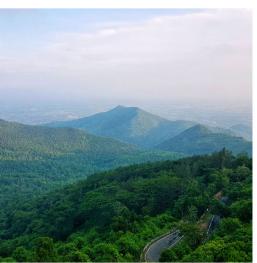
Reflections July 2019

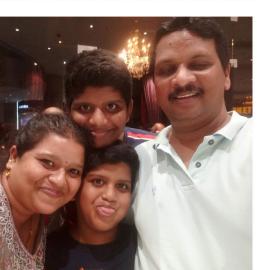








A NEWGEN PRODUCT









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Editorial Board: Arockia Alexander, Anthuvan, Rajath Krishnan, Krishnaa Lakshmanan, Athulya Sundaresan

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The fight against plastic pollution is such a critical one! We also are slowly banning

plastic straws, cups and all other kinds of throw-away plastic items in Europe.

Nice to see Pradhiba, and also Lydia and Srikanth starring in the issue © - Claire Chouzenoux, Content Supply Chain Manager, Wolters Kluwer



EDITORIAL BOARD



Alex a.k.a. Arockia Alexander is the manager of the Books Pre-Editing team at Newgen. He started his career in Newgen in 2005. He believes the best way to manage his team is by winning their hearts and motivating them to be better performers. He holds five postgraduate degrees in MSc, MPhil,

MBA, MA and MSW (Cont.), but his passion is undeniably in exploring Tamil literature, especially with regard to the Sangam period (spanning from 5th century BCE to 3rd century BCE). His interests are piqued by any art form related to Tamil, be it debate, oratory, written articles, poems, or short stories. His favorite quote is "தீதாம் நன்றாம் மூறாதர வாரா" (roughly translated as "No good or bad thing will come to us through others").



Anthuvan a.k.a. Arockia Anthuvan Rani is best described as a quiet, unassuming person who'll dazzle people with her brilliant smile. She loves reading novels and dreams of travelling the world one day. She is more emotional than she seems on the surface, and she has the ability to see the best that comes

with the worst. She believes that the best way to learn is through trial and error. Anthuvan is a production editor with the OUP UK Law team and this is her 8th year in Newgen.



Rajath Krishnan is a manager of copy editing, currently working with the Thomson Reuters Books team. He joined Newgen in January 2018. He dreams of writing a novel that could be adapted into a movie someday. He loves to collect books (for post-retirement reading) and plan exotic vaca-

tions and wishes to cycle across a vast countryside with his wife.

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: There once was a little boy who was asked to write an essay about the coconut tree. But he, instead, wrote about his pet dog. He droned on at length about how his dog would chase the neighbors' chickens around the yard and run after the postman down the road. How it would frighten the poor cats in the neighborhood and chase them up the trees. The capers of his spirited pet were endless. At long last, he ended the essay with a note saying, " ... to tie up such a naughty dog, the coconut tree is very useful."

I narrate this story here because trying to publish a magazine with a theme/topic is similar to asking everyone to write an essay about the coconut tree. So, in an attempt to have all-round participation, we decided to forego the theme. True to form, we received several contributions this time that were about all things under the sun.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as I have enjoyed working on it.

It gives me immense pleasure to introduce to you the new members of the Editorial Board. I thank all those who participated in their own way in making this issue possible.

Keep reading and keep the contributions coming!

∼ Lydia



Tell us What we're doing right and what we're doing wrong and what you think of this issue. We'd love to hear from you.

Your feedback and suggestions are most welcome. Please send in your contributions before 5 September 2019 to Reflections@ newgen.co

E D I T O R I A L B O A R D



Krishnaa Lakshmanan is a senior copyeditor with the Books Copy Editing team who has been a part of Newgen since September 2016. Apart from that, he is a writer, casual poet, and wannabe author of fiction (someday, sooner or later!). The art of words is what keeps him going. Krishnaa's

dream is to one day see his book(s) on the shelves of bookstores. A diehard Linkin Park enthusiast, he also loves discovering new music to listen to. Driving calms him, except when he is on the roads on Saturday evenings. He is also an ardent lover of food.



Lydia a.k.a. Anula Lydia is an avid reader and a lover of coffee. Lydia believes "Any day that doesn't begin with coffee and reading is guaranteed to be a bad day!" She is a gardening and cooking enthusiast and imagines herself to be a world traveller, slowly but steadily making her way through her

travel bucket list. She says she can sometimes be organized to the point of mania. She loves watching movies, plays, and TV series in her spare time and spends a good amount of time with her nieces. She is a managing editor for the Books Copy Editing team and her association with Newgen is a long one.



Athulya Sundaresan is a senior executive copyeditor with the Journals Copy Editing team. When she is not working, you will typically find her daydreaming. She loves staying up late at night to read books, play Sudoku, watch movies, or simply listen to songs. Her interest in music varies from country

to pop, in dance from contemporary to street dance, in books from romance to thrillers, in movies from Disney classics to scifi, and in general from anime to artificial intelligence.

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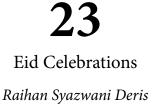
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Arthi Kuppuswamy* Consultant Remedial Education

pril 27th to 30th witnessed a summer camp at Nandavanam, near Kapaleeswarar Nagar Beach, Neelankarai, in the form of a Children's Theatre Fest. The event brought together students from Nandavanam Learners Club, an afterschool program that caters to underprivileged children from Chinna Neelankarai Kuppam; Madurai Seed, a grassroots non-profit organization that caters to underprivileged children from Karumbalai, Madurai; and Nandavanam Center of Excellence for Children with Developmental Challenges. The three-day festival was a lot more than just theatre; it all started with apprehensive children and parents walking in, and over the course of the three exciting days, several warm, new friendships had been forged, ideas and thoughts were shared, and most importantly, everyone was witness to the heart-warming spirit of inclusion that the children displayed.

On the morning of April 27th, there was anxiety in the air as children from Nandavanam Learners Club and Madurai Seed gathered at the venue. The children from Madurai Seed had arrived the previous evening. A colourfully decorated Nandavanam, with intricate Rangoli designs and exquisite floral arrangements, helped kick in the festive mood.

After a formal inauguration, the children from the Learners Club performed theatre warm-up exercises while the Madurai Seed children observed keenly. During the exercises, the children were like flowering buds as they dropped their inhibitions and opened up to their potential. Children from both the organizations began bonding with each other during the break and lunch and soon started playing their own games.

