



Complitবর্তা

E-newsletter of

Centre for Comparative Literature, Bhasha Bhavana
Visva-Bharati

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From the Office Desk

Dr. Nilanjana Bhattacharya

ॐ द्यौः शान्तिरन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः

पृथिवी शान्तिरापः शान्तिरोषधयः शान्तिः ।

वनस्पतयः शान्तिर्विश्वेदेवाः शान्तिर्ब्रह्म शान्तिः

सर्वं शान्तिः शान्तिरेव शान्तिः सा मा शान्तिरेधि ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

At a time, when the world is becoming increasingly distressed, this ancient prayer for peace – in the sky, in the space, on the earth and in water, in all the herbs, trees and creepers, all over the entire universe – seems to be an apt one to begin another fresh year. May human beings learn to live in peace, and leave others in peace!

The Centre for Comparative Literature continues its journey towards betterment, in terms of everyday teaching-learning, as well as other associated works. A new semester has begun, and we are gearing up towards introducing Post Graduate (NEP) programme from the upcoming academic year. Interested readers may take a look at the section for prospective students. In the past, we have focused on gender awareness and mental health issues – programmes we aim to continue. Now that CCL is in its teens – this is our thirteenth year – we plan to build a better network with our alumni, and make them a more active limb of our department. From this issue, we initiate a new section, “Alumni Corner”, where we will invite write-ups from our alumni. With participations from our current and former students, we hope to assist our future students in a better way.

In our editorial team, we have welcomed new members, who are being guided by the older ones. As always, we look forward to your feedback. Any comment or query may be sent to cclvbu@visva-bharati.ac.in.

Subho nababarsho!

WORKSHOP

International Body Movement Workshop

Dheeman Bhattacharyya



As part of Visva-Bharati's initiative to promote Indian Knowledge Systems, the Centre for Comparative Literature, Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, organised "Of Clay and Dust: A Six-Day International Body Movement Workshop" in collaboration with the Department of Yogic Art, and Science (DYAS), Vinaya Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, from 16-21 February 2026. The inaugural session was held at the open-air premises of Dhyana Kutir, at Department of Yogic Art, and Science. Professor Samiran Mondal, from the Department of Yogic Art and Science, delivered the welcome address. Dr. Dheeman Bhattacharyya, coordinator, and curator of the workshop introduced the objectives of the workshop and explained that the workshop should be seen as a culmination of all the dance-related curations since the successful completion of the international

symposium on 'Literature and Dance' organised in December, 2024. Professor Mrinal Kanti Mondal, Principal, Bhasha Bhavana, and Professor-in-Charge, Centre for Comparative Literature, emphasised the significance of organising the workshop which is closely aligned with the IKS mission and vision of Visva-Bharati. Professor Amit Hazra, Director, SEI&RR, and Principal, Vinaya Bhavana, congratulated CCL for this unique endeavour in his inaugural address and unveiled the brochure of the workshop.

Apart from the registered participants across several Bhavanas of Visva-Bharati, eminent national and international performers and dance scholars like Guru Pagulu Jena (Eminent Chhau Guru, Mayurbhanj Style), Subhasree Mukherjee (Mayurbhanj Chhau Artist), Guru Niranjana Bhol (Mardala, Dholak and Percussion), Michel Casanovas (France, Dancer, Choreographer and Feldenkrais Practitioner), Eveline Noth (Switzerland, Musician and Craniosacral Therapist, Sudarshan Chakravorty (Founder Director, Sapphire Creations Dance Co.), Monit Paul (Sarod player and musical collaborator of the workshop), Lakmidar Ghunia (Dancer, Mayurbhanj Chhau Artist), Monami Nandy (Performing Artiste, conceptualiser and facilitator of the workshop) were present. Professor Kalpika Mukhopadhyay, retired professor of Sanskrit, also graced the occasion. Soma Mukherjee, from the Centre for Comparative Literature, delivered the vote of thanks.

Subhasree Mukherjee delivered the keynote address, which was interwoven with live demonstrations by Lakmidar Ghunia and Guru Niranjana Bhol. The session was chaired by Nilanjana Bhattacharya, Teacher-in-Charge, Centre for Comparative Literature.

The panel discussion on “Connecting the Body, Mind, Soul Across Cultures” was moderated by Dheeman Bhattacharyya. Sudarshan Chakravorty, Michel Casanovas, Eveline Noth, Pagulu Jena, Monami Nandy were the panellists who engaged critically with the idea of curating this type of workshop in Santiniketan. The day-wise schedule was circulated to the participants by Monami Nandy and the workshop began at 12 noon.

The scheduled studio space visit at Krittika Art Space, Santiniketan was followed by an evening performance and conversation on developing a performance. Sudarshan Chakravorty, Dancer of Sapphire, Kolkata; Michel Casanovas, Eveline Noth, Monit Paul (Sarod) collaborated with students and collectively engaged with the studio space and the arts on display. Eminent film maker and art critic Goutam Ghosh visited the space to observe the process and appreciated the vision.

The second concluded with two historically significant events in the domain of dance studies in India: the session with Maa Parvathy Baul, practitioner and educator, Sanatan Siddhashram, Birbhum, in the open *chait* (circular elevated space designed organically with mud and cow dung and then adorned with *Alpona* by Robi Biswas, an internationally acclaimed artist and ex-student of Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati) followed by a studio visit at Arthshila, Santiniketan, where international artists Michel Casanovas, Eveline Noth, and dancers of Sapphire Creations Dance Company presented “Dream of an Elsewhere”. Monit Paul (Sarod) enthralled the audience as he presented “The Musical Substratum.”

The next day began with weekly *upasana* followed by the regular schedule of the workshop. On the fourth day, an internationally acclaimed dancer and scholar Diyal Lahiri visited the workspace and shared her experience on the aesthetics of dance in Santiniketan, recollecting her days as a student in Visva-Bharati. Gargi Bhattacharya’s session on the *Natyasastra* was enriching as she explained the inherent performativity of Sanskrit and thus extended the possibility of incorporating the nuances in the work in progress which was to be presented on the evening of 21 February 2026. In trying to comprehend “*yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante, yena jātāni jīvanti, yat prayanty abhisamviśanti, tad vijijñāśasva tad brahma*” from *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (3.1) and subsequently responding to the literature with the musical substratum of Sitar, Dholak, Chhau and Odissi movements, the participants engaged meaningfully in the process of establishing the connection between literature and the other arts. The next two days started with scheduled yoga sessions that were conducted across the workshop under the guidance of Kashinath Metri, Parichiti Saha, Rupesh Kumar, Abhimanyu Arya (DYAS) as part of the mental and physical wellbeing of the participants.

