Electric Projects; Agriculture; Farming Households; Ecosystem Service; Resource Conflicts.

1. Introduction

Sikkim is a hilly state in North-East India with a large hydro electric generation potential. The Sikkim government had entered into 29 MOUs with private power developers to build and operate Hydro Electric Projects (HEPs) in the state. So far, five of them are already completed and another 10 are at various stages of completion. However, the MOU of the remaining 14 HEPs are terminated due to strong agitation put up by local communities against construction of dams and tunnels for HEPs. The local people, mostly farmers, have protested against such HEPs as they alleged that such constructions affected their agriculture adversely.

It seems that the long tunnels built to divert river waters to create electricity had a significant adverse impact on the local hydrology of the hills. For the projects, tunnels are created by blasting the hills and without sufficient water-proofing around tunnel's perimeter. So, waters flowing inside the rocks, which previously came out from various opening points to create small water channels on hill slopes, are now finding their way into those tunnels. Water in springs is available after a heavy downpour. In other times, they are almost dry and cannot support local agriculture which they used to do previously. It seems that lack of engineering foresight has caused serious damage to local agriculture and food security, while trying to generate energy with an

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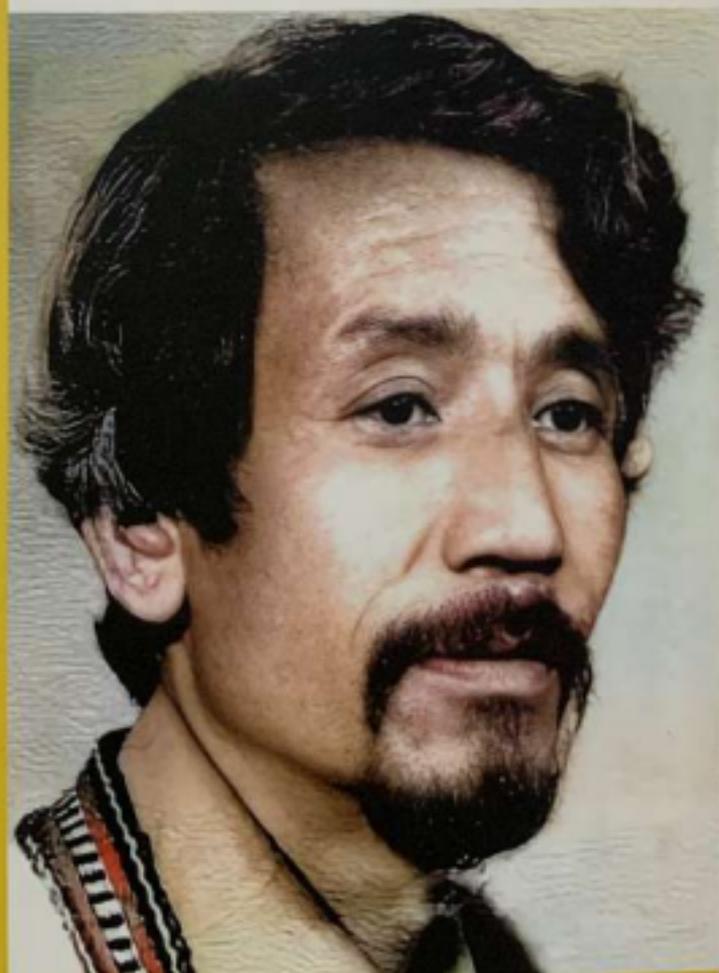
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Makers of Indian Literature

Haribhakta Katuwal

Jiwan Namdung



Poet, playwright, lyricist, and storywriter **Haribhakta Katuwal** (1935–1980) started his literary career with the publication of lyric poems *Samjhana* in 1960. Some of his works include *Bhitri Manche Bolna Khojcha*, *Yo Jindagi Khai K Jindagi*, *Spastikaran* and *Badnam Mera Ye Aakhaharu*. Katuwal's interest in the Hindu mythology, philosophic and cultural traditions is evident in his works as he weaves his narratives with the elements from Puranas, Vedas, Upanishads and the epics. A politically volatile period during Katuwal's formative years gave rise to his understanding of national consciousness, ethnic heterogeneity and patriotic fervour which abound in his poems and lyrics. His short stories, usually revolving around female protagonists, offer an insight into the psychological impact of various events on characters, moral choices and the social dilemma. Equally proficient in Nepali and Assamese, Katuwal played a pivotal role in heralding a new epoch in the Nepali literary scene.

Born and brought up in Darjeeling, **Jiwan Namdung** (b. 1951) has 52 books to his credit which include literary criticism, essays, poems, translation and edited works. His work *Paryavekshan* won the Sahitya Akademi Award. He is also recipient of Ratnashree Award from Kathmandu, Lifetime Achievement Award from Sikkim Government, Deokota Satabdi Samman from Nepal, Spandan Award from Kuwait and Giri Puraskar from Darjeeling.

Monika Rana (b. 1996) is an academic, writer and translator from Siliguri, India. Two collections of poems, *The Teesta's Desire* (English) and *Jiwanka Pailaharu* (Nepali) have been published to her credit in 2010. She is one of the youngest recipients of the Sahitya Akademi's Author Travel Grant, 2016. Currently, she is working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Salesian College Siliguri. She writes in Nepali, Hindi and English.



Haribhakta Katuwal (English)

