

# ASSAM

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# The Clarion

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## Crossing the cultural frontiers in the narrative of *Kanthapura*.

Tasrina Iqbal and Pori Hiloldari

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### Abstract

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* was written in the colonial period. But Rao's handling of the theme of India's struggle for independence and his technique undoubtedly posit the text in the postcolonial context. This paper aims at unraveling some aspects of postcoloniality in the narrative of *Kanthapura*. If postcoloniality is viewed as a critique of the colonialist perspective which constructs the relationship of the East and the West in the subjective terms of the West, the discourse of the *Kanthapura* can be read as a very strong dismissal of the East-West binarism.

Keywords: postcolonial, anti-colonial, escapism, narrative, language, political.

### 1. Introduction

'Postcolonial', is a highly contested term, but the application of the postcolonial perspective in literary discourse by the writers and the theorists presence of some qualities and conditions. This condition of post-coloniality are subject to individual writers own way of modification and appropriation. Nevertheless, postcolonial studies have resulted in the intense scrutiny of the relation between imperialism and textual production both in the colonial and in the decolonized period. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* was written in the colonial period. But Rao's handling of the theme of India's struggle for independence and his technique undoubtedly posit the text in the postcolonial context. This paper aims at unraveling some aspects of postcoloniality in the narrative of . If postcoloniality is viewed as a critique of the colonialist perspective which constructs the relationship of the East and the West in the subjective terms of the West, the discourse of the can be read as a very strong dismissal of the East-West binarism. The subversion of the colonial construction of hierarchies as the superior, self sufficient West vs the inferior, dependent East find a variety of manifestations in the story and discourse of this novel.

### 2. The European perspective

The European historian's subjective view that it was the Western Project of Enlightenment which taught the colonized the lessons on freedom and nationalism is proved as mere falsification of fact since it is the political reading of the India's mythological past which is invoked to teach the people of the lessons of freedom and nationalism. The people of this remote village, Brahmins, Pariahs and all got political knowledge on one subject of freedom, anti-colonialism and nationalism not from the educational institutions set up by the west, but from their own indigenous tradition. For these native people, their struggle against the foreign rule is a reenactment of the Ravana-Sita-Rama myth in the present context. It is also the contextualization of the pre-historic tale of 'Kalia daman' for the sake of getting liberation from evil forces, embodied in the colonial regime. Thus, the glance back at the past has become more than a nostalgic, romantic escapism to the past to forget the suffering of the present. The revising of the past is motivated by the present need and commitments. Therefore, the chanting of "Harikantha" has become more than a mere religious performance; it has taken

## Dislocating Patriarchal Discourse : Gendering Her Speech

Harshita Ghosh

A critical enquiry into the aspect of 'her language' in modern Assamese short stories brings out the complex issues of female subjectivity, her gendered existence, the troubled aspects of women's liberation and the attempts of women to break these constructed obstructions along with their journeys of victory and defeat. This paper is an attempt to trace these changing trends in the language of modern Assamese short stories written by women writers, Nirupama Borgohain, Mamoni Róisam Gowaeh, Arupa Patangia, Anuradha Sarma Pujari, Moushumi Kondali, Anamika Bora and Monika Devee.

It was around 1970s that a need to examine women's language separately was felt as it was realized by feminist literary critics that women's representation in literature was made to serve only male ideology. Responding to Frutkin's reading of female sexuality as a lack and Lacan's positioning of the phallus as the ultimate signifier of desire which structure, determine and limit the expression of sexual life, the French feminists attempted to circumvent this symbolic order of language and culture governed by the law of the father. By seeking to devise a mode of expressivity outside the dominant, paternal discourse, they worked to structure a language closer to the female body and identified with the mother rather than the father. Their *écriture féminine* thus endeavours to be a mode of writing

which is distinctively female and which attempts to raise mother and daughter to the status of subjects in possession of their own discourse (Ordonez 45-46). The most significant aspect of *écriture féminine* is that it is political. The aspect that this theory seeks to highlight is that the world is structured and defined through the medium of language. So only by undoing the established order of language, the patriarchal social structure can be disrupted. The destruction of the 'masculine language' would in no way disadvantage the women; rather it will provide her with the opportunity to explore their unsettling, revolutionary position at the margin (Waugh, 335-336).

