

# BEAUTIFUL BLEND OF HISTORY AND FICTION

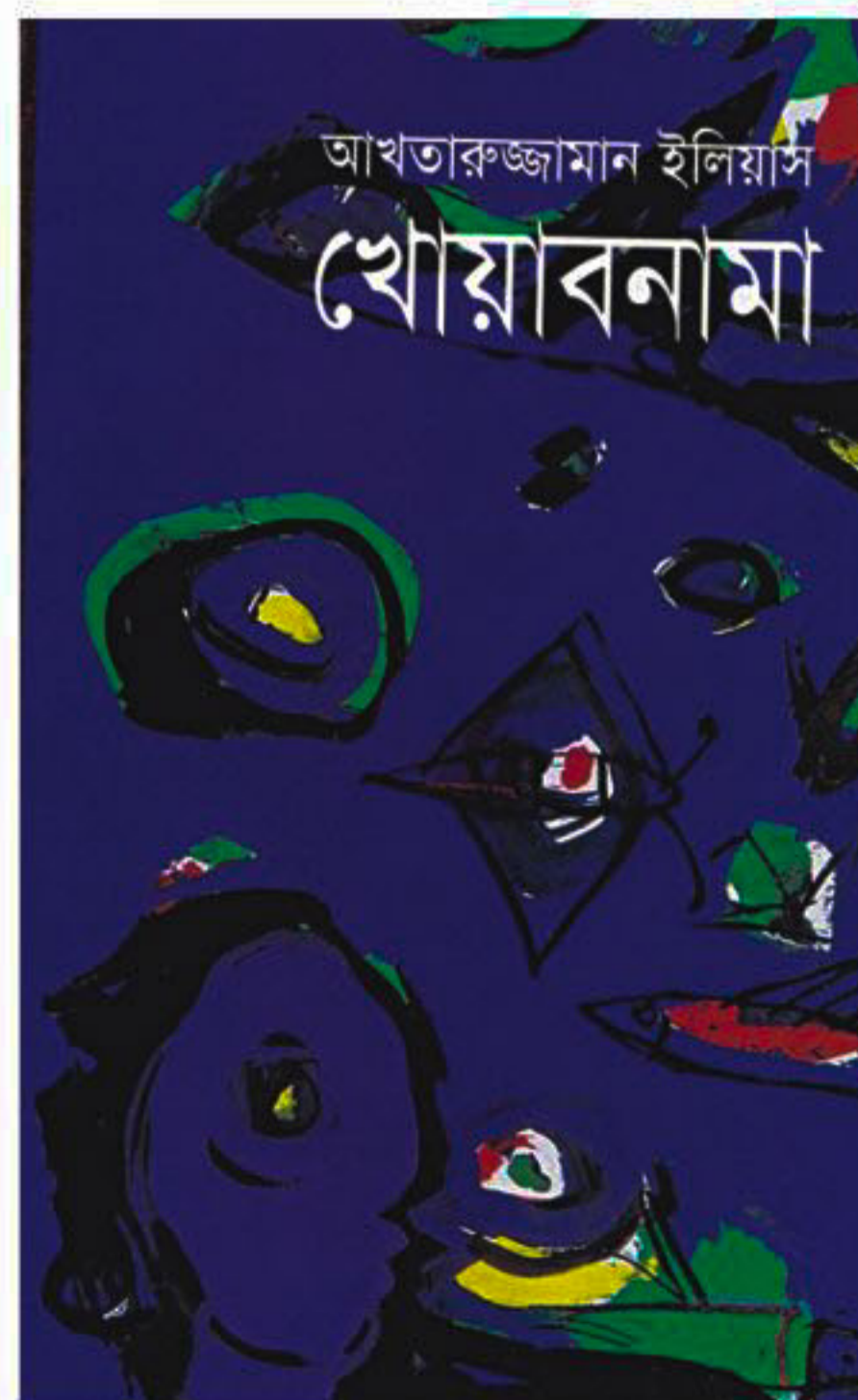