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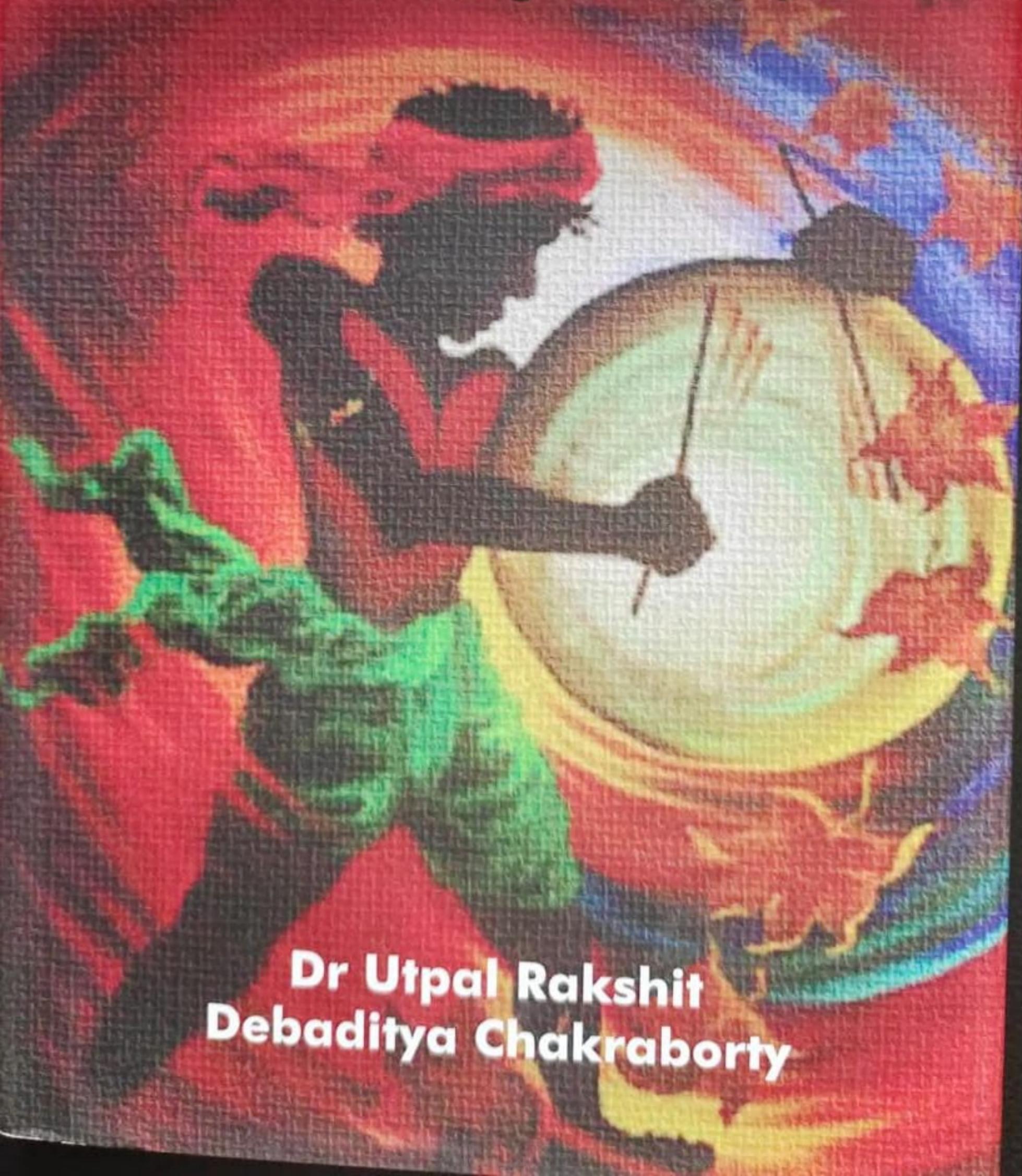


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LITERATURES FROM THE FRINGE

Voices of the Marginalised Space



Dr Utpal Rakshit
Debaditya Chakraborty

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LITERATURES FROM THE FRINGE

Voices of the Marginalised Space

The voice of the fringe-dwellers muted and degraded by the 'cultural politics' of gender, class, caste, and race, ethnic and economic divergence has found its space in literary pursuits down the ages. The present volume takes a broader focus and examines marginalisation as it manifests itself in a range of forms focusing upon the arenas for transitions from voiceless to voice. It includes the category of literary writings that emerge as the imperative strategies of an organised struggle or resistance which the writings put forth to exert the marginalised subjectivity in literature. It offers a reading of these strategies of intellectual pursuits of marginalised space which dismantle the command of hegemony and the assertion of governing centre. Given its multidimensional façade, the discourse has been structured into three sections, namely 'Marginalised Space of Dalits', 'Marginalised Space of Women' and 'Marginalised Space—an Umbrella for All' in this book.



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Violence and Invisibility in Murakami's "Barn Burning" and Lee Chang-Dong's *Burning*

Anik Sarkar

Abstract

The most elementary form of violence is visually evident that is: its presence is felt as a phenomenon that exists on the surface, more often as an undesirable event – that which must be negated or countered. Žižek identifies one subjective and two objective dimensions: "symbolic violence" and "systemic violence". The film *Burning* has only one distinct instance of subjective violence – in the climax where Jong-su stabs Ben in a frenzy, dumps his body in a Porsche and sets fire to his long desired object. The instances which build up to the sudden eruption of violence are ambivalent, and hence must be analysed through our understanding of "objective violence".

Both the film and the short story "Barn Burning" metaphorically touch on socio-economic themes, violence, marginalisation and present a critique of capitalism. This chapter seeks to unearth the deeper ideological concerns that linger in their word and image-based metaphors, while analysing the invisibility of violence as it operates in their worlds, through the ideas of two important thinkers – Žižek and Rene Girard.

Keywords: Marginalisation, economic, mimesis, violence.

Žižek begins the introduction to his book, *Violence* with a joke: a worker at a factory, who had been suspected of stealing, gets the



The Portrait of an Artist as a Pathographer

On Writing Illnesses and Illnesses in Writing

Edited by

Jayjit Sarkar
Jagannath Basu



VERNON PRESS
SERIES IN LITERARY STUDIES

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Focusing on the various intersections between illness and literature across time and space, *The Portrait of an Artist as a Pathographer* seeks to understand how ontological, phenomenological and epistemological experiences of illness have been dealt with and represented in literary writings and literary studies. In this volume, scholars from across the world have come together to understand how the pathological condition of being ill (the sufferers), as well as the pathologists dealing with the ill (the healers and caregivers), have shaped literary works.

The language of medical science, with its jargon, and the language of the every day, with its emphasis on utility, prove equally insufficient and futile in capturing the pain and suffering of illness. It is this insufficiency and futility that makes us turn towards the canonical works of Joseph Conrad, Samuel Beckett, William Carlos Williams, Virginia Woolf, Kazuo Ishiguro, Miroslav Holub as well as the non-canonical António Lobo Antunes, Yumemakura Baku, Wopko Jensma and Vaslav Nijinsky. This volume helps in understanding and capturing the metalanguage of illness while presenting us with the tradition of 'writing pain'. In an effort to expand the definition of pathography to include those who are on the other side of pain, the essays in this collection aim to portray the above-mentioned pathographers as artists, turning the anxiety and suffering of illness into an art form. Looking deeply into such creative aspects of illness, this book also seeks to evoke the possibility of pathography as world literature.

This book will be of particular interest to undergraduate, postgraduate and research students, as well as scholars of literature and medical humanities who are interested in the intersections between literary studies and medical science.

Jayjit Sarkar is Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Raiganj University, India. He is the author of the book *Illness as Method: Beckett, Kafka, Mann, Woolf and Eliot* (Vernon Press, 2019). He is also the co-editor of *Border and Bordering: Poetics, Politics, Precariousness* (ibidem Press, 2020).

Jagannath Basu is Assistant Professor in the Department of English, Sitalkuchi College, India. He is the co-editor of *Geographia Literaria: Studies in Earth, Ethics and Literature* (ibidem Press, forthcoming).

A vital new collection of essays, *The Portrait of an Artist as a Pathographer* investigates how literature represents and also shapes the experiences of illness, pain, sensation, and suffering. Drawing on scholars from across the globe, the collection moves deftly among periods, texts, perspectives, and locations to offer a capacious critical mapping of literary pathography.

