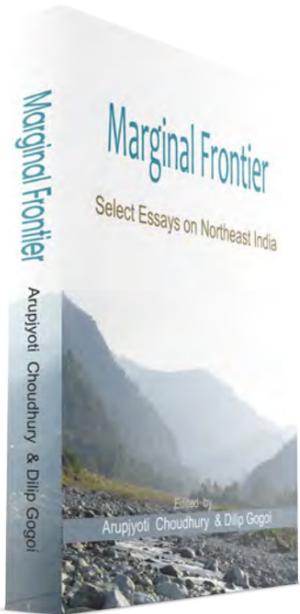


BOOK QUEST

A Bimonthly Newsletter published by Bhabani Books, Guwahati - 781 007, Assam, India

₹ 5/-

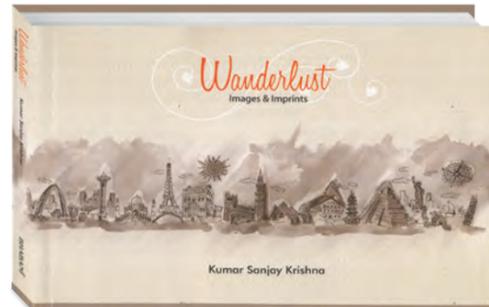


Edited by : Arupjyoti Choudhury
Dilip Gogoi
Bhabani Books, 247pp, HB, ₹ 350

Marginal Frontier

Select Essays on North East India

The compilation of thought-provoking essays explains how North East, the imperial frontier of British India, has been relegated to the margin in the post-colonial times. Formulating a theoretical debate on marginality in the context of North East India with critical analyses, the volume gives an account of the region's political history through the selected writings of distinguished academics and experienced civil servants. The book will serve as a useful reference book for the students of political science, history, sociology, public administration and will also be of particular interest to researchers, policy makers and civil servants. ◻



Kumar Sanjay Krishna, Bhabani Books, HB, ₹ 1200

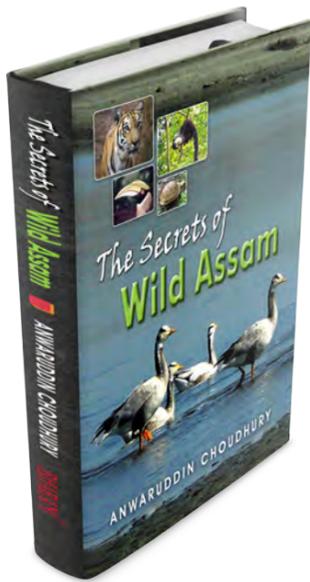
Wanderlust Images and Imprints

When photographs speak a thousand words, what better way there can be, to tell the tales of a globetrotter through breathtaking images? The coffee table book is a result of Kumar Sanjay Krishna's love

for travel and photography. During his various capacities serving in different positions as an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Officer, the writer has travelled far and wide and captured the beauty of the world through his lenses, to leave a lasting impression. Putting together images taken across places like USA, UK, New Zealand, Czech Republic, Italy, Greece, France, Germany, Austria, Norway, Russia, Netherlands, Canada, Iceland, Thailand, Bhutan, Assam, etc., the book is a repository of images brought to life through the author's lenses! Complete with a short and crisp description of the places travelled, the book would surely please the readers as they flip through the pages over a cup of coffee. ◻

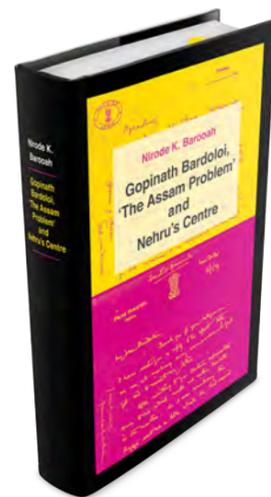
The Secrets of Wild Assam

Assam occupies an important position on the global biodiversity map. Nestled in the Indo-Burma and Himalayan biodiversity hot spots, the state has more than 800 species or nearly three-fourth of all the bird diversity in India. Assam also has the second highest number of mammals and is known for its high reptilian diversity. Besides, the state has a wide variety of habitats ranging from tropical wet evergreen rain forest and wet savanna grassland of the Brahmaputra Valley to the subtropical forests of the Barails. The state is also home to a globally distinctive population of wild elephant, tiger, great Indian one-horned rhinoceros, wild water buffalo, swamp deer, pigmy hog, golden langur, hoolock gibbon as well as white-winged wood duck, Bengal florican and black-breasted parrotbill. Over the years, mainly due to the increase in human population, the wildlife habitat has shrunk and also got fragmented. The book is an attempt to throw light objectively on all the challenges facing nature and wildlife. The book will cater to the needs of a broad section of readers, including tourists who could have a better appreciation of Assam's rich wildlife. ◻



Anwaruddin Choudhury
Bhabani Books, 102 pp, HB, ₹ 850

Gopinath Bardoloi, 'The Assam Problem' and Nehru's Centre



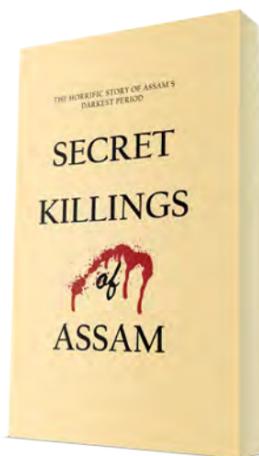
Nirode K. Barooah
Bhabani Books, 676pp, HB, ₹ 690

The author has written this book with great sensitivity and skill. An extraordinary work of historical writing, this book by Nirode K. Barooah is an almost complete and most authentic political biography of Gopinath Bardoloi, Assam's "man of destiny". The book gives an exhaustive account of the politics of Assam during the freedom struggle and the first three years of the post-Independence era. The writer shows great passion and is remarkably candid while writing about the anatomy of the Assamese character in the context of Assam's socio-political scene.

Pick up this outstanding and gripping book ... to know the persona called Gopinath Bardoloi. ◻

Secret Killings of Assam

The State launches a counter-insurgency operation through extra judicial killings and burst open a legacy of hate. Guns boom, there is enough blood and gore and total mayhem prevails. In *Secret Killings of Assam*, the writers give a vivid account of individual experiences and details how Assam got caught in the whirlpool of revenge killings during the period 1998 to 2001 – the darkest chapter of the state's political history. ◻



Mrinal Talukdar, Utpal Borpujari,
Kaushik Deka
Bhabani Books, 206pp, PB, ₹ 200

The Plum Tree

This work of fiction is a collection of short stories and presents thematic variety. *The Plum Tree* establishes that Deepika Phukan is indeed a gifted practitioner of short fiction.

The book has been written in a simple, lucid and personalised manner. What impresses the reader is the author's identifying herself with the characters of her stories, varied and colourful, yet simple to the core. The narration or the skill of her telling the stories is superb in the sense that the reader is either taken to the place of occurrence of the event, wherever it be, or brought to the reader's reach.

The author's intimacy with her subject and the words she has used to paint the themes are pleasantly absorbing. These are not translations from an Indian language. One can marvel at the ease in which Dr. Phukan has written the bunch of stories in this collection. She has convincingly mastered the craft. ◻



Deepika Phukan
Bhabani Books
146pp, PB, ₹ 80

Children's Literature: The Road Ahead

Fantasy transcending imagination is a vital component of a child's world. The oral tradition of story-telling has existed in our society since time immemorial. As we understand, a vast majority of children's stories in India have come from the oral tradition. Growing up in the north-eastern part of India, one has always been overwhelmed by the elements of mystery and magic contained in the folk and fairy tales that emanate from the region. The tale of *Tejimola*, which has several variations in India, the protagonist of which is the Indian sister of Cinderella, is a favourite of all children.

As regard to the tradition of story-telling, it may be noted that these tales which belong to the oral tradition, were first narrated in the form of discourses in the local languages and therefore, had a greater impact on the listeners. The stories were circulated orally by grandmothers, mothers, aunts and even older siblings who were in a mission to inculcate in young minds moral values, sound judgement and promote to them the art of living with wisdom and morality. The lullabies and their rhythmic chants induce a sense of nostalgia even today. *Uncle Moon* alias *Chandamama*, figures in nursery rhymes which a generation had listened to ever since it began to comprehend speech. The fact remains that generations of Indian children not only share *Uncle Moon* or *Vikram-Vetal* stories, but many other heart-warming stories too. From the oral mode, as time passed, these stories began to be written down and were transmitted to the print medium.