Professor Aishika Chakraborty, Director, School of Women’s Studies, Jadavpur University, and Performing Artist, delivered the Valedictory Address on “The Body Says What Words Cannot.” This was complimented by Dancers’ Guild presentation “Fire and Water” which was a response to Dante’s *The Divine Comedy*. Soma Mukherjee was the chair for this session. The work in progress that was choreographed by Monami Nandy was in tune with contemporary dance



practices aligned with traditional art forms that were introduced to the participants. As the workshop also focussed on how to develop a performance as skill development, the technical sessions on light design by Saheb Sanyal and set and props development by the ex-students and current students of Kala Bhavana were significant interventions. In his concluding remarks, Dheeman Bhattacharyya thanked Visva-Bharati administration for endorsing such an ambitious project along with other partners and collaborators like Arthshila Santiniketan, Amoli, Krittika Art Space, Amit's Creation and everyone associated with CCL. The Workshop concluded with distribution of certificates and Ashram Sangit.

With inputs from: Tushita Banerjee, Sadia Afrin Mohana, Soumojit Ghosh, Ayush Tamang, Utkrishta Sharma

Carcā: Exercise in Comparativism

On the Aesthetic Vision of Medieval Hindi Poets

Ankur Saha



As part of “Carcā: Exercise in Comparativism,” a lecture titled “*Madhyakaleen Hindi Kaviyon ki Saundarya Dristi*” was organised by the Centre for Comparative Literature on 28 January 2026. The lecture was delivered by Dr. Sukesh Lohar, Assistant Professor, Department of Hindi, Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati.

The event began with Dr. Soma Mukherjee’s introductory note on aesthetics. Then Dr. Lohar explained ‘Bhakti Tradition’, ‘*rasa*’ and ‘*alamkara*’. He deliberated on the idea of aesthetics and its impact on literature and society. In his profound discussion he mentioned Bhakti

poets like Kabir, Tulsidas, Surdas, Vidyapati and Jayasi.

The focus of the lecture then shifted from Bhakti Tradition to Riti tradition, focusing on poets like Bihari and Keshavdas, whose poetry foregrounds the Srinagar Rasa, refined imagery and linguistic ornamentation. Dr. Lohar compared Bhakti and Riti approaches, noting that while Bhakti poetry emphasises on inner spiritual beauty, Riti poetry, on the other hand celebrates artistic elegance and sensory experience.

The lecture concluded with an interactive discussion where students reflected on the relevance of medieval Hindi aesthetics in contemporary literary studies. The lecture was academically enriching and intellectually stimulating. It offered a nuanced understanding of Medieval Hindi poets’ aesthetic vision and highlighted their relevance. Finally, Dr. Soma Mukherjee ended the session with a vote of thanks.

প্রাচীন ভারতীয় নাট্যকলায় ভরত, কৌটিল্য ও বাৎসায়ন

সাদিয়া আফরিন মোহনা

১৩ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৬ তারিখে তুলনামূলক সাহিত্য কেন্দ্র-এর উদ্যোগে “Drama and Enactment in the Tradition of Bharat, Kautilya and Vatsyayana” শীর্ষক মাসিক বক্তৃতামালার চর্চা আয়োজন করা হয়। বক্তা হিসাবে উপস্থিত ছিলেন বিশ্বভারতীর সংস্কৃত, পালি ও প্রাকৃত বিভাগের প্রাক্তন অধ্যাপক অরুণ রঞ্জন মিশ্র। অনুষ্ঠানের শুরুতে তুলনামূলক সাহিত্য কেন্দ্রের সহকারী অধ্যাপক সোমা মুখার্জী চর্চার বিষয় সম্পর্কে আলোকপাত করেন। অরুণ রঞ্জন মিশ্র তাঁর বক্তৃতায় ভারতীয় নন্দনতত্ত্ব, নাট্যরীতি, রসতত্ত্ব এবং প্রাচীন ভারতীয় চিন্তায় নাট্যকলার অবস্থান নিয়ে বিশদ আলোচনা করেন।

বক্তা তাঁর আলোচনা শুরু করেন বৈদিক যুগ থেকে ভারতীয় নন্দনতত্ত্বের বিকাশের দিকে আলোকপাত করে। তিনি বলেন, ভারতীয় নন্দনতত্ত্বের মূল ভিত্তি প্রাচীন ধর্মীয় ও সাংস্কৃতিক অনুশীলনের মধ্যেই নিহিত। পরবর্তীকালে এই ঐতিহ্য সুসংগঠিত রূপ পায় নাট্যশাস্ত্রেতে। নাট্যশাস্ত্র-এ নাটক কেবল বিনোদনের মাধ্যম নয়, বরং একে মানবজীবনের অভিজ্ঞতা ও আবেগের শিল্পরূপ হিসেবে ব্যাখ্যা করা হয়েছে। এতে নৃত্য, সঙ্গীত, অভিনয় এবং কবিতাকে একত্রে একটি সমন্বিত শিল্পরূপ হিসেবে দেখা হয়েছে। তিনি কৌটিল্যের রাষ্ট্রচিন্তার প্রসঙ্গ তুলে বলেন যে, কঠোর রাষ্ট্রব্যবস্থার প্রেক্ষাপটে কখনও কখনও নাটক ও বিনোদনকে অপ্রয়োজনীয় বা বিলাসী কার্যকলাপ হিসেবে দেখা হয়েছে। তবুও সমাজ ও সংস্কৃতির বিকাশে নাট্যকলার গুরুত্ব অস্বীকার করা যায় না। বক্তৃতায় নাট্য ও নৃত্যের সম্পর্ক, অভিনয়ের বিভিন্ন রূপ (আঙ্গিক, বাচিক, আহাৰ্য ও সাত্ত্বিক) এবং প্রাচীন ভারতীয় সমাজে নাট্যকলার গুরুত্ব তুলে ধরা হয়। পাশাপাশি বাৎসায়নের চৌষটি কলার প্রসঙ্গও আলোচনায় উঠে আসে। এবারের চর্চা ভারতীয় নন্দনতত্ত্ব, নাট্যতত্ত্ব এবং সংস্কৃত নাটকের ঐতিহ্য বোঝার ক্ষেত্রে একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি প্রদান করে। পরবর্তীতে উপস্থিত শ্রোতাদের সঙ্গে প্রশ্নোত্তরের মাধ্যমে এই দিনের চর্চার সমাপ্তি ঘোষণা হয়।



