# CHAPTER 32

# INDIAN LANGUAGE & LITERARY STUDIES

## Doctoral Theses

01. DHALL (Twinkle)
**Unveiling Memories and Silences of Partition: A Study of Select Women's Writings.**
Supervisor: Prof. Ravi Prakash Tekchandani
Th 29132

*Abstract*

Partition of India (1947) led to the largest communal violence in the Indian subcontinent in the last hundreds of years. Women suffered a double blow: directly, by being raped and disrespected; and indirectly through the loss of their men (husband/father/son). This study seeks to explore the memories and silences within Partition Studies, as reflected in the self-writings of women from the northwest of the Indian subcontinent. Numerous academics have studied the Partition of India and shared their insights; however, the lived experiences shared by women who witnessed Partition firsthand are structurally central to understanding a catastrophe that included communal riots, mass displacement of people, gender-based violence, and family disintegration. This thesis dwells on the recollections of women survivors from a range of cultural heritages and languages, with the ultimate goal of unveiling those voices that have been left unheard in commemoration of partition. Through the examination of women`s writings, this work seeks to explore the dynamic between memory and forgetting. By interviewing survivors of the partition both empowered and disempowered, this effort seeks to uncover collective memory and preserve its remembrance. One of the intriguing features of this research is examination of diverse voices of women that does not find reflection in the mainstream history. In order to recognize that women have history and women are in history, it is important to pay due respect to the memories shared by the women writers who witnessed the gruesome violence, carried the wounds of uprootment and loss in their hearts but showed determination to reconstruct their lives. This work is an examination of the first-hand accounts by women Partition survivors that represent their individual memories of displacement and the trauma of the experience of Partition.

*Contents*

1. Understanding partition: a historical and linguistic framework 2. Voices of resilience: women`s autobiographies and partition memory 3. Reading women`s partition memoirs: a literary analysis 4. Scattered treasures: women`s writings and the intergenerational memory of partition 5. Documenting trauma and displacement: oral histories of women survivors, Conclusion and Bibliography and Appendices.

02. KAUR (Saheb)
**Performing University: Campus Theatre and Politics of Performance post 1990s.**
Supervisor: Prof. Venkata Ramaiah Gaампa
Th 29133

*Abstract*

This study explores campus theatre in post-liberalization India as a critical site of cultural production and resistance. Focusing on the University of Delhi, it examines how student performances since the 1990s have reflected and contested the neoliberal restructuring of higher education. Drawing on postcolonial, postdramatic, and feminist frameworks, the research interprets campus plays as cultural texts that reveal tensions between commodification, identity, and dissent within university spaces. Methodologically, it combines archival reconstruction, textual and performance analysis, and interviews with student practitioners to document ephemeral forms of theatre that remain outside institutional archives. The study situates campus theatre as a space of critical imagination. It redefines the performing university as both a product of neoliberal transformation and a site of enduring resistance and creativity.

*Contents*

1. Historiographies and evolutions of campus theatre in University of Delhi 2. Staging University: critique of power and ethics of resistance in campus theatre 3. Breaking backs and bending spines: theatre in university for university's Sake 4. Commodification and its discontents in campus theatre. Conclusion and Bibliography.

03. LODHI (Neeharika Singh)
**Representation of Women: A Comparative Study of Select Indian Detective Novels (2012-2018)" s.**
Supervisor: Prof. V. Narayanappa
Th 29348

*Abstract*

The present research is a comparative study of portrayal of women in six Indian detective novels written in English: “Blood Red Sari” by Ashok Banker, “More Bodies Will Fall” by Ankush Saikia, “Private India” by Ashwin Sanghi and James Patterson, “Greenlight” by Kalpana Swaminathan, “Chain of Custody” by Anita Nair, and “The Sea of Innocence” by Kishwar Desai. The selected novels were published between 2012 and 2018. The study adopts a qualitative and comparative approach. It examines female characters in relation to major roles within detective fiction, including detectives, sidekicks, victims, culprits, and other significant figures. It also analyses central themes and narrative voice to understand how women’s agency and vulnerability are constructed across the selected texts. The corpus includes three male-authored and three female-authored novels, allowing a comparison of authorial perspectives. Since all the selected novels include female victims, the corpus becomes especially relevant to the period under study. The year 2012 is taken as the starting point in view of the intensified public discussion on crime against women in India after the Delhi gang rape case. The study identifies significant similarities and differences across the six texts. Women in the selected novels occupy multiple roles, though these roles are not distributed uniformly across the corpus. In some texts, women appear in positions of investigative authority; however, their authority remains shaped by patriarchal structures. Their authority is therefore expanded, yet structurally limited. Female detectives in the selected novels are shaped by specific social privileges rather than presented as universal representatives of women. In comparing male-authored and female-authored texts, the study finds that authorial gender influences narrative emphasis but does not fully determine representation. Thus, the corpus presents a varied and complex portrayal of women, shaped by both agency and constraint, and reflects both change and continuity within the genre.