The body of literature written for and about children today forms a vast area of study. Sahityarothi Laxminath Bezbaroa's *Burhi Air Sadhu* is the most significant one coming from the region which has been recently translated into English as *Grandma's Tales*, first by late Pallavi Barua and then by the Crosswords Book Award Winner, Dr Deepika Phukan with colourful illustrations. Other notable collections of children's stories are *Xadhukatha*, *Aranyar Galpa*, *Akonir Upakhyān*, *Koka Deutar Sadhu*, and those immortal stories of Bhabendra Nath Saikia.

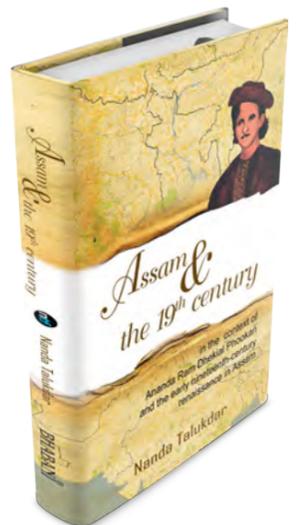
Translation can be recognized as a valuable means to provide a common ground to literature encapsulating vignettes from all the regions for the children of our country. National Book Trust (NBT), an organization set up by the government in 1957 to promote knowledge on various subjects through quality publications and Children's Book Trust (CBT), the largest publisher of children's books in the country, have laudably contributed towards this end. However, more and more publishing houses should come forward to work vigorously in this direction so that children in future may have a better access to our past heritage and traditions through a body of literature which is vast and variegated. □

English. To my own mind this feature of the educational policy persuaded in Assam is not only absurd but destructive of the honest motives of education and must necessarily cripple the advancement of schools as well as separate them from the sympathies of the people. These are some of the priceless inclusions in the book wherein late Dr. Talukdar mainly focused on life and works of Ananda Ram Dhekial Phookan but he managed to dig out enough material of that forgotten era. Though, ironically enough, bulk of the effort of this stalwart from those dark ages appears to go down the drain as the saviours of the Assamese language, including many of those in Sahitya Sabha, and teachers of Assamese pull all the stops in putting their scions in English Medium schools and take great pride in their wards not being able to understand day to day words in Assamese.

This book was originally the PhD thesis of Dr. Nanda Talukdar who died in a tragic road accident without facing the interview. The court of the Gauhati University took an unprecedented decision to award the PhD degree to Dr. Nanda Talukdar posthumously without the mandatory interview (viva) as a rare case, considering the importance and merit of the thesis. This thesis has been slightly re-arranged resulting in this book titled *Assam & the 19th Century*.

Dhekial Phookan started his career in 1847 as Zimmaradar in the Khata Pargana which was followed by a short tenure as acting Munsiff at Nalbari, whereafter he was appointed Dewan to Raja Amrit Narayan Bhup of Bijni in 1849. In 1850, he became the first Indian and first Assamese Sub-Assistant (present-day Assistant Commissioner or Extra Assistant Commissioner) under British Rule in Assam. Thereafter he rose to become a Junior Assistant (present-day Additional Deputy Commissioner or Sub-Divisional Officer) in 1854, and also officiated several times as the Principal Assistant (present day Deputy Commissioner or Collector) of the Nowgong (now Nagaon) district, before his precious life was cut short on June 16, 1859 at the age of 29 years 9 months 29 days.

This painstakingly compiled research work consists of some ten chapters apart from a preface and acknowledgement by the late author dated March 1, 1982 (he perished on nearly a year later on February 26, 1983). Following the introductory chapter, the chapter two delineates the entry of East India Company and starts right from political condition of the kingdom, administration, economic condition wherein the researcher delved out the salary structure of some govt. employees, population of Assam, Export-Import scenario in 1809, Statistics of Assam in 1853, River transport fares and ends the chapter with the story of reintroduction of Assamese in schools.



Nanda Talukdar, Bhabani Books, 252 pp, HB, ₹ 390

In chapter three with the caption "Education at the time first" he discusses the system of education before the British arrived, Company's Policy, the very first group of schools with the salary structure of Gowhatti School way back in 1842. His research reveals that in 1843 there were 50 schools in Assam. In the next chapter captioned Influence of Bengali Renaissance he even delves into history of Bengal and mentions the group of Assamese visiting Bengal carrying the modern outlook back to lead the society forward. In chapter V, the efforts of the American Baptist Missionaries and their impact has been thoroughly discussed.

Chapter VI is devoted to the person Anandaram and his genealogy. Anandaram, the Administrator comes next. In Chapter Eight, the literary works of Anandaram is described in detail. It is to be put on record that 'Englandar Bibaran' – an account of England by Ananda Ram Dhekial Phookan is the first essay in Assamese literature written by an Assamese writer. In the penultimate chapter a parallel is drawn with Raja Ram Mohun Roy alongwith a discussion on Phookan's contemporaries. Late Talukdar brings down the curtain with a résumé of the materials for the study of Ananda Ram Dhekial Phookan which involved fieldwork – visiting various places including Calcutta, Serampore, Shillong etc. in the trail of information and manuscripts of those era.

A long list of bibliography stands proof to the author's massive effort with mention of some unpublished documents and printed sources in various languages including list of Anandaram's writings and also other members of his family. At the end, the genealogical chart is appended.

Through this book we come to know the changing spellings of various important places of Assam at different times like Gowhatti, Gauhati, Guwahati and the changing scenario for an entire century. It has been a great toil on the part of a worthy son of Assam towards a stalwart who was born and departed like a shooting star but etching an imprint to stay forever in history for generations to emulate. A great work indeed by Bhabani Books to have come forward to share history and enlighten the knowledge seekers. □

Review

Assam & the 19th Century

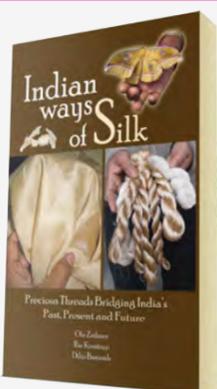


Nanda Talukdar

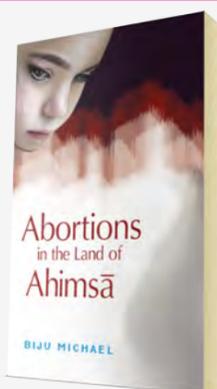
Amongst the Assamese people, the first voice of protest against the introduction of Bengali was raised by Ananda Ram Dhekial Phookan through his memorandum to Mills which was well corroborated by people like Rev. A H Danforth, member of American Baptist Mission who wrote to Mills in such language.

Bibekananda Choudhury

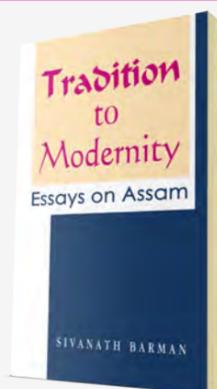
An English youth is not taught Latin until he is well grounded in English, and, in the same manner, an Assamese should not be taught a foreign language until he knows his own – this had been the observation of A. J. Moffat Mills, Judge of Sudder Dewanny and Nizamut Adawlut, Calcutta in 1853 that finally led to reintroduction of Assamese as the official language in Assam. Amongst the Assamese people, the first voice of protest against the introduction of Bengali was raised by Ananda Ram Dhekial Phookan through his memorandum to Mills which was well corroborated by people like Rev. A H Danforth, member of American Baptist Mission who wrote to Mills in such language : we might as well think of creating a love of knowledge in the mind of a stupid English boy by attempting to teach him French before he know anything of the rudiments of



