



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
AND MODERN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES
UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD



NATIONAL SEMINAR



on

**EPISTEMIC (IN)JUSTICE AND THE
SHAPING OF INDIAN SOCIETY**

(ICSSR SPONSORED)

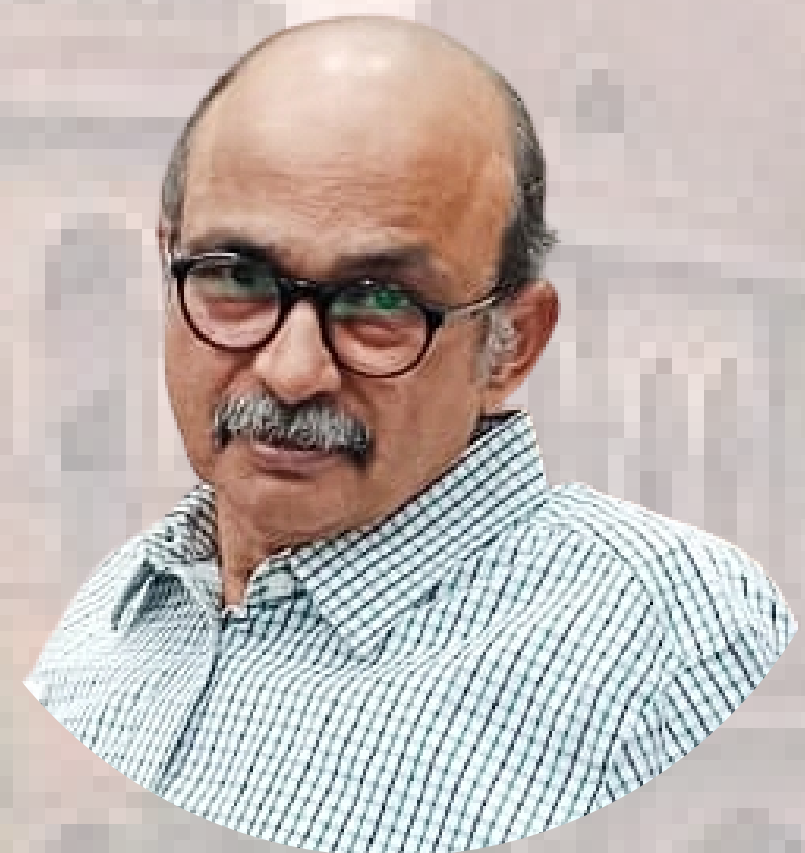
01-03 October 2023



PATRON

PROF. SANGITA SRIVASTAVA

**HON'BLE VICE CHANCELLOR
UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD**



CONVENER

PROF. SANJOY SAKSENA

**DEAN, FACULTY OF ARTS
HEAD, DEPT OF ENGLISH & MEL
UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD**



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Concept Note

It all began with Michel Foucault who questioned the very foundations of rationality, enlightenment and the violence of knowledge. Questions arose regarding the unconscious determinism which runs through all thought and the matter could be reduced to The Archaeology of Knowledge, to purge all forms of transcendental narcissism which permeates much thinking. Quick to follow were debates concerning epistemic injustice which were highlighted by Edward Said in his famous book Orientalism. It did not stop here nor did it begin here, because before Edward Said the feminists were busy questioning the basis of all forms and manifestations of patriarchy which went against women in general. The questioning attitude which began with the Reformation and the Renaissance was now taking broader and more diverse paths. The growth of democracy and the Right to Freedom of Expression brought defiance to the forefront, nothing was any longer sacrosanct. The aim was now to neutralize prejudice and search countervailing arguments. The overwhelming question was to make this place and our existence more egalitarian and freer of all forms of exploitations and search answers to some of the most basic problems of humanity. Epistemic injustice has been found to be the root cause behind all our difficulties and the mess which has been created, as a result minority and peripheral groups have started asserting themselves with the help of the media and their voices are being heard. One of the biggest challenges which confronts all of us is to find workable and morally sound answers because it has never been easy to over-haul the system, but none-the-less changes do get initiated and finally achieved. Ours was never a utopian society but the dream has always been to move as close as we can, in the given situation, towards an ideal society. Gayatri Chakravorty raised a very basic question in her famous essay Can the Subaltern Speak? concerning the capacity of several groups and people to express themselves coherently and clearly. Spivak also raises a question regarding our ability to understand them—which is to say that even if such people were to speak would we be in a position to understand them. Have such people become victims of epistemic violence and are they still getting a raw deal. There is yet another question which arises: would some vested interests allow the subalterns, the tribals and the dregs of the society to speak for themselves? Hermeneutical issues arose, including those relating to language, be it colonial or native, and feminists too have been complaining about all languages being patriarchal and hierarchical and exclusionary in nature. Epistemic injustice is so deep in penetration and widespread, so much so, that it has damaged the identities of entire populations, changed the course of cultures and histories of nations. Knowledges in a power-driven world and societies are not equal, one man's knowledge is more potent than that of another, can predominate through the exercise of power. All systems and structures which exist in society inhere epistemic injustice, including socio-economic and political biases. It is because of this reason that debates and discussions for social justice can be found in every part of the world. The problem becomes worst confounded when people start finding faults with normative, philosophical thinking or raising issues concerning the very ethical basis of justice and all solutions tend to appear elusive. All knowledge grows through clashes and through a process of dialectics, emerges