

**PROJECT TITLE : Mapping Society and Culture: A Digital Archive of  
Assamese Vernacular Comics, 1960- 2000**

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**

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**CO PI:**

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**Aim of the Project**

The aim of this research project was to contextualize, research, and archive late 20th century Assamese comics written and published for children.

**Objectives of the Study**

- To contextualize and read the comics as an essential part of history and culture. Vernacular comics may not have had readership outside their respective linguistic class but imagined for children on the margins, making the medium more inclusive.
- To archive the lesser known regional Assamese comics like *Parambir Hamd*, *Luit* comics, *Konkon* comics, *Kaziranga* comics amongst others, which have been out of circulation since the 1970s.
- To interview the writers and illustrators who wrote and designed these books. This will enable us to understand their position, their influences, and their reasons for choosing to work in a marginalized medium, in a marginalized language and for a marginalized section of readers. It is crucial to document their art before it is lost forever.

**Fieldwork and Limitations**

We applied for a Major Research Grant for the above-mentioned topic. However, since we were granted a Minor Research Grant, time and money were constrained. A Digital Archive of this magnitude required more time to source texts and meet collectors. Gaps in series could have been filled by travelling into the depths of Assam: to old village libraries and school libraries to source more texts. This is crucial since most of these publication houses, which





published these comics have closed down.

Creation of a Digital Archive requires an extensive set up with state-of-the-art computers and software. A basic camera, to click high resolution photographs, would cost us not less than Rs. 70,000/-, which was much more than our allocated budget for Books and Equipment. Therefore, in order to go into the Field, we had to work around the schedule of our hired photographer who was willing to travel with us at a very nominal fee. This set us back a few more Data collections over time.

The Digital Archive of Assamese Comics from 1960- 2000, does not include Assamese translations of few titles from the renowned *Amar Chitra Katha*, *Tinkle*, *Chacha Choudhury*, *Phantom* and *Superman* series. This Archive chose to ignore them due to many reasons including that of Copyright issues. Despite the unavailability of many titles, or few issues of some series, this Archive has successfully collected and documented the major comics/ comic series.

## Findings

The following ideas are the conclusions of this Research:

- Assamese vernacular comics were very much prevalent during the aforesaid period. Though the market was mostly flooded by translated titles of *Amar Chitra Katha*, *Indrajal Comics*, *Tinkle* and *Chacha Choudhury* and Western comics like *Marvel series* and the others, there was a substantial number of comics which were being written and circulated in Assamese.
- Comics, besides the ones mentioned above, were first introduced in the newspapers and magazines. Newspapers like *The Assam Tribune*, *Axom Bani*, *Prantik*, *Bismay* etc. began a designated comics corner for their subscribers to read. They mostly carried serialized versions of *Phantom*, *Mandrake*, *Superman* etc. which were translated to Assamese.

*Pallavi Jha*

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- As the Assamese translations of the Western comics became popular, writers and illustrators began to imagine stories which were steeped in Assamese culture and lore, thus introducing their readers to a whole new genre of indigenous comics. It cannot be a mere coincidence that this exercise, carried out during the 1960's and 1970's, which saw the linguistic, political, cultural and social build up to the Assam Movement, was done unknowingly. There is always a close link between comics and ideology which has time and again been researched and explained, by Indian and Western critics alike.
- An interesting idea, that has emerged from this area is the role that pedagogy plays in comics. Many comic writers have maintained that comics were not meant only for children but for adults as well.