Ole Zethner, Rie Koustrup, Dilip Barooah, ₹ 700, PB



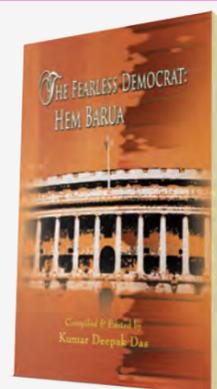
Biju Michael ₹ 375, PB



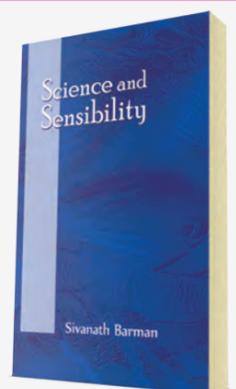
Sivanath Barman ₹ 270, PB



Deepika Phukan ₹ 250, PB



Compiled & Edited by Kumar Deepak Das ₹ 300, HB



Sivanath Barman ₹ 120, PB

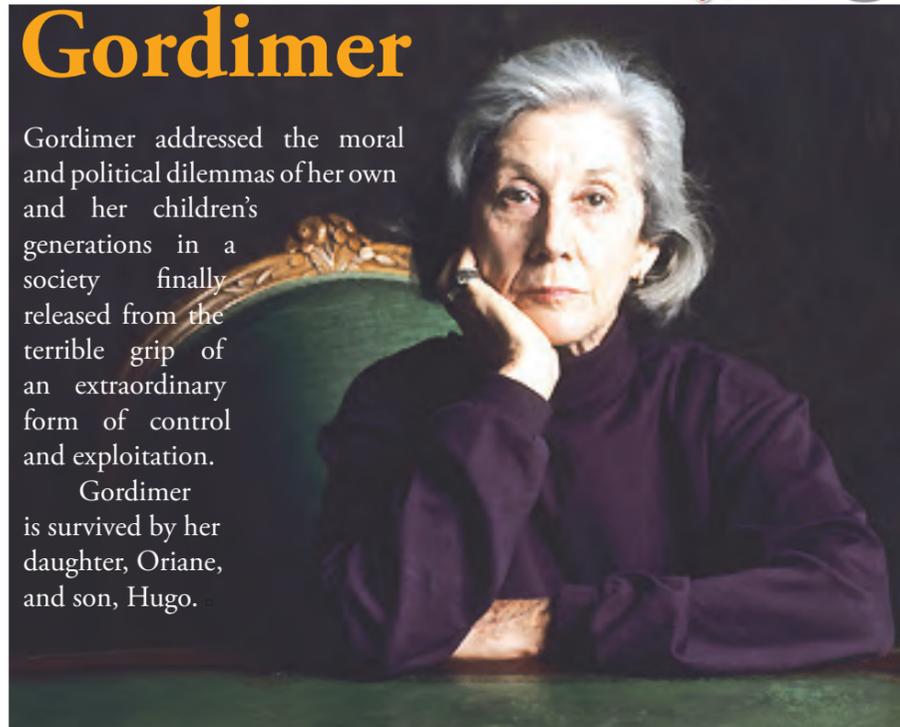
Adieu! Nadine Gordimer

South African author and Literary Giant, Nadine Gordimer (November 20, 1923- July 13, 2014) breathed her last at her house in Johannesburg on Sunday, 14th July 2014. Gordimer had won accolades for her tremendous efforts in bringing forward issues of racial conflict in apartheid-era in South Africa. She won the Booker Prize in 1974 for *The Conservationist*, a novel about a white South African who loses everything, and the Nobel Prize in 1991, when apartheid was in its death throes.

She was born near Springs, Gauteng, an East Rand mining town outside Johannesburg. Her father, Isidore Gordimer, was a Jewish immigrant watchmaker from Žagarė (then Russian Empire, now Lithuania), and her mother, Hannah “Nan” (Myers) Gordimer, was from London. Gordimer wrote 15 novels as well as several volumes of short stories, non-fiction and others, her works being published in 40 languages. Literary recognition was bestowed on her early in her career, with her first international recognition in 1961, followed by numerous literary awards throughout the ensuing decades which culminated with the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991. Among Gordimer’s best known novels is *Burger’s Daughter* which appeared in 1979, three years after the Soweto student uprising brought the brutality to the world’s attention.

Gordimer addressed the moral and political dilemmas of her own and her children’s generations in a society finally released from the terrible grip of an extraordinary form of control and exploitation.

Gordimer is survived by her daughter, Oriane, and son, Hugo.



Ache Din Aayenge—

A seven hundred year old hope of Kashmiri Pandits



Rahul Pandita

Krishani Khound

At the very outset Pandita briefs about the three thousand years old history of Kashmir and that of Kashmiri Pandits. He carefully crafts the generations of struggle, tolerance and brutality which is registered in every Kashmiri Pandit’s soul, by narrating encounters faced by each household.

My choice of picking up Rahul Pandita’s *OUR MOON Has BLOOD CLOTS: The Exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits* was sheer curiosity, to know about the subject which more often was kept in the closet and discussed in whisper. I never expected that the book will move me to an extent that I would decide to speak loudly about the unspoken chapter in Indian History. However, this saga of deep anguish which have taken away life, peace, home and hope, is many times bounced and used to feed the vote hungry mouths. I have adopted an unlike myself habit while reading Pandita’s memoir, that of folding pages with descriptions which at times brought tears and instilled anger within me to question; Is religion higher than humanity?

At the very outset Pandita briefs about the three thousand years old history of Kashmir and that of Kashmiri Pandits. The author himself being a Pandit conceits the contribution of his ancestors to Indian History. In the fourteenth Century with rule of Sultan Sikander, the pride was substituted by never ending suffering. With the advent of Afghans into valley, situation worsened. By then “Any Musalman who met a Pandit would jump on his back and take a ride”. The 1947 tribal invasion from Pakistan and the Exodus of 1990 robbed of whatever little the Pandits had and gifted them fear of being killed, raped and exiled.

The author carefully crafts the generations of struggle, tolerance and brutality which is registered in every Kashmiri Pandit’s soul, by narrating encounters faced by each household. “Our home in Kashmir had twenty two rooms” prided the author’s mother. A trauma of being homeless made her assert the past all through her life. The words rang in the mind of the protagonist and that of reader much after she left. But still the author states on being invoked by others, “I have lost my home, not my humanity”. Had every person in the valley had similar thinking, life would have been different in the Paradise on Earth.

The narration and unfolding of events is the best part of Pandita’s memoir. At times an emotion driven reader like me would decide not to read the book anymore, unable to take on the suffering the Pandits faced for centuries. This is when the spell of author’s narration and urge to at least understand and share the nested pain of the several real life heroes takes over. For every ordinary human being such level of tolerance is not to be found, the Pandits are an exception. By the end of the book I no longer sympathize with them, I honour them for such a rare feat of character shown by them in adversity.

“Every day, after going through the second page, I decide not to read the newspapers anymore. It makes me feel like Chitragupt – the clerk in the office of lord of death, Yama—who maintains the records of life and death”,

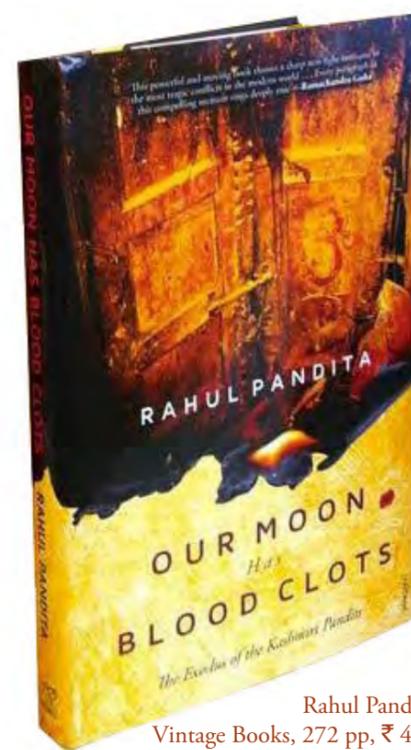
“Like our misfortune, the rain was also waiting for an appropriate moment to show that we were born when the gods had been looking the other way” and “Oh, running water!!” Such day to day dialogues and conversation evoke the kind of pain and hardship they faced through generations. Leaving behind their ancestral home and source of earning they are forced to take shelter in government provided deplorable refugee home and with meagre refugee allowance. Their situation again reminds me of a statement by Pandita’s uncle, “When I saw Nehru for the first time in Lal Chowk, I was a refugee in my own state. Sixty years later I am refugee in my own country”.

