

CHAPTER 17

ENGLISH

Doctoral Theses

01. ASWATHY P.
The Comic Strip of the Kerala Everyday: *Bobanum Moliyum*, 1957-2014.
Supervisor : Dr. N.A. Jacob and Prof. Udaya Kumar
Th 23354

Abstract
(Verified)

The history and evolution of one of the most popular visual, the comic strips, is an area that has not received sufficient scholarly attention. Though they have been part of the Kerala literary sphere, through newspapers, magazines, advertisements, pamphlets, comic strips have hardly been studied within the framework of Kerala's visual or print culture. This thesis is an attempt to mark an entry point for the same by studying the longest-living comic strip in Malayalam, *Bobanum Moliyum* by cartoonist Toms. By studying them in relation to other contemporary comic strips in Malayalam, published in various magazines, in a chronological format, the thesis seeks to understand its position and impact on the Kerala literary reading sphere. The thesis demonstrates how the lives of the people of Kerala feature in the comic strip, in these fifty-seven years, mediating its influence and readership. The socio-legal discourse around the copyright cases that the series was subjected to contributed to a shift in the status of the author-artist: from being one of the players in the production process, the artist came to be regarded as the creator-executioner of an idea. The thesis, while studying one particular comic strip closely, also examines other narrativised graphic literature, thereby furthering the domain of Malayali visual culture.

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1. Introduction 2. Changing to stay the same: Of sites and sights in bobanum moliyum 3. Encapsulating the kerala everyday: Through panels and gutters 4. The childhood of malayalis: The (im) possibilities of comic imagination 5. What's in a signature ?: The comic war over the twins 6. Conclusion and appendix

02. CHAKRABORTY (Nabanita)
Rhetoric of Love and Politics of Power: Speeches and writings of Queen Elizabeth I.
Supervisor : Dr. Prasanta Chakravarty
Th 23352

Abstract
(Not Verified)

This dissertation examines the rhetorical strategies of Queen Elizabeth I of England. The female monarch was able to rule over four decades of English history (1558-1603) singlehandedly amidst dynastic controversy, religious tension, political turmoil and economic upheaval. She mastered the art of rhetoric, ruling more by speech than by force. This dissertation focuses on the power of language (ingenious rhetorical tropes to

persuade or conciliate) rather than the language of power (through force or assertion) of the English queen. The intention is to study the modalities by which power and rhetoric are interwoven into the Elizabethan polity. This study has traced four rhetorical strategies of silence (chapter 1), procrastination or waiting for an opportune moment (*kairos* in chapter 2), deceitful nonchalance (*sprezzatura* in chapter 3), assertion and exhibitionism (*epideiktikon* in chapter 4) to respond to various crises like the religious settlement, marriage negotiations, threat of Queen Mary of Scotland, Spanish Armada and Irish rebellion at different phases of her reign. Though the focus is on the Queen's speeches, it also examines the potential liberty of the Elizabethan subjects to request, advise, intervene and challenge the authority of the monarch within the ambit of the parliament and outside. This allows a point of entry into the question of royal prerogative versus parliamentary privilege or the issue of 'monarchical republic' (Patrick Collinson) of Elizabethan England. This project departs from the myths and iconography of the queen and instead focuses on the real performative spaces of the Elizabethan court and the parliament where the queen displayed her passionate, persuasive and diplomatic rhetoric. This work intends to address these apparent contradictions of the Elizabethan regime. The methodology has been to closely study Elizabeth's public speeches, diplomatic letters, parliamentary proceedings, some legal and ecclesiastical documents to understand Elizabethan political history.

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1. Introduction 2. Rhetoric of silence : Elizabethan religious settlement 1559-1570 3. Principle of *kairos*: Elizabethan foreign policy 4. Rhetoric of *sprezzatura* and politics of covertness: Queen Elizabeth I and the threat of the Spanish armada 5. *Epideiktikon* and *pragmatikon*: Courtly literature and civic discourse in the last decade of Elizabethan reign 6. Conclusion and annexures

03. INDIRA PRASAD

Collective Experience: Individual, Family and Community in the Works of Bhikhari Thakur

Supervisor : Prof. Sumanyu Satpathy

Th 23357

Abstract (Not Verified)

This PhD project is a study of the complete works of Bhikhari Thakur (1887-1971), a Bhojpuri performing artiste and composer, who ran his own troupe and performed not only in the Bhojpurispeaking areas of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh but also in Assam and Bengal between 1917 and 1965. Bhikhari Thakur stands at the cusp of change brought about by the advent of print in a largely oral and scribal culture. His name is inextricably associated with *Bidesia*, the most modern of folk theatre forms and the latest addition to analogous folk theatre forms of North India that are historically of more recent origin such as *Svang*, *Manch*, *Khayala* and *Nautanki*. The study has been divided into five chapters. After a brief introduction, the thesis delves into the marginalisation of Bhojpuri literature against the backdrop of an aggressive promotion of Hindi. This eventually led to the demise of Kaithi script creating 'illiteracy' in Bihar by making obsolete an existing resource. This is followed by a critical biography of Bhikhari Thakur. The thesis traces the evolution of the text of *Bidesias* as we have it today, and shows that the printed text of *Bidesia* and his other plays, are a highly mediated set of texts derived from three different sources – Bhikhari Thakur's handwritten manuscripts, printed songbooks and performance. The biography maps his personal struggle, analyses the contribution of individuals, and the role of state institutions and political factors responsible for the transformation of Bhikhari Thakur into a cultural icon in Bihar. Finally, his works have been studied under two categories- devotional

compositions and plays, with a special focus on three seminal ones- *Bidesia* , *Gabarghichor* and *Beti-Viyog*.