The most interesting scenes unfolded when the differently abled children from Nandavanam joined the practice. All the children infused effortlessly. Inclusion happens in the most organic way when children are left on their own in a safe environment without any adult supervision.

Summer Camp: The Spirit of Inclusion through Theatre



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Later in the evening, a mesmerizing performance by the children from Madurai Seed provided a fitting finale for Day 1 of the fest. One could see the immense talent and dedicated hard work put in by each child out there.

Day 2 started with an exciting buzz. Now that the anxieties were buried away and the children were all familiar with each other, there was a sense of having completed a jig-saw puzzle and having seen the full picture. The play by the Learners Club children, which had been practiced in bits and pieces, finally came together as a whole act. Meanwhile, the adults in the house were also buzzing around like bees as they got busy getting the props ready and organizing and trying to get the minor details of the events right. The teachers practiced shadow puppetry for the final day's performance. While the children went about their rehearsals, the support staff moved around providing everyone with refreshments. As chaotic as it might sound or may have seemed, on the whole, there was a perfect synchronized harmony. Once again, the day ended with another scintillating performance by the Madurai Seed children.

Excitement levels peaked on Day 3 as the children seemed eager for dawn to break so that they could get back together and continue their play. It was fascinating to see the children from Nandavanam and Madurai Seed rehearsing their plays and the teachers working on their shadow puppetry, all in the same room. The support staff continued weaving in and out with refreshments. The breaks between rehearsals were filled with a lot of fun-filled chatter and little games. Once the final rehearsal was over, the make-up session got underway. Throughout the day, Nandavanam resounded with the joyous laughter of the children.

Just before leaving for the beach for the final performances, the children and the adults gathered to share their experiences and learning. It was heart-warming to hear the children talk about their experiences and to realize that such meaningful learning happens outside the curriculum framework of

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the school. The support staff, with their smiles and love-infused energy, have to be lauded for keeping everyone energized with their hospitality despite the peak summer's heat.

The first play of the evening was by the Madurai Seed children, and it was yet another excellent performance. This was followed by a shadow puppet show by the teachers. Although they had less than two days to learn the art as well as to find the right song, the teachers surprised everyone with their newly learnt skills. The Madurai Seed children displayed the most heartfelt gesture when, on sensing the nervousness of the Nandavanam children, they cheered and motivated them. The Nandavanam children performed so well that it was hard to believe they were performing for the first time. The efforts of the differently abled children to bond and the way the other children allowed them to blend in easily were deeply touching.

At the end of the third day when the curtains finally came down, the children bid tearful goodbyes. New friendships had blossomed over the past three days and each child carried back precious memories, experiences, and learnings from the fest.

Theatre has a role for every individual, and each role is different. It is this very difference that unfolds into a meaningful play. Every role is significant; even if the smallest part fails, a whole play can fall apart. Life is just that, a theatre, and everyone has a role in it.

^{*}Arthi is an Educational Therapist who works as a Consultant in Remedial Education at Nandavanam. Because of her deep interest and passion in wholesome education, she left a career in the IT industry. She has done Educational Therapy from the National Institute of Learning Difficulty, USA, and she holds a diploma in Specific Learning Difficulties – MDA. She is an avid learner who has qualified herself in many areas of remedial education. She is a warm and creative remedial teacher who makes teaching and learning materials interesting. The acceptance and commitment she brings to the children she works with is evidenced by how happy and eager they are to come to her class.



Rajath Krishnan Manager, Copyediting Thomson Reuters Books

y family and I live in a gated community today. Around 450 apartments clustered over nine floors and four blocks. We have neighbours all around. Upstairs, downstairs, left and right, front and back, east and west, south and north. We know not, however, any of them. There is always that excuse: 'Where is the time to socialize?' My sister and I walked over to an apartment next door with a box of sweets on Diwali. A man in his fifties opened the door, stared at us like we were salespeople, but turned a smile when he realized that we were two of his many anonymous neighbours: 'Oh you got sweets, thank you! You are from across the lobby? 305?' 'Oh no uncle, we're staying next door, 303.' Ah good, I live here - 302.' Yes, we can see that. Happy Holidays, we gotta go now.' More forced smiles, some awkward Japanese-style bowing of our heads, and soon, we were back home and comfortable, at 303!



Twenty-one years of my life, we lived in an independent house, facing the national highway, the Grand Southern Trunk Road, a. k. a. the GST Road. The house itself was almost hidden away behind a dozen and more shades of green, and I called my home the 'Jungle on the GST'. Life in an apartment, though, is so much more peaceful, and let me tell you why. Back at the Jungle, our biggest worry was the receding water level in our well. Yes! We had a proper 'well', not a bore well. Kids these



My Jungle on the GST

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days might need to Google the term. There were apartments coming up all around us, and their bore wells, we believed, were responsible for our well drying up. And then there was this problem of general maintenance. We had to hunt for days to find a plumber, an electrician, or a painter. Here at the gated community, these services are part of the package, 24×7 .



It has been three years since we had a power cut and a candle-light dinner with the moths and other winged critters, three years since we made our last call to the Electricity Board; three years since Dad had to clear up the walkway to our door after a monsoon night. Not anymore, not here at 303. Back at the Jungle, we sweated out on many weekends on our garden. Clearing away dead leaves; cleaning the knee-deep lily pond of algae; feeding love birds, diamond doves, cockatiels, and little finches that filled our little aviary; and the most priceless of all – giving our dog a bath. It was a once-a-month affair and a pretty tedious one at that. The task demanded the attention of three people: my dad, me, and the third would be my sister, mom, or grandmother. One held the soap, one held the hose and the bucket, the third held the dog. At the end of an hour-long battle, each of us would be as wet and dripping as our amused dog. Speaking of the hose brings to mind the picture of my dad or grandmother going around the garden with it every morning. During weekends, it was my sister and, sometimes, me. Our neighbours had cats, and they (the cats) would visit every Sunday afternoon for fish or chicken and have long naps in our backyard, but they made sure to leave the compound late in the evening before we let our dog out. We also had coconut trees, and they were a threat because a coconut was likely to fall on your head if you stood under it. (Don't ask me why you would want to stand under it.)

The rains were a nuisance at the Jungle. All the greens around the house would get a shade or two darker, and the bushes became so much thicker that you could hardly spot the house behind it. The smell of fresh earth would bring along with it new colourful insects, and many times, we even found a snake in our lily pond. We suspected it could have been hunting for fish, but we let it be. We did sometimes worry about the snake entering the house, but I was more worried about our dog finding the snake and trying to take a bite.

