

## CHAPTER 17

### ENGLISH

#### Doctoral Theses

01. Banerjee (Anavisha)  
**Satirical Representations of Bengali Women in Nineteenth-Century Colonial Bengal and their Context.**  
Supervisor : Prof. Shormishtha Panja  
Th 24288

*Abstract*  
(Not Verified)

My thesis analyses the satirical representations of middle and upper-class Bengali women in 19th century colonial Bengal. There are five chapters in my thesis. I look at many different genres, from the drama of Michael Madhusudan Dutt, to the satirical prose of Kaliprasanna Sinha, from the verse of Ishwar Chandra Gupta to the essays of Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay. The range extends to the fiction of Rabindranath Tagore and also includes visual satire: the caricatures of Gaganendranath Tagore. The thesis discusses the debates around the term "Bengal Renaissance," growth of women's reform and the Young Bengal Movement. The history of Bengali satire also becomes an area of study. The main area of focus is westernization and it relates to the educated Bengali Bhodralok and Bhadramahila, the Anglicized men and women under the colonial influence. In my use of the term "westernization," I have analysed the superficial imitation of English mores by some of the English-educated Bengali babu. I have particularly focused on the satirical representations of Anglicized Bengali women and their blind emulation of western practices. Ishwar Chandra Gupta's poem "Durbhikkho" (Famine) examines this aspect of women's superficiality as a cultural famine. Through my analysis, I try to prove that none of the writers are against westernization. They try to distinguish between modernization and westernization. They are also concerned about the slavish imitation of English mores at the expense of the erasure of Indian traditions. My last chapter is on Rabindranath Tagore's Shesher Kabita (Farewell Song) (1928). It was published in the 20th century and I include it in my thesis as it is the work of a primarily nineteenth-century author. It contains a valuable critique of westernized Bengali women. It also presents in the form of its heroine an enlightened combination of Bankim's prachina (traditional woman) and nabina (modern woman).

*Contents*

1. Satirical plays: Michael Madhusudan Dutt's ekei ki bole sabhyata? And buro shaliker ghare ron, Jyotirindrinath Tagore's alik babu and Amrit Lal Basu's bibaho bihrat. 2. Prose and verse satire: Kaliprasanna Sinha's hootum pyanchar naksha and Ishwar Chandra Gupta's "Durbhikkho" 3. Essays: Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay's "Shahuntala, Miranda ebong Desdemona," "Prachina ebong nabina" and "samya" 4. Satirical art: The satirical caricatures of Gaganendranath Tagore 5. Novel: Rabindranath Tagore's shesher kabita. Conclusion, Bibliography and Appendix.

02. BAIRVA (Mukesh Kumar)  
**Dalit Discourse in Modern Indian Literature : Reading the Dalit Novel as Counter-Discourse.**  
Supervisor : Prof. Raj Kumar  
Th 23902

*Abstract*  
*(Not Verified)*

This thesis tries to probe the Dalit novel as a counter-discourse to the mainstream Indian novel. The modern Indian novel is marked by erasure, suppression or mis-representation of the Dalit life worlds. On the other hand, the Dalit novel delineates the life worlds of Dalits, their culture, traditions, knowledge systems, history, their struggle and strategies of survival. It puts forth the contradictions and challenges facing Dalit communities. It humanizes Dalit characters who are delineated as diverse and complex human beings. The Dalit novel is characterized by regional and linguistic diversity; it employs a specific realism called 'Dalit realism'. The Dalit novel foregrounds the dignity of the individual but unlike in the bourgeois novels, the Dalit protagonist is not alienated from her/his community. Dalit protagonist's emancipation hinges on that of the community. The Dalit realism emerged in opposition to the hegemonic realist tradition by highlighting the latter's representational failures. Dalit realism is marked by the use of popular forms like *jalas*, dance, music, folk traditions and oral forms. Dalit realism prioritizes the role of the quotidian and everyday experience because in Dalit life every day is a crucial entity. The Dalit novel, though a product of modernity, underlines that post-Independent politics unleashes violence on Dalits and reproduces suffering bodies. Thus, the Dalit novel reflects the deep suspicion of the subaltern masses towards the grand narratives of nation, democracy, secularism, modernity and globalization.

