

A SEMINAR
ON
ENGLISH LITERARY STUDIES TODAY



ORGANISED BY

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
PATTAMUNDAI COLLEGE, ATTAMUNDAI
DIST - KENDRAPARA



**PATTAMUNDAI COLLEGE NACC
REACCREDITED B GRADE
PATTAMUNDAI, KENDRAPARA, ODISHA,**

A REPORT ON DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-23
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
PATTAMUNDAI COLLEGE**

Name of the Activity: Seminar

Date: 11-01-2023

**Speaker Name: Prof. Jyotirmaya
Tripathy**

Duration- One Day

Participants: Student - 30 and Faculty - 3

Objective:

1. To know about the new trends in English literary studies.
2. New discourse in English literary studies.
3. To know impact of English literary on other literature.

Outcomes:

1. The students came to know about new trends in English literary studies.
2. They learnt about the impact of English literary studies on regional literature.
3. They became aware of new discourses in literary studies.



Report of the Seminar: A Seminar was organized by the Department of English, in association with IQAC, Pattamundai College, Pattamundai on the topic “**English Literary Studies Today**” on 11th January 2022 at 09:00 A.M. in the English seminar Hall under the chairmanship of Principal, Pattamundai College. Mr Amiya Kumar Das, Head, Department of English, gave an introductory note on the resource person. Dr Manas Kumaqr Nayak, Lecturer in English, gave a key note on the seminar topic. Resource person of the seminar, Prof. Jyotirmaya Tripathy, Head, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Madras, delivered a scholarly talk on the topic. After his talk, he had an interactive and question answer session with students. This seminar enhanced students’ perspective on English literary studies. The meeting was ended with a vote of thanks by Mr. Sarojakanta Nayak, Lecturer in English.

Amiya Kumar Das
Signature of the HOD

Head
Department of English
Pattamundai College

[Signature]
Signature of the
IQAC Coordinator

IQAC Co-ordinator
Pattamundai College

[Signature]
Principal 16/01/23

Report of the Seminar

A seminar was organised by the department of English, in association with IQAC, Pattamundai College, Pattamundai on the “English Literary Studies Today” on 11th January 2023 at 09:00 A.M. in the English Seminar Hall under the chairmanship of Principal Pattamundai College. Mr Amiya Kumar Das, Head, Department of English, gave an Introductory note on the resource person. Dr Manas kmar Nayak, Lecturer in English, gave a key note on the seminar. Resource Person of this seminar, Prof. Jyotirmaya Tripathy, Head, De4partment of Humanities and Social Science, IIT Madras, delivered a scholarly talk on the topic. After his talk he had an interactive and question answer session with students. This seminar was ended with a vote of thanks by Mr Sarojakanta Nayak, Lecturer in English.

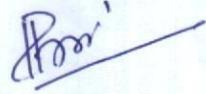


Signature
HoD, English

Head
Department of English
Pattamundai College



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ENGLISH LITERARY STUDIES TODAY

In a world where so many disciplines focus on progress, technology, and tangible solutions to global challenges, literary studies remain a critical lens through which we can reflect on our culture, society, and the human condition. Literature allows us to dive deep into complex ideas, to understand different perspectives, and to grapple with the questions that define our existence. Today, I'd like to discuss the state of literary studies, focusing on how modern literary theory enhances our understanding of classic and contemporary works.

Literary studies have evolved in such a way that we now recognize literature as deeply intertwined with history, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and politics. The field has embraced interdisciplinary approaches, offering new ways to interpret texts, whether they are centuries-old classics or contemporary works.

For example, if we take Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, we see a work that has been interpreted in different ways. In its time, it was understood as a Gothic novel—a horror story about science gone wrong. But today, literary critics see it as much more. Through the lens of postcolonial theory, *Frankenstein* can be interpreted as a tale about "othering," where the monster represents marginalized figures or colonized subjects cast out of society for being different. Through feminist theory, we explore the role of creation and motherhood, as well as Shelley's critique of male-dominated scientific endeavors. Today, we also have eco-critical readings of *Frankenstein*, where the novel's reflection on unchecked ambition and nature's destruction seems alarmingly relevant in the context of climate change.