## Conclusion

As mentioned the creation of this Digital Archive was the main objective and aim of this project titled, "Mapping Society and Culture: A Digital Archive of Assamese Vernacular Comics, 1960- 2000." Preliminary research into the area, piqued our interest and we formulated a Project that would create and historicize a much-loved children's genre in Assamese. Copyright permissions were granted by all Copyright holders. We created the following:

- A Digital Archive of all the comics that we sourced from various writers and illustrators and libraries
- An extensive metadata collection to navigate through the Archive

  
(Dr. P. Jha)

  
(Dr. Hashik NK)



## GFR 12 – A

[(See Rule 238 (1))]

FORM OF UTILIZATION CERTIFICATE  
FOR AUTONOMOUS BODIES OF THE GRANTEE ORGANIZATIONUTILIZATION CERTIFICATE FOR THE YEAR 2023-2024 in respect  
of recurring/non-recurring  
GRANTS-IN-AID/SALARIES/CREATION OF CAPITAL ASSETS

1. Name of the Scheme : **"Mapping Society and Culture for Children: Digital Archive of Assamese Vernacular Comics, 1960-2000"**
2. Whether recurring or non-recurring grants : Recurring and non-recurring both
3. Grants position at the beginning of the Financial year
  - (i) Cash in Hand/Bank : Nil
  - (ii) Unadjusted advances
  - (iii) Total : Nil
4. Details of grants received, expenditure incurred and closing balances: (Actuals)

Unspent Balances of Grants received years [figure as at Sl. No. 3 (iii)]	Interest Earned thereon	Interest deposited back to the Government	Grant received during the year			Total Available funds (1+2-3+4)	Expenditure incurred	Closing Balances (5-6)
1	2	3	4			5	6	7
			Sanction No. (i)	Date (ii)	Amount (iii)			
Nil	Nil	Nil	02/197/2022-2023/ICSS R/RP/MN/GEN	30/05/2023	Rs. 200000/-	Rs. 400000/-	Rs. 384010/-	Rs. 15990/-
				08/04/2024	Rs. 200000/-			

Component wise utilization of grants:

Grant-in-aid-General	Grant-in-aid-Salary	Grant-in-aid-creation of capital assets	Total
Rs. 164,303/-	Rs. 177,533/-	Rs. 42174/-	Rs. 384010/-

Details of grants position at the end of the year

- (i) Cash in Hand/Bank : Rs. 15990/-
- (ii) Unadjusted Advances
- (iii) Total : Rs. 15990/-

**GENERAL FINANCIAL RULES 2017**Ministry of Finance  
Department of Expenditure**FORM GFR 12A**

Certified that I have satisfied myself that the conditions on which grants were sanctioned have been duly fulfilled/are being fulfilled and that I have exercised following checks to see that the money has been actually utilized for the purpose for which it was sanctioned:

- (i) The main accounts and other subsidiary accounts and registers (including assets registers) are maintained as prescribed in the relevant Act/Rules/Standing instructions (mention the Act/Rules) and have been duly audited by designated auditors. The figures depicted above tally with the audited figures mentioned in financial statements/accounts.
- (ii) There exist internal controls for safeguarding public funds/assets, watching outcomes and achievements of physical targets against the financial inputs, ensuring quality in asset creation etc. & the periodic evaluation of internal controls is exercised to ensure their effectiveness.
- (iii) To the best of our knowledge and belief, no transactions have been entered that are in violation of relevant Act/Rules/standing instructions and scheme guidelines.
- (iv) The responsibilities among the key functionaries for execution of the scheme have been assigned in clear terms and are not general in nature.
- (v) The benefits were extended to the intended beneficiaries and only such areas/districts were covered where the scheme was intended to operate.
- (vi) The expenditure on various components of the scheme was in the proportions authorized as per the scheme guidelines and terms and conditions of the grants-in-aid.
- (vii) It has been ensured that the physical and financial performance under... (name of the scheme has been according to the requirements, as prescribed in the guidelines issued by Govt. of India and the performance/targets achieved statement for the year to which the utilization of the fund resulted in outcomes given at Annexure – I duly enclosed.
- (viii) The utilization of the fund resulted in outcomes given at Annexure – II duly enclosed (to be formulated by the Ministry/Department concerned as per their requirements/specifications.)
- (ix) Details of various schemes executed by the agency through grants-in-aid received from the same Ministry or from other Ministries is enclosed at Annexure – II (to be formulated by the Ministry/Department concerned as per their requirements/specifications).

Date:

Place:

Signature

Name.....