In Search of Alternative Aesthetics

Prachi Tanaya Dash

On 30 March 2026, the Centre for Comparative Literature conducted a Carcā-lecture on “Alternative Aesthetics for Alter-native.” The talk was presented by Dr. Ranvir Sumedh Bhagwan, Assistant Professor of Marathi, Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati. The session commenced with the speaker basing his talk on the ongoing discussions on Indian aesthetics and pointing out the lacuna



of the “mainstream” Indian aesthetics and *Natyashastra* in accommodating the stories of historically suppressed communities in India. He specified that in Marathi aesthetics, three additional rasas were included to the pre-existing nine rasas of the *Natyashastra* because they felt that it was incomplete in encompassing the bhavas experienced in real life. The speaker played the song *Achhut ki Shikayat* by Hari Dome to introduce the audience to Dalit poetry before continuing his talk.

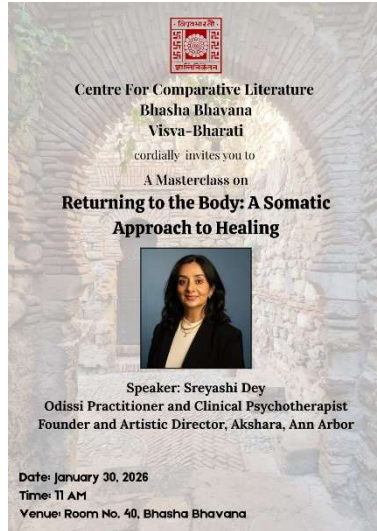
The speaker talked about the beginning and rise of Dalit literature during 1960s and 70s, as a revolution against the Brahminic values of the rules of aesthetics present in *Natyashastra* and the *Kalavadi* school of literature, instead composing Dalit literature as *Jivanvadi* literature. He emphasised on the fact that every Dalit writer in their writings was voicing out the stories of their community, on behalf of the individuals who did not have access to script and did not have the means to produce their own stories, thus establishing Dalit literature as a form of storytelling rooted in reality. Dalit literature’s role in redefining art and *saundarya* as being different from being ‘purified’ as in the mainstream idea of aesthetics was discussed with reference to various Dalit writers like Om Prakash Valmiki, Sharankumar Limbale and Sharad Patil.

Dr. Ranvir Sumedh Bhagwan noted the fact that Dalit literature goes beyond just bringing Dalit realities to a larger audience, but it also helps push against the Brahminic hegemony in politics and how it affects Dalit lives till date, as well as sharing Dalit culture with a larger audience through mediums like cook books. After the question-answer session, the talk ended with the speaker urging the audience to rethink and problematise the idea of the “mainstream” in media and culture nowadays.

INVITED LECTURES

Masterclass by Sreyashi Dey

Sampriti Gupta

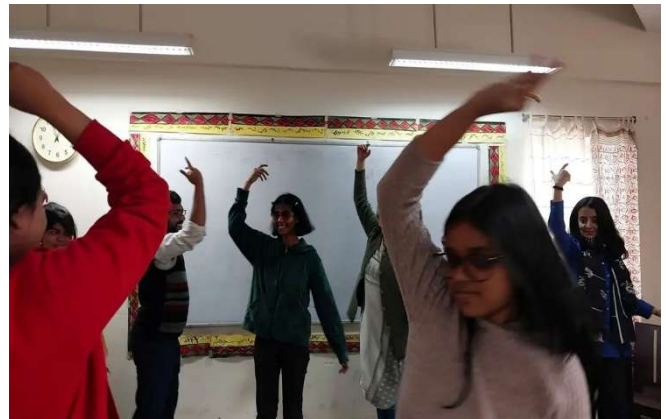


A Masterclass on “Returning to the Body: A Somatic Approach to Healing” was conducted by Sreyashi Dey, the Founder and Artistic Director of Akshara, an Ann Arbor based multi-arts organisation, on 30 January 2026, at the Centre for Comparative Literature. The session commenced with the felicitation of the guest in the traditional manner of Visva-Bharati. This was followed by an introductory address by Dr. Dheeman Bhattacharyya, who welcomed the speaker and briefly highlighted the relevance of somatic approaches in contemporary discussions on trauma and healing.

Sreyashi Dey began the session by foregrounding the concept of the “body” as a living archive of experiences. She elaborated on how trauma is often carried across generations and how, unlike in earlier times, it is now acknowledged and addressed more openly. She defined trauma through varied examples — single or acute incidents, repeated or chronic exposure and explained how its effects manifest emotionally, cognitively, and physically. The discussion further explored “Trauma Survival Defenses” and the concept of the “Window of Tolerance”, helping participants understand the body’s responses to stress.

The masterclass also introduced two primary therapeutic approaches: ‘Sensory-motor Psychotherapy’ which is typically individualised, and ‘Dance Movement Therapy,’ which is often practiced in group or community settings. She also emphasised on mindfulness, and guided attendees through a head-to-toe body scan exercise to cultivate ‘Present Moment Awareness.’

The most engaging segment involved interactive exercises where students actively participated in bodily movements, wordplay, poetry-making, and sharing personal reflections. The collective laughter, vulnerability and shared emotions created a deeply immersive and wholesome experience. The masterclass was enriching and meaningful, and the participants look forward to more such insightful events in the future.



The Film Art of Satyajit Ray

Prachi Tanaya Dash



On 9 January 2026, the Centre for Comparative Literature organised a masterclass on “Camera Stylo: The Film Art of Satyajit Ray”. It was conducted by Dr. Suman Ghosh, Reader in Film and Media and Subject Leader, Film and Television, Bath Spa University.