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That was all at the Jungle, though; here at 303, we worry not of such things. We cannot have our own budgies or finches, but there are pigeons that fly past our windows. We do not have a private lily pond anymore with pink lilies that bloom once a lucky year, with fish and snake, but we have a common swimming pool, a common lawn, a common gym, and common whatnot (but of course, we have not the time for any of those whatnots). But the best part is, we need not tend to any cleaning of ponds or aviaries, or muddy our fingernails and toes in the name of gardening. Dogs are allowed in our apartments but with strict conditions and rules; we decided not to get one, so no more family battles to give a dog a bath. No more hosing around. No neighbours or their cats to bother us at lunch on precious Sundays. It does not matter if the leaves turn greener or the flowers lure butterflies. The monsoon does not worry us anymore. No moths, no insects, no smell of fresh earth.

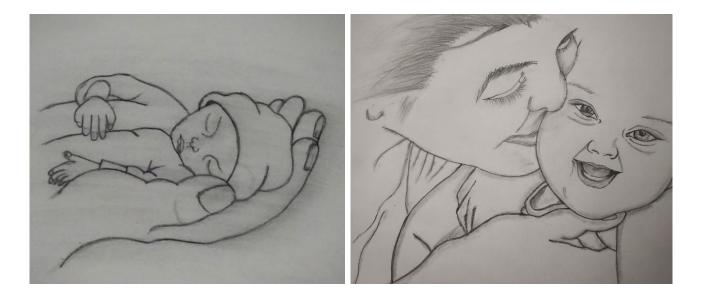
This is modern living – for those of us, or rather all of us, who have one eye fixed on the clock at all times. This is modern living, where a house is not the home it once used to be. This is modern living, and I see everywhere more locked-up bungalows waiting to be brought down to rubble and turned into multi-storey apartments.

I live, here at 303, an easy life. Yet my heart stays at that Jungle, with the birds, the fish, the wild and unkempt trees, the pond with the lilies, with my dog and the snake.



Sketches by Uma Parvathi Senior Executive, Preediting Journals Copyediting

Mother's Eternal Love





Awaleen R Copyeditor Journals Copyediting

Don't the swaying branches make you dance with joyful enthusiasm? Don't you feel perfectly refreshed listening to the rustling of leaves? Doesn't the pleasant shade make you feel ohhh so rewarded? Don't the blooming blossoms instil hope time and again? Don't you ever wonder killing trees would kill the planet as well? Doesn't this thought often seem frightening more than it is saddening? Live Trees! Love Trees!

Ж



Go Trees





Srividya Raamadhurai Project Manager Aspen DE

My favourite colours are the sunset, the rain-drenched Earth, and the seashells.

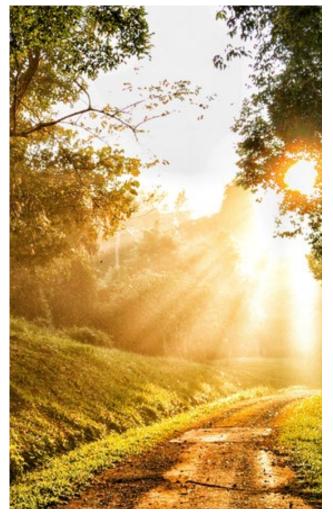
I like the sunset, the hues of orange and red, with a touch of Midas, to turn everything to gold. Roasting the sand to a beautiful bronze and bathing her pretty features with an angelic glow and, turning me, an admirer in the shadows, into a silhouette.

I like the rain-drenched Earth. With the dust settled down and washed away in the rain, the colours appear more vivid, with a little hope and a tinge of promise that someday when the sins of the past wash away, all that remains are the bright and beautiful colours of life. A fresh start.

I like seashells, reflecting a bit of the sea; it's place of birth and of the sky above and of the sand below. Each one so unique. It reminds me of people. How we are a mix of everything we come across, some good and some bad. How the shells have a story each of its own, just like people do. All thrown into the same world. Shells of different shapes, sizes, and colours, yet sharing the same sky and the same sea.

So, these are my favourites colours, what are yours?

My Palette





Sridevi Copyeditor Journals Copyediting

கண்ணா... காக்த மனம் தானடா – அதில் இரும்பென்று எழுதி வைத்தேன் – படிப்போர் இரும்பென்று என்னுதல் வேண்டி!! இரும்பென்று எழுதி வைத்தால் இரும்பாகப் போவதில்லை! இருமுறை பட்டம் பெற்றூம் உனக்கிது விளங்கவில்லை!! இரும்பை உறுக்குவதாய் எண்ணிக்கொண்டு காகிதத்தைக் கிழிக்கின்றாயே!! இனியனே.. நினைவுகொன்! – கிழியாக் காகிதத்தில் உனக்காக எழுதி வைத்தக் கவிதைகள் மிச்சமுண்டு!!!

உளடல்*





^{*} This Tamil poem talks about the melodramatic anger and sulking that occur between lovers who are easily offended over something inconsequential. The girl laments about her heart being broken, accusing him of thinking of her heart as (strong as) iron when in fact it is as fragile as paper. She questions his emotional intelligence saying that even though he is well learned, with a double master's degree, he fails miserably when it comes to understanding her feelings.

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Thiyagarajan Senior Developer R & D

எல்லா மௌனங்களும் சம்மதம் என்று பொருள் படுவதில்லை இதோ என் மௌனம் என் மௌனத்தை சம்மதமாக மட்டும் மொழி பெயர்த்து விட வேண்டாம் – இது பென்னுணா்வில் பிண்ணி பிணைந்த சோகத்தின் மெல்லிய வெளிப்பாடு குரல் வலையை நெருக்கும் பிரச்சனைகளால் சூழப்பட்டு குரல் வெளி வராத தவிப்பு இழப்புகளே வாழக்கை ஆனதால் வாய் வார்த்தையை இழந்த பரிதாபம் கனவோடும் கற்பனையோடும் வாழ்வதால் வார்த்தைகளில் ஏற்படும் நேர தாமதம் இத்தனை பேசியும் இவர்கள் புரிந்து கொள்ளவில்லையே என்கிற ஆதங்கத்தின் ஒலியற்ற வெளிப்பாடு இவன் பேசி மட்டும் என்ன பிரயோஜனம் என்கிற விரக்தியால் ஏற்படும் பேச்சற்ற நிலை அடக்கி வைத்த அத்தனை உணர்வுகளையும் தாண்டி என் கண்கள் பேசும் வார்த்தையை அறியாதோர் தயவு செய்து தயவு செய்து என் மௌனத்தை சம்மதமாக மட்டும் மொழி பெயர்த்து விட

வேண்டாம்

என் மௌனம்*



* The poem speaks about the different types of silence – physical, sensory, mental – resulting from being surrounded by many problems, a silence stemming from misunderstanding and unawareness, and a frustrated defiant silence arising from disrespect. The poem ends with a note asking the reader not to take the poet's silence for granted.



