

## Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Ann Maria Davis, Registration Number: 2090060, 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 Friday, 12 December 2025 at 10.00 am in Room No. 628, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, R&D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

**Title of the Thesis** : **Writing ‘Herstories’: A Feminist Reading of India Edgill and Tessa Afshar’s Select Novels**

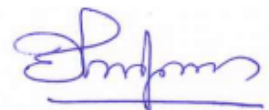
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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva – voce examination.



**Place:** Bengaluru  
**Date:** 04 December 2025

**Registrar (Academics)**

## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how biblical women are reimagined in the afterlife of the Bible through contemporary biblical fiction. The primary texts under consideration include India Edghill's *Queenmaker* (2002), *Wisdom's Daughter* (2004), and *Game of Queens* (2016), along with Tessa Afshar's *Harvest of Rubies* (2012), *In the Field of Grace* (2014), and *Pearl in the Sand* (2020). These narratives foreground the voices, agency, and resilience of select biblical women, functioning as counter-narratives to longstanding androcentric interpretations.

This study interrogates patriarchal representations embedded within traditional biblical hermeneutics and adopts a feminist interpretive framework informed by the works of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Luise Schottroff, and Phyllis Trible. The central argument posits that these retellings construct a 'herstory' of biblical women, rooted in feminist consciousness, which recovers and amplifies their lived experiences and subjectivities. Furthermore, the study argues that such contemporary reinterpretations not only offer renewed perspectives on women of the biblical past but also yield critical insights applicable to present and future gender discourses. The selected narratives by Edghill and Afshar emphasize the necessity of reimagining historical and religious narratives to center female voices, thereby contributing to broader conversations surrounding gender, power, and representation in literary contexts.

**Keywords:** *Biblical fiction, Feminist Hermeneutics, Biblical Retellings, Women, Herstory*

### **Publications:**

1. **Davis, A. M., & Abhaya, N. B.** (2024). Esther reimagined: feminist essence in Sara Joseph's narrative. *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19422539.2024.2418003> (Scopus, Q1)
2. **Davis, Ann Maria & Abhaya N.B.** AN INVENTIONAL LITERARY TOOL TO REASSESS "WOMEN IN GRAND NARRATIVES", Patent Published on 21/03/2025.
3. **Davis, Ann Maria & Abhaya, N.B.** "Unmasking Feminine Pedagogical Perspectives: An Inclusive Investigation of India Edghill's Biblical Women in Historical Fiction", *Agathos Journal*- (Accepted, publication in September)