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Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Mr Gokul Jayan, Registration Number: 2090065, PhD Scholar at the Department of English and Cultural Studies, School of Humanities and Performing Arts, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend his PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Tuesday, 14 July 2026 at 11.30 am in Mini Auditorium, 2nd Floor, Auditorium Block, Bangalore Bannerghatta Road Campus, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560076, Karnataka, India.

Title of the Thesis	:	The Yakshi Archetype: An Exploration of Folkloric and Cinematic Visuality in Select Malayalam Texts
Discipline	:	English Studies
External Examiner - I	:	Dr Ajay S Sekher Associate Professor Department of English Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit Kalady - 683574 Kerala
External Examiner - II	:	Dr Devika Sangwan Professor Department of Humanities and Social Sciences Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani Vidya Vihar, Pilani Rajasthan - 333031
Supervisor	:	Dr Dhanesh M Assistant Professor Department of English and Cultural Studies Bangalore Bannerghatta Road Campus CHRIST (Deemed to be University) Bengaluru - 560076 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: 02 July 2026

ABSTRACT

This research, “The Yakshi Archetype: An Exploration of Folkloric and Cinematic Visuality in Select Malayalam Texts”, examines the transformation of the Yakshi archetype in Kerala’s folklore, from a folkloric entity in select regional literature to a prominent cinematic character in Malayalam films. The primary texts for the study are two folkloric-literary texts and nine Malayalam films. By analysing this evolution, the research highlights the shifting identity of Yakshi, from a goddess worshipped in spiritual contexts to a ghostly figure permeating popular culture, particularly in Malayalam cinemas from the 1960s to the 2000s.

Historically, Yakshi(s) have been described as primordial goddesses, supernatural spirits, or celestial beings. The Yakshi entity is explored as a complex ‘figure’ symbolising a liminal space between the divine and as a diabolic character in contemporary narratives. This investigation underscores the importance of understanding the historical, literary, and cultural frameworks surrounding the Yakshi identity. The findings contribute to discussions of Yakshi’s visuality in folklore, literature, and film, particularly through the lens of archetypal criticism and formalist film theory, creating a distinctive regional visuality that reflects local cultural tropes of fear and horror, enriching the broader discourse on horror aesthetics.

Keywords: *Archetype, Folklore, Horror, Visuality, Cinema, Folkloric Visuality.*

Publications:

1. **Jayan, G.** (2024). Populism and the Museumization of Yakshi. In: ChackoChennattuserry, J., Deshpande, M., Hong, P. (eds) *Encyclopedia of New Populism and Responses in the 21st Century*. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-9859-0_396-1
2. **Jayan, G.** (2026). Who mourns for her? The death and Re-death of Yakshi. *Mortality*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2026.2640412>
3. **Jayan, G.** (2019). The Archetypal Reincarnation of Kaliyankattu Neeli. *Labyrinth: An International Refereed Journal of Postmodern Studies*, 10(3), 202.
4. **Jayan, G.** (2019). The disciplined woman: Revamping and deciphering the societal politics and patriarchy of Kerala through the movie *Samootham*. In S. Jain & A. K. Gupta (Eds.), *Glass ceiling and ambivalent sexism: Critical perspectives of gender trouble* (Vol. 1).
5. **Jayan, G.** (2026). This Is assisted dying: a doctor’s story of empowering patients at the end of life: by Stefanie Green, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2022, 304 pp., ISBN 9781982129460. *Mortality*, 1–2. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2026.2690501>