Two Day National Seminar
(Hybrid Mode)
on

"Rethinking Vulnerability, Re-understanding Resistance: Perspectives from Language, Literature, and Culture"

On
23rd-24th December 2024

Organised by
Department of English

Maa Manikeshwari University, Bhawanipatna, Kalahandi, Odisha

Convener
Major Dr. Jayadeb Sahoo
HoD English & Deputy Registrar, MMU

Chief Patron: Col. Prof. Sanjay Kumar Satapathy, VC, MMU
Chief Patron: Dr. Nibedita Nath, VC (I/c), MMU
Patron: Shri Pitambar Bhoi, Registrar, MMU

Venue:
Jubasanskar Hall
Maa Manikeswari University
Bhawanipatna, Kalahandi
Odisha-766001

https://kalahandiuniversity.ac.in/

Concept Note

The concepts of vulnerability and resistance have been central to interdisciplinary research, particularly in the field of public health, psychology, geography, and development studies. The term 'vulnerability' consolidated in the 1970s and 1980s in poverty and development studies to address the impact of hazards and (natural)disasters in specific population segments, but it was at the turn of the 21st century, that it began to be used extensively. Judith Butler was one of the earliest scholars to have developed a theory of 'vulnerability' signifying the undesirable exposure of nations and peoples to war-related acts of violence. In her two important works *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (2004) and *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (2009) and more recently in *Vulnerability in Resistance* (2016), Butler adopted the terms "precariousness" and "precarity" to describe different conceptions of her theoretical approach to vulnerability and resistance. Precariousness is an inherent condition in all lives, not only humans, simply because they are subject to death, that is to say, the material existence of bodies is exposed to eventualities and processes such as illness, hunger, or aging. Moreover, for Butler (2009), "precariousness implies living socially, that is the fact that one's life is always in some sense in the hands of the other" (14). In turn "precarity" refers to a "politically induced condition by which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death. Such populations are at a heightened risk of disease, poverty, starvation, displacement, and exposure to violence without protection. "Precarity" also characterizes that politically induced condition of maximized precariousness for the population exposed to arbitrary state violence who often have no other option than to appeal to the very state from which they need protection" (25). Similarly, according to Martha Albertson Fineman (2020, 2021), vulnerability is an inevitable and universal condition. Fineman however also recognizes that the universal and inevitable condition of vulnerability creates only the possibility of resilience. Fineman also emphasizes "resilience" and this resilient individual in turn rejects the "the restrained state" and envisions "a state responsive to the complexities of the human condition." Butler (2016)'s conceptualization of "resistance" moves away from exclusive reliance on the same institutions and states that translates "precariousness" into "precarity" to explore other forms of collective responses to such injustices. Further, the interconnected effects of globalization on economy, migration, digital communities, and ecology, together with the more recent effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, have forced the cultural, critical, and postcolonial theorists to rethink the notion of 'vulnerability' and reformulate the concept of 'resilience' once again. Thus, keeping these theoretical formulations as the context, this seminar aims to critically interrogate how notions of vulnerability and resistance are represented, negotiated and redefined in the fields of language, literature, and culture. Therefore, the objectives of the seminar include:

1. To explore the interconnections between vulnerability and resistance within the context of contemporary global crises.
2. To examine the literary and cultural representations of vulnerable and resistant communities, identities, and experiences.
3. To engage with the ethical, political, and philosophical dimensions of vulnerability and resistance in relation to power, marginalization, and social justice.
4. To analyze how language, narrative, and cultural expressions shape and redefine the concepts of vulnerability and resistance.
5. To discuss the transformative potential of literature and culture in fostering resistance and coping with vulnerability.

Through this seminar, we aim to create a space for an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural dialogue on the pressing issues of vulnerability and resilience. The discussions will offer new insights into how these concepts can be rethought and reinterpreted in literature, culture, and language, ultimately contributing to a critical understanding of their relevance in contemporary global discourses.

Works Cited
Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. Verso, 2004.
Butler, Judith. *Frames of War. When is Life Grievable?* Verso, 2009.
Butler, Judith, Zeynep Gambetti, and Leticia Sabsay (eds). *Vulnerability in Resistance*. Duke University Press, 2016.
Fineman, Martha Albertson. "Reasoning from the Body. Universal Vulnerability and social Justice." In *A Jurisprudence of the Body: Universal Vulnerability*, edited by Chris Dietz, Mitchell Travis, and Michael Thomson. Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.
Fineman, Martha Albertson. "Populations, Pandemics and Politics." *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law*, vol. 21, no.3, 2021, pp. 184-190. https://doi.org/10.11771358229121104212.

We invite original papers from academicians, researchers, PhD Scholars, students from various disciplines, on the following themes and sub-themes (but are not limited to):

Themes & Sub-themes

1. Vulnerability in Literary Narratives

o Trauma, displacement, and the refugee experience in literature, cinema and culture

o Representation of social-cultural-economic-religious vulnerability in literature, cinema and culture

o Vulnerability and marginalization in literature, culture and cinema

2. Resistance in Literature and Culture

o Narratives of survival and empowerment

o The role of art and culture in fostering resistance

o Healing, recovery, and resistance in postcolonial and post-crisis literature

o Psychological resistance in characters and communities

3. Language as a Tool for Understanding Vulnerability and Resistance

o Linguistic studies of power, oppression, and resistance

o Language, identity, and the vulnerability of communities

o Language as a tool for storytelling, memory, and resilience/resistance

o The role of translation and multilingualism in narratives of vulnerability and resistance

4. Cultural Resilience/Resistance: From Tradition to Transformation

o Cultural responses to crisis and catastrophe

o Indigenous knowledge systems and resilience/resistance practices

o Folklore, mythology, and cultural narratives of survival

o Reimagining community and solidarity in post-crisis contexts

5. The Politics of Vulnerability and Resistance

o Vulnerability and resilience in the context of global crises (climate change, pandemics, migration)

o The role of state and civil society in fostering collective resilience

o Intersectionality and the politics of vulnerability

o Media and digital representations of vulnerability and resilience

6. Philosophical and Theoretical Approaches to Vulnerability and Resistance

o Philosophical understandings of vulnerability and resistance

o Critical theories of vulnerability and resistance(Feminist, Postcolonial, Disability Studies)

o The ethics of vulnerability and Resistance

o Resistance in the context of social and environmental justice

Submission Guidelines

*Eligibility:
The seminar is open to academicians, researchers, scholars, and students from across India.