The book is never short of information and Pandita’s experience as an acclaimed journalist played in his forte. He mentions things though have improved good deal in Government documents, the reality still bites. In 2008 the Dr. Singh Government under a package announced six thousand jobs for Pandits, only about one thousand four hundred applicants applied “for the fear of being targetted by militants and radical elements in Kashmir”. Those who decided to work faced eve teasing from passersby and mental harassment from fellow colleagues. One victim narrates her incident, “My headmistress threw a notebook at me the other day and shouted, “You sixth-grade pass outs have now come to lord over us!” I wanted to tell her that I have double Masters and a B.Ed degree”.

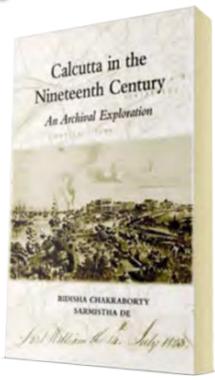
As a reader the only hiccup in reading the memoir was sudden popping up of a character without prior introduction. The book is sensitively involving, so such abrupt entry of a new story with the change in paragraph at times is slightly difficult on the reader to get hold of the connection.

With a new Government and their promise of “Ache Din Aayenge” I hope the Pandits of the Kashmir valley see a new dawn. The book has successfully thrown light on incidents, plights, and emotions which led to tragedy of Kashmiri Pandits. The words are carefully used and in a simple way the author presented a rather complex issue of Indian history.

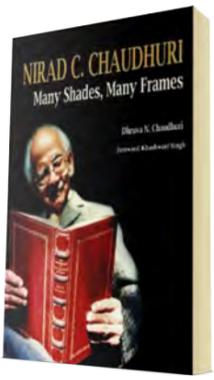
Lastly I would like to share a personal fear I developed while reading the book. The way the intruders and invaders have led to the Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits, will we Axomiya meet similar fate in the future due to the constant infiltration from the border? Hope that one day like Rahul Pandita our future generation will not have to knock the door of their ancestral home to be opened by a foreigner. □



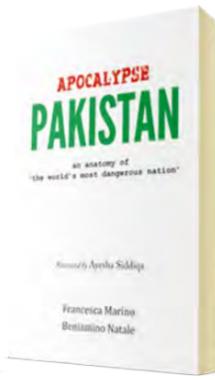
Rahul Pandita
Vintage Books, 272 pp, ₹ 499



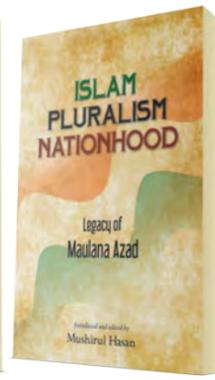
Bidisha Chakraborty, Sarmistha De
Niyogi Books, ₹ 595



Dhruv N. Chaudhuri,
Niyogi Books
₹ 1250



Francesca Marino and Beniamino Natale,
Niyogi Books, ₹ 395



Mushirul Hasan,
Niyogi Books
₹ 695

Nirad C Chaudhuri: Many Shades, Many Frames

Nirad C. Chaudhuri: *Many Shades, Many Frames* is the story of this famous writer, narrated by his eldest son Dhruva N. Chaudhuri. Words and photographs come together to create a charming picture of the prolific author whose *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, published in 1951, put him on the shortlist of great Indian English writers. This book covers Nirad Chaudhuri's early years, his struggle to find work, his stint at All India Radio, going on to highlight his years in Oxford, where he died at the age of one hundred and one. This is the story of an author who was certainly not destined to remain an Unknown Indian. The dramatic photographs and rare documents bring this illustrated biography alive. ◻

Islam, Pluralism, Nationhood

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, commonly remembered as Maulana Azad, rose to prominence through his work as a journalist, publishing works critical of the British Raj in the early 1920s. A powerful writer and an equally stimulating orator, his sway over the Muslim communities was considered a threat by the government which looked for every opportunity to clip his wings and restrain his activities. But Azad took these tribulations gracefully and came to play a very decisive role as a senior leader of the Independence movement. Like his pen-name Azad, which meant free, here was a man who relentlessly strove to remove the shackles of incapacious thinking, challenging its rigidity, wisely integrating the munificence of Islam and pluralism into the folds of nationhood. In an unconventional form of storytelling this book seeks to provide the thrill and opportunity of being a historian and an explorer, to each reader. A compilation of confidential facsimiles of notes, memos and letters, rich and varied, they unfold Azad's story like never before. The detailed 'history sheets' compiled by the Intelligence Bureau, are as informative as entertaining, conveying the tentativeness at the heart of an anxious and apprehensive government. The other documents reflect government policies in relation to the popular upsurge that had taken place in some parts of the country, an agitation that also drew Azad into the nationalist fold. Post- Independence communications on policies that were gradually shaping the young independent India also shed ample light on Azad's robust conviction of combining the essence of Islam and pluralism in building a new nation. ◻

Calcutta in the Nineteenth Century

This collection examines Calcutta's rapid transformation from a cluster of three villages into the second city of the British Empire. Bidisha Chakraborty and Sarmistha De, two talented archivists, remind us that the ancient and crumbling British legacy scattered all around Calcutta was once a fledgling imperial dream of the most astounding scope. The English East India Company started out as a trading company but soon found itself saddled with administrative responsibilities. The British built Calcutta around Fort William, not just for the burgeoning European population but also as the nerve centre of their growing Indian empire. As word spread about how the British wanted to make Calcutta the 'London of the East', people from all over Bengal, India and the rest of the world flocked to Calcutta throughout the nineteenth century. This book delves into several archival sources and unearths not just the grandeur of such an ambitious undertaking but also the meticulous planning that went with it. Through rare photographs, plans, blueprints and other documentary evidence we get a glimpse of Calcutta as the British wanted the city to be. This book shows not just how much they achieved but also the inevitable resistance that they faced. One is also made aware of the complex colonizer-colonised dialectic that lay behind the growth of a city like Calcutta. ◻

Apocalypse Pakistan : An Anatomy of the World's Most Dangerous Nation

Pakistan is presently the battle ground on which the unceasing war between the West and the international Islamic terror groups is being fought. After the killing of Osama Bin Laden in Abbottabad and the case of Raymond Davis—an undercover CIA agent who killed two ISI agents in Lahore but was later released because of his diplomatic status—the relations between the once staunch allies Washington and Islamabad is at the lowest point in decades. How did they reach this point and how could they, for more than a decade, pretend to be fighting the same enemy together? Most importantly, what does the future hold for them and the rest of the world? *Apocalypse Pakistan* tries to answer these and more introspective questions, by analysing the political and cultural evolution of the Pakistani elite (generals, politicians, etc.) from Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to the present, on topics like the relationship with Afghanistan and China, terrorism and nuclear proliferation. The book is based on first person accounts, reportage and personal interviews with two generations of the Bhuttos, the Sharifs, Hamid Gul and also includes Mohammed Hafeez Saeed's first ever interview to a woman journalist. The book presents a multi-faceted history of contemporary Pakistan and offers a balanced view without taking sides or trying to offer solutions to govern the country. ◻

Makers of Modern India

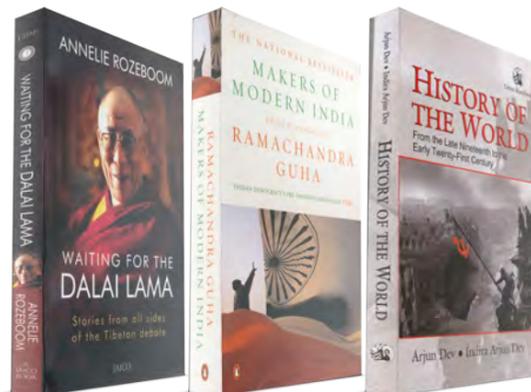
The book provides a representative selection of the writings of India's most remarkable social reformers and political activists. It presents the work and the words of the men and women who led forward the brigade for the Republic of India and its existence. Profiles of nineteen Indians whose ideas had a defining impact on the formation and evolution of Indian republic have been chronicled by Ramachandra Guha. The compelling excerpts from speeches of these eminent figures also form the content of the volume. Every thinking reader of the country must possess a copy of this stimulating and exciting work. ◻

History of the World: From the Late Nineteenth to the Early Twenty-First Century

The book is written in simple and lucid language by two well-known historians. It presents a comprehensive and tactful overview of World History from the last decade of the Nineteenth Century to present times. The Two World Wars are the prime focus points and by highlighting watershed events taking place during those times, the book chronicles a history which helped in shaping the contemporary scenario in the Twenty- First Century. There are

comprehensive discussions of events and forces like the Black People's struggle for equality in the US, the anti-imperialist and nationalist movements in Asia and Africa, the formation of the United Nations and so forth.

