

Call for Papers for UGC-DEB sponsored National Seminar

on

Postcoloniality, Subalternity and Indian Writing in English: The Open Learning Praxis

The School of Humanities proposes to organise a Research Project based National Seminar on Thursday, the 1st October 2015 at the Salt Lake Campus of the University on the aforementioned theme.

Concept Note

The days of critical hair splitting over the authenticity of Indian Writing in English as a meaningfully valid coinage and its existence as a genre are long over. This has come about not just as a result of institutionalising of the curricula in the academia, but also largely because of its mass acceptance as an independent discourse. The path to this has been a chequered one no doubt, but then it is time to think beyond.

Since the title of this Seminar takes **Postcoloniality** as a condition rather than as just a phase in the history of nation building, it is incumbent that the time is ripe to interrogate how far such a theme has actually been explored in the texts and contexts of IWE. In other words, we aim to signal an epistemological shift from the issue of semantics in IWE and foray into the vital aspect of representation in literary texts. The postcolonial psyche, needless to say, is not just something temporal; so researchers in the field will have the option of probing representational areas across a spectrum of time spread largely over the 20th and 21st centuries in the works of numerous writers of all possible genres. That way, the seminar ideally looks forward to hearing deliberations that would encompass a wide gamut of socio-economic phenomena ranging from the upsurge of mainstream nationalism to global consumerism against the backdrop of which all literary texts of the era would naturally be placed.

The other keyword in the title, **Subalternity**, becomes a relevant intervention in this context, and it aims to foreground a debate that has closely followed the nationalist movement ever since – the issue of inclusivity in India's struggle for freedom and subsequent nation building. Clearly, the focus is on the paradigms of caste, class and gender; and the point of contention/analysis is whether literary representations have been able to surge past the topos of what Ranajit Guha calls the ideology of 'statism'. The substantial body of literature from the margins, a lot of it in translation too, bears ample testimony to the fact that this is an area always up for honest academic deliberation.

Within the curricular framework of an Open University, our UG and PG syllabi in English offer full fledged Papers on IWE. The School of Humanities encourages researchers to contemplate on presentations taking off from but not necessarily limiting themselves to the literary texts syllabised in Paper 8 of the new BDP – EEG syllabus and Paper 7 of the existing PG syllabus for this Seminar. The detailed syllabi may be found on the University website under the 'School of Humanities' tab. **Papers may be based either on texts of Indian Writing in English or in Bhasa literatures that have been translated into English.** It is expected that the Papers thus received at the event will soon be compiled for publication in an edited volume with ISBN.

Interested scholars are invited to send abstracts (necessarily with key words – maximum 7) of 200 words on any of the following sub-themes, latest within 22nd August 2015 as email attachments in MS Word and pdf format to srideep.nsoueng@gmail.com. The abstract should indicate the serial number of the relevant sub-theme against which the submission is being made. Scholars are requested to mention **only** their designation, institutional affiliation and email id in centred format below the title of the Paper. Acceptance of abstracts will be communicated by 30th August 2015. Selected presenters will then be required to send their full Papers (within 3000 words) with complete citations according to MLA Handbook 7th edn latest by 20th September 2015. **Only Paper presenters are encouraged to participate**. There is no Registration fee and we shall be able to provide neither TA nor accommodation. However, outstation participants may be assisted in making local arrangements.

Sub Themes:

1. **The Indian English Novel: Pragmatics of the Post Gandhi era**
2. **Indian English Poetry by Women: Erasure to Assertion**
3. **Indian English Drama: Beyond the Metrosexual confines**
4. **Graphic Novel: From verbal text to art text**
5. **Contemporary Indian English Non-Fictional Literature: Polemics with a cause?**
6. **Texts on Dalit life by non-Dalit writers: Interrogating Politics of Representation**

Important Dates:

Submission of Abstracts: 22nd August 2015

Communication of Selection: 30th August 2015

Submission of Full Length Papers: 20th September 2015

Date of Seminar: 1st October 2015

Sd/

Dr Manan Kumar Mandal
Officer in Charge
School of Humanities

Srideep Mukherjee
Organising Secretary
Seminar Committee