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Domjur, Howrah**



*Department of English
in collaboration with the IQAC
presents*

Representations of Evil in Literature



~ A Departmental Seminar ~

***~ 11 June, 2024 ~
Venue: Conference Room
Time: 11 am***

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‘Representations of Evil in Literature’

Evil is the opposite of Good. An evil person is one who is wicked and harms others. However, evil people do not think of themselves as evil, they tend to justify their evil deeds. American social psychologist, Roy Baumeister, in his seminal work, *Evil: Inside Human Violence and Cruelty* (1997) dismisses “the myth of pure evil” as the motivation behind evil is complex. Even good people, may do evil things, as individuals or in groups under provocation. Swiss psychoanalyst, Carl Jung was one of the first in the modern era to explore the dark side of human beings: the personal “shadow”. Awareness of one’s shadow is essential, as Jung said: “One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light but by making the darkness conscious.”

Evil is “mysterious”, and ‘Literature of Evil’ is fascinating. One can hardly put down a detective novel or horror story until the mystery is cleared, and the evil is rendered ‘safe’, or less evil. Conventional literature portrays the age-old conflict between “Good versus Evil” in individuals as well as society, while modern literature blurs the lines between. Therefore, understanding heroes, villains and anti-heroes is essential in modern times of social-cultural-political transitions as part of the universal human experience.

Texts* that may be explored in the seminar:

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| 1. Ted Hughes – <i>Crow’s Fall</i> | 11. Bertolt Brecht – <i>The Good Woman of Szechuan</i> |
| 2. W.B. Yeats – <i>The Second Coming</i> | 12. Chinua Achebe – <i>Things Fall Apart</i> |
| 3. George Orwell – <i>Shooting an Elephant</i> | 13. Gabriel G. Marquez – <i>Chronicle of a Death Foretold</i> |
| 4. Samuel Johnson – <i>London</i> | 14. Amitav Ghosh – <i>The Shadow Lines</i> |
| 5. Daniel Defoe – <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> | 15. Protiva Basu – <i>The Marooned</i> |
| 6. Mary Shelley – <i>Frankenstein</i> | 16. Manik Bandyopadhyay – <i>The Final Solution</i> |
| 7. Robert Browning – <i>My Last Duchess</i> | |
| 8. Christina Rossetti – <i>Goblin Market</i> | |
| 9. Charles Dickens – <i>Oliver Twist</i> | |
| 10. Henrik Ibsen – <i>A Doll’s House</i> | |

* Other relevant Texts may also be explored in the seminar