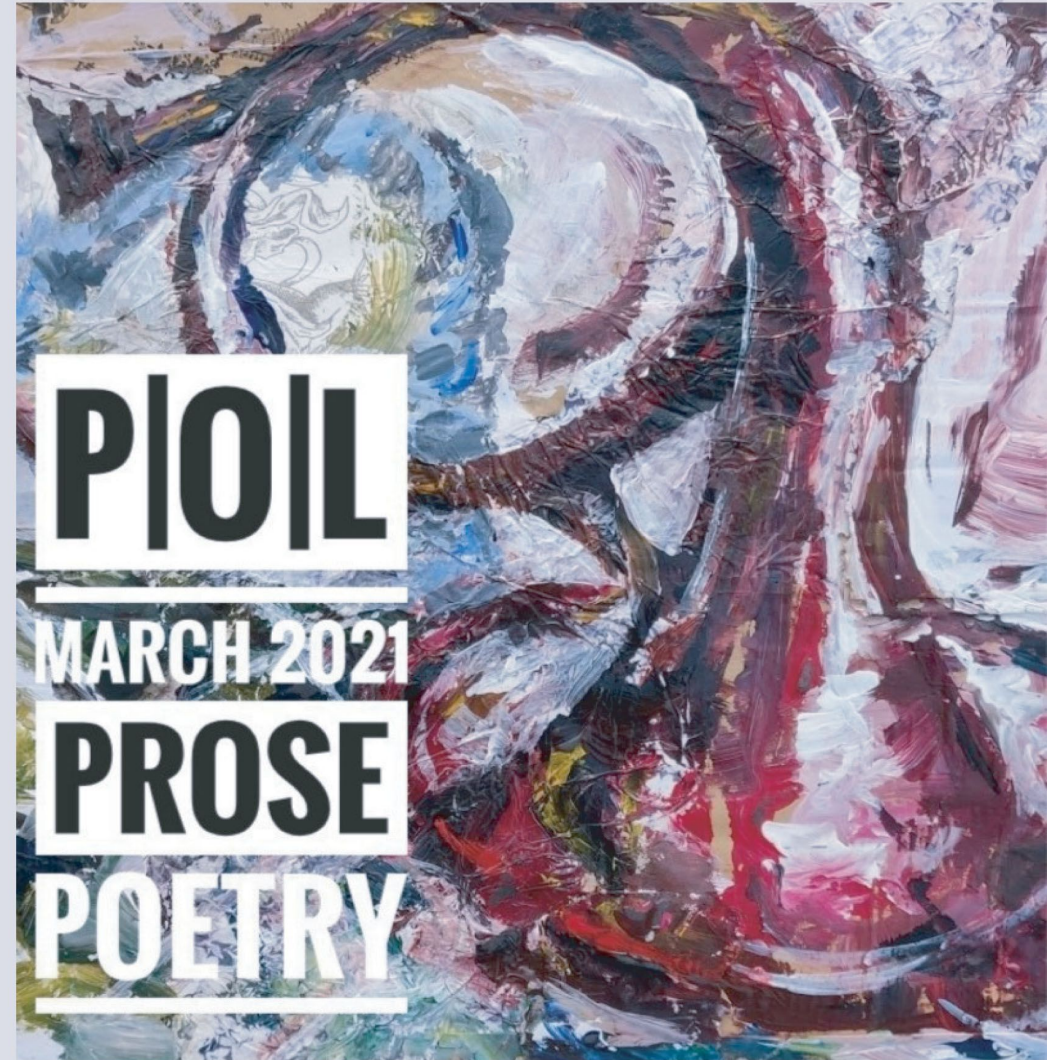


Bridging the gaps between poets
Poetry Out Loud



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Editor's Letter

Poets, with their own unique and various perspectives, express their emotions, joys, sorrows and other states through their writings. Some poets want to faithfully follow the traditional rules, but others challenge them with a new style, which might not be presumably accepted as part of mainstream in poetic forms. I would remember American poet Ami Lowell, who did challenge the traditional types and wrote a poem in the new style, prose form, in 1916. Writing a prose poem seems to be more creative one rather than other forms. So, this time we would love to explore the thoughts of poets who craft prose poems.

I would like to mention poet Gauranga Mohanta, who first has shared his idea to publish an issue of the POL based on prose poetry. Very unfortunately, today we can rarely find works in prose form. Although asking many poets in the universe to contribute their writings in prose form to an upcoming issue of the POL, I got negative responses from most of them. Regretfully, I did recognize they might not feel comfortable with prose form, which could be even beyond their interest. To be honest, even being disappointed, I did not step back seeing a light beyond the clouds. I have endeavoured to research as many relevant examples, articles, web-links and other sources as possible in order to find out how prose poetry would be. I did devote much time and efforts to this research in order to obtain significant insights in prose poetry.

I am so grateful to Tapashi Laha, who has committed her enormous efforts and valuable time on the POL better and would like to thank poet Ashoke Kar, who has also been doing a great job for the POL since the beginning of this magazine. He is dedicatedly expending his time to translate poetry from Bangla into English. I also appreciate Louise Whyburd and Daisy Green joining the POL editorial team and highly expect they would contribute to building up its great reputation in future. I would like to introduce a poet and artist, Abbie Neale, who, for the first time, has done a few paintings in particular for the POL and also poet Padmanava Adhikari, who has actually shared his innovative ideas to build up our magazine better. Two more poets Daniela Sanchez and Richii Plata joined the POL editorial team to manage better Spanish section for its upcoming issue. In the end I love to introduce a renowned translator, Joseph Inhong Cho, who has literally worked so far with a huge support behind the POL.

There is also one more thing which I love to share with you. Even during the pandemic of coronavirus, we had a chance to meet up with poets throughout the world via Google Meet. David Lee Morgan(UK), Binay Laha(Editor of Indology magazine, India), Gauranga Mohanta(Bangladesh) and Nivedita Lekhara(USA) have joined to recite their poems and exchange their views regarding their poetry.

These days, many magazines, blogs, webs and others are all involving in poetry without any doubt, but as for prose poetry, there is a very limited room we would have in reality.

In fact, some magazines still don't even accept prose poetry. Eventually the question, "why are we working for prose poetry?" might arise in our mind naturally. Well, prose poetry is neither in mainstream forms nor in new one totally. It came first in the seventeenth century in Japan and then turned up in Europe and America. But it was not popular as a verse at that time. Most of ordinary people, as is generally believed, always love to think in many different perspectives, and as for poets in particular, they have an even stronger tendency to do in their own unique viewpoints. So, we want to come up with the strength of prose which would provide poets with encouragement getting to some degree out of strict traditional poetic forms such as meter, rhyme scheme and others which could limit a poet's choices.

The POL always wants to put as more poets as possible together in order to share their individual thoughts through flavours of each other's poems. The POL has created a great platform in behalf of poets who are willingly to exchange their imagination throughout the world.

Part One

Eva Aronna

A brief history of prose poetry

We are living in a prosaic age now. Basically, what we read at the moment in books, in newspapers, on webs, on social media and in text messages is all written in prose, in particular among them is a novel which is the most popular and typically written in it. However, today a considerable number of people still prefer poems in typical poetic forms as expressing their feelings and emotions especially with regard to greeting cards or romantic stuff. On the other hand, there is another form, prose poem, in poetry, a bit away from typical forms, which was introduced to us long ago. Though not having as much attractive or popular as typical poetic forms, it also plays an important role in providing poets with more various different ways in expressing their thoughts, and makes them even more comfortable, as is compared to typical forms in poetry. As regards a prose poem, there are no strict fixed rules relating to the length of the lines, rhythms and system of rhymes and repetition. Whereas it should have a story behind a sentence, a song behind a tale, a melody behind a word and etc. In particular there should be a prosaic flavour which should take priority over a poetic form. According to Warner- 'prose poetry does not appear

obviously poetic at all. That is one of its apparently contradictory or paradoxical features.’ Prose poems occur when someone writes prose using poetry techniques.

Prose poetry becomes a revitalised medium of literary forms that focuses less on a narrative’s progress through chronological time and more on creating things what Jonathan Culler has referred to, when discussing the traditional lyric, as the ‘present time of discourage,’ with associated ‘ritualistic’ and ‘hyperbolic’ qualities.’ We need to remember one thing about the prose poetry, ‘In successful prose poetry, the mode of prose is not used in the same way one finds in most conventional and discursive novel or nonfiction.’

If we go back to the innovation of French Romantic prose poets such as Bodleyar and ...have been transformed French and international poetry. So, their innovative idea of prose poetry remained a form of poetry despite its construction in sentences and paragraphs. The tendency for this form of poetry to challenge or stretch our assumptions about what the poetic penetrates further than perhaps any of us had previously imagined.

In prose poems, we often find the voice of an author mixed with the voices of characters; or other, sometimes intertextual or historical, voices; or contemporary reference (bringing with them their own ‘voice’), in ways that create a sense of an unsettled whole; or a whole composed of disparate, disjunctive, and sometimes fragmented parts.

A prose composition which is not broken into verse lines, demonstrates other way such as symbols, metaphors, similes and other figures of expression common to poetry. In a sentence what is prose poetry we must say verse free poetic expressions where no line break. If we go back to the history of prose poetry then we found so many poets tried to write prose poetry in many aspects such as American poet Ami Lowell's 'Bath', Russel Edson's 'Metals Metals by, David Ignatow's 'Information' and Henryette Mullen's 'Kills bugs dead'

Bath

By Ami Lowell

The day is fresh-washed and fair, and there is a smell
of tulips and narcissus in the air.

The sunshine pours in at the bath-room window and bores
through the water in the bath-tub in lathes and planes of
greenish-white. It cleaves the water into flaws like a Jewel,
and cracks it to bright light.

Little spots of sunshine lie on the surface of the water and
dance, dance, and their reflections wobble deliciously over
the ceiling; a stir of my finger sets them whirring, reeling. I
move a foot and the planes of light in the water jar. I lie back
and laugh, and let the green-white water, the sun-flawed beryl
water flow over me. The day is almost too bright to bear, and
the green water covers me from the too bright day. I will lie
here awhile and play with the water and the sun spots. The
sky is blue and high. A crow flaps by the window, and

there is a whiff of tulips and narcissus in the air.

Source: *Selected Poems of Amy Lowell* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2002)

Metal Metals

By Russel Edson

Out of the golden West, out of the leaden East, into the iron
South, and to the silver North . . . Oh metals metals
everywhere, forks and knives, belt buckles and hooks . . .
When you are beaten you sing. You do not give anyone a
chance . . .

You come out of the earth and fly with men. You lodge in
men. You hurt them terribly. You tear them. You do not care
for anyone.

Oh metals metals, why are you always hanging about? Is it
not enough that you hold men's wrists? Is it not enough
that we let you in our mouths?

Why is it you will not do anything for yourself? Why is it you
always wait for men to show you what to be?

And men love you. Perhaps it is because you soften so
often.

You did, it is true, pour into anything men asked you to. It
has always proved you to be somewhat softer than you
really are.

Oh metals metals, why are you always filling my house?
You are like family; you do not care for anyone.

Source: *The Childhood of an Equestrian* (Harper & Row, 1973)

Information

By David Ignatow

This tree has two million and seventy-five thousand leaves. Perhaps I missed a leaf or two but I do feel triumphant at having persisted in counting by hand branch by branch and marked down on paper with pencil each total. Adding them up was a pleasure I could understand; I did something on my own that was not dependent on others, and to count leaves is not less meaningful than to count the stars, as astronomers are always doing. They want the facts to be sure they have them all. It would help them to know whether the world is finite. I discovered one tree that is finite. I must try counting the hairs on my head, and you too. We could swap information.

Source: *Against the Evidence: Selected Poems 1934-1994* (Wesleyan University Press, 1993)

Kills bugs dead

By Harryette Mullen

Kills bugs dead. Redundancy is syntactical overkill. A pinprick of peace at the end of the tunnel of a nightmare night in a roach motel. Their noise infects the dream. In black kitchens they foul the food, walk on our bodies as we sleep over oceans of pirate flags. Skull and crossbones, they crunch

like candy. When we die they will eat us, unless we kill them first. Invest in better mousetraps. Take no prisoners on board ship, to rock the boat, to violate our beds with pestilence. We dream the dream of extirpation. Wipe out a species, with God at our side. Annihilate the insects. Sterilize the filthy vermin.

Source: *Recyclopedia* (Graywolf Press, 2006)

In prose poetry, not all the words make sound good but poets got technique or capability to use them in the right position where readers feel comfortable. They go in depth and drive themselves into the ocean to search more magical moments or they find themselves in the fact of poet's thought. In that case, I have to mention Harryette Mullen's poem 'kills bugs dead' where he wrote 'redundancy is syntactical over kill'-- actually the word 'redundancy' is a business-related word. Basically, every department has its own language such as information technology has got some own words same as medical system or literature has got different sounds or tones in their own language. But those who actually play with words, or languages, they can use them in such different ways to make themselves more meaningful. Maybe the 'surrealism' term comes up in the poetic matter.

Sometimes we find that the surrealism has been driven in the prose poems. Readers might not discover the actual meaning of those senses that poet put together so as to draw something completely new. Readers get new flavour and try to unfold

the magical words which are chosen by poet, and then enjoy the rest of the writings. In prose poetry, a poet has complete liberty to use any colour paints to draw his lover's face. A poet has a dream to write a winsome poem as a man who waits for a long time to find a beautiful face.

According to T. S. Eliot -- 'prose an artistic medium as complex as verse and also as the vehicle of thought. The first idea came to him from 'verse libre'- (verse libre is a French form, in English it can be said 'free verse', 19th century French poetry from its traditional prosodic rules. In verse libre, the basic metrical unit is the phrase rather than a line of a fixed number of syllables as was traditional in French versification since the Middle Ages'). And a second thought came from the longstanding idea of prose as the manifestation of a cogent individuality - a clarified demonstration of the rounded literary intelligence. Now we can look at T. S. Eliot's prose poem 'Hysteria'

As she laughed I was aware of becoming involved in her laughter and being part of it, until her teeth were only accidental stars with a talent for squad-drill. I was drawn in by short gasps, inhaled at each momentary recovery, lost finally in the dark caverns of her throat, bruised by the ripple of unseen muscles. An elderly waiter with trembling hands was hurriedly spreading a pink and white checked cloth over the rusty green iron table, saying: "If the lady and gentleman wish to take their tea in the garden, if the lady and gentleman wish to take their tea in the garden ..." I decided that if the shaking of her breasts could be stopped, some of

the fragments of the afternoon might be collected, and I concentrated my attention with careful subtlety to this end.

Source: *Poems* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1920)

Over the last few months, I have been undergoing huge significant reading experiences with the prose poetry of Ami Lowell, Russel, Edgar Allan Poe, T. S. Eliot, Andrew Motion and Jean Sprackland. Prose poems operate in that fertile and porous territory between verse and prose. They offer us the freedom to make full use of the sentence without regard to line breaks, symbols, images, sound play and unconventional syntax that we celebrate in poetry

According to history, poetry has existed in many cultures around the world. In the seventeenth century, first prose poetry was discovered in Japan. Prominent Japanese poet Matsuo Basho created a poetic variation known as 'haibun', which melded prose elements with 'those of traditional haikun.

If we did the European literature, we could discover a significant prose poetry movement in France. French poet Aloysius Bertrand came up with his prose poem named 'Gaspard de la nuit.'

In the late nineteenth century, we found many poets such as Stephane Mallarme, Charles Baudelaire and Arthur Rimbaud.

If we go further to the west, we can include more poets who started first English prose poetry such as Irishman Oscar

Wild, American fellow Walt Whitman, Alan Poe, and so on.

By the mid-twentieth century, prose poetry enjoyed a revival in the USA where poets like William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Charles Simic, Robert Bly, Harryette Mullen, Russel Edson as so on wrote some short or long prose-based poetry.

In the first issue of *The Prose Poem: An International Journal*, editor Peter Johnson explained, "Just as black humour straddles the fine line between comedy and tragedy, so the prose poem plants one foot in prose, the other in poetry, both heels resting precariously on banana peels.

Characteristics of Prose, Poetry & Prose Poetry

Prose:

- ◆ Written in paragraph
- ◆ Tells a story rather than describes an image or metaphor
- ◆ Generally has characters and a plot

Poetry:

- ◆ Written in verse
- ◆ Written in poetic meter
- ◆ Focuses on image-driven metaphors
- ◆ Might have a narrative, but it might not or it might be harder to understand

Prose poetry:

- ◆ Looks like prose (written in paragraphs)

Focuses on images

- Includes instances of poetic meter
- Contains language play, such as repetition

To write prose poetry it doesn't feel like breaking boundaries, but much more like the introduction into a poetry context of parenthetical, informative material, or simply the need to move at a different pace. Sometimes a thought may come up and starts with some words. And although making longer line, it doesn't stay in any frames or formula. So, it is clear that poets cannot stop their expressions, in case that they need them, their thoughts will not come out naturally. In prose poetry, poets have an enormous freedom to organise their senses and put them in the right places. Nowadays there is an argument which is very likely flying everywhere in order to avoid the problem of definition of prose poetry if we call 'short prose piece' instead of 'prose poetry'. That was the idea of which T. S. Eliot wrote a piece of prose named ... But we cannot mention that prose poetry is a simple prose piece. There is another argument which comes up with prose poetry while sometimes it is a controversial. According to Stephen Fredman, he prefers to use the term 'poet's prose' instead of 'prose poem' to refer to '(prose) works that are conceived of and read as extensions of poetry', believing 'prose poem to be an oxymoron...redolent with the atmospheric sentiment of French Symbolism'.

Various perspectives in prose poetry can bring more arguments to our present literature. Bertrand's collection of

pieces – he didn’t call them prose poems – was published posthumously in 1842. The name (“poèmes en prose”) was created by Baudelaire who came across Bertrand’s book in the 1840s and found it a revelation. Baudelaire had long wanted to write novels, but in fact wrote only one extended short story – *La Fanfarlo*, published 1847. The small scale of prose poems appealed to him and he published series of them throughout the rest of his life. Most are vignettes of aspects of life observed in Paris; some are prose versions of poems. These show clearly how inferior the prose version is to the poem. Compare the beginnings of two descriptions of twilight, the first in prose (*La Crépuscule du Soir* in a literal translation):

I would compare a prose poem which is written in this century by Andrew Motion.

Pyongsan

When you had scoured the bamboo clumps and chosen
one bamboo right to make the handle, you split the next
into regular strips to be the hand and fingers of the rake.
They clawed across the hillside making almost no sound
but a quiver like sound travelled continually up your arm
into your ear while bamboo leaves were scraped together
and others fell to hide all trace of where your footprints went.
Source: The Custom House (poetry collection, published in
2012) by Andrew Motion

In conclusion, prose and poem are two commonly used forms of literature, with different meanings and writing styles. The actual difference between prose and poetry is that the former is written in complex, and in paragraphs, on the contrary, a poem is written in stanzas with aesthetic style. Furthermore, prose consists of no rhyme, or rhythm unlike the poem, which has a unique pattern.

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Shikdar Mohammed Kibriah

Philosophic discourse of prose poetry

Poetry and prose are thought to be opposed in common literary perception. Both are wordy but they have distinction in form, feature and nature. Prose artistically follows the standard lingual form that people use in spoken or written language. It does not treat the line as a formal unit. It has no repetitive pattern of rhythm or meter. Prose includes pieces of writing like novels, short stories, novellas, and scripts. These kinds of writings include the process of general linguistic technique used in everyday speech. On the contrary, poetry includes song lyrics, various poetry forms, and theatrical dialogue containing poetic qualities, like iambic pentameter. Basically, prose is regular text—words formed into sentences that are formed into paragraphs. While prose can be rhythmic and musical, it's not written in meter or rhyme. The vast majority of writing is prose, from essays and articles to novels and books of nonfiction.

Prose is a concrete depiction while poetry is an abstract one. Prose is directly meaningful but poetry is soulfully meditative. Originally and long traditionally poetry is a verse form, which may be a regular pattern of rhyme, meter or stanzas and rhythmic. On the contrary, prose is

a general speaking type, which is an artistic writing version composed without any pattern of rhyme, meter or stanzas. Since prose is a concrete, straight, meaningfully descriptive form of composition, we can think it looks similar to the appearance of the absolute that is directly perceptual or empirical. On the other hand, poetry is an abstract or meditative composition form; so it is thought to be the essence or reality of the absolute that is introspective, rational or intuitional.

In philosophy, we experience that empiricism mostly results in materialism or realism, and rationalism results in idealism. Both are extreme as they solely claim themselves the absolute. However, the absolute may not be double, but must be single. Therefore, the conflict between both is traditionally well known in philosophic arena. German philosopher Emanuel Kant attempted to find out a solution in his critical theory about the origin of knowledge. He viewed that the absolute has both sides of appearance and reality. Hegel solved this problem through his great dialectic method that categorically marked by himself consisting three steps like thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis. Thesis is an abstract idea of the experience that is intellectual and the first stage of thoughtful exploration while anti-thesis is concrete, that is to say, it is the contradiction of abstract ideas which means the second stage. Synthesis

is the final stage that is the logical combination of thesis and antithesis. Through this process he proved that both appearance and reality are the true elements of the absolute. Appearance is the physical explicative and reality is the spiritual indicative.

As a concrete meaningful composition prose is like perceptual appearance, an abstract meaningful poetry is like introspective, intellectual or intuitional reality. Like Hegel we can think both of these compositions are truly acceptable and through a synthesis process they result in an aesthetic feeling of the absolute that is visually corporeal or concrete like appearance and insightfully incorporeal or abstract like soulful essence of reality. It means prose and poetry form prose poetry in a combination like Hegelian synthesis. Therefore, prose poetry is not a something strange, but a serial evolution of poetic development that is progressive and historic indeed.

There is not anything static in the real world. Everything is moving, changing or transforming in an evolution process. We obviously know that blind or extreme following of any tradition is a real bar for progression of anything. Because it cannot solve, adapt and meet up contemporary crisis or demand, we should welcome the future with positive potentials. Therefore, in order to

achieve some progression in the arenas like civility, culture, literature, philosophy, politics, and so on, it is a must to break its relative conformity. So, poetry is not different to that. But how should we break a traditional form? Whatever answer we render, a process will stand before us as nothing is possible to be done but following any process. When it is accepted by some related authorities and practised massively, it turns into a new tradition. In fact, in order to break a tradition, we make a new tradition.

However, the main object of breaking a traditional process is to make a better process that should be contemporary, comparatively more modern or postmodern, developed suitable and goodwill-characteristic. This is the positive approach of real and serial evolution. But it should be said that removing an established tradition if a newly formed tradition would not be proved better than that of existing tradition, then it would be logically meaningless; or, in that process of breaking a tradition if the existence is at stake, it will be totally suicidal. So, it definitely needs to analyse the characteristics of the existing tradition to find out carefully what should be removed, preserved and added. What is prose poetry? Is it different to poetry? What's the significance of the additional adjective 'prose' with poetry? In fact, adjective

prose indicates a distinctive form of poetry.

Now we see what prose poetry is and whether it is an evolution of poetry. According to Wikipedia, prose poetry is poetry written in prose form instead of verse form, while preserving poetic qualities such as heightened imagery, parataxis, and emotional effects. “a prose poem appears as prose, reads as poetry, yet lacks line breaks associated with poetry but uses...fragmentation, compression, repetition and rhyme and...poetry symbols, metaphor, and figures of speech. Prose poetry...is essentially a hybrid or fusion of prose and poetry”. Prose poetry is mainly an imaginative poetic writing in prose. It is a creative writing format that combines elements of the poetic form and the prose form. It is a type of poetry composing that combines lyrical and metric elements of traditional poetry with idiomatic elements of prose, such as standard punctuation and the lack of line breaks. Upon first glance, a prose poem may appear to be a wholly unremarkable paragraph of standard prose, but a reader who chooses to dig in will note poetic overtones within its meter, repetition, and choice of language. According to Zimmerman, in a prose poem the writing is continuous without breaking lines. It may be of any length and may be divided into paragraphs. A single sentence, sentence fragment or multiple paragraphs can

be a prose poem. The natural rhythm of thought can lead to rhythmical cadences and internal rhyme and alliteration and repetition can be used. Rhyming language can be used in a combination of hard rhyme and soft rhyme. Prose poetry lies between free verse and prose while compressed thought and intensity are usually maintained. It's true that we can find prose passages in poetic texts in early Bible translations and the Lyrical Ballads of William Wordsworth, but prose poetic form was mostly introduced by the French symbolist writers in the nineteenth century. At that time we learned a significant turning, which removed the strict difference between styles of prose and poetry through the advent of this form in the work of Aloysius Bertrand and Charles Baudelaire. Baudelaire's "Be Drunk" is a remarkable example of this turning: And if sometimes, on the steps of a palace or the green grass of a ditch, in the mournful solitude of your room, you wake again, drunkenness already diminishing or gone, ask the wind, the wave, the star, the bird, the clock, everything that is flying, everything that is groaning, everything that is rolling, everything that is singing, everything that is speaking. .ask what time it is and wind, wave, star, bird, clock will answer you: "It is time to be drunk! So as not to be the martyred slaves of time, be drunk, be continually drunk! On wine, on poetry or on virtue as you wish" The innovated form quickly spread to poetic and literary

groups or activists in other countries. Rainer Maria Rilke and Franz Kafka in Germany, Jorge Luis Borges, Pablo Neruda and Octavio Paz in Latin America and William Carlos Williams and Gertrude Stein in the USA were much motivated with the form. They adapted the form and developed their own rules and restrictions in their poetic texts.

Among contemporary American writers, the form is widely popular and can be found in works by poets from a diverse range of movements and styles, including James Wright, Russell Edson, and Charles Simic. Campbell McGrath's winding and descriptive "The Prose Poem" is a recent example of the form; it begins: on the map it is precise and rectilinear as a chessboard, though driving past you would hardly notice it, this boundary line or ragged margin, a shallow swale that cups a simple trickle of water, less rill than rivulet, more gully than dell, a tangled ditch grown up throughout with a fearsome assortment of wildflowers and bracken. There is no fence, though here and there a weathered post asserts a former claim, strands of fallen wire taken by the dust. To the left a cornfield carries into the distance, dips and rises to the blue sky, a rolling plain of green and healthy plants aligned in close order, row upon row upon row.

There are several anthologies devoted to the prose poem, including *Traffic: New and Selected Prose Poems* and *Great American Prose Poems: From Poe to the Present*, as well as the study of the form in *The American Prose Poem: Poetic form and the Boundaries of Genre*. Following *A Poet's Glossary* by Edward Hirsch it can be said that the prose poem takes advantage of its hybrid nature. It forms itself with the elements of prose. We have learned that French Aloysius Bertrand established the prose poem as a minor genre in *Gaspard de la nuit* (1842), a book that influenced Baudelaire's *Petits poèmes en prose* (1869). Baudelaire used prose poems to rebel against the strait-jacket of classical French versification. He dreamed of poetry as a poetic prose, musical without rhyme or rhythm, supple and jerky enough to adapt to the lyric movements of the soul, to the undulations of reverie, to the somersaults of conscience." Baudelaire's prose poems — along with Rimbaud's *Les Illuminations* (1886) and Mallarmé's *Divagations* (1897) — created a mixed musical form (social and transcendental) that has been practiced almost all over the world in the twentieth century. "There is no such thing as prose," Mallarmé insisted in 1891. "There is the alphabet, and then there are verses which are more or less closely knit, more or less diffuse. So long as there is a straining toward style, there is

versification.”

However, prose poetry is a reality of poetic evolution that has a philosophic basis like the Hegelian dialectic method. It has broadened the range of poetic ability, freed its block universe of verse created by traditional rhyme and rhythmic calculative structure, made a dreamy reality with a harmony of practicality and contemplative sensitivity, formed soulful poetry with a prosaic corporeality preserving poetic character and quality and turned poetry into a such high classified form that is artistic and feelingly aesthetic. Therefore, prose poetry is an excellent evolution of poetry and it is historically evident.

Rashed Uzzaman

Origin and development of Bangla prose poetry:

A review

Translated by A K M Rezaur Rahman

The chapter of modern prose poetry evolved with the father of modern poetry, Charles Baudelaire in *Le Spleen de Paris* or *Petites Poemes en Prose* (1869) which was published posthumously. It bears a symbolic significance. Poetry is ego-driven whereas prose is revolutionary against single authority, which embraces numerous tones. Hence, prose poetry decorated in prose but composed in complicated combination of prose and poetry, boldly challenges the singular authoritarian tone of the poet inviting many. Consequently, it paves the way for the author's death for its own survival. The inherent conflict is suggestive in its very name prose poetry. It is such a myth-stone that only grows whenever it is touched. What is prose is not poetry and what is poetry is not prose. Resultantly, the prose poetry is regularly denying its conflicting nature. In terms of structure and rhyme, prose poetry is not only closely associated with prose irrespective of literacy-non-literacy approach of assimilating prose elements and expression, it is more prose like. On the contrary, in the use of metaphor-imagination-imagery, colorfulness of expression on sublime vibrancy it falls within the poetry family, too.

In recent times, this art form has been of great use in Bangla literature. Though universally agreed use of this form started

with the works of Arun Mitra (1909-2000), it is amusing for us that a contemporary Bengali of Baudelaire's time thought of this. In his 'Kabita Pustok' (1878), 'book of poems', Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838-1994) accepted prose and poetry both the forms as the media of poets and expressed:

"Now the tradition is that poetry should be composed in verse; but I have doubt whether this is right. I hope and believe that many know that only verses alone are not poetry. Rather to me in many respects prose is more useful and effective than poetry. Verses may suit poetry in some subjects but in many instances prose can work better. When language itself is glorified by arranging itself in verses, poetry is the best option. Otherwise, just for the sake of earning fame as poet, using verse leaves poor impressions. I am including here three prose poems in this book."

Bankim Chandra included three prose poems in this book named 'The Cloud', 'The Rain' and 'The Lightning Bug'. Although no one of his contemporaries was a follower of these poems, they are regarded as the first examples of prose poetry in Bangla literature. He employed the term prose poetry for such form. He indistinctly defined this form: 'Poetry written in prose. If we consider the total identity of Bangla prose poetry, we notice that this definition has mainly been pursued, it has emerged as poetry taking prose form of language. This may lead to suppose that prose poetry is more inclined to prose where the language of prose, seen as inferior, has mastered the characteristics of poetic beauty, seeks to rise in dignity and strength of expression. This may be true up to Rabindranath Tagore but exactly the opposite

happened in the cases of Arun Mitra and others. The language of poetry seeks to expand its horizon attaining the form and strength of prose. Recent works, however, is a shift from both where poets have been creating new genre. In creativity, the perimeter of prose and poetry both are redrawn.

After Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, we identify *Lipika* (1922) by Rabindranath Tagore (181-1941) as a step towards composing prose poetry in Bangla. We find *Lipika* as the first successful attempt at Bangla prose poetry, although it is ambiguous; but it has found inspiration in the expression of Bangla prose poetry. The prediction was made in the prose works of his "*Pushpanjali*" published in "*Bharati Patrika*" (Baishakh, 1292 BS) in 1885. Due to failure to classify, critics have identified "*Pushpanjali*" as elegy. But if we carefully examine, we find a leap of Bangla prose poetry. The language is not ordinary prose, but often seeks to resolve in poetry. Some of these compositions have been turned into *Lipika*'s prose. This is why the standpoint of "*Pushpanjali*" does not attract much attention as *Lipika* gets. Seen as a modified and improved version of "*Pushpanjali*", *Lipika* is regarded as the first successful attempt at Bangla prose poetry. The attempt of "*Pushpanjali*" to master poetry and poetry from the point of view of Bangla prose is also found in *Lipika*. Before *Lipika*, the language mastered the unspeakable by resorting to imagination in Rabindranath's plays, essays and even novels and short stories. *Lipika* can be seen as a sequel to this effort. However, it can be said that Rabindranath desired to bring the rhetoric of poetry here in

prose out of his desire to create a shocking impact of the poem. As a result, his efforts in Lipika not only changed his prose, but also his poetry.

An admirer of French poetry and translator of Rimbaud, poet Arun Mitra published a book of poetry “Towards the Source” in 1955 where he included four prose poems. This is the first conscious creation of prose poetry in Bangla. The effort that started with the poetry of poet Arun Mitra has progressed to Syed Ali Ahsan (1922-2002), Utpalkumar Bose (1939-2015), Abdul Mannan Syed (1943-2010), Sikder Aminul Haque (1942-2003) up to almost all the poets of recent times. In the practice of many poets, this variety has become more expressive and diverse. It is observed that the prose poetry of Bangla has assimilated most of the basic features of Bangla poetry as well as the new ingredients which are impossible to accept in poetry.