*Contents*

1. Introduction: The dalit novel and society in India 2. Joseph Macwan's the step child (2004): A dalit critique of the idea of nation 3. Kalyan Rao's untouchable spring (2010): Writing dalit history 4. P. Sivakami's the grip of change (2006): The politics of caste and gender 5. Sharan Kumar Limbale's Hindu (2010): Caste, culture and politics. Conclusion: Dalit realism and the deconstruction of caste and bibliography.

03. BASU (Nivedita)  
**Melodrama and Modernity : The Emergence of a Language of Sensation in the Nineteenth Century.**  
Supervisors : Dr. N.A. Jacob and Prof. Sambudha Sen  
Th 23901

*Contents*

1. Satirical pamphlets and the revolutionary aesthetics of melodrama 2. Commercial sensationalism and the mass serial: The case of G.W.M. Reynold's mysteries of London 3. Technology, time, and suspense in the sensation novels of the 1860s 4. Melodramatic contrasts and the making of a sensational idiom in D.W. Griffith's early biograph films. Works cited and list of pamphlets.

04. SAMBUDDHA JASH  
**Cultural Production and the Embodiment of the ‘Popular’.**  
Supervisor : Dr. Baidik Bhattacharya  
Th 23900

*Abstract  
(Verified)*

The fundamental question around which my thesis has been developed concerns the growth and development of English genre fiction in the 1990s decade and after. By using the term ‘genre fiction’ I refer to the category of writings that emerged in India in the post-Liberalization era. It has been termed ‘genre fiction’ as Indian English fiction writing received a new character with the proliferation of various genres like chick-lit, cric-lit, mytho-fiction, mythohistory and others, since the decade following the 90s. It is also known as ‘commercial fiction’ or ‘popular fiction’ as part of the publishing parlance as they are a combination of the popular category of readings that has the potential of drawing huge commercial gains for the publishing companies. My work begins by providing an analysis of the corpus of Indian English novel writing and its problematic relationship with English – which began by questioning its suitability for the quintessential Indian social and literary sensibilities during the latter half of the nineteenth century to it having gradually emerged as the ‘new vernacular’. I have placed Genre fiction and its characteristic writing practices within an intersection where it assumes the role of a ‘necessary read’ and the author appears as someone who tries to pontificate on the socio-cultural anxieties faced by the Indian youths – as they are the most important consumptive category of readership within this particular form of writing. My work does not deal with an analysis of genre fiction as a literary tool rather it tries to establish the materiality of production and consumption of such books. This has been studied as an alternative literary history whose foundations are within the socio-economic aspects of liberalization policies.

*Contents*

1. Shifting configurations of English and the Emergence of genre fiction 2. The intersectional Spatiality of genre fiction 3. The publishing industry and productive genesis of genre fiction 4. The locational multitude and the network circulation. Conclusion and works cited.

05. SINGH (Poonam)  
**Self and Society : A Study of Hindi Dalit Autobiographies.**  
Supervisor : Prof. Raj Kumar  
Th 24274

*Abstract  
(Not Verified)*

The title of my thesis *Self and Society: A Study of Hindi Dalit Autobiographies* incorporates autobiographies written by Dalit men from Uttar Pradesh. The location of Uttar Pradesh, which is a chosen locale for my thesis, remains fixed and unalterable throughout the argument. The ‘Self’ in the thesis is essentially a ‘Dalit-self of a man born in Uttar Pradesh’ and his interaction with the society at the various stages of his life such as Childhood, Education, Food, Hunger and Women. The attempt has been made to read these interactions of Dalit-self vis-a-vis society, dispassionately without overriding on the emotional aspects as the autobiographical discourse of Dalit lives needs to be jettisoned of its emotional baggage and empirical theorisation is sought. I have also attempted to investigate Dalit life worlds and the Uttar Pradesh upper caste society’s mutual interactions that are not adequately registered from the perspectives of Dalit people. Absenteeism of a Dalit literary expression from Uttar Pradesh location is/was a peculiar veracity considering the upsurge of Dalits in

its political domain. Besides the chapters on Dalit Childhood, Hunger/Food, Aspiration for Education, the Dalit woman subjectivity, as reflected in Dalit men's autobiographies, has also been critically analysed. Through the close reading of Hindi Dalit autobiographies there are ample evidences that reify the beliefs that Dalit women were the worst receiver of identarian politics within the conception of Dalit men's assertion of equal rights in the caste-based Uttar Pradesh society. Savarna women do/did not consider them as women because their group identity as lower caste put them into the category of Dalits, and their Dalit identity override their gendered position. Experiencing multiple-layered patriarchy, their subjugation suffocates and pushes them at the lowest rung of the society.