Elizabeth Outka

University of Richmond

Author of *Viral Modernism: The Influenza Pandemic and Interwar Literature* (Columbia UP, 2019)

The volume of essays offers a broad literary landscape to get to the heart of the difference between illness and disease. The essays cover an interesting range of writers and genres from around the world to explore the poetics and ethics of illness. Novels, short stories, plays, poems, both canonical and non-canonical, allow the volume to encompass an interesting corpus that will help provide an engaging and timely intervention in the growing field of literature and medicine.

Sangeeta Ray

University of Maryland

Registering illness as a critical factor that shapes human society— not just as a technocratic or medical issue, but as one that also merits literary and cultural investigation, this compelling and cogently argued volume succeeds in bringing together different encounters between illness and literature across time and space. It is a timely contribution that will be of great interest to scholars in humanities across the globe.

Priya Menon

Troy University



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Chapter 5

“Between Horror and Hunger”: Reflections on the Medical Poems of Miroslav Holub

Anik Sarkar

Salesian College, India

Abstract: A “curious mixture,” poet-immunologist Miroslav Holub is unusual in his approach to poetry. As a man of reason, it may seem that Holub resists romantic impulses, while on the contrary, he relishes it with a scientific temperament. His juxtapositions of real and the impossible give way to metaphors that he uses as a “hypothesis, an instrument for testing experience through conjecture and experiment.” Because of his belief that there exists in science, a wide body of imagination, away from all-encompassing theories and laboratory work, Holub is able to conjure abstractions that speak of human and non-human conditions, such as war, illness, suffering, pain, childhood and monotony, meanwhile, also alluding to pathological, medical and physical theories.

Starting from Ancient Greece to the Enlightenment, the West has been obsessed with the larger structures: the universe, planets, cosmos and God to understand the mechanics of how the world functions. But with the invention of the microscope, the discovery of atoms and enquiries into genetics, the paradigm shifted from macro to the micro. We were less keen to look for meaning hidden in the folds of the greater cosmic order and instead turned towards the world of quantum particles, atoms, DNA and microorganisms, where understanding the smallest components and their structures would determine how larger societal order and civilisations come into being or operate. Holub’s medical poems take on a similar rapport, where through looking into life underneath the microscope, he is able to construct metaphors that comment on society at large. This chapter seeks to analyse the poems of Holub that deal with the “alternating rhythms of cosmological expansion and

ENVIRONMENTAL POSTCOLONIALISM

A LITERARY RESPONSE

Edited by **SHUBHANKU KOCHAR AND M. ANJUM KHAN**



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—**SANTHOSH BAHADUR SINGH**, Lady Irwin College Delhi University

Environmental Postcolonialism: A Literary Response is an academic investigation of the environmental repercussions of colonial destruction. This volume addresses the complex interplay between postcolonialism and environmental discourse through literature produced in the ex-colonies within their human and non-human context. The primary objective of this volume is to scrutinize environmental concerns in the light of postcolonial theory, thus it examines works of art from the twin perspective of ecocriticism and postcolonialism, illuminating and underscoring how colonizers interfered with and destroyed both nature and culture. Through discussing the intersecting layers of ecocriticism and postcolonial criticism, the volume gestures to new directions and generates a hopeful vision of a decolonized world.

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Chapter 7

I Am a Tree Leaning

Neocolonialism, Eco-consciousness, and the Decolonized Self in Margaret Atwood's Surfacing

Anik Sarkar

Canada had its share of colonial struggle, first as a French colony in the sixteenth century and then as a colony of Britain in the eighteenth century. It only tasted freedom, just as most of the colonized nation-states in the first half of the twentieth century. The aboriginals of Canada were put through violence, displacement, trauma, and poverty, not to mention diseases like smallpox, measles, and yellow fever that were nonexistent in its lands, were later introduced by the colonizers. The small pox depopulated a large section of the natives (Cadotte 2015). Colonization—an organ of imperialism—fosters an imbalance of power relations, while being a breeding ground for dehumanization, relentless exploitation, plundering, and hostility that leaves people disconnected to their lands, culture, identity, language, and environment. Since Enlightenment rationalized the search for “truth” as a sign of civility and progress, colonizers formulated a moral excuse to embark on the task of dispelling darkness from “uncivilized” cultures that mainly belonged to the continents of Asia, Africa, and places of aboriginal dwelling in Australia and America. The rich mineral deposits in these places along with spices, rubber, timber, fur, cash-crops, and other products that were native to the indigenous people were ferried to Europe, which flourished economically (Murphy 2009). At a time, the colonization process sidelined with the Industrial age in Europe and there began an intensive exploitation of environment and natural resources available in the colonies, which in the process were invariably left tattered and deprived.



"When you are silent, it speaks,
When you speak, it is silent."
(Cheng Tao-Ke)

Fr. Prof. George Thadathil SDB is Principal of Salesian College Sonada and Siliguri Extended Campus, Darjeeling, West Bengal, India. His area of specialization is Cross Cultural Social Philosophy. He has organized various research seminars engaging local scholarship with contemporary concerns of identity, language and ethnicity. He is the author of *Vision from the Margin: Study of the Sri Narayana Guru Movement in the Literature of Nitya Chaitanya Yati* (2007) and has edited and co-edited books like *Communities and Identity Consciousness: South Indian Trajectories* (2004), *Cultural Identity in Nepali Language and Literature* (2005), *Subaltern Perspectives: Philosophizing in Context* (2005), *Cultural Linguistic Transitions in the Nepali Speech Community of Darjeeling* (2009) besides contributing to a number of journals and edited volumes on Philosophy, Literature and Social Sciences. His publications are the outcome of an attempt to apply the research findings in South India (SNGM) onto the Language and Ethnicity based identity formations in Darjeeling District, North East India. He continues with his research interests in this field and is in the process of bringing out a volume on "Owning Locations: Transforming Small Worlds". He is the Founder and Series editor of *Salesian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* in its tenth year as a biannual peer reviewed publication and the Founder Director of Salesian Publications.



