The moon between the trees

KUMAR SAMIT ROY

TRANSLATED BY ORCHID CHAKMA AND OSAMA RAHMAN

On the advent of the World Indigenous Day, Star Weekend has translated a song by the late Kumar Samit Roy. Most of his songs were composed based on present-day Rangamati. Though his home was submerged by the infamous Kaptai Dam, its' surroundings are ever-present in his simple but thought-provoking lyrics. This is our humble attempt to put forth his work in a manner that reaches even those who have not had the opportunity to explore the works of this great composer. We have taken minute liberties in our presentation, but have tried to stick to the original work as much as possible.

When the moon is between the tree,
Do remember me?
Look in your chest of memories,
If you look, you would find.

20 years,
Lost to the waters of a dam
Salil Roy, do you remember him?
Do your ears still ring to the songs of Dola San?

Look in your chest of memories left behind,
If you look, you would find.

Where are you today
I don't know.
Haven't seen you in a while,
Ever since the dam began to flow.

During the full moon in the night,
Our hands would intertwine.
We would go to our shrine.

Look in your chest of memories left behind,
If you look, you can find.

A new year has come again,
Past conversations have returned too.
Rangamati back then,
That was beauty true.

But the splendour washed away.

Search in your chest of memories left behind,
And you can find.
Source: http://www.kumarsamitroy.com

Chakma Translation by Trishila Chakma

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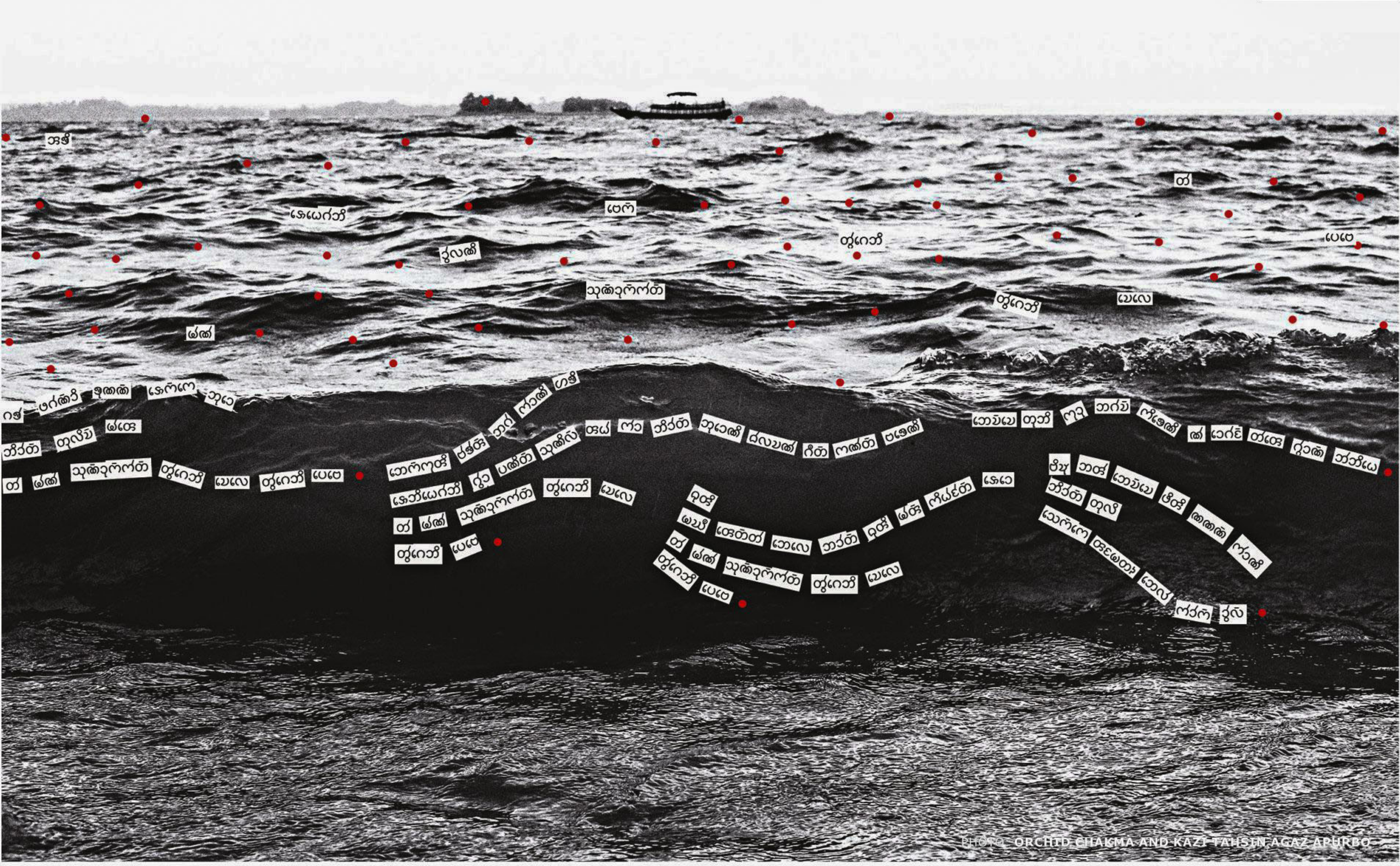

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Later, Wyler's project would see the light of day as *The Negro Soldier* (1944) with screenplay by Carlton Moss, an African American serviceman who was attached to Wyler.

John Huston, of British descent, would tour Italy with American units. His film of American soldiers and the aftermath of *The Battle for San Pietro* (1945)—the 'cleanup', as it were, with footage of piled up bodies and grave digging—would offend generals and army men to the point where they would refuse to release his films. Only General George C. Marshall's intervention would make it available to fresh recruits and the public, so that they could know the true price of war. After the war, he would film *Let There Be Light*—a look into the permanent scarring of war and the rehabilitation of servicemen from battle fatigue. It was the first look at PTSD, before the term was even invented. It would be seized and restricted from viewing by the War Department, not to be shown till the 1980s.

And towards the tail end of the war in Europe, George Stevens would stumble upon the biggest secret of the Nazi occupation of Europe—the horror of Dachau concentration camp in the aftermath of the Battle of the Bulge. He saw the gas chambers, the furnaces, the survivors, and filmed it all. The footage of these death factories served as proof in the Nuremberg trials.

For someone who only had access, as a child, to the often biased and largely one-dimensional historical documentaries peddled by the likes of History Channel and Discovery, it was a sobering realisation for me later on in life that few of these films had any real substance beyond a basic presentation of facts. *Five Came Back*, unlike these predecessors, offers a rare in-depth look at conflict, both outside and within the people telling stories of that conflict, as opposed to the pure propaganda that they set out to create. We see the grey—how the evil and the righteous are not as distinctly different as we think. And we see the legacy left behind by these directors, such as with Steven Spielberg and *Schindler's List* and Francis Ford Coppola and *Apocalypse Now*.