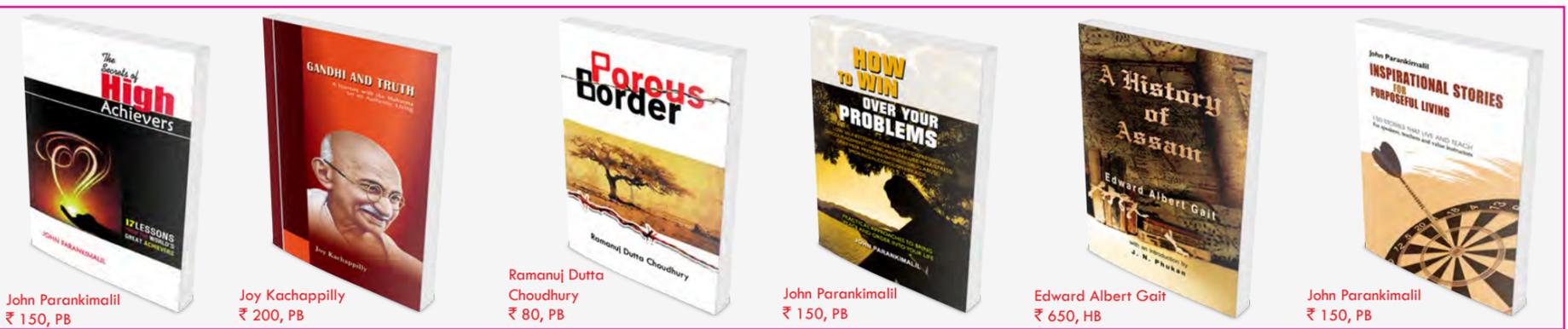
History of the World is a suggested read for students pursuing undergraduate course in History as well as in International Relations. ◻



Annelie Rozeboom
Jaico Publishing House, ₹ 295
Edited and introduced by: Ramachandra Guha,
Penguin Books, ₹ 599
Orient Blackswan ₹ 260

Waiting for the Dalai Lama: Stories from all sides of the Tibetan Debate

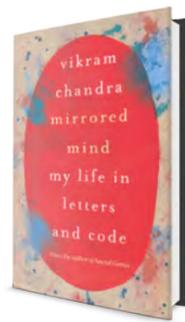
You very well may learn something new from reading this very informative and well documented book. Additionally, the personal stories, placed in context very well, make for interesting reading. The book is well-written, easy to read and educating. Why is it that the issues of Tibet rouse such passions on both sides? To find out, the author, Annelie Rozeboom interviewed Tibetans inside and outside Tibet, as well as Chinese and Western observers and the Dalai Lama himself. As these people explain their experiences, the reader sees why they think the way they do, and why the Tibetans and Chinese have taken such opposing positions. It is a collection of very different viewpoints which approaches the emotive issue of Tibet from all angles. The book unravels how history wiped away the remote Kingdom and made the Tibetans and Chinese opposing parties. ◻



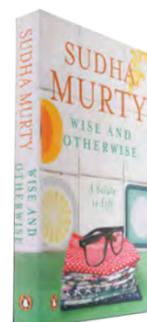
John Parankimalil ₹ 150, PB
Joy Kachappilly ₹ 200, PB
Ramanuj Dutta Choudhury ₹ 80, PB
John Parankimalil ₹ 150, PB
Edward Albert Gait ₹ 650, HB
John Parankimalil ₹ 150, PB

Mirrored mind: my life in letters and code

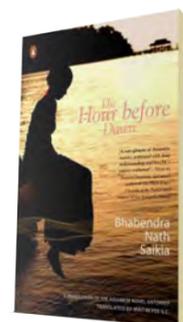
Vikram Chandra has been a computer programmer for almost as long as he has been a novelist. In this extraordinary book, he returns to his early days as a writer and looks for the connections between the antithetical worlds of art and technology. It is a mere coincidence that the writer feels a sense of affinity to the both seemingly opposite ways of thinking and perceiving the world. To find a relation between this dichotomy, Chandra delves into the writings of Abhinavgupta, the tenth and eleventh century Kashmiri thinker and as a result creates an idiosyncratic history of coding. A literary story, tech story and also a memoir, *Mirrored Mind* is a rare book with sweeping ideas and original thinking. □



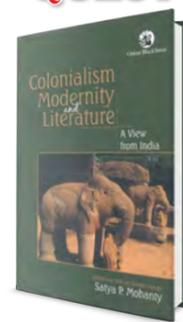
Vikram Chandra
Penguin Books, ₹ 499



Sudha Murthy
Penguin Books,
₹ 250



Bhabendra Nath
Saikia, Translated by-
Maitreyee S.C., Penguin
Books, ₹ 350



Edited by Satya P.
Mohanty, Orient
Blackswan, ₹ 695

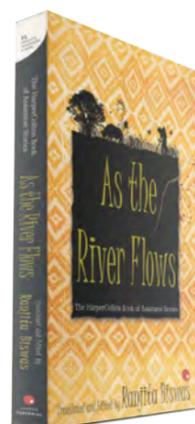
Wise and Otherwise: A Salute to Life

Wise and Otherwise: A Salute to Life is a collection of fifty one short stories based on the real life experiences of Mrs Sudha Murthy with a simple narrative technique and lucidly written text. As the Chairperson of the Infosys Foundation, she has come across different kinds of people in her office as well as while travelling during the course of her work. Each story covers a facet of human nature and has something to tell.

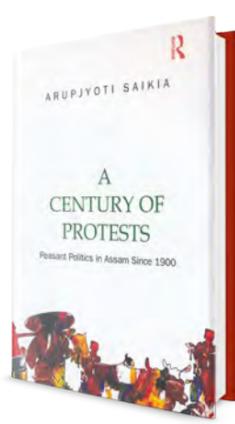
First published in 2002, *Wise and Otherwise* has sold over 30,000 copies in English and has been translated into all the major Indian languages. The present edition is a revised new edition and is sure to charm many more readers and encourage them to explore their inner selves and the world around us with new eyes. □



Kenny Deori
Basumatary,
Tranquebar, ₹ 200



Translated and Edited by
Ranjita Biswas, Harper
Perennial, ₹ 299



Arupjyoti Saikia,
Routledge, ₹ 1195

Chocolate-Guitar-Momos

Chocolate Guitar Momos revolves around Joseph, who has been living in Guwahati for less than a year and is struggling to earn a decent living with his profession as a musician. Meanwhile, his girlfriend of five years resides in Delhi, whose interest in him slowly begins to fade, to say the least.

Joseph has been dumped thrice so far and is now determined to find the girl whom he believes is his true soul mate. He only saw her once at a bus stop, where she smiled at him. The problem is that he doesn't know anything about her, nor does he remember how she looks like. The only thing Joseph remembers is that she wore a grey skirt. This starts Joseph's quest to find his soul mate by searching through social networking websites such as Facebook and radio broadcasting, leading to a series of events that will keep the readers glued to the very end. The writer has filled this novel with funny incidents packed with subtle sarcasm, which make for an interesting read. □

As the River Flows

The book brings together some of the finest contemporary short stories from Assam written by some of the finest writers in Assamese. Translated from Assamese, the wide variety of styles and concerns give a glimpse into the lives of those living beside the Brahmaputra. Spanning the decades from the 1950s to the present, this collection presents an eclectic mix of well-known stories by writers who set the tone for modern Assamese writing as well as those who gained from their pioneering efforts. □

A Century of Protests: Peasant Politics in Assam since 1900

This book engages with the changing dynamics of agrarian economy and rural politics in the districts of Assam under the Raiyatwari system of land revenue settlement during the late colonial and post colonial periods. Drawing upon previously unused archival sources, it explores how peasantry in Assam responded to various levels and forms of political mobilization in order to articulate its grievances and demands. Centred on the tumultuous period of 1947-52 in India's history, the book moves back and forth in time through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to describe the evolution of political consciousness and activities of various sections of peasantry including the tribal, caste-Hindu and immigrant Muslims in Assam, and their fluctuating and tension-ridden relationship with each other, as well as with the state, Assamese Congress nationalists, communists and socialists. Finally the book explores how Assamese nationalism succeeded in appropriating the dissent of peasantry into its larger nationalist agenda. □

**The Hour Before Dawn
(A translation of the Assamese novel Antoreep)**

The Hour Before Dawn is Maitreyee S C's translation of Bhabendra Nath Saikia's Assamese novel *Antoreep*. Bhabendra Nath Saikia was a highly acclaimed writer as well as a stupendous filmmaker. The story is about a village woman, Menoka, whose husband remarries a younger woman, ignoring her existence and loyalty, leaving her to question her womanhood.