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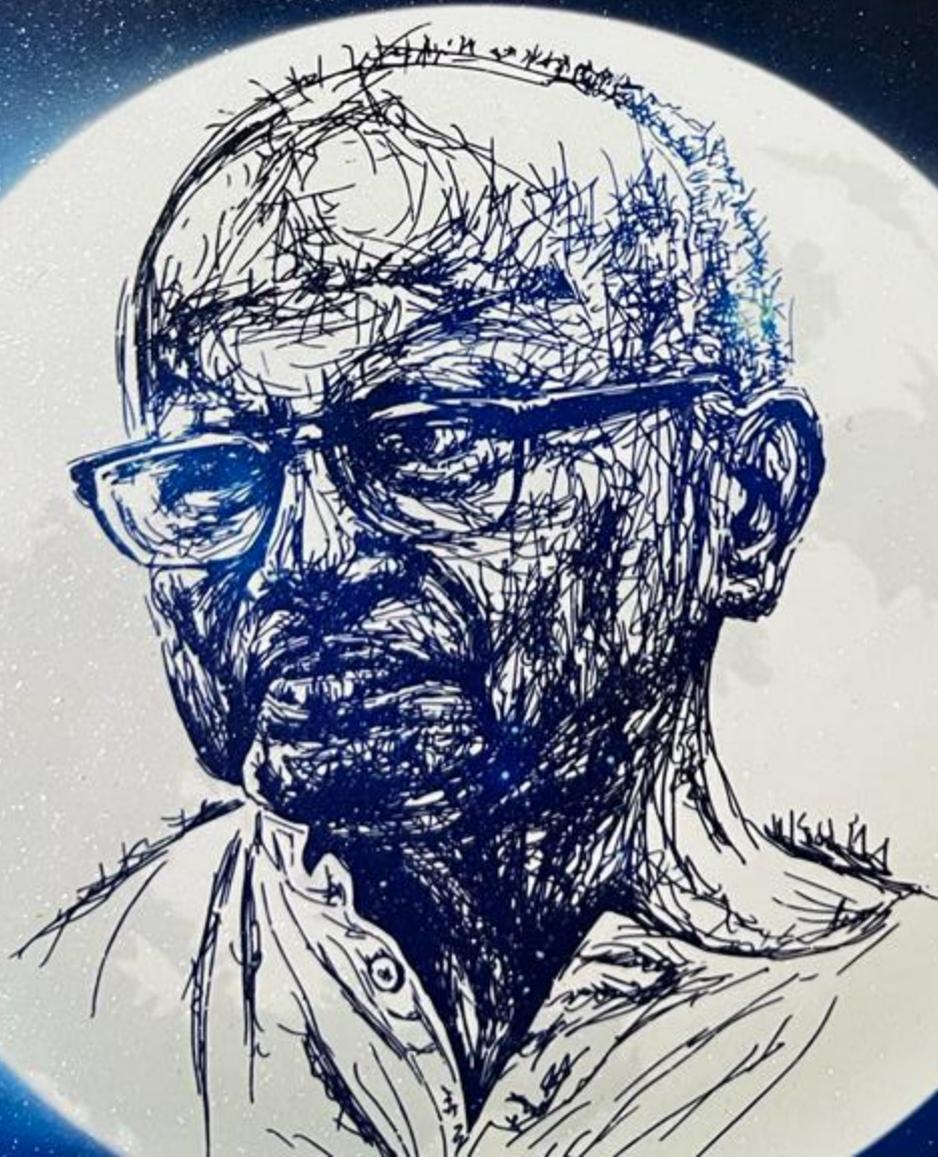


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എന്റെ ഗുരുകുല യാത്രകൾ

ഫാദർ (ഡോ.) ജോർജ്ജ് തടത്തിൽ

പതിനാറാം വയസ്സിൽ, 1976 മെയ് മാസത്തിൽ കൽക്കത്തയിലെ ഹുഗ്ലീ നദീ തീരത്തുള്ള ബാൻഡൽ ചർച്ചിൽ നിന്ന് ഒരവധിക്കാലത്ത് പയ്യന്നൂരിൽ പോലീസ് സബ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടറായിരുന്ന ജ്യേഷ്ഠന്റെ വീട്ടിലെത്തിയതാണ് ഞാൻ. അവിടെ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കൂടെ കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്ന നാളുകളിലൊന്നിലാണ് ഞാൻ ആദ്യമായി ഏഴിമല സന്ദർശിക്കുന്നത്. അവിടെ ഒരാശ്രമമുള്ളതായും ലോകത്തിന്റെ പല ഭാഗങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നുള്ളവർ അവിടെ അന്തേവാസികളായുണ്ടെന്നും ജ്യേഷ്ഠനിൽ നിന്നും അറിഞ്ഞിരുന്നു. അവരെ നേരിൽ കാണാനും പരിചയപ്പെടാനും കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ അവരിൽ മിക്കവരും ലോകത്തിന്റെ പല പ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽ സുഖസൗകര്യങ്ങളോടുകൂടി കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്നവരാണെന്നും ജീവിതത്തിന് പുതിയ ലക്ഷ്യവും അർത്ഥവും തേടി അതെല്ലാം വിട്ടെറിഞ്ഞുവന്ന് ഇവിടെ കഴിയുകയാണെന്നും മനസ്സിലാക്കാനായി. പരിമിതമായ ഭൗതികസൗകര്യങ്ങളോടെ പ്രവർത്തിച്ചിരുന്ന ആ ആശ്രമത്തെ അവർ 'ഗുരുകുല ഐലന്റ് ഹോം' എന്നാണ് വിളിച്ചിരുന്നത്. 1970-കളുടെ അവസാനം അവിടെ നിന്ന് ഗുരുസന്ദേശം (Guru Message) എന്ന പേരിൽ ഒരു ലഘു മാസിക പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിക്കുന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഫ്രഞ്ചിൽനിന്ന് ഇംഗ്ലീഷിലേക്കു തർജ്ജമ ചെയ്ത ലേഖനങ്ങളും ശ്രീ നാരായണഗുരുവിനെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് ലേഖനങ്ങളും ഇതിൽനിന്ന് ആദ്യമായി വായിക്കാനിടയായി. പിന്നീട് ഡാർജിലിങ്ങിൽ ഫിലോസഫി വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയായിരുന്ന കാലത്ത് ഈ മാസിക പോസ്റ്റ് വഴി വരുത്തുകയും അതിൽനിന്ന് ശ്രീ നാരായണഗുരുവിനെക്കുറിച്ചും ഗുരുകുലങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചും ഗുരുപരമ്പരയെക്കുറിച്ചും അതിന്റെ പ്രവർത്തകരുടെ ജീവിതശൈലിയെക്കുറിച്ചും കൂടുതലായി വായിച്ചറിയാനും കഴിഞ്ഞു. ആ കാലത്ത് എന്തോ കാരണങ്ങളാൽ നാരായണ ഗുരുകുലത്തിന്റെ

കേന്ദ്രനേതൃത്വവുമായി അകന്നു കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്ന ഗുരു ഫ്രഡ്ഡിയുടെയും സാമൂഹിക മിക്കിന്റെയും ശ്രമഫലമായിട്ടായിരുന്നു ആ ആശ്രമം പ്രവർത്തിച്ചിരുന്നതും മാസിക പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിച്ചിരുന്നതും. ടൈപ്പ് റൈറ്ററിൽ ടൈപ്പ് ചെയ്തെടുത്ത ശേഷം സൈക്ലോസ്റ്റൈൽ ചെയ്തെടുത്തായിരുന്നു ഈ മാസിക പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിച്ചിരുന്നത്. ഏതാനും വർഷങ്ങൾ അത് നിലനിന്നിരുന്നു.

