CHAPTER 22

ENGLISH

Doctoral Theses

01. ABDUL HAMEED P A
Print Culture and Mappila Modernity Arabimalayalam in Late Colonial India
Supervisors: Dr. Haris Qadeer
Th 29018

Abstract

Examines the emergence of a distinct form of modernity among the Mappila Muslims of Malabar through the material, linguistic, and intellectual history of Arabimalayalam print culture between 1862 and Indian Independence. It argues that Arabimalayalam printing constituted a cohesive and self-sustaining print system through which a script-based Muslim public articulated knowledge, debate, aesthetic production, and political imagination. Rather than a marginal extension of Malayalam or Islamic textual traditions, this print sphere functioned as an internally coherent modern formation. Mappila modernity developed through the material reorganisation of manuscript-derived Islamic-script textual practices within lithographic infrastructures, where technological reproduction, genre diversification, legal-commercial awareness, resistance narratives, and expanding readership coexisted with calligraphic aesthetics, devotional visuality, and inherited scholarly authority. This dissertation consists of five chapters, excluding the introduction and conclusion. The dissertation intervenes in print and Islamic intellectual history by challenging the equation of print modernity with typographic standardisation, visual minimalism, and secular textual domains. Arabimalayalam lithography demonstrates that seriality, navigational layout, authorship claims, copyright consciousness, and market circulation operated through ornamental density and manuscript-style calligraphy. It repositions the Mappilas as participants in a vibrant print-based intellectual culture beyond their dominant portrayals as ethnographic subjects or political rebels. Religious, literary, technical, and polemical writings formed a shared textual ecosystem. Drawing on archival research and close textual analysis, utilising printed Arabimalayalam books, pamphlets, periodicals, and paratextual materials such as title pages, colophons, ornamental borders, publisher marks, and pricing information from the late colonial period, this study reconstructs Mappila intellectual and social processes through textual samples and print infrastructure. Across five chapters, it shows that Arabimalayalam print culture constituted a script-specific public sphere and a materially grounded case of alternative modernity in colonial South India.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Arabimalayalam: History, Language, and Landscape 3. Arabimalayalam Print Culture: Evolution, Location, and Trans-locality 4. Religious Literacy, Intellectual Debates, and the Arabimalayalam Press 5. Secular Modernity and Arabimalayalam Print Culture 6. Resistance and Subversion in Arabimalayalam Print Culture. Conclusion, Bibliography, Appendice.

02. ASHEEKA ALI

Littoral Imaginaries and Contested Identities in Twentieth-Century Malayalam Literature.

Supervisor: Prof. Anjana Sharma

Th 29019

Abstract

This thesis explores how 20th C Malayalam literature generates a distinct oceanic consciousness shaped by centuries of Indian Ocean mobility, exchange, and contested histories. Moving beyond the nation-centered frameworks that dominate postcolonial studies, the research situates the Malabar littoral within the interdisciplinary lenses of Indian Ocean Studies and the Blue Humanities. It argues that Malayalam fiction, long overlooked within Anglophone-dominated oceanic scholarship , functions as a vital vernacular archive that preserves submerged histories, cultural memories, and alternative spatial imaginaries unavailable in official records. The thesis is organized around four coastal nodes each explored through a representative text. The first chapter argues that Ponjikkara Rafi's Swarga Doothan and Ora Pro Nobis formalize creolization in narrative structure, using stream of consciousness and subaltern memory to articulate the Latin Catholic community's fragmented history. The next chapter examines Thakazhi's Chemmeen through feminist and ecological theory, identifying its central myth by linking female chastity with the sea's temperament as a mechanism of patriarchal regulation and environmental ethics within a fragile matrilineal memory. The third chapter of this thesis interprets M.T. Vasudevan Nair and N.P. Mohammed's Arabi Ponnu as a critique of postcolonial hydrocolonialism, demonstrating how the newly sovereign Indian state criminalized ancient transoceanic circuits of trade and kinship. The novel's smuggler-figure is positioned as the precursor to the Gulf migrant, showing how illicit cosmopolitanism evolves into modern remittance economies. The next chapter analyzes S.K. Pottekkatt's Tales of Athiranippadam as a literary counter-map to imperial cartography. Through its focus on travel, drifting networks, and spatial confusion, the text critiques colonial attempts to discipline the oceanic world and instead highlights indigenous mobility, informality, and affective geographies. The last chapter turns to M. Mukundan's On the Banks of Mayyazhi, interpreting Mahe as a chronotopic postcolonial space shaped by French colonial residues, multilingual negotiations, and the ethical ambiguities of Indian Ocean cosmopolitanism. Across these readings, the thesis argues that Malayalam coastal fiction collectively constructs an alternative cognitive map that resists the linearity and territorial rigidity of both colonial and nationalist epistemologies. The Malabar coast emerges not as a stable periphery of the modern Indian nation-state but as a historically layered, fluidly connected, and persistently heterospatial zone. By grounding its arguments in vernacular literary archives, the study demonstrates that the lived experiences and memories of littoral communities are indispensable for understanding the Indian Ocean world and its contemporary transformations, including Gulf migration and the reinvention of coastal identities.