This multiplicity of interpretations illustrates how literary studies today aren't just about "what the author meant" but about how texts resonate across time and with diverse critical frameworks.

Postcolonial Theory and the Rewriting of History

One of the most significant shifts in literary studies today is the rise of postcolonial theory, which critiques the lingering effects of colonialism in literature and society. In postcolonial readings, we interrogate not just “what” is written, but “who” is telling the story.

Take, for example, Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. While long celebrated as a critique of European colonialism in Africa, recent postcolonial critiques, such as those by Chinua Achebe, highlight how Conrad’s depiction of Africa and Africans perpetuates stereotypes of the continent as a dark, primitive, and savage land. Achebe’s critique argues that the novel’s anti-colonial stance is undermined by its dehumanizing portrayal of African people, making us question the limits of Conrad’s critique. This perspective encourages us to recognize that literature from the imperialist era often reflected the biases of its time, and it urges us to seek out voices, like Achebe’s own work *Things Fall Apart*, that challenge and correct these distorted images.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe offers a counter-narrative to the colonial stories about Africa. By giving voice to the indigenous people, Achebe reveals the complexities of pre-colonial African life and the devastating impact of European colonialism from the perspective of the colonized. This shift in perspective is precisely what postcolonial theory brings to contemporary literary studies—an emphasis on alternative voices, histories, and the complexities of cultural identity.

Gender and Queer Theory: Rethinking Representation

Feminist and queer theory have also revolutionized how we approach literature, drawing attention to gender dynamics and representations of sexuality in texts.

Consider Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*. A feminist reading of the novel reveals Woolf’s exploration of women’s roles in a patriarchal society. Through the character of Clarissa Dalloway, Woolf examines the constraints placed on women’s lives, particularly in terms

of domesticity, social expectations, and identity. Clarissa's inner monologue, filled with existential reflections on her past and her lost loves, gives us a window into the struggle for autonomy and fulfillment within the limitations imposed by gender.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, queer theory can also be applied, especially when we look at Clarissa's complex feelings toward Sally Seton, with whom she shared a romantic moment in her youth. Woolf's subtle depiction of same-sex attraction in a rigidly heteronormative society highlights the repression and fluidity of sexual identity, a theme that queer theory interrogates in literature.

Likewise, in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, feminist and queer readings explore not only gender roles but also the intersection of race, sexuality, and trauma. The novel focuses on Sethe, an escaped slave, as she struggles with the trauma of her past and the haunting memory of her deceased daughter. Morrison's work deconstructs traditional narratives of motherhood, femininity, and freedom. It challenges the notion that enslaved women could find any "normal" role within the confines of a society built on oppression. Morrison rewrites the history of slavery by focusing on the psychological scars of those who survived, but her writing also questions patriarchal expectations of womanhood, motherhood, and resilience.

Ecocriticism: Humanity's Relationship with Nature

Another significant development in literary studies today is ecocriticism, which examines the portrayal of the environment in literature and humanity's relationship with the natural world. This field has become increasingly relevant as we grapple with the reality of climate change and environmental degradation.

One example is Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*. While the novel is most often discussed in terms of feminist theory, it also offers an ecocritical lens on the way that environmental destruction, caused by human greed and ignorance, is central to the dystopian world Atwood envisions. The environmental collapse in the novel leads to widespread infertility, creating the backdrop for the oppressive regime that seeks to

control women's bodies and reproduction. In this context, Atwood connects environmental and social exploitation, suggesting that environmental harm and the subjugation of women are deeply intertwined.

In another example, Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* remains a touchstone for ecocritics today. Thoreau's reflection on his time spent in nature continues to resonate as we confront the consequences of industrialization and environmental disregard. Through Thoreau, we are reminded of literature's power to raise consciousness about nature, as well as to critique humanity's often exploitative relationship with the environment.

Digital Humanities and the Future of Literary Studies

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the impact of technology on literary studies today. Digital Humanities has revolutionized the way we read and analyze literature, offering new methods for exploring texts through data analysis, digital archives, and computational tools.

