

# Livelihood and Living Together in the Ganges Delta: A Bioregional Enquiry into the Literature of the Place

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**Abstract:** The paper investigates the contribution of literary works in integrating the bioregional territory for the Ganges delta bioregion and the opportunity in promoting sustainable living initiatives in the deltaic region through bioregional practices of living together in harmony with the specifics of the place, preservation of the flora and fauna of the area and ‘rehabitation’ in the place. A Bioregion or “life-place” is denominated by some biogeographic conditions such as topography, climate, soil pattern, watersheds, flora, fauna etc. Instead of the political boundaries of the countries and the states the bioregional demarcation of territories depends on ‘geocultural’ conditions. Bioregionalism grew as a proactive environmental movement in western North America in the 1970s led by Peter Berg, Raymond Dasmann and Gary Snyder. Many bioregions have been identified since then in North America and Australia by the government as well as non-government agencies to address the environmental issues at the local scale. If a thorough ‘bioregionalisation’ is planned for the Indian subcontinents or the SAARC countries on the bioregional precepts it would naturally be noticed that many bioregions would cross political boundaries. The Ganges delta in the undivided Bengal (now divided between West Bengal in India and Bangladesh) can be treated as a bioregion following the process of ‘bioregionalisation’ on the basis of its climate, soil pattern, river system, agricultural patterns, cultural practices etc. Many literary works of Rabindranath Tagore, Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay and Jibanananda Das reflect the essence of this deltaic bioregion; and this bioregional sensibility can be permeated among the inhabitants to encourage sustainable living in the deltaic bioregion,

**Keywords:** bioregionalism, Ganges delta, literature, sustainability, biodiversity.

## Introduction

Bioregionalism evolved as a proactive environmental movement in the western part of North America in the 1970 with the leadership of activists and thinkers such as Peter Berg, Raymond Dasmann, Gary Snyder, and Stephanie Mills. The precepts of bioregionalism have already been integrated into the environmental planning in many countries. The practitioners who based or base their environmental activities on bioregional principles are called bioregionalists. Allen Van Newkirk, a radical politician from the United States, conceived the term bioregionalism. He also established the Institute for Bioregional Research to further develop and propagate the ideas related to it. He did not continue his mission for long, but he had some discussion with Peter Berg on the ideas and the projects. The idea of bioregionalism was later elaborated by Peter Berg and Raymond Dasmann in the article “Reinhabiting California”, published in 1977. Jim Dodge in “Living by Life: Some Bioregional Theory and Practice (341)” explained that “bioregionalism” is derived from the Greek *bios* (life) and the French *region* (region), itself from the Latin *regia* (territory), and earlier *regere* (to rule or govern). He added that etymologically bioregionalism connotes a life territory; place of life, or perhaps by reckless extension, government by life. In the words of the leading figures in the field Dasmann and Berg “A bioregion is determined “initially” by “climatology, physiography, animal and plant geography”, etc, typically including a “major watershed”; but its boundaries and “resonance” are confirmed over time by inhabitation of those who have made a long-term commitment to living there (Dasmann and Berg).” Bioregions are regions which are not restricted by administrative boundaries of provinces, countries and instead follow a landscape-scale demarcation and are based on biogeographic regionalization on the basis of watersheds, soil patterns, terrain characteristics etc. The movement aimed at betterment of environmental health at the specific bioregions by living harmoniously with the elements and components of the specific place, by maintaining a sustainable lifestyle for the place, by protecting the natural resources such as rivers and grasslands, by protecting the flora, fauna, ecosystems and habitats of the bioregion. Each bioregion has its specific resources and limitations and the inhabitants of the place must live consciously in the place so that the resources are sustainably utilized. Since the focus area of this paper is restricted to literary bioregionalism I would directly move to the focal area of the paper.