From the review of the history of Bangla prose poetry, we observe that it is advancing towards the third stage or stage of its consequence—the first being its emergence and attempts of gaining approval as an individual genre, the second being its acceptance as a form of poetry and the third being its development. At the outset, the poets have included prose poems in their books of poetry. Poets like Arun Mitra, Syed Ali Ahsan, Sankha Ghosh, Utpal Kumar Bose, Abdul Mannan Syed, Bhaskar Chakraborty, Sikder Aminul Haque have included prose poems as a new type of poetry in their various books of poetry. The practice was regarded revolutionary till the seventies. The situation changed from the mid-eighties and the treasure of prose poetry made this

genre a natural phenomenon to the readers. In the nineties, a single volume of prose poetry began to be published as a separate book of poetry- for an example, Sikder Aminul Haque published his ‘Always A Winged Man’, and ‘Conversation with Air’. Gauranga Mohanta, a poet of the eighties who is dedicated to prose poetry has been publishing his volumes of prose poetry from the first decade of this century. Poets are now comfortable to include these books in the list of books of poetry. This indicates the recognition of this genre. And the recent experimentation with the creation of new possibilities in prose poetry has been observed through the further incorporation of prose-features. In other words, Bangla prose poetry has entered the third stage. As a result, there is an increase in the number of prose poems that are independent of both the structure of poetry and prose. In Bangla, prose poems written in one or two sentences found in Majnu Shah’s ‘I am a Dropout Horse’ can be remembered. The anthology of ‘Postmodern Bangla Poems’ edited by Prabhat Chowdhury, published from Kolkata, West Bengal, India, shows us a variety of observations though this book does not entirely include prose poems. Here the poets have easily included non-poetic and non-literary subjects like examination question papers, mathematical formulas, market forms etc. in their prose poems. In Bangladesh, poets like Bratya Raisu, Shamim Reza, Mujib Irom, Matiar Raphael and others have used mixed citizen idioms, regional words and idioms and rhetoric of righteousness in prose poems. In recent times, some people are writing long prose poems. The readers may recall the three poems of the American poet John Ashbury.

It is evident that these efforts of the poets did not emerge through the release of rhythm--even the prose poems of Arun Mitra and others. The appearance and development of Bangla poetry are both the result of artistic obsession and creativity. Prior to the advent of prose poetry in the French literature, which was drawn from the hands of Aloysius Bertrand and Baudelaire, there had been a well-established practice of poetry in prose. Baudelaire's modern consciousness chose prose as a medium for the poetic embodiment of a new way of life. He has identified the turning point in the industrial vision behind this. The same is true in the case of the rise of the present prose poetry; and it cannot be placed in the continuation of rhythmic release of Bangla poetry.

The way of Bangla prose poetry was not very smooth because it involves the issue of identity-construction of different types of literary forms--this crisis is innate and inevitable, because it is a hybrid class of literary work. In Bangla, we know 'free verse' or 'free verse poetry' as 'prose poetry'. Prose poetry has also two or three closest neighbors: short stories, poetic prose, and autobiographical essays. These three variations come from the prose. They did not clash with 'prose poetry', because they are not widely studied in Bangla literature and on the other hand, prose poetry was published as a part of the book of poems, at the demand of poetry. Therefore, without 'prose poetry' or free verse poetry, the mentioned styles or variations did not challenge or threaten the prose poetry. The prose poetry has come face to face with the free verse poetry in terms of poetry in the above-mentioned styles or types.

The trend of so-called 'prose poetry' or 'free verse poetry' in Bangla literature is established by Rabindranath Tagore with the publication of the book of poetry, 'Punoscho'(1932); however, it is termed as 'Rabindra Prose Poetry' by the poet, Shankha Ghosh. The kind of poetry that is meant by 'prose poetry' in Bangla seems to be very similar to the 'English free verse'. But in the history of Bangla poetry, names like 'prose poetry', 'free verse', and 'free rhyme' etc. were suggested at different times for rhythm-free poetry. Whether it is due to the use of Rabindranath or any other reason, the name 'prose poetry' is widely used. The duality of prose poetry or free verse with prose poetry is therefore very deep and historical in Bangla literature.

When prose poetry appeared, it did not have the urge to assimilate the language used in everyday life. Prose being the medium, it was easily attainable. But the poets of prose poetry desired to find how much the nature of poetry can be perceived in prose. Free Verse, on the other hand, emerged from a rebellion against old, cliché words, connotations and tendencies in the language of poetry. They wanted to provide the language and context of daily life into poetry. For this reason, they sought to adopt different features of prose. The ability to assimilate both mediums is remarkable. It is not possible for Free Verse to give up the uniqueness of becoming a poem, because it is a free verse or free rhyme poem while retaining the line-feature. This is why, no matter how prose-oriented it is, it has to return to the axis of poetry. Prose poetry is much more restrictive in this case. As much as it may lean towards poetry, it has the ability to use all the

possibilities of prose. There is no doubt that this freedom is riskier--but there is really no risk factor in expanding the horizon.

What is the nature of this freedom and risk? Other features of prose poetry are not inevitable except the absence of lineage. The demand for poetic shock is as distinct from the individual as it is to many other works. This is due to the blazing ability and almost irregularity in assimilating the features of any form. This irregularity can become a trap, because the poet may reach the abyss failing to reach the sublime beauty of poetry.

When a poet composes a prose poem, they naturally expect this risky freedom. For this reason, in terms of poetic language, the linguistic peculiarity of the prose poetry is more or less present. The audits they have made are also worth considering. The situation of this art-genre in the beginning can be said to be an almost undeniable alternative-structure of verse structure, where the poetic-expression can be examined by driving through. With repeated practice, it sprang to many places thus transforming into a mature form. The first four pioneers Arun Mitra, Utpalkumar Bose, Abdul Mannan Syed and Sikdar Aminul Haque's prose poetry emerged to a placid status through their departures, but the exercise of this form is definitely reaching new dimensions with various poets. Wherever they leave this variant, their successors or associates continue to place it in a more vivid horizon, just paving the way for the new expansion.

Sudip Chakroborthy

The Search for a Plurality of National Identities through Performance in Bangladesh

Between the ages of twelve and fifteen, my childhood friends and I used to celebrate the *Saraswati puja* – worship of the Hindu goddess of knowledge and wisdom – which would typically take place in the winter. We collected funds from all local businessmen, both Hindu and Muslim, in order to celebrate the *puja*. Many local Muslims visited the temporary shrine of worship and shared *prasad* (worship food) with Hindus. At that time, we were able to celebrate the *puja* during *Azan* prayers without keeping silent. Reciprocally, I remember very well that my Hindu family joined in *Eid-ul-Fitr* celebrations with our Muslim friends.

Today, it is almost mandatory to keep silent and take a break during *Azan*. Besides, during religious gatherings, many Islamic religious preachers advise their followers and lay devotees not to participate in non-Muslim worship and even not to observe Muslim celebrations such as *Eid-e-Miladunnabi* or *Ashura*, since these are not, or less, celebrated in the Middle East, and they embrace local Bangla

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forms. According to the preachers' views, participation in these Bangladeshi Muslim ritual are *shoriot-birodhi* (unlawful) and *haram* (forbidden) in Islam.

In January 2020, during a research visit to Bangladesh, I noticed that I could simultaneously hear the sound of *Azan* from the local mosque, and evening-prayer in my home. This resonance is rare in Bangladesh today. It is rare but it has not completely disappeared, and this moment was an inspirational impetus for me, resonating with hope for a society that can “live side by side within the same political unit” (Furnivall, 1948, p. 304). In such a context, my aim with my Practice Research has been to explore the multifaceted expressivities offered by theatre and performance traditions from Bangladesh, along with those to which I have been exposed during my PhD study in the UK, to examine the existence of the fluidity and heterogeneity of national identities in Bangladesh.

In this essay, I explain how my Practice Research project has explored various cultural, religious, and ethnic performance traditions to examine how theatrical performance can provide a space for posing questions about national identity/ies, and function as a forum for dialogues between contesting identities, while proposing how a plurality of national identity/ies may play out in daily life in Bangladesh today. I hope that my Practice Research reveals the theatrical performance of Bangladesh can expose ways in which the nationalist identities and homogeneity are negotiated and refused, and heterogeneity is celebrated.

The essay focuses on three performance traditions or theatrical productions. I first examine a theatrical performance which is based on Hindu rituals, but which goes beyond the normative structures of both Hinduism and Islam. Secondly, I analyse a theatre production that presents cultural nationalism and questions Muslim majority rule, instead proposing a plurality of identities. Finally, I allude to a theatrical production that celebrates the *Adivasi*¹ Saontal community. I place these recent theatrical productions in response to my ethnographic research on plurality and fluidity in relation to identities in Bangladesh.

***Kandoni Bisaharir gan* (2012)**

Kandoni Bisaharir gan, based on the medieval Bangla text of *Padma-puran* which is composed in rhyming metrical verse by Narayan Dev, is set in a secluded agrarian community. It is a theatrical performance based on the traditional performance of the life of the Hindu goddess Manasa. The well-known narrative of Manasa describes how she is the goddess of serpents. Snake worship is a popular form of adoration across the Indian subcontinent and Manasa is a popularly worshipped deity by subaltern communities in Bangla region. The goddess herself is only a snake in the eastern part of the subcontinent, Bangla, however. Manasa is

1 indigenous communities; however, the Constitution of Bangladesh (2011) uses the term tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities.

also identified as *Padma* (lotus), because a lotus gave birth to Manasa. The deity is called *Bisahari*, a name consisting of the two opposite words, *bisa-dhara* and *bisa-hara* (carrying venom and removing venom). Moreover, the word Manasa is derived from *manas* (desire or will). Therefore, Manasa is a goddess who, according to local Bangalee Hindu belief, represents both poison and cure, both danger and protection, both desire and will.

Many performances in Bangladesh employ texts popularly known as Padma-Puran or the Manasa-mangal which, as I have already mentioned, is a performance made of rhyming rhythmical verse. *Kandoni Bisaharir gan*, on the popular deity Manasa. Its narrative performance technique presents “a single performer [who] describes an event and/or portrays various characters related to the event, all in third person” (Ahmed, 2000, p. 18). *Kandoni Bisaharir gan* is generally “composed of dance, instrumental music, and speech rendered in prose, verse or lyric, either in the form of narration or that of dialogue” (p. 111). The structure of *Kandoni Bisaharir gan* is epic, yet non-linear, and includes around ten events. In the final episode, the elite male merchant Chandra Sawdagor offers puja to the goddess Manasa, thus placating her anger.

A performance group named Tilay Loko Theatre were invited to stage *Kandoni Bisaharir gan* at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (National Academy of Fine and Performing Arts), in Dhaka in 2012. The Bangladeshi playwright and researcher Shahman Moishan’s study of *Kandoni Bisaharir gan*

illuminates how it represents multiplicity and plurality. The performers staged the piece end-on. However, Moishan informs that when the performance takes place in rural settings in Dinajpur, the northern district of Bangladesh, for example, the seating arrangement is a little different: the inner yard of a house is transformed into a round or square performance space that utilises minimalist scenographic elements. *Puja* or worshipping rituals provide the central premise for this performance because the female goddess Manasa desires offerings from Chandra Sawdagor. *Kandoni Bisaharir gan* is performed frequently in Hindu households in order to fulfil the wishes of Manasa's devotee. However, the important point to be made is that, in spite of the fact that this musical form is a Hindu ritual, the interweaving of so many different stories at subverts any singular narrative, meaning that the stories transcend religion, according to Moishan (2014, pp. 181-186).

Moreover, in this particular production, the performers were both Hindu and Muslim, creating an interreligious collaboration. It is in fact important to note that, owing to the popularity of Manasa in the Indian subcontinent, she is in fact worshipped Muslim households. Therefore, both the tradition of *Kandoni Bisaharir gan*, and its performance at the Academy in Dhaka, break the traditional confines of religion (p. 182).

For instance, Anisuzzaman points out, “[w]hen we identify a group of people as Bangalee Muslim, we highlight only one aspect of their self-identity. But if we observe closely, we shall see that they contain multitudes” (2017). Being active

participants in the Hindu performance, both the Muslim performers and spectators/devotees reject one fixed self-identity, embracing the complexities of South Asian identity.

Similarly, *Madar pirer gan*, *Satya pirer gan*, *Gazir gan*, *Khawaj Khijirer gan*, *Bono-Bibir Gan* which are artistic performances staged at shrines and conducted by fakirs, pirs and sadhus across the Bangladesh Delta region, exemplify and illustrate the syncretism and symbiosis of different performance and ritualistic traditions characteristic of the region.² According to the Bangladeshi performance practitioner and researcher Syed Jamil Ahmed's study of *Madar pirer gan*, one of these performance rituals staged at shrines, "the very act of performing, sponsoring, and witnessing" the aforementioned performances are the "act of resistance to the ideological stance taken up by the Islamic scholars at *waz mahfils*" (2006, p. 79).³ Thus, these performance traditions are at the very basis of theatre and performance in the Bangla region, and are a key influence on my own practice.

Bisad Sindhu (1991-1992)

Just three years after declaring Islam as the state religion, and

2 *Fakir* and *sadhu*: mendicant dervishes or religious ascetics who live solely on alms. According to Ahmed, "A pir is a spiritual guide among Muslim mystics from the Sufi branch of Islam" (2006, p. 76).

3 lay devotees gather to listen to an Islamic scholar who elucidates one or more religious issues believed to be important.

immediately after the fall of General Ershad's dictatorship, Dhaka Padatik, a theatre group, produced Mir Mosharraf Hossain's *Bisad Sindhu* (*The Ocean of Grief*), an adaptation of a nineteenth-century Bangla novel. It was staged in two parts, in 1991 and 1992 consequently. *Bisad Sindhu* was adapted by Biplab Bala while Syed Jamil Ahmed designed and directed the theatrical production to seek, as Ahmed argues, "a third space of enunciation that lies in the unoccupied middle ground on the axis of the dichotomous positions held by religious and linguistic normative standards" (2014, p. 143). By mentioning the idea of the "third space", Ahmed was clearly citing Homi Bhabha (1994)'s notion of hybridity, where different identities can come together and meet in a "third space".

Bisad Sindhu presented the story of the martyrdom in Karbala of the Prophet Mohammed's grandson, Hasan ibn Ali and Husayn ibn Ali. The production dealt with "possibly the most uncomfortable issue" in the history of Islam, notably the separation of the religion into Sunnis and Shi'ites, which "gave rise to the most painful schism within the fold of the believers" (*ibid*).

Ahmed argues:

In the context of the Islamic resurgence in post-liberation Bangladesh, the performance deployed the quasi-historical legend of Karbala that has been familiar to the Muslims of Bengal since the sixteenth century (although an overwhelming majority of them are Sunnis), in order to challenge religious bigotry by structuring the narrative of the performance

around incessant questioning of supposed
“Islamic” values. (2014, p. 143)

This production consequently created an intellectual platform in which to question the sectarian values that are imposed on people in the name of a particular faith.

Bisad Sindhu used poetic visuals rather than realist scenography, transforming the proscenium stage of Mahila Samiti theatre in the capital city Dhaka to create a thrust stage, where the show literally “thrust” itself into the audience, demonstrating the fact that this story from Islamic history was of keen relevance to Bangladeshi society today. Ahmed explains:

The spectators seated on the three sides of the thrust, were treated to a feast of song, music, indigenous martial art, acrobatics, narration, and dialogue. The performance of the play is still remembered by the spectators for stunning visuals, such as representation of the Prophet (unimaginable in Islamic culture) by a beam of light, the entry of Shimar (the fabled murderer of Hussein) from behind a moving army of cardboard figures, his subsequent disappearance under a pyramid of white cloth, and horse riders represented by hobby horse dancers, to mention only a few. (2014, pp. 143-144)

Therefore, while the show provided critique of contemporary politics and religion, it was presented obliquely, poetically and expressionistically. In this way, *Bisad Sindhu* was able to question:

Islamist assumptions of an imagined bond of a Muslim nation that evokes uninterrogated allegiance to legendary heroes of a pristine character. [...] In the inclusive encounter that *Bisad Sindhu* succeeded in becoming, it imagined a Bangladeshi nation by consciously putting together diverse cultural shreds, even from Sanskrit-culture, and sought to pose the problem of outside/inside in ‘a process of hybridity, incorporating new “people” in a relation to the body politic, generating other sites of meaning [...]’. (Ahmed, 2014, p. 144)

Bisad Sindhu thereby celebrated plurality in a third space by displaying cultural elements from Sanskrit-vedic sources, and *Bharatanatyam* (a classical genre of dance drama widely practised across South Asia), bringing together Hinduism and secular cultural paradigms into the theatre.

Rarang (2004)

Rarang (*Distant Drum*), staged in 2004, represented a point of departure from the metropolitan, national centre, to the indigenous periphery.

The indigenous intellectual Aongiyojai Marma argues, “[...] cultural interventionist representations are only but misrepresentations not only because they are representations of the colonized by the colonist, but because they camouflage events to allow the consensus reality to remain unaffected. Consequently, it makes the colonized more subservient”

(Marma, 2010). Noted playwright and researcher Selim Al Deen argues that “the Bangalee majority dominates the ethnic minorities economically, politically, and culturally” (1995, p. 9, my translation). In order to combat this kind of “colonial” and “dominant” attitude by Bangalee culture over *Adivasi* indigenous people, Aranyak theatre group staged *Rarang*, a play written and directed by Mamunur Rashid, a noted theatre maker and cultural activist. A group of Bangalee artists from Aranyak then performed this play.

Employing a set of non-hierarchical and horizontal systems principles, *Rarang* engages “the struggle of ethnic communities” in the domain of theatrical practice in Bangladesh, where Bangalee cultural nationalism exists predominantly (Ahmed, 2014, p. 145). *Rarang* presents the Saontal resistance against oppression by the British and their local Bangalee agents. It is a historical play that spans the period from the Nachole uprising in 1940s led by Ila Mitra and other communist activists, to the murder of the Saontal leader Alfred Soren in 2000. It staged Saontal performance aesthetics, using Saontal dance, music, and simplified realist acting. Ahmed describes the further use of non-realism:

for the scenes that depict the devious Bengali characters and their duplicity, the production makes use of caricature and a homegrown version of Brechtian alienation technique that mellows down the ‘dry’ and ‘intellectual’ mode, as seen in Berliner Theatre’s application in Brecht’s very own *Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder*, and brings home the play’s political statement. (2014, p. 145)

Often when *Adivasi* indigenous people are represented in Bangalee culture, “an oversimplification of their [indigenous communities]” takes place, (Marma, 2010); or else a “pathetic” and folkloric representation is given, in the name of “cultural celebration” (Tripura, 2015, pp. 142-143). Marma expresses that, “[i]t is disheartening that the distorted, neglected and bypassed cultures and peoples are being once again given the false impression of permanence by the narrators who belong to the centre” (2010). Therefore, a production like *Rarang* was important, because it portrayed the *Adivasi* people with dignity, humour and respect.

Admittedly, *Rarang* was staged in the centre of power, Bangladesh’s capital city. Moreover, it was not staged by the *Adivasi* people themselves, but instead it was about them. However, anthropologist Prashanta Tripura describes *Rarang* as a potentially important representation of ethnicity, since it was relatively unprecedented to represent *Adivasi* people positively. He did, though, express his doubt whether this play, however sincere, can stop the oppression against ethnic minorities in Bangladesh (2015, p. 143, my translation). A writer from one of the ethnic communities did describe *Rarang* as a “sincere” play, and stated that it signifies the diversity of the nation’s ethnicities, and how they should be “accommodated within the monolithic narration of the nation as posited by the cultural nationalism” of the Bangalees (Ahmed, 2014, p. 145).

Rarang staged the idea, expressed by many participants in my interviews and workshops, that human existence is impossible without following the principles of co-existence.

Conclusion

Theatre of Bangladesh, therefore, becomes a space to understand the fluidity of identities, metaphor of contestation, negotiation, hybridisation, that seeks neither the answer nor the solution. Instead, being informed by my ethnographic research in Bangladesh, the performance creates an embodied form of knowledge that seeks a new understanding of reality and sets a vision of plurality for the collectivity of people living in the Delta.

This study has also found that the Bangla language-based cultural nationalism has dominated in Bangladeshi theatre. Nonetheless, theatre in this region also celebrates the expressivities of fluidity and plurality that challenge the monolithic idea of national identity. These performances imagine a multi-axial space of co-existence and inclusion, rather than the inflexible mode of exclusion. Informed by the plurality expressed in some contemporary Bangladeshi theatrical performances sought to create a new performance that can celebrate diversity.

On the occasion of “World Theatre Day” in 2005, Ariane Mnouchkine, the French theatre director of epic pieces with historical and political themes, exclaimed:

Help!

Theatre, come to my rescue!

I am asleep. Wake me

I am lost in the dark, guide me, at least towards a candle

I am lazy, shame me
I am tired, raise me up
I am indifferent, strike me
I remain indifferent, beat me up
I am afraid, encourage me
I am ignorant, teach me
I am monstrous, make me human
I am pretentious, make me die of laughter
I am cynical, take me down a peg
I am foolish, transform me
I am wicked, punish me.
I am dominating and cruel, fight against me
I am pedantic, make fun of me
I am vulgar, elevate me
I am mute, untie my tongue
I no longer dream, call me a coward or a fool
I have forgotten, throw Memory in my face
I feel old and stale, make the Child in me leap up
I am heavy, give me Music
I am sad, bring me Joy
I am deaf, make Pain shriek like a storm
I am agitated, let Wisdom rise within me
I am weak, kindle Friendship
I am blind, summon all the Lights
I am dominated by Ugliness, bring in conquering
Beauty
I have been recruited by Hatred, unleash all the forces
of Love. (Mnouchkine, 2005)

Theatre can create a forum for debate on the co-existence of individuals and the communities from diverse backgrounds.

My aim was to propose plurality as the basis of living both in theatre and in real-life contexts in Bangladesh. Paul Gilroy, a British cultural theorist, writes of identity in ways that summarise my own approach to identities in Bangladesh “the instability and mutability of identities which are always unfinished, always being made” (1993, p. 39). This concept of the hybridity of identities has been combined in my study with a belief that multiple heterogeneous identities must be tolerated together, in society. French sociologist Alain Touraine’s *Can We Live Together?: Equity and Difference* states:

We can live together only if the primary objective of our laws, institutions and forms of social organization is to safeguard our demand to live as the Subjects of our own experience.
(2000, p. 158)

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PART TWO

David Lee Morgan

David Lee Morgan was born in Berlin, grown in and around Seattle, for the last 30 years David Lee Morgan has been based in London, travelling the northern hemisphere as a performance poet and street musician (saxophone). He has written novels, plays and musical theatre. He's won a fair few slam poetry competitions, including the London, the UK, and the BBC Slam Championships. He holds a PhD in creative writing and philosophy at Newcastle University. He's a longstanding member of the Writers Guild of Great Britain.

Blackbird

It was the orphans who got it bad from those bastards - the ones who had no one to look after them, no one to notice the bruises and broken limbs, no one to notice if they disappeared. The Christian Brothers were an

organisation of sadists and pederasts, but in Ireland and elsewhere they had two sides – there were also lots of really good teachers who ran the posh prep schools that trained half the rulers of the Irish state.

My friend Tom was put in a Christian Brothers' home when he was eleven years old. He was beaten and tortured, but his mother and sisters were still alive, so compared to the orphans, he 'had it good'. He said you would see a kid in the hallways who had become small and withdrawn, who would jump at sudden noises, and you would know that they had started in on him.

A few years ago, the rulers of the Irish state flew my friend Tom back to his old school to show them where the bodies were buried. There is talk of him getting money in compensation - big, big money - but so far as I know, it hasn't happened yet.

The Christian Brothers murdered my friend
He walks the streets and writes songs
Beautiful songs that break your heart
But he is dead, long dead
He waits for the time they will cart him away
He drinks Tennants and Special Brew
And has long since abandoned his wife
His son, his chances, all his wonderful chances
He's a selfish bastard

But no one blames him very much

In my courtyard there is a blackbird which has come
unstuck in time

He wakes us hours before dawn and sings his heart out
Only to fall silent long before the sun has thought of
coming up

This morning, he woke me at three a.m.
I thought of Tom and wrote this down

[Poet's Note: I wrote this around 15 years ago about a friend of mine, a sweet guy and a wonderful songwriter – a victim of the Christian Brothers in Ireland. A couple years later, his family asked me to speak it at his funeral.

The first time I performed this – at the Poetry Cafe in London – two other poets got up after and defended the Christian Brothers. I remember one of them said, “I went to a Christian Brothers school here in London, and there wasn't one of them I wouldn't be glad to sit down with and have a beer right now.”

The first time I performed it in the US, it was at an

Italian-American poetry event in NYC. I was doing it along with a very anti-American poem about 9/11, and it was a less than a year after 9/11. I'd always thought of Italian-Americans as very patriotic and was kind of worried the 9/11 poem. After I'd finished my set, the president of the society stormed over to my table, pointed his finger at me and said, "You have to promise me one thing. You have to promise you'll do that Christian Brothers poem at every show on your tour. Those bastards can't be allowed to get away with what they've done".]

I Saw This Movie

I saw this movie where the forces of the devil were killing all the six years old children for fear that one of them would grow up to be good, and there was this one little girl who was really good, and they wanted to kill her so bad, and her mother tried to save her but she was just a single mother and the forces of the devil were very strong, they were too strong for the mother and she was all alone, but every time they almost succeeded in killing the mother and child, a stranger would appear, a different stranger every time, but each one of them looked like a really nice person and they would do something to help, something small and insignificant, but at just the right time and just the right place, and it

was always just enough for the mother and child to get away, and finally the forces of evil were defeated because the little girl was so very good and her mother loved her so very much and there was a whole convent of nuns praying for them night and day, and there was one good cop, more than a cop, he was an FBI agent, a good FBI Agent, how about that! And together they saved the world, and made it safe for all the children in it, and I couldn't help thinking all the obvious things, like... were there enough nuns in enough convents to pray for all the children in Iraq, and would god give a shit, because after all even if they were such very good children and their mothers loved them so very much, and maybe there would even be a good CIA agent, how about that! But how many good strangers are there in the world, are there enough, and can they do just the right thing at just the right time, even if it's small and insignificant, could they do that, could it be enough, are there enough nuns, are there enough good strangers, do you think we could find even one good cop? We probably could. At least one. Would that be enough?

[Poet's Note: This was a real movie. It was laughably cheesy, and I stuck with it only because it was late at night and nothing else was on. When I wrote this description, I was intending a piss-take, but something happened in the writing, and now I can't read through it

without tears coming to my eyes]

Angel Kiss

I had this intense dream last night where an alien creature – it turned out later that it was Satan – was killing off all my friends, one by one. We tried to stop it, but it seemed to have these supernatural powers, it could do amazing things, we were helpless in the face of it.

Then I was drinking in a bar, trying to forget, I imagine, and this beautiful woman – it turned out later that she was an angel – came up to me and said, “The creature has no real power, not the kind that could kill anyway. God wouldn’t give it that kind of power. She loves you too much. She maybe even loves the creature too much – to give it the weight of such power. The creature can only deceive you and turn you against each other. You are killing yourselves.”

Then it was like the phrase in the Bible – the scales fell away from our eyes. The creature had no power over us. We were free, maybe not safe yet, but free. Then the

angel kissed me. I looked into her eyes. I saw you.

Prayer

and the holy dove turns into a bald eagle, into a warplane, into a screech owl, is the terror, is the killing, is the dying, is the prey, is the predator, is the sin, is the tiny patch of longing for the sweetness of love, of giving, of caring for someone, something, anything other than the me that i hold onto, that i care about more than any living thing, is the dead weight of me, is the desire to be, the desire to be worth, and i think of Kirsty, of Carolyn, of Caitlin, of my sisters, of my little brother that i betrayed, ran away from, abandoned, couldn't love, couldn't love enough, is the baby drowning on the beach, always coming back to the babies, the easy tug at the heartstring, is the music of a world that is more than me, that goes on after me, is the hooded wish to, wish, to wish to, want to, story story story take me, make me, me me me me me...

there are those i know who love in a way that escapes the me me me, i, who have all this magic, all these gifts that i use, trying to do good, but not with good intent, only

with the claws of a hungry hunger, wanting to be loved,
to be held, to be sex in a bottle, fermented mischief,
wickedness baptised in the holy font of a typeface,
two-face, caritas, sidewalk flower growing up out of a
crack in the ego solo, riding a broomstick, clean
sweeping with a hammer and popsicle, floating on a sea
of the me me me me me me...

there are those i know who love because they love, not
because they want to be loved, not just love hungry, but
because they see soul, they cherish, hold close, closer
than life, closer than death, kind all over, kind deep
down inside, and brave – without bravery love is nothing
– and i can sing their praise, i can see their wings, i
see-dream their dream, but no not never holy me, never
feel their heat, never bleed their bleed, never give the
way they give, i am sick and twisted, but i can see the
spring bloom booming around the me me me, mooses
looking down at the promised land, but never setting
foot, because my feet are stones holding me down, down
deep, and i can never sing the pure sweet song of the
dispossessed, glue sniffing demons cackle with
demented sarcasm mocking at the me me me me me...

on a good night, i can catch the easy cry of a child in a
code on a keyboard, but no never crack the sidewalk
chalk-mark ghost of the me me me, i can never tell the

good story, not from deep inside, but i can see it in you, i
can almost touch it, maybe even bring it to life, not
because it is there in me, so... not coming from the core,
so... hollow and empty in a way, but on the page maybe,
where the hard body does not live, but only suggests,
gives an impression, maybe there the ghost skeleton is
enough for you to read into it the honest love that i am
missing but can almost catch, almost write down, and in
the almost, maybe you can read a soul, not because it is
there, but with enough of the almost, maybe i can lay it
down on a page for you to pick up and breath into it.

this is my prayer

that my life so smothered i ego can find meaning

not rest, but purpose, usefulness

because you can see in me what isn't there but almost is

please find these words and glue them together with the
courage i wish for you

because i want it to be me.

Louise Whyburd

Louise Whyburd is a creative who lives in the Southwest of England. She studied a BTEC national diploma in Performing Arts during her college years and has also worked on a stained-glass window project which is still displayed in the Steam Museum in Swindon. She continued her creativity into adulthood through her passion for cooking and arts, and rekindled her love of writing poetry during lockdown last year. Louise's poetry is very much inspired by her life experiences and unique perspective on a vast array of subjects from nature to politics.

The river flows inside of me

When your heart is truly open and hear your authentic heart beat calling at a frequency like no other, you know your soul has been opened. It's like a tide that has a force like no other, a rip tide, a current that is so strong you fight against it but your instincts tell you to let it flow deep within you. Every breath you take becomes deeper as the world around keeps turning beneath your feet,

your smell, your touch, your taste heightens as the energy runs through your veins and every inch of your soul breaths.

You feel a river deep inside of you, it takes over and flows within, it floods your senses, runs heavily through your blood; your mind opens as the vibrations echo through your body leaving no cell untouched. The air around you becomes clearer, the passion you have becomes stronger, the fight inside you is no longer a battle, the true words within you surface and dance off of your tongue like a tempo that compares to no other. You find your happiness within silence, solidarity is no longer loneliness as you build your mental fortress, as the thoughts within your mind deepen your life's true calling shine's bright like beacon within the dark nights sky. Let the river flow deep inside of you, let it run through every depth of your being, let it take over and grow your soul, as your heart beats at a rhythmical flow so strong you feel alive inside and awakened.

[Poet's Note: The inspiration behind "The river flows inside me" came to me late one night whilst led in bed, I was at point in my life where there had been a lot of upheaval and change yet within the change and uncertainty, I found this feeling of freedom and release, like a new lease in my soul.]

Rain drops

Listening to the rain as it hits my bedroom window, as I lay here absorbing the soothing sound, the smell of the damp air awakening my senses, taking in the sound of the rhythmical tapping, hearing the soft wind blow, feeling it gently run over my skin, embracing the moment for all it's worth. Resting as I take in the moment before I rise to start a new day. There is something calming about it, I could lay here for hours within my thoughts, taking in the sound, the feel, the smell. It's the small things, the free things in life that can truly bring the simple pleasures.

[Poet's Note: I was inspired to write the poem "Raindrops" one morning as I was led in bed listening to the soothing sound of the rain hitting my bedroom window on a warm summer's morning.]

Ripples

Be that pebble that radiates those high-frequency ripples. For those ripples grow into tides and those tides grow into tsunamis. Flood the world, set the momentum, let it grow, the only boundaries are the limits you set within your mind. Don't be your own life sentence. Happiness is

a state of mind, not a destination. Don't go searching for a saviour because you're the only one who can save ya. Are you truly free if someone still holds that lock and key? Is that freedom? I think not, throw away that key, break the lock and build your own empire. Set your own path. Head into uncharted territories. Explore the unknown. Move forward for the only winner of this battle is you. Take control because what's the point of spending your life grafting, if inside you're no longer laughing?

Who are you pleasing, society, social media, your boss, screw them, be a self-pleaser because no one else will heal you. If someone rocks your boat, don't let it sink. Drop their anchor, keep on sailing. For they are only a drop in the ocean. An ocean you have the strength to conquer, leading to discoveries along the way. Full of light, full of wonder, full of connections, drop your sail. Let the wind carry you to your next destination. They say fight fire with fire, but that only ends in flames, not gains. So chose those battles wisely. Chose the one's that make you flourish, not the ones they leave you malnourished. For those will leave you weak, they won't help you reach your peak. So trust your inner judgement. Let your gut instinct speak. Don't spend your whole life inside a chrysalis. Become a butterfly. Show your vibrancy, your true colours, your beauty, your self-worth. Spread those wings and fly. For each flutter

will send your energy far and wide. Flood the world with your high-frequency vibes.

[Poet's Note: I started getting back into writing poetry during lockdown, my friend and fellow poet Zed Regal challenged me to write a poem every day for 7 days, from there I found my creative writing flow again. I started to share my poetry with friends which inspired them to take up poetry too, so this was what inspired me to write the poem "ripples" because once the pebble drops the energy's ripples continue to spread, the rest of the poem just flowed naturally from there.]