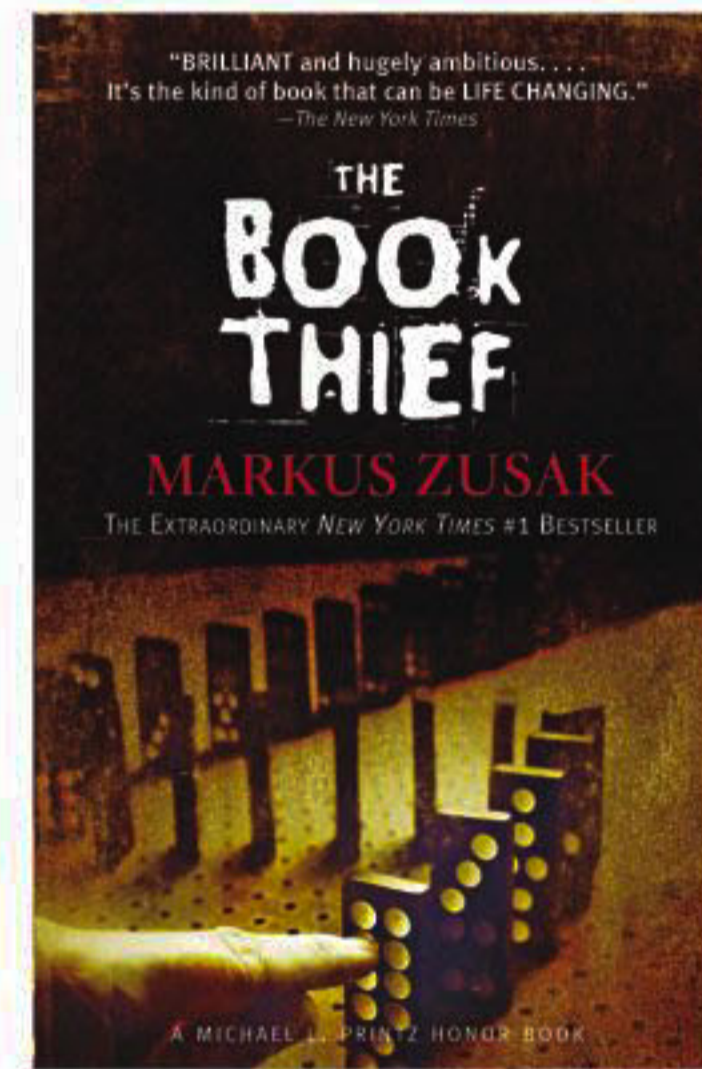
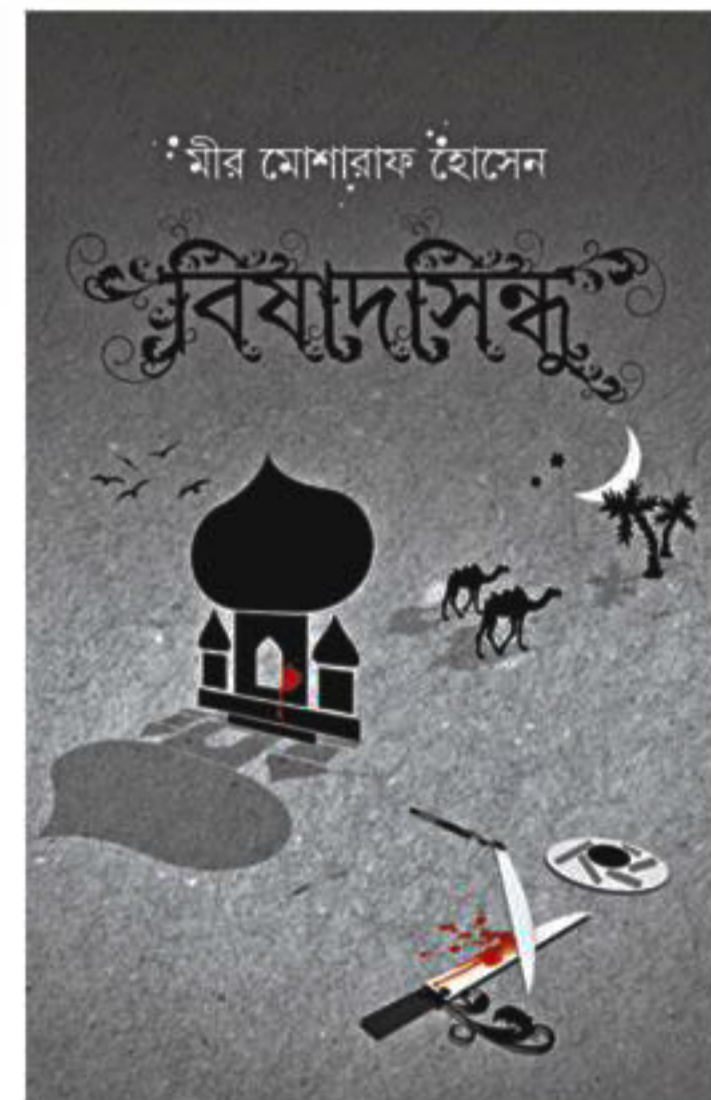