While arguing about the prospect of constructing a female language with a view to challenging and dismissing the language of the father, Patricia Waugh describes '*écriture féminine*' as a style of writing characterized by disruptions in the text. In her opinion:

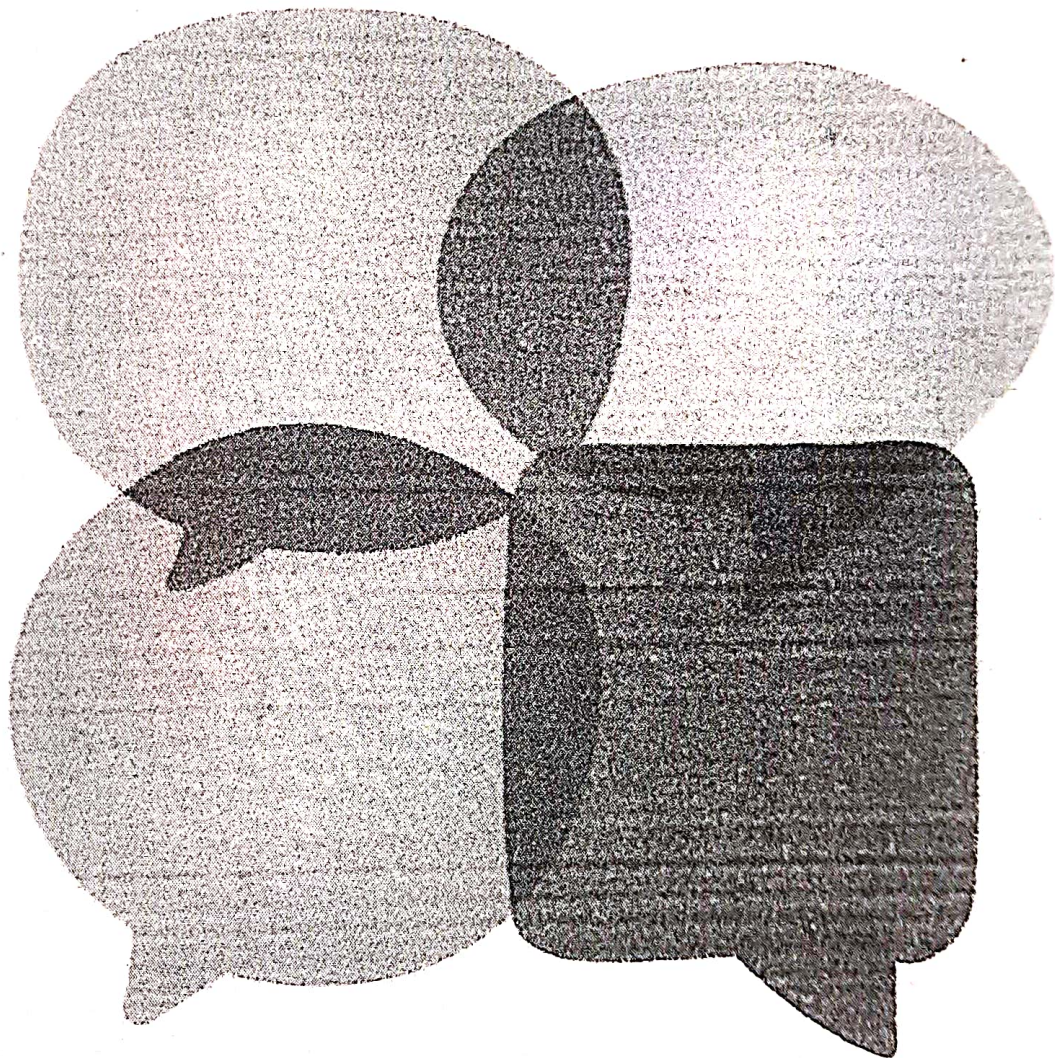
....gaps, silences, puns, rhythms and new images all signal *écriture féminine*. It is eccentric, incomprehensible, and inconsistent, and if such writing is difficult or frustrating to read, it is because the feminine voice has been repressed for so long, and can only speak in a borrowed language, that is unfamiliar when it is heard. Masculine language represents the symbolic: it is linear, logical authoritative and realistic, and *écriture féminine* behaving like the semiotic disrupts the symbolic and threatens to unleash chaos where there is order. (Waugh, 335-336).