Literary works play a pivotal role in the formation of the awareness regarding many issues. Digital social media can also utilize the literary resources by contextualizing these to the target audience. Anyway it can be said that the consciousness of people through ages have been formed by many literary works; and some of them harbor immense potential for the promotion of environmental awareness. The literary works that reflect the essence of the locales in the narrative may be treated as potential bioregional literature. These integrate the bioregional characteristics of the places on one hand, on the other the literature of the past can be referred to in the process of literary renewal of a place through the re-imagination of the past. Thus a poem that describes, now, the flora and fauna of a place such as upper Himalayan territory promotes bioregional consciousness for the specific bioregion. On studying the poem the natives of the place may grow a sense of rootedness or find a strong connection with the place already inherent in them. On the other hand, if someone reads the poem after few years and discovers that the lake mentioned in the poem no more exists; or the species of birds mentioned in the poem can no more be spotted in the area the reader

would be aware of the loss of habitat and species in the area. In the same way, one may study a text from the early part of the nineteenth century to assess the loss of habitats and species in the particular area. Now the place can be rebuilt in imagination and can be restored to some extent wherever possible through the bioregional practice of 'rehabitation'. This may enhance the practice of sustainable, connected and mindful living. But it is not always possible to live sustainably when sustainable living clashes with livelihood. In many places livelihood is maintained at the cost of the biodiversity and habitats. But the loss of biodiversity, habitats and natural resources can be minimized if the inhabitants live consciously keeping in mind the abundances and limitations of the bioregion.

Some literary works bear the potentials for the promotion of sustainable living by making the readers aware of the essence of the place; some texts may unearth the severity of the loss of the species and ecosystems; some fictions may portray the bleak future that awaits such mindless eradication of the essential elements of life on the planet. Literary texts of a life-place may ignite our imagination about the circumstances a bioregion should endeavour to renew for the successful rehabilitation practices. It can be established from the observed, experienced and documented sources that the largest riverine delta on earth called the Ganges delta has its specific geocultural tradition due to its particular geophysical characteristics. The study of the literature of the place would definitely indicate the particularities of the region in comparison with nearby biogeographical regions. The Ganges delta or Bengal delta has been a source of literary imagination to generations of authors including Rabindranath Tagore, Satyendranath Dutta, Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay, Jibananda Das, Manik Bandyopadhyay, Syed Mustafa Siraj, Atin Bandyopadhyay, Amitav Ghosh.

Finding the traces of sustainability in literary works and utilizing the knowledge to promote bioregional consciousness can be treated as an important involvement in literary bioregionalism. The aim of such projects would primarily be to increase the sensibility so that a place based living in a sustainable way may be achieved in the particular places by protecting the biodiversity and the habitats. The role of literary works and literary criticism in bioregionalism can be summed up from the observation of Tom Lynch, Cheryl Glotfelty, and Carla Armbruster: "Literature and other arts function as vital expressions of cultural values that can ignite emotion, change minds, and inspire action..." (12). They have elaborated the point by further discussing the role that can be played by literary and other arts: "Literature and other imaginative arts can also reflect, develop, celebrate, and protect the unique character of the bioregions that produce them" (12). The texts may not always directly convey the issues related to sustainable living; sometimes the ideas may be latent or referential; bioregional critics can add immense value by exploring the embedded environmental consciousness and making them available for general awareness among the people who directly interact with the vegetations, insects and animals around them.

**Materials and Methods:** By assimilating the bioregional precepts of the thinkers and practitioners of bioregionalism the paper conducts a qualitative analysis some literary texts which are based on the Ganges delta. The paper also analyses the features that demarcate the Ganges Delta as a bioregion or sub-bioregion.

### **Ganges Delta as a Bioregion:**

In the process of bioregionalisation many biogeographic conditions such as climate, landform, soil texture, watersheds, flora and fauna are taken into account; if a scrutiny of the biogeographic characteristics of the Ganges delta region is conducted it can be noticed that the deltaic region can be categorized as a bioregion. Dr. Kanangopal Bagchi in *The Ganges Delta* (1944) has provided a detailed description of various aspects of the delta including its ecological aspects, agricultural patterns and distribution of population. From Bagchi's categorization, which was attempted few years before the partition of India, it is noted that the roughly triangular tract of the land bounded by Bhagirathi on the east and Padma-Meghna on the west, resembling the Greek letter 'delta', which begins at Gaur and extends to the Bay of Bengal has been commonly ascribed to be the area of the Ganges delta. According to his demarcation the eastern portion of Murshidabad, and the whole area of Nadia, Jessore, Faridpur, 24 Parganas, Khulna, Bakarganj and the islands of Noakhali fall within this deltaic region. The whole area of land is formed mostly by the alluvium brought by the Ganges and Brahmaputra. Radhakamal Mukerjee in *The Changing Face of Bengal: A Study in Riverine Economy* (1938) has discussed about the formative stages and changes of the land in the deltaic region (200-204). The deltaic region is intertwined with numerous distributaries of Bhagirathi-Hooghly, Padma-Meghna and full of various water bodies locally known as beel, baor etc. which are actually oxbow lakes. Nitish Sengupta in *Land of Two Rivers: A History of Bengal from the Mahabharata to Mujib* (2011) has categorized the whole tract of the Bengal plains as the Bengal delta and subdivided the region based on the historical sources and geographical patterns into four areas known as Varendrabhumi, Rar, Vanga and Samatata. From the division of Sengupta it can be noticed that the region of Vanga is basically the same region as covered by the Ganges delta, "bounded by the Bhagirathi, the Padma, the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra and the Meghna, lies the region of central Bengal comprising the Presidency division in West Bengal, the Khulna division in Bangladesh and parts of Dhaka division. This included the Vanga of Kalidasa and the Kingdom of Gangaridai as known to Ptolemy and Pliny (5)." The climatic condition, the texture of soil, the floral and faunal diversity, the practice of fishing, food habit, the agricultural pattern, the folk culture and other geocultural characteristics of the land would ignite one's imaginative faculty to attribute this deltaic land as a unified life-place or a bioregion.