Contents

1. Aqueous Moral Economy and the Gendered Seascape: A Reading of Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai's Chemmeen 2. From the Islet to the Ocean: Excavating the

Subaltern Archives and Archipelagic Memory of the Coast in Ponjikkara Rafi's Swarga Doothan and Ora Pro Nobis 3. Counter-Archive, Illicit Cosmopolitanism, and the Making of the Smuggler in M T. Vasudevan Nair and N. P. Muhammad's Arabi Ponnu 4. Charting Literary Currents: Navigating Colonial Waters, Coastal Confluences,and Alternative Spatialities of the Indian Ocean in Tales of Athiranippadam 5. Colonial Entanglements and Indian Ocean Cosmopolitanism: Politics, Language, and Identity in M. Mukundan's On the Banks of Mayyazhi Conclusion. Bibliography.

03. Balhara (Himanshu)
Colour and the Cinema of Denis Villeneuve.
Supervisor: Prof. Christel R. Devadawson
Th29416

Abstract

The title of this PhD thesis is 'Colour and the Cinema of Denis Villeneuve.' It is a structured study of how the visual element of colour functions within the cinematic medium. The work opens up with a broad framework meditating upon the ontological similarities and differences found in the allied fields of literature, painting, photography, theatre and film. There are a number of advances proposed by this study. Primarily, it argues that chromatic intentionality in cinema is an important critical instrument of inquiry as it informs the way in which colour has been fashioned in a film, exceeding beyond the replication of indexical reality. The second hypothesis is the propagation of chromatic restraint. It refers to the conscious, deliberative, and restrictive use of colour in a way that directly advances the cinematic narrative without digressions. The third hypothesis asserts that Villeneuve is not simply using chromatic intentionality and restraint to project a certain narrative, but that there is a connecting thread that runs through the entirety of his filmography. His background as a Quebecois establishes him as a diasporic filmmaker in Hollywood, often harkening to recognisable motifs apparent throughout his repertoire. The study is divided into five major chapters. Chapter I– Early Film Colour; Chapter II– Time and Space in Cinema. Chapter III– Aesthetics and Symbolism of Colour. Chapter IV– Denis Villeneuve: Identity and Transnationalism and Chapter V– Colour Functions in Denis Villeneuve: A Case Study. The ensuing analysis was the result of the interdisciplinary methodology conducted through the intertwining of colour studies, film studies, art theory, semiotics and finally close reading of the given films as texts. Keywords: Colour, film, semiotics, Villeneuve, aesthetics.

Contents

1. Introduction to Cinem 2. Early Film Colour 3. Time and Space in Cinema 4. The Aesthetics and Symbolism of Co Conclusion and Findingslour 5. Villeneuve: Identity and transnationalism 6. The films of Villeneuve, Bibliography, Appendice.