Smriti Gupta* Legal Executive Writer WK Tax & Accounting



Drowning into the sea of fabricated lives and fake routines. Each day I see, the world cheering camouflaged personalities. Scorning the honest we dismiss the scarred, in the desire for perfection the authenticity is starved.

* Smriti Gupta has been irrevocably in love with words and the literary world since forever. She is an impulsive poet, an undercover wizard, a crazy-animal lady and believes coffee to be the elixir of life. She is perpetually spaced out and believes that she belongs to the planet Pluto.

It is a color, a void, a concealed sphere for the paranoid.

It is a place, an escape, a muster of unflinching minds, the ones untrained.

It is a start, a descent, an outset of thoughts, otherwise condemned.

It is distant, it is bare, a shadow to override the dangles of despair.

It is an art, a discard, a conclave of memories, a dark boulevard.

BLACK



Krishnaa Lakshmanan Senior Copyeditor Books Copyediting

Ater ankle-deep in backyards. Water knee-deep inside homes. People's patience wearing out. Those were probably the first signs that the rains were getting to us. Rich people became paupers over a fleeting night, having to wait on their terraces for food packets to be dropped from helicopters, just like everyone else. 'Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink.' Such is the power of nature.

Those were the scenes in Chennai towards the end of the year 2015, during the floods.

Water levels at an all-time low. Lakes and reservoirs parched dry. A borewell driller hammering away at the ground for almost every mile. People frantically booking water tankers for triple, even quadruple the normal cost. Rains had failed for one of the longest known spells in the city, rendering full water tanks a luxury for the lucky few. Such is the power of nature.

Fast-forward to almost four years later, and these are the scenes in today's Chennai.

Two scenarios, separated by a gap of a World Cup or Olympics, in stark contrast – and yet, are they?

Sure, the circumstances are different: too much water then, too little water now. But are the causes



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for these consequences really all that different from each other? Both these situations resulted from poor planning and ill-preparedness, with encroachment of waterbodies being the principal reason.

In 2015, people living in houses constructed on beds of waterbodies suffered from water invading their homes. 'Invading' is a misnomer, however; water always seeks its level – talk about the pot calling the kettle black! We did not learn, though. In 2019, the very same encroachment has caused the dire need for water: the number of waterbodies has drastically reduced over the years. To put this into perspective, here is a satellite image comparison depicting Puzhal Lake's water levels depleted over a measly ten months (August 2018 to June 2019):



This YouTube video also shows the lake's water over the course of eighteen years: https://www.youtube. com/watch?v=hbqjidBTdoE.

And what's more, a major chunk of the little rain that has started to grace the city in the recent weeks is going to waste. When there *is* some rain, it is accompanied by the inevitable flooding of roads, owing to the pathetic storm-water drainage system. There are no proper techniques in place to recharge the ground water levels. Even the rain-water harvesting systems implemented in some houses don't work as they should for the most part.



The photo on the next page is from Madipakkam, taken after hardly about a half hour's worth of rain. The mind cringes at the sight of all that water dwindling away – and that is just from a small street in the suburbs.

Jean-Paul Sartre once said, 'When the rich wage war, it's the poor who die.' Make no mistake, a considerable portion of the rich is in a war against nature. We see it in corporations taking nature for granted, exploiting loopholes in environmental laws, caring only about profit, no matter whom they run



over along the way. We see it generally in the blatant disregard and disrespect for Mother Nature. And if it goes on for much longer, it is not only the poor who will suffer, but the rich as well; money can only delay the inevitable.

One can see this in action even today. The same rich man on his terrace in 2015, arms raised for his food packet dropped from the hovering helicopter, is now dialling one number after another on his smartphone, trying in vain to reach a water tanker willing to deliver a lorry of water to his home. There are people ready to pay ₹5,000 for a 12,000-litre lorry, but where will all the water come from?

Money, money, everywhere Not enough to pull from the brink.

Back in 2015, when I wrote a blog post on the floods, I ended it by hoping that the rain would wash our complacency away. Since then, rains have come, cy-

clones have howled, and the sun has burned down. But our self-importance and narrow-mindedness remain; we have blinkered ourselves to ignore what we don't want to see.

Today, I conclude with these words from philosopher Alan Watts: You cannot employ non-hostile, non-destructive technical skill, unless you realize, basically, that you yourself are this whole domain of nature. That's the real you. You are not in a fight against nature, you are not here to conquer nature, because there's nothing to conquer. It's all you! So when you use technology to bulldoze everything into submission ... you're fighting yourself.

Sources and Further Reading

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Raihan Syazwani Deris Commissioning Editor Thomson Reuters Asia

n multicultural Malaysia, where the population consists of Malays, Chinese, Indians, Eurasians and many others, Eid-ul-fitr, a religious celebration for Muslims, marks the end of the fasting month (Ramadan).

It is common practice in Malaysia for traditional Malay food to be served during the Eid-ul-fitr festivities, which includes lemang (glutinous rice cooked with coconut milk and salt in a hollowed-out bamboo stick lined with banana leaves), ketupat (boiled rice in packets woven from coconut or palm leaves), nasi impit (rice cubes), satay, curry or rendang, sweet and spicy peanut sauce, and traditional cookies, to name a few.

On Monday, 24 June 2019, Thomson Reuters Asia/ Newgen Malaysia had a simple celebration in their office. This celebration is a yearly tradition (much like the Chinese New Year or Deepavali or Christmas) where colleagues from diverse backgrounds and religious beliefs prepare and cater delicious traditional food to be served to their fellow team mates. Like most festivals, it is a time to celebrate with gratitude all the wonderful things life has brought together.



