



University of Rajasthan, Jaipur



Department of English

organises

A TWO-DAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
(HYBRID MODE)

ON

**DECOLONISING
NARRATIVES AND
INTERPRETATIONS:
LITERARY AND
CULTURAL STUDIES
IN INDIA**

28 February & 1 March, 2025

Patron

Prof. Alpana Kateja (Vice-Chancellor, UOR)

Convenor

Prof. Deepa S.P. Mathur (Head, Department of English)

Organising Secretaries

Dr. Arun Singh (Assistant Professor, Department of English)

Dr. Aditi Kalra (Assistant Professor, Department of English)

Venue: Malviya Mission Teacher Training Centre (MMTC), JLN
Marg, Jaipur, Rajasthan 302004

Concept Note

The study of literature and culture in India has long been shaped by the colonial legacy of English Studies, which sought to impose Eurocentric frameworks and diminish the intellectual and spiritual autonomy of Indic civilisation. Introduced as a hegemonic tool of control, English literature was deployed to establish Western ideologies and missionary ideals as superior while marginalising indigenous knowledge systems, storytelling traditions, and cultural philosophies. Today, as India reclaims its intellectual sovereignty, there is an urgent need to decolonise narratives and interpretations to reflect the depth and diversity of Indic thought.

This seminar seeks to critically examine the colonial underpinnings of literary and cultural studies and propose alternative frameworks rooted in Indic philosophies, traditions, and worldviews. By addressing the hegemonic onslaught of secularist, Marxist, and Eurocentric discourses and ideologies, the seminar seeks to promote a more holistic approach to studying literature and culture, one that integrates the ethical, spiritual, and cultural dimensions of Indic civilisation.

As Gauri Viswanathan argues in her groundbreaking work *Masks of Conquest*, English literature was introduced in colonial India “as a strategy of containment designed to inculcate a sense of British superiority.” Nirmal Verma avers in his essay *Dharm and Dharmnirpekshata* that in the decades following independence, Indian masses were deliberately forced to live in such a social apparatus where their own dharmic beliefs were relegated to the periphery. Such ideological imposition not only shaped the curricula but also influenced the way Indian students and scholars approached texts, often through the lens of Western critical theories. To reclaim our intellectual traditions, it is essential to reinterpret English texts and cultural narratives through Indic philosophical frameworks, such as *Dhvani* (suggestion), *Rasa* (aesthetic emotion), and *Purusharthas* (the four aims of life).

Ashish Nandy’s critique of “secular hierarchies” further underscores the need for this shift. He argues that secularism, as propagated in colonial and postcolonial India, often operates as “an ideology of the modern West masquerading as a universal category.” In literary studies, this secularist framework has stripped narratives of their spiritual and ethical contexts, reducing them to purely materialistic or ideological readings. For instance, Andrew Marvell’s “To His Coy Mistress,” traditionally interpreted as a romantic plea, can be read as an imperialist allegory where the conquest of time and space mirrors colonial ambitions. Milton’s idea to “post o’er land and ocean without rest” insinuates limitless imperialist intentions. Such reinterpretations challenge conventional readings and align them with a decolonised worldview.

By incorporating the Vedic knowledge system, this seminar will explore how texts can be interpreted through ethical and cosmic principles like Dharma (righteous duty) and Rta (cosmic order). For example, Shakespearean tragedies, when analysed through the lens of Karma (action and consequence), reveal universal truths about human existence that resonate with Indic thought. Similarly, the principles of Natyashastra can provide fresh perspectives on dramatic texts, enriching their emotional and aesthetic dimensions. The seminar will also address the limitations of Marxist and secularist historiographies, which often fragment Indian society into divisive categories of caste, class, and religion. As Ashish Nandy points out, such frameworks replicate colonial power structures by undermining indigenous traditions of unity and harmony. Moreover, this seminar advocates for an integrative approach that highlights the unifying threads of Indic civilisation, fostering cultural pride and national identity.

In reimagining the teaching of English literature, this seminar aims to explore how texts can be contextualised within Indian realities. Translations of Indian classics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana, along with regional folk traditions and oral narratives, can be integrated into curricula to create a truly global perspective rooted in local traditions and, in the words of Sri Aurobindo, a culture of “assimilative appropriation.” Decolonising narratives and interpretations is not merely about revising curricula but about reclaiming the cultural, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of our literary consciousness. Through this seminar, we aim to create a space for critical dialogue, intellectual engagement, and the revival of Indic philosophical frameworks in literary and cultural studies.

This is a call to scholars, educators, and students to join us in reimagining the study of literature and culture in India. By dismantling colonial hierarchies, challenging secularist narratives, and promoting Indic philosophies, this seminar seeks to pave the way for a more inclusive, culturally rooted, and spiritually enriching academic discourse. Together, we can shape a vision for literary and cultural studies that celebrates the richness of Indic civilisation and its place in the global intellectual landscape.