അടുത്ത വർഷവും ഞാൻ അവധിക്കാലത്ത് ഏഴിമല ആശ്രമം സന്ദർശിച്ചു. അവരുടെ ജീവിതശൈലിയും അച്ചടക്കവും അധ്വാനക്ഷമതയും എനിക്ക് വളരെ ആകർഷകമായി തോന്നുകയും അത് എന്റെ ജീവിതശൈലിയുമായി വളരെ സാമ്യമുള്ളതായി എനിക്കനുഭവപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്തു. ഒരവസരത്തിൽ അവർ സ്വന്തമായി കിണർ കുഴിക്കുന്നത് കാണുവാനിടയായി. അതുമൂലം കളിൽനിന്ന് വന്നവർ ഇവിടെ സ്വന്തം നാട്ടിലെ പോലെ അധ്വാനിച്ചു. ജീവിക്കുന്ന കാഴ്ച എനിക്ക് ഒരുതരം പോസിറ്റീവ് എനർജി പകർന്നു തന്നു.

1980-കളുടെ അവസാനമായപ്പോൾ മറ്റൊരു തരത്തിൽ ഗുരുകുല ജീവിതവുമായി ഇടപെടുന്നതിനുള്ള അവസരം എനിക്ക് ലഭിച്ചു. 1988 മുതൽ എന്റെ ഉപരിപഠനവുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട് നാലു വർഷം ബാംഗ്ലൂരിൽ ചിലവഴിക്കേണ്ടിവന്നു. അക്കാലമായപ്പോഴേക്കും ഏഴിമലയിൽ നാവിക അക്കാദമിക്ക് വേണ്ടി ഗുരുകുല ഐലന്റ് ഹോമിന്റെ ഭൂമി ഗവൺമെന്റ് അക്വയർ ചെയ്തപ്പോൾ കൊണ്ട് ഗുരു ഫ്രഡ്ഡി, സാമി മിക്ക്, സാമിനി ബ്രിജ് തുടങ്ങിയവർ ഏഴിമലയിൽ വിട്ട് കർണ്ണാടകത്തിലെ സോമനഹള്ളിയിൽ വന്നെത്തിയിരുന്നു. ബാംഗ്ലൂർ നഗരത്തിൽനിന്ന് ഏതാനും കിലോമീറ്റർ അകലെ കനകപുരം റോഡിൽ സോമനഹള്ളിക്കടുത്ത് ഒരു മലമ്പ്രദേശത്ത് അവർ ഒരു ആശ്രമം തുടങ്ങി. അപ്പോൾ എനിക്ക് അവരുമായി വീണ്ടും സന്ധിക്കാനും ഇടപെടാനും അവസരം ലഭിച്ചു. അക്കാലത്ത് കാര്യമായ ജീവിതസൗകര്യങ്ങളൊന്നുമില്ലാതെ വളരെ ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടുകൾ സഹിച്ചാണ് അവർ കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്നതെങ്കിലും ആശ്രമത്തിന്റെതായ ചിട്ടയോടുകൂടി അത്യധികം പരിശ്രമിച്ചു മിതമായ രീതിയിൽ ജീവിക്കുന്നത് കണ്ട് എനിക്ക് അവരോട് ചിലപ്പോൾ സഹതാപവും അവരുടെ പ്രവർത്തികളിൽ ആശ്ചര്യവും തോന്നിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. പല തവണ അവരുടെ പോവുകയും അവരുമായി സംസാരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഈ യാത്രകളോരോന്നും താത്ത്വികാനുഭവങ്ങളോടൊപ്പം വേറെയും കാര്യങ്ങളുള്ള സംന്യാസജീവിതം നയിക്കുന്നവരെ അടുത്തു കാണുവാനും സന്തോഷങ്ങൾ മനസ്സിലാക്കുവാനും എനിക്ക് കിട്ടിയ അവസരങ്ങളായിരുന്നു. സന്തോഷം നാടും വീടും വിട്ട് മറ്റൊരു ദേശത്ത് വന്ന് രണ്ടു തവണയായി ഗുരുവായൂർക്കാൻ ശ്രമിച്ച അവരുടെ ജീവിതത്തിന് പ്രചോദനമായിത്തീർന്ന ഗുരുവായൂർ ശാസ്താന്റെ കരുത്തിനെക്കുറിച്ച് കൂടുതലറിയാനെന്ന തോന്നൽ കലശലായ കാലമായിരുന്നു അത്. ഈ വഴിക്ക് കൂടുതൽ മുന്നോട്ടു പോകുന്നതിനുള്ള

അവസരം എനിക്ക് വീണ്ടും ഒത്തുവന്നു. 1993-ൽ ഡാർജിലിങ്ങിൽ ഫിലോസഫി അധ്യാപനവുമായി കഴിഞ്ഞിരുന്നപ്പോഴായിരുന്നു അത്. അക്കാലത്ത് തികച്ചും അപ്രതീക്ഷിതമായി ഒരു ദിവസം സാമി മിക്ക് എന്ന അന്വേഷിച്ച് സോനാപയിലുള്ള സലേഷ്യൻ സെമിനാരിയിലെത്തി. സോമനഹള്ളി ആശ്രമത്തെയും ഗുരു ഫ്രഡ്ഡിയെയും ഉപേക്ഷിച്ച് സ്വന്തമായൊരു പാത കണ്ടെത്തുന്നതിനായി ഒരഭയാർത്ഥിയായാണ് അദ്ദേഹം അന്ന് ഡാർജിലിങ്ങിൽ എത്തിച്ചേർന്നത്. സാവകാശം ഡാർജിലിങ്ങിനടുത്തുള്ള ഡാജിയബത്തി ഗ്രാമത്തിൽ ആശ്രമം ഉറപ്പിച്ച അദ്ദേഹവുമായി അന്നു മുതൽ അടുത്തിടപെടുന്നതിന് എനിക്കവസരം ലഭിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്.

നടരാജഗുരുവും ഞായും

ഈ കണ്ടുമുട്ടലിന്റെയും ഇടപെടലുകളുടെയും ഫലമായാണ് എനിക്ക് ഉപരിപഠനത്തിനുള്ള അവസരം കിട്ടിയപ്പോൾ വിദേശത്തുപോയി പഠനം തുടരുന്നതിനു പകരം മദ്രാസ് യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റിയിലേക്ക് യാത്ര തിരിക്കാനിടയായത്. അവിടെ 1996-ൽ എം.ഫിൽ പഠനത്തിനുവേണ്ടി രജിസ്റ്റർ ചെയ്തു. നടരാജഗുരുവിന്റെ ജീവിതത്തോടും തത്ത്വദർശനത്തോടും എനിക്ക് തോന്നിയ ആകർഷണം നിമിത്തം ആ വിഷയംതന്നെ എം.ഫിൽ പഠനത്തിനായി തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തു. The Making of a Tradition: The Vision of Nataraja Guru എന്നതായിരുന്നു എം.ഫിൽ ഗവേഷണ വിഷയം. മദ്രാസ് യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റിയിലെ ക്രിസ്ത്യൻ സ്റ്റുഡീസ് ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെന്റ് മേധാവി പ്രൊഫ. ഡോ. ഫെലിക്സ് വിൽഫ്രഡായിരുന്നു ഗൈഡ്. അദ്ദേഹം ഞാൻ തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്ത വിഷയത്തിൽ പൂർണ്ണതൃപ്തി പ്രകടിപ്പിക്കുകയും ഈ ഗവേഷണ പ്രോജക്റ്റുമായി മുന്നോട്ടു പോയപ്പോൾ നിരന്തരമായി പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിക്കുകയും നിർണായകഘട്ടങ്ങളിൽ ഉൾക്കാഴ്ച നിറഞ്ഞ മാർഗനിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ നല്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

