

Jadavpur University
Department Of Comparative Literature

International Conference on Dalit Studies
3-4 November, 2022

“My birth is my fatal accident”: Reimagining Dalit aesthetics, resistance and solidarity

I am a venereal sore in the private part of language.

- Namdeo Dhasal

2022 marks the 30th anniversary of two significant landmarks in Dalit writing in the context of Modern Indian literary traditions: the anthology of Marathi Dalit writing, *Poisoned Bread* (1992) edited by Arjun Dangle and the autobiographical *Karukku* (1992) by Bama, the Tamil Dalit writer. Celebrating the pan-Indian legacy of these books as “inherited texts”, the Conference would rethink and rearticulate established and emerging debates in relation to Dalit aesthetics and literary representations today. Locating hierarchies of gender and sexuality, practices of solidarity within and beyond Dalit communities, the Conference would revisit the rich and complex narratives of resistance and affirmation in Dalit creations. Situating the role of memory within local and national contexts and temporalities, this Conference would focus on the turbulent history of conflict and fragmented selfhood as embodied in the field of Dalit Studies. Relations of authority and vulnerability are replayed through the projection of fragmented and contested lives, thereby highlighting the interface between the aesthetic and the political within genres that relentlessly work in the intersections of gender, caste, class and relations. Highlighting discourses and practices of complicity, assimilation and subversion, Dalit literatures narrate a story of a politics of resistance that destabilizes and contests meaning.

The conference invites papers from academicians, Dalit writers and activists and registered PhD students working on conceptual frameworks that negotiate the dynamics of marginalised voices and a distinctive and heterogeneous Dalit identity in terms of socio-political realities and aesthetics of culture. Topics might include but are not limited to:

- Dalit aesthetics
- Politics of representation
- Dalit women’s narratives
- Literary historiography and Dalit Studies
- Language and resistance
- Performative arts and Dalit identity
- Digital Spaces of reclamation
- Caste and the graphic novel
- Dalit literature in translation
- Dalit trauma
- #Dalitlivesmatter
- Dalit literatures and pedagogic practices

Abstracts (500 - 700 words) in Bangla or English with a short bio-note (50 words) as word document or a pdf must be emailed to sayantan.dasgupta@jadavpuruniversity.in and debashree.dattaray@jadavpuruniversity.in by **30 September 2022**.

Acceptance will be intimated by **12 October 2022**.

A few selected panels may be organized in the online mode. Selected participants are encouraged to avail funding for travel and accommodation from their institutions.

Conference Coordinators: Sayantan Dasgupta and Debashree Dattaray, Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University.