Eid Celebrations @ the TR Malaysia Office

Spotlight on Rachel Jaques

Written by Ujwala Vaidyanathan

Rachel Jaques loves the culture of the people in Malaysia, where people of all races and backgrounds live in harmony. She enjoys the variety of delicious food from the various ethnic backgrounds that make Malaysia a great place to live. However, she hates the politics in Malaysia.

Rachel feels very strongly about women's place in society today. She feels that in a country like Malaysia, it is great to see women playing an important role in public services: the deputy prime minister, the chief justice of Malaysia, the governor of the Central Bank of Malaysia, the chairperson of Malaysia Airports, the chief commissioner of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission and many such posts are being held by women, and she is indeed very proud of it.

Rachel is an early riser, and after a hard day's work, she loves to relax in bed and watch television. She loves to read physical books – the old-fashioned way – and dislikes reading off a screen, her favourite genre being crime. She loved the book *A Woman of Substance* by Barbara Taylor Bradford. She also loves to watch family stories and musicals. What she won't watch, however, are horror movies or shows. She is terrified of them!

What puzzles her is the obsession of tons of people with e-Sports. She just doesn't see the point of it!

The farthest Rachel's ever been from home is London. But visiting the USA is on her bucket list, as are visiting the Holy Land and Niagara Falls. She loves cooking, and if time and money weren't an issue, she would be doing that as a hobby.

Rachel is very proud of the team that she works with and the support given by each member. She is also the go-to person for advice, opinions, answers and solutions.

The best compliment she's ever received, in her own words: "[You're] the alter ego of Sweet & Maxwell Malaysia" from a Federal Court judge.



Spotlight on Mohankumar

Written by Krishnaa Lakshmanan

eet Mohankumar, a practical, down-toearth problem solver who is a great listener. Share with him your hard feelings, and you'll leave with a clear mind. He is most inspired by anyone who does any act, however simple, with commitment and a sense of purpose. He loves Chennai's beaches but hates its traffic and poor roads. If he had one superpower, he would turn the clock back a whopping thirty thousand years so that we can start cultural evolution anew, correcting our mistakes along the way. His irrational fear is a relatable one: exam fears (still!) in his dreams. His ability to find a solution to a problem before it can make an impact is his most prized skill. His favourite quality about himself is being a humanitarian, while one thing he is not very happy about is that he is not very expressive - 'Probably zero,' he says.

Self-centred people are his pet peeves. This is understandable when you take into account his secret talent: reading others' minds! He says he has a short temper and a sense of humour – an interesting mix that many in Newgen don't know about him. His take on women's place in today's society: 'A behaviour considered civilized by a particular culture may be judged senseless or even seen with horror by another culture. We must be aware of cultural values so that we do not go off-track in our journey. Even when he's recharging, Mohan is thinking about his life journey: being aware of the purpose of all his actions so that any obstacles are overcome. He says that he is usually tardy, but he'd probably be among the first to line up if ever there was a spaceship travelling to his dream fictional destination: the Pandoran biosphere from the film *Avatar*. However, television serials are certainly not his cup of tea.

The first thing Mohan notices about people is their genuineness, while he doesn't get the point of so many people being depressed all the time. He has been away from home only a couple of times – and just for a week's time at that. Call him for a forty-minute presentation on a topic of his choosing with absolutely no preparation, and he'll share his formula of how to handle problems, be they personal or official. He feels that being a parent is an experience everyone should undergo at least once in their lives – now we know where that formula came from!

Mohan follows three little things to make his day better: work for the company and not for bosses; have a sense of purpose to face both successes and failures; and however hard you work, end the day with a feeling of satisfaction and begin each day with excitement.



Spotlight on

Team TR Malaysia

Written by Krishnaa Lakshmanan with inputs from the Malaysian Editorial and Publishing team

A ay hello to the Malaysian Editorial and Publishing Team, also known as TR Malaysia, a team of eleven editors who take pride in their authoritative legal-related subscription products, books, and loose-leaf publications. Rachel Jaques is the Publishing Director. The Managing Editors are Gavin Xavier (subscriptions), Kevin Ooi (books and major works), and Mohd Nizam Hamdan (loose-leaf publications). Althia Pillay is the Assistant Managing Editor, while Tabitha Dass is the Commissioning Manager and Nik Hazwani is the Legal Editor. Raihan Deris, Jeanie Stanislaus, Ashley Danker, and Samuel Chan are the Commissioning Editors. The members have a wide range of experience, with some having been in the publishing industry for close to thirty years. As legal publications go, subject-matter knowledge is important, and all of the editors have a legal background to provide the context needed for the work being done.

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It is easy to see that they are a close-knit, dedicated group. By their own words, all members of the team are stars in their own right. Describing themselves as a hardworking, committed, and supportive team that is multiracial, they affirm that the team does what it takes to complete tasks, collaborating and working well together, irrespective of their different religious beliefs.

The secret to that could be the skill they say they are working on: patience. (Perhaps there's a tip here for all teams to pick up on?)

When asked what the nicest thing about their team is, they answer that they all get along and bond well with each other. This is helped along by their strategy of sharing work load when crucial timelines are involved, to ensure that the publication is completed on time. Another insight to be had here, maybe?

Two things they would most like to do for the improvement of the team: adding more headcount to the office and meeting more potential

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Standing L-R: Raihan, Rachel, Althia, Jeanie, Tabitha, Nizam; sitting L-R: Kevin, Gavin, Ashley, Samuel.



Nik Hazwani, who mostly works from home from another state and only comes to the office once in a while.

authors and contributors. They say that productivity is the team's biggest challenge because sometimes the members find it difficult to fully devote themselves to their actual roles. However, they do agree that the person next in line is familiar enough with the work to fill in, should the need arise.

There is a saying that mistakes are a fact of life, but it is our response to them that matters. And so it is with TR Malaysia: after spelling 'statutes' as 'statues', the team now specifically searches for this word to ensure its accuracy according to context. Their pet peeves are characteristic of an editorial team: when authors are unable to adhere to timelines, and being misjudged as nitpicky and fussy. 'But that is the very essence of editorial work,' comes the emphatic response!



Jo Bottrill Managing Director Newgen's UK and US onshore operations

From 11 to 13 June, more than six hundred university press publishers gathered in the Michigan city of Detroit for the annual meeting of the Association of University Presses. This impressive meeting brought together staff from presses across North America as well as representatives from publishers around the world.