*Abstract Submission:
Abstracts of 250-300 words along with the title of the paper and a brief bio (150 words) should be submitted to the seminar email (mmu.englishseminar2024@gmail.com) by 14th December 2024

*Full Paper Submission:
Authors of selected abstracts will be notified by 15th December 2024. The full papers (3000-4000 words) should be submitted by 20th December 2024. Papers should follow the MLA 9th edition style for citations and references.

*Presentation Mode:
Authors can choose to present their papers either in person (offline) or via an online platform.

*Registration Fee:
For presenters (Offline): ₹1000
For presenters (Online): ₹500
For participation (offline): ₹500
For participation (Online): NA

Please scan the QR to pay the registration fee

Note: Registration fees include access to all seminar sessions, a certificate of presentation/participation, conference materials, breakfast, lunch and dinner on both the days.

Selected abstracts will be published in seminar proceeding and full papers of those abstracts will be published in an edited volume published by a reputed international publisher with ISBN No.

*Important Dates
Abstract Submission Deadline: 14th December 2024

• Notification of Abstract Acceptance: 15th December 2024

• Full Paper Submission Deadline: 20th December 2024

• Seminar Dates: 23rd -24th December 2024

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Convener:	Major (Dr.) Jayadeb Sahoo, HoD English & Deputy Registrar, MMU
Co-Conveners:	Dr. Jharana Rani Dhanagadamajhi, Asst. Prof. English, MMU
	Mr. Sanjib Kumar Sahu, Asst. Prof. English, MMU
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	Mr. Amrendra Mohanty, PhD Scholar & Guest Lecturer, English, MMU
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	Mr. Purnendu Patra, PhD Scholar, MMU
	Mr. Gobind Sahoo, PhD Scholar, English, MMU

RESOURCE PERSONS

(Chief Guest)
Prof. N. Nagaraju
Hon'ble Vice Chancellor
Gangadhar Meher University
Sambalpur

(Inaugurator)
Prof. Raj Kumar
Dept. of English, University of Delhi

(Keynote Speaker)
Prof. Saugata Bhaduri
CES / SLL & CS
JNU, New Delhi

Panelists

Prof. Asima Ranjan Parhi
Head, Dept. of English, Utkal University, BBSR

Prof. Anjali Tripathy
Head, School of English, GMU, Sambalpur

Prof. Sambit Panigrahi
Head, Dept. of English, Ravenshaw University , Cuttack

Dr. Debaditya Bhattacharya
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About Maa Manikeshwari University

Maa Manikeshwari University (formerly Kalahandi University) is one of the youngest state universities under the Higher Education Department of Odisha. The university located at the district head-quarter Bhawanipatna came into existence on September 1, 2020, with an upgradation from the status of an Autonomous College conferred in 2002. As an affiliating university, it serves the needs of 60 colleges in the tribal-dominated districts of Kalahandi and Nuapada. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-Graduate, and PhD degrees in as many as 23 subjects including languages, humanities, social sciences, science, business studies, and commerce. The University is located 401 km south of the state capital Bhubaneswar. While it fulfills the needs and aspirations of the region, it strongly believes in playing a significant role in nation-building by connecting Kalahandi to other parts of the world and driving home the best of brains and practices from across the world. Further, since the motto of the university is "Enter to Learn, Leave to Serve", the university fosters an ambiance of holistic development for its students so that they can be equipped with the skills required to face the complexities of the modern world and serve society.

About the Department of English

Department of English, one of the oldest departments of the University (formerly Govt. Autonomous College, Bhawanipatna) offers degrees at BA, MA, and PhD levels and oversees undergraduate teaching at the 60 degree colleges that are affiliated with Maa Manikeshwari University. Peopled with experienced faculties having expertise in different areas of English Studies i.e., Contemporary Literary Theories, Linguistic Studies, Classical Literature, Indian English Literature, Translation Studies, and Aesthetics Studies, the department provides intensive mentoring to the students both in and beyond the classroom. The aim is to familiarize students with Western, Indian, and regional literature, theories, and culture. The Department also offers courses in AECC-English, SEC-II Communicative English Generic Elective in English, and Multidisciplinary courses to students of other departments of the University. Ongoing lectures by invited speakers from India and abroad, film screenings, seminar and conference, field work, on interdisciplinary themes are part of academic calendar of throughout the year.

How to reach Maa Manikeshwari University

 Maa Manikeshwari University is about 401 km in the south from the state capital Bhubaneswar. The University is only 2 km from the Bhawanipatna railway station. Night coach buses also ply to Bhawanipatna from Bhubaneswar and other cities in the state. People traveling from other parts of Odisha and state can also use Kesinga railway station (34 kms) or Titlagarh railway station (50 kms) to reach Bhawanipatna.

Tourist places: Kalahandi district has several beautiful places to visit i.e., Manikeshwari temple, Dokarichanchara waterfall, Phurlijharan waterfall Gudahandi hills, Karlapat Sanctuary, Asurgarh fort , Raban dhara, and Belkhandi Shiva Temple, to name a few.