04. GAUTAM(Ashish)
The Representation of Caste in the Times of Neoliberalism
Supervisor: Dr. Anju Gurawa
Th 29020

Abstract

This thesis investigates the persistence and mutation of caste hierarchy in contemporary India, particularly in the wake of the 1991 neoliberal economic

reforms. It argues that caste is not merely an ideological superstructure but a foundational mode of production that structures access to land, labor, and political power. The study adopts an uncompromising Ambedkarite framework, asserting that the fulfillment of the constitutional promise of dignity requires nothing less than the annihilation of caste, rather than the moral reformism historically favored by the dominant society. Historically, Dalit representation in popular Indian cinema was overwhelmingly filtered through the "savarna gaze," which centered upper-caste subjectivity and moral authority, portraying Dalits either as objects of pity in reformist melodramas or as figures whose agency was contingent upon a privileged savior. Non-Dalit-directed films, even those critically engaging with atrocities, often fall prey to this "Brahminical gaze," reinforcing the need for external intervention to resolve systemic injustice. The neoliberal economic environment presents a complex, contradictory terrain for Dalit emancipation. While some theorists posit that market anonymity and the rise of "Dalit capitalism" offer strategic pathways to mobility and economic autonomy, critics argue that this visibility is often a fragile spectacle. The market reproduces caste exclusion through a new language of meritocracy, compelling Dalits to conceal their identities to succeed in urban, professional spheres where structural inequality remains entrenched. In response to this enduring exclusion, a powerful wave of Dalit auteur cinema has emerged, asserting "Oppositional Bahujan Agency." Filmmakers like Nagraj Manjule, Pa. Ranjith, and Mari Selvaraj reclaim authorship, fundamentally transforming cinematic language into a political practice. They construct a "counter-visuality," employing aesthetics—through specific iconography, colors, and spatial composition—to resist normative mainstream codes. This work reclaims historically degraded spaces, centers self-authored narratives of dignity and collective resistance, and refuses to dilute anti-caste politics for commercial expediency or universal humanism. This cultural assertion extends into digital space through the rise of "Sovereign Dalit Media Ecosystems," such as Round Table India and The Shared Mirror. These platforms function as intellectual counter-publics, bypassing traditional upper-caste media gatekeepers to produce autonomous, theoretically rich knowledge rooted in Ambedkarite principles. Through this network of cinematic, literary, and digital interventions, Dalit cultural production shifts decisively from mediated representation toward narrative sovereignty, mapping the continuous struggle for social justice and collective self-definition in the contested territory of modern India.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. The Class-Caste Conundrum: When Class Hid My Caste and the Revolution Was Lost 3. Caste Incorporated: Chandrabhan Prasad's Dalit Capitalism and the Limits of Neoliberal Inclusion 4. Beyond Gandhian Moralism: Evolving Modes of Dalit Representation from Premchand to Navaria, Jadhav, and Maitreya 5. Cinematic Interventions: Dalit Representation, Authorship, and Aesthetics in Contemporary Indian Cinema 6. Sovereign Screens: Dalit Music, Social Media, Digital Forums, and International Solidarities Conclusion.

05. CHAUDHARY (Piyush B.)
Lost Voices and Reclaimed Spaces: A Study of Select Indian English Women Dramatists.
Supervisor: Prof. Gitanjali Chawla
Th29342

Abstract

The thesis revolves around women`s role in reclaiming their space as subject and practitioners in Indian drama in English (IDE). The birth and growth of feminist

theatre followed the decades post the 1960s when feminism was gaining currency in India and so was theatre written in English by women. IDE by women playwrights has taken note of both of these aspects and has given rise to a distinct visibility to feminist theatre written in English by women. This rise is adequately represented in the three playwrights taken up for a detailed study here, viz. Dina Mehta (b. 1961), Manjula Padmanabhan (b. 1953) and Poile Sengupta (b. 1948). The playwrights taken up for discussion in the thesis in their own ways negotiate this marginalized space of women in IDE. The thesis aims to explore the journey of women's representation, particularly focusing on the role of the select playwrights in transforming the representation of women in IDE. The thesis explores the position of IDE within the field of theatre studies and also attempts to analyse how English language has played a role in it. The playwrights taken up for discussion in the thesis further negotiate this marginalised space of women in IDE and form a space called 'feminist theatre' grounded on women`s consciousness, sexuality and their social position. The thesis also focuses on the various innovative theatrical techniques used by these women playwrights which counter the male dominated theatrical norms. The three playwrights taken for the study establish their individual role in the formation of feminist theatre by their contribution ranging from raising age old women's issues, like dowry death, female infanticide to the new generation of women marching towards financial liberation and women`s body and sexuality as a site of violence and their eventual reclamation of the same.