Newgen's Managing Director for UK and US operations Jo Bottrill attended this year's event, representing Newgen and networking with customers and prospects. As sponsors we are proud to support the great work the association does in representing and supporting our customers and their staff in challenging and somewhat uncertain times.

The event centred around an impressive programme of talks, panel discussions and seminars. Topics covered the full range of issues facing university presses, from cover design through to fundraising, and the challenges in launching a new journal. Consistent through many of the sessions were the issues of open access, equality and accessibility.

Some of the key takeaways include:

- 1. The university press community is buzzing with ambition and ideas. Press staff are intent on working collaboratively across the industry, in asserting and increasing their value (to their institutions, to scholarship and to the wider society). At the heart of this community is a focus on continuous improvement and experimentation.
- 2. While uncertainty remains around open access and Plan S, university presses are committed to making open access work. It's at the heart of what university presses stand for, and while there is concern about the impact to the established business model, there is widespread intent on finding solutions and making a success of the various open access models.

Annual Meeting of AU Presses



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3. Initiatives around XML workflow, backlist conversion and creating truly digital first content that is born accessible are far from complete. Many presses, like the University of Michigan Press, lead the way in much of this work; many more have further to travel. As a vendor, Newgen has a responsibility to support the industry with its great solutions and to help presses make their content more discoverable and accessible.

This was a hugely optimistic event, a reminder of how exciting it is to be at the coal face of academic publishing. Bringing together dedicated people, industry-leading technology and a signature can-do attitude to all of the publishing challenges our customers face, Newgen is perfectly placed to support university presses.

Detroit was once home to the US motor industry. Now reinventing itself with new industries, cultural activities and open spaces, it is an inspiring and positive city. I was lucky enough to join many of the conference delegates in an early morning five-kilometre run along the beautiful waterfront, with the United States on one side of the river and Canada on the other.

If you would like to know more about this conference and the good work of the association, you can read the conference Twitter stream by searching #AUPresses19 and by following @aupresses. Next year's meeting is in Seattle. We look forward to meeting with more of the many university presses we already work with and to opening new conversations with those we are yet to support.



G. Raghuraman Copyeditor TAA

Fire, Water, Sky, Earth, and Air are the five pillars of creation. By our acts of omission and commission, we have redefined apocalyptic destruction.

The rift between the two of us rivals the rift in the ozone layer. Were the Pacific Ocean to freeze over, shall we play rugby with the penguins?

Climate change is a very real and worrisome phenomenon. Global warming, groundwater depletion, contamination of rivers and oceans with industrial waste, even in unsailed areas, seem to be the new normal.

Imagine the following conversation between Mother Earth and a Zen Master:

Mother Earth says, 'When I was silently rotating around my axis and revolving around the sun in the infinite void, nobody seemed to bother.

'I said, "Please take care of me and my resources; please nurture me; please take only what you really need and return the surplus so that I can sustain the coming generations." But no one listened to me.

'With no one listening, I am protesting in my own way: I have started causing earthquakes and tsunamis. I create anomalies in weather patterns, making humans and animals run hither and thither for water and food. I make them suffer by delaying rainfall, prolonging drought conditions, and also by causing acid rain.

'Now, the people are sitting up and taking notice, talking about sustainable development, carbon footprints, sharing and caring, renewable energy

sources, deleterious effects of pollution, and so on. Tell me if I am wrong in my responses to the human beings' activities. Am I being unduly harsh on them for their pillage, plunder, and abuse of my resources?'

The Zen Master finished his soup, washed his bowl, and sat looking at the sun setting beyond Nubra Valley for two minutes. Then he addressed Mother Earth:

'Your response is absolutely correct. Listen to the sound of one hand clapping. Sometimes, even a mother does not give milk to her baby unless the baby cries.'

Save the Earth. Now!





Jayaprakash P Project Lead Education Division

Are we living or are we dead? A lot of us do not know why we live, and some of us do not want to live at all. Life is a free gift to all of us. Perhaps that is why it is belittled by people. We were all brought into this world with immense love and care from our parents. And all of us have a purpose in life. As the French philosopher René Descartes said, 'I think, therefore I am'; as human beings, we need to ponder over these things and find our purpose in life.

The philosophy of life is defined as an overall vision or attitude towards life and the purpose of life. This article was written keeping in mind today's young people and not the wisest of this world. Some have achieved greatness, some are still trying to achieve it, and yet others are dreaming about it.

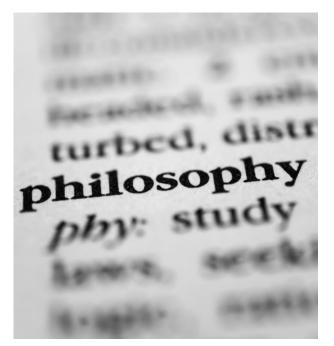
Success is not what is achieved out of selfish or greedy attitudes towards earning money, pride, and power. Success is meaningless when you forego the moral values of companionship, love, and ethics. In this materialistic and individualistic world, people do not have the time to love one another – they have instead become 'selfie-lovers' or selfish lovers of themselves. Ethical values have lost their importance and have become almost meaningless. There are people living in our lives and our memories who are stellar examples of those who have led a meaningful life. It is not just enough if we leave behind our sons and daughters as proof of our existence; we need to be living an everlasting life even after our death.

Attracted by worldly gadgets and advancements, people think that they live in a modern world. Today, crimes are at an all-time high, spurred on by these modern gadgets and technology. The me-

dia plays a pivotal role in today's life. Too much exposure to worldly things has set the young generation on a destructive life path.

Live in the present and savour every moment of life. Do not be bothered when problems come your way, but stay courageous and face them. Kierkegaard said, 'Life is not a problem to be solved but a reality to be experienced.' It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. Be the beginning of any revolution and not just a witness to it. Whatever you do, do it with all your heart. Live a legendary life and live even after your death.

