

CALL FOR PAPERS
Seminar (Hybrid Mode) on
Living with Precarity: Literature in Context on the 21st Century
25 & 26 April 2024

Name of the organisation: Department of English, Bodoland University, Kokrajhar (BTR), Assam, India

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CONCEPT NOTE:

Anna Tsing's definition of precarity as 'life without the promise of stability' mirrors the contemporary crisis of life and living conditions. From being a French neologism to describe population resettlement and displacement, the term precarity has gained academic and social parlance not only as 'the societal outcome of economic forces' but also as marginalised, risky and/or uncertain living conditions, in which the vulnerable population, especially that of the Global South, suffers the adverse effects induced by disproportionate environmental changes and life conditions, including job conditions. Human survival is contingent on nature and rich social infrastructures, yet the human agency has been growing oblivious of the natural world thereby aggravating the Anthropocene. Dipesh Chakrabarty opines that the divorce of human from nature has been triggered by the ideas of 'development', such as the tendency to build big cities, setting up industries, chemicalization of soil, food, even life. While everyday efforts contradict the vision of a sustainable future, a crucial need has raised the necessity to decolonise human and more-than-human subjugation and question the policies and processes inducing precarity in the name of economic development.

Discourses on subalternity and postcoloniality have highlighted how colonial domination and mentality continue to exploit the natural and the socio-economic and cultural spheres of our lives. A subaltern or postcolonial perspective explicates Anthropocene as similar to the exploitative colonial embarkments with more menacing consequences not only upon the colonial states, or the Global South but the world as a whole.

Extractive capitalist practices have taken a toll not only on the natural environment but also on humans and living beings. Diseases, such as the recent pandemic of COVID-19, destruction, war, and terrorism have exemplified the precarity rendered due to reckless human activities and have further reinforced the necessity to engage in the discourse on Anthropocene. The universal currency of the term 'Anthropocene' encapsulates the fact that the earth has been irrevocably altered, for the worse, by the human agency (Attebery). Disease, war and terrorism not only bring death and destruction but also aggravate migration leading to the creation of burnout societies, and dilapidated ecosystems.

Such precariousness has often been portrayed by climate fiction thereby often allowing authors and readers to speculate future scenarios rendered by Anthropocene and precarity, broaching on the need for a sustainable future. Scholars such as Amitav Ghosh, Dipesh Chakrabarty, and Imre Szeman have advocated the need to decolonise the environment and the impending ecological derangement resultant of the Anthropocene. The 'wasting' of life forms at the altar of human development and modernity (Prmod K. Nayar) has given rise to several concepts such as that of splintered precarity, ecoprecarity, transnational and transhumant

migrants, net slaves, technobohemians, the planetary and global issues, etc. to broach upon the discourse of living with precarity. Om Dwivedi links these precarious conditions to the unsecular character of our deep state. He suggests that this “unsecular character is the hidden abode of capitalist economy, which then leads to the creation of ‘bioprecarity’, which is the “expropriation of all life forms.”

In this national seminar, we invite papers that would explore precarious livings and existence in the Anthropocene epoch. Scholars are invited to submit abstracts/paper proposals that address the following (but not limited to) issues contextualized in the narratives and discourses in Anglophone and Regional literatures:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War/terrorism and dystopian imaginaries • Solastalgia • Tierratrauma, Ecoanxiety • Climate change • Pandemic, Disease and Disaster • Anthropocene • splintered precarity • population explosion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ecofeminism • ecoprecarity • ecopoetics • transnational and transhumant migrants • net slaves, technobohemians • the planetary and the global • planetary precarity • extractive neoliberalism and ecologies
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We invite long structured abstracts (350 -500 words) together with 5 keywords and a 100-word bionote. Abstracts may be submitted in English and Assamese (pdf & MS word).

Timelines:

- Last date for submission of abstracts: 15th March 2024
- Information about acceptance of abstracts: 31st March 2024
- Registration: 10th– 12th April 2024
- Full paper submission (6000-7000 words)- 25th April 2024

Submission must be made only in MS Word Document & pdf attached to the email.

MLA 9th Edition must be followed strictly for in-text citation and Documentation.

Convener: Dr Debajyoti Biswas, Department of English, Bodoland University, Kokrajhar

Participation Fee

- International Participants: 30 USD
- Indian and SAARC countries: INR 2000
- Research Scholars, PG students & Unemployed: INR 700

Award and Recognition: An award of INR 10,000 (INR ten thousand) and a certificate will be awarded to the best paper.

Selected papers will be published as edited books from a renowned international publisher.
Venue: Bodoland University, Kokrajhar & Online.