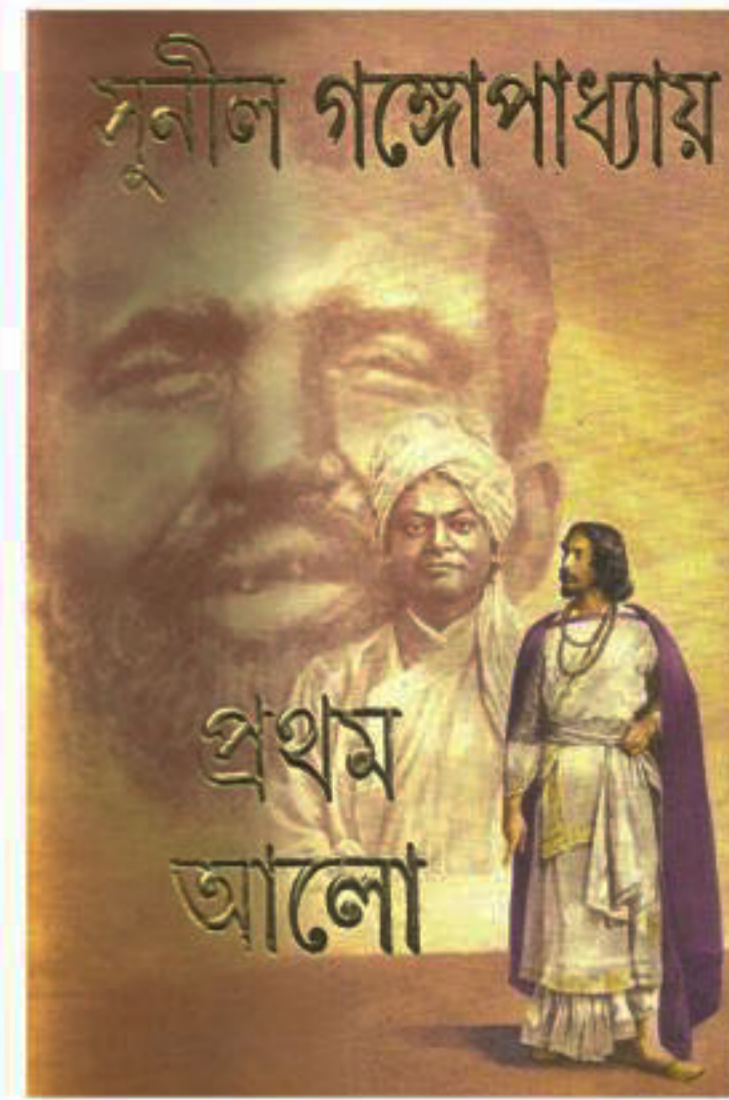
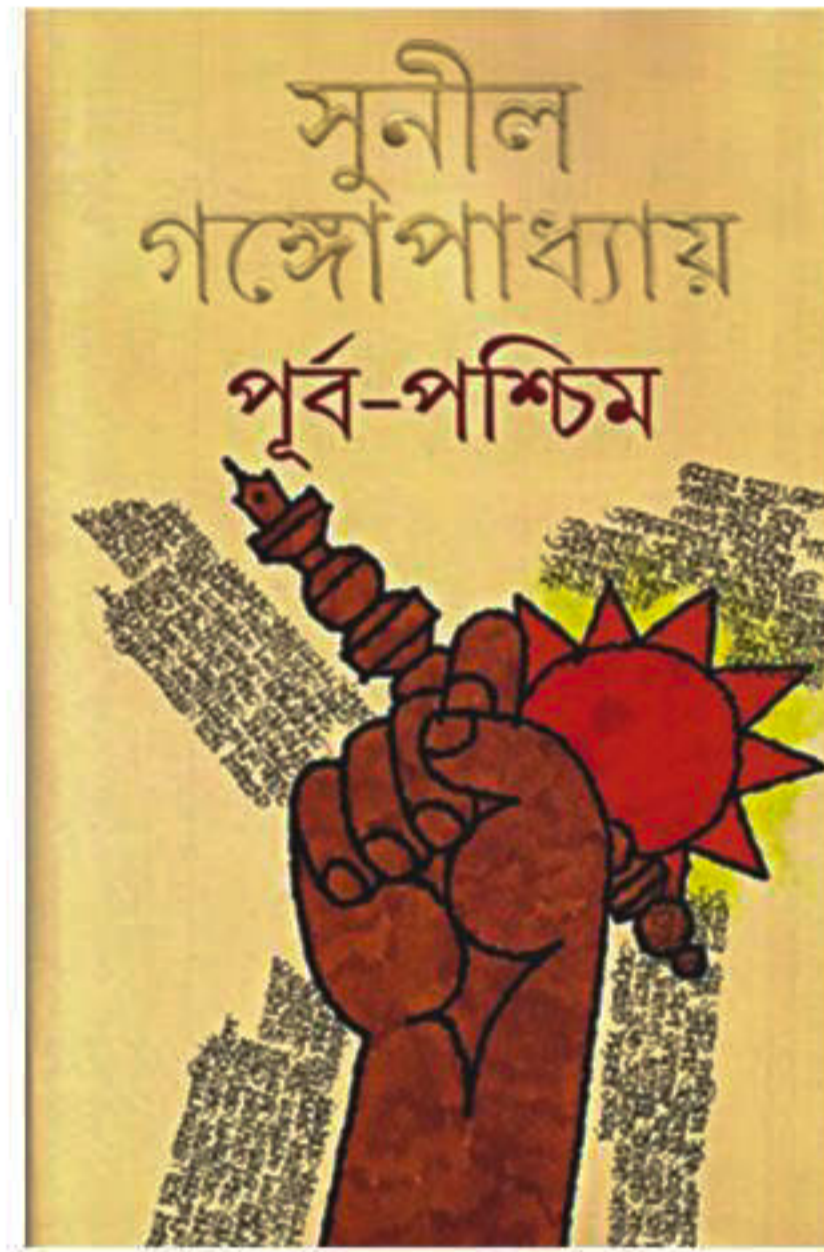
APURBA JAHANGIR