In order to gain agency through discourses, women must construct a language of her own. The concept of the '*écriture féminine*', however, is subjected to criticism for being too polemic. It is pointed out that the belief that there is a separate female language creates false binaries in the

CONCEPTS IN LANGUAGE AND

LINGUISTICS

SIMPLIFIED



DR. TASRINA IQBAL  
PRASANTA MAHANTA



## The Changing Face of Hindi Horror Cinema: From the Ramsays to the Bhattas

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**Abstract:** One question that has had scholars divided over the years is how does one define horror. According to Brigid Cherry, the primary aims of the horror film are to frighten, shock, horrify, and disgust using a variety of visual and auditory leitmotifs and devices including reference to the supernatural, the abnormal, to mutilation, blood, gore, the infliction of pain, death, deformity, putrefaction, darkness, invasion, mutation, extreme instability, and the unknown (2009)<sup>1</sup>. It is the emphasis on these characteristics that tend to distinguish horror from the related genre of thriller or psychological thriller (Hanich, 2011)<sup>2</sup>. Over the years, the genre of horror has been experimented with in a myriad of ways, be it in the form of sub-genres like psychological horror, fantasy horror, etc. or in the nature of recent developments like zombies, aliens, etc. However, one thing that is very peculiar in the context of Hindi horror films is that the evolution of these films has been more on grounds of semblance than on content. This paper attempts to analyse those very changes that are palpable on the screen and the subsequent changes in public reception of the films belonging to the genre.

**Keywords:** Horror, Violence, Prosthetics, VFX, Cinematography

**Introduction:** In the 1970s and 80s, when Hindi cinema was at the peak of its opulence with major commercial blockbusters like *Sholay*

# **margins**

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## **Book Review**

**A HANDBOOK FOR CLASS VIII  
ENGLISH TEACHERS:  
A NEW APPROACH**



**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING INSTITUTE,  
ASSAM**

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## Aspects of case in linguistic varieties of Assamese : Ghulia vs Charuwa

Tasrina Iqbal

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### Abstract

In linguistics, a case role describes the function of a noun in a sentence with relation to the sentence's main verb. Some languages have formal case systems, in which the form of the noun determines its case, where as in some other languages case systems are determined by the distribution of the noun in a sentence. At its most basic, the case of a noun or pronoun is an inflectional form that indicates its grammatical function such as the subject noun, direct object, indirect object etc. The syntax of a sentence provides the necessary information to determine the grammatical function of the noun.

**Keywords :** Ghulias, charuwas, nominative, accusative, genitive, locative, instrumental, dative.

### Introduction

Of all the socio-linguistic and stylistic factors which promote variety in language use, the one which people most commonly enquire about is geographical origin. The fact that speech in particular can convey such a clear answer to the question, where are you from? exercises a particular fascination. (Crystal : 1985)

The linguistic groups chosen for study are the Ghulias and the Charuwas of the Dhubri district in Assam. The district of Dhubri shares its borders with Bangladesh, a country, with which, India shares a most controversial relationship due to the issue of illegal migration from that country into India, especially to Assam. The groups mentioned have been facing a typical problem of identity, common to inhabitants of many countries living in areas close to international border. The varieties of the language spoken by such inhabitants, share a great deal of similarity with varieties across the border because of a phenomenon called 'dialect continuum'. Such geographical similarity has often contributed towards an identification of such groups with speakers of other

varieties of the same language within the state. In this paper an attempt has been made to make a comparative study of the two most distinguished linguistic groups of the district. It needs to be mentioned here that the two varieties are often confused to be one and the same by the people of the state itself which intensifies the need for an in depth study of the mentioned linguistic groups. But due to problems of software, Some phonetic symbols could not be used in the paper which unfortunately does not facilitate a correct phonetic study. The sounds depicted are approximates.

### 1.1 Ghulia

The term Ghulia is no longer a popular/common term in the Dhubri district. It is an old word which had originated from the term "Ghulla" (ghurn-round area) a paragana at the time of Zamindari rule. Most of the people in the district speak this variety of Assamese. The more popular terms used to name this variety of languages are goalparia/dehsi kotha/deshi bhasha/kamtai/rongpuri/rajbongshi/uzeni. It is spoken in areas like Dhubri

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