SUB-THEMES

The seminar unbiasedly emphasises—but is not limited to—the following themes to present a balanced account of intellectual ideas and perspectives.

- Reclaiming Cultural Indigeneity,
- Incorporating the Vedic Knowledge System,
- Decolonising Literary Theory,
- Decolonial Methodologies and Indic Revival,
- Rethinking Secularist Hierarchies,
- Revitalising Indic Ethics in Literature,
- Coloniality, Rashtradharma, and Indigeneity in India.

- Critiquing Marxist Historiographies,
- Highlighting Indigenous and Folk Literary Traditions,
- English as a Tool for Indic Revival,
- Indic Revival in the Classroom,
- Globalising the Vedic Legacy,
- Decolonising Literary Interpretation,
- Rewatching Indian Cinema and Its Decolonisation,
- Environment and Decoloniality,
- Unlearning conventional reading and decolonising the postcolonial text,
- Regional translations of English canon,
- Intersemiotic translation of English canon,
- Folklore as a decolonising tool,
- Locating Bahujan discourse in India and Diaspora,
- Indigenous Studies in Shakespeare,
- Cultural Nativism for Decolonisation,
- Canonising Orality in India,
- De-hegemonizing Indian Folk Arts,
- Western critical discourse and Indian Feminisms,
- Indian goddesses and women’s discourse,
- Indian Neetishastra and the form(s) of dissent,
- The concept of Sacred in India,
- Pinpointing and analysing divisive and separatist discourses/theories.



Last Date for Registration & Fee Payment	20th February, 2025.
Submission of Abstract	20th February, 2025.
Submission of Full Paper	25th February, 2025.
Conference Dates	28th February, 2025 & 1st March, 2025.
Conference Venue	Malviya Mission Teacher Training Centre JLN Marg, Jaipur, Rajasthan 302004. Landmark: Beside R.A. Poddar Institute of Management (RAPIM) at Gandhi Circle, JLN Marg, Jaipur.
Accommodation may be provided, if available during the time.	Dr. Arun Singh 9887129759 Sunil Kr. Meena 9694520231 Vaibhav Meena 9024288039

Submission Guidelines:

- Abstract length: 200 words.
- Keywords: 6-7 words.
- Full paper length: About 4500 words.
- Font style & size: Times New Roman, 12 pt.
- Line Spacing: 1.5.
- Citation Style: MLA 9th Edition.
- File Type: .doc.

FOR ONLINE REGISTRATIONS (<i>Early birds</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/> UG & PG Students (Participation): ₹ 700.
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Scholars (Participation): ₹ 1200.
<input type="checkbox"/> UG, PG Students & Research Scholars (Presentation): ₹ 1500.
<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers & Academicians: ₹ 2000.
<input type="checkbox"/> International UG & PG students: 35 USD.
<input type="checkbox"/> International Research Scholars, Teachers & Academicians: 75 USD.

FOR ON-SPOT REGISTRATIONS
<input type="checkbox"/> UG, PG Students: ₹800.
<input type="checkbox"/> Research Scholars: ₹ 1800.
<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers: ₹ 2500.

Organising Committee

Dr. Sanju Choudhary, Dr. Preeti Choudhary, Dr. Mohit, Dr. Shweta Meena, Dr. Pooja Joshi, Dr. Shankar Jhanjhnodia, Dr. Priyanka Meena.

Advisory Committee

Prof. Rajul Bhargava, Prof. Nand Kishore Pandey (Director, Humanities), Prof. Rajesh Poonia (Dean, Humanities), Prof. Sudha Rai, Prof. Mini Nanda, Prof. Joya Chakravarty, Prof. Tanuja Mathur, Prof. Arun Soule, Prof. Aruna Pandey, Prof. Nidhi Singh, Prof. Charu Mathur.

No language barrier—papers & presentations in English as well as Hindi are welcome!



Padhāro Mhāre Des—snacks & a Rajasthani feast awaiting all the participants and presenters!



A modern-classic Indic movie screening at the end of Day 2 of the international conference.



REGISTRATION LINK:

<https://forms.gle/Z9uueD8yPxLHr7JE8>



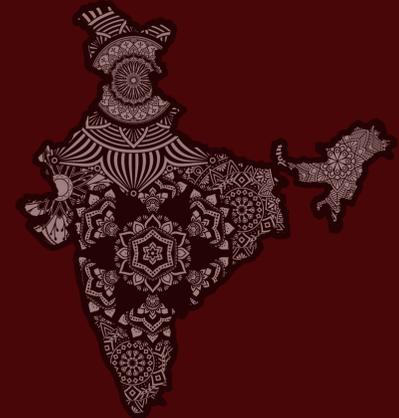
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Steps:

- 1) After the acceptance of your abstract, kindly pay the conference fee using the bank details.
- 2) Take a screenshot of your successful payment receipt.
- 3) Using the registration link, fill the form to participate in the conference.
- 4) That's it! We'll contact you via email.



Coordinators

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