For example, Franco Moretti's work on "distant reading" uses digital tools to analyze vast numbers of texts to identify patterns and trends that traditional close reading might miss. By examining data points across hundreds or thousands of novels, scholars can trace the evolution of literary genres, themes, and motifs in a way that provides a more comprehensive understanding of literary history. This method doesn't replace close reading, but it adds another layer to how we can engage with literature in the digital age.

Whether through the lenses of postcolonial theory, feminist and queer theory, ecocriticism, or the digital humanities, literature continues to offer us profound insights into the world we live in. It allows us to question power structures, reimagine marginalized perspectives, understand our relationship with nature, and rethink how we interact with stories in a digital world.

As we continue our discussions today, let us remember that literary studies are not only about interpreting texts but about fostering critical thinking and empathy. Through

literature, we engage with the complexities of the human experience, and it is this engagement that makes literary studies so vital in today's world.



**OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL
PATTAMUNDAI COLLEGE, PATTAMUNDAI**

No. 46 dt. 10/01/2023

NOTICE ON DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR

It is for the information all concerned that the Department of English, is organizing a departmental seminar on the topic “**English Literary Studies Today**” on 11th January 2023 at 9.00. Prof. Jyotirmaya Tripathy, Head, Department of Humanities and social Sciences, IIT Madras, is the resource person of this seminar. So all the staffs are requested to remain present in the said seminar.

Copy to Guard File, Notice Board, A K Das and IQAC.

[Signature]
Principal

Pattamundai College

Principal
Pattamundai College



OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

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PATTAMUNDAI COLLEGE

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Ref No. : 39

Date..... 10/01/2023

To

Prof. Jyotirmaya Tripathy
Head, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,
IIT Madras.

Sub: To deliver a seminar on the topic **English Literary Studies Today**.

Sir,

I am very much pleased to invite you to deliver a seminar on the topic **English Literary Studies Today** in the Department of English, Pattamundai College, on 11th January 2023 at 9.00 am.

Your kind consent in this regard is highly solicited.


Principal 10/01/23
Pattamundai College.



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Invitation for the Departmental Semin



Principal Pattamundai College <pattamundaicollege@gmail.c
to jyotirmaya

Principal
Pattamundai College
pattamundaicollege@gmail.com

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seminar invitatio...



Jyotirmaya Tripathy <jyotirmaya@iitm.ac.in>
to me

Thanks madam.
This is to acknowledge the receipt of the letter and to confirm my
Regards,
Jyotirmaya

From: Principal Pattamundai College [pattamundaicollege@gma]
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2023 11:34 AM

SEMINAR ON ENGLISH LITERARY STUDIES TODAY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, PATTAMUNDAI COLLEGE

ATTENDANCE SHEET. DT: 11/01/2023

Sl.No	Name of the Student	Roll No	Signature
01	Tripthi Manjari Praethan	BA22-045	T.M Praethan.
02	Bhagyashree parida	BA22-085	B. parida
03	Sarojini Ho	BA22-035	S. Ho
04	Jambi soy	BA22-036	J. soy
05	Subhalaxmi Dhal	BA-22-253	S.L Dhal
06	Sepranya Nandi	BA-21-07	S. Nandi
07	Subham Ku. Sethi	BA-21-13	S. Ku. sethi
08	Subhamjit Sutar	BA-21-207	S. Sutar
09	Akash Biswal	BA-21-219	A. Biswal.
10	Bindu Sagar Biswal	BA-21-35	B. Biswal
11	Sibani Sahoo	BA-21-17	S. Sahoo
12	Amrita Jena	BA-21-60	A. Jena
13	Sandhya Rani Ghadai	BA-20-53	S. Ghadai
14	Ashutosh Malik	BA-21-147	A. Malik
15	Sadyajeet Majumdar	BA-20-134	S. Majumdar
16	Pushpa Panda	BA-20-261	P. Panda
17	Samrudhi Bal	BA-20-207	S. bal
18	Bhagyashree Bihari	BA-20-244	B. Bihari
19	Rakesh Ranjan Das	BA-20-210	R. R. Das
20	Saritarani Das	BA-21-199	S. Das
			<u>APD</u> 11.1.23.





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