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An Ecocritical Reading of Syed Manzoorul Islam's *Shakuner Dana*

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Abstract- Like other countries across the globe, Bangladesh is also experiencing an environmental turn in literature. Eco-fiction and climate fiction are the new avatars of contemporary literature with a particular focus on ecological concerns. This kind of literature is on the rise as the world grapples with 'climate emergency', a new entry in Oxford Dictionaries. The governing theme and subject-matter of such literature pertain to the environment, which has encountered severe challenges causing a massive threat to the existence of humans and non-humans alike. In addition, the eco-focused literature highlights the degradation of biodiversity at local and global levels. Similarly, environmental pollution is a common feature of almost any global discourse including literary studies. Besides, global warming is a buzzword occupying a huge space in academic discussions. As a branch of humanities, literature responds to such phenomena through evocative storytelling informed by scientific facts and suggestions. The latest theoretical school namely, ecocriticism studies the environment in all its manifestations and nuances available as an active and evocative force in literature.

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Abstract- Like other countries across the globe, Bangladesh is also experiencing an environmental turn in literature. Eco-fiction and climate fiction are the new avatars of contemporary literature with a particular focus on ecological concerns. This kind of literature is on the rise as the world grapples with 'climate emergency', a new entry in Oxford Dictionaries. The governing theme and subject-matter of such literature pertain to the environment, which has encountered severe challenges causing a massive threat to the existence of humans and non-humans alike. In addition, the eco-focused literature highlights the degradation of biodiversity at local and global levels. Similarly, environmental pollution is a common feature of almost any global discourse including literary studies. Besides, global warming is a buzzword occupying a huge space in academic discussions. As a branch of humanities, literature responds to such phenomena through evocative storytelling informed by scientific facts and suggestions. The latest theoretical school namely, ecocriticism studies the environment in all its manifestations and nuances available as an active and evocative force in literature. The insights of ecocriticism will be applied in this paper to analyze a Bangla language novel titled *Shakuner Dana* (Wings of the Vulture) (2013) written by the Bangladeshi writer Syed Manzoorul Islam.

Keywords: eco-fiction; environmental degradation; environmental justice; ecocriticism; ecofeminism; Bangladeshi eco-fiction.

I. Introduction

The Bangladeshi novelist Syed Manzoorul Islam's eco-fictional novel *Shakuner Dana* (2013) has environmental concerns at its core. The novel centers around a proposed development project to be financed by a global money-lending agency and actively supported by several local and multinational stakeholders readying themselves to draw their interests out of it. This project is supposed to develop a haor (a large, landlocked water body typical of north-eastern Bangladesh) area. The undertaking is christened the CMB Project after the initials of three adjacent areas: Chandipur, Mahiganj, and Bhadartek. The local NGO, commissioned to assess the feasibility of the project through ground level surveys and case studies, deliberately hides the environmental effects the project may cause and doctors its findings. It seeks to cover up several loopholes in its research work. This money-minded organization prepares concocted reports discounting environmental issues, biodiversity, and potential dangers for local communities. Similarly, the evil elements in the political dispensation and different local interest groups, either together or in separate ways, become active to ensure the project is undertaken and they can make quick profits. However, Orin—a research team member of the NGO— primarily out of her intuitions and also under the influence of a Dutch environmental expert named Von Hoffman, who has been initially sent by the sponsoring Global Money-Lender (used as a catch-all term for all highly influential international money-lending agencies) to the area for assessing environmental aspects of the enterprise, sniffs the shortcomings, loopholes, and fraudulence underlying the whole affairs. She manages to conduct her private research by allying with a local family and discovers all of this conspiracy. The findings of her research motivate her to launch environmental activism that resonates with the local commoners themselves, already anxious about the CMB project. Orin goes on to mobilize a mass movement, with Dhaka-based media coming forward and local and environment-conscious urban people joining hands together to neutralize the evil enterprise. The political and corporate opportunists willing to make money out of the project receive a massive setback, and the whole area is safeguarded from an ensuing manufactured disaster. All of these matters are subject of study of the current article, which seeks to explore and appreciate different ecocritical aspects that underpin the storyline, themes, contents and messages of the book *Shakuner Dana* by Syed Manzoorul Islam. Since the book is originally written in Bengali/Bangla and no English translation is available as yet, all textual references/portions will appear in my translation.

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II. What is Ecocriticism?