Contents

1. Staging History – Indian Drama in English 2. Marginalized in Si(Vio)lence: Plays by Dina Mehta 3. Reclaiming Sexuality, Bringing the Woman on Stage: Plays by Manjula Padmanabhan 4. Enforcing Activism: Plays by Poile Sengupta 5. Voices of Experiment: Theatrical Innovations in the Plays of
Padmanabhan and Sengupta, Conclusion.

06. KATHPALIA (Jyoti)
In Search of the Feminine: Language and CounterAesthetics in Selected Women Writers and Artists.
Supervisor: Prof. Christel R. Devadawson
Th29343

Abstract

This study explores language and aesthetics in selected contemporary women writers and artists in post-independence India (approximately 1960–2000) as they chart the terrain of the feminine against its patriarchal constructions. The research examines selected writings by women after 1947, the autobiography of Ajeet Cour, and the art of selected women artists Arpita Singh, Nilima Sheikh, Nalini Malani, and Arpana Caur, among others. The thesis engages with multiple forms of expression—fiction, autobiography, painting, and installation—and analyses how these writers and artists retrieve the feminine from patriarchal discourse through counter-language and counter-aesthetic strategies. These women writers and artists from educated, upper-middle-class, and well-travelled backgrounds envision an alternate feminine outside patriarchal frameworks through a range of theoretical approaches across text and image. They deploy critical tools to reclaim feminine expression as felt, constructed, and articulated by women themselves. In doing so, their works radically question masculinist language and its violences, along with the systematic exclusions that form an integral part of gendered oppression. Central to this inquiry is the engagement of the writers and artists with themes of the maternal, abjection, the body, silence,

and trauma to expose the limitations of masculinist language and aesthetics. By foregrounding the abject, the maternal, and the desiring female body, they challenge idealised constructions of femininity and attempt to envision alternative modes of feminine expression beyond patriarchal mediation through counter-aesthetic and discursive practices.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Socio-Historical Background 3. Articulating Violence: Patriarchal Structures and the Silenced Feminine 4. Language and the Reinvestment of Emotional Intensities 5. Reclaiming the Maternal: Counter-Discourse and Visuality 6. Abjection and the Feminine 7. Refiguring Women's Writing and Art, Conclusion.

07. NASIM KAMALI

Bridging Peace and Gender Equality in Indian and Iranian Women's Writings: A Survey on the Works of Indian and Iranian Women Poets: Savitribai Phule, Kamala Das, and Nabina Das, Táhirih Qurratu'l-'Ayn, Simin Behbahani, and Forugh Farrokhzad.

Supervisor: Dr. Nidhi Vats

Th29344

Abstract

Abstract This thesis explores the dynamic relationship between peace and gender equity in the poetry of selected Indian and Iranian women writers under a comparative feminist literary perspective. Considering the Savitribai Phule, Kamala Das, Nabina Das, Tahirih Qurrat al-ayn, Simin Behbahani and Forough Farokhzad, the research articulates and investigates how women`s poetry may be said to contest patriarchal as well as social and political violence and at the same time raise a dignified vision of justice and peaceful co-existence. By contextualising these poets in their unique historical, cultural, and sociopolitical milieus, the project argues that poetry is not only an aesthetic act but a means for social critique and feminist activism. Employing a multidisciplinary approach, which spans the disciplines of feminist literary criticism, comparative literature and peace research, the thesis undertakes close readings of the selected poems in conjunction with the historical and theoretical contexts. The paper states that these poets contest hegemonic narratives with different approaches, such as education and reform (Phule), confessional self-expression and bodily autonomy (Kamala Das and Farrokhzad), spiritual and ideological rebellion (Tahirih), national and humanitarian awareness (Behbahani), and diasporic and marginal challenges (Nabina Das). Their work may be at odds culturally, but they both come together in the argument that gender justice is the basis of sustainable peace. In bringing Indian and Iranian women's poetry traditions into conversation with each other, this thesis makes a contribution to the burgeoning field of Global South feminist concerns and demonstrates the possibilities of literature in peacebuilding and human rights advocacy. It claims that women's poetic reconstruction of peace moves away from considering peace as a lack of violence and war towards viewing peace as the existence of equality, voice and social participation. In the end, the research positions poetry as an ethical-political act that connects the individual with collective change by providing ideals for a more just and harmonious world. Keywords: feminist poetry, peace studies, gender equality, Indian women writers, Iranian women writers, comparative literature, resistance, social justice.