*Contents*

1. Introduction to Detective Fiction and the Primary Texts 2. Indian Detective Novel: Historical Development and women's Representation 3. Analysing Female Characters in Blood Red Sari, More Bodies Will Fall and Private India 4. Analysing Female Characters in The Sea of Innocence, Greenlight and Chain of Custody 5. Comparative Analysis of Female Characters in the Primary Texts 6. Conclusion.

04. SADIA PRINCE
**Study of Heterogeneous Identities of Kashmir Through Literature and Folk Narratives.**
Supervisor: Dr. Ahanthem Homen Singh
Th 29349

*Abstract*

This study critically examines the notion of Kashmiriyat by foregrounding the heterogeneous and historically contingent nature of Kashmiri identity through an analysis of literary and folk narratives. While Kashmiriyat has often been represented as a timeless and syncretic ethos symbolizing communal harmony, this research revisits such homogenizing frameworks by demonstrating that identities in Kashmir have been shaped by shifting political, religious, and socio-economic conditions across time. By engaging with folk traditions, mystic poetry, nationalist writings, and post-1990s narratives, the study positions literature and oral forms as alternative archives that reveal tensions, contradictions, and contestations embedded within Kashmiri society. Methodologically, the research adopts a qualitative and interpretative approach, employing close textual analysis alongside theoretical frameworks drawn from folklore studies, postcolonial theory, Marxist criticism, and memory studies. It reinterprets the mystic poetry of Lal Ded and Nund Rishi as reflective of socio-political transformations rather than merely symbols of spiritual harmony. The study also revisits the anti-Dogra movement through the works of Mahjoor and Abdul Ahad Azad, highlighting competing ideological positions within what is often viewed as a unified nationalist struggle. Further, the research examines post-1990s literary narratives to analyze the divergent yet parallel experiences of conflict, displacement, and memory for Kashmiris of different backgrounds. It also explores the role of language, script, and oral traditions in shaping identity across historical moments. By bringing these diverse narrative forms into dialogue, the study argues that Kashmiri identity is not singular or stable but a dynamic and contested construct shaped by multiple voices and histories.

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1. Valley of Voices: Folklore and Multiple Identities in Kashmir 2. Beyond Saints and Syncretism: Social Reflections in Mystical Poetry 3. Verses of Awakening: Kashmiri Poets and National Consciousness 4. Reimagining Home: Displacement and Cultural Memory in Kashmiri. Conclusion and Bibliography.

05. TEJASWINI (N.)
**Navigating Contemporary India through Select Narratives of Women Travellers.**
Supervisor: Prof. Ratnottama Das
Th 29134

*Abstract*

The thesis titled, Navigating Contemporary India through Select Narratives of Women Travellers, explores the transformative role of women's travel writing in post-liberalization

India, focusing on narratives published between 1989 and 2019. Historically marginalized in the male-dominated genre of travel literature, women's voices have begun to reclaim space, offering fresh perspectives that challenge traditional notions of travel, identity, and representation. By centering both Indian and foreign women writers, this study investigates how their narratives negotiate complex intersections of gender, culture, power, and globalization in a rapidly changing socio-economic landscape. Drawing on Arjun Appadurai's scape theory, the research examines how ethnoscapes, technoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes shape and are shaped by women's embodied travel experiences. The thesis reveals how women's travel writing functions as a feminist practice of resistance and self-articulation, disrupting patriarchal and colonial legacies embedded in travel literature. It highlights the politics of visibility and the negotiation of public spaces, emphasizing themes of vulnerability, agency, and the reconfiguration of the gaze. A comparative analysis of Western and Indian women's travel narratives uncovers significant dissonances shaped by cultural, racial, and socio-economic factors, while also identifying shared experiences of mobility and constraint. The study further situates these narratives within broader discourses of national identity, globalization, and neo-colonialism, demonstrating how women's travel writing contributes to reimagining India's cultural and political landscape. Ultimately, this thesis argues that women's travel writing in contemporary India is not merely anecdotal but a critical site of cultural production and epistemological intervention. By inscribing gendered, embodied, and intersectional experiences into the genre, these narratives challenge dominant ideologies and offer nuanced, pluralistic visions of India, making a vital contribution to travel writing, feminist scholarship, and postcolonial studies.

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1. Changing Scapes 2. Gender and Gaze 3. Dissonance in Western and Indian Women's Travel Writing 4. Writing of the Nation's Identity 5. Conclusion