As mentioned earlier, ecocriticism examines the environment in its diversity in a given text. This school of criticism is a relatively recent phenomenon in academic practices. There are a variety of opinions concerning its definition, scope, and effectiveness. According to Glotfelty (1996), ecocriticism 'is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment (xix).' She also says, 'ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies (ibid).' To outline its area of operations, Richard Kerridge in his book *Writing the Environment* (1998) says, 'Most of all, ecocriticism seeks to evaluate texts and ideas in terms

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of their coherence and usefulness as responses to environmental crisis (5; cited in Garrard 4).' Another prominent ecocritic Kevin Hutchings (2007) expands the definition and says,

> One of ecocriticism's basic premises is that literature both reflects and helps to shape human responses to the natural environment. By studying the representation of the physical world in literary texts and in the social contexts of their production, ecocriticism attempts to account for attitudes and practices that have contributed to modern-day ecological problems, while at the same time investigating alternative modes of thought and behavior, including sustainable practices that would respect the perceived rights or values associated with non-human creatures and ecological processes (172).

All these definitions of ecocriticism highlight the environmental issues, ecological concerns, interspecies relationships, and the earth-oriented visions and activist attitudes of environmentalists.

III. *Shakuner Dana* as an Ecocritical Text

The novel *Shakuner Dana* (Wings of the Vulture) charts the development of its protagonist Orin and other characters, such as Safia, Azam, Hanif, and Mahin vis-à-vis an increasing eco-consciousness leading to a mass upsurge. The story of the novel is primarily set in a haor area spanning the villages Chandipur, Mahiganj, Bhadartek, Sitakut, and a rural town called Dhulaura. This area is crisscrossed by three natural water bodies: the Tishna River, the Patijuri Haor, and the Mainar Bil. The area's people are almost entirely dependent on these water sources for life and livelihood. They are primarily a community of peasants and fishermen. Of them, Hanif is a farmer, Shailen is a boatman, and Manu Miah is probably a farmer. Irrespective of their profession and vocation, everyone here in the area is profoundly connected with the natural environment. This natural space, extremely crucial to the life and living of the local people, encounters an imminent threat posed in the shape of the proposed CMB project. The implementation of the project, as all textual evidence and estimates suggest, will affect the whole community, humans and non-humans alike. Considering all these issues, the ongoing paper intends to scrutinize the text *Shakuner Dana* from various ecocritical viewpoints and launch an eco-discourse highlighting fiction as a potent tool in the process. Sections below will unfold different aspects of *Shakuner Dana* (2013) as a formidable piece of eco-fiction emerging out of Bangladesh.

a) Title as Symbol

The title of the novel having "shakun" (vulture) in it bears symbolic significance. The vulture is an endangered species in Bangladesh. So, the use of the bird's name brings to our attention the destruction of biodiversity and ecological balance in Bangladesh. In the novel *Shakuner Dana*, when the Dutch environmentalist Von Hoffman comes across a vulture flying up in the sky, he gets wonder-struck. The narrator says, 'It's an endangered species numbering less than one hundred in Bangladesh, he heard. This one must be among the hundred (Islam 14).' However, it also signals the subject matter of the book. The vulture, which is a predatory bird, carries both negative and positive connotations. It symbolizes gluttony, jealousy, opportunism, and power-mongering in Bengali culture. So, when the Dutch scientist expresses his surprise at the chance sight of such a species on the verge of extinction, he receives a more surprising response from Orin, a delegation member in the scientific team. Orin claims, laughing, 'The vulture is not a dying species.' She also adds, 'Vultures are not up in the sky but available all over Bangladesh, and their number is increasing at a rate higher than the birth rate of the Bangladeshi populace (Islam 15).' Here Orin sarcastically and metaphorically refers to the burgeoning greedy section of Bangladeshi people. The vulture metaphor also foreshadows how the plot of the novel is shaping up.

Curiously, the vulture also bears positive connotations and symbolic value. In certain cultures, 'vulture symbolism is associated with purification and rebirth (Green).' The novel seems to have incorporated both meanings, however apparently contradictory, to set the eco-discourse in motion. While the negative tropes associated with the vulture lay bare the indomitable greed and destructive force of a section of Bangladeshi people, the positive ones pertaining to purification and regeneration highlight environmental resilience and revival. The positive aspects of the vulture symbolism also gesture towards the re-enactment of balanced relations between human and non-human elements of the environment.