Turquoise blanket

Jagged edges and rocky cliffs, embracing the moment for all it's worth and beauty. Taking in the therapeutic smell of the briny sea air as it fills every chamber of my lungs with each breath. Hearing the ocean whispering as the soft waves lap over the shore line creating a beautiful rhythmical song. Gazing at a vast turquoise blanket broken up with shimmering diamonds as the sun beats down over the soft ripples. Listening to the call of the seagulls as they glide above the water's surface, scouring the coastline for food. Staring into the heat haze dancing over the hot pebbles creating flickering hypnotic mirages. This is my happy place; this is my place of peace. The isle of Portland

will always be a part of my heart.

[**Poet's Note:** The Isle of Portland had always been very dear to my heart as had many family holidays there growing up, so I have a lot of fond memories of the area. The inspiration to write "Turquoise blanket" came to me whilst sat on Chesil Beach just simply watching the waves lap over the shore line.]

Daisy Green

My name is Daisy Green. I am a mature student studying a BA English and Creative Writing degree. I live in Llangollen. North Wales. I am inspired by my beautiful surroundings of mountains and rivers.

Most of my work stems from being a victim of domestic violence but I think my works also shows positivity. I write what I am feeling, rarely without editing. It all comes from anger, upset and my strength to keep strong from whatever is thrown at me.

My goals are to publish an anthology of my poems for victims and survivors of domestic abuse and anyone else that would like to read it. I would also love to facilitate workshops using poetry to enhance well-being.

Please find me at

<https://www.facebook.com/poetryblogs/>

The Anniversary of Happiness

This day, three years ago, I became a Mrs. I never imagined being separated on our third-year anniversary. Maybe we would never of reached thirty years but only due to death. The death that we were meant to share. Holding one another in to the next life. But then this life happened and we are no longer together.

Death of a marriage

Loss of a best friend and love

De Ja Vu comes true

My heart is full of pain. It aches for what should have been. It crumbles when I remember this day. The 4th and the 29th will always be a reminder of the happy times. The difficult times the beginning and ending of times.

Painful memories

Soothed by water, nature and

The moon and the stars

[Poet's note] Written on what would have been my

third-year wedding anniversary. I always said I would never marry but I did. I always said marriage is for life. But I realised that happiness and self-worth is worth much more than a marriage certificate.

Times Forgotten

It's an autumn evening in the cottage set between the mountains and the sea. He pours her a large red wine at dinner time. Joining her by snapping the top of his beer can. There isn't any food just yet. He needs to smoke his weed before he feels the need to eat. He's not particularly bothered about the booze, it's the smoke he wants to evoke. He's high. He makes her want to cry.

He talks to the room

Sharing his thoughts from times past

How long will it last?

She joins in with the smoke. Craving for numbness, wanting to block him out. Ignored he cannot be. He tells her stories of the ex and the ex before that. The intrusive images float around her already damaged mind. She prepares a fire for some kind of warmth. She sits and stares at the vicious flame attacking the wood. Which reflects her husband. She feels the burn. He talks and talks and talks some more. Whilst playing his guitar and

mournful music.

Her mood is sinking

She cry's within, drinking more

Black out is welcome

[Poet's note] This is written from a memory of the times I did not enjoy. I would drink to pass-out and forget how I was feeling. Hiding behind the booze.

Harvesting the Gloom

As she sat under the stars and the moon, the clouds were playful with her gloom. She waited patiently for the dark blackened clouds to uncover her delight of the bright Harvest Moon. Her eyes wandered to the falling stars, serenading her with wishes that may come true. For she had a hundred wishes to be fulfilled. Distracted by the beauty of the darkened sky, keeping her heart beating. Finally, the luminous moon makes an extraordinary appearance. Dulling her sadness.

Nature in the evening

Wild life in the day

Taking all the thoughts away

[Poet's note] This poem was inspired by sitting out looking for the moon, searching for my happiness. I have recently split up with my husband and he was my dark cloud blocking my light.

Embrace the Reality

Today I feel alive. There's someone at my door. My heart joining the tapping of every knock. I open the door wide just like the look in my eyes. Its him, he is here, he's finally come. I wrap myself around him and embrace him tenderly. We are lost in a stare. My eyes they are shut tight. I awaken from the night. I must have fallen to sleep. With the realisation of my dream. The cold stone cottage dampens my joy. I crawl from my bed and blow out the candle but there's no point in making a wish. I look from my window and the leaves have disappeared, replaced by the spirals of icicles neatly webbed between the branches of the trees.

Tea in the morning

Pot of herbal for my lunch

Wine in the evening

[Poet's note] This poem reflects that I was trapped in an abusive relationship and no matter how much I wished for the relationship to work; I was only fantasising. When I woke up every morning, I realised I was still in that depressing relationship.

Loneliness

I see the candle flickering in the shadows, the sweet smell of jasmine arouses my thirst for sensual love making. I sit alone in this dark stone cottage nesting in the hills of autumn. The trees are shredding their security of their warmth, of the cold winter that is approaching. I sit all lazy and dazed. I dream of walking hand in hand with the beautiful man I adore, step by step, crunching and crushing the red, brown and orangey leaves.

The sound of the lambs

The tweet tweet tweeting birds sing

From my garden swing

[Poet's note] Finding some refreshment in my surroundings of a darkened relationship. A wanting to

make love with sensuality rather than a need to provide a sexual act. My security felt bare and I knew I needed to be cold to end the relationship.

Dustin Pickering

Dustin Pickering is a founder of Transcendent Zero Press and founding editor of Harbinger Asylum. He is a Pushcart nominee. He was placed as finalist in Adelaide Literary Journal's first short story contest. He is an author of several poetry collections, a novella, and several other works. He is also a literary critic and philosopher, as well as a book reviewer. He lives in Houston, Texas.

Pregnant Fiery Sun

but what is ascension....she may ask / future tense. I
knew her strains, belly and all. The magic is in her
awakening. I sing sweetly the dawn, again. Our mouths
are open. Tomorrow.

Birth is a promise \?/ inside of me...her eyes devour
light, light becomes her sullen drive....

o but aghain, aghain, sam hain, the world. here it is
autumn “there seasons are bright with sorrow”

and eyes, eyes, YES-----

she is again, again.

October Walpurgis

fiction is empty. her satin colors full with evil. the
opening of the eye, threaded needle, she stitched me
short, again. again. I bled the highway of singularity. her

purple passion kept me alive. I am a STAR,
belly...aching, STAR...the wedges of price, a fiction.
don't sell the wares until the winter is through. stitch the
night, stitch it short, stitch it like a shallow nod. the
death is only once.

Star Will We Hear Ye?

open the facets of your face // again the night. but only
they can hear me, these celebrities. they are haunting the
page. they are *prophets* damned, I tell ye, sitting on
the edge of doom [Hollywood is a damsel in
distress: she pimps my being, escorts my pride:
sanctimonious rapture.] o, but aren't we all sicker than
the glory we succumb to <ancient> <old> you are
greater than your teeth

I Am Waiting On The Other Side

.....finally: you are there, soul mate, breaking bones
badly, we are a corpse together. death is over. I am on a
stone slab and you are laughing. to run, torture, language
is my saint. I tell you to shush. you are resolved,
cemetery, kill <ME?> but know I am also the bigger
one.

Succubus

starvation. wildeyed and empty of virtue, vulture of my gallows: I stand in defiance. like a dys-functional working class dove—you hidden dimension/dementia...I have, but wait, forgotten. weigh me to the earth, my ear is a dream. I have heard nothing.

[Poet's Note: These prose poems as a whole engage with the mystique of darkness within so many elements of American culture, including recent Weinstein accusations and so forth. The symbolic syntax is intentional and is used to imply sickness and redemption. "pregnant fiery sun" engages with the concept of renewal and purification in the realm of possibilities,]

Tapashi Laha

Tapashi Laha is a bilingual poet, critic, magazine editor. She started writing from an early age of six, that she stopped for years. Later she took up her pen when she felt the call of her soul for writing. She loves writing ghost stories and many of her stories are also published in reputed magazines. She loves travelling and learning new skills.

An address of storm

I remember now. All these disasters that formed a storm to dance my life within a bag that got four sides like the shape of a perfect square which you learn, you have to, since age and all, winks by your parents side, fuelling the ears, the brain, the rigid channels of heart with complex names, our forefathers' vision and all growth

that needs be meet, to call it a tree. After this you cut it in two halves or can scrape the flesh out from within, it never minds. I was different a lot. Since they never called me to school, left to nature to sing own song. Only then you learn how to teach and how to love, two things predestined for a woman. It will be same like cycle of nature. Nature and mother, cherishing all those memories sweetly boxed into, smelt more like homemade chocolates, frugal yet divine! from there those sides have invited me for a party. I went and got mad. As i sipped down through the brewing flavour of a new horizon, the glass got into me and i was reflecting its own emotions, all its streaks of bright dazzles, it was more than an addiction. It was a home with all peace and food and love that you often get hungry for. I never knew whether you can call this glass a perfect for fill, I still wait to let the dance end to the edge of all stormy nights, when they still appear, like just bloomed flowers of azurite light.

Of course the bag is overpacked. Those pairs of trousers, shirts and kurtis. Sarees were never opted for a choice of the day. Not that they weren't beautiful enough. They were, still are, frugal yet divine. Now I teach my students to copy my loads that I carried for years. I see shine in some of theirs' eyes. I laugh at myself like that Lomov from Russian playwright, seeing the future, those

storms that i carried along in all temporal dimension, seeing for so so many years, so many ages, gone old, still repeating those tables of innocence.

[Poet's note: I wrote this without any particular thought in my mind. A random of memories that keeps the screen time of life into store, as i received a few flashes of some episodes life.]

Grass of Green, Pale of Blue, Heart of Shape

I never thought anything while seeing anyone in trouble. i took her stand, i shouted full pitched, in intense emotions, before some fifty chairs occupied. i comforted her when she got the news of accident of the only child, far away from her reach, knew she loved me too, calculations were clumsy, never cared for.... it was pure...that's what they call it, a soul to soul connection, in full bloom, ripe and fertile. life was too mysterious... i hardly could realise it was not for ever, never. One day it started thus. She shouted back, i didn't followed her advice to live my life. My life! Did i have any! Had i ever did the stuff like living in full, to make choices, never plucked weeds out of the field, never cleaned, never bathed until one father died in distress, without a clue. I don't call her now, i escape those

irksome chats of self-satisfaction, arrow-shaped,
moulded by creator to shoot forth to the target, never
replaced hands to the blessings of fork. I let it be, until
the end, the very. One plain cloth must leave all smells,
to look more acceptable to some unique cries.

[Poet's note: Based on the various aspects of friendship.
It reminds me one of my female friend. She forms a
very warm place in my memory, like those life
experiences that once broke you and then also, builds up
you too.]

Burnt

A long time ago, when the sun was just a runny nose
toddler, sucking its thumb at its first day of school.
Back then, it had a teacher, nobody remembers,
among his friends, the name of her. She resembled a
little like some human figure. The sun stood long hours
in class. It had no brain, not any finger. Still it stood,
like regular rock, and people mocked about him, sun was
struggling, juggling between places and it took years to
grow up into a man of him. And one day the teacher and
the sun met, suddenly. But they couldn't talk. They stood
facing each other. The burn of skin turned more filthy.
Some birds died off the heat.

[**Poet's note:** It's about the ill effect of ego conscious that drags one down from its source.]

Christ's Pain

They talk, talk, they talk, talk talk, words play to their mouth like melting of ice, breaking glaciers, of silence, scorn, disbelief, beaded, they draw together all oceans of hatred with volcanic erupts they do burst, provoke, hinging minds outgrown weads in shady green inhabiting flies, snakes and rat. Petrid skin left out to some bushes, emits the horrific smell. They talk. So many colours as many that you count by a rainbow, drawn so beautiful in a child's copy. Who they are, still they are, in their presence, without an eye, without a heart, without a shadow. Themselves but shadow with no eyes, no smell, no root to form an anchor, neither those bees, they are still okay with their hives. One layer of naked world as they drape over to their assumed form, foul it looks to bear, the images receds gradually to a screen of outburst pouring laughter, dreaded decibel, heart cringes, the poor fellow realised his part. He receives the punish, rain gorges down until the last of its vein, he

loved them only! sinned he was!

[**Poet's note:** Everyday we see so many things happening around, how people look up to each other, the conversations, reactions, emotions, how the jealousies, vulgarities for genuine human feelings is mocked at, tortured. It's a tribute to those warriors fighting through their silent actions against all such in general.)

Butterfly

The yellow butterflies up in the air, broad, thin screen like, dupattas of happiness for your bereaved soul. Motioning to the unrest, the storms that mind catches, let them release like waste smoke churning out of the factory mouth puffing circles, dirty gray. Butterfly is here to sing the song of your childhood, once more in lap of nature.

[**Poet's note:** How a small tiny creature like butterfly can turn a strong source of ones inner healing amidst all drudgeries of life.]

Part Three(five poems)

Padmanav Adhikari

Poem and prose writer Padmanav Adhikari was born on 12 October 1956 in Bakchar, Jashor Municipality. A teacher and British movement activist his father was Nalinikanta Adhikari and mother was Gauri Adhikari.

Notable works of Padmanabha Adhikari: Jabo Na(poetry), Antare Antare (poetry), Viddhhasto Janapad(poetry), Ferrari(poetry), Prahari(novel), Ekbrinte(essay), Maharshi Lalon Sai (essay), Teenage story Tin Panda (1st part). Moreover, his writings have been published in the national dailies, weekly and monthly newspapers of Bangladesh and India since 1992. So far, about 600 of his poems, stories, essays and research papers have been published. He received the Honorary Award for Literary Works (2003) by the Mohana Sahitya and Social Welfare Organisation of Khulna, the lifetime achievement award (2012) by Captain Mansur Ali Sahitya Parishad of Sirajganj and Honorary Award for Literary Works (2018) by The Tajuddin Foundation UK. He is a founding member of the Rupayan Sampraday Research, Literature and Culture, and Rebel Literary Council.

Poverty Consciousness

Things turn, in temporal tide. Raw hair fades in tone, catch tangles, turning white like a foul smell drawing repulses from human grammar. The beggar realises his famished state, in such signs, hanging out in open yard or in roof terrace. Those unparallelism, while noticed, shut back in mind for silence....from village to suburbs and vice versa. Meagre savings out of farming, unannounced in private store, utilised in labour expenses. Only ... only parents bear upon.....storehouses of poverty consciousness.

Translated from Bangla by Tapashi Laha

On The Way To Time

Every day, every moment. I observe a reflection in some mirror just opposite to you. In this way passes thousands of sleepless nights. A gypsy boy follows someone in running canvas of time. I do claim you are mine. Nobody more nothing else I long; clouds disappear, the sky gets captive in the star of sight. The sun looks, the man peeps into your mind. I know not roaming heart. Only the reckless civilization deserves. And still, I adore you. After all, the vast of the known and unknown is preserved in my first. I face the reality of life on my journey to the nameless land. Indeed life runs on the

nature of time.

Translated from Bangla by Moniruzzaman

Walking in Pure Light

One lie...entuned in revenge game with olden myths. The catch...poor, dumb masses, meagrely aware of game tricks, yet linger to those brainwashes by players, convinced fully. You try to break the spell...they come all attacking.....for the prejudiced faith in question. Beware!!! or meet the doom, for faith holds us. Wise see them as lies and politicians exploit through them the game of death. Why afraid to face that you search for the truth!! But knowing it and moulding life into its light, unlike those ignorant beasts, continuing to walk the path of pure light.

Translated from Bangla by Tapashi Laha

One Fragrant Face

Heroic sun...eagerly, tearing off layers of morning mist, I scudded through the same. one scooty overtakes.....wheeezooo.....a sound... a glance I pay to it.

Till then one fragrant face came upon my thought as the body gets hydrated in unison of wind and mist. Unusual wave within. A throbbing blue-lotus blooming over a patient lake. A kingfisher soars upward, just out of it. I battled anxiously, like that fish trapped between beaks. Walking continues, The sun has risen, vigorous against those foggy blocks.

Translated from Bangla by Tapashi Laha

This is the Right Time Now

Anamika, open your eyes and have a look over here. When the greenness extended up to the horizon pervades the world's open window, you are in mediation, spending an hour and hour of the best period of your life! Is Facebook more favourite than your lover? What games are you playing with your life at the moment! Will you get back your time when it's over! It is the perfect time to fight a battle.

Translated from Bangla by Uday Shankar Durjay

Binay Laha

Binay Laha is an Indian English poet and editor of Indology English Magazine. He has received many prestigious awards and recognition for composing and promoting literature. He has authored and edited a few books. He can be reached at binkrishna.taps@gmail.com

Some twenty miles away

1.

Away away from my dreams I nurture a different universe. Away from my dreams I call my soul became an unfortunate death. I die but cannot die for I fly beside your walk. I catch those birds after I clipped their wings. Dreams gone. I start reading the universe.

2.

I have seen a poet was sold to a whore. The whorish twilight has seen with me the same movie. I am sold to twilight. Poetry is born. Then they call me a poet. A poet is always worthless except to a poet.

3.

There is an abstract ending has a beginning to the end costs literature on the road. Balloons burst out balloons pumped out. It is a horse trading night. It is a night to be sold in the name of god and love. All are sold in night, nowadays in day and night both shamelessly.

4

Fatigued. Then comes the cost. The doll is coughing. I find no link in between life and death. I then call the stars. Counting those falling having a closer summer. The winter is slapping my body and nose. I will start loving my life.

5.

The fishes are dancing in fear. They have seen themselves to be caught. They have no god. They know how to dance before their death. So am I.

Chad Norman

Chad Norman lives beside the high-tides of the Bay of Fundy, in what is known as the hub of Nova Scotia. He has given talks and readings in Denmark, Sweden, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, America, and across Canada. His poems continue to appear in publications around the world and have been translated into Danish, Albanian, Romanian, Turkish, and Italian. His latest collections are *Selected & New Poems* (Mosaic Press, Oakville, Ontario, Canada), and *Waking Up On The Wrong Side Of the Sky* (Grant Block Press, Truro, N.S., Canada). A new collection, *Squall: Poems In The Voice Of Mary Shelley*, is due out Spring, 2020.

Spinal, Not Well There in memory of Cindy Culgin

1. The Winter Touches

Looking at the window of the room where I nearly died.
The winter touches, no hideous rain, just the sun's sheen,
just the snow's landscape, just a backyard where

crows are afraid to land and feast, knowing of the man attempting to hide inside the doorway, as if he believes he can hide from them, or for that matter anything or anyone. Inside him a scene of another home begins to surface in his memory, where he does not understand the home is a hospital, and the room in a home known to be a hospital.

2. Owned By A Disease

And only moments ago he had stood and looked up at the window of this room. A window where he stood and looked up at the window of another room. A window where he stood at 13 years of age, his body owned by moments owned by a disease moving within his spine toward his mind. A disease that jumped into him via a girl 15 years of age, one he thought once sat ahead of him on a bus taking them to the country after classes on a Friday afternoon.

3. Bodies They Were Deciding To Accept

She was a part of teasing him he thought, with her friend who he had a crush on; they were all teenagers ready to feel the changes in the bodies they were deciding to

accept, were ready to grow up within, not a thought of death stalled their optimistic dreams. I remember, I think. I relive it all periodically when a walk leads me to the window of the room where I nearly died, the room where my family gathered on Day 3, the day the medical people said I will die.

4. Troubled Blood

Where my memory took on scenes of my grandfather gazing down at me dealing with his weeping, my uncle stood nearby unable to hold my hand, but using his eyes and face to say, "I am here, do you need to leave?" My memory slowed by the huge pills racing around in my troubled blood, the ridiculous amount of injections which gained access to my spirit through the cheeks of my aching and scarred rear-end. The room with the window I seem to seek on days I don't seem to know where I am, I don't seem to feel grateful, I don't feel confident I will be alive for much longer.

5. Anything The Memory May Believe

The days where the window takes me into where my past

remains alive and accessible. The past, when I lived and the girl 15 years of age did not, when her cough, I thought, found my mouth and nose, when the disease that took her entered me, the cough, I think, I have never been able to forget. The Past, when the medical people were left answerless, other than they believed I lived because of my heart, the strength of that region where I live more and more as gratitude steers my moments. I know this, without anything the memory may believe. Yes, I live more and more.

Gionatan Scali

I am a musician, creative writer, concept artist and founder of *Folke up Night*, an Art event Est. Feb 2016. We've made 33 events in 3 years of activity and hosted more than 150 artists from different backgrounds such as poetry, music and fine art. I'm interested in short stories with surreal twist. I do also like neuroscience, psychology and film. I'm currently based in Hackney, East London.

The Gypsy woman with the infinite storage

Schools are closed, no kids around, there's a Gypsy Woman whirling around and with her I am deeply browsing around. She's getting everything she can from the street. She does not have a car. She pushes a baby buggy. I guess she uses the buggy as a trunk of a car. What people can offer she gets, never say no to something. Accepting everything the street has to offer, literally everything. She's also got a special radar to see things. She won't admit, but she is a vacuum cleaner, she is probably doing better than any lazy dustman. She brings back everything she sees, I've seen her at the end of the day, when the sun is down, get back in her infinite storage with a massive smile and say to me "hi". She seems not scared of any virus. She looks

happy and friendly and she says hello to everyone she sees. Schools are closed, and there are no kids around. No even people. Joggers mostly, and sad faces. She is my favourite right now. Perhaps does she know about the virus? I bet she doesn't, and because of this, because of this lack of information, she is doing a better job, unaware and joyfully minding the street. The Gypsy woman with the infinite storage. I would probably stop to read the news as well.

Catharsis

Something from the past happened in the future. That was from a time that I was projecting things, then things happened, then I started to believe in my intuitions, then I developed some sort of conscious power, then I applied magic on it, then I putted all my emotions in one object, actually wasn't an object, it was a fruit, I think was a lemon, then all the lemon sucked all the emotions from me. One day I was squeezing some lemon on an avocado. The day after, I came out of my room, I saw the lemon turning blue, I've started to run naked in the street. The experiment went through.

Quarantine

I just passed a shop, and I numbered the people in, then, I was on the opposite side of the road, I didn't want to cross it, went back home, too scared of it. I just passed a shop, I went out again for my outdoor-daily Hour of breathing, I felt so much the distance between my house and the corner shop, all of sudden it became way too far, unreachable for some reasons, I gave up in tons of fears and imaginary questions "do I want to go in?" "Can I go in? and if I get the disease?" I fall in pain, tortured by silly questions, and the answer was: "No, got too scared "So I went back home. After a few days, the fridge was empty, I choose to get some groceries via the Internet.

Invisible Man/ invisible Sex

I'm stiff during the moment of a sexual approach. Sexual approaches? Don't know them anymore. Too scared to touch a smooth skin? My body won't even connect, I'm inside my mind and all my cravings hold my muscles. They are not responding, I'm a mannequin looking for an instant reward, I'm an invisible man, making invisible sex.

Wary Cat

I feel like I can be bold, but uncertain times make me

feel on hold. I try and re-arranging, re-evaluating re-calibrating, even jogging. However I'm not a runner at all. I should stop reading about conspiracies, won't get me anywhere, if not fill me up with Paranoia. What about erotica audio books? nah! I don't want to get into the dirt of my mind, enough of my silly thoughts. Can someone see that wary cat? It's just behind the corner of my house.

Stephanie Powell

Stephanie Powell is a poet based in London, she grew up in Melbourne, Australia. Her work has appeared in various anthologies published by Enthusiastic Press. Her work has also appeared in The Bacopa Literary Press and other journals. When not writing she works in

documentary television.

The milk bone

The milk bone, a cream blush marks where the marrow has slid off the joint. My fat girl skeleton. The tip of a finger like powdered sugar, sprinkled over a sweet bun, licked away from the corners of the mouth - which do not come from bone. Fat dissolves away to a bare, clenched grin. No longer milk teeth, but far uglier versions glued to the jaw line - molars like meteors you'd find in deep space instead of floating just above the mandible, held up by a climbing vine of vertebrae, the clavicle, rod of sternum, ribs - all leading to the empty space that held pregnant the organs, flesh, fat - pressing overflow of belly - skin against belt buckle, milk bone.

Dead fish

Quiet. The finger she raises to her lips is as pointed as the stringybarks that tower over the playground fence. They are playing a game of dead fish- though only pretend-dead, hearts beat loudly in the canals behind

small ears. Stretched out on sun-roasted tambark-
the traffic is louder when they are silent. The magpies
can be heard calling to each other between the trees. A
footstep in the distance rolls in like thunder. Dead fish,
the children counting heartbeats, eyes, mouths pinched
shut. The babysitter lights a cigarette and stares at
the sky. The wind washes over all of them like the sea.

We Decide to Go to The Seaside

We decide to spend a few days at the seaside,
We pack up and tell no-one. I hunch over the steering
wheel to see beyond the headlights.

*The sea cracks the stones of the beach like a whip in the
dark.*

We check into an old hotel on the promenade. The tall
windows of our room are swallowed by the view of the
water. I sip from faux china in the morning, looking at
the yellow caps of swimmers crawling past like insects
on a turquoise rug.

We take breakfast in the dining room, dream at shop
windows and smoke spliff on the pebble beach. I
imagine France somewhere on the other side, but you tell
me I am looking the wrong way.

We take baths, watch *the Simpsons* and complain about
the ads. Sometimes I just sit at the window. You make

tea.

I go swimming. It's late-September, last brush stroke of good weather dashed across the south coast. I tremble with cold before my feet touch the water. I throw myself into the curling wall of a wave. I am emptied immediately of sensation and punch my way horizontally across the shoreline until the feeling comes back.

You read your book, while I war with the surf.

Later, we eat chips - yours drown in vinegar. I drag mine through large swipes of tomato sauce, marks like blood at a crime scene flame-lick the plate.

The teenage waitress hovers at the counter, waiting for us to finish so she can close up for the night. We float back over the seafront, arms looped at the elbow, noses filled with salt – *the wind carves through the buttonholes of our jackets*. Our bodies weighed down by calm gravity, love.

Hot night

On hot nights, in the brick house, the blood boils through

tight corridors of vein- evaporating the water from
your limbs. You try swimming the ocean in your head
but the heat curdles the waves- sweat running like
dead fish rising to the surface of some fiery lake. Sticky
skin on warm pan of bed sheet, pillow turned over to the
cold side. The water on the bedside table turns to ash.
All windows open, you lie listening to the cicadas make
love in the trees.

Afterbirth

Neat hospital room, windows open above the tram stop-
passengers step down through folding doors, while I
cling to your insides. We almost die many times to the
sound of the driver ringing the bell, the hiss of the
concertina doors.

Painted birth-grey in film, the bed sheets red- your blood
clotted in my fists, cavities tearing, my baby body
bearing down into the bowl of your pelvis- but moving
no further. It takes years to see that it stays with us, this
violent start that almost broke the crib, the walls, nurse
ears- new-dad hearts.

There is nothing tender in anus, hipbones splitting apart,
under-carriage now a warzone of purple flesh and fluid.

The shape of an under-boiled egg- I am evicted by force, ankles held like a prized-fish, the baby Moby Dick— us both dying as my back is slapped in perfect 2/4 time.

That long season we went to war- the pain when you realised, I'd never hold the memory of the scissors biting through umbilical cord, the classic rock station on the hospital radio, the drip of the IV, the cool, baffled look between us as we sucked in lungfuls of air— treading water long into the afterbirth.

Daniela Sánchez

Daniela Sánchez (Mexico City, 1998) studies Literature and Creative Writing in the University of the Cloister of Sor Juana (Universidad del Claustro de Sor Juana) in Mexico City. She also is studying engineering in innovation and design in the Panamerican University (Universidad Panamericana). She participated, as a writer, in the 2018 version of the Microfictions of the Univeristy of the Cloister of Sor Juana. In 2019, she got a diploma course in European Conteporary Literature in the Center of Literary Creation Xavier Villaurrutia.

Something I Bottle Up

1.

I should imprison you in a little crystal vase, just like the ones kids use when they want to nourish a bean seed. I would leave you somewhere, near the window so the sun could be your daily company. I hope to be far from you, still, not too far. I need too much of you. Stay. Just in case, someday, I don't need you anymore. I could take you out on Sunday mornings, dear little one. You'll sit on my shoulder and I will show you off every step of the way. We'll wander around, accompanied by the deserted streets, the smell of fresh coffee and the half-squished leaves. We could love each other, as friends do, only for one day. However, little hope, for now I ask you to stay calm and where you are, rest your legs by the sun. Someday I will come back.

2.

Blue blossom, why don't you want to bloom? Come on, stretch your leaves a little bit. The brown will turn into green after we fall. Some of the flowers have already dropped. They are now falling, lying down into the street. Please, even when I drop won't forget me, my blue blossom. Don't forget to open yourself up, show me your inner sunshine. There is still a long way to go until your petals darken, until they turn to clear glass. Don't you worry, forgetful girl, I'm sure, one day you and I will fall. From our brownish stem a new blue flower will grow, and she, will never forget us.

3.

I'll build my own shell, just like the turtle's one. I'll start building it with my own words. The notification-less nights will form it's outline. The coffee, sipped alone, and the non-shared cake on Saturday mornings will stain my crust. My memories, will only have to fill them, with some bone and some nostalgia. It will be as big and hard as yours. Would you make some room for me, turtle? I will make some space for you. We will sleep all the time and everything happening outside will

disappear. A translucent protection will shelter us. Come, I have a space for you, but only for you and no one else.

4.

We started playing hide and seek. You hid behind my apps, you toyed with Instagram for a little while, and you avoided visual contact with Bumble, at all cost. My dear, you hid under my dresses, the ones I never wear. You disguised yourself between my books, the ones I bought but I never opened. You have hidden so well I forgot I was looking for you. Now, it'll be your turn to find me, to wait for me. I will hide for a while and you'll count to ten. Perhaps, if you forget too, if you forget to come and find me, we could stop playing. We would go home. You will go to yours and I will stay in mine.

5.

My eyes have tried to deceit you; they have tried to be cautious. Still, my smile, that skilled informer, keeps

pointing out what they hide. I have tried to lie to you. I have said the right words. I have copied the right gestures. I have tried to deepen my glance. Some have told me, many have told me, that I am just as transparent as my words are. They are made of Glass, my words, translucent, shiny and weak. Transparent, they have said, because even an open book has its own secrets between its covers.

James Sutherland-smith

James Sutherland-smith was born in Scotland, but lives in Slovakia. He has published seven collections of his own poetry, the most recent being “The River and the Black Cat” published by Shearsman Books in 2018. He also translates poetry from Slovak and Serbian for which he has received the Slovak Hviezdoslav Prize and the Serbian Zlatko Krasni Prize. His most recent translation is from the poetry of Mila Haugová, *Eternal*

Traffic, published in Britain by Arc Publications.

On Looking Into Clapham, Tutin And Warburg's Excursion Flora Of The British Isles

The previous owner built a pool beside my cabin for a disabled child, not much more than a bathtub and only a yard away from my deck so the child could be safely guided down two brick steps at the near end of the pool, which is oval in shape and thus, with the gap made by the steps, almost in the form of the letter omega.

I've let the pool go. It's now crumbling cement and sky-blue render. The outflow pipe has been choked by a fern and the bottom of the pool is ridged with lines of moss. On its edges there's Herb Robert, hawsers of bramble, saxifrage and an umbel, neither angelica nor parsley nor chervil.

So I open Clapham, Tutin and Warburg, six hundred sallow pages, as flimsy as those in my copy of the King James Authorized Version of the Bible.

There's no need to work out if the plant is a tree, a fern or a moss and I know an umbel when I see one. I turn to page 224, Umbelliferae, and follow the trail to its source:

leaves not peltate, leaves variously toothed or divided,

*leaves not spiny, leaves pinnate or ternate,
aerial leaves numerous and well-developed at flower,
lower leaves 2-4 pinnate or ternate,
plant glabrous: leaf margins sometimes finely toothed,
flowers white or only slightly tinged with green, pink or
purple, stems not purple spotted, bracteoles 0 or 1,
segments of lower leaves smaller, pinnatifid;
plant not rhizomatous, basal leaves soon withering;
petioles long and slender, largely underground;
plant perennial, tuberous, 15. Conopodium, PIGNUT*

Beside the pignut, dangling over the edge of the pool between cracks in the blue render, is a languor of spearmint with a single yellow flower like a star at the edge of a galaxy, shadowed by the branches of an elderberry beneath which we buried a family tomcat wrapped in a tea towel with his head pointing homewards. I've resisted demands to cut it down, citing the pagan notion that one mustn't cut the branches of the elderberry unless one has a good intention. And I have no intentions at all. Last August I watched a whitethroat hanging upside down there, feasting on sprays of the elderberry's black fruit.

At The Table

At the table under the hornbeam or ironwood or yoke tree, guardian of homes, double-trunked from the ground up, splashed with lichen on their northern sides, profuse with leaf and beyond the hornbeam the main stream with beech trees on the opposite bank stabilizing a virtual cliff, the nearest tree again a double trunk straight for sixty feet before the first branches with leaf and ninety feet more to the crown, the other beeches straight as well, pewter-coloured in the forest light above the stream's rustle through which ring snakes pass, lazy slivers of light assuring the water's purity despite the debris from logging upstream: at the table under the hornbeam, at a table made from a sycamore trunk halved down the middle slowly succumbing to years of weather, the mycelia of a rubbery fungus and an archipelago of moss in the creases in the surface of the table, dark green tropical islands towards which a tiny spider, mottled like the aging table, tacks, its legs to my squinting gaze like oars moving rapidly, a cutter from a privateer in search of plunder disappearing and reappearing in the swell of a sycamore sea.