Menoka, a woman of grit, avenges her husband's hedonism by engaging in a short affair with Modon, the village thief and outcast. Along with Menoka's equation with Kiron the new wife, the novel portrays the growth of Menoka, the wronged woman, into a powerful matriarch providing motherly care and protection to the defenceless in the household and locality. The way her relationship with her first born, Indro, changes over the course of the book also makes for an engrossing read. The treatment meted out to the girl child in India too finds a place in the book while the predominant theme remains the victory of one woman against her patriarchal oppressors from within the system. □

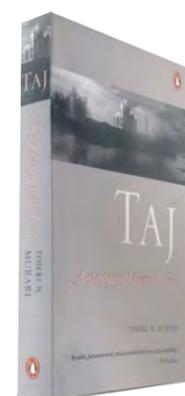
Colonialism Modernity and Literature: A View from India

This Volume presents a distinct and complex view from the Indian context, but with wider implications. It addresses themes like the relationship between colonialism and socio cultural modernity in the colonized world. Focusing on Fakir Mohan's ground-breaking late-nineteenth century Oriya novel *Chha Mana Atha Guntha (Six Acres and a Third)*, the book highlights the intersection of at least three multidisciplinary fields which are postcolonial and the subaltern theory, comparative Indian literary criticism and the study of 'alternative' and 'indigenous' maternities.

Colonialism, Modernity and Literature grounds the political insights of postcolonial and subaltern theory in close textual analysis and challenges readers to think in new ways about global modernity and local cultures. The method of comparative analysis as applied in the pieces to read the texts will help readers to study Indian Literature in ways, which are non-ethnocentric and in the modern Indian Cultural context, is non- chauvinistic. □

Taj: A story of Mughal India

This powerfully written novel narrates the story of the Taj on two parallel levels. The first one tells the passionate love story of Shah Jahan and Arjumand Banu-Mumtaz-i-Mahal, till her death. The second recounts the later years of Shah Jahan's reign, the building of the Taj Mahal and the bloody pursuit of the fabulous peacock throne by his sons. Intertwined with the narrative about the building of the Taj is the story of Murthi, the Hindu master craftsmen sent as a gift to the Emperor to carve the famous marble jali around Arjumand's sarcophagus. The Taj is an ode to Emperor Shah Jahan's queen, a monument that was the image of his perfect love for her. The Taj Mahal, a marble mausoleum lined with gold, silver and precious jewels took twenty two years to be built and twenty thousand men laboured day and night to build the Taj. In this complex and fascinating book, the writer has written much more than a historical romance and has skillfully recreated the period against which the story is set. □



Timeri N. Murari
Penguin Books, ₹ 399

These Hills called Home: Stories from a War Zone

Comprising ten stories based on the life and ways in Nagaland, the author has stroked many a chords and described how ordinary people cope with violence, how they negotiate power and force, how they seek and find safe spaces and enjoyment in the midst of terror, etc. the author vividly details a way of life under threat from the forces of modernization and war. Economical and unadorned, these stories bring alive the poignant and bewildering experiences of a people caught in a spiral of violence. In doing so, they speak movingly of home, country, nation, nationality, identity and direct the reader to the urgency of the issues that lie at their heart. □



Temsula Ao
Zubaan, ₹ 199

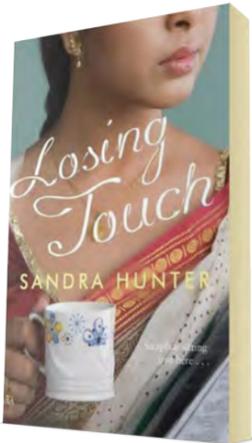


Joel Dicker
Penguin Books, ₹ 599

The Truth About the Harry Quebert Affair

The Truth About the Harry Quebert Affair is an incredible debut which has already sold over 2 million copies, won France's top literary prizes and topped the charts across Europe. Part crime novel, part love story it tracks a pupil's attempt to clear his former mentor of a thirty year old murder. Highly acclaimed in more than 40 countries it has already been published in the book has just topped the charts in the UK and is about to release in the US.

Author of thirty books, including the award-winning *The Snow Leopard*, Peter Matthiessen sadly passed away recently. His final novel, *In Paradise*, tells the story of a group of men and women who come together for a weeklong meditation retreat at the site of a World War II concentration camp, and the grief, rage and upsetting revelations that surface during their time together. ◻



Sandra Hunter
Penguin Books, ₹ 399

Losing Touch

Arjun moves his family to North West London after Indian independence - but hopes of a better life rapidly dissipate. Reeling from the death of his younger brother, Arjun vainly attempts to enforce the values he grew up with, while his family eagerly embrace the new ones. But when his right leg suddenly fails him, Arjun's growing sense of imbalance is more than external.

Offering an intimate and touching portrait of an immigrant family precariously balanced on the cusp of East and West, Hunter's strikingly sympathetic characters remind us of our own shortfalls, successes, hypocrisies and humanity. In pitch-perfect prose, Hunter offers a fresh focus on the immigrant experience and of the differences that exist between first and second generations.

A richly observed look at how a father's illness challenges and strengthens his relationship with his wife. Set in 1970s London, examines Britain's social issues of a growing population of South Asian immigrants.

Sandra Hunter is a prolific short-story writer. She has won the Arthur Edelstein Prize for Short Fiction, and been a finalist for numerous short-story prizes, including the Pushcart. ◻

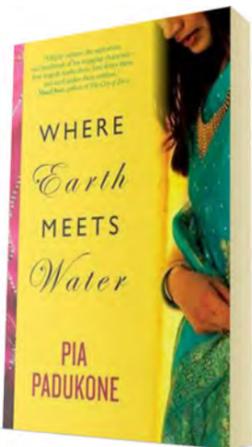


Peter Matthiessen
Penguin Books, 256pp, ₹ 599

In Paradise

In Paradise tells the story of a group of men and women who come together for a weeklong meditation retreat at the site of a World War II concentration camp, and the grief, rage and upsetting revelations that surface during their time together. Even as it probes the suffering, conflicts, and longings of these diverse characters, *In Paradise* raises provocative and unanswerable metaphysical questions: what responsibility comes with bearing witness to such cruelty and tragedy; and what insights into the nature of good and evil may be lost in the next decade or two, as the last survivors of - and witnesses to - the death camps pass away. *In Paradise* is Matthiessen's first work of fiction since *Shadow Country*, which won the National Book Award in 2008. Having participated in three Zen retreats at Auschwitz beginning in the 1990s, he had long wished to comment on the ongoing fallout of last century's global catastrophe, but 'as a non-Jewish American journalist, I felt unqualified to do so, I felt I had no right. But approaching it as fiction - as a novelist, an artist - I eventually decided that I did. Only fiction would allow me to probe from a variety of viewpoints the great strangeness of what I had felt.'

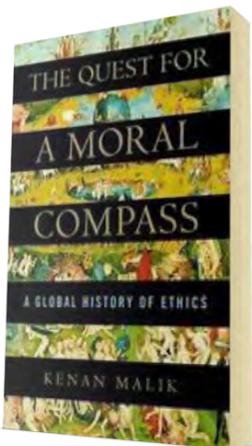
Peter Matthiessen is the author of more than thirty books and the only writer to win the National Book Award for both non-fiction (*The Snow Leopard*, in two categories, in 1979 and 1980) and fiction (*Shadow Country*, in 2008). ◻



Pia Padukone,
Penguin Books, ₹ 299

Where Earth Meets Water

Karom Seth should have been in the Twin Towers on the morning of 9/11, and on the Indian shores in 2004, when the tsunami swept his entire family into the ocean. Whether it's a curse or a blessing, Karom can't be sure, but his absence from these disasters has left him with crushing guilt—and a belief that fate has singled him out for invincibility.