In the novel *Shakuner Dana*, we can see an environmental disaster, ecocide to be precise, looming large under the guise of the development project, which is a nasty human intervention in nature's domain. That the project is finally discarded in the face of synergistic endeavor by different groups of people speaks of the affirmative aspects foregrounded by the vulture symbolism. The title choice involving the vulture is worth it as far as ecocriticism is concerned.

b) Sense of Place

Attachment to place plays a crucial role in the life and order of a community. In his *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (2005), Buell says, 'Ecocriticism, however, has tended to favor literary texts oriented toward comparatively local or regional levels of place-attachment (68).' He maintains that for contemporary environmental criticism 'place often seems to offer the promise of a "politics of resistance" against modernism's excesses-- its "spatial colonizations"

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(Oakes 1997: 509) (65).' Place is crucial to memory and a whole host of powerful emotions. This evocative feature of the place has a solid political appeal that can effect positive changes. For instance, the personal development of Orin, the protagonist of *Shakuner Dana*, both as a character and an environmental activist draws immensely on the agential influence of the CMB area. To quote from the novel, 'Rumi's (a male colleague in the research team) cold voice has sparked a sense of persistence in Orin. She does not know whether she's obtained it from working with the CMB project; whether Patijuri, or the Tishna River, or Chandipur has instilled it into her mind at a moonlit or dark night (Islam 24).'

However, the individual who shows the highest degree of love for land and place is Hanif Miah. Being a farmer, he nourishes himself, economically and psychologically, from his intimate engagement with soil. His land dependency also shapes his cultural identity and philosophical orientation. This dependency creates a community feeling in him for his fellows. It invokes camaraderie and an egalitarian worldview that forms his personhood. In the narrator's words:

> Soil attracts him (Hanif Miah) and so do men. He does not distinguish between a day laborer, a farmer, and a Mahajan (money-lender/businessman). Those intimate with soil are all the same at a certain point—such a belief empowers him (Islam 84).

Not just the land but also other natural entities have formative influence over people. Significantly, the river and other water sources upon which people depend for their existence sustain them. The interaction between humans and the river (and by extension, all of natural sites) is mutually beneficial if based on care, love and minimal interference. In the novel under discussion, we find that the Tishna River system is central to the bio-cultural reality of the whole area it courses through. The narrator says,

> The people of Chandipur and Mahiganj are indebted to the Tishna. Every year the Tishna opens its storage up to them. Water, fish, whatever they want, they get it from here. Whereas other rivers shrink following a low tide, the Tishna River looks full to the brim as always. This is a strange river whose heart lies in the geography of Chandipur-Mahiganj-Selimabad and the lives of the people there (Islam 26).

In other words, the novel *Shakuner Dana* evocatively demonstrates the interconnectedness of all forms of life: human and non-human.

c) Anthropocentrism

Deep ecology, which is a radical form of environmentalism, detects anthropocentric bias in many human interactions with nature. Ecocriticism in general and deep ecology in particular, finds Anthropocentrism deeply disturbing. Anthropocentrism is

> a philosophical viewpoint that argues, human beings are the central or most significant entities in the world. This is a basic belief embedded in many Western religions and philosophies. Anthropocentrism regards humans as separate from and superior to nature and holds that human life has intrinsic value while other entities (including animals, plants, mineral resources, and so on) are resources that may justifiably be exploited for the benefit of humankind (Boslaugh).

The novel *Shakuner Dana* passionately brings to the light an anthropocentric takeover of the environmental domain of the CMB area. For instance, some people out of enormous greed and a faulty philosophical understanding of assumed supremacy over non-humans, intend to exploit the environment as their prerogative, denying the ontology, agency, and self-identity of the natural sites of the CMB region. Orin observes that the Patijuri-Tishna river system has turned ferocious recently. The narrator of the novel puts her observation thus,

> The officials of the CMB project are capable of taming Patijuri and the Moynar Bil, which have turned ferocious of late. The whole project has been designed to bring this assumed ferociousness under control. It reflects the mindset of hunters, who keep on watching a leopard and anticipate an attack and ferociousness from the beast. Nobody cares to realize if the leopard is not disturbed, he will not disturb men either; rather, he will live in the wilderness following his natural laws. If Patijuri and Moynar Bil are left in the hands of nature and machines are kept out of ruling their water system, there will be no problem anywhere–Orin tends to believe (Islam 28).

