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Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Ritika Banerjee, Registration Number: 2170015, PhD Scholar at the Department of English and Cultural Studies, School of Humanities and Performing Arts, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bangalore Central Campus will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Tuesday, 26 August 2025 at 10.00 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R & D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru – 560029, Karnataka, India.

Title of the Thesis : **Gender Performativity through the Tropes of Cultural Diaspora: Examining Texts of Diaspora Literature by Select Authors of the Indian Subcontinent**

Discipline : **English Studies**

External Examiner - I : **Dr Siddhartha Biswas**
Professor
Department of English University of Calcutta
87/1 College Street
Kolkata - 700073
West Bengal

External Examiner - II : **Dr W Christopher**
Rajasekaran
Associate Professor
Department of English
School of Social Sciences and Languages
Vellore Institute of Technology
Vellore- 632014
Tamil Nadu

Supervisor : **Dr Sharon J**
Assistant 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: 12 August 2025

ABSTRACT

This research work destabilises the construct of gender by placing it within the setup of cultural diaspora originating in the Indian subcontinent. It analyses Judith Butler's gender performativity in this context. This link between diaspora and performativity is examined through a comprehensive study of the works of four authors- Sunetra Gupta's *A Sin of Colour*, Romesh Gunsekera's *The Sandglass*, Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. The background of the authors, who are products of diaspora themselves, is also poignant to the analysis. The elements of reality interwoven into these fictional texts provide a deeper insight into the functioning of gender in the socio-cultural contexts of these works. The historical background of the countries of the Indian subcontinent has been studied, and its implications have been established.

This research thesis examines how this displacement and the nuances of the cultural diaspora of the Indian subcontinent shape the gender performativity of characters in these texts. The representation of elements like food and clothing, which are significant cultural markers, has been analysed. This brings out the themes of exile and displacement in these texts. The points of similarity in the performativity of the gender of characters in the contrasting cultural backgrounds of both texts reveal significant aspects of the intersection of gender and culture. Through the study of this intersection, the emergence and existence of the gender construct have been questioned and problematised. These texts have been analysed as palimpsests, and the multiple palimpsests that present themselves in them have been studied. The study of the layers of gender and culture in these texts and the way in which there is an interplay between them brings out the nuances of gender performativity. Palimpsests have been categorised into spatial-temporal and intertextual for the purpose of this research. Language as a palimpsest has been analysed through the study of the language used in the texts. The analysis carried out in all the chapters of the thesis portrays the performative nature of the gender construct and its functioning within the context of the diaspora of the Indian subcontinent.

Keywords: *Gender performativity, cultural diaspora, Indian subcontinent, displacement, palimpsests*

Publications:

1. **Banerjee, Ritika**, and Sharon J. "“Bacha Posh’: Gender Construct in Afghan Culture Examined Through the Lens of Children in Literature.” *IAFOR Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, Dec. 2023, pp. 65–80. <https://doi.org/10.22492/ijcs.8.2.04>.
2. **Banerjee, Ritika**, and Sharon J. "Deconstructed home, deconstructed identities: Examining the perpetual process of deterritorialization and reterritorialization of spaces and identities in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* and Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*" *Literary Voice*, 2023, pp. 24-32