Contents

1. Historical, Cultural, and Feminist Contexts of Indian Women's Poetry: Savitribai Phule, Kamala Das, and Nabina Das 2. The Legacy and Impact of Iranian Women Poets: Táhirih Qurratu'l-`Ayn, Simin Behbahani, and Forugh Farrokhzad 59-138 3. Voices of Resistance: Exploring Patriarchy through the Lens of Indian and Iranian Women Poets – Savitri Bai Phule, Kamala Das, Nabina Das, Táhirih Qurratu'l-'Ayn, Simin Daneshvar, andForugh Farrokhzad 4. Exploring Love as a Way of Expression in Indian and Iranian Women Poets: A Comparative Study of the Works of Savitri Bai Phule, Kamala Das, Nabina Das, Táhirih Qurrat al-Ayn, Simin Daneshvar, and Forugh Farrokhzad 5. Exploring the Intersection of Equality and Peace in the Poetry of Savitri Bai Phule, Kamala Das, Nabina Das, Táhirih Qurrat al-Ayn, Simin Daneshvar, and Forugh Farrokhzad. Conclusion, Bibliography.

08. RALENG (Rinchuila)
Women, Roles, and Identity: Representations in the Literary and Social Life of the Tangkhul Nagas
Supervisor: Dr. K.B VEIO POU
Th 29022

Abstract

In contemporary times, the discourse of identity, status and role of women and related challenges of women in society are being widely debated and discoursed globally. There are many ways to examine and understand the issues. The representation of women in literature is one kind of approach that enables to understand the identity and roles of women in the society. In fact, the portrayal of women in literature reflects the image, identity and roles in the given society. Ethnographic study that involves field work is another kind that has been employed to understand the situation of women. In this research work, the researcher uses literary representation and ethnographic field study to examine the identity, status and roles of women among the Tangkhul Nagas (The Tangkhul community is situated in North-East India and North-West Myanmar (erstwhile Burma). This approach attempts to understand the traditional and the contemporary situation of Tangkhul women in time and space. The status and role of Tangkhul women is a least studied subject area, and more so, there has been no works so far that try to understand Tangkhul women through the perspective of literary representation. The use of ethnographic data complements well to the literary sources to understand the research problem. The thesis examines the multifaceted roles, identities, and representations of women in Tangkhul literature and the broader social context of the Tangkhul Nagas. It addresses the various roles and identities that women hold within society and the transformative changes propelled by modernization, particularly through the introduction of modern education and the influence of Christianity. Despite some observable changes in the roles and identities of women, the fundamental structure of inequality between men and women in Tangkhul society remains entrenched, especially in rural areas.

Contents

1. Introduction 2 Representation of Women in Tangkhul Literature 3. Oral and Self-Narrative of women 4. Silenced Narrative of women 5. Status and Role of women: Then and Now 6. Conclusion.