#### *Contents*

1. Perils of dalit childhood: An analysis of Hindi dalit autobiographies 2. Hunger/food as a leitmotif in dalit autobiographies in Hindi 3. Aspiration, attainment and the educated dalit subject 4. Dalit women subjectivity in Hindi dalit autobiographies. Conclusion. Works cited.

06. SINHA (Debashree)  
**Lost Poet. African-American Women Writers of the Harlem Renaissance.**  
 Supervisor : Dr. Tapan Basu  
Th 23899

#### *Abstract* *(Not Verified)*

This thesis is a culmination of rigorous research undertaken with an intent to recover the lost voices of the women poets of the Harlem Renaissance such as Nellie Rathbone Bright, Bessie Calhoun Bird, Kathleen Tankerseley Young, and several who others have despite their contribution to the literature of Harlem Renaissance remained unknown till date. It explores the multiple constructs of black masculinity while trying to identify the many ways in which the black woman was denied presence within the black political thought and the literary culture of the Harlem Renaissance. This argument is followed by a discussion on the various perceptions of selfhood of the black woman of the Renaissance through a close reading of various etiquette and conduct books of the period. The following section explores the publication policies of seminal journals of the time such as the *Crisis* and *Opportunity* and also attempts to investigate the "proper standards" which these journals claimed to maintain. Needless to say, several black women poets found themselves unable to feature in these renowned journals because they did not meet the standards of these journals. The last chapter attempts to understand the significance of the alternative space opened up by the "little magazines" of the Harlem Renaissance. The chapter then explores the literary journey of the *Black Opals* very minutely so as to understand its importance with regard to the scope of possibilities publishing it offered to the struggling black women poets whose work was rejected by the *Crisis* and *Opportunity*. The content, the editorial agenda, economic and social struggles of the journals such as the *Black Opals* were also studied. The thesis concludes with some reflections on the archives which were consulted in order to be able to conduct this research.

#### *Contents*

1. Black masculinity and the cult of virile manliness 2. The perception of black women during the Harlem renaissance: A stud of image from etiquette books and journals 3. A study of the policies and the politics of publication in the journals of the Harlem Renaissance: Crisis, opportunity, and black opals 4. Breakings those "Four great walls" that "Have hemmed me in": A study to recover the voice of lost poets of the Harlem renaissance. Conclusion: A self-reflexive narrative of my experiences of researching the archives. Works cited.

07. TANWAR (Sumeet)

**Bharatendu Mandal : An Enquiry into the Socio-religious and Linguistic Transformation in 19<sup>th</sup> Century North India.**

Supervisors : Dr. Gautam Chakravarty and Prof. Nityanand Tiwari

Th 23903

*Abstract*  
(Not Verified)

This research project is a study of Bharatendu Mandal, group of Hindi authors of the latter half of the 19th century. This group has been credited by later historians of Hindi literature for collectively producing the first modern literary corpus in Khariboli Hindi. The project has attempted to see this group of authors as part of the vernacular intelligentsia that came into existence with the spread of vernacular education under the General Committee of Public Instruction and with the growth of printing press in the mid-19th century. The Mandal was spread across the territorial region of North Western provinces (United Provinces), while the city of Benares served as its nerve center. In tracing the roots of the formation of the Mandal, the project attempts, in the first part to provide a brief account of the city of Benares, the establishment of Sanskrit College at Benares, the introduction of English Seminary at Benares, transition from English to vernacular education and the spread of vernacular education in North Western and Central Provinces. The second part shall discuss the lives and works of the Mandal. The third part shall analyze the engagement of the Mandal with debates on history, identity, caste etc in connection with the colonial knowledge framework. The history of debates on language central to the period of the Mandal shall be traced through a study of dictionaries and grammars of Hindustani, Hindi, Urdu published in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*Contents*

1. Transition to the modern age: The region of Hindi intelligentsia 2. Short history of Bharatendu Mandal: Building the first literary corpus of modern Hindi 3. The problems of Hindi History and the literature of Bharatendu Mandal 4. Hindustani, Urdu, Hindi: Language debate, policy. Conclusion, bibliography and appendices.