Awaking A Peacock Butterfly

Almost a fragment of old-fashioned carbon paper; I relive a forty-year old excitement of two or three copies of a poem, fit enough for the two-fingered labour

of typing on my Olivetti, shaken out from under the original, their letters fuzzy round the edges like tiny caterpillars in a variety of postures.

A piece of darkness oddly perpendicular resisting the temptations of gravity to subside and lie flat, I take it up between forefinger and thumb, carry it out of my cabin then place it in the sun where it topples as air gusts over. Dead, after remaining upright all winter?

Not so. Antennae and legs have unfolded. It quivers in the now still air, shudders, fibrillates as though it might shake itself into black dust. Solar power and whatever smidgeon of insect blood ripples the colours of its wings like tiny counterpanes. The merest flicker of the edges of its wings and it's off.

Then I notice Brimstone, the original 'butter fly', Hairstreak, Queen of Spain, Speckled Wood, a large fritillary, Banded White, a Blue and a first Camberwell Beauty's rapid linear flight between willow and willow while above two ravens chuckle observations. Carbon copies of each other, they will not change.

Red Admiral, White Admiral

Freshly emerged from its chrysalis, its complex eyes shiny oval portholes, it crosses my threshold and rests on

the floor of the cabin. I wet a finger to revive it with my saliva. A black proboscis all of a piece with its glossy thorax and abdomen unfurls and sucks.

It looks as though just promoted from commodore to admiral, the red bands on its wings shine like new braid on dress uniform, spick and span for a review of the fleet with royalty to be piped aboard.

It flies off elegantly unlike the battered old warrior that circles my head shortly afterwards its wings ragged in a combat brown and white. Briefly it settles, heaving to on my wetted finger uncoiling a yellow tongue to imbibe before an agitated patrol and attack.

Am I too near its bramble patch?

I flap a hand and it vanishes until I feel a disturbance in my hair. In the glass of my cabin door I see it victorious, the enemy a prize firmly under its legs as it splices the main-brace from the sweat on my bald patch.

Sickle Moon

The orchard shadows are mottled and where I step they

are slightly damp from the rain which drips from the leaves of the shed through a complex of angles of leaning timber on to the top of a steel drum.

A Great Tit finishes feeding from the bark of the branch of an apple tree with a complacent “chink, chink,” as though it had fed at a rather good restaurant. It removes itself to another branch where it is rather difficult to make out against the colour of the leaves, the twigs and the blue sky behind, although ten minutes of slight movement in the leaves from it preening grit or parasites or the last fledging down make me fairly certain of its position.

The young bird roosts above the raspberry canes. Its round breast emulates the roundness of unripe apples and its black head blends in with the leaves. It knows less than me, but not much less.

A sickle moon has risen before the sun has set, a white curve like the scar on the thigh of a girl I met in a disco club. Later I followed the shape of the scar with my fingertips. Its texture was smooth and cold as silver. She didn’t answer when I asked how she came by such a wound.

“Look at the old man in the moon,” she said, “And his wicked smile.”

Sudip Biswas

Sudip Biswas was born on 8th August, 1977, at Palta, Purbachal, Jhilpar Lane, a small town of West Bengal, in India. His early studies completed in Ramakrishna Missions in Brrackpore and Rahara. He completed his Bachelors degree in Presidency College, Calcutta. He completed his Master's from Calcutta University. He then completed M.Phil in Environmental Sciences from Global University, at Nagaland. Most of his writings is in Bengali languages, and mostly are poetry and short stories. He publishes and edites a bengali little magazine namely 'Kobita Ei Samay', a timely poetry magazine, publishing since 2011.

The Way Around

The loneliness ever left an impression on ourselves. If you're talking to memories, themselves they come across. The rivers without boat can't sail. Winter days must always cross the hot summer. The way around, wind changes it's route. The sea waves may not be impartial. The time makes a move to everything; as the

way around our daily travels, we cross the evil things for a keen search of joy and happiness.

Garden Rosa-sinensis

The wind is playing with waving branches, praying to blooms. The soul devouring woes, the mind enlightening buds, twigs, the thirst, hunger and prayer are waiting for a queue of aspirations. Sunbeams spread the colour, the moonlight softens the dreams. The egg yolk days soak rays into a glass of ocean. Birds' collection of pollen of Hibiscus rose, without haziness, wet into wings, built their nest in my garden resonance. It radiates energy to my heart. Sun rays without fear penetrate into my soul. Yellow leaves wind upon my hair. I sit beside the trees and think, without spring, I never seen the summer.

Homeland

No train take them to their home, they have to fleet themselves. No car bring them to their nest, they have to walk themselves. Across the long distance they return. No flight avail them to their own village. They are flying with their own wings. Just a Nation makes them

refugees, in their own homeland. No traces of sunshine are kept in their hut. No sun at all, to differ to dawn from evening dusk. A single body, a single boat, moving towards its own destiny. A nation is moving to its own homeland.

Touch the flowers

Roses and mountain flowers in my mind blossom, stumbling in a clumsy impression. How they differ from other mind? Touch the tree, a tropical girl, who wanders in every flower. She laughs after a hot summer, she dances in a heavenly rain fall, she is smiling in the autumn dew drops. Whoever touches the golden fields of spring, who walks along the muddy lane of a overwhelming green. A village girl and a mountain flower blossom with every rose, touch them, touch the upgrowing nature.

My Daughter

After being father I learned to fly with a magic marble time. It makes myself a bird-winged man. When I feed my baby and my wife, wash up, clean the kitchen; no one is there in her side. This way morning creeps to sunset. I become mad to and good afternoon, the thirsty time changing her outfit. These way holidays

disappeared. My school time comes. Baby sleeps in her dreams. My home runs faster than her. The olive sun-lines make me fly again. All the way I dream about her, She never cries for anything. The shallow stains of time climb over the clouds. I miss her smile, the magic always wonder me, with her words-worthy sounds, funny utterings. We would even understand her language. My daily workouts fly in mosaic sound.

Umapada Kar

Umapada Kar was born and brought up in Beharampur, Murshidabad in 1955 and presently he lives at Kolkata, India. His first poetry book *Rituporber Nach* (Dance of Seasonality) published by Kobita Pakhshik in 1996 (Writing period -1979 – 1987). His notable works: *Koyek Alokborsho Dure* (Few Light-years Away, pub: Roktomangso, 2002), *Porijayee Cholo* (Move on Migration, pub: Rourob, 2005), *Bhanga Piyanor Paa* (Leg of Broken Piano, Pub: Bhashabondhan, 2009), *Apor Bosonta* (The Other Spring, Pub: Kobita Campus, 2009), *Dhonuk Kothay Swar* (Vowels to Bow Words, Pub: 9ya Doshok, 2011), *Riledourer Anishesh* (The Endless Relay Race, Pub: Aihik, 2017), *Rabindra Kobita: Ajker Uthone* (Poetry of Rabindranath: In Present Day, Pub: Khorimati, 2017). *Aabhaman Path: Tero Aakash* (Traditional & Ever-existent Reading: Thirteen Sky, Pub: Srishitisukh, 2020).

Prow Filling Me

One

Someone or the other is writing poetry. Evening is tracing waves. Someone paints afternoon-shine. Songs are simply falling from the cascade. Someone singing. Anyone has taken flute in the lips. How a crippled child is turning into poetry!

Someone or the other must be in poetry. Someone is

writing the light and shed of poetry in dream. Being
mute somebody is reading poetry of night at the evening.

While dresses of deep night putting of itself, spoiled
bowstring of light-sleep is flowing out speedily from the
circle. It wants to mortgage itself to the poetry.

A seed continues to become a tree of poetry while on
travel. How the colour of flower *Rudrapalash* may be
described is well-known to deep mid-day.

Someone or the other becomes poetry. Someone smears
maya in the collyrium of eyes.

Two

When the idea of ‘away from home’ can’t be contained,
I turn international. The yolk of bird’s egg can’t lie
anymore in the shell... The arms of young-bird want to
become wings...

The face of tortoise is once international and again once
in the carapace... Before rolling up its smile is
enframable... Horses in the three sides and leg in one...
Who is more international? Who is more to and fro
like *Howrah-Sealda*...

Palmyra-fruit from Sesame and Betel-nut to

Palmyra-fruit... who is ours' more near and far... whose hospitality is more charming... As much as on travel obsession is to that extent. From an instant thinking horse become pregnant...

Slowly leg... Oh leg! Go towards inter-nationality at least once...

Three

Sometimes the body opens its windows, I realise. But doesn't open the door. A cage of parrot or myna is full of windows. Lonely door doesn't open. My humming finger touches the door of the cage today.

Selecting one as a king and another as a queen we used to play funny games with excitement. A deep trench appears when friendship inversely varies as age of ours. Girl... Plunge into water so much ago... drifts as woman, wife or mother... I recognize her. But queen...? will o the wisp...

Lines are inserted in the song. They want to be song by spreading out their bodies... I feel... I see even their dance through window. But never opens the door. Climbing upon the terrace I can't able to make friendship with them... The lines look confusedly at me

for a while...

Four

Few words may be exchanged with the combustible substance at the time of cremation. Keeping it at distance... Ash-colored stories come out from the rudeness of death... My face turns to red due to generation of burns... From the core of heart comes out a little 'Ah' and cold groaning sound... This is visible... But matters nothing... Buddha was then at *nirvana* with a smile in his face and closed eyes...

My friends will go someday for your cremation. That also I... the Palas-peer, the Shimul-peer... A self song of crematorium will be played on... due to the nostalgia of my meeting with the combustible substance a long ago... that also a music... assembling together, blending smoothly...

Now, words are for the light. The particles of light sprayed from the crematorium may recognize me at a glance... I am at the center of light with burning sensation... let's go now to any direction...

Five

The alloy of ornament mixes up with words. As the day and the dawn involve the night and evening respectively with few chats. In course of conversation the mamma becomes deepening, calmness too. The mood soaked with tears out of nickel-plated weeping is a lyric...

Salutation offered for oneself, even bowing down. They are bread as like as them. Rolling, baking and then puffed up with warm air... as if it is compulsion ... the smell of sweat of the bread... bread croton... the eyes, noticing from the hillock, are made of stone. If tears come out, still it is not felt...

The confined words acidify me or settle as stone being fermented. In thinking process it is a Crow, otherwise a Drongo... song of Atulprasad... The gravid Cow tries to recollect the poetry of the stoical bull about the setting Sun... perhaps it can't...

Quamrul Bahar Arif

Born on 7 November 1965, Khulna, Bangladesh. Growing up, educated in Rajshahi, Bangladesh. Post Graduate with a Bachelor and Masters of Commerce in Accounting and information System. He is a deputy director (Budget) of University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh. His notable works: Shurjer Map Chnuye (2008), Godhulir Pandu Nilimay (2012), Ke Dake Aagun Pothe (2013), Borsha To Jaler Borno (2015), Rangarod Chnuche Powsher Sharir (2015, 2nd edition, 2016 Book Fair, Dhaka), Prembritte Jol O Nari(2017) Ke orhe Nodiparer Naye (2017).

Red blood blossoms flower

On my own list with mother Palash too is as deep as au, aa, ka, kha like the root that is merged into the dissolved consciousness. The dearest places of the city of Rajshahi sitting where I feel that I am in my own self, The University campus, the huge Padma in front of its embankment, the gathering at Puspastudio of New market the Shahid Minarat Rajshahi College. This Shahid minarwoks a deferent feeling here I found the Palash of my own list I do not why I have such a weakness for Palash, there I seek myself together

with Palash and the Minar, and when the Palash on
its branches and twigs blossoms the
blood coloured flowers with pervaded red I become a
rebel at that moment. All on my won list and all the
dearest places become rebels.

Translated from Bangla by Anup Kumar Sarkar

Limitation of Happiness and Heaven

The fool walks facing the vehicles always on the reverse
way. I don't know the name of the fool. We never want
to know their name. As their name is unknown, their
name is 'Fool' always. When I see, in my mind I think,
may be, no more I'll see him tomorrow or will see... a
crushed horrible body falling on the black concrete road
ownerless under a running car for the carelessness of the
driver. Falling leaves from the trees beside the roads will
come running towards him with affection with
speed like the chameleon. All the dust frozen on the road
will come fast To the lump of blood to cover the false
faces of humanity. All these falling leaves, tale of
dust, Yielding to the realization of life, One day
surrendered themselves to the wind.

Agonies from the stalk of demission fell down with
soundless cry. Mummies of owe stick to the stalks of
demission for decades.

Terrible illnesses lie in soundness. Unification of illnesses. Limitation of happiness and heaven.

Which soundless rebellion do the fools always walk in indifferent on the reverse way? Against which illness? We don't know the name of the fool. No name remains of the fools.

Translated from Bangla by Mamunoor Rashid

Neither Human nor Rapist

Suddenly I see all the trees wearing dress are standing. Stunned I become and stand still to know the reason. I ask the trees but no reply comes. I think I can get the answer if I find the owner of the trees. I look around but nowhere I find a son of human being. I go forward in the hope of reply but nowhere I see a son of human being. It seems the earth is without human being!

Here and there, there are dogs-cats-goats-rams looking at

me, they are running away back and forth. Their owner couldn't be found even though they are pets. Seeing the trees with attire, I start coming back with tiresome body. Suddenly I hear the screaming of birds! Covering eyes with fear, I see, nor I am human. No appearance of human being I have! Coming back to consciousness, I hear the birds saying, 'Run away; run away! There comes the rapist! So, am I a rapist too? Then I am neither a human nor a rapist! Now I can realise the language of the attire of the trees.

Translated from Bangla by Mamunoor Rashid

River Gets Perfection in the Sea

Water Yellow sunlight is peeping through the thin wattles and playing with the doves on the clay bed with the swinging of sketches of shadow. Habitually, loving the isolated noon, doves and their beloveds get together in love so melodiously. As they thrill with delight and quiver the noon with drunken lives, A lonely rose from the high branch shakes in layers. When bashful squirrel turns her face, gentle breeze blows jingling ah!

When you were seventeen you were a rose bashful and

aromatic When became twenty five, I became a dove to meet you and you became the wings of that dove. When you reach at middle age we, under the shadowy wattles with gentle breeze, Become the bed on the earth. We become river taking delight of all the doves. But the river gets perfection in the sea water- to get perfection we rush to the sea with the rhyme of doves. What an ecstatic joy, ah!

Translated from Bangla by Mamunoor Rashid

Distance between the Seen and the Unseen

A river has two banks on either side is man like this? I laugh I think, I see, you know a distance in-between, like a river or else some joint's crevice mark! A river has two banks on either side

A bird lives life not alone but with a mate, vibrantly living in a world so well-known Carnival of love—what's not there? In the cloudy, happy *Sharavansky* float birds flapping their wings. Yet no coalescence of wings, you see distance! The melodies of the birds of dreams thus fall apart

A bird lives life not alone.

Translated by Ahsan Habib

Gauranga Mohanta

Dr Gauranga Mohanta was born on 07 January 1962 in Lalmonirhat. Dr Mohanta has a BA (Hons) and an MA in English from the University of Dhaka. He did a PhD in English Literature at the University of North Bengal, India. Dr Mohanta's hobbies include writing poems and prose, travelling and listening to music. His first collection of poems, *Adhiprantar Jure Chhayasarir* (A Shadowy Figure Pervades the Agonized Prairie) and a research work, *Robert Frost: A critical Study In Major Images and Symbols* have been published in 2009. *Sunyota o Palokprobaho* (Voidness and Feather-flow), another collection of poems has been published in 2012. Two collections of poems *Trogoner Gan* (Songs of a Trogon) and *Jolmayurer Sato Palok* (Hundred Feathers of Pheasant-tailed Jacana) have been published in 20016. *Jholke Otha Swapnodanga* (A Gleaming Dreamland) has also been published in 2016 in which 63 Tang poems has been translated in Bangla for the first time. *A Green Dove in Silence: Forty Prose Poems in Translations* has been published in 2018 by Rubric Publishing, Delhi,

India. Two books he co-edited are: Puthi Rahibo Nishani: Heyat Mamud (A Commemorative Volume on the Birth Anniversary of the poet Heyat Mamud, 2006) and Begum Rokeya Smarak (A Commemorative Volume on the Birth and Death Anniversary of Begum Rokeya, 2005). He lives in Dhaka. Dr Mohanta's poetry is an unending record of conscious and subconscious mind. He thinks that images are the building blocks of a good poem. Only statements hardly help a poet to find their immortal expressions. He places much importance to the power of structure of a sentence to create a striking image. He touches on love, nature, darkness, voidness in his poetry; a personal narrative evolves through metonymy and metaphor in which the poetic persona gets related to other entities or the nature.

Songs of Mansur Fakir

The lotus eyes stay awake in the winging shadow of a bird. Piercing through the window glass, the balcony flowers rummage around in the room for snapshots which will be posted in the timeline after death. Crossing the sea, a lotus stem reposes on north courtyard, goes straight into a monologue about how chemo-fatigued the whiteness of clematis is--the garden is filled with her hair fallen out. When daisies get crushed by the cogwheels of wind, the watery discharge will

occur--after the birth of Amherstia, the turban of darkness will fly off this region. The metalanguage of stone will do backstroke in the water of Umangat; Lotus stunner will come over to a forest pool at Birampur finding solace in songs of Mansur Fakir.

Lotus-music at the Concert

Near the warmth of deer hair, half-nakedness sometimes turns out to be alternately grass and water. The history of a remote castle kisses the thighs, rhubarb juice dribbles. The rain machine is being contrived by the source-consciousness of water--the prayer composed for bullfrogs drifts with the silver balls of rain. Lotus-music echoes through all concerts of the island soon after I learn that rain never ends in death.

A non-Aryan Princess

(My indebtedness to Bibhutibhushan Banerjee)

In the fragmented sky, zakaranda mastered Manipuri dance. The city is asleep in the blue of its shadow. A dark gondola smoothly floats down the trachea of light. The festival of Teuri flowers takes place in the solitude of distant mountains. A non-Aryan Princess looks at the

forest as she spreads Mahua flowers in the wind filled with the throb of Madals. The forest burnt in the feudal fire makes her tremble inside; the flower-leaf-deer motif painted on clay walls of the palace may be luminous in terracotta colour, the family pasture may be guarded against hoof beats of buffalos. She removes the spear-gleams from her eyes and let the radiance of wild nyctanthes float with the stream.

A Black Cat

Yogurt was kept in black-and-red earthenware pots discovered at Wari-Bateswara; fragments of the pots are now discernible since black cats used to break the pots while enjoying yogurt. The black cat has been recognized as the fat species for they have been taking dairy food for two and a half thousand years. Gorakshanath's songs are merging into the new moon air as yogurt has grown scarce. The vibrating reed of a kite no longer makes a sound in the afternoon tinged with bhat flowers. Every cat can dance while playing a sistrum and become cheerful at a festival. Anyway, no project has been implemented since prehistoric times to promote the artistic flair of cats.

Record of Rainfall in Pottery

When the crown of a watercock scatters red lotuses in rainwater, I return to air. Rain seems to pour down from human consciousness, not words. The warm raindrops disappear instantly, the soil does not retain splodges of water. Nevertheless, all records of rainfall are preserved in black pottery. On the way back, Astoria, Verazano Bridge, Staten Island or the Museum of Modern Art are housed in Moshulu ship; two eyes wake up in Van Gogh's olive grove. The air becomes heavier with the huge volume of vapour. The wind turns out to be the bearer of agonies, not sounds.

Uday Shankar Durjay

Uday Shankar Durjay is a poet, essayist, and translator. He writes regularly in many daily newspapers and magazines. Uday Shankar Durjay was born in Bangladesh and now he lives in the UK. His first writing was published in 'Daily Jessore' in 1996. He studied Business Information Systems at the University of East London and MSc in Management at BPP University, UK. Durjay's published books: *Likhe Rakhi Bishuddho Atmar Ratridin* (Night of the Pure Soul, Bangla poetry collection), *Western Avenuer Aronnodin* (Woodenday of Western Avenue, Bangla translation of selected English poems), *Prabanddha Sangroho* (Collection of Bangla articles). Durjay's edited magazines: POL (An international poetry magazine), Spandan (A creative magazine of Bengali Literature).

A Different Journey to Reset the Colour

You may deny if grasses feel the pleasure of pouring

dews in the morning, or you may passionately in love with the imagined landscape. What's on your mind, beautiful lady? What's going on in the lake of your astronomical mind? You are not too late to explore your hidden star shining bright, growing up every day in your twilight sky. You may sit down face to face to your untouched dream; feel your future who can dig your hidden garden. Unbox your pandora, chant hocus pocus... unknown part of our life is mystic; something happens without a sign. It's neither the ending of the planet nor the last breath of your golden heart. It's time to uncover the equation of your beautiful walk.

On The Dark Night River

You know the yellow colour that is from the sun and it's the sign of happiness. I feel you beyond the shadow of a doubt. I look for you at the wooden bridge on the dark night river. Perhaps you left the port with your boat, perhaps you left everything whatever you belonged to this home. No place to move around just counting the stars one after another; they are countless like the aspiration of your way back. This water is very calmly alone, just a few little waves talk each other so faintly. I don't want to get crushed in the illuminated fireworks, don't want to even break a bunch of your beautiful tears. I just wish I could be anywhere somehow to catch you. I

just want to be there with you, with your hidden tears,
with your twisted hair.

Sorrows of White Stars

I've heard the melody form of a violin once I woke up in the morning. This morning is very extraordinary than others. Snowflakes fell overnight in the backyard of my cottage, nearly two feet high. There is a snow mount standing far away, which can be seen from my glass window. Windows and doors are covered by white ashes. I've tried to figure out my last winter, tried to recall her beautiful face through to feel that obsession. Snow has strong recapturing power, the snow has the mind-reading device. Her creaking footsteps slumbering of my stupor. I realised her whispering blow the curtain slightly; my subconscious brain cell rejuvenates the memory bank. Why does snow need to fall every winter? why does it need to bring back that repentance ever and ever again?

A White Dust Festival

Snow is a magical stimulation, a spectacular illustration of the lime splash. Trees get summer shower in the winter when the sky outbreaks unconditionally. Countless white stars compose the hills and waves in the

avenues and capture the daily routine, a dense carpet of snow lying around the woodland palace. Leaves of forests burst out crying like slow-rain falling from the sky. Sometimes the winter-stars are like nasturtiums and astrantia flowers. Sometimes they are bluish eyeballs of my kitten. In the winter, wooden-river is unemotional and undisturbed, and they forget their source and destiny. Crispy snow hugs the crackling trees; the heartbeats sharply move into their boughs. They wake up from the thousands of years of sleeping. Kissing branches with flowering tips break the silence; an untouched relation calls souls to the white-dust-festival. They wait for the timber flame to recover their healing power. They want to get back to their calmer, stressless and simpler life.

Wiped Out Utmost Vision

When you would sit next to me to count the spectacular stars, I felt an unbounded obsession instead of counting. I would catch the rain, but you would offer me a snow shower, how can you read my mind? I believe your heart, believe the bottom layer of your soul; huge crystal diamonds shine in there. Diamonds never lie to the hearts. The greatest gift is once your eyes would just see my deep pain, once your velvet-touch would take me away from this earth.

I feel a few pieces of broken sun come through the window. I try to look for my glasses and I realise last night I lost my eyesight. Apparently, all cosmological views have been wiped out from my vision. I've been there a thousand times to find your shadow. I tried to find the table where you touched the surface, but no trace at all here. I catch the same rain, but no one can read my mind. It's dark like my eyesight. All the crestfallen threatened to overwhelm me.

PART Four(four poems)

Hiren Bhattacharyya

Hiren Bhattacharyya (28th July, 1932 -- 4th July, 2012), popularly known as Hiruda, is an eminent Indian poet and lyricist. Hiruda basically contributed in the field of Assamese Poetry. His innumerable works are like the valuable treasure for the Assamese literature. Hiruda won many prizes and accolades for his excellency in Poetry. In the year 1992 Hiruda won the prestigious 'Sahitya Academy Award' for *Saichor Pathar Manuh* -- his remarkable anthology of poems.

Shelter

One day I marched to a new land. A bright, blue flag decorated with stars was in the heart of that land. Wind

from the ocean waved the flag: Tender waves of love. A free tune like the tune of the flute of a cow boy came floating from the core of the jungle, covered with darkness. Hearing the tune like an injured beast I ran back to my land. Like the stalks of flowers the stars from the blue flag dropped one by one in every street of my return journey. My land, my own land, budding of my first love. You have seven rivers like seven-stringed necklace. What a deep sympathy love has. How will I forget that?

Native land Native time

I am a poet, have overcome many dreadful days of history with aptitude. Word has given me the supreme potentiality to hurdle, punctuality in meaning, wish to be accurate, so, in need re-establishing the exiled meaning of catastrophic words. Word is the auspicious music or next level's mathematics of mine.

Let's stop the immature wars, epidemic of pox, word is important, real sword of excellency acquired in my ancestral hostility. I have no other self, word is the inseparable world of mine; making pieces of what I

use to enhance my native land and time smeared with blood. An impossible future constructed with the mature figure of dream.

Calamity days

Yard of famine. Paddy fields are vacuous. Adolescents have lost the freedom to dream. Pregnant women killed in sleep. What is main poison? Villages were ruined. Destroyed cities. In the faded shadow of death is the vulgar business. The gestures of sin are in abundance. Oh, time! fulminate, use the supreme brilliance.

World is my Poetry

My pen is the hammer of blacksmith's hand, by striking construct word, sharp like the ploughshare of a farmer, in the furrow is the golden Sita, rough like the axe of a carpenter, pull out the words smeared with experience separating fibre of the hard wood, every word of mine like the arrow of a chaotali man becomes intensed in blood-flesh-desire, one of them is proud like a mountain, one is obedient like a river, and another one is sober like a lake, never can be controlled by others.

I am the poet of the large world with
ocean-river-mountains,
World is my Poetry.

All of them translated by Gayatri Devi Borthakur.

Zillur Rahman

Zillur Rahman, who was born in 1966 at Chittagong, is a poet of Bangla literature. He started his journey at mid eighties. He worked for new philosophical poetic movement named ‘Uttar Adhunikota’ since 1993. He edited Jodiyo Uttarmegh (2017) and was a member of editorial board of Lyric (1992—2005). He has published 3 collections of poems, 2 long poems, 2 collections of essays and 3 translated books. He first translated the Rubaiyats of Nazim Hikmat in Bangla.

Biology

Then the trees deepened into the ground, the long arms of the roots stretched - in the deep darkness, in search of the juice - the chlorophyll at the uplifted branches pulled the air in. The trees thus never roll the boats - could not go for fishing - the trees grew more and more upwards became banyan, spreading the shades over the earth.

The giraffes went long on their own in search of leaves to raise neck like tall stems of trees. The deer with skin of the strange herb began to run faster - a great hobby of their steadiness - to imitate the tree, one day by making stems on their heads and making it even more

attractive.

And look, those like monkeys - tiny, those who have no green in their hearts - have no power like the tiger or buffalo - no deer thrift - those who hide under the trees, throw stones at them - sometimes hit with sharpened metals and irons - they begin to destroy the tree, fish, animals and birds - even the fresh air of dawn and the clear water; We started calling them best creatures! Now they are digging their own hearts hurriedly.

Just to Go Ahead...

There are so many scars on the whole body, the swelling is red since yesterday. Hair is constantly rubbing hair all day long. Yet suddenly I understand the push on the plate of tectonic! And thus all the fragmented lands unite as a tuft of earth and form the Himalayas. Somewhere again, the molten lava stream of Vesuvius. Somewhere in the cool black terrain, somewhere in the waves of the overflowing Sea. Though I say to stop, the huge creatures didn't stop but run haphazardly on the horizon. Sacrificing their own fire in the fire of lava. Those who are shorter move get touch of water. It's a horrible game of suicidal activities in the fire of lava and

in hot water. I only see these things without realising. As much as I want to call them to the right path, they move on the wrong way. For ages, nature has been running after evil ways. I am the only one who sings prayer songs and want cap and beard. I curse the animals but who sees the direction? As long as life continues, I understand that life means to run. Whether understanding or not, I run on that way where the mind wants to run away. Let there be adversity of Vesuvius's fiery fire, or we are at the moment just before the glaciers smashing somewhere, Let not be alarmed, just let to move forward...

They Walk In The Path of Their Own Destruction

Some animals mimicking sheep, some are covered with more hair, survived from the white curse of ice age ignoring its horrible death effect. Then some trees woke up freshened. Again the games of life begin - Again biting storms in the vast wilderness to survive.

When the ice starts to melt, When the summit of the White Mountains goes shrinking, when the heat of the shining sun is so aggressive on the surface, the hair is cursed. Look, the hair that saved life at frosty winter, that hair became danger at this severe hot weather. And

they went on a path of destruction, on a way to extinction. I went to cut shorter their hair, but I did not see them having any leisure listening to me. They walk on their own way of destruction. Prophets could get no chance to help them.

White Shirt

When they celebrated that festival of Holi by stabbing me with knives or swords, and how beautiful they have painted the beli-Shiuli-colored shirt to the red like a Kaiyum's paint, that father bought on the day of Vijaya Dashami; at that time you all were engaged with that artwork. Hey Holi, O Hari!

On that day, the clouds stopped crying - the thunderbolts stopped roaring in front of your loud noises like sounds of divine conch. Besides their house of knowledge, brush of paint master, graveyards of three great leaders, and far aside the unquenchable flame visible. The shiny shirt also having the same waviness of that flame. I have been flying; flying until the vanishing of consciousness, I was also your companion of ecstasy. With that uprising flame I became as the lord Shiva danced in destruction.

My light is switched off. That you were observing, as

spectator in the rhythm, orchestrated with them like
statue - are you really alive? Or the ghosts you all, dance
experts with upraised arms in the foggy skies...

Manik Saha

Manik Saha, a Bengali poet, was born in March 1983 in West Bengal, India. Now he is working as a teacher in a government school. At the same time he does work on translations. Manik started writing from his teens. Published three books of poetry: *Chaya Roder Brail* (Brail of light and shades), *Jol Jyostshnar meye* (Maid of water-moonlight), *Ashwamegheder Ghora*. The poet writes in various online and offline journals. Besides poetry, Manik Saha also writes articles, essays, short stories and book reviews.

Invisible Chains

Sitting round a burning tale we feel its heat. Heat is in front of us and its shadow, like a ghost, dangles behind. We listen to the songs in the greed of wind. I look at any of the stars and throw all my hidden sins at it. I buy a mask and return home at night. Sometimes I say - We have to burn the stories that unveil us and make our teeth shiny with the ashes of it. We try, but cannot talk the truth; some invisible chains are tied to our tongues and dreams.

Loyal Gardener

Better to have a river in my sleep. Ah! could i have sailed through the darkness of night. At dawn, I shall stand on any of the banks and take people on the boat whom I dreamed of. I shall sprinkle holy water of that river on their soul. Hark, no one let me go to the river. Water deceives. River is, thus, stolen, the woods of my boat too. I struggle with sleeplessness and sleep. Flush the moon with a delicate mosquito net. And a bushy tree shakes its distant branches and wakes me up. many a times I desired to cut the tree, but now it becomes my refuge. Descending from my dream i take up the water-pipe; I am its loyal gardener.

Water

Every sleep has a secret letter, and some letters are never written. My midday sleep breaks down like a chunk of earth on idle water. I hear its sound and forget all my sins. Decent sunlight fills the broken wall of my room and I feel the fragrance of Mahogany plays around like a country note. I dig a well in the soft bed of my sleep and fence it with my broken ribs. And wait. Time comes when gods need a bath. They descend to my humble well. I feel I am filled. My shadows are in the water flowing from my sleep.

Secret Hymn

I have taken my skull in my left hand as a fatal cup and grayed out all your deception with the ashes of cremation. As far as it can be seen is the corpse of touch and nothing more. Time and again I have stumbled and fallen on it.

Dear Betrayer, you have painted my heart with numbness. Bubbles of letters ooze out from it. You have poured the poisoned love in my cup and my heart gets wounds. Ah, Wounds, that hurts a lot! Some flowers thus bloom from the purple pain. Some sing the forlorn notes. Some inauspicious birds fly in the midnight sky. I have drunk and drenched in the notes.

The forlorn notes have touched the filthy water and have made them pure, unstained. Tear is like a mystic hymn that can wash away all our secret sins.

All of them translated by Jaydip Sarkar

Ashoke Kar

Ashoke Kar was born on January 10, 1959 at Rajbari, in Bangladesh. Since adolescent he has been engaged in writing and participated in cultural activities. During 80's and 90's his poems, short stories, essays and translations were published in Daily Newspapers, Magazines and

Literary Anthologies. His writings became promising and dynamic. He created his own styles in writing and gained recognitions of his literary styles and contexts of genre. Since 1999 he have been in United States for his profession. During his tenure in abroad, he managed his creative works in Bangla Literature, at the same time, become engaged in globalizing Bangla Literature via translations and participating global Literary organizations, in home and abroad.

Beyond Surrealism

The stoney moon stands watch over the mountain;
dreamy moonlight has frozen into morning's mist.
Scattered dreams are growing amongst the green roses.
Light chasing the shade has almost reached the sky,
drawing me besides YOU. Flying flocks of pigeons -
searching for our dreams - a thirst for peace is scattered
on the wind. Part of the sky, hanging on the open
window, makes constellations seem so tangible. Here
we are, hiding ourselves in the turmoil, with strange
silences between us; under the vast water - we are tiny
living species - we are drunken gamblers, playing
aquatics with fish and sea weeds, nourishing our suicidal
aspirations. We reach, absurdly, for compliments to one
another. Into our loneliness we shelter, living seems so
distant, dormant, waiting for the Spring to come. YOU,
becomes inevitable for existence to grow..., to me!