The session commenced with the speaker making the distinction between 'art film' and 'film art' and proceeded to explain how Satyajit Ray's films are examples of film art consisting of pictures, contrast and rhythm, and discussed Ray's time in Santiniketan and how it shaped the Indianness in his films. There were detailed discussions about Ray's Indian influences like Rabindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose and Benode Behari Mukherjee as well as the influence of American films, foreign filmmakers like Jean Renoir and John Huston, and photographers like Henri Cartier Bresson who shaped his sketches, photography and filmography. The speaker proceeded to explore the social role of a creative artist through Satyajit Ray's filmography and how Ray as a filmmaker was “looking for continuity within the destruction” during the era of partition and how he dealt with the subject of his films. The politics of Ray choosing the subjects for his films and documentaries were also discussed. On the same note, it was explored how Ray did not compromise the audio-visual aesthetics of his films while dealing with relevant contemporary topics. The composition of Ray's films was discussed through films like *Charulata* and *Apur Sansar*, the pioneering of the ‘bounce lightning’ by Ray and his collaborator Subrata Mitra was also talked about. The speaker then moved on to discuss the changes in Ray's style of filmography after 1970, where the film art started changing into films functioning as direct statements. During this time, Ray started making films that depicted the life and experiences of the city from a distance, often focusing on themes like escaping the city. This change in Ray's filmography came through because of his artistic responsibilities to the society. The speaker concluded by posing a question to the audience: “What does being an artist entail?”

The masterclass then moved into the question-and-answer session where the students and professors asked questions about the process of visual storyboarding and the different approaches to it. The session ended with the vote of thanks to the speaker.

On Manga and the Scanlation Community

Utkrishta Sharma

The Centre for Comparative Literature organised an online lecture titled “Some Observations on Manga: Genre and the Scanlation Community” on 15 January 2026. The speaker Chinmay Pandharipande is a PhD student, Programme of Comparative Literature, Department of Languages, Literature and Cultures, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Chinmay mentioned that he has been reading Manga for a very long time, and he appreciates its style of storytelling. He discussed how subculture and Manga are interrelated and how the existence of Manga extends beyond its culture.

Scanlation refers to amateur, fan-made scan, translation and editing of comics, which is a kind of reading. Chinmay focused on how translation can come along as a form of production and commercialism, which reshapes the aspect of storytelling. He talked about Manga being serialised and being translated by their respective fans and readers. The linguistic context of translation becomes problematic as many culture-specific words cannot be translated at all. The meaning is conveyed through the interdependence of word and image. Translation does not refer to replacing the original. Meaning is integrated through the translator’s note at the end of certain panels in Manga.

A translation will never be an absolute. He gave examples of the Japanese Manga *Haikyuu*, *One Piece*, *Astroboy* and *Attack on Titan*. Without translation, understanding and meaning-making might be different. Scanlation is utilised to avoid copyright issues and have non-profit motive. The translator’s note available in scanlation is a way in which fans and readers interact with the text. Chinmay also discussed about the genres ‘*Shōnen*’, ‘*Shōjo*’, ‘*Seinen*’ and ‘*Josei*’. Genre was discussed as a threshold that needs to be crossed for further exploration.

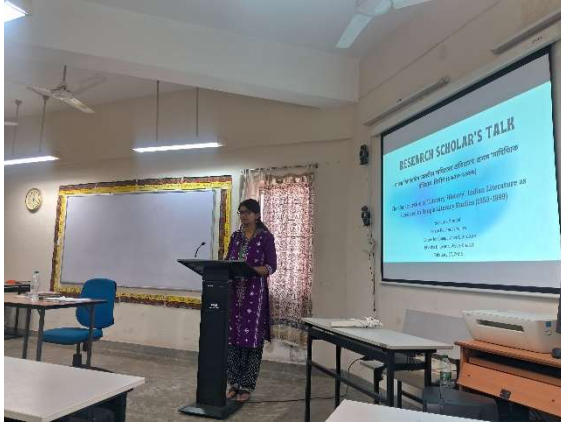
Chinmay ended his discussion and lecture by questioning if scanlation can be an act of reading and if it can be considered as an example of post-production of a Manga. According to him, Manga cannot just be understood as a hybrid form. It is more of a transcultural form. Scanlation shapes the experience of the readers quite differently from translation. It is more of a decentralised product coming from the readers and those who appreciate the Manga.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

Research Scholar's Talk

Shinjini Sinha



The Centre for Comparative Literature organised a talk by Suparna Mondal, a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre, on 27 February 2026. Her lecture, “The Construction of ‘Literary History’: Indian Literature as Received in Bangla Literary Studies (1950–1999)” was related to her PhD research.

Suparna Mondal began by introducing the central concern of her research, the idea of literary history and how it is constructed within Bangla literary studies. She explained that her work examines how Indian literature has been received,

interpreted, and organised into literary-historical narratives in Bangla between 1950 and 1999. In doing so, she highlighted that many Indian texts circulated through translations, often ranging from Sanskrit to English and other languages, before being reinterpreted within regional literary frameworks. This process, she suggested, plays a crucial role in shaping literary history itself.

She briefly touched upon the emergence of the idea of “National Literature” in India and how Bangla literature gradually positioned itself within this broader framework. At the same time, she emphasised that literary history is not a fixed or neutral record, but something that is actively constructed through choices of language, inclusion, exclusion, and perspective.

While explaining her timeline, she identified 1950 as a significant moment in shaping language and literary discourse in post-independence India, and 1999 as a point by which substantial work on literary histories in Bangla had already been produced. However, rather than focusing on dates alone, she stressed that her primary concern lies in understanding how literary history takes shape across this period.

A key argument that stood out was her insistence that literature does not exist in isolation, and therefore literary history cannot be studied in isolation either. Her approach draws on Comparative Literature methodology to examine how different languages and literary traditions interact with one another. In this sense, literary history becomes a way of reading not just texts, but also the cultural and intellectual contexts in which they are produced and received.

She also discussed the overall structure of her research, noting that it moves from the development of the concept of Indian literature to its articulation in



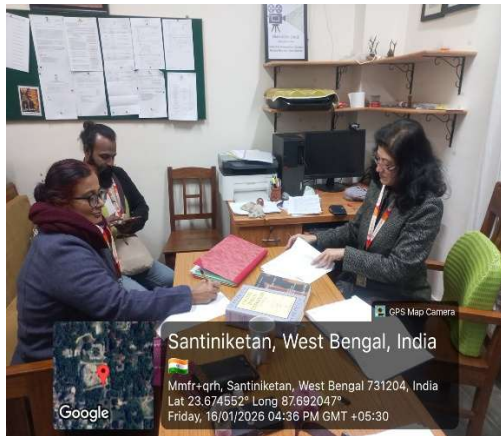
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Bangla, and finally to its presence beyond formally designated “histories.” This last aspect is particularly significant, as it expands the scope of literary history beyond conventional texts and shows how literary-historical thinking exists across various forms such as essays, translations, and critical writings. She mentioned that this part of her work is still in progress.