The Philosophy of Life



Events @ Newgen

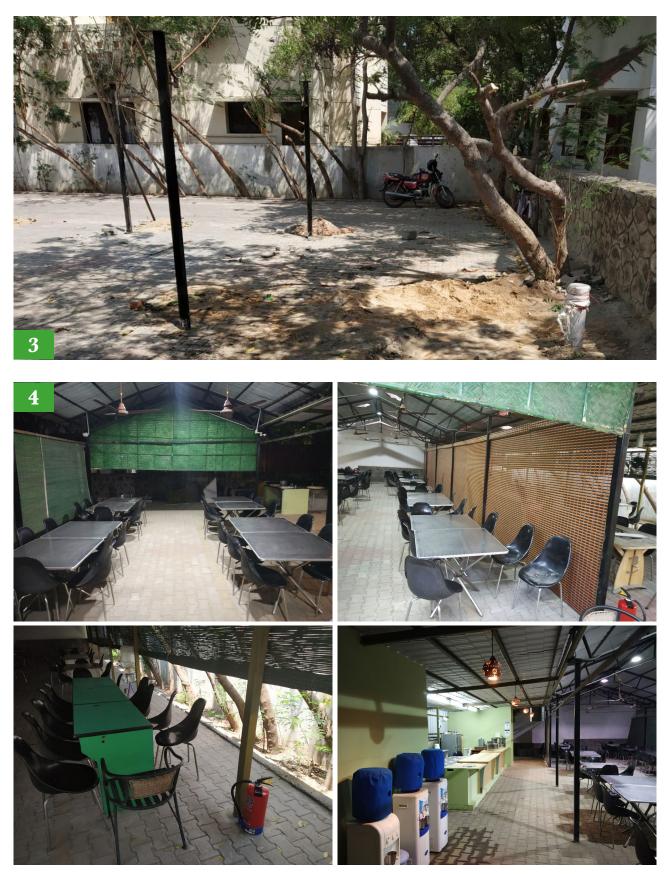






We help our clients create, manage, and deliver content, and help their customers find it

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(1) Video on the benefits of running by Dr. J. S. Kumar, a professor of Medicine and Diabetology, SRM Medical College, and a regular long-distance runner; (2) book exhibition by Cre-A; (3, 4) canteen makeover (before and after).



Deivanayagam R Deputy General Manager Wolters Kluwer – Germany

Barbara Karl, a native of Germany, was part of the Newgen family for more than two years. However, she recently had to go back home due to unavoidable personal reasons. No matter how much work piled up at the start of the day, she went at it with an enthusiasm and drive and passion that few can boast of. She had all the right skills, qualities and attitude for becoming a full service management professional and she took challenges head on and excelled at completing the tasks successfully. Her excellent communication skills helped to resolve issues one after the other without breaking a sweat, ensuring that mission- and time-critical goals were always met without fail.

She was a dynamic, yet a calm and dedicated team player. I have lost count of the number of times she has proved herself to be an invaluable and priceless asset to our team, especially with regard to her innovative thinking and troubleshooting skills to tackle and resolve operational issues. Barbara Karl was a great colleague and a fantastic teammate, and the team and I are extremely grateful for having had the opportunity to work with her.

We wish Barbara all the very best in her life and success in every endeavor of hers in the future.



Farewell to Barbara Karl





Raj Suthan Production Editor OUP ACAD US

Sirumalai is a mysterious hill town which finds mention in the Kaliyuga period of the Vedas. It was a crucial time in my life and my future was looming as a big question. This is a travelogue about my experience of a journey I embarked for a day and how the people I met during the journey changed the perspective I had towards my life.

Escapade: How I Spent a Day in Sirumalai

A fight with one's parents is the worst thing that could happen to a jobless 22-year-old who has to depend on them even for the next meal. The fight started for the power to control the TV remote for the evening as my grandma used to watch reality shows throughout the day. I switched to a different channel and my father insisted on switching it back to the channel my grandmother was watching. My rising bad mood made me disrespect my



Vanaroja's family at Palayar

father, and the next moment my hand was on my cheek to avoid a second slap, the first of which was handed to me by my mother to stop me from uttering another word. I turned to face my mother now and screamed at her.

My father's temper had peaked and he shouted at me to get out of the house right away. With no clue as to my next move, I scooted off from the living room and into the bathroom, punching its walls until I found out it only hurt me. In all that frustration and urge to walk out of the house, my mind pondered like an imbecile.

I always fantasized of a dramatic getaway (taking inspiration from the movie *3 Idiots*) and I couldn't find a more perfect time. This would be a trip to discover myself and I wanted my parents to feel guilty about their harsh reactions. Moreover, a Royal Enfield Classic 350 standing stationary at home for a month desperately needed some miles on it.

Every bike lover has a name for their ride. I named him "Sinrasu" after Suriyavamsam Sarath Kumar.

The radium light from my clock told me it was 3 in the morning and I could hear my father snoring. I knew the first thing my mother would see on waking up is the kitchen door, and so I glued a note onto the door: "Amma! Don't worry, I will be back home at night. Please don't call me." After stealing some cash from my father's wallet, I downloaded the map offline and switched my phone to airplane mode so as to avoid calls and messages. I pushed my bike to the corner of the street before starting the engine so that the sound of the ignition would not get me caught. I then counted the cash with which I filled the fuel tank and bought myself some bites for the drive, and finally I kickstarted my journey.



Sinrasu, my Royal Enfield Classic 350

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The pathway after the asphalt; view from the watchtower; my fellow hiker

"Dark, cool breeze, music, the empty roads and a mind filled with random thoughts" was a dream come true. In the beginning, it was all lovely and as we know, good times pass so quickly. I was cruising towards my destination.

The ride to the top of Sirumalai consists of eighteen hairpin bends and a dozen little temples which were built to protect passersby. I wanted the cruise to start with the sunrise. I was at the fifteenth bend when the view I was dreaming about opened up majestically. The clouds passing through the mountains, the cold air flowing through me and the first light from the sun—I finally found what love is.

The whole town of Sirumalai stared at me curiously. I was wearing a full-sleeved T-shirt, shorts that stopped just above my knee and a high ankled shoe—I was a total fashion disaster.

I saw an old lady sitting in front of a temple which was at the base of a huge banyan tree and she seemed to be the perfect one who could tell me the story of this place, but I ended up listening to her own tragic tale.

Chinnama, the old lady, narrated: "I lost my husband 20 years ago in an accident. I have two sons. After the death of my husband, I was taken care of by my elder son and I married him to my brother's daughter. At first, they treated me well but as the years passed my meals were reduced to two times a day. My daughter-in-law, whom I treated as my own daughter, started to yell at me for unknown reasons and she started hitting me in front of my son who doesn't even care about it. My second son doesn't even know if I am alive. Without their knowledge, I used to beg near the temple. Sometimes good people give me 100 rupees. I used to buy food with that money. Can you give me some money? If any of my neighbors saw me talking with you, they will definitely tell her and she will beat me. Please give me the money quickly. I have to collect firewood to cook." I gave her 50 rupees and she blessed me saying that all my wishes would come true. She left the place in a hurry.