Most of us come across a common problem when dealing with history books. One of the major complaints of teenagers or even young adults is that reading history is boring. For teenagers, there're dates to remember and good marks to achieve. Others just don't have that luxury to sit and make time for learning about history, and in this day and age, that is understandable. Then again, there's also the aspect of keeping in touch with one's own roots. This is where fictions narratives can be of great help.

There are a bunch of novels which take place in historical settings. Sometimes the characters of the story are historical persons. Historical Fiction not only serves as a source of amusement but it teaches history in such a way that one learns about the chronological occurrences or lives without their own acknowledgement.

One of the most popular historical fictions in Bangla is Sei Shomoy, part one and two; by Sunil Gangopadhyay. The book was first published as a series in the Bangla literature magazine, Desh. The plot centers around characters such as Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Dwarkanath Tagore, Debendranath Tagore, journalist Harish Mukherjee, Keshab Chandra Sen, English educationists David Hare, John Bethune etc. The book revisits the late 19th century Bengal, where the establishment of modern Bangla literature takes place alongside the religious and philosophical conflict between different cast systems. This book also helps to get an insight on historical lives such as Madhusudan's and the Tagore family. Sunil's research and his way of writing, undoubtedly makes Sei Shomoy one of the best historical epics in Bangla literature. The book continues through Sunil's other two famous creation; Purba Paschim and Pratham Alo. All three narrate Bengal's ups and downs in the 19th century.

When talking about historical fictions, Leo Tolstoy's War and Peace can, in no way, be forgotten. Though this is considered to be one of the longest books ever written, War and Peace is a must read for people who want an in-depth experience of Catherine the Great's era. The novel is set 60 years before Tolstoy's day, but he had spoken with people who lived through the 1812 French invasion of Russia. He read up on all the standard histories available in Russian and French about the Napoleonic Wars and had read letters, journals, autobiographies and biographies of Napoleon and other key players of that era. There are approximately 160 real persons named or referred to in War and Peace. The book is considered to be one of the greatest books of all time.