09. SAMARA REHMAN
The Sea is History : JMW Turner's Seascapes
Supervisor: Prof. Anjana Sharma
Th29023

Abstract

This thesis examines J.M.W. Turner's (1775-1851) seascapes as sites where art, history, and maritime culture converge in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century Britain. While Turner is often seen as a painter of the Romantic sublime, this study argues that his maritime paintings must also be read as sophisticated historical narratives that chart Britain's evolving relationship with the sea, empire, and industrial modernity. The study situates Turner's works within the upheavals of his period–from the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars to the consolidation of Britain's naval supremacy and rise of second empire, the transition from sail to steam borne out of the industrial revolution to the growth of fishing/processing industries and coastal tourism. Against this backdrop, the artist's canvasses visualise national aspirations and as well as anxieties. The thesis traces how Turner adapted the conventions of 'History Painting,' to marine art, thereby creating a hybrid genre in which allegory, national politics, contemporary history, and Romantic sensibilities intertwine. His depictions of naval battles and sea-ports interrogate Britain's imperial destiny, while his portrayals of steam-powered ships, coastal resorts, and whale-hunt operations capture the tensions between technological progress and mankind's fragility at sea. Close readings of his Carthaginian, Venetian, and Roman subjects place his works within the broader discourse of rise and fall of imperial maritime powers, made and un-made by the sea. Similarly, his shipwreck and storm imagery, marking a shift from 'sublime' to what the thesis identifies as the 'anti-sublime,' critiques the limits of empire and pretensions to human mastery over nature. By placing Turner's seascapes within their cultural and historical context, this thesis argues that they are not mere aesthetic maritime views, but are rather dynamic and critical commentaries on nationalism, empire, and nature-human entanglements. His seas become enduring mirrors of both the Romantic imagination and our present ecological consciousness.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. History and Legacy in Turner's Visual Narratives 3. Turner's Seascapes and the Influence of Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars on Romantic Sensibilities 4. Turner's Ancient and Modern Maritime Powers: The Imagery of Carthage, Venice, and Rome in Romantic Aesthetics 5. Seaside Tourism and Whaling: A Study of Industry-at-Sea in Turne 6. Lost at Sea: Shipwrecks and Tempests

10. SHELMI SANKHIL
From Spears to Pen: Naga Fiction in English and Indian Literature
Supervisors: Prof. Priya Kumar and Prof. Rimli Bhattacharya (retd.)
Th 29024

Abstract

Thesis Title: From Spears to Pen: Naga Fiction in English and Indian Literature Anglophone Naga writing (poetry) has been around for several decades. But it did not get the desired visibility and recognition from both Naga and non-Naga readers.

However, shortly after Naga fiction in English appeared in 2003, the wheels of fortune began to turn. And in twenty years, Naga fiction has scaled great heights to earn the desired recognition in the region and nationally. In Mizoram University, Sikkim University, Nagaland University, University of Delhi, Jamia Milia Islamia (Delhi) and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi, to name a few, Anglophone Naga literature (mostly fiction) has been included in the curriculum at various levels of university education. In this context, a systematic study of 'Naga literature' is not only timely but essential to how we theorise and define the category and explore reading frames that are more cognisant of Naga experience and lifeworlds. The present study has been conceptualised and situated within this emerging context. It seeks to understand the phenomenon of ANF and explore its viability for Naga discourse in contemporary times. The study also seeks to formulate 'new' questions for the conversation on what is broadly considered to be Indian literature. This is because, the literary cultures of the erstwhile oral societies in the Northeast of India, of which ANL can be taken as a representative site, fall outside the Marg-Desi dichotomy. And given the interest of trade publishers in Northeast India Anglophone writing in recent years, it is a question that is likely to come up in the foreseeable future.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. He Naga Club and the Emergence of an Ethnic Consciousness: 1918-1929 3. 'Japan War' and Anglophone Naga Fiction4. A New Milieu: Reading the First Anglophone Naga Novel 5. Narrating Memories of Pain and Hope: 1947-1980 6. 'Operation Bluebird' and Naga literary Representation 7. Towards an Alternative Conception of 'Home' in Anglophone Naga Fiction. Conclusion. works cited.