stronger. A very basic question arises: is injustice in some form or the other inbuilt in the human condition itself? Writers, philosophers, theoreticians, social scientists and even scientists have tried to express their perceptions in all stages of human history on the subject. It is with such troublesome complications and worrisome challenges in mind that we propose to explore the problem during the conference. All creative literature, histories, religions etc. have come under the scanner, and many of us find ourselves in a knotty situation, unable to find clear answers to escape the intellectual quagmire. This explains the need to interact and conference, brain storm together.



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Concept Note

Indian knowledge systems were rich and there was a time when India was the world leader but in the last two centuries, perhaps more so after European colonialism, Indic epistemology and forms of knowledge or ways of comprehending reality were systematically subverted. And today the Indian imagination has been heavily interpellated by western thought so much so that it has entered into our collective unconscious. This unconscious valorization of western thoughts and ideas about ourselves and all that we stand for must be rigorously scrutinized. This, on the road to peace, happiness and prosperity, is the biggest roadblock and challenge. Mahatma Gandhi described the western forms of knowledge as 'satanic' in Hind Swaraj and held them responsible for India's woes. The question arises: how do we discover our national genius which has been smudged over the years and promote Indo-centric thinking worldwide? The Department of English, University of Allahabad is celebrating its centenary and it shall be a most appropriate place for such discussions, especially in view of its contribution to the freedom struggle. Among its distinguished former students have been Madan Mohan Malviya, Motilal Nehru, V.P. Singh (Ex. P.M.), Chandrashekhar (Ex. P.M.) etc.—all active participants in the freedom movement. As we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of our Independence it becomes imperative that we explore the counter-productive pressures at work on our minds, work out and critique their intricacies, and even try to discover countervailing solutions to liberate our freedom of the intellect to attain greater intellectual autonomy for a more powerful and progressive India which supports and relies on the genius of its own people.

Sub themes :

Papers are invited focusing on, but not limited to, the following sub-themes:

1. Nativist Epistemologies in the Age of Globalisation
2. Dalit Epistemologies, their Strengths and Weaknesses
3. East-West Encounters in the Domain of Knowledge
4. Subaltern Visions and Revisions
5. Epistemic Obligations in a Pluralistic Society
6. Epistemic Injustice and Silencing
7. Epistemic Reparations for Structural Injustice
8. Democratic Communication under Conditions of Epistemic Oppression
9. Modernity and Subjugated Knowledges
10. Critique of Local Epistemologies: Immanent or Transcendent
11. Politics of Hope and Liberatory Epistemologies
12. Double Consciousness and Epistemic Marginalisation
13. Epistemic Over- Determination in Romanticised Histories/Narratives
14. Epistemic Injustice as Oppression
15. Epistemic Injustice in Indian Films and Literature
16. Revisiting the Epistemologies of Development: Inclusion and Diversity in India
17. Envisioning Green Epistemologies: Nature and Sustainable Development in India
18. Epistemology of Self Reliance: Cultural Representations and the Question of Pride in India





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Special Session

on

POETS ON THEIR OWN POETRY



This is being organized because many people, writing poetry, believe that there can be no worse tragedy for a poet than being misunderstood. Therefore, poets are welcome to give their own definitions of poetry and expatiate on their own poems. We support creativity and want the nation to discover itself through poetry, want poets to come forward and play their historic role in taking the Indian revolution ahead! Poets have always helped us in understanding ourselves better.