What is more worrying is that modern science and technology is being used for the most part to anthropomorphize the whole environment. Humans have encroached upon the non-human world, perhaps more than ever, and on an unprecedented scale. In *Shakuner Dana*, the narrator makes a relevant comment, 'The twenty-first century is the epoch meant for bringing the environment under human control and for putting a human face on the environment (128).' This vulgar attempt to rule over the environment runs rampant globally, and the novel's narrative awakens the reader to this harsh reality on more occasions than one.

d) Impact of Globalization on Local Environment

The famous ecocritic Lawrence Buell highlights the importance of an increasing amount of literature dealing with "compromised, endangered landscapes" and "marginalized minority peoples and communities" everywhere (97; cited in Alam 7). The novel *Shakuner Dana* exposes how globalization is set to spread its tentacles all over the CMB region in order to endanger its landscapes and marginalized community. Neocolonialism, a recent avatar of capitalism and a partner of globalization, intends to exploit ecological resources of mostly the formerly colonized countries in the name of development. The profit-driven ideology views things, including the environment and natural entities, mainly in terms of monetary values. Concepts like progress and development are sold, often at the

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expense of environmental stability and ecological balance. In Vandana Shiva's words,

> The ideology of development is in large part based on a vision of bringing all natural resources into the market economy for commodity production. When these resources are already being used by nature to maintain her production of renewable resources and by women for sustenance and livelihood, the diversion of resources to the market economy generates ecological instability and creates new forms of poverty for women (196-97).

The market-oriented ideology of development affects developing countries including Bangladesh, which become targets of multinational corporations and international financial institutes with global outreach. Development agendas of the so-called third world countries are aligned with the prescription of such global economic players. The environmental degradation caused by many of the development programs is often neglected. People, especially women depending on nature's bounty for livelihood, are massively affected by such development activities. The local corrupt and opportunistic political and bureaucratic elements, as evidenced by the local representative Safar Ali and the NGO head Dr. Irfan Malik in *Shakuner Dana*, join hands with international financial players to sell development agendas to the ordinary people. More often than not, they neglect the ecological damages their projects may cause to the local environment and geography.

However, the narrator of *Shakuner Dana* sees through such thinly veiled assaults on the environment in the context of the proposed CMB project in a downstream region of Bangladesh. The narrator writes, 'The Dutch expert says, "The CMB project is a suicidal one. If the project rolls off from documents and government files onto the field, that is, it gets implemented, the whole CMB area will turn into a gravesite" (Islam 21).' The crux of the problem is that the implementation of the project proves to be an undoing of the local people, whose life and livelihood will face jeopardy. The anxiety about such consequences is repeated throughout the novel. For instance, Orin remarks, 'It's such a big project, but the profit it may generate will end up in the pocket of a few. People, who generation after generation, have been fishing in the water bodies like the Mainar Bil, the Patachala Chhora, the Ghuinga Canal and the Tishna river, and cultivating paddy and other crops in the land scattered here and there, will get uprooted and lost forever in the name of development (Islam 22).' It is imperative that our collective predicament caused by such corporate occupation and exploitation of natural spaces, crucial to the survival and sustainability of human and non-human beings, should be stopped.

e) Environmental Crisis Exposed

According to Glen A. Love in an essay in *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996), 'The most important function of literature today is to redirect human consciousness to a full consideration of its place in a threatened natural world (Love 237).' The novel *Shakuner Dana* does precisely the job of drawing attention to an imminent threat to the natural space of the CMB area with all its ecological realities, posed by the anthropocentric development program to be initiated under the proposed CMB project. As a consequence, the environment of the project area is susceptible to encountering seismic change. If infrastructural development occurs ignoring geographical particularities of the site and downplaying environmental implications of such misadventures, then a number of negative changes are likely to happen. Through damming up of rivers and canals, the natural flow of water will be manipulated. Ample evidence suggests that such human interventions in the name of water administration are oftentimes counterproductive and responsible for the death or decay of water bodies. Destruction of a water system in an area means the gradual extinction of fish and other water species in addition to other non-water species such as birds depending on them. Disturbed water flow can cause river erosion jeopardizing the habitation of ordinary people turning people into environmental refugees. In this regard, Azam, an important character of the novel reflects: 'If village Sitakut drowns (as a consequence of the project implementation), he will go to Dhaka along with his parents and sister Rupa. Dhaka is a big city, and there are hundreds of opportunities there (Islam 50).' Every year, such environmental refugees, although they may not be officially designated so, crowd towns and cities in Bangladesh. The agriculture of such affected areas can be hit hard, and consequently, the extraction of underground water for irrigation and other cultivation purposes has a broader environmental cost. The natural cycle of cloud formation and rain gets disrupted, which impacts weather patterns leading to conditions in which desertification and untimely deluges are extreme case scenarios. In the context of the novel, the proposed development project in the CMB region will cause an environmental catastrophe if implemented.