Kenan Malik
Penguin Books, ₹ 599

The Quest For A Moral Compass

In this remarkable and groundbreaking book, Kenan Malik explores the history of moral thought as it has developed over three millennia, from Homer's Greece to Mao's China, from ancient India to modern America.

It tells the stories of the great philosophers, and breathes life into their ideas, while also challenging many of our most cherished moral beliefs. Engaging and provocative, *The Quest For A Moral Compass* confronts some of humanity's deepest questions. Where do values come from? Is God necessary for moral guidance? Are there absolute moral truths? It also brings morality down to earth, showing how, throughout history, social needs and political desires have shaped moral thinking. It is a history of the world told through the history of moral thought, and a history of moral thought that casts new light on global history. At a time of great social turbulence and moral uncertainty, there will be few histories more important than this.

From the Ancient Greeks' stringent ethical standards through to the demise of western religion and our current ethical quandary, Kenan Malik guides the reader through some of humanity's most profound questions. ◻

Curious

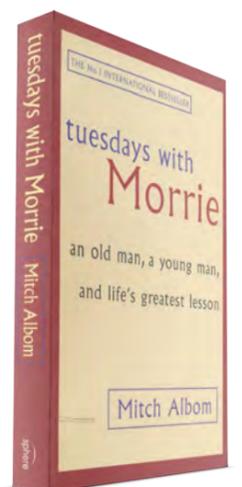
This is a book about our extraordinary capacity to take pleasure in discovering, learning and understanding. It demonstrates how the practice of 'deep curiosity' - persistent, self-reflective seeking of knowledge and insight - is key to the success of our careers, the happiness of our children, the strength of our relationships, and the progress of societies. It also argues that curiosity is a fragile quality, which wanes and waxes over time, and that we take it for granted at our peril: and shows you seven practical steps you can take to stay curious.

Ranging from Leonardo da Vinci doodling ideas in his notebook ('Draw Milan') to Google co-founder Larry Page's thoughts on the perfect search engine, through to the invention of the microwave oven, the advantages of your local bookseller over Amazon's algorithms and a reassessment of Donald Rumsfeld's defense strategy, *Curious* is a rich, textured, exciting take on the most absorbing human trait of all. ◻

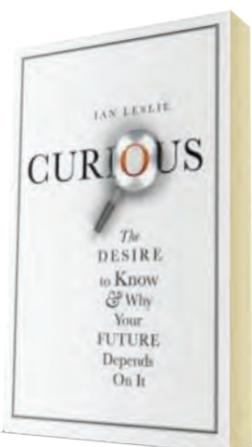
Tuesdays with Morrie: an old man, a young man, and life's greatest lesson

Maybe it was a grandparent, a teacher or a colleague. Someone older, patient and wise, who understood you when you were young and impassioned, helped you to see the world as a more profound place and gave you sound advice to guide your way through it. For Mitch Albom, it was Morrie Schwartz, the college professor who had

taught him nearly twenty years before. Perhaps, like Mitch, you lost track of this mentor as the years passed, the insights faded and the world seemed colder. The writer, Mitch Albom got a second chance, rediscovering Morrie in the last months of the older man's life. Their rekindled relationship turned into one final class: lessons in how to live. The book is a magical chronicle of their time together. ◻



Mitch Albom
Sphere, ₹ 295



Ian Leslie
Penguin Books, ₹ 599

The Book Thief- Review



Markus Zusak

The story is narrated by *Death* who is impersonated as a hovering haunting figure drawn to people and mostly children. Most of the story is symbolic, as the choice of the narrator itself is figurative...

Yashomana Choudhury

It's all about..

Words

A Girl, A Jew in the basement, An accordionist, the fanatical Germans

Words, its power

And quiet a lot of book thieving.

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak is about the story and the way its written making the use of words its forte. What struck me and made me love the book is the manner the story is being narrated. Zusak is a performer with words, the words just don't tell us a story they perform it. The writing is almost poetic in some instance and pleasingly expressive and evocative. The book is a lively collection of powerful words and brilliant storytelling, set in Nazi Germany, the morbid setting couldn't dampen the spirited mood of the book.

The story is narrated by *Death* who is impersonated as a hovering haunting figure drawn to people and mostly children. Most of the story is symbolic, as the choice of the narrator itself is figurative the story is peppered with metaphorical usage of thoughts and ideas; like the hand written note books of Max (the Jew). The note books of Max for me are the most imposing element in the whole novel, something which I loved more than the story. The novel can said to be hovering on two chief stories; one that is narrated by death and other that is penned and pictured over the pages of Mein Kemp which is first painted white. Here are few quotes from Max's story books *The Standover Man* and *The Word Shaker* which is full of symbolic abstraction and yet written in simplest words. *The Word Shaker* tells us a metaphorical story of a girl and the Fuhrer contesting against the real story of Lesiel's small survival triumphs against the disturbing ambience of the Nazi Germany.

I particularly liked the description of Hitler "There was once a strange small man, and he decided three important details about his life—he



Markus Zusak
560 pp, Black Swan, PB, ₹ 499

would part his hair from the opposite side to everyone else- He would find himself a strange moustache- He would one day rule the world" and Hitler's ideologies

"He planted them day and night, and cultivated them. He watched them grow, until eventually great forest of words has risen through Germany. It was the nation of farmed thought"

The story is set in Germany during World War II and shows us the life of a small German town called Molching while circling around the whole Nazi propaganda. *The Book thief* is the title given to a school girl named Leisel Meminger and her bouts of book stealing which unfolds in to a series of events.

The book opens with Leisel and her brother being transported to some unknown town to be left in care of some foster parents as her mother is unable to take care of her. The train journey is where Death first encounters Leisel and leaves with her brother's soul and which leads her to steal her first book *The Gravedigger's Handbook* from the site of her brother's grave. Leisel is placed in a new town with strangers who she are to call Mama, Papa and then being hunted by nightmares every day until her new papa helped her face life with words and books.

Leisel's foster parents Hans and Rosa Herbermann are poor but they are given a small allowance to take her in. Hans, a tall, kind man plays the accordion and paints people's houses. Rosa is grumpy and swears a lot but has a soft heart. This is where Liesel meets Rudy the boy with "hair the colour of lemons" who becomes her best friend and accomplice in her deeds. Life goes on in the little town in usual until one night a Jew named Max turns up at their doorstep. He is the son of Hans Herbermann friend who died saving Hans's life in the First World War. The book then narrates us about the struggle of the Herbermann's family trying to keep a Jew alive in their basement, and Leisel's deep friendship with Max who sort of replaced her lost brother.

The book though has a morbid theme and centres around the iron-clad rigidity of the Nazis which not only unsettles the lives of the Jews but also those ordinary Germans, who too are as much as at risk of losing their lives as the Jews. The story is no doubt an elaborate, evocative narrative, yet the narration does have few flaws, as there are spoilers in the chapters, those melodramatic statements by Death which really kills the suspense of the story, like Death declaring a death of Rudy after just a few pages of introducing him. And then the story itself you can't help but feel the uncanny resembles of the girl and the diary in a Nazi Germany with the book *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank. But overall, the book is one of the best narrative styles I have encountered and it really deserves to be a bestseller. ◻

On Brahmaputra



Ranjita Biswas

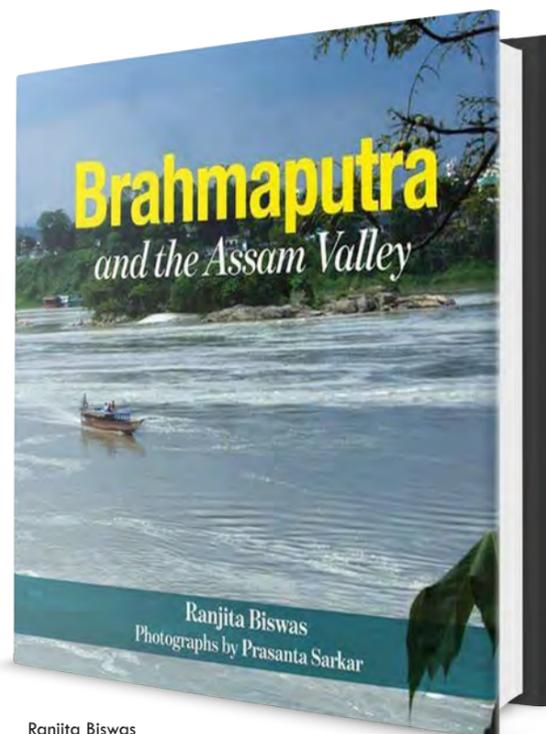
The profusely illustrated book takes along the reader through a pictorial journey giving glimpses of the rich socio-cultural template of the land of the 'Red River and Blue Hills'.

