

Faculty members & Research Scholars of Pondicherry University are exempted from registration fee.

Abstracts (with the Name, address, contact number and email id) are to be sent to the Organizing Secretary before 25th June 2013 by email. The participants can pay the Registration fee in cash on the first day of the seminar.

Travel and Accommodation:

We hope that you will be able to take care of your travel and accommodation. However accommodation will be arranged for outstation paper presenters, if intimated in advance. Working lunch and local hospitality will be provided.

Important Dates

Last Date for sending abstracts: 25th June 2013

Confirmation of acceptance: 30th June 2013

Full papers are to be sent before 25th July 2013

Full papers will be accepted for presentation only after strict anti-plagiarism checking.

Papers selected after peer review will be published by a leading publisher with ISBN number.

Chairperson:

Prof. Sujatha Vijayaraghavan, Prof & Head

Organizing Secretary:

Dr.T.Marx

Paper Scrutinizing Committee:

Dr.Clement S Lourdes & Dr.Binu Zachariah

Members: Prof. S.Murali, Prof. N.Natarajan, Dr. Bhaskaran

Nair, Dr. H.Kalpna, Dr. Lakhimai Mili, Dr. S. Vishaka Devi,

Dr. K. Reshmi, Dr. Ujjwal Jana

Address for Communication:

Dr.T.Marx

Department of English

Pondicherry University

Puducherry-605014

09443984650, 08903884650

drtmarx@gmail.com

drtmarx@yahoo.com

For updates please visit: <http://lithr2013.blogspot.in>

LITERATURE & HUMAN RIGHTS



NATIONAL SEMINAR AUGUST 2013

"It is through literature not simply literacy, that we learn to understand and empathise. As readers, we learn about the lives of others, other places and cultures, other ways of seeing the world. We find out about the past, understand better how it made our today and how our today makes our tomorrow. We learn we are not alone in our feelings, that joy and pain are universal, that humanity is to be celebrated for its diversity but is ultimately one humanity. Through literature, we can find our place in the world, feel we belong and discover our sense of responsibility". -Michael Morpurgo



Design: M.Elangovan Art: Sabith Jasari.P.P

National Seminar on Literature and Human Rights 7th & 8th August 2013



Organised by :

Department of English
Pondicherry University
Puducherry-605014



Host Department:

Established in 1986 in Pondicherry University on the salubrious East Coast of India, the Department continues to attract students and scholars from all over India for its M.A., and Ph.D., programmes since its inception. With its special focus on Comparative Literature, it has so far produced around 60 Ph.Ds and 340 M.Phils besides a massive exodus of PGs. The Faculty of the Department with their diverse research areas and publications on topics of contemporary relevance remain at the forefront of innovative research and erudition. The Department also caters to the language and communication needs of students from other departments, running special courses on language and communication skills and an add-on PG Diploma in Professional Communication in English. The Department runs a Research and Journal Alert Forum providing platform for students and Scholars to present their research findings and creative talents.

A Two-day National Seminar has been planned by the Department of English on 7th & 8th August 2013. It will have its focus on "Literature and Human Rights".

Objectives

The specific objectives of the Seminar are to (1) analyse literary and cultural narratives in relation to theories of human rights and humanitarianism, (2) think critically about cultural discourses of human rights and humanitarianism and to produce close readings of literary and cultural texts, (3) examine human rights in our global community, and to use the study of Human Rights as a vehicle to explore several genres of literature while making the concept of personal rights relevant to their experience, (4) explore more fully the study of Human rights represented through literature within the context of contemporary theory and more traditional discourses, and (5) validate a larger socio-cultural context and avenue for understanding human rights in literature.

Theme

The Seminar tries to manifest the belief in the enormous power of literature to drive change, and in the author's moral duty to their readers, both social and artistic. Literature is a social enterprise which drives change and motivates people to take action. The Seminar attempts to persuade the readers to expand their understanding and knowledge on human rights topics and violations, thereby inviting them to take social action. Literature promotes values of human rights directly or indirectly. It aims to transform the impact of the reading experience into a motivation for social action. In his book 'What is literature?' Jean-Paul Sartre argued on the moral duty of intellectuals, as well as the ordinary citizen, to take a stand in face of political conflicts, and especially those in their region. Literature according to Sartre is a tool which provides a dual action: first as a mirror to the oppressor, and second, as a guide and inspiration to the oppressed. Through literature, oppressed minorities could gain recognition and an action taken by the elite. The Seminar aims to place texts that keep human rights at the core of its moral and social duty. It also aims to recognize and read authors who dared to delve into writing that is not deliberately cut off from the world, geopolitical changes or social crises. Many literary works give the readers direct opportunities for a real action. Social commitment is in fact an unwritten contract that is signed between the readers to the creation in the process of reading and holds the reader's freedom to act.

In recent times, identity politics got its prominence in the discourse of political philosophy. It signifies the political activity and theorizing founded in the shared experiences of injustice of a social group. Historically, the social groups, which had acquired political and economic dominance, enjoyed the privilege over cultural production and others got silenced. West-influenced middle class, who later played a major role in moulding the nationalist struggles, involved in the production of literary writings. It is obviously the dominant group's ideals and aspirations and their worldview reflected in literature too. With the advent of print culture, the literary and cultural forms of the oppressed social groups such as the Blacks, Dalits, Adivasis, women, transgenders, old age people, children and the Minorities got marginalized while the literary elite succeeded to establish their social experience and their literary products in their various forms as Literature. However, with the intensified struggles of these submerged groups, there emerged a new literary conscious-

The new consciousness produced a new genre of literature different from the so called mainstream literature. The new literature resists the hegemony on the one hand and on the other, it questions the existing human rights violations seriously.

Literature can cultivate a better understanding of Human Rights through critical evaluation of characters, analysis of scenarios, and examination of diverse historical voices. The spirit of the seminar is not to advocate political stances but to cultivate responsible scholars and students capable of a critical examination of their individual rights and the rights of others. Every society should become egalitarian when the voices of all its citizens are not only heard, but incorporated into its policies and decisions. The Seminar will examine how literature has helped to create and critique modern concepts of human rights and humanitarianism. It will focus on the ethical and political questions that arise from this discourse in contemporary works of literature from across the globe. It further investigates what literature can hope to accomplish in the wake of mass violence and examine the new kinds of responsibility that these texts create in a globalizing world. Topics will vary from refugee narratives, testimonios, memoirs, and fictions of witnessing.

Thrust areas for Discussion:

Literature and

- Civil rights (The Blacks)
- Gender rights (Women, Transgender, Gay, Lesbian)
- Disabled rights
- Dalit & Tribal rights
- Environmental rights(right to land and displacement issues)
- Child rights & Senior Citizens' rights
- Minority rights
- Refugee rights

Cinema and human rights

Any other relevant areas

Registration Fee:

Faculty Members: Rs. 400

Students/Research Scholars: Rs. 200