In her concluding remarks, the speaker reflected on both the possibilities and limitations of her research, especially given the vast multilingual nature of Indian literature. The session ended with an interactive discussion, where participants raised questions and offered differing perspectives, making the exchange thoughtful and engaging.

Syllabus Workshop: Phase II

Suparna Mondal



Following the first phase of the Syllabus Workshop held on November 19–20, 2025 to revise the minor and multidisciplinary syllabi, the second phase was conducted on January 15–16, 2026, at the Centre for Comparative Literature. The workshop was attended by all the faculty members of the Centre – Nilanjana Bhattacharya, Soma Mukherjee and Dheeman Bhattacharyya. This phase primarily focused on restructuring the MA syllabus in accordance with the framework proposed in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. As part of this process, course structures were developed for a one-year postgraduate programme,

a one-year postgraduate diploma, and a two-year postgraduate programme.

MOOC Workshop

Suparna Mondal

The Centre for Comparative Literature organised a MOOC Workshop on 6 March 2026 for the faculty members and research scholars of CCL. The workshop was conducted by Dr. Sarita Anand, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Vinaya Bhavana, Visva-Bharati.

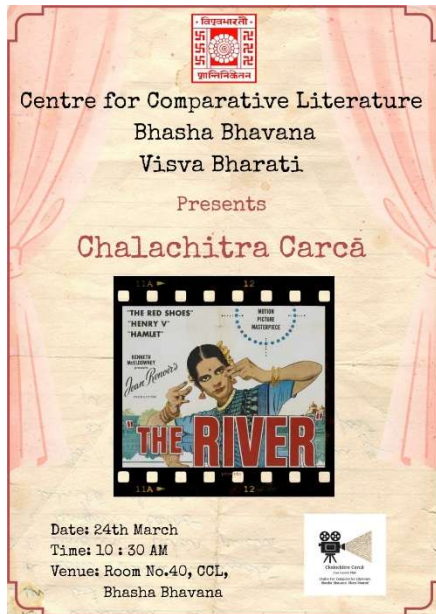
The workshop began with Dr. Anand introducing the MOOC platforms, with special focus on SWAYAM. As she has been running several courses on this platform, she shared her firsthand experiences as a course-coordinator. She mentioned different institutions like NPTEL and INI through which one can offer these courses. She discussed in detail the process of creating the course content, video lectures, grading assignments, and so on. She also mentioned



the professional benefits of creating these courses. The session ended with an interaction with the facilitator.

Screening of *The River* (1951) by Jean Renoir

Garima Sen



On 24 March 2026, the Centre for Comparative Literature organised a screening of Jean Renoir's *The River* (1951) as part of the Centre's Cine-lovers' Club *Chalachitra Carcā*. Dr. Dheeman Bhattacharyya, the coordinator of the club, opened the discussion by placing the screening in the context of the Centre's academic work. He noted that the decision to watch Renoir was a direct response to discussions from Debashish Sen Sharma's masterclass. He spoke about the close connection between Renoir and Satyajit Ray, pointing out that Ray, who was working on a film at the time, was deeply involved in the making of *The River* and had himself acknowledged Renoir's strong influence on his understanding of cinema. He also mentioned that it was through this film that Ray first met Subrata Mitra, who went on to become the cinematographer for many of his well-known works. He then spoke about the literary source of the film, which is based on a novel of the same name by British author Rumer Godden.

He noted that despite Godden's long and varied connection with India – both as someone who lived there and as an outsider looking at – she is rarely discussed in literary circles, unlike writers such as E.M. Forster or Kipling. He suggested that this neglect may be linked to her focus on women characters and her exploration of desire, identity, and the mixing of cultures in a colonial setting. He also pointed out how the film connects with the Centre's ongoing academic interest in translation, adaptation, and how texts are received across different forms of media.

The River is set in British India and follows Harriet, a teenage English girl living with her family on the banks of the Ganges. The story centres on the arrival of Captain John, an American war veteran with a prosthetic leg, whose presence stirs the emotions of Harriet, her friend Valerie, and Melanie, the mixed-race daughter. The film traces the personal struggles, desires, and quiet transformations of these young women against the backdrop of colonial India, while also touching on loss and the rhythms of life and death along the river.

The session also included the presence of Sharanya, an actor and theatre practitioner in contemporary Bangla theatre and the founder of the theatre group Tenth Planet. Dheeman Bhattacharyya welcomed him as an example of the kind of exchange between the world of art and academia that the Centre hopes to build. The screening and discussion reaffirmed the Club's commitment to fostering critical engagement with cinema as an art form deeply intertwined with literature, translation, and the broader world of Other Arts.



Student-Teacher Meeting

Arpita Panda

As part of its regular interactive activities, the Centre for Comparative Literature, conducted a student-teacher meeting on 23 February 2026. Such meetings are organised frequently at the Centre, where students share their academic and other concerns and provide suggestions on the upcoming activities of the Centre. All the students of MA I and II were present, along with the professors.

Apart from the Centre's student-teacher meeting, several other meetings with the students were also conducted recently. These included a meeting between students and scholars at the Bhavana level. Additionally, five students from the centre were selected to meet the Honourable Vice-Chancellor in an interactive session held on 13 February 2026 at Natyaghar. Such meetings are organised to provide students with a platform to share their honest feedback and experiences regarding the campus life at Visva-Bharati.

Observation of Gandhi Punyaha

Ayush Tamang

Like all other departments of Visva-Bharati, the Centre for Comparative Literature observed the auspicious event of 'Gandhi Punyaha' on 10 March 2026. Gandhi Punyaha refers to the commemoration of the day Mahatma Gandhi first visited Santiniketan in 1915. It is heavily focused on the principles of cleanliness, self-reliance and dignity of labour, where the students and the faculty members take over the task of cleaning. The campus, departments and the residential areas are cleaned by staff and students.



The students and faculty members gathered at the Centre at 10 AM, after which they worked towards cleaning the allotted classrooms and staff rooms. The rooms were dusted, the windows were cleaned, the floor was mopped and the whiteboards were wiped clean. The green space outside the Centre was also cleaned. The pots were rearranged and watered. Since the event promotes proper waste disposal, the Centre's waste was handled and disposed of accordingly. Some reusable items like leftover chart paper and empty boxes, were neatly arranged in one space for future use.