The Void

A void seems so strange, drifting me ever far away,
unbounded..., I have never been known of anything,
nothing, a vacant of the heart, all were unknown - but
questions are; how much do I really know myself? Must
I expect a part of the sky for my own? May I realize
those futile stanzas are off my own poems?

The dusty smoke of forests burning the last of me...,
does lamenting really find life amidst smokey timbers?
Sometimes familiarity can become strangers, what
illusory image is on broken glass, who is calling whom
by names unknown! Is it for the mysterious self or for
others? Strangers, all of a sudden seem familiar; Is it
reality?

Inside the illuminated skyscraper window, who's
inhaling exhausted breath? That which implies a rule that
instantly erases self-recognition? In front of mirror, I try
to recognize unknown-myself..., why am I so unfamiliar
to me?

Repealing shades after shades of memories, I stand
bloody. Old greetings seem modestly appreciating as a
pleasant surprise, questions are spreading strange
unheard-unknown thoughts..., addressing prolonged
applauses; Into the mystic mist; void seems so strange to

me!

Honeymoon

Suppose, the sign of downfall was hidden into love, with naive intuition we were playing around, never noticed that the inevitability of consequences was a smokescreen to reality! Our desires are far away, carried by the wind to places unknown ..., that's the way dreams are, they take us to safe corners of the heart ...then, like gypsy tents, silently slip away ...

Abstruse music notations are lost to the nimble musician's fingers. To the unknown image in the mirror, hiding uncontrolled lust only seen as the prism is exposed to light, captured, but lost as fractured light, responding to the heart's ghostly visions.

Suppose, the remaining pages of our history has made tracks in the sands of time, with far-reaching shadows, deaf to the noise of the wind, with a surprised fall of rhythmic shapes, painted by a crestless moon. Poisonous provocations were hidden under affectionate greetings spreading into the air all around, colours enjoying their fleeting honeymoon ...,

Love-blinded

With all the pleasant loneliness, you brought three life
giving red-roses during the time of shivering affections;
Love pierced the imaginary throne.

With unhindered inevitable blood drops in fingers, as far
as you are, being afraid echoes within me, piercing the
darkness - holding light in hands; Can roses too
become poisonous instantly?

Looking around to see wonders all over, lightyears seem
not so far away at all, darkness around the light, the
elegies of elegance; silently mingle into expelled
petals of mourning. Along with the fragrant heat of
love, crystals get frozen onto the thrones of roses.

Part Five(three poems)

Ballari Sen

Ballari Sen is a bilingual poet from Kolkata. India has
six books of poetry in her mother tongue i.e. Bengali and
two more books in English. She is a researcher dealing
with various subjects like old Bengali manuscripts,
contemporary trends in poetry and new
observations, in terms of structuralism, in Bengali
poems. She had been invited by the Centre For

Linguistics, The University of Oxford for working on a research project along with Professor Aditi Lahiri and Dr Stephen Parkinson from 2012-2015 on the Portuguese and Bengali interface in Indian cultural history. Her book *Bihaan Raater Bandish* won the coveted Krittibas puraskar in 2010.

Elsie stories

a) Dishwasher session

Moving through last month's Google calendar

No! It's neither marked and underlined nor remembered. It's neither registered by any phone apps as I desperately browse through a series of last night's prolific dinner plates left in that basin. Hands enhance finger movements as dirt leaves me alone. Each morning as I take over the kitchen sink with pungent leftovers. I feel the conundrum rising within and taking me nowhere, only to understand the mistakes performed. And when, when did I have my last period, dude?

b) A pressure cooker and the man

Lucretia is dead. She quietly tinkles cups and saucers, spoons and forks aside this tomorrow. A bang! Ah, the kitchen calls for a party. Our old rubber gasket works

again and cheers!

Lucretia is my granny's nickname we used to call her in our naughty moods. Lucretia would shout when we pampered her with hazy afternoon mango pickles and steal new coins

She was our new pressure cooker at our service. She teaches how to hang on till old machines start to work as if my man was with the pressure cooker as if it's a day off. Elsie, remember it's you and not you. Both.

c) He, the teacher

The last gates swept to a close tethering of data done successfully. My womb was facing my mother's yet eyes awake, I could smell the earthy Vermilion. Forcing to a sudden halt, signatures of scarlet drops between a darkness roaring near as people gathered. I know I have yet to Slaughter. Reincarnating black particles of a dying. He, who stayed with my dearth till each comma dared to fly into the blue Oblivion.

Amrita Bhattacharyya

Amrita Bhattacharyya is an Assistant Professor at the department of English Studies and Research in Amity University, Kolkata. Her poetic works include three collections of poems written in Bengali: *Amra Sobai Palok Aki*, *Pyne*, *Ghatsiri ar Sreeghorer Golpo* and *Bhor Barchhe Shwetbamoner*. Many of her poems in English have been published in many renowned literary journals and magazines e.g. Indian Literature published from Sahitya Akademi, POL (published from London), Indian Writers Forum, Muse India etc. to name a few. Some of her translated poems have been included in A Collection of World Poetry (2012, 2013 & 2014). Apart from writing poems, she also writes short-stories, short plays and skits. She is also interested in painting and Music.

Kunstlerroman

Once it was a mirror reflecting the edge of his desire. Another time, it was a pure white sheet hung on the far wall of the room. It was a common magnifying glass. He wanted to enlarge every fear and every prayer-bead he

owned!

To get off a few minutes earlier, he had worn long-forgotten silence himself. The current witnessed a wave of migrants moving out and another moving in. The community hall still echoed the rhythm he had grown accustomed to! It was his twenty seventh birthday and he held his magnifying glass tight!

A good twenty years have passed. He has been locking himself up for several years and, they say, magnifying glasses scare him now. He takes an instant liking to the lighthouses --to enjoy a bird's view of everything he owns. A visitor's crew goes rushing through the spiral staircase adjacent to the light-house -- each of them holding a magnifying glass in hand! He smirks. He puts his right hand in the pocket. He takes out his lighter! He feels relieved and blows out a cloud of smoke over the horizon!

On the day my grandfather died

A spectacular entrance is what we always cherish when my grandpa tells us stories of great heroes who won over the labyrinthine traps of light every night. To make the presence known and to echo the whisper down the age-old corridors, he holds the breath as tightly as he

holds the unread letters with a pause. Then he pours my morning coffee into the wonder cup, mostly when the owner is absent. He is a magic narrator with his broad shoulders, Roman nose, thin lips and the burnt smell of Viva! But, you know, even dust seems to be a stranger when it becomes a sticky jelly-like substance on the bedpan.

The yards of materials, that soapy fragrance, his dim eyes almost unreadable — the stories of his inappropriate lineage, his false teeth nibbling nervously on his bottom lips almost dry as a hard raisin...override the impending moment of an overturn!! We take some moment for our eyes to adjust to the darkness; a deep silence and then the crowd starts mourning aloud. Nothing stops the clock from ticking at a regular interval.

The exit is spectacular for sure; but there is a rift between the sight and our moist eyes. The crowded silence leads us to a caveat drowning uncontrolled deep into the known darkness!!

The girl, after knowing the truth

Her brown eyes focus on nothing. It's a nice mall, indeed! The tattooed anatomy seeks sudden exposure. But the haunting blaze over her pensive forehead and the

polished walls, ready to be wooed, does not have any clue of her blank gaze; In fact, the glare is pregnant with learnt disbelief and repellent passion.

The soft Beethoven and the water-stained plates on the fourth floor are busy in speculating the answer. The blankness rests her on the escalator. The building's interior is not so homely; still she eyes the rotten beams of familiarity over the ceiling. She scales down so smooth as if gravity takes her to the womb of indifference.

Nivedita Lakhera

Nivedita Lakhera, M.D., is a board certified-Internal Medicine doctor. She has more than a decade of experience in Inpatient Medicine. She is considered to be one of the leading feminist contemporary poets and a staunch advocate of gender equality in all spheres of life, especially medicine and technology. She is a prolific writer, having written 4000 poems and prose, besides having created a massive body of artwork - all while being dedicated to her professional practice of medicine. Lakhera has published two poetry and art books- Pillow of Dreams, and, I Am Not A Princess, I Am A Complete Fairytale.

Memories

Love unfolds us into otherness ... it surfaces who we are and stretches to what we can be, love is not for happiness - love is where rawness of soul rises to the surface and meets universe - and makes it permeable to light darkness name and unarmed things equally - its both comforting and painful, it feels kind when it kisses the cloud and it's brutal when it bleeds with imperfection that is a rule than exception... love is not for happiness, and it will take over you when it's your time , it's a field that people have talked about but mutates with

when someone enters new-love enters when universe sees you ready for an exponential experience whether you are ready for it or not , and it stays after the flesh that brought is has left - it stays like , poetry, art or inspiration, it stays like scar and undying ache at times, it stays like nostalgia or resentment- it stays like how you decide it to stay- but it stays as a land of what you wanna grow on it growth, memories or newness it always stays

Origin

The reason I create art and poetry is because I must.... it's a must rather than desire, it's the only place where every single inch of my soul finds a distilled and sacred space to unfold...

With the dizzy pace of life, it allows a restful interface, where across alive or dead time and kingdoms, people can feel holy lavender water when parched with craving of 'being understood'. And to be understood is the intimacy of highest level and that's what art and poetry provides them, an intimacy of being both vulnerable and understood, without being judged and shamed for being human.

Contrast

You cannot desire lotus and reject mud...you cannot desire rainbow and reject rain...you cannot desire wisdom and reject pain...you cannot desire growth and reject failure....you cannot desire to create something new and reject resistance by others for that...you cannot desire to be different and reject world for not treating you same...

What seems contradictory are actually complimentary
Life doesn't happen in brightness of day but in shadow of darkness too
Death of old births life of new And new becomes old

Faruk Afindi

Faruk Afindi, a journalist, was born on 1 January 1973 at Shibnagar, a village of Meghna upazila, in Comilla District of Bangladesh. He graduated in 1997 from Sonargaon University College, Narayanganj, and lives in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh.

As You Are Coming

As you are coming, come with the village. Come with all that prevail upon your village. Was not a ritual in the village? When an animal was sacrificed another one kept him aside. As they are dumb, do they understand nothing? Don't realize blood? You knew the mind of the cow as once you were a cowherd. Yet the tunes of the flute flow over the sun- I can hear, as the snake wanders in the full rain swimming in the water creating a watery fold. You saw the water cut by snake, lying like a human being incessant- folding and folding.

You saw the indifferent noon and the sun. The colour of the very sun resembles the flute. Your mind was as beautiful as the lonely noon. You had a pastime like afternoon loving with red cow. You had fondness in your eyes as like those of the cow. You knew love from the cow. Come with your solitude and lovely heart, passionate time to love and tottery fondness.

As you are coming, come with the village. Urban sun means not to play with the restless wigs of grasshopper. Just a clear sky, going to the posh office, moving with sweat. But that is not the flying of the non embellished comely butterfly. This sun is opposite to leisure and will to wet in the charming rain like your sister. Bring the village to the town with you and the fragrance of

lemon-leaf of your sister

Cot of The Forest

At noon, my child phoned me and said- 'the cot of wood has broken, come back father, please.' Hearing this I have been frustrated. What a whirlpool in the Padma in the rain! Once sinking in frustration I used to play like a diver known from childhood. But now I am not the diver. I even eat up fishes and water, dive at the watery ghat and drive the boat. But this like of life is not mine as my child said, 'our cot of sleeping has broken.' (Further) 'our cot of sleeping has broken.' And I am absolutely drowned in depression. I am tired to standing and become like freeze by wet as if in my body there the thorns pinch. Now I want to sleep on the cot of wood, the wood of the forest because I wanted to sleep easefully like the forest. I want to sleep on the cot of wood, the wood of the forest-, and want to watch the dancing of the child like the wren drongo. But my cot has broken and at this moment my pocket is empty. But not like the sky that I will see the lines of my palm being to be the Milky Way.

Hence for the time being it is not possible to sleep on the

wood of the forest nor cot of the wood. And I do not know when can I sleep with the peace of the forest. In fact this is known to me that one day I must sleep when lying down on a cot people will convey me in sleep to a place ever mysterious where the grass and the wild creeper speak fluently in a secluded place. There, in beyond the sleep, I will sleep like the forest with a cold body.

Life: Evening and Dew

I saw that there is no such thing called life. No lolled scenery I have ever seen like this name, nor blue eyes of grief or vapidness. Hands, the unalloyed chest, the silent face with speech - which I see cannot be called life. They have names as I have. For instance, If someone calls me I appear. When we will be called by name we must leave. Hands will go along with us and Legs will come. We shall go with open chests like the eyes blue or deeper black colour. They have names as I have. But I have never seen someone whose name is life. But I see that a restless deer runs from the wood into steppe as if I can run in fascination. An unsmooth hunter hand is extended in the back and it is running. Yes, it for life

binds the deer and pulls slowly in breath and emerged
love as a white sheep attempts to touch the grain
and the grass. It doesn't want to leave the ground and the
field.

Here the evening is stagnant on the leaves of beans.

Dews are on the grass.

O Sun, wake up. Hei Pearl, hei!

All of them translated from Bangla by Jubak Anarajo

Mahfuz Al-Hossain

Mahfuz Al-Hossain (1968-) is a promising bilingual poet based on Dhaka, Bangladesh. His poems are in every aspect which represents the flavours of humanity with its relations to society, nature and psychology. His published poetry books include: Probably Poems or May Not, Subasito Shobder Ghumghore (Sductions from Scented Words), Proteechchyer Bugle (Western Bugle), Kalkeuter Taxidermy (Taxidermy of Black Cobra). In professional life he works for National University of Bangladesh as its Registrar.

Identity

Last night may be in between halfway of my drowsy journey across the boulevard of wasteland. I've been stopped nearby a bush by some uniformed clown men,

one of them I remember wrapped face with cobra-printed silk scarf scrutinized me from top to bottom and then he asked me a strange question in a thuggish loud voice: Gentleman, What is your identity? Seemed they're carrying over their shoulders some double barrel strapped sticks small trigger-type joystick attached to it.

Pretending like a scared petty offender replied them in a feeble fainting voice : Sir, few minutes back I was a 'somebody', now I am at your disposal and if you're kind enough you may report me as ' nobody.'

Among them a pillow shaped round-belly senior laughed at me, saw him telling jokingly to one of his scarecrow-faced skin accomplice: smelly, don't you see, the guy is a foreteller and knows his fate --even can reproduce in advance from tomorrow's press report candidly!

Unknown Midnight Call

(Dedicated to Harold Bloom)

Last midnight received a strange call from an unknown man sounded mid forty asking for help in an unpolished husky voice: listen buddy, I'm not a beggar and don't need your middle class coins or torn ten taka

notes you saved forcibly from rustic 'rickshawalas',
don't even think of entertain me from your
sumptuous savoury leftovers rather text me your penned
poem and of your original thoughts...

When I tried to inquire about the caller's identity with all
its copious cowardice an unromantic anti hero call- drop
kicked me out from that unusual conversation of my
whole life
since then I am at a fix and don't know what to write
next. Still thinking about inherent influences of stalwarts
on my own thoughts and write-ups and their undying
contributions to my knowledge endowments. Don't know
to what extent. My thoughts are genuinely original and
really don't know what to text.

Online Relationship

Online relationship is like handmade assorted biscuits.
Predominant attributes are manifold like old Dhaka
jigsaw lanes. Fungal fatal attractions due to nose biting
aromas as flies feel for molasses due to oven-baked
wrinkle-free face complexion as bumblebees are
buzzing around majestic marigolds during pollen
periods. In frequent interactions so many crisps n

crunch murmurs like falling maple leaves or mouthful chilly potato chips. Romantic twists and turns translated symbolically in overflowing GIFs and emoticons. Extravagant hours are evaporated in gastronomic gossiping and mutual private data mining. High altitude mind trekking and Sherpa mountaineering through Nuru messaging or volcanic video chats rarely binds each other meaningfully. Sometimes proven sumptuous like edible adhesive crèmes between conjuring cookies ended up in unfriendly swallowing.

Quazi Johirul Islam

Quazi Johirul Islam is a contemporary Bengali poet. Collection of his poems namely ‘Poems of Quazi Johirul Islam – power of words’ is taught in the New York City University as a text book. Islam wrote in almost all formats of poetry: Haiku, Sonnet, Limerick, Pantoum what not. So far 65 books published, 22 are poetry books. His notable contribution to Bengali literature is introduction of ‘verb-less poems’. The collection of verb-less poems (*Kriapodhin Kriakolap*) first published from India in 2016 and later from Bangladesh in 2020, the book was also translated and published in Odia language from Bhubaneswar, India in 2020.

Relationship

Many years back at one evening they both stood up opposite sides of a bridge, facing each other. They knew each of them own the one-half of the bridge. The boy

was the first one, advanced towards the girl and he stepped in her property, she pushed him back while she also stepped in his property, in retaliation the boy pushed her back and again stepped in her side. For many years they have pushed-back each other with anger, anxiety and defense. One day they have realized both of them are standing in the middle of the bridge, right at the edge of each property and they are holding each other, not out of anger, with love, when a red flower bloomed between them and they have also realized the entire bridge belong to them. Now they know how the paradise looks like.

Suicide

It was an Indian restaurant in South Hall, on his jogging suit a man in his seventies asked for two big *parathas*, goat-*paya*, two *rasgallas* and a *malai chai*, ah for so many days, months, years starving for such food. The chubby senior poured the last bit of tea-drop in his tongue and sniffed the taste of heaven. Many years back for same reason a middleclass retiree died in Delhi hospital but no one knows where the south hall guy has gone.

Before he made the payment looked at the girl who

served him poison, "I was expecting someone with love to stop me committing suicide" and the girl saw the Delhi retiree is in cadaverous face behind the old man who just has stepped out to the rising sun that led him to the deep cloud.

One Life In Four Bodies

Great grandpa, a schoolteacher, collected an unknown seed from somewhere that eventually became his dream, the dream that never let him sleep. He planted the seed in his classroom where he usually teaches students not to have a dream. He fought against feudalism all his life but the seed, the dream he never left behind, one day embrewed and grew like a feudal lord. My great grandpa died as a marginal dweller of the plain but his only son, for a definite reason, from the very beginning wanted to be a rich man, his dream plant of dream died of lack of water in the desert. His son, who is my bohemian father, every morning recites the dream that he inherited in his blood to be a wealthy man, unfortunately the plant of him grew in the trashcan as he did not have a piece of land of his own. What he did not do to grow the plant bigger, thick and healthy, he even has reached to the cloud for water and to the sun for light, he held the tempest not to touch the leaves of his dream, drank the rain to avoid flood but the plant never grew enough as

there was not adequate soil for its roots, what a trashcan could produce, he finally realized, though he didn't ignore the only ripen fruit of the dwarf tree that made him Pollyanna again. His son, myself, never had a dream, I float my boat without an aim on the endless ocean, but I never realized the dream has landed to the other side of the vast water. My son at his twenties a successful Millionaire, I look at his confident face and try to understand who is he? Is he not my great grandpa who planted the seed of this brightest morning? It took four generations to have the tree full of fruits, in fact, through the four generations the only one life has flown, the one life has used four bodies, the only feudal life.

Sumana Ray

Sumana Ray hails from Tripura, now works and stays in Mumbai. She studied mathematics though her interest in literature grew from her childhood. She likes to play both outdoor and indoor games. She is fond of music and travelling. She has a passion for cycling. She writes poems, short stories and critiques. Two of her books, *Uran* (poetry), and *Rangiye Diye Jao* (short story) have been published in 2018.

Zero Point

Specks of dust gathered in the regions of my memory are shaken by the spring to fly. Beautiful is the unwritten poem writ large. This digital age, unaware of the fragrance of withered roses hidden in the folds of arithmetics, clearly recognizes the exchange of vibes. I take advantage of inbox that makes me dauntless experiencing happy waiting period. The undefined waiting period saved in a long time increases the length and breadth of desire—comes my shining moment as I meet him for the first time. This informal meeting, not

arranged in an air-conditioned room where instrumental music fills the air, ushers in a proposition of intense passion. The watch of Border Security Force, fidelity of white clouds, packed crowd and heat of the Palas Sun come forward to witness the union. My vocal cords get stifled in the short time borrowed from diplomacy, only the frequency of Mahua breeze reaches a decibel level at which one can comfortably hear. The waves of ineffable joy swamp the pathway warmed up by life. The distance between two different geographies is compressed into a zero; I immediately recognize this as zero point—zeroing sharply widens the area of the world. The barbed wire fence dissolves in unbounded love while light spills from a strange relationship.

Waves and the Dazzling Figures of Time

The gentle waves smash their reflections to form dazzling figures of time. They wrap the briny sorrows in soft silk of deep contemplation in order to make the way smooth and every moment they cross new borders. The reflection of disarrayed time draws geometric problems concerning joys and sorrows on their extended waves. Water current memorizes the formula of buoyancy to escape immersion. The letter what they write to the clouds floating across the ways sans

circumference is stamped with watery letters to be compressed into a personal archive. Over and over again, they kneel on the unalloyed sand though no one waits in any seashore. This is why the circular orbit of love manifests itself in the compass kept in the covered porch. The copyright they own looks brilliant in all beauties of infinite but there is no written writ of possession. Every day they evoke a virgin dawn with the oblation of light. All temporal sounds and echoes are made by their inner light of deep contemplation.

The Sound of Water

Conceded joys and sorrows are touched by discernible intricacy. Broken dreams draw the tragic consequences of somnolence. Shaking off last drowsiness, the night begins to pen a love story about the moon and the sky. Lonesomeness is reflected in the mirrors of greens which have clung to colourlessness. The sounds and echoes left by the twilight blend into darkness just as the beautiful young woman who mingles with a lion and a ringmaster in the circus. From the sombre piano there is only a

sound of water without waves...

All of them translated from Bangla by Gauranga
Mohanta

Ivanka Radmanovic

Ivanka Radmanovic graduated from the Fashion Institute of Technology, Department of Fashion Design in New York (USA). She has published three

collections of poetry: *Where is My Home* (Где је моја кућа, 2016), *Heavenly Cage* (Пајски кавез, 2014) and *AMARANTH or About Eternal Love* (АМАРАНТ или О бесмртној љубави, 2013). For her book *Heavenly Cage* she received the prestigious *Milan Rakic Award* in 2015. Ivanka Radmanovic is a member of the Association of Writers of Serbia, Association of Writers of Vojvodina and the Association of Scientific and Technical Translators of Serbia.

An Outing

Uncle Božo sits on his bed, his legs semi-sprawling, his back upright and leaning against two crumpled pillows. Yet if even he wanted, he couldn't lie straight out. Božo is a giant. Tall, broad shoulders, a big belly, a long beard. And sitting, his legs stick out beyond the length of the mattress. So, as if expecting some news, he sleeps at night, face up to the ceiling so the metal bed becomes even smaller in comparison with his body.

Uncle Božo sits on the bed, because in his small cell there's not enough room for him and us, his guests. My father sits on the only chair, I'm on a bundle of books. In the rest of the room on the floor and under the window there are more books stacked one on another to the

height of the bed and a little more. When I get up, some of these piles come up to my chin and at under seven years old, I think it's really fun. But, I'm quiet and sit in my place, thinking that in this room everything is very miniature compared with my uncle, as in Lilliput. And while I try to understand what my uncle and father are talking about, I follow the journey of a cockroach that trots the winding paths between the stacked books.

The window is open and the afternoon heat enters from the monastery courtyard. The father wanted to arrive in the day and return from Ostrog. Understandable. The route from the Zet Valley was steep, narrow, passable only for one vehicle, full of bends that swung out over the gorge and covered with small-scale gravel whose dust floated like a fog. Uncle Veso, who'd come with us, too, as a guide and to visit Božo, his cousin and a monk in Ostrog, nervously smoked all the time in the car with a rolled up cigarette in his hand. He puffed smoke through the open window and firmly held his seat on the bends, while the joints of his black, rough hands grew pale on his clenched fists. I thought it was funny because my father was a careful driver. It wasn't our first journey on the winding roads.

Even today I don't know how my father managed to get me, a girl, into a monastery cell. Only a few years later,

someone told me that a woman wasn't allowed to set foot inside the walls.

Nevertheless, at that moment it didn't matter at all. Father and Božo were already in the middle of a conversation on a topic that was far from me. From time to time, strange words and names could be heard: Marxism, Communism, Party, Ideology, Marx...

The cockroach appeared and then disappeared again between the books. I knew about Uncle Božo. Dad kept up a regular correspondence with him and periodically sent him money so he could survive. Božo was a monk, a writer and truly knowledgeable about Marxism, so my father enjoyed conversation with him as much as his written words. I don't remember if he ever offered something to eat or drink. I remember clearly the small room, the books, the insect on the floor and uncle on the bed, the whiteness of the courtyard that was visible through the window. And the cigarette hole in the front seat burnt by a faint-hearted Uncle Veso. My father laughed until tears came because Veso was also two metres tall, tough and sunburned, from working in a stony field and in a vineyard with vipers scattered all over it.

We never met again, Uncle Božo and me. I know he

abandoned his calling and fell by the wayside. He died in the nursing home in Igalo. They say that before his death he fell in love and took to drink, but they aren't sure in what order.

Translation by Viera and James Sutherland-Smith

A Dream, The First

I wake up. Morning has just emerged beneath a young sun and mild sky. The air smells like jasmine and slides down my throat like a sweet syrup. I close my eyes. The water is poisoned, they said, and it would be like in my dream: a river, powerful, bustling with tossing boats, yelling raftsmen and fishermen, swirling nets that twist with live catch on the slippery decks.

What are you going to do here I wondered, in a long silver dress fluttering in the morning wind, sprinkled by the agitated water? Why are you leaving the coast? What are you looking for on these half sunken boats? Who are these women who follow you, invoking your name, pleading with you to return, to go, to give up? And what is this huge red box that you can barely carry?

You do not listen, but continue to search for what does

not seem to exist, through this nightmare of an unpredictable harbor, through the shouts of fishermen, the sound of incoming ships, the slap of water through the floating boards on which you step barefoot with uncertain step, trying not to slip into the turbid wave below you. “Stop,” the women shout after you, while I helplessly dream of your eyes, black with uncertainty, your heart striking like a gong and your hands, slender, unaccustomed to their burden.

“I must”, I hear your thought, “I have to gratuitously and inexplicably throw this red box into the water, A meaningless box, resembling a casket in which I can lie down and not wake up; a box missing one side, a half-smashed box that serves no purpose, whose significance I don’t know, which I carry upright so that two small, perfect, completely identical red boxes won’t fall out of it.” You slip. The wet boards are all narrow under your feet. “I have to”, I hear you whimpering, “I have to abandon it to the water to float back carrying its bright red essence and two cubical omens far from here. I must, there is no choice, and there is no space between the floating boats, boards, rafts, to slip into the water what I must. I wake you up. Your eyes are black from fear.

The water is poisoned.

Jasmine is the sole respite.

Translated by Viera and James Sutherland-Smith

A Dream, The Last

They've never been that close, Charlotte and her mother. That's why this joint adventure is so astonishing for her. Her mother has initiated, in spite of her perpetually conservative nature, a crazy film shoot of Metropolis. Charlotte's head spins on the huge crane crazily lurching above the spooky quiet streets and peeking through the enormous windows of a skyscraper watching the blink of the future film's frames, with a secret thrill to be revealed. The law is immovable, a heavy fine for intrusions by expensive recordings. Mother is, however, unstoppable and so she and Charlotte circle from square to square, surrounded by windows in which the gleam of their faces without a single line flickers from time to time. Behind their backs the branches of a vast park that divides the city into two parts move profoundly. Fear of an inadvertent fire flares up inside Charlotte. In this crazy floating above streets, traffic lights, parked cars, in the dawn of the day, among buildings that time brings up, time moves away, at the last moment avoiding being seen and revealed, Charlotte fails to persuade her mother to stop. And so they skim over the first, second and fifth square.

And then, her mother, finally, decides to move towards an old but still prestigious hotel, in which, Charlotte has heard, she is shooting another film. This time, when they enter through the revolving door enclosed in gold-plated frames, her mother goes to the reception desk to check her and Charlotte's name on the list of those who are allowed to attend.

Charlotte is patient, with no questions, but still fondly waits for her mother to complete the procedure. Around the lobby, the lights are dimmed. Her gaze is directed towards the revolving door, through which the coming day slides.

And while she stands in her chosen place, overwhelmed by a feeling of helplessness, the doors begin to turn and through them a middle-aged woman enters, dressed in neutral-coloured clothes for riding, leading a horse by the bridle. Charlotte looks at her and infers that the woman is unnaturally ugly because of the rage that gnaws at her thin mouth, while her eyes filled with disgust are fixed on the horse she leads. Charlotte directs a look at the animal and realizes it is a mare. Its proportions are not the happiest, Charlotte concludes. Its body is relatively short, her legs too, somehow stocky and with a big rump. It's white, but covered with pale spots of irregular shape, which give the impression

of dirt. The mare's mane is in disarray, sweaty locks, tangled in a blanket of cords in Rastafarian style. At that moment the rider brutally pulls out a brush and begins to comb the disheveled mane. As the animal, without movement, without voice, suffers violence, unblinkingly with sad, black eyes, her mistress silently cursing, in another burst of anger and disgust, throws down the brush, rises suddenly, turns and leaves.

At that moment, Charlotte's gaze meets the eyes of the mare and in them she reads the deepest grief and suffering for lost love. The one who appears this modest animal loved and whose love, regardless of her unprepossessing appearance, was returned fully with a curse, she is no longer alive. In the pupils of her eyes Charlotte succeeds in seeing the moment when this beautiful white horse with a long, magnificent mane struggles for its last breath in the depths of the ocean, trying to defend itself from the fish that attacks it and devours it piece by piece, stripping it to the bones. There's no blood. There is only an a mane swaying bubbles of breath, hooves that vainly try to get the body to the surface and hungry shoals of flocks that carefully and systematically finish their work. Both the sad mare and Charlotte see the end. Clearly on a desolate shore covered in wet, brownish sand, below a low pale blue sky, next to the subdued noise of the ocean

whose dark green waters lap very calmly, among all these portents lie the immense, angular white skeleton of a horse. It seems to be asleep. Its mane is untouched, the fish have taken pity on its beauty. It is still long and thick, it is occasionally ruffled in the breeze, creating a golden glow on the whitening bones. Only, the mane is no longer white. The gold is yellow. Both Charlotte and the poor mare realize that nothing is the same as it was before.

Translated by Viera and James Sutherland-Smith

Pran G Basak

Pran G Basak was born in 1955 at a remote village of Bengal. His parents moved to a small town from East Bengal. Due to displacement his parents suffered a lot. In his childhood he worked in a weaving factory before going to school. Nevertheless he worked as a part-time bidi worker during his student life. He finally moved to Delhi in 1980. Till now, he has published twenty collections of poems, one short-story volume and one satire in Bangla. He is one of the leading unputdownable younger writers of today's Delhi in Bangla poetry. He writes regularly in various little magazines published from different parts of India and Bangladesh. He received several literary awards.

Cinevision

Wide open, the door, without an urge of issuing passport, since the eye signals entry anytime. The volumeless matt, one blanket of comfort, ilsheguri drops tickles hard on sensation, the fish net hanging over the shoulder of my elder brother, while I am carrying the fish-trap. Drenched in rain, after the whole day, the lavish of precious gem sprained out of water. The yard

is now, bustling with women, engaged in scaling of fish. Their hot, flavory taste as after boiled in bed of salt and turmeric, in that three-eared cauldron of iron. Tattered bedroom blanket with dreamless tiled roof above, the fixed blank stare of household fireflies, the father is out to meet up day's need.

There she is, Maa, a lean, little woman wrapped in shrunken terror of the uncertainties of family nuances. Water boils on of dry plantain woods on the pot-bellied cauldron--only water. Sunrays ascend over the verandah from the main door, everyone is ready after bath, school-time pricks on. Water still boils. Father out.

The scene shifts after the cycle bell tinkles. The fire in dry plantain wood turns havoc. A-B-C-D -s rolls down the jute bag, boils with brimming overture. Qued plates cover the vapory wonder, the rush to school.

Father is out for day's meet.

Preparation

The earth hones its practice to get its share of dedicated rain. Even the sky follows through the schedule of patience....those standing like still, the raintrees, the land

of forests, dozing on the spell of shower bath. I come out open in the desolation of street for one ounce of rain sound. Thrashed incessantly by towers one after another, each word echoes the cry of fountain. Oops, can't avail to wet in rain, stuck either into some dream or choric euphoria perhaps! grasping dumb ringtone when the wind stands witness to the act of someone's threat. And yet amid this distort, the earth must prepare herself for one drop of rain and chord, for lispings languages...for poetry.

Modern

Dawn comes silently.....in huge abundance, passing of the night drops on the canvas of jaded form...drowsy artisan lurking out of worldly fair....mysterious sign of anxiety prevailing.....slowly the lotus blooms in, unfamiliar shape, strangely perfumed and tinted in extreme rarities. Who is there in out, while some still indoors... that will pluck the dark of doors, some deserted time caught in mirrored reflection. Unknowingly the forbidden stairs of dream descends...and multitudes of words float on the ebb.

Some call it charm, others name it fog. A few more addresses it as the Lord of Time.

All of them translated from Bangla by Tapashi Laha

Siddartha Sankar Kalita

Siddartha Sankar Kalita is a young poet of Assam, India. Sankar Kalita won the prestigious 'Dainik Assam Sahitya Bota'-- an award given by the trust for excellency in Poetry. Moreover, Sankar Kalita is also interested in 'Bhaona'--the local village theater of Assam.