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1. Introduction 2. Reading culture: The marginalisation of Bhojpuri 3. From 'bhikharia' to 'malikji': A critical biography of bhikhari thakur 4. Bhakti and bhikhari thakur 5. Revolutionising the 'folk': Social concerns in the plays of bhikhari thakur. Conclusion, appendices and bibliography
04. KRISHNAN UNNI. P
Discourses of Memory : Resistance, Resonance and Reflection.
 Supervisor : Dr. Nandini Chandra
Th 23355

Abstract
(Verified)

This dissertation enquires into the nature of resistance, resonance and reflection outlined in the selected writings of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Amitav Ghosh and W.G. Sebald. The main focus is on how memory in contemporary literature works through social, political, historical and language related questions. Consequently, I elaborate on the diversified ideas of memory in connection with the different national identities to which these writers claim a belonging. The dissertation is divided into an introduction and five chapters. Each chapter closely analyses the theoretical issues relevant to the diverse nature of memory. In the introduction, I outline a map of some of the very important issues concerning memory. I chart the philosophical trajectory of memory from the Enlightenment to the contemporary period. In chapter One, I broadly describe the importance of region in the constitution of memory and narrative. In chapter Two, I provide an analysis of the relationship between time and memory. Here, I elaborate upon the philosophical notions of time, and reveal its relationship with memory to be tenuous and tangential. Chapters Three and Four look at the constructed nature of archives, and its impact on memory. The relationship between archive and memory is the focus in these chapters. In Chapter Three, I examine the nature of archival constructions in Garcia Marquez's narratives in the context of existing debates in Latin America. In chapter Four, the above argument is extended to look at the nature of archive and memory in the framework of global writing involving close readings of both Sebald and Ghosh. Chapter Five is an analysis of postmemory and related dimensions as it structures much of contemporary continental literature.

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1. Introduction 2. Interrogation the region: The dispersal and deviance of memory 3. Time as disabling mechanism and responses of memory 4. Archival construction of memory: Demands and negations 5. Contesting archives, miscalculation memory 6. Addressing postmemory: Uncompromising displacement and paradoxical belonging. conclusion
05. LALIT KUMAR
Literary Cultures in North Bihar: The Coming of Print in Mithila
 Supervisor : Prof. Raj Kumar
Th 23353

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1. Introduction 2. Calling names: Colonial constructions of Maithili 3. "The gallant, 10,986": Darbhanga raj and *devernacularization* of Maithili 4. 'Tar kona padhalol geil': Maithili print and battle of scripts 5. Two histories: Region and its literary culture. Conclusion, bibliography and appendices.

06. MUDITA MOHILE

Scripting Resistance: Marathi Bhakti Poetry and Women's Agency

Supervisor : Dr. Prasanta Chakravarty

Th 23356

Abstract
(Not verified)

This thesis explores questions of gendered authoriality and spirituality with reference to the work of three women poets, Muktabai, Janabai and Bahinabai, who were part of the Varkari sect, a devotional community that emerged in the twelfth century CE in Maharashtra. The corpus of these poets' work has been accorded a subsidiary status, and has been rendered fragile, by centuries of brahmanicalpatriarchal norms of textual transmission. This thesis attempts to retrieve the texts and analyse their reception in the context of colonial modernity and contemporary feminist projects in India. The gender politics of aesthetic choices made by translators, in their varied contexts, are scrutinized. Also, an attempt is made to study the ways in which these women poets mark a niche in available conventions of poetry and philosophy, sometimes remoulding the genres typically used by their sect. Further, this thesis explores the gendered dimensions of Varkari practices such as hagiography, pilgrimage and samadhi or voluntary/ devotional death. These practices put the spotlight on materiality, both as text, site and relic, and as the caste- and gender-marked body of the devotee. Thus they allow for a search into the nascent moment of the engendering of the spiritual self as it encounters the androgyny of the deity, Vitthal.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Religion, historiography and the self: A survey of methods 3. Bhakti, historiography and modernity 4. Gendered forms of poetry? Genre and spiritual self-fashioning 5. On agency and gender: the deity and morbidity in the varkari tradition. Conclusion, appendix and bibliography

07. SWATIE

The New Normal Trauma, Biopolitics and Visually After 9/11.

Supervisor : Dr. Subarno Chattarji

Th 23727

Abstract
(Verified)

My study focuses on the notion of the state and subject after the 9/11 atrocity. I make special reference to sites of incarceration such as Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib as 9/11 phenomena. I argue that the nation state after 9/11 has used the atrocity to formulate a new relation of power into being. This relation of power guides the relation of the state to its citizen subjects as well as its non-citizens. The study uses the categories of trauma, biopolitics and visibility to highlight the use of these very categories by the state to develop, consolidate and maintain its relation of power. The state generates a newness whereby the hitherto contingent becomes mainstream: the new ideological norm posited forth is thus normalised. This process of normalisation is enacted through the culture machine's use of

various techniques. These techniques include positing the state itself as traumatised, positing the state as ill and in need of remedy, and the state as having the ability to regulate affect. In each of these cases, the state of USA after 9/11 is shown as being humanised, whereas the human subject is forced to transpose metaphorically, its humanity onto the state. The state thus enters into the category of the human, while the human subject is dehumanised.

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1. Introduction
2. Trauma
3. Biopolitics
4. Visuality
5. Conclusion: the new Normal