We propose to organize a Poetry Reading Session as well!

Register fast!

Please phone to clarify if need be.

You can submit your abstract/full paper at epistemicsem@gmail.com

Last date for submission of Abstract: 20 September 2023

Guidelines for abstract/ full paper submission:

Word Limit: 4000 words and more

Abstract: 250-300 words

The abstract and papers must contain

1. Title
2. Author Information (Affiliation, Email Id and Mobile number)
3. File Format: MS Word
4. Font: Times New Roman, 12 points
5. Text: Double-spaced, left justified, with 1-inch margin on each side and page numbers at the top centre



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Registration Details:

Link for Registration

The candidates are
requested to register by
clicking on the google form

link :

<https://forms.gle/pJWHRQa8Rjg2916i7>

Registration Fee

Faculty: Rs 2500 /-

Research Scholars: Rs 1500 /-

Payment Details

Name: HEAD DEPT OF ENGL MOD
EURO LANG

A/c No: 10341398951

IFSC: SBIN0001621

BRANCH: SBI, Allahabad University

Registration Desk

Dr Nakul Kundra : 988338210

Dr Raju Parghi : 9340002878

Dr Pradeep Kumar : 8299725531

Dr Mrityunjay Rao Parmar : 9936101811

Dr Charu Vaid : 9415704566





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About the University :

The University of Allahabad has always occupied an esteemed place among the Universities of India for over a century. It is a collegiate central university located at Prayagraj/Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, India. Established on 23 September 1887, it is the fourth oldest University and also currently recognised as an Institute of National Importance (INI). Its origin lies in the Muir Central College (named after Sir William Muir Lt. Governor North-Western Province, 1876) which later evolved in to the present university and is also popularly known as the 'Oxford of the East'. It was conferred the status of a central university by the University of Allahabad Act 2005 passed in the Parliament of India.

About the Department:

The Department of English and Modern European Languages, University of Allahabad, has the unique distinction of being one of the oldest English Departments in the country. It was established in 1922 with S.G Dunn as the first Head of the Department. Its rich legacy boasts of having teachers such as Harivansh Rai Bachchan, Raghupati Sahay (Firaq Gorakhpuri), who taught English but wrote in Hindi and Urdu and have already achieved legendary status. This is a department with teachers who have excelled as creative writers, researchers, administrators, and theatre artists such as A N Jha, A K Mehrotra, Rajnath, Sachin Tiwari, N S Gaur, R. R. Dutt, V D N Sahi who were negotiating (at individual and private levels) between the region, the nation, and the world. The department has a rich and vibrant academic and research culture that goes back to its early days comprising regular performances of plays, film screenings, seminars/conferences, research methodology, and creative writing workshops. The department is currently in the process of implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in all its aspects.

About the City

Prayagraj (old name Allahabad) city is globally known as a seat of learning, culture, history, religion, and scriptures. Its ancient name was Prayag which is still famous for its Kumbha Mela. It is held after every twelve years at the Sangam (confluence) of the Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical Saraswati, attracting millions of pilgrims and tourists from across the world. The glorious heritage of the city is enriched by the majestic presence of the Allahabad fort and Khusrobagh from the medieval period. Prayagraj has also played a pivotal role in the freedom struggle. Subsequently, it has provided several Prime Ministers to this country which is unprecedented anywhere in the world. Allahabad is also known worldwide for its delicious Surkha Guava which has been given a GI tag.

Transport:

The university is 05 km from Prayagraj junction and 18 km from the Prayagraj airport and is well connected by trains and flights from different parts of India. Local means of conveyance are also easily available from various points in the city.

Weather:

The weather in Prayagraj, in October, remains pleasant with the average temperature around 20-25 degrees. The days are relatively warm.