He is also a good reciter. His creative work is 'Palithinor Dhorakauri'--a collection of poems. 'Taming the Sea Horse' is the English version of Sankar Kalita's Poetry book, which was translated by Prof. Pradip Acharya, an eminent critic and translator of Assam India.

The Hayagriva*

Neighing of the Hayamedha. Bell like roar of horses.
Sleep is disturbing Drona's wife. Neighs in dream.
My little daughter rubs the slate with a chalk. The neck
of horse is long! Spread out high, high and higher.

Water. Water. Water. A horse smeared in mud. A lotus is
hanging on its mouth.

My village-uncles are busy in making the masks for
horses. Both the two uterine brothers spent many
sleepless nights in the name of _Bhaona_, the village
theatres. This time will rescue the Vedas.

We are only the horse-riders. Hanging the _khol_, the
sheather of one cubit on the shoulder the script of king
Hayagriba's entrance is in the ten fingers.

(This poem is based on a myth.)

The Scream

The salesman of the Hoque Bookstall put something on my bag, hung on my shoulder, in no time and said, Sir, with a great risk I carried your Munch*. Please, you too carry it carefully.

Thanking him I Stepped towards home by the street. Having a glance of mine a few on duty police squeezed. Marched towards the backside of a small shop. Being unable to understand anything as I opened the gate, dissecting the secure barrier my dog came to the street and barked so horribly.

As I entered my room, all the furniture of the room trembled having a sight of mine. The clock collapsed on the floor. When came near the book shelf to place Munch, opening the shelf, all the books scattered on the floor.

That was the hottest day ever. Just I switched on the fan. The fan started trembling. Hurting me on my forehead the fan collapsed on the floor. And too broke into two pieces. A salty current from the forehead, just crossing the nose, licked my lips.

To measure the depth of the wound, I stood in front of the life-sized mirror. Pressing the ears with a great force, the alarming scream gone away from the mirror, directly.

**Edvard Munch is a Norwegian artist. 'The Scream' is his famous art.*

Dalism

Desire to touch the sky or to see it with a bend. An abode is sprouting. Abode on and above of an abode. Abode. Abode. Abode.

A pedestrian faints by ringing the bell on the footpath or on the scalp of the footpath. Hit strokes. No shadow. No shadow. No Shadow in the city of illusion. To rest, only the balconies are scattering the shadow of the undergarments. We are sharing the evenings of bottles in the glasses.

Getting down from the hoarding, the famous cat is stepping in our hearts. The gestures of her back is glittering in the light of the teeth of the panthers, chasing her from both the sides. We lost or set out our minds freely. Opening the door of the dawn-dream, the Masturbator came out of the wash room.

**Salvador Dali , a Spanish surrealist artist . 'The Great Masturbator' is his famous painting.*

Pijush Kanti Barua

Pijush Kanti Barua is a quiet observer of life and nature and tries to listen to the tongues of time and the earth. He makes an effort to catch the melodies of nature in his poems. He was born on 10 October 1973, by the bank of *Karnafuli* in *Chattogram*, Bangladesh. His maiden book of poetry was *'Tomar Nibeetey Aunya Keu'* published in 2004. His '100 Poems', a collection of poems was published in December 2019. A card-poem collection was published in December 2010. A book offered to *Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's* birth centenary was published in March 2020 named *'Janoker*

Aumrito Jeebon.' He received the award of winner in Celebrating Life Lyrics Contest in 2009. He is a registered physician by profession.

Village That Given Birth To Me

I roam with the village of my birth in my pocket. And she accompanies me in my every tour anywhere. She seems to be my body guard since my birth and defends me in any danger with the same care like my mum. I carry the village of my birth in my memories. And sketch her as she was in the days of my adolescent standing by the unknown river far away from her in expatriation. The bull eyes of the *Karnafuli* didn't ash her even then. I draw the village of my birth inside every lines of my poem. As I compose the pathway of my poem on the inert streets from where the bloodstreams of the great Fifty Two ran away to the sea and I sketch h the village of my birth in the Martyr Memorials. I can discover the village of my birth in the beak of the flying birds. In the form of an Olive branch as if she was the messenger of peace. The village of my birth, as it were the intercontinental ambassador who abolishes the third world war which is still in the womb of time.

Pilgrimage by a 'Hundred Year'

Running through its whole life on streets the tired dust sinks in the reminiscences of its golden past reaching old-age. Spending youth the tired dust, in the same hundred years aged morning, whips the memories to clean the layers of dust and brings out the thrifted gems. And both its face and mind glistens like a new bride with colour of henna in the sudden flash of light. It can recall a young leader of its same age walking in an agitating procession in the sun imposed street. Lean and thin physique more than six feet height, back brushed hair. His gait depicted himself the Himalayas as it were walking over its chest with hero-like footsteps after that the dust and the young leader would met each other off and on in close interval in meetings and processions battoned by the police. In times, the young leader would alone sprouting smoke from the black pipe walked along the sun-burnt street getting past stepping on it to the ever known destination of independence. The dust of the street thought itself and laughed in enchantress. What an unbeaten courage did that man bear! Sometimes he would have disappeared for some days. The dust of the street realised that, the man was not at home, rather he was enlightening the whole country being confined in jail himself. Seeing a man like him, the width of the chest of the dust would increase. He was in fact, a friend of the oppressed! One day, the dust too desired to adhere to his sacred pair of

feet. No sooner had it thought and the opportunity came. One day the dust of the street, being the foot-dust of him, reached at the address of number ‘Thirty Two’. The dust found the home of its super dream hero. Oh! It was not just a home, it was no less than great pilgrimage! Uncountable peoples would come with lots of excuses. Even then, the great lady named Renu didn't show any tiredness. Renu was adhered in the life of the six feet tall map!

The dust of the street became a hundred years old saga with knowledge of three phases of time today. Till today its eyes are ablaze with every sound-wave of the speech of that charismatic man. What a many memory impacted in the tale of that afternoon! Today after so many days the dust of the street again determines to go to pilgrimage. Not to the house of number ‘Thirty Two’. Soul could hear the call of close green shelter of Tungipara. Where The Byegar would accompany him during swimming once upon a time. Where a century years ago people could hear his maiden cry.

Ataur Rahman Milad

Ataur Rahman Milad is a poet and short story writer. His writing career started in the early eighties. He was born and raised in Moulvi Bazar district in Bangladesh. Since 1987 he has lived in England. He has published six books including the latest book of poems, 'Jolbhora Jotilotha'. He is a literary editor in chief of the paper 'Shobdopath'. He also edited the quarterly 'Shapla', 'Bhalobeshe Aundo Hoi' meaning- 'I fell in love with the blind', and the anthology 'Trithio banglar kobita' (i.e. poem of the Third Bengal'). He received the Solidarity in Literature Medal in 2008.

Mutest sketch

Babies are slept hearing stories of fierce Tiger here. The speaker had never seen a Tiger, but supplied the story

with professional robes and style. Babies pass mountain slopes in dream-time, with warmth of burning field. They're growing up with experience so heinous, fragrance of soaked cloths can make them awake. They can see then, they're not falling apart on a distant land, but on their own door-ways. Milk-cups are in front of them, babies drop them while taking milk with inexperienced hands and efforts. Babies can't sleep with fear of dream, hearing the story of Tiger and laying on cats-back, they forget their own nature with passing of time they fall onto the feet of their elders, with careless time, with negligence and hate forever.....

Air-hunter

I can't understand a lot, what you say bloody-stain of betel-nuts on my whitish balcony? Colored-chaos can be omitted by index tip. The pinned-speeches are echoing on the mountain top mystery of air is opened now. All the speeches are stored on a human dictionary...

I can't understand a lot, what you say rotten shades on spider-net in the gloomy dark. Mute love on the anguished way of thinking words; made of ugliest dreams are awake here. Scarcity of traditional sense of aristocracy. All are alive with deadliest legs of birds with falling of the sound of any shape whistle....

Souvenir

All of her tunes have disappeared in her black holes. No frame has the sign of her inner soul. Her beaconing has disguised behind the false. The quarrel of her parents, she got an endless flow of youth from her mom? Is she swallowing her mother's age? Is it the way to be grown up on careless cry? Sealed packet can't be attainable only by an ardent sigh: It's habitual to pray for the better, habituated for mom and her!

All of them translated by Laila Ferdous

Hassanal Abdullah

Hassanal Abdullah is a Bangladeshi-American poet,

translator and critic. He introduced a new sonnet form, Swatantra Sonnet, seven-seven stanza pattern and abcdabc efgdefg rhyming scheme, more than 200 of which he wrote in Bengali. He is the author of 42 books in various genres, and has written a 304-page epic, Nakhatra O Manusar Prochhad (Ananya, 2007, 2nd edition 2017), where, based on several scientific theories. He edited the Twentieth Century Bengali Poetry (Bangla Text, Mowla, 2015). His three bilingual poetry collections, Breath of Bengal (CCC, 2000), Under the Thin Layers of Light (CCC, 2015) and Swatantra Sonnets: Bengali with English Translation (Feral Press & CCC, 2017) is available at Amazon.com. Hassanal received a translation grant from the Queens Council on the Arts and was invited to the 2nd International Poetry Festival, Chalkida, Greece, in 2019.

Cold Drying Sun

The words time and self-reliance often emerge in our thoughts, though we are all essentially a domestic animal of some raucous rulers. Cages, therefore, are the justified domicile of our healthy endurance. Though we occasionally get out of the cage and tweet once or twice for a little while, we in fact soothe happiness swishing over the cage-walls in flirtations, rehearsing

emotional songs that bring forth instantaneous tears. There is no difference between weeping and the subdued words of those lyrics. People, who regularly think about their wives and children, emit fear of eating egg-yokes, and devour soft bird meat; they, in reality, are always against being long-sighted. Day and night, they keep themselves busy kneeling down in front of torture and injustice. And when they hear about finding a new planet in outer space that is similar to earth, they await a new revelation or a new prophet, staring curiously with their big wide eyes as if they were a butterfly sitting on a *kolmi* flower on a vast village pond. Meanwhile, bin Laden's third wife passionately states in deposition how nervous they were living in the same cage-like room for five long years.

Translated from Bengali by Ekok Soubir
with the poet

I Talk Exactly About That Poem

1.

I am not going to tempt you in a remunerated life—you could hover your wish over any spectrum that is being granted by the tempestuous time. And if you do not trust me, then gaze into my eyes with full consent, and dig a huge pond with all of your savings where you

can swim twice a day, in a regular basis, like a swam. I too am capable of swimming exactly like you, and I know it well, you turn blind without poetry. I talk exactly about that poem.

2.

Poetry emancipated you. It was mainly the spirit of poetry that strengthened you from behind and let you fire up together standing against sheer darkness and deafening falsehood. In fact, rising above all odds, poetry empowered you and made you bold. So after expressing all through poetry, that is what they wanted to say, the religious books finally fidgeted to ban poetry. All the falsehoods of religion, and the prophet's hypocrisy were chased only by poetry. I talk exactly about that poem.

3.

A group of people, when they got greedy, when they managed to understand through upheaval social injustice that it's evident to get the naked, poor, and ignorant into their path through clutching them in the vicious nets of fear and temptation, religion was formed right at that moment; and it started its uncontrolled torture—different for different clans. It was told, you should immediately fear the invisible power that brandishes the claws like tiger's crouching with a vampire's tongue. Otherwise, you will be burnt in the

ferocious fire forever. Not a single cell of your body, from your head to toenail, would be able to escape the brutal hands of the creator. Therefore, they were bowed down in groups, sect by sect, clustered and calmed like honeybees. Lining them up side by side, it was completely evasive to force them taking the oath in defective rhythms and meters. Therefore, I talk exactly about that poem.

Translated from Bengali by the poet

A Sudden Yawn of a Star

1.

Staring at the luminous world through the window, we feel the light as if it were assimilated in the absorbing darkness. Indeed, we cannot find any differences between the day and the night—light and dark. Though we don't think about this a lot, though we shout happiness getting two meals a day and sex at midnight, the raucous time weaves its dark nets around us. If we get a slight chance to look back, we can't see anything. We try to pace forward, but eventually, without realizing it, we fall into a grave of corroding age.

2.

We dive into the waving evening. We dive into the

cheerful race of life and hand ourselves over to people who once promised us happiness. People—who become our rescuers as if they were the gods, though they had the quality of becoming nothing but a bunch of dogs—sitting in the bedchambers of our brains casting away on their own wishful vessels.

Translated from Bengali by the poet

Ricardo Plata

Ricardo Plata (Mexico City, 1994). He studied Hispanic Literature at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana. He is an author of the poetry collection *Para habitar mi nombre* under the Literalía publishing label. He was a fellow of the Festival Interfaz: The signs in rotation. He is founder and CEO of *Cardenal Literary Magazine* and of the National Meeting of Young Writers-UAM-I. He has published in the magazines *Círculo de poesía*, *Punto de Partida*, *Buenos Aires Poetry* and *Mood Magazine*

A prayer for abandonment

I never released myself from my loved ones, I think about abandonment as an excuse to come back, so that time can make of the chest a moor of open hopes. I think about abandonment as a night with three suspension points which opens the windows of grief. People who loved me looked at me as if I was a tall house, three-story high which they could dessert, they departed leaving the doors open because they knew I don't have

the strength to close them. I was always the prelude so they could find love, I was the place where they concurred crying, the place where they swaddled their heart, and when they left, I also wanted to uninhabitable myself.

An Angel's Paralysis

The Television's statics settle in the room, right on the corner where our words join. I honor the wisdom of your body, the experience you have gained from your other lovers to untangle your hair and disentangle your daily clothes. An angel paralyses every time you undress, there's a thirty degrees sun arising from your feet and a moon climbing up your stomach completing each one of your phases. You remind me of the woman I dreamt of in my childhood and you describe your waist which maddens every time someone loves it, show in my stomach the madness of your pelvis so the caress will taste like a January's evening.

You draw a cross

You draw a cross in my forehead, with your fingertips
you found a religion, you smile, you throw a prayer into
the void to the god in which we do not believe so that I
won't miss any memory when I get home. Of those who
look at me, none will know I come from your body, I
throw a prayer so that it will always come back to you.

All of them translated from Spanish to English by
Daniela Sánchez

Rudrasankar

Rudrasankar is a Bengali poet of the young generation. His poems have been published in several leading literary magazines and Bengali poetry collections in India, Bangladesh and other parts of the World. He has been recognised as an atheist Bengali poet. Rudrasankar's poetry is a sophisticated combination of self-reflections of everyday life. Some of his lyrical poems are converted into songs by popular singers.

Elocutionists from West Bengal and Bangladesh often recite his poems. Rudrasankar was involved in editing the poem section of popular newspaper 'Prothom Alo'. He performed in Bangasammelon (NABC) multiple times as an invited poet. He has eight poetry books. He received a couple of awards including Bhasanagar award 2016 and Terminus boi-parbon award 2019 from Kolkata, India.

Epidemic

Fear everywhere, but love came and stopped me. Embosomed me in one sip with such intensity, I was forbidden to leave the house. Brooding at the tea stall five steps away did not happen! Domestic drudgery confines mother, chest malady makes father bedridden. The Lord and the devout pedagogue, like me, are left idle at this moment; Perturbed not for any solace beneath closed temple, mosque, church, synagogue. At life's most valuable desire scientist hunts for antidotes, doctor eager for application. Day after day, night after night relentlessly runs the emergency department personnel, very secretly arrives the terrible paucity of money. In front of my eyes I perceive rests obscure on the road a corpse, of high repute; flies hovering, gullet throwing up from cavity within. Oh, how can I stay afloat above the ground! Fear

everywhere, but love came and stopped me. Ever since, destiny differs; destiny showers as poetry.

Virus

I haven't seen them with unfiltered eyes, haven't addressed them as 'brother', still the road I traverse everyday is gloomed with horror. Some appear tall, some round, some assemble in surging waves forcing the immense aura of compelling ignorance.

Childhood nostalgia of sun- drenched school and my biology teacher. I heard from him first- there resides a whole world of love between living and non- living things. They remain truly fair to all beliefs than human selves. They discriminate not against creed readily embrace all when encountered. My dull brain failed to fathom deep overwhelmed with rain profound; The eye within eye then, was flooded with love vehement.

Now that I evoke the fine memories of the Lord who resides above seven heavens, Like me, He holds himself to be the only clever one, In all likelihood, the Lord fancies to be the Omniscient Overseer, and His autocratic ideas lie scattered like jelly fishes, throttled. Neither have I seen them with unfettered eyes, nor have I

addressed them as 'brother', In this strange time may mankind be bestowed with lasting long life; when conscience rise, love happens to this planet again, on an intimate evening.

Tathagata (Possessor of true wisdom)

These days I do not muse too much on Marufa and Timirkanti. Their very thought reminds me of the cave dwellers. Who before deciphering the meaning of the word 'fire' Made me perceive - How to burn with the fervour of menstrual instinct; when comes within one's reach, the way to appease the entire hunger, the entire fast of the Sun.

Born into this primordial family, we are born again. I was not timid then overtly rested no germ of ambition within me inside the cavernous deep settled, fragments of light and darkness. There were no God, no religion, no politics.

Our days and nights were nomad-like, every year the seasonal cycle went by. One day my crude nails sensed the bloody taste of Power. Sense of supremacy bisected me and entered my cerebral space. God entered my room. Slowly crept in religion, politics. Every day, every year the worms infiltrate and there and then fear keeps drowning me relentless dread of exploitation and

continual terror of dominion. Dissolve my confidants,
Marufa and Timirkanti. Tathagata himself effaces from
my mind.

All of them are translated by Nibedita Ghosh

AKM Abdullah

AKM Abdullah is a poet, writer and editor and was born in Bangladesh. Now he lives in London, United Kingdom. Published books: *Matir Maachay Dondito Prjapati*, *Je Shahore Harie Felechhi Karoti*, *Email Bodite Shamoyer Anubad* (all of them are the poetry collection in Bengali edition). Novel: *Kkhudha O Shoundorjo*, Story: *Tea-breaker Galpo*. Poems translated into English have been published in various anthologies, literary magazines and blogs. He is an editor at micro-story compilation ‘shabdobindu’(print

magazine) and ‘Dash’(literary web
mag).Email: abdullah.20@hotmail.co.uk

Six-Feet Gaps

Standing across the bright dawn of May are all the wonderful nice trees. Our eyes are walking along the side of the park through the gaps of green branches. The scent of kisses stored up in the folds of the elbows, leaving the wonderful taste of noon—

covering our noses and mouths inside a little cloth. And we're picking up all past habits in a six-foot gap. Now the sirens of the ambulance come in waves, flying in the air making our chest rise and fall. And the diary notifications are being boiled inside the hand sanitiser.

Lockdown

And— when the terrifies stuck on the designed handkerchief; the walls of the quarantines trembled. Our

heartbeats increased. Our breath became smaller. The latest projector became on automatically. And three colours scene displayed on the screen; where, waved our inner symptoms.

And then the strange siren break the lockdown walls and come down; we tie the survival yearns up with the head and jump in the Android-lake— but the radiation- polo breaks the glass protector and captive us. And when we hear the embroidery announcement—

The Richmond Park, *Sayedabad* bus terminal or Komla-Pur rail station fell from our clapping gap's. Our lamentations become divided and lost in the crowd. Oh! If ever come drunken sigh grain from the corked bottle; I will also be a story on the screen of survival time.

**Polo- Fish catcher*

Ashes of Memories

On the stone chest of Trafalgar Square, I see the grey pigeons flap their wings. And I sit on the embankment pier. I watch the river of Kushiara's engine boat games in twinkle water of Thames. At the Piccadilly hole; there is

visitor wave and long queues. Sometimes from the underground, a sweet tune come through the breaking guitar, like one string music instrument and the tune taking me to the childhood. After that I get upset, and lie down. In my dream I walk into the tea garden in Sylhet and on the Keane Bridge of Surma river. I walk on the muddy path and previous smells come out from the straws. I lost myself in laugh of muddy childhood. From the countryside, the magpies whistled touched the heart's desire. I woke up and open my eyes, I find myself on the bank of the river Thames and the Tower Bridge is front of my eyes.

Ranjit Bora

Ranjit Bora is a poet, novelist and lover of art from Assam, India. He is also interested in acting, playwriting and is a teacher by profession. He is an author of a few books as well.

Let's exchange our spectacles

Let's exchange our spectacles. And arrange a run of sight. To tell this the priest goes to the temple. The Hajj pilgrims to the Mecca. To message this one day Siddhartha became Buddha. Rosse wrote the Republic. Father one day told that the verse -- 'Ma Nisada' shaped the Ramayana. The arts of Vince and Picasso, the bent dreams of water, and the ant-hills; too scents like the ripen jackfruits. Rests in the heart through the path of

eyes.

Let's exchange our spectacles. Let's touch the procreation of a white flower alive in the heart. Let's pour moonlight as oblations in to the hearts wandering in the nook and corner of the world with the blazes of fire. Let's wash dust and spots of blood affixed to the pure grass...

Humanity-inhumanity

No one be complete alone. Being unable to understand this human behaves like inhuman. Fire catches the huts. Sleeping together on the same bed, can't be a couple. As hearts neglected hearts, the tolerating figures of boarders, slowly blazes the cinder of grief. In the sky flies the unhappy smoke. Searching the boundaries of prayers, God and Jesus becomes homeless. In the anxiety of heart, the lake of sorrow becomes deeper. Being excited in the elation of power men became devils. The consciousness under the supervision

of God also becomes naked by putting off the clothes,
one after another..

Self-advertisement

I can't be that person who can take a sleep in your garden
of blossoming flowers. Can't be that person who can
scorn the love of the soul soaked in blood. Who can
chase the colours of the autumnal sky. I had nothing to
be prosperous in your love. The altercated sun said,
'This is nothing but the aspirations of your infertile
dreams.' I am that person who is alive only by hugging
the breeze of or like living by overlapping of madness
summer or the yellowish shadow of the lightly
blossomed *Kadamba* tree. Know that needn't to be
sharpen. The voice of a winter's conch needs not words
too. Though in every moment in inspiration the naked
wind of solitude...

Lipi Nasrin

Lipi Nasrin was born on 3 April in 1971. She obtained
her master's degree in Botany from university of

Rajshahi and PhD degree from the institute of Biological Sciences under the same university. Now she is serving as an Associate professor of Botany at Satkhira Government College, Satkhira, Khulna. She has three poetry books published, namely '*Noisobder nissongo prohor*', '*Godhuli Ronger chhaya*' and '*Nilombon Madokota*' and '*Nistal Melancholy*.'

In the Spring Evening

They fall suddenly saying nothing. It leaves a mild ripple in the air. Its skeleton breaks by the thrash of storm, remains like the fossil for eternity holding the memories of time. The futile language spills out in the depth from the quiet eyes. Thereafter I raised my eyes with the music of the string of bells of the ankle, they mingled out in the soil with wet kisses ecstasy. The tiny physique gets a taste of smell of the horizon. They sing under the candle light along with the cuckoos in the spring evening; look for the young butterfly lying on the *Dumur* leaves in the shadows. Intoxicated organ-hill streams out fresh cries. Maybe someone drifts away in haunted diffidence.

Dance on the Fallen Leaves

Looking at the sky of a drunken evening I dissolve in

tears. The last hew of the dusk still was engulfed over. Slowly it also glides into the depth of intense delirium-raving. The breezy moonlight falls through the gift of fumbling moon, somewhere trembling air gets wet with your touch, I return defying my efforts to head on, return with a shivering heart to the cat-and-mouse light and shade. Storm breaks out of the heart of poem-swelling, diffident, restless tremor run away on. Sometimes somewhere on the nervous dividing line of his lips, numerous seedlings are planted by a pair of some other lips. During an evening of musical soiree lonely words find some imperil feeling. You I or some other ones look for the refuge on the span of sky drilling through like the migrating birds. Probably then storms dash through outside at the copulation of the fallen leaves.

You are in Deep Feeling

Came again: Why it falls repeatedly raising the waves of echoes? That stone is soft like a bird's womb, sights grow trappy bohemian love there, regaling nocturnal music pops up in a harmony of orchestra at the claps of time and space. The trance of night clamped me tight lest I return fast. The grey sky puts on turquoise incessantly turning a whirl of silent cascades. The memories furnish a stage on the drunken eyes with the

sketches artistry, numerous faces in processions
chanting demands, among those your face sticks its eyes
in the trembling realm of light and shadow. I call out,
come over the burning man, drown me in the mist of
undiluted braiding waves. Still he glides away far to
cause blazing irrupt at the ventricle. I keep on calling
him stretching hands out in the sonata of insane winds.
Darkness gets denser in reality, I turn oblivious, who
looks for a full-moon at the dawn other than a
dead-drunk!

All of them translated from Bangla by Dr. Abedin
Quader

Poliar Wahid

Poliar Wahid was born on 20 May 1986, Jessore,
Bangladesh. He works as a journalist and writes poem.
His notable works are: *Prithibi Paper Palki*(2015),
Shiddho Dhaner Om (2016), *Hawa Abriti* (2016),
Shamaygulo Ghumanto Shingher (2019), *Doas Matir
Kokil* (2020). All of them are collection of poetry. He
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Sapodilla, olive bard and tongue welfare

You are eating Sapodilla, but getting test of mangosteen.
Here where did you find light yellow with gray color? Or
have you forgotten the welfare of the tongue? Now let's
cross the pomelo yard together.

An olive bard is floating inside your dream. But you
discovered a cockroach is crushed on your bed! Who
says, address of your kisses is incorrect!

As if different colored birds chirp to sit on my branches

O Allah, want to be a tree only once in human life
Where different colored birds chirp to sit on my
branches!
All of us call you, how many of us to get proximity of
you?
How many days am I alive more? Please, erase the sinful
nights!

Fish costume

To wear the dress of fish men's mind travels. Would
Birds be
outsider, Friends, when forest has burned?

All of them translated from Bangla by Nokib Mukshi

Gayatri Devi Borthakur

Gayatri Devi Borthakur(1980), a teacher by profession, is a poet, story writer and translator from Assam, India. She also writes poems and stories for children. She completed her master's in Sanskrit. Her articles and poems etc. have been published in various esteemed magazines and newspapers of Assam. She started her journey in the world of literature, a few years back only. Recently she participated in the event 'Mulakaat' of 'Sahitya Academy 'in Jorhat, Assam, India.

God, Apple, Newton and Gravity

One day god unwillingly gave capital punishment to an apple. Maturity is equal to death sentence for them. But the apple was lucky enough. And had fame and lifelines too in his stock. So took the U - turn from death's house.

(God should not have forgotten that)

Newton, the root-researcher of the earth, noticed the apple. The apple finally took a relaxed breath. Newton

too God was a little bit disappointed. He was not in a mood to recall the three lows of motion, one by one.

Once for gravity only

God took the incarnation of the Varaha*. Newton left the matter in the wind. God kept him out of the competition. Maintained himself in a particular point. You may say in a relative distance. For the apple. For Newton. For Gravity. For the relative gravity of the earth.

Varaha is an incarnation of lord Vishnu to save the sunk Earth.

A Night With a Finger

Spent a full night with a finger. The finger did not approach to me spontaneously. I just went in. Last night, I without any reason paged down an ambiguous page of history. From that page, the finger in terrific labour pain, moved towards me. I said, Please put me on the unturned armour of self-praise. And getting a change I also asked, "Oh you! the pathetically imprisoned finger! What do you want to bring forth? Please...once more..." After pin drop silence, amidst the coagulated blood, I listened the feeble first cry of the pale Gandhiva*...

(This poem is based on the legend of Ashvatthama of the Mahabharata. *Ashvatthama, * The bow of Arjuna.)

Woman

If a cloud is questioned, after pouring every drop, what have you given...? There's not a single drop to drip in return. Nothing in hand to explain.

If the field full of golden paddy is asked, what are you bothering? What to say! After bearing all the calamities the earth is ignominious, still. The rain of the Summer and the paddy fields of the winter, the real picture of every legacy is...

Munindra Mahanta

Munindra Mahanta is a poet from Assam, India. His poems and articles are published in various leading newspapers and magazines of Assam. Furthermore, he is a social activist too. His poems are translated into Bangla as well.

Aesop is no more

Sleep swings with the tells of Aesop. Who is more powerful, the Sun or the Wind? A rat is a friend of a

trapped lion. A fox is always more artful than a tiger. A bear unfolds the real image of the best friend. The stories of Aesop are in the dreamland. It's a Parental advice.

One day the city became offended with Aesop .On the milestone of truth, the city collapsed. Lameness is indeed, far better. Aesop should be matured --said the chorus. From that very day, lessons to execute Aesop only....

Prime Session

Songs of Vixens comes down through the wings of Butterflies, "Vixen, don't come at night, children are in deep sleep, please." Through the gridded holes of the roof, millions of twinkling stars with moonlight enters. Silently. The touch of assurance of mother's soft hands is like a breeze, an outline of tranquillity. Mirror reflects the modest span of life. And blazing flames of those burning eyes quotes loudly, "Oh thee, the unknown Merchant, don't stretch out your hands, to pluck a flower --don't even dare to..."

The Trade of God

The Trade of god is running in profit. God stretch outs

his hands and feet, in great comfort, on a bed of gold to take a precious sleep.

The helping hands of god with great labour enhances his treasure god's treasure is full of priceless seeds of precious faith. The prosperity of god is a matter of frustration for his rivals. Their trade is in major lost, as you know. The enemies made hole in god's treasure, therefore.

And a few seeds of faith, dropped down through the hole. Rots in rain. Dries in sunshine. With the few dropped seeds his merchandise will not be misfired. Skills are the same for God and opponents. God is in his trade from centuries. Foes are the new comers, to get the level of him...

All of them translated by Gayatri Devi Borthakur.

Emanuele Cilenti

Emanuele Cilenti was born in Messina, Italy, in 1981 and is a poet, writer, actor, songwriter and film director. He has published ten books: "A blade of grass that tickles the sky", "Dream journeys of my soul", "I'm just a nightmare", "Violent percussions", "Heavenly whispers", "Infinite petals", "Echoes immortal", "Tears of ink on the face of the heart", "Help! I have two mummies in the house" and "That wake of light and beauty". As a poet and writer he won some poetry premieres in Italy and his poems have been translated into Spanish, English and Romanian. His poems are present in various anthologies of poets around the world.

First Trip

I am the man of ancient traditions, I am the one who, in the presence of the marvelous infinite painting, colored in blue, still knows how to get excited and thank the Most High, I am the one who treading the earth of every age hopes for a better future that you realize!

Fish swarm in the sea, the sea is the mirror of the sky, so my heart also teems with colorful emotions wrapped in a gorgeous ribbon that is the rainbow, my thoughts are

agitated and challenged in mind! Peoples and tribes follow one another, each leaves an inheritance to the other: "life that restarts its defined course", how many years will pass before the green and fresh grass emerges without being contaminated by hateful wars? Many believe in cupid as the only beginning of love that shoots from his arrows, but I say that it is you who made me discover a feeling different from hatred, even if you are not an angel you resemble him! Words are useful, yes, but when the wind of time passes then they go away without leaving a trace of themselves, but those who remain anchored to the globe are called facts, they are those who have the courage to change!

Changing is human, being a chameleon is not acceptable because it is for animals, the flag flies with the wind that touches it, it does so only because it has no strength in itself, man has this but sometimes he does not exploit it well !

Perhaps time will not be enough for us, perhaps death will come before life takes its full course, but the important thing is that what we have to do we do it before old age advances inexorably, so that without more strength we will revolt and get angry. for not being able to do anything good, only life has a meaning, an explanation, all the rest of the concept is called death, the

end!

Fourth Trip

Some days you are lying on your bed contemplating the fantasy of your white ceiling, waiting for some inspiration that will induce you day by day to live in this universe that is sad and dying!

You find yourself lost in this land that has nothing to rediscover and that has also lost what little it had acquired in the millions of years of its foundation, you are afraid for what your sad destiny will reserve for you!

Your heart quivers in your chest, you don't know your future, you don't remember your past, you don't understand your present, the important thing that you discern your life well, without it you are useless in this terrestrial globe that holds you!

But still you feel and you find yourself being like a pilgrim down here, do not worry about this feeling of yours, any common mortal proves this feeling, because staying in place does not mean that you are part of it!

You will always be lonely down here even if you see yourself surrounded by relatives and friends, they will be passing through your life, they will help you for a

short time, the only company you will have will be your solitude!

You will have happy days and it will be there that you will rediscover the meaning of life, you will be unhappy and then you will lose sight of what would have helped you most on your path down here: your happiness honestly earned with hard work!

I did not understand anything about life, maybe this is really why I am still optimistic about my continuation in this purgatory made of dust and tears, yes because you see we are like vessels, the water inside is nothing else that your tears that you will shed and collect inside your heart, you will dry your eyes that will gradually wear out more and more, from what came out of your eyes is from what entered!

Fifth Trip

The sun has risen from the ashes of the night left by the moon, everything is so beautiful, the earth is illuminated by this warm and shining star, now you can see things more clearly, on the other hand when there is darkness and always like this!

I stop to quench my thirst near a spring, the river below

looks like a mirror, it reveals the defects of the blue sky, birds fly joyfully in this painting, they too give a little color to the sky!

But then I got up and went on my way, regardless of that crazy and inexplicable movement called life, I had to get to my destination, just as the river must reach its own mouth!

Fields of tender grass tickled my ankles, the grass that has just sprouted from the tomb of the earth is fresh, the morning dew has watered it a little with its tears of worldly joy and suffering!