ശ്രീ നാരായണഗുരുവിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ഗവേഷണം ചെയ്യാൻ മുതർന്ന സമയത്ത് എന്റെ ഫിലോസഫി, തിയോളജി പ്രൊഫസർമാർ മാത്രമല്ല സ്വന്തം കുടുംബത്തിലെ സഹോദരന്മാരും സഹോദരിയും അവരുടെ കുടുംബാംഗങ്ങളും വളരെയധികം സഹായങ്ങളും പ്രോത്സാഹനങ്ങളും തന്നു. 1962-65 കളിലെ രണ്ടാം വത്തിക്കാൻ കൗൺസിൽ ചർച്ചകളുടെയും പ്രഭാഷണങ്ങളുടെയും പശ്ചാത്തലത്തലമാണ് ഈ പ്രോത്സാഹനത്തിന്റെ ഉറവിടമെന്നാണ് മനസ്സിലാക്കേണ്ടത്. മതസൗഹാർദ്ദവും സംവാദവും (ഡയലോഗ്) രണ്ടാം വത്തിക്കാൻ കൗൺസിലിന്റെ പരമാർശങ്ങളിൽ എടുത്തു പറഞ്ഞിരിക്കുന്ന നിലാപാടാണ്.

'അച്ചൻ ഞങ്ങളുടെ ഗുരുവിനെക്കുറിച്ച് പഠിക്കുകയാണോ?' എന്ന വാക്കുകൾ, കാസർഗോട് മുതൽ തിരുവനന്തപുരം വരെയും പെരിയാറിന്റെ തീരത്തുള്ള ശ്രീ ശങ്കരാചാര്യം യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റിയിൽ വെച്ചും പലരിൽ നിന്നും

കേൾക്കാനിടയായിട്ടുണ്ട്. കാലടി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റിയിലെ പ്രൊഫ. ഗോപാലനാഥനായ ഗുരുക്കുലത്തിലെ പീറ്റർ മൊറൈയ്സും മുനി പ്രസാദും മറ്റും ചേർന്ന് 2000-ൽ കാലടി യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റിയിൽ നടത്തിയ ഒരു കോൺഫറൻസിന്റെ എല്ലാ പേപ്പേഴ്സും ഇപ്പോഴും എന്റെ കൈകളിലുണ്ട്. ഒരിക്കൽ കാലിഫോർണിയയിൽ വച്ച് പീറ്റർ മൊറൈയ്സുമായി അതിയ ഒരു കുടികാഴ്ചയ്ക്കുശേഷം അദ്ദേഹം എനിക്ക് അയച്ച സുന്ദരമായ അപേക്ഷകളായി എഡിറ്റു ചെയ്ത് പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞെങ്കിൽ എന്തെങ്കിലും ആഗ്രഹം ഇന്നും സാക്ഷാത്കരിക്കാൻ കഴിയാതെ തുടരുന്നു.

എ.സി.പി.ആർ. റിസർച്ച് ഫെല്ലോഷിപ്പിനായി ഡോ. രാധാകൃഷ്ണൻ ഇൻസ്റ്റിറ്റ്യൂട്ട് ഓഫ് അഡ്വാൻസ്ഡ് സ്റ്റഡീസ് ഇൻ ഫിലോസഫിയും ക്രിസ്ത്യൻ സ്റ്റഡീസ് സെന്ററുമായി അസോസിയേറ്റ് ചെയ്ത് മൂന്നു വർഷത്തിനകം എം.ഫിൽ ബിരുദം നേടുവാൻ സാധിച്ചു.

മിതവൈതന്യത്തിയും ഞായും

എ.ഫിലിപ്പിനുശേഷം പി.എച്ച്.ഡി. ബിരുദത്തിനായി ഞാൻ മദ്രാസ് യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റിയിൽ തന്നെ 1998-ൽ ചേർന്നു. ഡോ. ഫെലിക്സ് വിൽഫ്രൈഡ് തന്നെയായിരുന്നു ഗൈഡ്. A Study of Sri Narayana Guru Movement in the Literature of Nitya Chaitanya Yati എന്നതായിരുന്നു ഗവേഷണവിഷയം. ഈ സാഹചര്യമാണ് നാരായണ ഗുരുക്കുലവുമായി വീണ്ടും അടുക്കുന്നതിൽ ഇടനല്കിയത്. ഈ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ ഫേൺഹിൽ നാരായണ ഗുരുക്കുലത്തിൽ നിത്യചൈതന്യയതിയോടൊപ്പം പലതവണ താമസിക്കാൻ എനിക്ക് അവസരം ലഭിച്ചു. അദ്ദേഹത്തോടൊത്തുള്ള താമസവും സമ്പർക്കവും എന്നെ വളരെയധികം സാധിനിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ആദ്യത്തെ എന്റെ കുടികാഴ്ചയിൽ എനിക്കുവേണ്ടിയ കിയ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ പ്രഭാഷണത്തിന്റെ റെക്കോഡ് ചെയ്ത കോപ്പി (Audio Cassette) വളരെ വിലപ്പെട്ട ഒരു നിധിയായി ഇന്നും ഞാൻ സൂക്ഷിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്.

ഈ കാലത്ത് ഗവേഷണവുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട് കേരളത്തിനകത്തും പുറത്തുമുള്ള മിക്കവാറുമെല്ലാ ഗുരുക്കുലകേന്ദ്രങ്ങളും ഇന്ത്യയ്ക്കു വെളിയിൽ ഫിജി, സിങ്കപ്പൂർ, ഓസ്ട്രേലിയ എന്നിവിടങ്ങളിലെ ഗുരുക്കുലങ്ങളും സന്ദർശിച്ചു. അവിടെയുള്ളവരിൽനിന്ന് ഹാർദ്ദമായ സ്വീകരണവും സഹകരണവും എനിക്ക് ലഭിച്ചു. ഇത് കൂടാതെ, ശ്രീനാരായണഗുരുവിന്റെ പേരിൽ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന വിവിധ പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട ഒരുപാട് ആളുകളെ നേരിടുകയും സഹായം സംസാരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. ഇങ്ങനെ വിലപ്പെട്ട ഒരുപാട് വിവരങ്ങൾ ശേഖരിക്കുന്നതിനു കഴിഞ്ഞു.