Swachhata Abhiyan at CCL

Jeet Pal

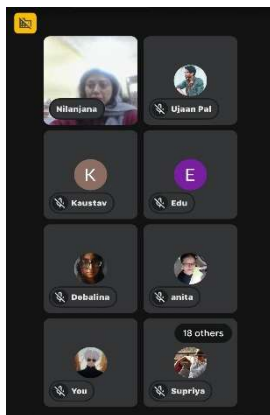
The Centre for Comparative Literature organised “Swachhata Abhiyan” on 18 February 2026, as part of Visva-Bharati and Bhasha Bhavana's endeavour to honour the ‘National Vision of Cleanliness Drive’. It aimed not only to neat up the departmental premises but also to establish a sense of collective responsibility among students, faculty and staff members. The drive began at 4:30 PM, fuelled by the self-driven initiative of the department's faculty and students.



Equipped with brooms, rags, and mops, students and scholars of CCL, along with faculty members, actively participated in the cleanliness drive. They cleaned the classrooms, office, and staff room. The entire team worked in tandem to complete the task with great success and the drive conclude with ensuring that the spirit of the *Abhiyan* extends beyond a single day.

Meeting with the Alumni

Suparna Mondal



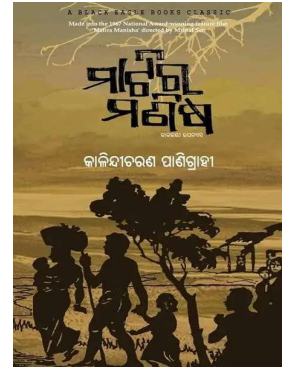
On January 10, 2026, the Centre for Comparative Literature organised an online meeting with its alumni to strengthen its network with former students. The meeting was attended by all the faculty members, along with an impressive number of former students and research scholars.

The Teacher-in-Charge, Dr. Nilanjana Bhattacharya, opened the meeting by welcoming the participants and proposing the organisation of an alumni meet. She further suggested that the Centre and the alumni association could collaboratively organise various academic events. To facilitate such collaborations, formation of an association was proposed. An offline alumni meet is likely to be held in December 2026. CCL appeals to all interested alumni to be in touch with the Centre.

Book Review

ମାଟିର ମଣିଷ [Matira Manisa]**Kalindi Charan Panigrahi****1931****Black Eagle Books****Price: 150/-**

Prachi Tanaya Dash



Rooted in the ideologies of the short lived Sabuja Yuga (Green Age, 1921-1936) of Odia literature, Kalindi Charan Panigrahi's (1901-1991) *Matira Manisa* (1931) provides an emotional narrative of life and family of two brothers Baraju and Chakadi. The book provides an unconvoluted narrative about the life of the brothers and the choices they make in the post-World War I and pre-independence rural setting, filled with greedy zamindars and exploited farmers; the choices provided between Gandhian ideologies of unity, sacrifice and rural self-reliance; and the growing capitalist greed of material acquisition. Through multiple rural registers of *chalit* Odia and rooted in Odisha's agricultural ethos the book provides parallels to Premchand's *Godaan* in exposing the tyrannical hold on land. *Matira Manisa* goes beyond a simple rural tale through its masterful fusion of ideological tensions and vivid social realism. Set amidst the first World War, colonial exploitation, and famine shadows, the narrative critiques the "worm in the bud"- greed, eroding joint family structures and village self-sufficiency. Gandhian ethics clash with nascent individualism, as Chakadi's pursuit of personal gain mirrors broader post-war shifts toward consumerism, echoing Gandhi's warning that unchecked desires could lead to dismantling of the rural family and broader social structure. The author avoids didacticism through straightforward prose, and opens up the possibility of characters making situational choices, as he immerses readers in Odia village idioms, rituals, and the tactile pull of the soil: the words "matira manisa" themselves being a metaphor for being rootedness of human beings in soil.

The plot follows the story of the Pradhan family; Shama Pradhan, his old wife, two sons and daughters-in-law. Selfless and wise, Shama Pradhan on his deathbed, entrusts his elder son Baraju with caring for the family and keeping their ancestral land and home undivided: a symbol of joint-family harmony. Baraju, a peace-loving Gandhian idealist respected by villagers and farmers, lives simply with his wife Harabou, supporting Chakadi, his ambitious wife Netramani, and their children. Influenced by Netramani's desires and the scheming village headman and moneylender Hari Mishra, Chakadi demands property division, despite his initial hesitations to mistrust his brother and break the family. Shocked yet bound by his father's wish, Baraju, being a man detached from material wealth and a firm believer in *dharma* (duty) devises a selfless solution; he relinquishes all wealth, handing land and house to Chakadi without partitioning, then departs with his wife and their children. Chakadi's initial triumph sours into regret and nostalgia as isolation sets in. The story ends with Chakadi going in search of Baraju and declaring that he will follow wherever his brother goes. The end leads to poignant ambiguity, underscoring rustic life's fragility and human bonds strained by material ambition.

The novel presents Sabuja Yuga's prosaic evolution, depicting post-first World War era agrarian decay and erosion of the joint-family system. This marks a departure from Satyabadi Yuga, positioning *Matira Manisa* as a bridge to Pragati Yuga's ideological fictions. The book's film adaptation by Mrinal Sen in 1966 further cements its legacy. The novel has been translated into English multiple times, two of the most notables being *Salt of the Earth*, translated by Leelawati Mohapatra, Paul St-Pierre, and K.K. Mohapatra; and *Born of the Soil*, translated by Bikram Das.

There's a Carnival Today

Indra Bahadur Rai

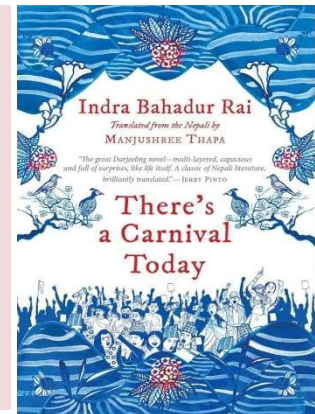
Translated by Manjushree Thapa

2017

Speaking Tiger Books

Price: 267/-

Utkrishta Sharma



There's a Carnival Today is a translation of Indra Bahadur Rai's (1927-2018) novel, *Aaj Ramita Chha* (1964), from Nepali to English by Manjushree Thapa, a Canada-based writer and translator, and was published in 2017. Indra Bahadur Rai's novel *Aaj Ramita Chha* deals with the struggles of the tea plantation workers during the 1950s. An elaborate view of post-independence Darjeeling and the varied communities that resided in the protagonist's locality is provided. The crisis of the characters highlights the tea estate labour movement and the political changes in Darjeeling.