Some adjacent areas on the west of Hooghly and on the east of Padma-Meghna more or less share the biogeographic and cultural specifics of the deltaic region; but these common traits fade and changes become prominent as someone goes farther east of Padma-Meghna or west of Bhagirathi-Hooghly. As bioregionalists are against any strict demarcation policy the process of bioregionalization would allow these adjacent areas to be included in the deltaic bioregion and even the whole of Bengal plains may be categorized as a single bioregion and the Ganges delta may be termed, then, as a sub-bioregion under that bioregion. The

other sub-bioregions would roughly follow the boundaries of Varendrabhumi, Rar and Samatata of the ancient Bengal. The cultural specificities of these four distinct regions can be noticed in many subtle characteristics. For example, the musical motifs of these four sub-regions may be noted in this regard. The musician Kalikaprasad Bhattacharya in some of his interviews like “Je Jole Agun Jole- Samia Rahaman with Kalikaprasad” has pointed out that that the musical motif of the area around Nadia is kirtan, of samatata is bhatiali, of Varendrabhumi is bhawaiya, and of Rar it is jhumur. Whether Ganges delta is ascribed as bioregion or a sub-bioregion it still remains a specific place with a geocultural identity of its own. The delta has been divided in 1947 by the boundary of two nations, but any initiative to restore the bioregional integrity and environmental health needs to be attended by a combined effort from Bangladesh and India at a bioregional scale.

### Literature of the Deltaic Bioregion:

As the world struggles hard to maintain biodiversity, resist the rampant destruction of ecosystem and ameliorate the miserable surrender of the ecosystem people, the preservation of the bioregional integrity of the place through widespread awareness and intensive activity must be taken on an urgent basis. The planet has stepped into a very critical period of environmental disruption and species extinction. The carbon footprints must be decreased on urgent basis, water bodies are to be protected and even restored, and the green areas must be extended on emergency basis. This urgency must be understood by each of the stakeholders. All must understand that even a minimum action in this direction is valuable; and all must respond to this urgency accordingly. The mindset of the consumerist society needs to be changed to stop the losses already unleashed in the last few decades in the form of environmental distortion. In this regard it has been hypothesized by the bioregionalists that the people who live mindfully in a place would do less harm to the place’s ecosystems, habitats, trees, creepers, birds and insects.

Literary works have the potential to boost the awareness about the geocultural identity of a place; these writings or oral narrations can inspire people of a place to live mindfully; and this faculty of narrations must be utilized to the full extent so that the global environmental crisis gets an attendant even if it is of a minimal stature. The geocultural history of a bioregion may be traced from many cultural productions like songs, paintings, travel writings, diaries, autobiography, poems, fictions and other sources.

The oral and written literary works of the Ganges delta are mostly composed in Bengali. In Bengali literature some poems of Satyendranath Dutta and Jibananda Das, some short stories and letters by Rabindranath Tagore, many short stories and novels by Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay, some novels by Manik Bandyopadhyay and Atin Bandyopadhyay are only to mention a limited store that may be analyzed from bioregionalist perspective to understand, preserve and restore the bioregional and geocultural identity of the place. The river centric life of the land, the green vegetation with the canopy of creepers, the abundance of winged species, the presence of various mammals, the pattern of agriculture, the food habit of the place can be reconstructed from a careful study of these texts in comparison with other connected sources. Some of these texts can be utilized as primers to the teaching of biodiversity, which in turn may help in building a common interest towards the preservation of the biodiversity and following a sustainable outlook towards nature.

