
Theory-Literature Interface: Possibilities of Re-Searching India

A Two Day National
Seminar
(11-12 May, 2023)

**Abstract Deadline
extended
till March 25, 2023**



About the Department

The Department of English and Cultural Studies is one of the premier centres of Language and Literature in the country, offering Master's and PhD programmes. The Master's course is designed as an eclectic programme that offers courses ranging from Indian Writing to Media Studies, from Contemporary Critical Theory to Postcolonial Literatures, and from World Literatures to Writings from Punjab. Besides rigorous training in literary and cultural studies, the programme offers exercises on Translation, Creative Writing, and Social Outreach and Research work. The Department is also running a PhD research programme focusing on interdisciplinary areas of study such as Popular Culture, Digital Humanities, Memory Studies, and Posthumanism as reflected in literature and cultures across the world. In addition to these, the Department offers specialised studies under the Sarojini Naidu Chair and Mulk Raj Anand Chair. The Department also offers a Soft Skills course in English language, in association with RUSA.

Organised by:

Department of
English and
Cultural Studies
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Faculty Coordinator

*Dr. Sudhir Mehra
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Concept Note

Re-searching and revisiting the dynamic nuances of everyday entails a breaking away from the classical idea of everything. Boundaries of the world are re-configured every moment. People, communities, nations and identities are constantly in the process of making, un-making and re-making. Now, what does it mean to be Indian in these precarious contexts? How is our Indianness being shaped and modified by the currents of the immediate as well as the mediate? How do we navigate and negotiate with our Indianness in everyday life?

Henry Lefebvre in his *Critique of Everyday Life* diagnoses the everyday to be colonized by consumption. On the other hand, Michel de Certeau posits the everyday to be the site of possibilities for resistance. Alternatively, Certeau understands consumption in everyday life as an act of production as well. For him, the everyday is the site where mass culture encounters the individual. Different people consume culture in their own unique ways. In a similar vein, Lefebvre visualizes the everyday as an “intersection” of what we control and what we do not control. Our understanding of India as a nation, cultural entity and space is fast changing.

Henri Lefebvre posits space to be a complex social construction, driven by a three-part dialectic between everyday practices and perceptions, representations and the spatial imaginary of the time. Boundaries of communities and cultures keep emerging and disappearing as one navigates between spaces. The cultural conditions within which each person works are multiple, overlapping and at times contradictory. The everyday practices are integral in understanding the changing dynamics of a culture. Being part of a class, an ethnic group, a professional grouping or some other social community entails ascribing to certain values and beliefs regarding how we conduct our everyday affairs. While these values and ideas are dictated to us by the group, they also help in consolidating the group's existence as a social collectivity. The everyday thus becomes a contested domain of shared social experiences and global interactions.

India is a land of cultural confluences. From the existence of the unique Vedic civilization through the conquests of the Mughal to the British colonization and the landmark economic reforms of the early 90s, India has been the land where diverse streams of ideas and cultures flow.

The seminar proposes to bring together researchers interested and invested in the interface between literature and theory towards a critical understanding of India, and moving across disciplines it aims to facilitate discussions around the following themes:

- Orality in India
- Spaces and Non-Spaces of Contemporary Indian Geography
- Visual Arts: From Museums to Underground Art Galleries
- Indian History: Memories and Truth
- Communities in Transition
- Cyberspace and the Future of India
- Digital Turn in the Indian Literature: Emerging Trends
- Indian Literature in Translations
- Indian Cinema and the Everyday
- The Great Indian Bazaar
- Indian Food, Ethnicity and Glocalization
- Mapping India: Urban Space and Segregation
- New Demographic Challenges as India Hits the 1.41 billion mark
- Future of Liberal Arts in India
- Indian Popular Culture: From Folk to Pop
- Indian Tribes and Communities: Alienation and Exoticisation
- Native Discourse of Eco-Criticism
- Indian Philosophy and Art Aesthetics
- Indian Knowledge Systems
- Visva-Bharati: India and the World
- Cultural Cartographies of India

Call for Papers

Abstracts of up to 200 words, accompanied by a short bio of 50-70 words, are invited from research scholars and young teachers by 25.03.2023 at

researching.indiaseminar@gmail.com

The selected abstracts will be notified by 30.03.2023. The last date to submit full length papers of 3000-5000 words is 20.04.2023. The papers should be formatted according to MLA Handbook (8th/9th edition). The tentative dates for the Seminar are 11-12th May, 2023.

Registration Details

The research scholars and young teachers selected for paper presentation are required to pay the registration fee by 07.04.2023. The details for the same are as follows:-

- For Research Scholars (From Panjab University Campus and Colleges in UT): Rs. 1500/-
- For Research Scholars (From Outside UT of Chandigarh): Rs. 1500/- + 18% GST
- For Young Teachers (From Panjab University Campus and Colleges in UT): Rs. 2500/-
- For Young Teachers (From Outside UT of Chandigarh): Rs. 2500/- + 18% GST

Note: No travel allowance will be paid to the paper presenters. Moderate accommodation on additional payment, if possible, will be provided. Selected papers can be considered for publication in *dialog* – a bi-annual peer reviewed journal, or an edited anthology.

Further details will be shared at a later stage. Please reach out at researching.indiaseminar@gmail.com for any queries.

Faculty of the Department

- Prof. Akshaya Kumar, Chairperson, Department of English and Cultural Studies.
- Prof. Deepti Gupta, Professor, Department of English and Cultural Studies
- Prof. Rumina Sethi, Professor, Department of English and Cultural Studies
- Dr. Meenu Gupta, Associate Professor, Department of English and Cultural Studies
- Dr. Surbhi Goel, Assistant Professor, Department of English and Cultural Studies
- Dr. Sudhir Mehra, Assistant Professor, Department of English and Cultural Studies

Organizing Committee (Faculty)

- Dr. Sudhir Mehra
- Dr. Raj Kumar
- Ms. Simrat Khurana
- Mr. Abhay Singh
- Ms. Sanyogita Singh

Organizing Committee (Student)

- Aalisha Chauhan, PhD Research Scholar
- Suraj Kumar, PhD Research Scholar
- Sushmita Negi, PhD Research Scholar
- Arunjot Kaur, PhD Research Scholar
- Kanika Panghal, PhD Research Scholar
- Beant Kaur, MPhil Research Scholar
- Vivek Tomar, PhD Research Scholar
- Tanya Kaur, PhD Research Scholar
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