ഗുരുക്കുല പ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ സ്രോതസ്സ് ശ്രീ നാരായണഗുരുവും അദ്ദേഹം സ്ഥാനം നടരാജഗുരുവുമാണെന്ന് എനിക്ക് ബോധ്യമായി. ലോകത്തിനുള്ള

നാരായണഗുരു പരമ്പരയുടെ സന്ദേശം എന്താണെന്നും അതിന്റെ മുഖ്യ മെന്റോണെന്നും മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നതിനും ഒരു ഗവേഷകൻ എന്ന നിലയിൽ അത് വിലയിരുത്തുന്നതിനും ഞാൻ ശ്രമിച്ചു. ഒരു സർവകലാശാലാഗവേഷണ വിദ്യാർത്ഥി എന്ന നിലയ്ക്ക് കണ്ടെത്തിയ കാര്യങ്ങളെല്ലാം പ്രശംസിക്കുകയും പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നതിനതീതമായി അവയോട് വിമർശനപരമായി എന്തു സമീപനം സ്വീകരിക്കാനാവുമെന്ന പ്രതിസന്ധി ചിലപ്പോഴെല്ലാം എന്റെ മനസ്സിൽ അനുഭവപ്പെടുന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഈ പ്രശ്നം എന്നെ മാത്രമല്ല, ഗുരുക്കുലത്തിൽ ഞാൻ കാണുകയും ഇടപെടുകയും ചെയ്തിരുന്ന ചിലരെയും ഒരുതരത്തിൽ ആശങ്കപ്പെടുത്തിയിരുന്നതായി എനിക്ക് അനുഭവപ്പെട്ടിരുന്നു. എന്റെ ചോദ്യങ്ങളെയും അന്വേഷണങ്ങളെയും ചിലരെങ്കിലും സംശയദൃഷ്ടിയോടെ കാണുകയും അല്പം അകൽച്ച കാണിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തിരുന്നപോലെ തോന്നിയിരുന്നു.

എന്റെ ഗവേഷണം 2000-ൽ പൂർത്തിയാക്കി പ്രബന്ധം സമർപ്പിച്ചു. ഇതിന്റെ ഓപ്പൺ ഡിഫൻസിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കാൻ ഫേൺഹിൽ നാരായണ ഗുരുക്കുലത്തിൽ നിന്ന് സാമി തന്മയയും സാമി വ്യാസപ്രസാദും ചെന്നെത്തിയിരുന്നു. 2002-ൽ എനിക്ക് ബിരുദം ലഭിച്ചു. ഈ ഗവേഷണപ്രബന്ധം പിന്നീട് ഉചിതമായി എഡിറ്റു ചെയ്ത് Vision from the Margin - A Study of Sri Narayana Guru Movement in the literature of Nitya Chaitanya Yati എന്ന പേരിൽ ഏഷ്യൻ ട്രേഡിംഗ് കോർപ്പറേഷൻ, ബാംഗ്ലൂർ 2007-ൽ പുസ്തകരൂപത്തിൽ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിച്ചു.

ഗുരുപരമ്പരയുടെ കാതലായ ഒരു വശം അതിന്റെ സർവാശ്ലേഷ സ്വഭാവമാണെന്ന് (All inclusiveness) ഞാൻ കരുതുന്നു. വൈരുദ്ധ്യങ്ങളെ എത്രത്തോളം നിലനിറുത്തേണ്ടതുണ്ട്, എത്രത്തോളം തരണം ചെയ്യേണ്ടതുണ്ട്, ഇക്കാര്യം എന്തടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ ചെയ്യണം, ചെയ്യാൻ കഴിയും എന്ന ഒരു വെളിപാടാണ് നാരായണഗുരു ലോകത്തിനു നല്കിയത്. ഭാരതത്തിലെ ബുദ്ധന്റെയും അംബേദ്കറുടെയും ഇനിയും സഫലീകരിക്കാത്ത സ്വപ്നങ്ങൾക്ക് (ജാതി വ്യവസ്ഥ ബഹിഷ്കരണ പദ്ധതികൾക്ക്) ഗുരുദർശനത്തിൽ ഫലപൂർത്തി കാണുവാൻ കഴിയുമെന്ന് ഞാൻ കരുതുന്നു. ഈ സത്യത്തിലേക്കു നയിക്കുന്നതിന് വേണ്ട വെളിച്ചവും ഊർജ്ജവും പകർന്നു നല്കുന്നവരായാണ് ഗുരുപരമ്പരയിലെ ഗുരുക്കന്മാരെ ഞാൻ കാണുന്നത്.

മുതി താരായണപ്രസാദും ഞായും

ഈ ഗവേഷണയാത്രയ്ക്കിടയിലാണ് മുനി നാരായണപ്രസാദിനെ ആദ്യമായി വർക്കല ഗുരുക്കുലത്തിൽവെച്ച് കാണുന്നത്. വിവിധ വിഷയങ്ങളിലുള്ള അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ അറിവും ഭാരതീയവും പാശ്ചാത്യവുമായ തത്ത്വശാസ്ത്ര

ത്തോടുള്ള കാഴ്ചപ്പാടും നാരായണ ഗുരുവിന്റെ കൃതികൾ മലയാളത്തിലും ഇംഗ്ലീഷിലും ലളിതമായി പരിചയപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിനുള്ള സിദ്ധിയും ക്ലാസ്സുക്കുന്ന രീതിയും എന്നെ ആകർഷിച്ചു. എന്റെ ഗവേഷണവുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട ഒട്ടേറെ വിവരങ്ങൾ ശേഖരിക്കുന്നതിന് അദ്ദേഹവുമായുള്ള കൂടിക്കാഴ്ച എന്നെ സഹായിച്ചു.

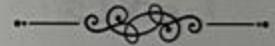
2011 ജൂൺ 7 മുതൽ 9 വരെ സിലയിലെ ഇന്ത്യൻ ഇൻസ്റ്റിറ്റ്യൂട്ട് ഓഫ് അഡ്വാൻസ്ഡ് സ്റ്റഡീസ് നടത്തിയ The Philosophy, Vision and Work of Sri Narayana Guru: An Instrument of Egalitarian Social Change എന്ന അന്താരാഷ്ട്ര സെമിനാറിൽ വെച്ചാണ് പിന്നീട് അദ്ദേഹവുമായി അടുക്കുന്നതിനുള്ള ഒരവസരം ലഭിച്ചത്. നാരായണ ഗുരുകുലത്തിന്റെ നേതൃത്വത്തിൽ മുനി നാരായണപ്രസാദിന്റെ അദ്ധ്യക്ഷതയിലായിരുന്നു ആ സ്ഥാപനം ഈ സെമിനാർ സംഘടിപ്പിച്ചത്. ഡോ. പീറ്റർ റൊണാൾഡ് ഡിസുസയായിരുന്നു ഈ സെമിനാർ നടക്കുമ്പോൾ ആ സ്ഥാപനത്തിന്റെ ഡയറക്ടർ. ഇന്ത്യൻ ഇൻസ്റ്റിറ്റ്യൂട്ട് ഓഫ് അഡ്വാൻസ്ഡ് സ്റ്റഡീസ് എന്റെ സ്ഥാപനമായ സലേഷ്യൻ കോളേജും ചേർന്ന് അതേവർഷം (2011) ഏപ്രിലിൽ Christian Educational Institutions and The Making of Modern Democratic India എന്ന പേരിൽ ഒരു നാഷണൽ കോൺഫറൻസ് നടത്തിയിരുന്നു. നാരായണഗുരുപഠനവുമായുള്ള എന്റെ ബന്ധം മനസ്സിലാക്കിയ പ്രൊഫസർ പീറ്റർ റൊണാൾഡ് ഡിസുസ അടുത്തുതന്നെ ആ സ്ഥാപനത്തിൽ നാരായണഗുരുവിനെക്കുറിച്ച് നടത്താൻ പോകുന്ന സെമിനാറിനെപ്പറ്റി പറയുകയും അതിലേക്ക് എന്നെ ക്ഷണിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. അങ്ങനെയാണ് Positioning the Philosophy of Sri Narayana Guru എന്ന ഒരു പേപ്പർ സിലയിൽ നടന്ന ഈ കോൺഫറൻസിൽ അവതരിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിന് എനിക്ക് അവസരം ലഭിച്ചത്. വളരെ കാര്യക്ഷമമായി നടത്തിയ ഒരു സെമിനാറായിരുന്നു അത്.