f) Ecofeminism in Shakuner Dana

The term "ecofeminism" was coined by French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne in 1974. Greta Gaard and Patrick D. Murphy mentioned in their introduction to the book *Ecofeminist Literary Criticism: Theory, Interpretation, Pedagogy* (1998), 'Ecofeminism is a practical movement for social change arising out of the struggles of women to sustain themselves, their families, and their communities. These struggles are waged against the "maldevelopment" and environmental degradation caused by patriarchal societies, multinational corporations, and global capitalism (Gaard and Murphy 2).' Patriarchal hegemony and anthropocentric exploitation of the

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environment are undergirded by the same logic of domination over the "other" in a binary configuration. As human beings seek to exert their control over nature and natural spaces in a display of power safe in the knowledge of anthropocentrism, so do patriarchal men over women motivated by their assumed superiority. Women being traditionally and temperamentally considered closer to nature and the environment, seem more poised to preserve and conserve them and put up resistance against environmental degradation. Against this backdrop, this paper will seek to analyze, from an ecofeminist point of view, how patriarchal ideology and capitalism combine to dominate women and the environment and how women exert their female power to challenge both types of hegemony.

i. *Patriarchal and capitalist hegemony unearthed*

One critical tool of the patriarchal stratagem is to exercise control over the female body. The overriding male gaze constantly monitors and polices female bodies. Sexualizing female bodies is a time-tested patriarchal weapon to subjugate women to the wishes and whims of men. Normalization of surveillance over female bodies and actions in the name of social, moral, and religious codes is deeply ingrained in the patriarchal vision. Making explicit or suggestive sexually insensitive or misogynistic comments and cracking lewd jokes at the expense of women should be seen in the light of the overarching ideology of male supremacy prevailing in society. Precisely in this context, attempted smearing of the character of Orin, the protagonist, makes sense. Her teammates blame Orin for having persuaded Mr. Von Hoffman, the environmental expert, and Dr. Qais, the water and delta expert, against the CMB project the environmental grounds. As they are returning to Dhaka from the project site, visibly frustrated and upset by their failure to prove the project's feasibility, they seek to discredit and disgrace Orin as a woman of compromised character. They take advantage of Orin's decision to stay back in the village as an excuse to question her morality. In the words of the narrator:

> Rumi does not mince his words; he has launched a direct attack. This girl is at the root of all evils, he says. There is no sense of decency in his implication. The gap between decency and indecency has been bridged by Dr. Saurabh. Orin is typically prone to cuddling and caressing, Saurabh says. Hadi nods in approval but cannot recall when she (Orin) cuddled and caressed and whom (Islam 30).

As if this was not enough to assassinate the character of an absent female teammate, Rumi goes on to say that Orin has already been enjoying a "post-coital sleep" in the village, and then he cackles to the top of his voice. This type of brutalization of women is conceptually and ideologically bound up with the devastation of nature and the environment. Both actions are governed and motivated by the twisted logic of domination over the binary "other". Capitalism, which is driven by a sense of profit-making, views natural space in the light of its financial value. Both the female body and the environment are commodified and exploited under the familiar logic of domination sought by hegemonic ideologies of patriarchy and capitalism. Eco-feministically speaking, the plight of Orin as a female and the potential damage to the environment in the CMB area are intertwined.