11. SINGH (Jyoti)
Interrogating Correlations of Disability Representations in Indian Literature with Indian Culture and Society.
Supervisors: Prof. Anil Kumar Aneja and Prof. Dr. Sanjay Verma
Th29345

Abstract

The thesis examines the correlations of disability representations in contemporary Indian literary works with Indian society and culture. The interrogation of these representations is grounded within the context of methodologies and theories of Disability Studies to examine how these representations interact with the societal and cultural factors specific to the Indian context. The primary sources incorporate two types of narratives. One form of narratives presents a fictional account and the other narratives are based on the lives of the authors. As a result, this research work presents an in-depth exploration of representations of disability in contemporary Indian English literature, highlighting the significance of disability studies as an academic discipline, as well as positions the framework of critical disability studies as an analytical lens. It also examines how these portrayals construct societal understandings of disability within the broader Indian cultural and social framework. This research work is prompted by a group of research questions that are interrelated and that address an important vacuum in Indian literary Studies and Disability Studies.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Emergence of Disability Rights Movement and Literary Representations in India 3. The Disabled Identity in Indian Fiction and Life Narratives 4. The Role of Family and Community in Shaping Disabled Identity in

Indian Literature 5. Gendered Disability: Women, Care and Silenced Agency 6. 'Disabled Masculinity and Sexuality: Rejection of Hegemonic Masculinity in Fictional Novels. Conclusion.

12. Somya
Reading Adorno's Social Psychology - A Return to Neurosis.
Supervisor: Prof. Subarno Chattarji
Th 29417

Abstract

My dissertation, Reading Adorno's Social Psychology - A Return to Neurosis, re-examines neurosis through the framework of Adorno's critical theory, moving beyond its conventional understanding as an individual psychological pathology. It contends that Adorno's intervention in Freudian psychoanalysis enables neurosis to be understood as a historically mediated response to the contradictions of modern capitalist society. Thus, neurosis becomes a record of human suffering and psychic damage under modernity, registering the pressures of reified and administered existence. Rather than a condition requiring adjustment or cure, the neurotic figure may retain a critical and potentially redemptive relation to social reality precisely through an inability or refusal to reconcile completely with its contradictions. The dissertation situates Adorno's social psychology within the intersecting traditions of Marxism, psychoanalysis, German Idealism, and Critical Theory, with particular attention to his critiques of instrumental reason, identity thinking, the culture industry, and the administered subject. It brings this theoretical framework into dialogue with existential modernist literature through readings of Sartre's Nausea, Camus's The Stranger, and Kafka's The Metamorphosis. Across these texts, experiences of nausea, absurdity, alienation, estrangement, and revolt foreground fractured forms of consciousness whose heightened self-awareness exposes the contradictions between individual subjectivity and social totality. Therefore, what appears as an existential crisis may constitute a form of negative knowledge, that is, a refusal to accommodate oneself fully to a damaged social order. As an interdisciplinary engagement with critical theory, psychoanalysis, philosophy, and literary modernism, my thesis demonstrates how literature registers forms of historical suffering that cannot be reduced to mere individual pathology. Adorno's concepts of non-identity, negative dialectics, and autonomous art provide the basis for reconfiguring neurosis in a more redemptive light - not simply as a condition to be overcome, but as a negative yet indispensable resource for critique and the possibility of human emancipation.

Contents

Introduction 1. Hysterical Commitment: Adorno and Praxis of Neurosis 2. Sartre and Adorno: Nausea and the Existential Aesthetics of Neurosis 3. Camus and Adorno: Absurd Revolt and Neurosis in The Stranger 4. Ungeziefer in Plain Sight: Kafka and the Pathologies of Modernity in The Metamorphosis, Conclusion. Bibliography.

13. TIKADAR (Sukanya)
Interrogating Bengal's 'Castelessness': Recasting Caste through Namasudra Autobiographical Writings.
Supervisor: Prof. Raj Kumar
Th 29388