The story is about Janak, a prominent, but now failing, businessman, who has been sued by Jayabali, a Marwari trader, to whom he owes a loan. He is acquainted with Bhudev, a revolutionary who later influences Ravi, Janak's son, to join the revolution. The protesting tea estate workers are fuming and attempting to overthrow the party ruling over them, as their payment for their labour was being delayed and stretched out. Janak is stuck with a dilemma when he finds himself drawn to Yamuna, a free-spirited woman and a friend of his wife, despite being tied to a blissful marriage with Sita. Janak also realizes that Bhudev is using Ravi to undermine him and get him involved in the revolution. The tea estate workers march into the town to raise their voice against the brothers they had lost to the earlier protest and to also demand for their forgotten rights. The police launch a massacre by firing at the protestors, which ultimately leads to the end of the mass rally. Janak finds a way to the pedestal for delivering words of comfort and encouraging the masses to retaliate against the unannounced massacre. The novel ends there, basically leaving the readers on a cliffhanger as to what will be the aftermath of Janak's action. Will he, too, be shot to death? Will he be arrested?

The novel is a significant work in Nepali literature. It extensively deals with the political unrest in Darjeeling. Though it does not directly hint at the demand for Gorkhaland, some speculations suggest that the author might have been attempting to highlight this notable instance as well. The word *ramita* in common terms means something worth seeing or observing. The protest rally has

been portrayed as something remarkable and something important in the society of Darjeeling as a whole. The cover of the book shows a lot of graphics, including natural vegetation, flora, and people marching in protest. With the title of the book written in red at the centre, it has a protest showcasing below it with people in their traditional Nepali attire. The hill-like doodles along the top and the bottom highlight how this struggle was necessary for the people belonging to the hills. The novel is inclusive of all castes, classes and genders as people from all walks of life gather to observe the happenings and how sacrifices and bloodshed have been considered to be a crucial part of a revolution. Indra Bahadur Rai's use of his unique way of writing, *leela lekhan*, in this novel and stitching the narrative together is reflected in the translated text as well, keeping intact the essence of the *lekhan*. All these people who consider themselves to be a part of the soil and essence of Darjeeling, despite the many differences among the communities they belong to, seem to be a part of this *ramita* and carnival as described in the novel.

Alumni Corner

Comparative Literature and Beyond

Dr. Anita Gua Hembrom
(MPhil 2015, PhD 2024)



Enrolling myself in the Centre for Comparative Literature was not a conscious decision. It was an outcome of my inner anxiety to return home without any scope of a promising future. So, CCL became an escape from the uncertainty of what future was going to unfold for me.

The concept of Comparative Literature was completely unknown to me and it was only after I enrolled in M.Phil., that I came to know about the subject. The hard part began after the enrolment as I, being a slow learner, found it difficult to understand and grab what was being taught in the class. And because of that I often skipped classes. As I gradually began to grasp CL, I learned to transcend singularity. The years spent at CCL, from 2013 to 2020, was a period of transformation, transition and growth. I learned to be patient, consistent in my work no matter what. I earned not only my degree from CCL, but also my personality, view-point and perspective of understanding the surrounding. During my years in CCL, what I learned as a student is that Comparative Literature is not a literature in itself but an 'alternative' to literature. The constant support and scrutiny from my teachers taught me that Comparative Literature is not just a discipline to be studied at classroom rather, to be lived and practiced in real life.

The learnings of CL have helped me in coping up with my current position as Assistant Professor in a small town of Madhupur, Jharkhand. Working in a place where problems and challenges appear to be abundant, I apply my perception of CL to these unresolving and unending challenges. With an education system that is failing and students who are ignorant, I always look for an 'alternative' that would prevent the educational structure from falling down. Though, a small-town classroom, it is a perfect example of multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-lingual

scenario. Hence, I treat my students not just as students, but as subjects of study and myself as a learner.

Johar.

The Long Road to Making Sense: Reflections from Santiniketan

Supriya Banerjee
(PhD 2020)



I look back and find a confused, conflicted human being, of a particular kind, clutching three incompatible theoretical notebooks sourced from the library, wondering why she ever thought Comparative Literature was a sensible life choice or a choice at all. I always had a peculiar penchant for the fantastical but never knew my thesis would enact the shapeshifter. One day it was a class on translation studies where I met a formidable scholar, Suparna Mondal, from the undergraduate program, who never dog eared a page and used her semi-colons wisely. On other days, my thesis had relocated to a formidable feminist discourse from down under- though down from where remains productively unclear to me. I often wondered whether it lay under the bottom shelves of the labyrinth of Rabindra Bhavana where all the dangerous books lived. There, again, I met a couple of astute scholars like Anita Gua Hembram, Rakesh Kaibartya, Rupnarayan Mukherjee who had read those books, and had opinions about the writers. They did not need to check on them on Google during seminars and conferences, like me.

I felt my thesis had commitment issues, and so did I. Therefore, we were perfectly matched. I was held together with twisted intestines and a dysfunctional gut, I never could see the chequered line. My guide Nilanjana Bhattacharya with a fully serious face deployed all the time tried to pry out whether I have read Derrida or merely felt his presence-or absence. Alongside her, Soma Mukhopadhyay and Dheeman Bhattacharyya formed what I can only describe as a formidable academic tribunal — learned, rigorous, and constitutionally incapable of letting a loose argument pass without comment. So, one fine day, I simply put down my pen and refused to continue. The thesis and me regarded each other with exhaustion, but finally stubbornness got better of me. Finally, it was done. My thesis reminded me of a souffle, jiggling and jangling upon my nerves but just pretty enough to be served to the esteemed external observers.

After this adventure, one would assume my tenure in the academia would be short and cute. One would be proved wrong. Now I am an Associate Professor. I find myself on an entirely new ride — pursuing my D.Sc. under Translation Studies, this time along the Silk Road, in Uzbekistan, which is either a sign of tremendous intellectual ambition or conclusive proof that I have never once in my life taken the sensible exit. I enjoy it. I do what I can. The thesis, once again, has commitment issues. So, do I. We remain, as ever, perfectly matched.