2012 മുതൽ കൊച്ചിയിൽ നടത്തിവരുന്ന Backwaters Collective on Metaphysics and Politics എന്ന അന്താരാഷ്ട്ര സെമിനാറിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുന്നതിനും The Transformative Power of the One World Vision of Sri Narayana Guru എന്ന പേപ്പർ അവതരിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനും എനിക്കവസരം ലഭിച്ചു. ഡോ. വിനയ് ലാൽ എഡിറ്റു ചെയ്ത് ഓക്സ്ഫഡ് യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി പ്രസ് 2019-ൽ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിച്ച India and Civilizational Futures - Backwaters Collective on Metaphysics and Politics II എന്ന സമാഹാരത്തിൽ ഒരു അദ്ധ്യായമായി എന്റെ ഈ പേപ്പർ ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്.

ഇന്ത്യയിലെ പല സ്ഥലങ്ങളിലും അമേരിക്കയിലുമുള്ള നാരായണഗുരു അനുയായികളുമായി സമ്പർക്കത്തിൽ വരുന്നതിനും അവരുടെ പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളിൽ നിന്ന് പല പരിപാടികൾക്കുള്ള ക്ഷണം ലഭിക്കുന്നതിനും എനിക്കാ

സരം ലഭിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. മതേതര നിലപാട് സ്വീകരിച്ച് കേരളത്തെയും ഭാരതത്തെയും ഒരു പുതിയ ദിശയിലേക്ക്, ഇൻക്ലൂസീവ് നാഷണലിസത്തിലേക്ക്, നയിക്കാൻ ശ്രീ നാരായണഗുരുദർശനത്തിനും ഗുരുകുല അനുയായികൾക്കും സാധിക്കും എന്ന വിശ്വാസമാണ് ഇന്നും എന്നെ ഗുരുകുലവുമായി ബന്ധിപ്പിച്ചു നിറുത്തുന്നത്. ശതാഭിഷിക്തനാകുന്ന ഗുരുകുലത്തിന്റെ ഇപ്പോഴത്തെ അദ്ധ്യക്ഷൻ മുനി നാരായണപ്രസാദിന് ആയുരാരോഗ്യങ്ങൾ നേരുന്നതിനോടൊപ്പം ഈ ആഘോഷങ്ങളുടെ സ്മരണികയിൽ ഒരു ലേഖനം എഴുതാൻ എന്നെ പരിഗണിച്ചതിലുള്ള സന്തോഷവും അറിയിക്കുന്നു.

ഏഴിമലയിലേക്കുള്ള യാത്രയും സോമനഹള്ളിയിലേക്കുള്ള യാത്രയും ഫെൺഹില്ലിലേക്കുള്ള യാത്രയും സാമി മിക്കുമായി ഇപ്പോഴും തുടരുന്ന ബന്ധവും ഡാർജിലിങ്ങിലുള്ള അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ നടരാജഗുരുകുലത്തിലേക്കുള്ള യാത്രയും എന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ പൂർണതയ്ക്കായി എന്തോ ഒന്നു കൂടി ചെയ്തു തീർക്കാനുണ്ടെന്ന പ്രേരണയായി ഇന്നും എന്നിൽ അവശേഷിക്കുന്നു.



ആയുർവൃതികം

Darjeeling Hills University

&

The Prospects of Higher Education in the Hills



Edited By
Srikanta Roy Chowdhury

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II**



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SOCIAL DISTANCING, COVID-19, AND
EXPERIENTIAL NARRATIVES II

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*Augustin Joseph, James Chacko Molekunnel, Paramita Datta,
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"It was the organic presence of bhakti in Indian history that fascinated Tagore.... Furthermore...to account for the fact that the bhakti movement... often failed to achieve the promises it seemed to make, namely, to override differences between Hindus and Muslims and to advance the cause of the poor and despised. How can we deal with these issues?... A major aim of network theory is to displace the illusion that individual actors are the engines of history, and this surely resonates with bhakti despite its personalist focus."

John Stratton Hawley, *A Storm of Songs: India and the Idea of the Bhakti Movement*, (London: Harvard University Press, 2017), 295-6.

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Editorial

Social Distancing, Covid-19, and Experiential Narratives II

Bhikash Sharma

As we are steering through an unprecedented epoch of Covid-19, desperate attempts have been made to renew existential meanings as an underside to the unbridled meaninglessness and existential defeat in the world outside.

As the “everyday familiarity collapse[d]” and uncanniness or ‘un-home-like’ took over, the spatially constrained and temporally disoriented self began an anxious search for the “metaphor for existence.”¹ Post the global lockdown to ‘tame’ the virus, home has become the site where the metaphor for existence is materially and discursively situated: either *being* at home or longing for one, as with the case of thousands of migrant workers in India who have walked miles – some to death – in search of this metaphor.

Martin Heidegger contends:

In anxiety one feels ‘*uncanny*’. Here the peculiar indefiniteness of that which Dasein finds itself alongside in anxiety, comes proximally to expression: the “nothing and nowhere”. But here “uncanniness” also means “not-being-at-home” ... Being-in enters into the existential ‘mode’ of the “not-at-home”. Nothing else is meant by our talk about ‘uncanniness.’²

In uncanniness, the self flees from the “threat to its everyday lostness” – a withdrawal from the ‘publicness’ and from the absorption in the world - even “though the very world itself is *still* ‘there’, and ‘there’ more *obtrusively*.”³ When the conceptuality – of the uncanny situation and human condition as a result of

¹ Hans Blumenberg, *Shipwreck with Spectator: Paradigm of a Metaphor for Existence*, trans. by S. Rendell (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1997).

² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Translated by J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), 233.

³ *Ibid.*, 233-4.