



Department of English
Utkal University
Vani Vihar, Bhubaneswar



National Seminar
on
INDIAN EPISTEMOLOGY
&
POLITICS OF APPROPRIATING MYTHS

26 April 2023

Chief Patron

Prof. Sabita Acharya

Vice Chancellor, Utkal University

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Prof. Durga Shankar Pattanaik

Chairman, Post Graduate Council, Utkal University

Keynote address

Prof. Susheel Kumar Sharma

Dept. of English and Modern European Languages

University of Allahabad, Prayagraj

Convener of Seminar

Asim Ranjan Parhi

Professor and Head, Dept. of English, Utkal University

Academic and organizing committee

Dr. Nirjharini Tripathy

Dr. Tanutrushna Panigrahi

Dr. S. Deepika

Shri Pulastya Jani



One-Day National Seminar

Indian Epistemology and Politics of Appropriating Myths

26 April 2023

Department of English, Utkal University, Vani Vihar, Bhubaneswar

Concept Note

Literature has served as an everyday response to human subjectivity beyond its narrative and codified identity since the beginning of civilization. Whether Wordsworthian 'modifying colours of imagination' or Victor Shklovsky's 'defamiliarisation' as potent literary crafts, critical endeavour has always flourished on the fertile sites of creative faculty. This creativity taken as a whole has been immensely influenced by ancient myths, belief system and epics. So powerful is the impact of myths in human imagination that leading modernist writers like Yeats, Eliot and Joyce have found in them their intellectual and cultural resource to establish new genres and forms of narrative. The roots of literary pursuit in any culture thus have always been a commonplace, everyday act in response to our emotional and cultural background shaped by innumerable natural and supernatural forces. The epics and ancient classics were mostly transmitted orally through stories before its specialised study from the written texts. Their relevance has been both contextual and perennial so far as the need to apply and correlate with archetypal characters and values been concerned.

However, in recent times, ideological and imposing modern theoretical practices have robbed the epics and underlying myths of their beauty and rendered a discursive narrative of the same suitable to modern social, political imperatives. This has been also the case in attacking canonical writers like William Shakespeare, D H Lawrence and many more. However its abuse has been maximum in case of mythical characters and culturally embedded legends, stories. Needless to say such texts sell because of their Westoxicated and market friendly interests. Even scholars and writers like Harbansh Mukhia and Manoj Das have cautioned such exercise while the former asserting the myths to be part of cultural history and not to be disbelieved altogether and the latter seriously questioning the ultra-modern theorist's limitation by such exercise. Myths and cultural history in India have provided ample scope to the common reader and audience form their moral and pragmatic choices in ordinary lives. The idea of Karma and Dharma got tuned to the human mind in order to integrate the spiritual and practical essence of self in the humdrums of social life. This is why a text like *The Mahabharata* has served generations to make choices on moral as well as secular grounds. Characters like Krishna, Drona and even Durjyodhana have made impact on economic, political and ethical issues.

This seminar thus intends to create awareness as well as question the critical and methodological practices of the modern writer and critic to examine the relevance of time-tested myths and such narratives in a highly democratic literary space at contemporary times.

Scheduled Programme

Registration and Tea-10.30 am

Inaugural and Keynote speech 11 to 12.45 pm including discussion

Prof. Susheel Kumar Sharma, Dept. of English and Modern European Languages, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj

Resource Person

12.45-1.30 pm- Panel Discussion by Faculty and experts

1.30-to 2 Pm-Lunch

2 to 3 pm - paper reading session-I

3-4 pm- Paper Reading Session- II

4-4.15 pm- Tea

4.15-5 pm- **Valedictory session and Certificate Distribution**

Themes on Focus: Indian epistemological practice, Aesthetics in native cultures,

Myth politics

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Asim R Parhi

Professor and Head, Dept. of English, Utkal University

Academic and organising Committee

Dr N Tripathy

Dr T T Panigrahi

Shri P Jani

Dr S Deepika

Assistance

Office staff and all Students of MA

An abstract of around 300 words with a title and key words is expected by 18 April 2023 by mail to parhi.english@utkaluniversity.ac.in. The write-ups received will be sent for blind review by an external expert in the area and the select few (maximum 10) will be accepted and subsequently intimated for presentation. The paper presenter has to deposit Rs 1500 on spot to meet the expenses of the certificate, lunch, a Newsletter, refreshment and attendance to all sessions.