Faculty Members' Publications

- Bhattacharyya, Dheeman. "The Santiniketan Ashrama Samaja: Integrating Pedagogy as Social Responsibility in the Architecture of Praxis at Visva-Bharati." *Sahitya*, vol. 13, December 2025, pp. 84-115. https://www.clai.in/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/3_D.-Bhattacharyya.pdf.
- Bhattacharya, Nilanjana. "Literary Action as Cure: Colonial Modernity and Disability Aesthetics." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 6 March 2026. <https://doi.org/10.3828/jlcls.2025.35>.
- ভট্টাচার্য, নীলাঞ্জনা। "মানবেন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের তর্জমায় লাতিন আমেরিকার উপন্যাস।" স্বরাস্তর, বর্ষ ১২, সংখ্যা ১১, ২০২৫, পৃ. ৫২-৫৯।
- মজুমদার, কমলিনী, তিন্নি মুখার্জি ও ধীমান ভট্টাচার্য, অনুবাদক। বান্দ্রাবাসীর খেরোর খাতা। জয় বিমল রায় লিখিত, লা জ্রাদা, ২০২৬।

Students' Publications

- মণ্ডল, সুপর্ণা। "তুলনামূলক সাহিত্যে ভাষান্তরের ভূমিকা।" *ভূদেব চৌধুরী স্মারকগ্রন্থ*, সম্পাদনা অতনু শাশমল, বঙ্গীয় সাহিত্য সংসদ, জানুয়ারি ২০২৬, পৃ. ১৩৪-১৪০।
- মণ্ডল, সুপর্ণা। "সন্জীদা খাতুনের স্মৃতিকথায় শান্তিনিকেতন প্রসঙ্গ।" *আত্মদীপ*, পর্ব ২, সংখ্যা ৪, মার্চ ২০২৬, পৃ. ১৯১৪-১৯২০।
- মণ্ডল, সুপর্ণা। "বাংলায় রচিত ভারতীয় সাহিত্যের ইতিহাসে ভারতীয় জ্ঞান পরম্পরার প্রতিফলন।" *অতঃপর...*, বর্ষ ১২, সংখ্যা ১, মার্চ ২০২৬, পৃ. ৩০৪-৩১১।
- মণ্ডল, সুপর্ণা। "একদিন।" *যাপনচিত্র নদী সংখ্যা*, বইমেলা সংখ্যা ২০২৬, পৃ. ২২।

Students' Achievements

- Ankur Saha, a second-semester postgraduate student, won first prize in the inter-college debate competition held at Rishi Bankim Chandra College, Naihati, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, on 2 January 2026.
- Suparna Mondal was invited to KIFALC-Yapanchitra Festival 2026 on 1 March 2026 to present her poems.

- Suparna Mondal was invited to Birutjatiyo Sahitya Utsab to present her poems and participate in a panel discussion on women's writings on 7 and 8 March 2026 respectively.

Ongoing Research Works

- Mrityika Ghosh: Contextualising the 'Canon' and 'Periphery': Historicising the Works of Select Nigerian Women Writers (1960 - 2020)
- Ankana Bag: Exploring Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism: The 'Travel Writings' (1942-52) of Ramnath Biswas
- Arjyarishi Paul: Assessing the Idea of the Juvenile in India with Respect to Selected Bangla Illustrated Texts (1947-91)
- Suparna Mondal: বাংলা বিদ্যাচর্চায় ভারতীয় সাহিত্যের প্রতিগ্রহণ: প্রসঙ্গ 'সাহিত্যিক ইতিহাস' নির্মাণ (১৯৫০-১৯৯৯) [The Construction of 'Literary History': Indian Literature as Received in Bangla Literary Studies (1950-1999)]

Tumulayan: Call for Submissions

The upcoming issue of *Tumulayan*, the annual literary magazine of the students of the Centre for Comparative Literature, Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, will have "Childhood" as its focus. We encourage you to tap into the child in you and create creative pieces and observations about childhood for the upcoming edition of *Tumulayan*.

Childhood is an inherent part of everyone's life, humans and animals alike. Some childhoods are veiled in sweet nostalgia; some are shrouded in unspoken pain. The whims of a child's mind bring forth imaginary friends, strange narratives, and innocent truths that vaporise with the flow of time as one grows into adulthood. What remains are the experiences, memories and fragments of magic which one can revisit and gaze upon through another lens. One can create stories or retell lived experiences of good and bad relating to childhood. Remembering our childhood is about realising how far we have come in life. Though one must grow, little unfulfilled wishes, fragmented memories of mischief and magic, and the recollections of granny's fairytales do not let the child inside a person die. Childhoods today are shifting from those of yesteryears, with the introduction of screens into the everyday lives of kids as young as toddlers. Do screens filter out the childhood magic of the past, or does the magic still find a way to creep into childhoods? It is something to ponder. One is shaped by the experiences one has in their childhood.

The sub-themes can explore the following areas (but are not limited to):

- Childhood and Nostalgia
- Lost Childhoods
- Inner Child
- Childhood and Imagination
- Children's Literature
- Childhood and Play
- Childhood and Creativity
- Childhood on Screen

We invite original, creative, and unpublished thoughts in the form of poems, short stories, personal and creative essays, memoirs, plays, translations, artworks, and photographs on the idea of childhood. You may write in any of the following languages: Assamese, Bangla, English, French, Hindi, Japanese, Nepali, Odia, Russian, Sanskrit, Santali, and Spanish. The word limit should not exceed 600 words. Please submit a short bio within 50 words along with the submission. Publication of the works is subject to the review committee's selection. If selected, authors will be contacted.

Please send your contributions along with a short bio-note and your contact number in a single word document to tumulayancl@gmail.com. The last date of submission is **31 July 2026**.

(Please note that we have a strict policy against AI-generated content. If a submission is found to contain more than 10% AI-generated text, it will be summarily rejected.)



For Prospective Students

CCL offers MA and PhD programmes in Comparative Literature as well as Minor and Multidisciplinary courses at the undergraduate level. Details about admissions and all syllabi can be found in the Visva-Bharati website. Students are also welcome to contact the CCL Office, located at Room No.1, Ground Floor, Bhasha Bhavana Building. Any academic query may be directed to cclvbu@visva-bharati.ac.in



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