

**CHRIST**(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
BANGALORE | DELHI NCR | PUNE

Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Leena P Kuriakose, Registration Number: 1830093, PhD Scholar at the Department of English and Cultural Studies, School of Humanities and Performing Arts, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Monday, 06 April 2026 at 10.00 am in Room No. 628, 6th Floor, R&D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

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| Title of the Thesis | : | Antinomies of Culture: A Spiritual Ecological Reading of the Select Novels of Wendell Berry |
| Discipline | : | English Studies |
| External Examiner - I | : | Dr S Karthika Associate Professor Sri Parasakthi College for Women Courtallanathar Road Courtallam - 627802 Tamil Nadu |
| External Examiner - II | : | Dr Sandip Mondal Professor Department of English University of Calcutta Asutosh Building Kolkata - 70007 West Bengal |
| Supervisor | : | Dr Abhaya N B Associate Professor Department of English and Cultural Studies School of Humanities and Performing Arts CHRIST (Deemed to be University) Bengaluru - 560029 Karnataka |

The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Registrar (Academics)

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 27 March 2026

ABSTRACT

The thesis titled *Antinomies of Culture: A Spiritual Ecological Reading of the Select Novels of Wendell Berry* is a study of the cultural disparity through the lens of spiritual ecology in the novels of Wendell Berry, a seminal figure in American agrarian thought and environmental literature. Berry's writings critique the dichotomies between nature and culture, individual and community, and tradition and modernity, advocating for a holistic worldview that reorients human relationships with the land. The study examines how Berry's writings, especially his novels, *Nathan Coulter* (1960), *A Place on Earth* (1967), *The Memory of Old Jack* (1974), *Remembering* (1988), *Jayber Crow* (2000), and *Hannah Coulter* (2004), articulate a deep reverence for place, community, and sustainability while critiquing industrialised modes of living that estrange humanity from the natural world by employing spiritual ecology. The study will primarily focus on six selected novels by Berry while also incorporating insights and perspectives from his broader oeuvre to contextualise and enrich the analysis. Berry's concept of membership, especially membership in the large community of the environment, is central to this analysis, an ethical framework that underscores the interdependence and interconnectedness of human and nonhuman life. Through close reading of the novels, this thesis explores how Berry integrates spiritual ecology into ecological narratives, presenting a counter-cultural ethos that resists exploitative systems. The analysis foregrounds his critique of contemporary environmental crises juxtaposed with a vision of harmonious coexistence rooted in agrarian values and localised community living. It highlights Berry's relevance in fostering dialogues on sustainability, spirituality, and cultural regeneration.

Keywords: *agrarianism, antinomies of culture, connectedness, ecological ethics, sense of place, spiritual ecology, stewardship.*

Publications:

1. **Kuriakose, Leena P.** "A Culture of Agriculture for Sustainable Prosperity: A Prophetic Voice of Wendell Berry." *Journal of Dharma*, vol. 46, no. 3, July-September 2021, pp. 327-344. Scopus Indexed. ISSN: 0253-7222.
2. **Kuriakose, Leena P.,** and Abhaya N B. "Ecocriticism and Sustainable Development: Lessons from Wendell Berry." *Advances for Sustainable Development: Role of Science and Technology*, edited by T.R. Anju and Balarama Kaimal, Scholars' Press, 2025, ISBN: 978-620-8-8476-2. Pp.53-67.