ii. *Environmental Justice Movement*

As mentioned earlier, women are generally considered to have more affinity to nature than their male counterparts. The protagonist Orin exemplifies the female sensitivities to the environmental degradation of the CMB region. Hence she takes up the challenge to put up an "environmental justice movement" against the potential onslaught on the ecology of the wetland. As per Adamson et al., in *The Environmental Justice Reader* (2002), environmental justice can be defined as 'the right of all people to share equally in the benefits bestowed by a healthy environment (4; cited in Clark 88).' Orin seems to share this spirit of justice and inspires the ordinary people, who in return throw their weight behind her fight against the politico-corporate nexus adamant in profiting off the mindless brutalization of natural sites of their region. Mass mobilization gathers momentum as local people are gearing up to neutralize the conspiracy to destabilize their life and livelihood, which depends upon the environment of their area. A conscientious section of people, the civil society, and environmental groups united and organized via social and mass media are willing to drive their collective power against the diabolical CMB project. Orin has tapped the power of the digital space to harness her environmental movement as her blog posts complemented by relevant pictures draw the attention of netizens at home and abroad to the sensational issue. Her communication with certain print media outlets and TV channels proves incredibly practical as they run an information war against the politico-corporate cabal and champion the cause of the commoners for whom the environmental toll of the proposed undertaking would pose existential threats. A TV reporter named Rupa, inspired by Orin, declares her crusade against the CMB project thus, 'My reporting career is barely four years, yet I've observed how massive plunder takes place in the name of projects. The projects start in the name of the poor but end up fattening the pockets of the rich. I won't spare the plunderers. I will use whatever little power I have against those who suck the blood out of common people, accumulate money, and settle down abroad (Islam 57).'

It is evident that the resistance movement led by Orin resonates with conscientious people of all walks. She has inspired villagers like Hanif Miah, Azad, Azam, Safia, Shailen, Imam Sahib, and city people like Rupa, Hannan, Simi, and Mahin to become united via the common goal of saving the CMB wetland area from

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imminent dangers. Most importantly, there are some brave women at the forefront of the movement, and it highlights constructive female power. Speaking from an ecofeminist perspective, this is a glaring example of how the caring and compassionate attitude of women to nature and the environment enables them to mobilize their power against environmental degradation, manufactured or otherwise.

g) Text as an Ecocritical Tool

Lawrence Buell et al. maintained in a paper titled "Literature and Environment" that ecocriticism has at its core the assumption 'that the arts of the imagination and the study thereof—by virtue of their grasp of the power of the word, story and image to reinforce, enliven, and direct environmental concern—can contribute significantly to the understanding of environmental problems: the multiple forms of ecodegradation that afflict planet Earth today (418).' In other words, texts can act as an effective tool to bolster ecocritical analysis and environmental consciousness. The multiple blog posts, email postings, and visuals Orin has used work as influential texts to mobilize public opinion against the anti-environmental undertaking. These texts have also helped create a broader public discourse in online forum discussions, informal chats and exchanges, talk shows, TV interviews, media reports and coverage, all focusing on the environmental concerns of the CMB project. Orin's texts, therefore, have played a pivotal role in accelerating public awareness about ecological issues and environmental problems.

Besides, *Shakuner Dana* as a fictional text has initiated an environmental discourse, which is not prominent in mainstream Bangladeshi literature. Based on certain actual environmental movements held in Bangladesh, this novel aims to boost environmental consciousness in the academic and cultural spheres of Bangladesh. The novel has also shown the creative potentials of ecological issues as materials for fiction. As a consequence, other creative writers may feel encouraged to incorporate the ecological concerns into their writing and create a literary tradition involving the environment, nature, ecological equilibrium, climate change, and other relevant and pressing issues. The novel *Shakuner Dana* and Orin's social media posts are potent examples of the capacity of the text to advance ecocritical discourses.

IV. Conclusion

Shakuner Dana (2013) by Syed Manzoorul Islam builds a compelling narrative around an environmental movement. This novel highlights the creative capacity of fiction as a force to mainstream an ecological discourse in the literary and intellectual arenas of Bangladesh. The paper has presented diverse aspects of environmental concerns informing and nourishing the plot of the novel from a variety of ecocritical perspectives. It also examines how the logic of exploitation and domination underlying different ideologies, such as capitalism and patriarchy, are intertwined in their joint offensive against nature and the environment. It also valorizes female power for its capacity to add impetus to environmental activism in preserving and conserving nature and the environment. It appreciates the power of (eco-)fiction in championing environmental movements and harnessing an eco-discourse, which is crucial for a climate-vulnerable country like Bangladesh. Overall, this paper highlights the centrality of ecological concerns underpinning the narrative construction of *Shakuner Dana*, a not-so-frequent event in the mainstream Bangla language literature produced by Bangladeshi authors.

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