For anyone born in Assam or for that matter visited Assam even for once in their lifetime, have been mesmerized by the vigour and vibrancy of the only male river of India flowing peacefully through the valleys of the State. Many a bard and artist have been inspired by its richness and many a songs and work of art have evolved around its theme. The Coffee Table Book *Brahmaputra and the Assam Valley* by Ranjita Biswas complemented with photographs by Prasanta Sarkar offers an in-depth look at many aspects of the mighty river Brahmaputra tracing its origin, its journey and beyond.

The book is divided into eight chapters, which trace the river's journey that originates from Tibet with the name Tsangpo before it enters India's North East. The book begins with the legends, adventure of the explorers and myths as a background and then the journey begins at Parasuramkunda, the pilgrimage centre in Arunachal Pradesh. The narrative accompanies the river as it meanders through the valley till Dhubri in Goalpara district from where the river enters Bangladesh. The profusely illustrated book takes along the reader through a pictorial journey giving glimpses of the rich socio-cultural template of the land of

the 'Red River and Blue Hills'.

The author weaves meticulous research into an easy flowing narrative which makes it easy to grasp without being too academic. The book introduces the reader to many aspects of this beautiful valley – the tea-country, old capital Sivasagar of the Ahoms, Majuli, the biggest inhabited river island in the world and a repository of Vaishnavite culture, Kaziranga National Park of the famed one-horned rhino, Tezpur- the modern cultural capital, Guwahati, gateway to the North East and an



Ranjita Biswas
Niyogi Books, ₹ 1495, HB

ancient habitat, to end in the land of the 'elephant –song', Goalpara.

It is an unfortunate fact that even within the country ideas about Assam and the North East are vague and often misconstrued. The coffee table book also makes an attempt at giving an insightful look at the valley where the Brahmaputra is almost a living entity so that people from within the country and abroad can have a multi-faceted idea about this major river of Assam. ◻



Indrani Raimedhi Bhabani Books 328pp, PB, ₹ 350
 Rishi Saikia Bhabani Books 192pp, PB, ₹ 180
 Mitra Phukan Bhabani Books 272pp; PB, ₹ 320

Just Between Us

Indrani Raimedhi must have greeted you through her column 'Third Eye', on almost every Sunday while you sipped your morning cuppa.

From Parenting to the Paranormal, What Women Want to the Mystery of an Abandoned Shoe... she has her quirky, contemplative and at times downright brazen take on everything under the sun.

Compiled in book form for the first time are these pieces from her popular column which has featured in The Assam Tribune for close to two decades now.



John Parankimalil Bhabani Books 161pp, PB, ₹ 150
 John Parankimalil Bhabani Books 154pp, PB, ₹ 150
 Dr. Ramesh Chandra Kalita, Bhabani Books 188pp, HB, ₹ 250

How to Teach English : A Resource Book for Teachers and Teacher Education

It is a resource book for teachers and teacher educators in an attempt to help them in their endeavour to effectively impart the teaching of English language. The book also aims to refresh their knowledge of some crucial aspects of the theories relevant to English language teaching, the knowledge of the content of English language teaching, use the teaching-learning materials included in this book in the class and produce similar (or even better) materials for specific groups of learners and design short term training modules for helping out the teachers, taking cues from the modules suggested in the book.

Inspirational Stories for Purposeful Living

Inspirational Stories for Purposeful Living by Dr. John Parankimalil is a collection of 150 powerful and poignant stories for speakers, teachers and value instructors. Stories have an important role to play in life. They teach us valuable lessons for living. The stories are inspirational, uplifting and enjoyable. If your goal is to evoke a positive response from your listeners, just pick one of these short stories to make your message come alive.

Guwahati Gaze

The fifty pieces that make up this collection have been culled from five years' worth of the hugely popular fortnightly column, "All Things Considered", which have been appearing in The Assam Tribune, the premier English language daily of Assam since January 2007. Encompassing a range of subjects of contemporary interest, these fifty columns have been chosen on the basis of having generated a great deal of reader feedback over the years. Mitra Phukan's irreverent and searching gaze dwells on a variety of incidents, characters and trends of contemporary urban life. Usually humorous, sometimes ironical or sardonic, at times poignant or thoughtful, these writings are never cynical or unkind. Even though these pieces have appeared over the years, they have a freshness of appeal because of the universality of their subjects, and the way the topics are discussed. The lively, easy-to-read style also makes it a pleasure to dip into these pages, and enjoy the pieces, a few at a time.



Surendra Nath Barua Bhabani Books 544pp, HB, ₹ 995
 Troilokyewari Devi Barua. Translated by Aradhana Kataki Bhabani Books, 184pp, HB, ₹ 375
 Joy Kachappilly (Compiler) Bhabani Books 140pp; PB, ₹ 120

Tribes of Indo Burma Border

This book describes in lucid and simple language, the fascinating traditional practices and unique social systems of the major ethnic tribes of the Patkai range, particularly of the Tangsa, the Singpho, the Nocte and the Wancho. It begins with a historical prelude and goes on to give detailed accounts of the geography of the region and the cultural characteristics and social behaviour, political administration and impact of the Second World War on the communities living in the Patkai range.

This edition is a revised and edited version of the first edition, with a rearrangement of the chapters. It also contains some supplementary articles and some additional maps. The photographs not only comprise those taken half a century ago by the author, but also some more recent ones of these communities. It is hoped that administrators, researchers, historians, educationists, social scientists and general readers from both within these communities and from elsewhere will find this book useful, informative and enjoyable.

Situating Assamese Middle Class The Colonial Period

The author walks down the annals of history and takes an insight into the socio-political role of the Assamese middle class during the British colonial regime in Assam. The book endeavours to provide readers, social activists, students and intellectuals a new perspective from which to look at and reassess Assamese middle class politics during the colonial regime.

The Long Shot

This is a hilarious story of four friends pursuing MBA at IIM, Bannerghatta. The story revolves not only around the protagonist Raghav but his other three friends who indulged in unthinkable escapades which culminated in their apparently insurmountable insecurities. The subtle humour makes it a must read.

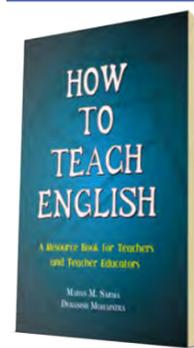
Inspiring Stories from Mahatma Gandhi

Everyone loves stories, anecdotes and episodes associated with great personages. They capture attention and enable the listeners to identify themselves with their message. By appealing to the emotions, stories can arouse curiosity in a person much more than a series of impersonal platitudes. *Inspiring Stories from Mahatma Gandhi* is such a collection of stories, incidents and anecdotes either linked directly to the life of Gandhi or to some close associates of Gandhi. They can engender love for him among the readers and can provide an in depth knowledge of the life and works of Gandhi through not so serious and yet captivating reading. The book is an invitation to live some of the Gandhian principles in a dispassionate manner.

Xadhukatha

'Xadhukatha' is the Assamese term for 'folktales.' The tales in this book belong to the oral tradition like all folktales. These stories are simple and have elements like fantasy, magic and the supernatural. The characters include gods and goddesses and animals as well as human beings. Most of the stories have a moral although some, like the story Teton, are just simply pure fun. Set in antiquity, the stories have characters from different social classes and types. An interesting aspect of *Xadhukatha* is the large number of stories having women as the chief protagonists. Some stories remind us of other folktales from around the world. "The Monkey Bride" reminds one of "Beauty and the Beast". Troilokyewari Devi Barua has also taken from the *Panchatantra* (Bandor) and *Vikramaditya tales* (The Riddle) but presented them in her own style.

How to Win Over your Problems



Madan M. Sarma Debasish Mohapatra Bhabani Books 94pp, PB, ₹ 90

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