Some letters in Rabindranath Tagore’s *Chhinnapatra* captures the vast tract of plains of Ganges delta around the estate of the Tagore family in Shilaidaha. The first English translation of the selected letters was significantly titled *Glimpses of Bengal* and the glimpses open up before us the raw nature of the Ganges delta portrayed by a philosopher and artist. Tagore himself described his years among the bounty of Bengal plains as the “most productive years of my literary life (Glimpses v)”. In many of his letters he has captured the geocultural splendor of the places. The large and mighty river Padma and its chars, the smaller rivers, the floral diversity, the birds, the green paddy field, the golden paddy field and the open vastness of the fields when the harvest is over formed in him a man who could listen to the pulse of nature. He found the mysterious Nature playing throughout the seasons with multifarious shades. The letters ignite the bioregional integrity of the land through a unique combination of the physical feature of the land, the floral diversity, the agricultural pattern, the quiet flow of simple life. Tagore could connect this bioregional characteristic of the land with the global dimension of nature. He easily moves from the Ganges delta of the present to the ancient past of the planet: “The river lost its coating of sliminess, scattered its current in many directions, and spread out, finally into a *beel* (marsh), with here a patch of grassy land and there a stretch of transparent water, reminding me of the youth of this globe... (Glimpses 14-15)”. The experience in the land-time was also reflected in many of his poems and short stories. The depiction of the life in a village of the place in *Postmaster* shows how the land-time created a permanent impression in him in the open air and green vegetation in the deltaic region. The brilliant description of the place only in a few sentences is marvelous as it catches the history of the play intertwined with the present. It combines the rural flow of life, the common pattern of the rural flora across the places in the bioregion with the history of indigo plantation which is a significant part of the geocultural history of the land. Tagore was telling a touching story of two human hearts but he has portrayed it on a canvas that bears much more for us to discover in terms of bioregional imagination:

When in the evening the smoke began to curl up from the village cowsheds, and the cicadas chirped in every bush; when the mendicants of the baul sect sang their shrill songs in their daily meeting-place, when any poet, who had attempted to watch the movement of the leaves in the dense bamboo thickets, would have felt a ghostly shiver down his back... (Stories 116)

With a single stroke of majestic brush Tagore has presented something in the quoted extract that embodies some signatures of the region. A bioregional understanding would allow us to connect the smoke from cowshed in the present time and try to find ways to address this unhealthy practice that pollutes air. The presence of *baul* musicians connects us with a bioregional cultural tradition and it ignites our imagination to compare the *baul* music of those days with our present days. The comparison of the fusion folk of various bands from cities like Dhaka and Kolkata with rural tradition of Nadia and Kushtia would show a significant drift from the traditional music of the bioregion. Kalikaprasad Bhattacharya expressed his observation that the folk music like *baul*, *bhatiali*,

*bhawaiya, jhumur* are the tunes of the particular place and in this connection he expressed concern over the rampant deformation of the folk traditions of the place.

In Tagore's nature poems and songs the nature is not always specific of a place rather it is a generalized representation of Nature. But some poems and songs are distinctly connected with the deltaic plains while some others are associated with the red soil of the rare Bengal. The song *gram chhara oi ranga matir path* is clearly of the red soil; and a symbolic poem *Sonar Tori* which was written at Shilaidaha captures the rainy season of the Bengal plain with its river, paddy-field and boat, while the song *amar sonar Bangla* which is the national anthem of Bangladesh presents a wider span of Bengal.

Satyendranath Dutta has depicted the nature of the bioregion with its biogeographical pattern and geocultural specificities in some of his poems like *Kon Deshe, Ilsho Guri, Durer Palla, Padmar Proti, Rup-snan, Banga Janani* etc. The way he portrayed the nature of the Bengal plains it remains some amazing snapshot from the landscapes and lives of the region and these poems would familiarize the readers with the green, fertile and riparian past of the region.

Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay is commonly praised for his delineation of nature in his novels, short stories and the diaries. A careful study of his works would unfold that he basically portrays the nature of the deltaic bioregion. Though his masterpiece in connection with environmental issues, *Aranyak*, emanates from another bioregion called Chota Nagpur Plateau, most of his other novels and short stories are portrayal of the land-time in the deltaic region, especially in the middle portion of the region in the district of Nadia and Jessore of his time. A study of his diary entitled *Trinankur* would unveil that he was deeply connected with the place he lived in and it is reflected in some of his protagonists like Opu, Bhabani Barujye, Satyacharan. In his diaries he has mentioned the characteristics of the place where he lives in with a detail of the water bodies, pattern of bushes and creepers. He was familiar with many wild plants, creepers by their names. This strong connection with place is motivated by a sense of harmony with the natural surrounding as he finds it as a source of simple and eternal joy. In the novels like *Pather Panchali, Ichamati, Ashani Sanket, Athoi Jal* his depiction of the geocultural feature of the places particularly of the middle of the deltaic region invite our imagination towards bioregional integration. The portrayal of floral diversity in *Pather Panchali* and *Ichamati* and the relation of the human beings with the place are worth noting. The child protagonist Opu and his elder sister Durga in *Pather Panchali* knew the place intuitively and had a kind of integral connection with it. The fruits like *nona* or playthings from wild bushes brought them close to nature and they gradually discovered the spirit of the place. When Opu departs from his village in the Bengal plains for a better future in a city of Northern India he smelt a lonely life ahead discarded from his own place:

Here was all the season's magic, and Opu saw it with new eyes. Bengal! The unearthly beauty, which its fields and rivers, its untrodden forests and the changing glory of its moonlit face painted for him then, young though he was, became part of his life for ever, filling the pensive moments of his later working days with sweetness and inspiration. (Song 354)

Bhabani Barujye in *Ichamati* falls in love with the areas around river Ichamati and gradually develops a spiritual connection with the place. The voluntary simplicity showed by these characters would be appropriate for a bioregional living motivated by the culture of the place. The concept of sustainable living can be grown from some sustainable practices shown in the novel. The novel has a detailed glossary of local food and food habit, a clue to ethno-medicine and a spiritual understanding of the place. The biodiversity and especially the floral diversity in *Pather Panchali* and *Ichamati* can help the inhabitants to participate in a significant bioregionalist practice called reinhabitation:

If you go from Marighata or Bajitpur by boat upto Chanduriar Ghat- you will be able to see on two sides *palte mather* trees' red flowers, the bush of *banya buro* coming out of water, the floating leaves of *topa pana*, wild *titpalla* creepers, exhibition of yellow flowers somewhere up above the banks in the shade created by banyan or *asatha* tree, *uluti-bachra-boinchi* bush, bamboo grove, the hole made by the river bird *gangshalik*, delicate creepers. (Ichamati 3)

What Bandyopadhyay narrates for our observation is no more a reality today as the vegetation on the banks of *Ichamati* has succumbed to agricultural practices and the river around Bajitpur is no more navigable.

Jibananda Das's collection of poems *Rupasi Bangla* translated as *The Beautiful Bengal* can be a model of bioregional literature. Though it is apparently about the Bengal in general it can be observed that it is actually about the Bengal plains and particularly of the deltaic region. The place-names and the rivers mentioned in the poems are mostly from the Ganges delta or the adjacent area on the east of Padma-Meghna and west of Bhagirathi-Hooghly. It is a wonder that poetic creation can emulate a place with its physiography, biodiversity and cultural history in such a way. Dr. Amalendu Basu in the *Introduction* to the translated work of *Rupasi Bangla* demarcated the place portrayed in the poems as southern Bengal which closely follows the territory of Ganges delta. Basu observes: "The fountain of all this blessing of beautiful appreciation is his motherland, which he calls *Rupasi Bangla*, and this southern Bengal he has revealed through superb poetic imagery of picturesque sights and relishing sounds (Das 9)". The translator Majumdar observed that the place with its geographic characteristic attains a spirit of its own and the poet creates while he remains immersed in it. The place in *Rupasi Bangla* truly becomes a terrain of consciousness: "Jibananda's Bengal, is, in his poetic vision, not merely a geographical identity but an all-comprehensive spirit...(5)". No one would fail to observe the geocultural integration that runs through the poems. It also is a commentary of the geocultural history of the land which bears a spirit of its own. The spirit of the place is not a human attribution of a poet as it strongly emanates from the land-time of the bioregion. The Bengal as it is portrayed in his poems has gradually lost its greenery, water bodies and rural spirit on the both sides of the border and waits for a renewal and reinhabitation.