A wild gaur



The curious case of Chinnama

After a long and bumpy ride, I pitstopped for water somewhere in the middle of a slope as I could see a house about 100 meters off the road. It wasn't spooky but it was surrounded by trees. I asked for some water from a woman who seemed to be in her late 40s. She asked me to take a seat on the portico, where I was given company by an old lady who started a conversation even before I sat down. This was Manjamma, 102 years old, but with a face that seemed younger.

She spoke about her past, and as the conversation went on, I was offered a cup of home-grown coffee by her daughter-in-law.

After Sirumalai, there were small villages with no roads where the tribal people lived. No vehicle could go through the decrepit path. I had a deep fascination for learning their lifestyle. I walked through the jungle with a bit of both excitement and fear. The tribals were called "Palayargal" and their main occupation was farming on nearby land. An NGO had established a school at the tribal settlement for the welfare of the community.



(*From the top, clockwise*): Manjamma, a 102-year-old woman; a coolie in the estate; Manjamma's daughter-in-law; Manjamma's neighbour, Marie



Vanaroja's son

It was hard to build a conversation with them as the language they spoke sounded like a different version of Tamil. I had my brunch at another family's place: Vanaroja's place. She offered me some rice and spinach and I gladly accepted it—who says no to free food! It was a healthy Palayar cuisine. She was happy to be photographed with all her sons for the first time.

On my way back down the hill, there was a region named after a prominent monk called Agathya Siddhar. It consisted of several peaks called Silver Hills; it was said the hills shone like silver in sunlight.

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A girl enjoying splashing color powder during the temple festival; view from the top of the Silver Hill; the priest

At the base temple, I was told that there was a 500-year-old Sivalinga at the top of the hill and that I would have to hike a couple of kilometers to reach it. I did not intend to take the hike after all this travel but I was told that if I go there, all my questions would be answered. I am an atheist but something told me I should try this at least for the experience. With a lot of hesitation, I rolled up my sleeves and decided to hike. I even had a co-hiker in a mongrel who joined me for courtesy after I offered him a biscuit.

I thought of heading back when my packet of biscuits got over and my wingman stretched his legs and settled down. I made room for myself near him and started patting him. That was when I heard a noise coming from downhill, as a mysterious man with a stick walked towards me. I was startled at seeing his attire, but he had a smile on his face which consoled me. Without uttering a word, the priest held my hands and started walking up the hill. I stood firm on the ground and didn't move an inch. Then I saw a family walking towards me and the man was instructing them to walk faster. Then, he looked straight into my eyes and said in a deep voice not to give up. It gave me instant energy and the next second, I was leading him to the top.

The sun was at its highest and it was blazing. Gasping for breath, I finally reached the top of the hill. There, I spotted a tank of water and I rushed to it. To my surprise, the water was cold even though the sun was scorching. I was totally drenched in sweat, and the monk called me to sit with his family. The monk started narrating his life story to me: "Even though I have two daughters, there is no one to take care of me after my wife's death. I left everything behind me and followed the pathway of Lord Shiva. I have been to Kumbh Mela and was living with a Naga sadhu in the same hut. Two years passed by, but one day my family found me. I was happy at first but later I came to realize that the reason they looked for me was to acquire my properties." One of his daughters looked at me with guilt. Amidst his talk, he gulped a quarter of a bottle of local brandy in a single sip and puffed out a roll of weed.



The magical hour



A cadet in deep slumber at the viewpoint post

We made our way down to the base temple after a long prayer. The monk insisted that I should never leave this place without having food in the *maadam* (a place where priests stay). I was served a plate of tomato rice which my taste buds didn't really appreciate but I managed to finish it off. Then we went to see the high priest and I was given a *laddu* and got *vibuthi* (holy ash) on my forehead.

He wanted to hitchhike and I dropped him in Dindigul, which was on my way back home. I totally enjoyed his lectures and advice on life and how to lead a good one. After dropping him at the bus stand, I left the place with a heart full of confidence. Any business is unfinished in Dindigul until you have a plate of biriyani from Venu's Biriyani. A plate of mutton biriyani, a bunch of mutton balls, and a karandi omelette cleared my head of any leftover grumpiness. However, I still feared what would happen when I got back home. Nonetheless, I rode at a leisurely pace, devouring the beauty of the pathway.

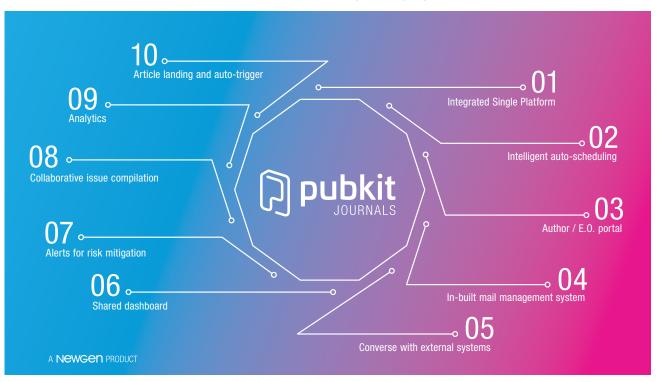
P.S.: The trip was great but it did not immediately change my life. With time though, and the lessons learnt, I was able to afford my own meal.



From the Newgen Tool Kit Written by Athulya Sundaresan Senior Executive Copyeditor Journals Copy Editing

PubKit is a highly intuitive and unified platform that integrates all project management and production tools and ensures that a defined workflow is strictly adhered to. It stores metadata, monitors the progress of all articles, identifies bottlenecks and takes the necessary action, accelerates schedules where needed, and triggers alerts to keep important decisions in check. PubKit can talk with client systems through application programming interfaces (APIs) or feeds. It provides a shared dashboard for editors and project managers and monitors folder or FTP locations for incoming files, picks them up, and auto-triggers an appropriate workflow. In PubKit, the system intelligence drives the schedule. Hence, there is consistency across all journals, which eliminates human error and improves the capacity to handle a greater number of articles. Mails are paired with and clustered within the project to eliminate the need to manage two separate systems.

For more information on this tool, see http://pdf. newgenimaging.com/Journals/



PubKit