Chief Finance Officer

(Head of the Finance) *Finance Officer*  
*Tespur University*

Signature

Name.....

Head of the Organisation

*Registrar*  
*Tespur University*

(Strike out inapplicable terms)



To,  
The Deputy Director  
Research Project  
Indian Council of Social Science Research  
Aruna Asaf Ali Marg  
New Delhi-110067

Sub: Statement of Assets, Books etc. related to the Research Project of "Mapping Society and Culture for Children: A Digital Archive of Assamese Vernacular Comics, 1960-2000"

Certified that the following assets, books etc. acquired from the grant of the ICSSR- Research Project Title "Mapping Society and Culture for Children: A Digital Archive of Assamese Vernacular Comics, 1960-2000", Project Director Dr. Pallavi Jha at Tezpur University, have been procured as per Government norms.

Sl. No	Description of item bought under Research Project	Head under which the item is acquired	Vendor Name	Invoice No.	Date	Price
1.	Brother Multifunction Machines Mfm. (Quantity: 1)	Equipment and Study Material	M/S Ratan & Company, Bulbul Bazar, Tinsukia, Assam, 786125	GEM-34959076	26/09/2023	Rs. 17,998/-
2.	Samsung Tablet Computer with 8 GB RAM and 128 GB internal storage (A9+ LTE 5G) (Quantity: 1)	Equipment and Study Material + Fieldwork	Motiv Enterprises Private Limited, Jaipur, Rajasthan	MEPL/24-25/325	31/05/2024	RS. 24,176/-*
Total Cost of Assets and Books acquired (in words): <b>Forty Two Thousand One Hundred and Seventy Four .</b>						Rs. 42,174/-*

\* The exceeding amount is adjusted from the Fieldwork grant as per the rule of Re-appropriation as per the Sanction Order, headed 'Project Budget', F.NO.02/197/2022-23/ICSSR/RP/MN/GEN dated 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2023, which states "The Project Investigator may with the permission of the institution, re-appropriate expenditure from one sub-head to another, subject to maximum of 10% of the particular budget head."

A copy of the sanction order is attached.

*Pallavi Jha*  
5/11/24  
Principal Investigator  
Dept. of English

Consolidated Statement of Accounts

S.No	Expenditure Head	Percentage (as mentioned in the sanction order) Allocation to Total Budget of the Study	Actual Value as per study (in Rs.)- Sanctioned Amount	Actual Expenditure incurred
1	Research Staff Full time/Part-time/Hired Services	Not exceeding 45 % of the Total Budget	Rs. 180000/-	Rs. 177,533/-
2	Fieldwork Travel/Logistics/Boarding, etc. Including Books/Journals	Not exceeding 35%	Rs. 140,000/-	Rs. 147,181/- **
3	Equipment and Study Material Computer, printer etc. Source Material/Software and Data Sets, etc.	Not exceeding 10 %	Rs. 40,000/-	Rs. 42,174/- **
4	Contingency	Not exceeding 5%	Rs. 20,000/-	Rs. 17,122/-
5	Publication of Report*	5%	Rs. 20,000/-	NA
6	Total	100%	Rs. 400000/-	Rs. 384010/-

\*The publication amount will be kept by the ICSSR for publication of the final report based on the recommendation of the Expert Committee constituted by the ICSSR.

\*\*The exceeding amount is adjusted from the Fieldwork grant as per the rule of Re-Appropriation as per the Sanction Order, headed 'Project Budget', F.NO.02/197/2022-23/ICSSR/RP/MN/GEN dated 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2023, which states "The Project Investigator may with the permission of the institution, re-appropriate expenditure from one sub-head to another, subject to maximum of 10% of the particular budget head."

A copy of the sanction order is attached.

Certified that no change has been made in the  
Project as approved by the Council

*Pallavi Jha*  
5/11/24  
Signature of the Project Director

Counter signature of the Administrative Head of the  
Affiliating Institution/University with seal

OR

Finance Officer and Chartered Accountant

*Finance Officer*  
*ICSSR University*

**Principal Investigator**  
**Dept. of English**