Manik Bandyopadhyay's novel *Padma Nadir Majhi* (1936) which has been translated by Ratan K. Chattopadhyay as *The Boatman of the Padma* captures some aspects of bioregional interests. The entire life related to the fishing in the river Padma and its tributaries finds a realistic representation in the novel. The bounty of nature cannot offer the poor fishermen with a square meal

everyday as the middlemen and deceiver interfere. The life of Kuber majhi, Dhananjay, Ganesh has a strong connection with the place; they can smell the place and listen to its every beat. The art of fishing of hilsa, the preparation of nets and boats, the knowledge about the gathering zones of hilsa are all associated with the geocultural identity of the place. The pattern of huts, the technique of fighting with flood, the glossary of local food, the dimensions of a village fare are all integrated in the story. A bioregional description of the land can be chalked out from the narration in the novel. The agricultural practices are also to be mentioned in this connection as production of *aus*, rotting process of jute is not less valuable than the life itself. These people of Ketupur in the Bengal plains near Padma are unable to adjust to the new type of land in Moynadwip near the sea as it needs a different technique to dwell on such a place. In this connection it can be mentioned that the bioregional representation in *The Hungry Tide* would more closely be associated with the pattern in Moynadwip rather than the Ganges delta of the rivers of sweet water. The Sundarbans with the mangroves definitely demands a separate bioregional demarcation and the habitats and species of Sundarbans cannot be bounded by a political territory. Any conservation project in the area needs a combined effort across the bioregion with a proper adjustment to the need of the livelihood of the people on either side of the border.

### **Livelihood and Living Together:**

The Ganges delta and its adjacent areas share a common geocultural identity and it can be traced from the literary works of the regions. Any bioregional understanding of a place can significantly be polished or tuned by the literary imagination of the place. The writings with bioregional inclination can be anthologized to offer a ready guide for that understanding of the literature of the place. The biodiversity of a place and the spirit of a place should get its identity recognized among the people of the place for a sustainable living. Once the people of a place grow a cordial relation with the place he lives in he would always hesitate to hurt it. They are likely to resist any serious damage to the place. Due to its fertile soil and water bodies the Ganges delta has been densely populated throughout history and observed a gradual loss of biodiversity. The restoration of faunal diversity is no more an easy task in the area as leopards, hares, porcupines, tortoises, fishing cats have lost their habitats across the delta but the floral diversity can significantly be brought back with little effort. A number of literary works of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century represented the presence of these animals across the delta. The volumes of *A Statistical Account of Bengal* that cover the deltaic region also support the literary representation. With the scientific documents the planners can combine the literary imagination of the place to restore its floral diversity and also the water bodies wherever feasible. My journey across the Indian part of the delta and the newspaper reports from both sides of the nations convince me that much can still be done in that direction. The restoration of the indigenous vegetation and water resources may be the beginning of bringing back of many butterflies on the flowers, birds on tree top, fishing cat in the marshland and hares in the bushes as we find in many poems, short stories, and novels of the place. The Ganges delta is probably most prominently defined by its water bodies, rivers as the literary imagination would indicate and it is a bioregional duty to save them from forced death. Most of the rivers are dying fast and the deltaic region is gradually transforming into a dry land which depends mostly on underground water despite the presence of high level of arsenic in groundwater. The homogenizing global economy is changing the indigenous agricultural pattern; but, as the world struggles hard to cope with the climate change, loss of biodiversity, toxic air the bioregional living can be an intelligent and generous gesture. If the inhabitants of the Ganges delta want to find a bioregional understanding of the place the literature of the place can be a guide to the notion of harmonious life in a beloved life-place.

### **Conclusion:**

The paper comes to the conclusion that the literature of the deltaic regions presents the place, its biodiversity and people in such way that it may promote a strong sense of connectedness with the place. The knowledge embedded in these literary treasures bear the potential to inculcate teachings for place based sustainable living practices in the region through the aesthetic and ethical sense that these literary works may grow in its readers. In the vastly populated deltaic region, on the either side of the Indo-Bangladesh border, the bioregional sensibility needs to be grown to find a way out for sustainable living keeping in mind the need for livelihood for a massive population. As many rivers crisscross the two countries and pour water into the Bay of Bengal a joint action on bioregional parlance from each side of the border may be undertaken to stop the loss of habitats and biodiversity; stabilize the floral and faunal diversity; and finally to restore the essence of the soothing effects of nature as it was described the poet Jibananda Das in *Rupasi Bangla*.

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