Abstract

This thesis examines the myth "casteless" of Bengal. Long celebrated for its traditions of social reform, bhadralok modernity, and Left radicalism, Bengal has often been imagined as having outgrown caste, even as Dalit communities continue to encounter its everyday operations. The study contends that this misconception has been construed mainly by two forces: the demographic displacements triggered by the Partition of 1947, and thirty-four years of Left Front rule during which caste was systematically consumed into the broader category of class. Against this narrative of exceptionalism, the thesis turns to three Bengali Dalit autobiographies—Manohar Mouli Biswas's Surviving in My World, Manoranjan Byapari's Interrogating My Chandal Life, and Kalyani Thakur Charal's Ami Keno Charal Likhi—to reconstruct the specific, lived forms of caste in Bengal, especially for the Namasudra community. Biswas's narrative illuminates the persistence of caste discrimination within spaces conventionally celebrated as egalitarian, such as schools and colleges, while foregrounding the Matua sect's crucial role in the cultural and educational upliftment of Namasudra community. Byapari shifts the frame to the refugee colony and the camp, tracing how Bengali Dalit refugees are doubly marginalised as "outsiders" to the nation and as unwanted low-caste subjects within the state. His detailed accounts of the Dandakaranya Project and the Marichjhapi massacre reveal caste at work within the apparatus of state machinery. Thakur's autobiography complicates further by mapping upper-caste hegemony onto urban office spaces, even as it lays bare the domestic violence that shapes Namasudra women's lives in rural Bengal. Reading these three texts together, the thesis argues that caste in Bengal persists not through absence but through disavowal: it is reproduced via pedagogic exclusion, refugee governance, workplace hierarchy, and gendered violence, even though such practices are publicly recast as matters of class, rehabilitation, and private family life respectively.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Introduction- The Misleading Idea of Castelessness of Bengal 3. Importance of Matua Sect in Social Upliftment of Namasudra Community of Bengal 4. Quest of Namasudra Community for Education- A Study of Manohar Mouli Biswas' Autobiography Surviving in My World 5. The Plight of Bengali Namasudra Refugees- A Study of State Machinery's Systemic Caste-based Targetting, through Manoranjan Byapari's Autobiography Interrogating my Chandal Life 6. Embracing the Margins- Reclaiming Dalit Identity in Kalyani Thakur Charal's Autobiography Ami Keno Charal Likhi (Why I Sign as Charal 7. Conclusion- The Nature of Casteism in Bengal. Bibliography.

14. YADAV(Jaya)
Reimagining the Subcontinent: Exploring Identity, Boundaries, and Histories in South Asian Narratives
Supervisor: Prof. Anjana Sharma
Th 29025

Abstract

My thesis focuses on a literary remapping of the cartographic transformations that have occurred across South Asia in the contemporary era. This is linked to both a precolonial and colonial legacy in the region, which has created altering identities, shared histories, linked to multiple migrations both within and outside the subcontinent. The region's long history of cultural exchange, trade, and travel was

radically disrupted by colonial interventions, whose legacies, including the Partition and other subsequent divisions of conflict, continue to raise questions of identities, boundaries, and alternative histories. These discourses remain contested, often reflecting the tension between dominant forms of historiography and silenced marginalised voices, adding to postcolonial critiques of writing, positing an intersectional lens to study the region. South Asia emerges as a complex geopolitical and cultural formation whose histories extend beyond fixed territorial borders, recalling Benedict Anderson's notion of "imagined communities." My methodology involves examining literature from across the region, including Myanmar, to challenge pre-existing academic frameworks that have historically defined South Asia through Cold War geopolitics, especially in North America. This research places South Asia within a broader framework, reflective of multiple changes it has undergone through time, arguing for a more nuanced reading of themes that emerge today. This thesis reframes analyses of studying contemporary South Asian literature by focusing on questions of gender and representation through a close study of texts that signify the various shifts redefining notions of belonging, nationhood, and homelands in relation to writing

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Mphibious Lives: Climate Displacement and Migrant Identities in Amitav Ghosh's The Hungry Tide and Gun Island 3. Mapping Identity, Politics, and Conflict: An Analysis of Fatima Bhutto's the Shadow of the Crescent Moon and The Runaways 4. Reconstructing Memory, Gender, and Identity: Examining Tahmina Anam's the Good Muslim and Aquila Ismail's Marigolds and Martyrs 5. Imaginations, Circulations, and Representation in Myanmar: Reading Pascal Khoo Thwe's From the Land of Green Ghosts: A Burmese Odyssey 6. (De) Constructing Consolidated Colonialism(s): Nayomi Munaweera's Island of a Thousand Mirrors and Romesh Gunesekera's Noontide Toll.