Focusing on Islamic history, Mir Mosharraf Hossain's Bisadh Sindhu takes place in time of the war for the throne of the Khalifa. The plot revolves around the assassination of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s grand sons Hassan and Hussain. Though many say that a lot of the information in the book is made up, Bisadh Sindhu still is a good choice to know about a certain point of that period in Islamic history.

Australian writer Mark Zusak's The Book Thief is also a remarkable example of a modern age historical novel. The book is about the life of Liesel Meminger, a ten-year-old girl living in Germany during World War II. Liesel's experiences are told by Death, who describes both the attraction and annihilation of life in this era. As death narrates the horror of the Nazi regime, Liesel Meminger, the protagonist of the novel, struggles around surviving in this difficult time. A must read for history enthusiasts.

Akhteruzzaman Elias's Chile Kothar Shepai can also be one of the stars of this genre. Based on real life characters, this book narrates the details of the psychological journey of a man during the turbulent period just prior to Bangladeshi independence in 1971. This novel also contains what is arguably the most authentic description of life in Puran Dhaka. Elias's Khoabnama is also a good read to know the socio-political scene in rural pre-partition Bangladesh.

Humayun Ahmed's Moddhanho is also a good a read for book lovers. The novel deals with 20th century cast systems and the effects of the Second World War in the Indian sub continent. Humayun Ahmed, apart from his fiction characters, introduces historical characters such as Lalon, Rabindranath and others.

Books like these can serve as great tools to learn about important historical incidents. There are hundreds of books such as the above mentioned ones, which give thought-provoking insights on the major occurrences around the world. History and literature enthusiasts should, at least once, go through these books! ■

| BOOKS |

| STRIKING A CHORD |



Have you heard of the Local Bus? No, it's not one of those half-damaged, 35-year-old or more vehicles running on the streets of Dhaka. The latest sensation that managed to stir a commotion on the internet – Local Bus, by Pritom featuring Momotaz and Shafayat – is the most popular song Banglis all over the world are listening to right now and had hit more than 5 lakh views in less than 3 days!

The song speaks of everything that the mass can relate to – love, despair and revenge – but of course, in very colloquial words and setting. The chorus line, where the heart-broken individual compares her lover to a local bus, is probably one of the best lines heard in the longest time. To be more specific, the heart-broken beloved

seeks familiarity between her lover and the local bus, where passengers are invited on the bus with respect and passion, after which they are almost thrown off even before reaching the destination or the bus stop. Those living in Dhaka and using the local bus services could not agree more with the words of the song.

The satirical song is accompanied by a comic video where the characters show the different sides of love -- love for the self, for the other, and also for food.

The lyrics of the song were written by Golam Rabbani and Lutfor Hassan. Launched by Gaanchill Music on their YouTube platform, Local Bus was composed by the young Pritom Hasan. The video was directed by Taneem

## GETTING ON THE LOCAL BUS!

ELITA KARIM

PHOTO: COURTESY

Rahman Angshu.

Performed by the 'folk queen' of Bangladesh, internationally acclaimed singer and also one of the ministers of the Bangladeshi parliament, Momotaz, the composition reached further heights with her voice, not to mention her spontaneous performance on the video. Also, Shafayat, the rapper, created a whole new dimension in Bangla rapping with his words showcasing double meanings,

sometimes more! Young actors Toya and Shoumik were also seen in the video. The best surprise was when Adit, popular music director, played the part of a disgruntled director, working behind the camera; doing a pretty good job.

Check out the video now, if you have not already. And for all those looking for some Bangla music to dance to in the wedding-month of December – Local Bus would be your perfect choice! ■

ABOUT TOWN



SHAKUNTALA  
DANCE DRAMA - BHABNA'S  
PRODUCTION

September 23, 6:30 - 9 pm, Jatio  
Nattayshala, Bangladesh Shilpakala  
Academy

Hosted by: Samina Husain Prema  
Tickets can be found on [ticketchai.com](http://ticketchai.com)

For more information, visit-  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/320172151659875/>



GET 20% DISCOUNT  
for every booking till 30<sup>th</sup> september 2016

EXHIBITION OF  
SNAPPY

September 22-24, 3 - 8 pm, Drik Gallery  
Hosted by: Snappy

For Query, visit-  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1071648049578993/>



CHARCOAL  
ART EXHIBITION

September 23-25, 10 am - 8 pm  
Venue: BUET Auditorium Complex  
Hosted By- Charcoal- BUET Artista  
Society

For more information, visit-  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1651538728491977/>