Dark clouds in the sky try in vain to scare me and discourage my journey, no, they will not succeed, they do not know that when man has already lost everything he is no longer afraid of anything and becomes unbeatable!

Sheep and goats are hopping close to me, in this street there is all kinds of creation, from human to animal, so I raise my face to infinity and I feel like saying, thank you, I know it's repetitive!

People dart past me, they are running! But where do they go so fast? Why did they decide to accelerate their vital pace? Why did they decide to arrive before us? So they do nothing but kill themselves, go against nature and how to go against the very Life that has made you in a

different way from how you have reduced yourself now,
in what you do there is no freedom, there is the slavery
that this what you do will kill you!

Neelabh Sourav

Neelabh sourav was born in 1980 and an Assamese young writer of Assam. He has been attracted to art and poetries since childhood. He is also related with various literature organisations and working for Assamese folks and culture. 'UTTAR ADHUNIK GHAA' is his first collection of poetry. He has founded a school in the Raha (native place) area with an aim to provide modern scientific education to the children of villages.

Poetry

Sleepless sail .Sleepless river .And sleepless is the
delicate earth. The eyes of a sailor resolute with a desire
to sink. In the tempting navel of an unknown sleepless
woman. Halted feet.

Carefully listened to the coo of the pigeons. Pen in a lariat. Transfer picture in a pen. The mango tree of the entrance still not blossomed. Will blossom with time. Mangoes will be in many clusters. Also will rot. A woodpecker said.

The poet scattered his heart - canopy to welcome rain. And damped his sun-burned back. Searching here and there a sparrow is gathering straws.

Optional

Soil is more powerful or wind. Asked Neer. The earth is a small round of soil. It floats in the air --I said. She delighted. Made some small rounds and continued to throw.

One day without any reason I asked, "What are you doing, dear darling daughter? 'Throwing small rounds of soil. 'Understood but why?'
'We are in need of a new earth. If it floats, let it to'

Epitaph

An eagle snatched away the fingers of mine. When I prepared to ask with the axed head, the reddish sky smiled. By what name should I call you, Oh! the evening bird. Unfamiliar smells floats. To write up. The two banks of the eyes dried up. The kiss-flowers spread out, here and there.

Tanusri Paul

Tanusri Paul was born on 5 September 1958 at Bhotpatti, an Indian village in Jalpaiguri. She earned her Master's in Bangla Literature, taught in a school for 26 years and took early retirement. She writes poetry,

essays, fictions and travelogues. Two essay books, 'Anubhaber Aloy Kichhu Katha o Kabita' and 'Anubhaber Aloy Aro Ekbar' exhibit her uncommon dexterity in critical thinking. She has been editing 'Tista', a literary journal for 12 years.

In Oblivion

The ray of hope under the eyes may not be flaming now. He chooses freely to uncloak the blind robe of fundamentalism at the crossroad, the clothes of exigencies of life too—little relieved now. With living comes recognition of the speech of tress and choked exhaling of broken ribs—in oblivion. Straightway I will stand before the sanctity of nakedness or unfenced woodland garden; I may fade far away. I can proclaim cuffing the shoulder of Baishaki-cloud or wild wind, “Come and be with me”.

On Worship

The moon and a gray bird repose on my porch railing during midnight hours. The din of urban-mechanic life resonates across the sky. The gluttonous roots of ashvattha* are soaking into my treasured land,

crawling along the ribs of the wall like my first attempt at digging well...after soaring you come, and kissing my palm with durba** you utter, “Offer a prayer.” Undecided, I ask, “Whom to pray?” Destitute crows are flying here and there...let’s pray these crows who can truly sweep away the maladies. The mobile FM radio should keep resounding: “Chand uthechhilo gagane” (The moon rose in the sky).

*ashvattha in Sanskrit, the peepal or Bodhi tree "the sacred fig" (Ficus religiosa) is a very large tree with light grey bark

**meadow grass

Who Will Go

As I walked down the Unakoti hill towards the plain, I scattered a basketful of flowers and croton leaves on azure stream; never I looked back. Never I glanced blooming of a courtyard hidden in a frame, or Neem-Kadam trees and my ancestors shivering around a flaming furnace. Never I glanced vanity of pistil in a yellow flower, or the gathering darkness come of sacrificial smoke—never I glanced. Ritual of sacrifice is at hand—but where is the splashed spirit with enveloping darkness? Time claims to be virtuous. Who

will go for a willful sacrifice? Awaits hibiscus wreath
with the stake amid maddening drum-beating—but
darkness is alien to me. Always treading on the edge
of a deep tract, questing for unalloyed delight of flowers
and croton leaves, I gleefully set sail from Dwapara
noon. I am inclined to drift with the azure stream. Why
should I go to the stake? Can blood-smitten hibiscus give
me a reply?

Translated from Bangla by Dr. Nitai Saha

Shafinur Shafin

Shafinur Shafin is a Bangladeshi poet, translator and academic. She has published her debut book “Nisangam” which is a collection of Bangla poems in 2016 and her translation book Gandhamphul has been published in 2019. She is also the poetry-editor in an e-zine named Prachya Review. She writes in Bangla and English both languages. Her Bangla poems have been translated into seven different languages including Nepalese, Hindi, French, Spanish, German and Italian languages. Her English poems have been included in two anthologies published from New York and Philippine.

The Dive
Seen

On Sundays at the assembly, flowers in blue uniform used to sing “On this propitious day, let us go together to our Father’s celestial home.” in chorus. Sister Maria would sing along, with tearful eyes.

The floral chorus would rise towards the crucifix atop the red tiled roof of the Catholic Church. Jesus on the cross, standing transfixed with his arms spread and one of his legs in halves, got perfumed by the chhatim*-scented breeze.

The convent was adjacent our missionary school. And those nuns, their faces were grim with solitude.

Unseen

At the entrance to the convent, mother Mary stood with her hands joined, and a smile on her white, nodding countenance. It resembled Sister Maria’s beaming face when she would tidy up our white hair laces. She reminded me of Mona Lisa every time my eyes found her. Vinci’s Mona Lisa, without eyebrows. Next to the

main hall of the convent was the sisters' bathroom. The tiny privy had a red corrugated-tin roof. Outside the door was a spike. Before entering the bathroom, the nuns would hang their rosary with the small crucifix from the spike. It may well be that the nuns were ashamed of taking a bath before Christ. There was no mirror in the bathroom. In the Christ-less privacy of a dimmed, fifty-watt globe, they were accompanied by their eyes, looking thirstily at their soapy breasts.

Seen-Unseen

You will be hard put not to find a well – abandoned or in use – in convents that are adjacent to a church. You will also not miss the echoes getting back from their navels when you yell into them. Some say, Sister Maria turned lunatic instead of becoming a saint. Others would hold she used to hear God's voice in the echoes. I also heard that one day sister Maria yelled and not hearing an answer from God jumped into the well.

No one would hear an echo inside the well from that day forwards.

Anif Rubed

Anif Rubed was born on 25 December 1980 in Bangladesh. When he was in college, he published his first poem in a College Magazine. He is an author of a few books such as: *Prithibeer Mrityudandapatra* (poem), *Eso Mhakaler Madure Suye Pori* (poem), *Mon O Sharirer Gandha* (story), *Drishyabiddha Nornarigaan* (story) and *Agamikal Theke Surja Purbe Uthbe* (novel). He is also an editor of a literary magazine name '*Hrithibee Rath*'. His poems & stories have been published in the renowned literary magazines and daily newspapers from Bangladesh and India. He won a literary award, named 'Jemcon Tarun Kathasahitya Puraskar' in 2012.

The Murderer

Yesterday, a murderer came to kill me. He sat and gossiped with me, talked long on my murder and took tea. The man seemed quite sober and told me-- 'I have come to kill you, and I am done. Please you knot that you are murdered. I knotted him. The man handed me over the blood y knife and ordered- "Wash it well"

My scared soul forgives you

Once I rented a spider's net. Being remorseful then, I told it the matter and sought apology from it grabbing its leg repeatedly. The spider said -- "To beg pardon, no need to grab my legs. I am forgiving you scare-free." But I forcefully grabbed its legs frequently for a confirm relief. And surprisingly the legs of the spider were opened out.

Next day

One of the sons came speaking out loud with pride - "Come and see, your son is peeing off on the face of your earth. Closing the zipper the other son quickly returned and complained--' No, your other son peed off it first.

Subir Sarkar

Subir Sarkar was born on 3 January 1970 in Cooch Behar. He is a teacher by profession, but his dedication to poetry is admirable. He is also proficient in crafting prose. He places importance in depicting folklife and nature of North Bengal. He studied history at the University of North Bengal, Darjeeling. He takes a keen interest in subaltern history. He lives in Cooch Behar, India.

Poem no 3

Oh how the dream stairs descend from the tent top, our
grand feast in candlelight leaves us to the world of
illumination. Words of personal rain are penned down by
the wax doll. So what do you get out of the travelogue,

pilgrims, pointed javelin, fathomless water, minibus, old architectures, so and so. Why you, sweet winter, blows out so soon!!Yonder small stretches of river throbs so vibrant with the tapping sound of dew. Flight of marriage song, down from the yellow mustard field to this farmhouse of tent city. The bird walks on the narrow rope, a bit of jokes flies back to the ring master from the circus joker. What a heartache! You continue to play the flute in Bengali tune, opening the colourful umbrella, in advance of rain. I translate those tear drops. Let the burnt corpse be lied down under the tallest of the trees.

Cave Engravings

And the rain droops down at evening. I stroll down purposeless, light steps. Dazzled town, loud music from open shops. Shrill sound coming from back, the fastest rickshaw overtakes. I notice beautiful fingers of dandy ladies, polished nail, corner myself to the unfrequented route. The white coloured hospital keeps standing in my wait, wrapped in mist, air and fire. I enter into its intestine, apron-worn nurses, numbing smell of Dettol in corridor. Thousands of deaths, the dead bodies, shrieks of the newborn, patrolling of pregnant ladies. I pull a conversation with the relations of the passed ones, on their past, consume untouched water, calls for the Chaiwala. Time transcends. Ignoring all the

warnings, theft of cycle runs at midnight. Poetry books are laid out by the drop of moon. All earthly vocabulary prepares, sitting on haunches before me.

Elegy

Between these pattering and tapping of rain, I am caught, brimming solitude. No friends, no god, no well-wisher, no political stance....Exactly, not a regular soul, a spontaneous youth. I fail to speak perfect, to sing full-throated, those skills of furnishing pockets with all goodies like an ace goon. Walking through dark, by this serene scene, the far-off alehouse bustling alive, crushing the cadence of silence. I rest my hand on drunken man's shoulder, while my palms washed off the tears of the lustful guy. The swift bunny chases onwards the picnic-spot, in rain. The race of lakhs of dear by the family course. At once, I carry on play with the pet cat, just a normal chap; reading, writing and all those sudden dives into river.

All of them translated from Bangla by Tapashi Laha

Mandira Esh

Mondira Esh was born on 21 February 1986 in Jamalpur. The two poetry books she has to her credit are 'Bhorgulo Onyorakam' (Mornings are Different, 2015) and 'Aranyo Myther Prishtha' (A Page of Forest Myth, 2018). Her second book of verses earned her Mahbubul Huq Shakil Award in 2019. She lives in Dhaka.

Thorn symphony

Diving through a quiet river, I, a maddened ox pulled out dead fishes, underneath the hooves. I felt impeccable joy, offering blood red hibiscus as a last tribute, turning on that instant into a cactus. I found how, soft and thirsty birds, stuck into my thorn, get torn off their wings, feathers while flying across my direction speedily. Helpless, I felt; for cold heart moulded me speechless. Yet, I kept on recalling the Elmanda tree from past life, teaching me to moisten in tenderness, in love.

Shadows Behind Me

Some senseless shadows roam about in my name. Supposedly, touching upon the banks of the Blueboy, under the water, their deeper shadows reclines.

Imagine their talk with each other and the stirring about, at their gap of breath. Other day, while walking, just out of home, I heard rumours of shadows:: "some of yours shadow have boarded the local from Kanchantala without tickets, just go and get them released by paying fine at Kamlapur. "I decline knowing them and run, trails of mutual whispers at my back. No letters from friends or relations since a long period, the letterbox fills in with letters from those airy shadows.

Race

High pitched rock number woke up the black race horse sharp by 6. While getting ready for the race, she chats casual stuffs with the young foal, on bed lying full-stretched. Still in sleep, with eyes half-opened, creates the myth of being awakened. Favourite time of the day, anything from heart be discussed unabashed to the foal that, now, sleeps like a tadpole, streaks of hair over the delicate face, removed gently by the racehorse, "But that you will not be one like us, no case of negligence, for we buy you an acre of green grass. You will remove the horse shoe. Our mother bleeds every day, post race. But, you will learn to fly after running from a distance on the field, won't let your

wings to cut alike us, never. And you learn flying slowly with trials and pains, gained out of it, I will teach you by naive scolding, me and mother would stand on the ground, instead of sky; our wings snapped. We will clap loudly, full of joy to see you fly.

The call of race, black horse storms through various lanes, alleys and routes, two soft legs, at the back rests, half-opened eyes, still stares on, without a meaning.

Translated by Tapashi Laha

Mostafa Tofayel Hossain

Mostafa Tofayel Hossain (shortnamed Mostafa Tofayel) was born in 1954 and is teaching English in a private university of Bangladesh. He has authored some poetry books, the most acclaimed one among them, is '*Akjon Prometheus Tini*', meaning 'The Prometheus that he is'. The book is composed of Bangla blank verse, well-read, and is often recognised as an epic on Sheikh Mujib. Besides, he has translated Shakespeare's sonnets, Julius Caesar, Hamlet into Bangla. He has a publication on the Bangla translation of selected poems of Robert Frost. He has an

interest in literary criticism.

The Invisible Defeat

I wanted empowerment; self-government; enthronement. What ultimately happened to me was dethronement; stepmotherly rule and my exile. I am an offshoot sprung from the blade of a plough. I used to make my utensils of the ploughed land for my dinners. Green peppers were my most favourite and delicious sauce. As ill luck would have it, I was exiled from my motherland to the dark forest of Panchabati. I consented to what was meted out to me. Ultimately my men defeated the giant and visible Ravana in a fierce war. The Ravana was compelled to set me free. I succeeded to come back to my motherland. I am yet that Janaki today in exile, very unfortunately and wretchedly, since seventy-five of twentieth century.

Vipers in hibernation

Vipers were in hibernation; panthers were in hibernation; carnivorous animals were in hibernation. They were waiting for a vantage point. They were not with mankind, the sons of God. The sons of God were busy fighting against horses from the west. The sons of God

fought very violently at the loss of their lives, against the horses from the west. The company of horses were with long genitals moving like pendulum before their uniforms. The horses were defeated and dashed to the ground. Their piteous eyes were plucked out. Under the eyelids of those horses were big cavities; they were unable to shed tears or to lament. They were taught such a lesson. But the carnivorous animals so long in hibernation are trying to come out from their dens. They were blood suckers; they are bloodsuckers; and they shall remain bloodsuckers ever and anon.

The Photographic Picture

The photographic picture is a snapshot at 32, by a skilled hand; its background is the wide open lawn of *Dhanmondi*. The picture there is a reflex of the sky, or of a god. A delicate, tender aged boy was seen there one day. He was all alone there with his head bowed down in awe. Fragrant branches of a large *bokul* were being seen hanging on the altar. A flock of doves came down to welcome the boy. All of a sudden there came a braggart crowd with noise and bustle, creating an earthquake with the pride walk of their boots. They put on black ribbons knotted behind their locks of hair. At this spectacle, the tender aged boy found himself in fear. He just receded to the far off corner of the nearby lake. The flock of the doves were already away. The photographic picture is

now in the *Shahbagh* Museum.

Masudar Rahman

Masudar Rahman is a Bangladeshi poet. He was born on 01 September 1970, Joypurhat, Bangladesh. Rahman has been writing last 30 years. He has published 13 books in a different category; ten of them are poetry collections.

Easy

Light is lenient, can not get in if you shut down windows. Wind is simple, so it tries to go easy straight ways and fall apart onto the complex. At dawn, birds wake up in bamboo forest, start gossiping on these topics about the light and about the wind, in an intense and tumultuous manner.

I took off my shirt and standing at the easy light. Watch me, see how complicated I am! The wind is blowing and my wearing green lungi is getting swollen like a balloon. It's dawn, sunlight is approaching. Rabindranath is as decent as light

Journey by Bicycle

When get out for Bicycling, topic of the Moon obviously

comes upfront. The profound evening. Musical dark starts spreading

The Paddy field. Paddy fields covered the horizon ... zigzag muddy roads are its flat palm-lines. As I'm out for bicycling, my dog is following me. The round food-plate moon shining over the evening sky. The bicycle running. My dog is following me back. Sister Ranu's pet moon is accompanying on our way home

Sunday Poems

In the afternoon there are huge flowers! Seeing this, two eyes went up to his forehead in surprise, he did not want to go down

It is wrong to call the blue house the sky on the other side of the field. Lavanya Das stands in amazement on the verandah. Why isn't he on the porch today? His clothes are drying in the last sun

Returning home on knees. The birds are returning. The shadows of the trees are lying down, this time I will sleep seeing all this, the huge Sunday was cut short

Late at night, I see a hutum owl. He is a spectacled bird

Meem Mizan

Meem Mizan was born on 3 February 1966 in Kaimari of Jaldhaka police station in Nilphamari district, Bangladesh. Bangabhumi awarded him the best medal of the year 2018 for his contribution in translation. As an emerging essayist, he received the Basasap special award-2020.

Stars

Beside the path in dustbin; The luminous stars of dark night carrying dirty sacks on shoulder; Collecting leftovers of fresh *hilsha fishes* of high classes officer. Getting a little bit of duck bones from *Meena Bazar* and *Shopno's* refrigerators. But a molecule or particle from fishes fiber; which has been cooked with least oil and onion. Nothing from these exists in dishes of stars. The female servant is back with full plate of food; the woody doll is rather escaping than taking from the plate. I won't dare to smell the dirty food. It knows his father, having a colossal tie over the neck, brought the payment. Who has bestowed. He can't put a molecule of food to his hungriest babe. Can't buy cough syrup for aged mom.

When Secured Echelon is Carrion-depot

Don't spoil the bud! One day this bud will be filled tree of flowers, leafs, fruits and branches. If the bud is spoiled in early, It can't able to give soothing shadow; Won't be a big banyan; Where you will relief from fatigued? For proposing to dear one. A bunch of flower is needed; But there is no flower for you. You have spoiled the bud of flowers. Today a single granule of pomegranate is unavailable; Sweet grapes aren't available; Delicious orange can't be found after intensive searched. You have spoiled the plants when they are blossomed. Wanna eating mango, berry, jackfruit; Will

you able to find only one? Nothing, today everywhere is the blur of desert; So much tired by searching. Today's bud is future's big tree. Where there will live happy birds. How can you set fire on that bud! Finally spoiled covering by sands! For philandering, done the secured echelon to carrion-depot.

Let Me See

Thy love. Thy billet-doux. Uncounted loving emojis. Sent to through messenger. Thy little laughter-lit. Thy special duo eyes at me like archer. A bunch of light hair flying in the light breeze. Fair appearance without ornament. Curved lips like ocean's wave, eyelashes like Peacock-tail. Fat-free folded throat. Rocking a little jewelry with the ears. This is the element of being more than me. The best goldsmith jewelry is worthless for you. Unnecessary pollen or, face powder, never seen a makeup kit, liner or spike, light or deep lipstick, glossy, never put it on your lips. Yet, still, many things to see in you. I will keep looking, Unknowing, not a short life but whole life. Yet I will not be satisfied.

Syed Rumman

Syed Rumman is a poet and writer with three poetry books to his name. He was awarded “2008 Editor’s Choice Award” from the International Library of Poetry, USA, for his poetry. Rumman is also a TV Presenter, elocutionist, researcher and human rights activist and lawyer, and he was called as a Barrister from the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn. Syed Rumman is currently also serving as a literary editor of Surma News Weekly, UK.

In the midst of No

Not the sky, but I shallow the signs of disappearance;
soloing the years I park my car on your sweaty palm and
you abandon me with all the horsepower. I've been
muttering, ever since I started opening my eyes, where
am I going? I am a restless species that turns and runs
through the same roundabout — there is no shadow
other than me, there is no road other than my walkway! I
crossed the ocean of tears searching for me, searching
for the life's ratio decidendi, but every time witnessing
the fall of breath I realise, I was never belong to there—I

am always here in the midst of No.

Dad-body

You the Lord woke me up from a womb, from my mom's womb. I was in the no man's land with an umbilical cord. I was surrounded by darkness and light. I was in the midst of twilight and dawn. When I cried, I smiled. So I stepped onto the human tide. I slept, I walked... I walked, but I never got so far just to see my mirror... and until it broke, I was named Rumman. But after I have given up the ghost, waiting for my burial you, my Lord, call me Dad-Body.

The time belongs to you

I have seen you the day you were cuddling the spring Daffodils. A sigh from the bottom of the Lötschental was suckling the rain drops from the last summer and you adorned yourself with the rejected necklace; it reminds me again the time belongs to you. Time belongs to you as I do; climbing the mountain, I have touched the rainbow and whispered—I go, I go over the sky and you

sigh.

Rajarshi Chattopadhyay

Rajarshi Chattopadhyay was born on 7th May 1970 in Kolkata, West Bengal, India, and is a poet and prose-writer. One may find in him a first person narrator who loves to tell a tale of his psyche. He is bilingual in Bengali and English. Besides, many a credit to his mother language, he has his first English anthology *Poppy Field and Scarlet Flowers* lately published. He edits a webzine:
nayadashak.co.in

My Lord

1.

And, at last, chronic boredom found me in a shitty rat hole. As shitty as that of a man asking for his purgation. To none but himself. I asked the lord, my lord, if anything is more sinning than forgiving. He was accompanied by no words. Even not a few, too few. I hurled a piece of chocolate at him. Dark. Darker though, than every first luring. And every last being lured. I had been carrying a ring of which you're no lord. My lord.

2

It's all karmic. I got into the creepy hole. An array of rage and wrath. It's all empty ewes, as empty as those sermons curved on the long faded flags, A white whole was peeled out after some times and subspaces. Mere stripes and dots.

Trial must be over, by now, my lord.

3.

No sworn body. Some metal sights and sounds, and
neither of them, any particles, either of ghost or god.
Might I tell you someday, I was never born, never
physically engineered. I was a mystery, died out of
death, my lord.

Part Six(two poems)

Joanna Svensson

Joanna Svensson is a Swedish poet, writer and novelist. She has been writing and publishing her works ever since her early teens. As a poet she has at present eight books of poetry of which two was published in the USA (in English and Arabic, 2019) and one in Sweden (in Swedish, 2020).

When My Mother Was Nine Years Old

It was a lovely summer morning with clear and lofty sky. The night had been a little crispy as a preview to the coming fall. Some yellow leaves had fallen from the old Acasia trees in the alley where her childhood dwelled. But this morning the sun stood already high above the rooftops and it had every intention of becoming a very solemn and warm late summer day.

For a little schoolgirl who had just turned nine, this was an unforgettable day. Just like before – each first of September – was the start of school. Even in this little secure village, where all the children knew every street by heart.

This little schoolgirl was all dressed up in her new gown.

Her mother had worked almost all night to get it perfect. She so wanted her little girl to look perfect.

So with a red dotted dress, white rosettes in her hair and full of prosperity in her light brown eyes – she was ready for summon in the third grade. Sharp, alert, and filled with expectations. On her way to school. Hand in hand with her proud mother and father.

At the other end of the alley of Acasia trees, the school was waiting. Filled with bright and future knowledge. Eager to meet its students once again, after a well deserved summer holiday. A time for recreation. Old students, new students coming in groups.

Inside the school you could feel the fragrance of the white walls. Newly chalked and painted. Beaming of purity, gleaming of security and embracing of prosperity.

The first day of September in 1939 was still a sunny morning with the clearest blue of blue skies you ever saw. And in the little safe and secure village, just outside Warsaw – the capitol city of Poland – everyone with proud heads and straightened backs was ready to embrace a new year in school.

No one ever felt, not even the slightest, tiniest little chill of worry. Not a tingle, not even a silent burr. In the west there was a wall of dark rainclouds and from the west you could with sharpened ears sense a tiny little hum

like bumble-bee's – far away by the horizon.

But it was not to be any first day at school. It was not to be anything all like that. This September the first, with its tiny, humming sound – far away in the west – slowly but surely changed into larger humming sounds. Changed into becoming airplanes – no traffic airliners – but a whole squadron of Stuka's with a certain mission, now kept coming closer.

By that time very very few in that little village even had a radio set. And surely no one had listened to the broadcast at five forty. Newspapers never report what is GOING TO happen. Only what HAS happened. And no one had ever seen a real airplane before. So the children all greeted them by waving their hands in the sky.

Foreign troops had once again crossed the childhood's secure borders. In the dark of night – as a common, simple thief, with malice hidden and blood on his agenda, the bright sunny morning was now about to totally change its action.

Soon new topics were put on the children schedule. Soon they had to learn something else than math. Something new about geography. About history and about violence. Something you didn't want at all.

Bullets whizzed and scattered. All around and everywhere. The rubble street was whipped to dust

clouds and schoolmates and best friends as well as little sisters and elder brothers – suddenly sighed and sunk to the ground. And laid still – never to play or move again.

Then suddenly there were bombs in this increasingly infernal crescendo. The pretty school was blown to pieces. The rosy-cheeked teacher on its steps fell to the ground with a final unfinished smile of surprise on her lips. And an unspoken question in her wide open eyes.

The brass school bell in her hand hit the marble stair case with a clang. This told everyone: No school today! Yes, it chimed so sadly – something different that summon.

The little girls dress was all smothered, when her mother in pure panic, threw her daughter to the ground and put herself as shield on top.

All went dark – all went dusty. It whizzed and rumbled all around. It felt like the little girl's childhood was coming to a bitter end.

Brutally crushed – her trust in mankind. She, who was raised to believe that everyone wished her the best. Yes, from this very moment; the world as she knew it, was forever lost. Still today you see shadows creeping. Shadows from so long ago. They patter around in the deep of your subconscious. Pushed away by your fear, by your own survival strategy. By the fear that has

shaped all your prudence in your long, long life. By
the fear that Has shaped even me!

The Princess of The Night

I remember so well when I was born. When my mother gave me birth. It might seem strange to you, but I saw the princess of the night standing by my side in the kitchen where I came into this world.

It was a quarter to eleven on a cold and windy night at the end of November. In the light of the burning midnight oil/ kerosene lamp there was my mother and me, my grandmother and a midwife from the neighborhood.

It was the third child she had delivered so far but the very first one with a caul. This was but one in several thousand and it was said to bring great luck. I and everybody present saw that there was a special halo glowing in the kitchen that special night.

The princess of darkness swept the moment with a veil she was given by the moon. The veil was woven by joyfulness and love and embroidered with wishes and dreams. Dreams that would be fulfilled – no matter what!

It was freezing cold outside. The wind and the snow swept the little house in Falenica. Electrical power was down and outside was minus 20.

With no running water the times were different then. Early next morning the water in the buckets had almost frozen, so my grandmother went up extra early took make fire in the stove and warm some milk to the newly born. A new life – a new pride –a new member of the family - a new reason to hold your head up high!

My princess of darkness followed me through my early life. Gave me solace each night, tucked me in and spread sleep-dust in my eyes. She sent me picture-messages in my dreams.

Way before I was born, I knew that in my earthly life I would experience many magical things. Things that very few ordinary people were about to see.

I was acquainted with the laws of nature right the day I arrived with my little trunk. Self preservation was very important. You always swept the dust and the bad energy towards the door out. You chalked the walls with ultra-marine to avoid all kinds of deceases. The unwritten laws of nature are all about being born and reborn. All plants, all animals and all living. And I! I! I am a part of the whole assembly!

Now the years have gone by. I have grown up – become

an adult. But the Princess of the Night has always followed me. May be one step behind but she has always been there.

She often visited me in my dreams and I saw her taking notes of what was happening during the day. Yes, she followed me when I grew up. I heard the whispers of the Universe and I felt the power of love inside of me. Felt that the star of love was shining bright each night. She lit the way for me so I could look both back and forth.

I always felt her presence when night was closing in. She gave me healing powers – soothing me – giving me solace. Whenever I was sad and weary after long, stressful working hours, she hugged me and wooed me to sleep.

She spread with her graceful hands stardust in the Universe so that life could go on with energy of love. In her calendar of eternity she noted things about the living theatre on earth.

I felt so strongly that life was worth living. To take care of life and share it with others. She followed me through the years. Now, here I sit, in my own enchanted garden. Fall is closing in Your fall of life is getting near. Yes, here we sit – in the old enchanted garden. In the shade of the old cherry-tree. I pour the two tea-cups full from the tea-pot with the old Chinese pattern.

Here we sit – right in the middle of the day – with philosophic eyes. Without saying nothing – just looking at each other – smiling. Me and my guest – who has come for tea. To my surprise she takes off her starstruck halo and puts on her sunglasses. She suddenly looks just normal. A beautiful woman with long, black hair. She sips her tea and says:

Thank you for the refreshment. I will walk beside you every day and sleep beside you every night. And guide you all through your life. She then says with an unfathomable smile:
-See you later this evening. Close to bedtime!

I am so happy for my princess. That she has followed me since my birth. When I defeated her, I stumbled and fell into dark holes, but then she was instantly there and lit a light for me so I could find my way back.

Oh, princess of the night – daughter of the queen of nights.

Thank you for guiding me through all of my life. And when the time comes she will light up another new life for me!

Anindita Mitra

Anindita Mitra was born on 17 May 1982 and is influenced by the philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore. She believes in humanism and detests fundamentalism. Mitra writes poetry, stories and articles. She lives in

Kolkata, India now.

A Wound

Time's wound festers in the heart of darkness, dawn surmounts the shadowy smoke. Hope's watercraft drifts across the ocean of hesitation. As I bear woes and sorrows, the frisson of pique is brushed aside. Words stick in my throat, burnt bones of my beloved float down the river of tears. Sometimes the narratives of love and hatred woven into the grey cave paintings of Ellora get pulverized by the wheels of time. A bleeding roll indicates the turning point in life, I fall silent as I exist, breaths merged with deep sighs.

When Rain Joins

When rain joins the swollen river in spring, all catches for discomfort are smashed, yellowish strange leaves begin to shiver, the light of *kojagari* full moon floods the body, two sets of lips get closer on the lonely beach, exists only endless dreams fuelling fantasies about fulfilling intense desire. With immense sorrow, your shadowy figure gets mixed up with mine, tears drip silently. Discoloured alphabet hidden in my bosom takes a tumble at your Cherrydown East house, fallen feathers dab sunset orange tinged with cinders. You start to laugh, read a work of fiction secreted in my mind.

Both of them are translated by Gauranga Mohanta

Ahmed Shiplu

Ahmed Shiplu was born in Bangladesh on 17 June 1976 and he has 11 poetry books published till now. Some of his poetry books are *Balika akash*, *Projapoti Fire Gieachilo*, *Bishonno Ispat*, *Bishbrikkher Ullash*, *Kono Prochhod Nei*, *Himghore chader shojja*, *Nimojjito Mognomaya*. Besides all was also the editor of little magazine 'Nandita' *Kabyakalpo* [Book of learning poetry recitation] and 'Abrittir Sreshtho Kobita' [Best Poems to Recite]. Currently he is editing 'Mognopath' [A magazine of art-literature and free-thinking]

Perfume

One day, in this city, a forest of aroma engirdled us. Or the town got into the forest itself! There the Sandal or Cinnamon leaves were flying and delivering miraculous scents.

How deeply shameful the people were! The mayor hasn't even come out of his cottage. Hill of waste was on the roadside and the gully boy was smiling. Between the teeth's of the Mayor the dental insects were smiling too.

The messengers rushed for that forest! Shefali stems

hurried for the live telecast. Sheulli, jaba, woodbelly..... the tale of perfume entered into the sound receiver. The storytellers showed the roads of the city on the screens. How an unnatural city without trees and flowers! The leaves narrated the tale of dusts, the history of sweats!

Lost in the forest of aroma, at that day, the TRP of all the channels went high, but the mayors declared everything fine.

Living With My Murderer

He, who killed me, was so intimate with me. I offered him a raw cup of tea with some cardamom floating on the surface. The murderer was so remorseful to me. Because, in the time of death, I went through a world of pain.

An entire night, hang on the ventilator, where some sparrow used to invite the dawns. I wandered through a number of flower shops to present a rose to my absolute murderer. In the laboratory, the rose also may catch cancer. To avoid that risk, I don't put my hand on green flowers.

I wish I could return to the table of that murdered night!
I would confiscate the forks from the dining table. I wish
to put the knives in the lockers of clouds before seeing
the stable status of the seeds crumbling the stomach of
the apple.

All of them translated into English by Mosabbir Ahe Ali

Part Seven

Interview

Interview of Wali Mahmud

Taken by Farida Yasmin Tithi

Short bio of Wali Mahmud

Wali Mahmud. The name given by his family is
Mohammad Waliur Rahman Mahmud, Father's name is

Matiur Rahman Mahmud and mother is Mrs. Sufia Akther Mahmud. He was born in August 1st 1972 in Dewan Villa of Jaldhup Pathon village under Beanibazar upazila of Sylhet district, Bangladesh. Wali Mahmud holds the language of Bengal, literature, culture, history and heritage of Bengal. As a means of presenting, he narrated the stories taken from his life, or the myth. Sometimes he took on the symbolic, sometimes mythical, or pragmatic character of life in marginalized cities. The variety of gratitude that the heart has received has been shown to be straightforward and humane. He is a dreamer of a poetic dream, dreamed of building an enlightened society.

Wali Mahmud is a literary phenomenon and his poems are highly metaphoric. The use of a variety of styles used in his words which will keep him alive for a long time. His published books—Bhalobasher Poati (1999), Joiboti Shon (1999), Ekti Dirgoshasher Mritto (2001), Death of a Sigh, Ami Ek Uttorpurush (2002) I am The Descendant, Nirbashone, Nirbachito Druho (2004), 1237 Daag (2013) and Editor of Lookon Little Mag UK & Bangladesh. In personal life, wife Farjana BL Mahmud and two daughters- Zarin Sophia Mahmud and Mehreen Wali Mahmud.

Conversation about his poems and others

Why do you have friendship with poetry?

Because I love poetry.

When did your start writing?

When I was a student of secondary school.

What time do think *good*?

When I write.

And what is *bad* time?

When I can't write.

Would you explain?

I can't impose anything on me. What comes, it comes spontaneously. The important thing is to carry them. Truly speaking, the time of carrying them is bad time for me.

What is your commitment?

Depicting the portray of time- in the form of artistic language of literature...

Which rhymes do you like to write poems?

Basically free verse.

Nowadays a distance has been created between poems and the readers. What are the reasons?

The distance you have mentioned may be divided into two kinds. One— linguistic, two— preparation of the

readers. The linguistic problem is to use obsolete words. Especially colloquial words used by people every day, foreign words are used in poetry. For example, Rebel poet Nazrul used Arabic, Persian words in his writings. No mention of other.

Now the preparation of the readers- in poetry sensitiveness and feelings of emotion are found. Now the readers habituated in a particular set up become confused going to read poems of different track. It takes time to make them accustom with the new tradition. The more important thing is that limitations of the use of poetry to everyday life and the thing told by Noam Chomsky *Literary Competence and performance* of the readers is important to me.

How is the traditional thought changed?

New generation becomes pioneer to change the structural form of language. And once they become experienced. Going to be experienced, some lose their way. Those who remain help change the thoughts.

Dialect, folklore and publishing them in books- your opinions?

We all know the definition of dialect and folklore. Dialect and folklore have played an important role in the evolution of civilization. They are related to life. We don't think them outside literature. They are inseparable parts of literature. If we talk about publishing them in books, we may set example of Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, Sir George Grierson's

Linguistic Survey of Bengal or Dr. Mohammad Shahidullah's *Ancholic Bhashar Obhudhan* (A Dictionary of Colloquial Language). These books are the appropriate collections of colloquial languages. You know the *Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary* where more than half of the words are different languages. Besides, more than three hundred Bengali words have been changed to English. Most of these words are the permanent forms flowing Bengali words. You may see other dictionaries.

Colloquial words are used in your poems—its complain..

No comment on it but I am reading Dr. Renu Luthfa, 'If we look at English language, we must observe that the English collect few words from the whole world and add to their language. On the other hand, if we look at Bangla, we notice that we use English, Urdu, Hindi, Japanese and Persian. But if it is a dialect of certain region of the country, we can't take easily. Is there no end of this snobbery, poverty of mind? The word 'Gato' of the Inner City of Britain becomes the meaning of diamond and gets added to the Oxford dictionary. Then why should we debate on words and language uselessly? and Dr. Mukid Chowdhury says, 'Right use of words of dialect can create a different world.'

Texture of Words

Bath in the moonlight of twentieth century full moon.
Pour juice of research in thoughts. Go past and dry under
the sun with heightened proclamations. Give away the
landless home and deep into work. The sun becomes
restless to take revenge against cold of winter. Migrated
feelings of the piece of land bearing number 1237 make
texture in the coat. The wall besides High and Muddle
Classes become listeners.

You are the deep night like the land disintegrated from
the moon. The shadow of the body exists just beside the
body. Hindering the distance it carries my love for life.
Inner shadows want lie in my heart. But awake at the
middle of nights. On the long pillow of prose sleeps the
jubilation. In the heart of poems there is only the sigh of
land. If body dies away, only a piece of paper will
remain in the draft note book. All limitations release in
the rivers of rain. Then the words are textured in its own
land one, hundred, thousand sing the song of one.

When was the first book of poems published?

In 1999 Ekushey Book Fair.

What were the feelings?

A book is a result of lots of sacrifices. So it's pleasant. A
nicely- published book is the source of another. It's a
great achievement for me that I've given diction of my

own emotion and language.

How did you mix yourself with poetry?

'Beauty' is the first reason. Going to bear beauty, I wrote and wrote and then got habituated with poetry. Basically inspiration flown in my heart is the main reason.

A large portion of your poems has been written in prose. We see it in the last book naming *Nirbashone, Nirbachito Druho* (Deportation of Selected Rebellion)..

Yes. It must be admitted. In the wide field of denotation there are a lot of feelings, emotions and realizations. If you are able to unite all these in an aesthetic way, it will stir the heart of people. I am trying this in prose. I am researching with it and want to go near people with it.

In your about *Forefather and His Journeys* and *Always the Grey Boundary of Soil* we observe the tales of time. Do you want to tell of any philosophy?

The people of art and culture are wise. In their classic books we find philosophy of different subjects. I want depict in poems the struggles before and after my times, social, political and economical changes i.e. our gains and various disparities observed by me. Already your have seen the rise of the new generation. To be honest, when you write, though you are in abroad, you must back to the country of origin.

About Forefather and His Journeys

Forefather walks beside the urban life bearing a story in his heart. The whole families are engaged in destroying wall within few yards of the time-worn building. From blooded soil to stones are getting wet with salty sweat. Inexperienced religious men were throwing stones to stones. Just playing or untimed emotions. The trembled welcome read by eyes is set into the heart. Searching the memories he tries to touch a morning like a farmer going to fields in acute darkness to find light. Then he thinks to take rest in the crossroad. But where to go? Divisions of conflicts haven't set yet.

He goes to the hide checking the thing bound with him after seeing the youth breaking the wall of customs.

Modern and Continuous- your evaluation?

These two go side by side. If the grammar of poetry allows it, it may be called modern.

What is the truth behind the birth of a poem?

Continuity of the history of languages and the established newness.

How can you portray what you want to say in poems?

The main ideas will be caught by the agent ideas. We see different elements in literature and they have surfaces.

These have specific intentions. Many people want to keep them aside. Literature is Literature is way of worship. Poets have presented their works in different ways to build the stages of poetry. For example-romanticism, materialism, mysticism etc. There may be a question of belief. You know what I mean—many divide the material totality with belief. A part of them want to mix up poems with beliefs.

Is it universal?

No, it's my own view. Anybody may oppose herewith.

Last part of a poem of you? such as-

Yes. I want to summarize the whole poem in the last part. We can consider of the embankment created around a poem as the total representation of light. Whereas you want to like to go there.

How can you select the favorite topic?

Favorite topics are enormous. First you have to choose what that is about. Abstract, ethical or human being...it is set with subjective concentration. I love natural beauty, a lot of things. Such as—sound of rain, flow of air, clouds and estuary etc.

What are the features of new comers attract you?

Language, styles of presentation etc.

What subjects do you use as the source?

Nature, rivers, human, women... Though different, they make a single subject. Like the definition, 'overflow of emotion', joys and sorrows for the diversification of life.

How does poetry exist in human life?

As shadow walks with him/her.

We notice different use of language in your poetry..

You may say, it as thoughtful use.

Thoughtful.. In what sense?

The readers of this century are a result of long evolution. I do it keeping in mind the truth of development of technology.

I want to tell of exaggerations.

In this regard my explanation is that a poet has the freedom to use words beyond the everyday meaning. This is called the poetic license in English. There are a lot of examples in Bengali literature. For example- *osrujol* (tears). *Osru* itself means tears. It has been used hugely in Bengali literature.

Who are the inspirations behind a writer?

They are my parents. They have made the field. Mother was brought in a literary environment. She saw her

father, litterateur Akaddas Sirajul Islam. She saw how a writer should be given space. She read the Ittefaq beside my writing table. And then, teachers, well-wishers, readers and critics.

How do *Modern* and *Ultramodern* make difference in use?

I don't agree to 'difference' here because qualitative need of modern time changes into ultra-modernism. But there may be unnecessary use.

What is nature of typographic poetry?

Mainly it stands on abstract forms like home, cigar, rain etc.

Do we think that the naked expression of language in the name of the latter is part of the literature?

Language is a sacred art. Its materials are colors. And the dress — dimensions. Its house is the sum of words and sentences. ... Now if we did not take a seat from the body of art, it would not be art, how would we accept the naked expression of nudity? Although in the words of Maqbool Fida Husain — nudity is also under the art.

You use multiple myths in poetry. Why?

When I translate my feelings into language, and the expression of that expression is reflected in it. The

influence of poetry is evident on the basis of the concepts contained in rural, folk and mystical. And what is nourished in the heart of emotions is difficult to conceal. In fact, his appearance once became a poem. In whose heart you will see the use of various myths. There are some key words whose effect is reliably relieved. When the commentary is transformed into writing, the talk of reality, in that case, retains its implication.

We see a kind of crossing over the old ones — why is that?

An indomitable interest in creation helps a writer to transcend its elders.

How much do you think poetry written in the Western model is enriching Bengali literature?

Which model is built from its acceptability? This is justified by the criteria of world—literature. Whether imitation is there or not is a matter of observation. Western or Eastern doesn't matter to me. The point is—to guarantee the use and correctness of his pioneering language.

To what extent does the translation of the poem hold the image of the original poem? You have a long overdue death and how much have I exploded in a descendant?

Poetry translation is a difficult topic. There are fears of

change in the spatial and relative issues of the key components. In many places, I did not mind what it looked like, but it became clear. In contrast to fresh flowers, the proportion of native flowers, e.g. The conservation of speech with words in the form of in symbolic names is, in many cases, intriguing. Although this is not a permanent settlement. Nevertheless, when the word is used in graffiti, there may be representatives and misrepresentations. I don't want that... Holding the standard of metaphorical sentences becomes difficult. Anyway I'll be giving hardly tried, but summery types only.

We see a kind of crossing over the old ones — why is that?

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In the poem of heart, we see that there are issues of stains, khatiyans, etc. Why use such words?

Yes, I was through. When it comes to settlement in our country, these words are prevalent in our society. Descriptions of land—deposits—field survey, dag, khatian, class, fourteen, pargana etc. I wanted to tie in the poem. I'm writing a poem from a manuscript of semi—poetic poems.

Which decade is important to you in the post—

Rabindra era?

I'll talk about thirty straight. Its n Impressive A's of Bengali Poetry, you know, started by Rabindra Decade—we say, I think you agree with me.

The decades that followed...

That means up to zero decades? It has not diminished, especially in literature. There have been many versions of prose, descriptive differential angles. Of course, the poet's critics say that to follow and to be continue.

What do you think about the simulation issue?

You can not declare a language to be trademarked. There may be similarities in expression of mind. You may think the same thing. There is nothing to blame. The fault is copying. It doesn't obey the senses. You cannot say that you will only use these words in the Bengali dictionary. This right was reserved by the whole Bangalis. What you can do— let your expression become distinct, same language, same art.

Let's come to another context. Audience in Poetry— whoever says, how do you see?

I see the auditory feeling as a merger of emotional

instincts. Once it was established, relates good poetry.

The language of protest and poetry— how do you see? Class split with him?

Absorbed and exploited class. The exploiters bind the law. The exploited are victims. There is no boundary for poets to publish. Protests are the same everywhere. There is only one medium of language. Poetry speaks of the right to be exploited, all over the world.

Otherwise the political affect..

The dominance and subjugation of subjectivity with long periods of authority and subjugation, led to the formation of binary opposition from society to society. We and the others issues were imposed. The imperialist powers have formed a compressor class in the colonial states. And they act as their mediators. What I'm saying ... I'm talking views of oriental. There they distribute their helpful ideas. In this kind of context, your protest, your argument, will naturally be in the writings.

Our society feels far away from the reality of literary workers. Do you agree?

Sad I disagree. People practicing literature have to look at society in different ways. Here is their separation from ordinary people. Literature emerges from society. Every morning, people wake up with dreams, wake up with

hope. Everyone tries to make their soundings like fantastic. Considering the reader's expectations associated with reality. You have to press your key button, as a visual. I do not address the society of those whose are only onlooker of Bengali literature.

Address to those whose are the kith and kin of literature. There are many things to do in life. Should be reduction in spite of reluctance. It has to be accepted. One Fine Morning, gratitude will be knocks to your door. Do not take this classification any other way. Many people's say of the poets nowadays in many ways, like this and that, blah blah... But I'd like to say, leave it, let's redecorate the time for new generation.

Does the current social situation and world situation play a role in your actions?

An author retains his contemporaries. Accountability cannot be overstated those are called mirror. The author's statement is expressed in his writings in the current world situation and social situation. Then the point of view and the poem becomes one. To create public opinion in favor of the demands of the time, I can say such a creation— literary social work platform. As we all know, life passes by night and day. Now you will see part of the time of day. But you will not see the night, you will not see the light of society, you will not

see the darkness—it's not fair. Underneath the light is the darkness. This is surrounded by all things authoritative utterances. It may be in verse—prose or essay. Poetry has to show a dream of beautiful life and a peaceful world.

Khadija Rahman took the program with you at the Radio Bangla broadcast on London's Sound Radio in the 21st century. There you have an explanation of the estuary. Do you remember? Very interesting...

Right. The poem in exile, in search of estuary, is taken from *Nirbashone, Nirbachito Druho* (Deportation of Selected Rebellion). Mohana is meant to refer to the destination. People have a myth. It depends on how much he has achieved.

the explanation is that there is a water stream across the northern border of our village. We call it locally Pulachara. Although much wider and richer in sand. The drainage from the neighboring village proves as a sign of separation. What I was saying is, I too broke the water of the walk, looking for the estuary.

And advancing the course of man's age with age; The way in which people think they can reach their desired destination. I have transformed this goal into an attraction. As humans age, that can change. It is said that the age is twenty years—the power of desire, age is

thirty years old—innovative energy and in forty years—the power of justice is acquired.

Thus variations occur. The busy Baghmara Jame Masjid is busy rebuilding on one side. On the other hand, death of harvest. A man's chest was drenched in the sweat of seasonal labors. The village's centuries—old Jame Masjid is stand on the Baghmara block. It is being broken down and re—inserted into a new architectural style. On the other hand, the demands of the era arise based on the achievement of the farmer and the contribution of the laborer. That is the demand of society, of change. The impact of that on the moment of life. Frankly, I wanted to draw on the essence of poetry, a life and time portrait. Finally I would say that you have to be prepared to go to the destination. Otherwise it is difficult to get there.

What are some of the things that are relevant to your poetry?

The pioneering language comprises the concept of thought, the central point of view of the distinctive artistic entity, and the concept of the current period.

The future of Bengali poetry in the England— what do you think?

This is Billet. Here is the Multicultural Society. The

Society to honor those whose are writing poetry. Whatever is happening, we can expect it to be good. Good poetry is going on in the high street of poetry. I think the poetry practice here sounds good. You know, the professional issues with the poems are intertwined. Still, I believe they will probably have a poem in their hands that will transcend its present. Anyway, I'm very optimistic.

What kind of commentary is there on the Bengali Newspaper? That means literature...

See how many Bengali newspapers have come to this place today. The papers that talk about our community. The context of Bangladesh papers and London's papers is different. One has to work in the face of difficult realities. Our predecessors have always struggled to be okay. We were able to come to this position because of their sacrifice. Although not relevant to the matter. Yet I say because Give Respect, Get Respect - a popular slogan. Look at the pages; the relationship and editing with the literature are interlinked. On the other hand, the issue of financial and editorial goodwill is associated with the allocation of literature pages.

How do you evaluate a little magazine?

I think this is extremely helpful in literature. Because the

little magazine ones collect writers and writing from the field level. Using the floor they gave him, a lot of talent came out of them.

Out of writing?

Yes. As a kid, grandfather used to tell stories about ships. The story of sailing, then I thought I'd be aboard. When he used to tell England's story, I would imagine how it would be if? When he talks about the underground political organization, I thought it would be good to do so. We know that in childhood, human depend on emotions. Because at grandfather Makmode A. Mahmud was a congressional leader of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's Congress. His father Dewan M. Mansoor Ali influenced him to join the Congress. After completing secondary in 1918, he joined Assistant Dock Engineer post. After touring many countries around the world then he settled in the UK in the 1943. He joined the Merchant Navy in World War II in the dream that India would be independent. After Netaji Subhas Bose resigned from the Congress, he and his followers joined the Forward Block. He was arrested for forward block activity in the UK and lost his job in 1946. He was the organizer of great liberation war of Bangladesh 1971. His stories of real—life experiences made for me a kind of inspiration.

Now?

Working to create an educated community.

What do you do beyond this identity?

I work in IT trade, catering trade and freelance.

How do you find time in this busy life?

Fact is habit—like these addictions. I have to poetry's neighbor all my life. And this is to take time out of life. All it takes is an earnest desire and mental and physical exertion.

What do you think of Destination?

The issue is wide. With short notes, it might be like this—I have to go too. Right? But non—believers' are different. The way we make a lot of arguments, it may seem like Thingy Yes, I'm Walking the Right Way. I have to see what is the output of them? Man, think at least once before settling down. You need to select from the roundabout ideology of your destination. From and where you are like to go and which one is best for you.

Occasionally we see many words in the poem, namely, Huknia, Tisari Bil, 1237 plots. Even though the name of a manuscript in your book is all these.... Many readers like me may not be familiar with the words. What would you say?

Practically one of these uses is silent compromise. Where is my birth, the light, the atmosphere and the people, there is an obligation. You can easily call this situation a tribal effect. You can't ignore it. Huknia is the name of our locality, Tisari Bil (marshland), you know, it is the name of a bil in our village and the number 1237 in Dewan Villa (Dewan Mansoor Estate[©]) is the house plot number. There are many more words that may be less used.

Thank you Sir

You too.

Part Eight

Book Critique

Promise of an “indefinite life”: Revisiting the world of Gauranga Mohanta’s “A Green

Dove in Silence” (Forty prose poems in translation)

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Abstract

Since Gauranga Mohanta’s vision in “*A Green Dove in Silence*” has transcended particular time and place, it becomes a living symbol. He does not know how to compromise love with mere facts, nor does he want to know how to lose mystery or desire for knowledge to be lost unattended and ignored in the human experience and human sensibility. The adventure of life as he delineates in his prose poems “The Tale of Ever-flowing Life” and “Self-Division” with skilful handling of emotions and sensibilities—sometimes passionate and sometimes poised—brings forth a new wonderland of serenity of vision where all intuitions and expectations, promises and performances are baked in the warmth of mystic resonance. In fact, he has a promise, quite unlike others, to look at himself not merely in isolation but also in association with all experiences of life—sane or sinful,

insignificant or otherwise.

Gauranga Mohanta's collection of forty prose poems in translation titled "A Green Dove in Silence" entails more than an act of 'doing': doing must be the final outcome of an amalgamation of many faculties interacting with one another and determining the final shape of the thing made. The poems of Mohanta have easily earned their attraction by dint of their evocative power, and hence can readily be chewed and digested by avid readers of all climes. Some poems are at times obscure, for sometimes the form, the manner of writing, the language, and the imagery may have a private meaning for the poet, yet convey another aspect of experience to another. This is the joy of his creation, for even when he is obscure he is compelling. Half the joy of poetry comes in discovery of the unknown beneath the facade, and the other half comes in sharing the poet's experiences or emotional responses to the world of nature and of man at the same time.

Mohanta is the master of the unusual, the paradoxical, and the unknown: his great virtue is that his poetic vision embraces all from top to toe. He has successfully conjured up the whole gamut of human experiences in a way that deserves accolades. "Literature is always personal," says W.B. Yeats, "always one man's vision of

the world, one man's experience, and it can be popular when men are ready to welcome the visions of others" (115). Mohanta speaks out some of his personal passions in words and types and metaphors that draw one's imagination as far as possible from the complexities of modern life and thought. His is a personal world, world of broken dreams, cessations, and all sorts of longings. But once he completes his personality, Mohanta sinks back to enrich the mass. Whitman's concept of "en-masse" is echoed when the poet speaks representatively in both "The Fiery Palas Posture and Homeland" and "Rajbari Camp":

"Escaping the ruthless eyesight of the bullets, we stealthily made an onward journey in the deep dark paths of the village... As we desired to come back, catfishes proliferated in our ponds; courtyard would be covered with beans' verdant tenderness."(GDS 61)

"In the enclosed field of 'Rajbari' the stinking tents could not provide the reflection of solace, the villages by the Tista could offer... No dark could overcast the festivity in the anxiety-free villages of Bangladesh. The musical wave of the *dhol* would be played again."(GDS 64)

Mohanta's prose poems can be read as critiques of the urban world. His realisation that poetry is but a vision of reality comes to colour many of his poems. In "Orchid

and Inner Scene”, the contemporary urban world, the world of the machines, is envisaged as cold and cruel one, which distances the poet from the world of nature:

“I get surprised at the characteristic role of reality. Being associated with machines, I forget the name of the *Phuljor* river. As the sound of machines blocks ears, the intensely colored gerbera inscribes shiny remorse on the everlasting wall.”(GDS 37)

The notion of heterocosm, the promise of an alternative world, is shrouded in mystery. “Darkness and the Flared Bell of Dreamless Air” acquaints us with a dark vision of existence:

“The pitcher of prosperity may shudder with the distress felt by decayed, old stone; the sense of futility exudes from secret existence.”(GDS 77)

In the “Preface”, the poet defines what poetry has been to him: “To me poetry is the unending records of conscious and subconscious mind.”(GDS 11) He always puts emphasis on the structure of the sentence in a poem itself which in a way displays the prowess of his poetic inventiveness. Even human psyche gets reflected through love, nature, darkness, voidness and so on. The poet has also maintained, “I have made every endeavor to translate my poems as I desire to reach the readers with faithful rendering across the globe.”(GDS 11) Most

of his poems have a theme of journey in their thematic texture, the purpose of which is to explore the inner self which often is “more distant than stars and nearer than the eye” (Eliot 103):

“Immersed in contemplation of a *pankauri*, I find a natatorial territory beside the brightness of a fish” (GDS 33)

With the absence of urban outcry, the images get quiet and peaceful: “I have been waiting under the white birches since snowy dawn to see the fish swimming around the Jyvaskyla Lake. I keep an eye on the length of forest sensing the fish will take time to come out from the deep mire” (GDS 38)

Since Mohanta’s vision has transcended particular time and place, it becomes a living symbol. He does not know how to compromise love with mere facts, nor does he want to know how to lose mystery of desire for knowledge. The adventure of life as he delineates in his prose poems “The Tale of Ever-flowing Life” and “Self-Division” with skilful handling of emotions and sensibilities is sometimes passionate and sometimes poised. It brings forth a new wonderland of serenity of vision where all intuitions and expectations, promises and performances are baked in the warmth of mystic resonance. In fact, he has a promise, quite unlike others, to look at himself not merely in isolation but also

in association with all experiences— insignificant or otherwise.

W. B. Yeats rightly asserts in his *Autobiographies*, a poet “had to take the first plunge into the world beyond himself, the first plunge away from himself that is always pure technique, the delight in doing, not because one would or should, but merely because one would or should, but merely because one can do.”(167) The entire sequence of this realization matured into that fine poem, “Rajbari Camp”:

“In the enclosed field of Rajbari the stinking tents could not provide the reflection of solace, the villages by the Tista could offer. The muddy byways of camp were filthy with stagnant water and toilet dirt. Everyday wet fire woods became fit to be burnt by the heat of the earthen oven. The refugees were introduced without fail to the unpleasant taste of rationed rice-lentil.”(GDS 64)

“Night and the Fight of Green Sight” is such a work in which Mohanta’s mature style—“violent and terrible”—is fully evinced. The picture of Nature at evening induces a strain of melancholy since the poet imagines it to be tainted by life’s pale residue. He could hear “virile groaning” (GDS 70) coming out of sands and rocks. But “fragrance of fading twilight” (GDS 70) allows the poet to search for certain noble qualities of beauty, certain forms of indefinite life, separated from all

the purposes of life. It is indeed a beautiful movement of the theme from the stigma of darkness to the desired promise of an anchorage:

“I often visualise the picture of Nature at evening full of melancholy- incarnate tainted by life’s pale residue; I get sunk down in the inevitable gloom of evening as I stare at the moody sky and grey sapless creepers and pale trees. I hear virile groaning that comes out of sands and rocks. The fragrance of fading light permeates indefinite life; such an evening is sure to shelter me in fine!”(GDS 69-70)

So, the poet here stops and thinks back: in a world of ‘virile groaning’ (GDS 70) suddenly everything is changed, changed utterly. The transformation, whatever its cost, has occurred on account of “the fragrance of fading twilight” (GDS 70). The promise of indefinite life runs counter to the tragic bias of the work. The longer Mohanta is blessed with ‘blue flower’ arising out of the very essence of night, the more its appeal will take on his inner soul that he esteems as the ‘gift of ageless flower.’(GDS 70) Indeed, Mohanta has completed his emancipation from the inevitable gloom of evening, has securely achieved the self-conquest, and has fought his way to “embrace the icy isolation in the depth of night’s vibration.”(GDS 70)

Mohanta has also touched upon the then Nationalist

movement of Bangladesh. After the formation of Pakistan, the idea of religious nationalism began to be replaced by a sense of ethno-linguistic nationalism among the people of then Bangladesh within a short period which was primarily caused by the cultural, economic and political discrimination by the West Pakistani elite. The immediate causes of disintegration of Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh were the military atrocities committed by the Pakistani Army against unarmed Bengalis. As a result, the influx of millions of refugees from Bangladesh into India has not escaped the notice of Mohanta. After having trodden long distances on foot in grim agony and in a desperate effort to escape from the ruthless atrocities of the Pakistani Army, the poet speaks representatively:

“Escaping the ruthless eyesight of the bullets, we stealthily made an onward journey in the deep dark paths of the village. The veil of the cow-pulled cart engulfed the thrilled light of the last bright dreamy lamp of the village. In the depth of my frightened eyes arose the trepidation of the burnt houses of *Mritinga*...” (GDS 61)

The refugees seem to be everywhere – sitting in the streets, crouching in doorsteps, sleeping on porches, occupying empty buildings, and cooking in the fields. They appear anxious and troubled, looking for someone to answer their questions. Mohanta is nowhere

more explicit that in the progressive elucidation of their miserable plight in “The Fiery Palas Posture and Homeland”:

“Crossing the river we needed to go to border to safeguard ourselves. The refugee attendant hid us in blithe darkness to ferry us to the open quay. The misfortune of the paralyzed, stooped co-journeyers pierced our chest until the countless refugees found shelter in the camp. They cooked rice in the open kitchen and spent the messy night with their cattle.”(GDS 62)

“My father who took shelter in the tent of *Rajbari Camp* stood beside the oppressed people and we confined ourselves to the hut built in the moist courtyard of the village. Walking along the borderlines of paddy and jute fields, I glanced at the dipping of the bright colisa in the swamp, I was enchanted by the delightful flight of *hariyal* and thought life might remain in absolute darkness. During the war my father risked his life for the essence of the homeland and urgent news. When he disappeared, we spent gloomy period.”(GDS 62)

“Rajbari Camp” further narrates the story of inhuman condition in which the refugees most haplessly find themselves:

“The muddy byways of the camp were filthy with stagnant water and toilet dirt. Everyday wet fire woods

became unable to be burnt by the heat of the earthen oven. The refugees were introduced without fail to the unpleasant taste of rationed rice-lentil.”(GDS 64)

“Beside the well there remained the undeclared rubbish dump - the horrible sight of vomit and stool; the life cycles of mosquitoes, flies, maggots and earthworms were distinctly visible. Even in the camp with no rivals death waited in ambush. The itching became more unbearable than the blow of cholera and diarrhoea. There was no arrangement to perform the rituals of the dead. Lifeless bodies of the infant and the aged were wrapped in cheap, coarse mats to take them to graveyard or burning-ground. A grave did not appear to be the ritualistic, ultimate shelter. Wrapped in coarse mats an oedema patient was thrown into the hole of five feet by two feet; in that unidentified bamboo-clumps no one from Bangladesh would come to pay homage. Life and death were synonymous in the camp.”(GDS 64)

The story of the 1971 refugees – their exodus, reception, and eventual return – forms part of a wider narrative of some of Mohanta’s poems which bring to life the disintegration of one nation – Pakistan – and the birth of another – Bangladesh:

“We used to stand in a row by the side of the road to get rationed rice-lentil-oil-fire-wood watching trucks full of firmed faces of allied force and freedom fighters. We

would like to believe that the darkness would be dispelled soon.”(GDS 62)

“As we desired to come back, catfishes proliferated in our ponds; courtyard would be covered with beans’ verdant tenderness. The day we returned, *Pakra* howled a lot at the feet of my father. Our pet dog *Pakra* did not get frustrated even though he saw the unexpected reign of weeds in the homestead. No one did welcome us with the warmth of heart of this pet.” (GDS 62-63)

Mohanta has desired to show in a vision something of the face of Bangladesh to his own people who care for things of this kind. He has therefore written down accurately and candidly much that he has heard and seen, and, except by way of commentary, nothing that he has merely imagined. Thus, his oblique yet succinct reference to the nationalist movement of the time is one way of recapturing identity, culture, and society. His goal is to restore voice to those who he believes not only possessed a greater visionary awareness, but indeed maintained a link to the true national identity, lost due to years of aggression. Mohanta thought that the critical mind of Bangladesh is subjugated by misapprehensions of politics and social necessity, but ordinary life has rejected them more resolutely. The poet conjures up a vision of pre-colonial identity:

“Let the *basmati* fragrance be covered with *muslin*

restless in air; the wind has no stigma.”(GDS 75)

“The poet is”, according to Graham Hough, “a maker: he makes things that have never existed before. Yet he is also an imitator: he makes them by analogy with things that have existed.”(Quoted in Roy 4) Indeed, art and life are close analogues. In an “Introduction” to *A Green Dove in Silence*, Dr. Bina Biswas reiterates what art is for man:

“Each poet has his own beliefs, his scheme of values, an outlook of life as inspired in a world seen refracted through his imagination.”(GDS 31)

Breaking down the traditional forms of poetry, Mohanta’s poems are abounding in symbols that connect the poet with the world of life, and to be more precise, with the world of nature. The artistry of hybridization which freely mingles nature and human life is the hallmark of Mohanta’s genius:

“I identify sky as a symbol. Our life is surrounded by numerous feeble skies. Those skies epitomise us. In the sky rises the inscrutable *parijata* of love, the contrary sprout of the heart. The sky is valueless before the speck of dust of the universe; we fight for this sky, we rejoice over a victory. May be the value of psychological history of the sky has not yet been appraised.”(GDS 66)

In “Sparkling Wine”, Mohanta reaches the richest texture of poetry. His poems come up with the presence of absorbed existence. As a result, there are contradictions and a strain of bitterness. Bitterness is strange, for he is sometimes a happy fortunate sage. Mohanta achieves a kind of ripeness in disillusionment. He turns with a pang from the sensual magic of the world, and is drawn towards the “psychic soil” (GDS 79). This is the voice of one who knows intellectual passion. He does not deceive himself. His regrets help him to find out an antidote: “Let the drops of sparkling wine ooze out of the roots grown in the minds of my friends.”(GDS 79) He has achieved a delicate sincerity. The vision that he gains in exploring themes and techniques in “*A Green Dove in Silence*” partly germinates from his intense personal experiences of life where societal issues do not rule the roost. Even he charts out solitude not for mankind but for himself. There are longings for the far-off or the long-ago, memories of broken dreams and cessations of all kinds:

“Staring at the unrealistic sights I grow simultaneously delighted and melancholic. To view the sights of my own past that rejuvenate the existence is enthralling, the confusion as to reproduction of coveted sights gives rise to the sense of dejection. But vision cannot be the fountain of sustained delight. Deceit-less immersion is essential for exploring delight, melancholy is often

ineradicable—its subtle roots pervade all sights.”(GDS 76)

Apart from art’s fictionality, the dialectic drives too act as stilling, transforming agent. Whenever nature, asserts Schopenhauer, “presents itself to our gaze all at once, it almost always succeeds in snatching us, although only for a few moments, from subjectivity, from the thralldom of the will, and transferring us into the state of pure knowledge.”(WWR 196)

As Joseph Conrad pointed out in Heart of Darkness, ““Droll thing life is -- that mysterious arrangement of merciless logic for a futile purpose. The most you can hope from it is some knowledge of yourself -- that comes too late -- a crop of inextinguishable regrets.”(87) Mohanta started building a ‘mound’ for his mother in his consciousness and ends up returning to ‘you’ after ‘crossing time zones’. ‘Mother’ has been so miraculously metamorphosed into ‘you’, the desired ‘motherland’. This longing to reach ‘you’, to identify with one’s own identity, as depicted in many of his prose poems in the collection, establishes a strained, tumultuous and torturous relationship with a sense of dislocation and displacement.

Mohanta’s drive towards creative instinct as a consummate artist as enunciated in “*A Green Dove in*

Silence” accords well with C.G. Jung’s theory of the artist:

“Art is a kind of innate drive that seizes a human being and makes him its instrument. The artist is not a person endowed with free will who seeks his own ends, but one who allows art to realize its purposes through him.”
(*Modern Man in Search of a Soul* 195)

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