

# Political Thinking in Indian Literature

Editor :  
Sanjeev Kumar Sharma



**BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN**  
AHMEDABAD

King Vikramaditya once asked Vararuchi, the great Sanskrit scholar in his kingdom, which is the best shloka in Valmiki's Ramayana. Va following shloka which had three different meanings to relate to the feats of the king

शक्यं दशरथस्य विद्वि मम विद्वि जयस्य अरजजस्य । अयोध्यास्य अजीतस्य विद्वि सत्यं सत्यं सत्यं ॥ (2-40-9 Ramay

The role of literature is larger than a narrative. The author is a seer and has the strength to command the kingdom, Mahabharata, Pritviraj Raso, Anandmath, Raitarangini and many other texts have broaden their larger than plot wisdom, spreading into centuries. It been older to many existing literary traditions and has been a guiding force not only to the relative era, but also to successive gener quotes from the texts to bring out the relevance of age old established systems in the society and establishes its political thinking assimi

This is first of its kind of effort to present the Political thinking in Indian Literature in the form of edited book. The collection includes invita texts from different Indian languages and writings. The authors come from different disciplines and have based the articles from ancien writings

The book shall be useful to the scholars of Political Science, Public Administration, Literature, Comparative Studies, Ancient Indian Diaspora Studies and Progressive Writings.

ISBN : 978-81-7276-456-2

₹ 2000

*Sanjay*  
**Principal**  
Kanoria PG Mahila M-*...*valaya  
JAIP...

## Political Thinking in Indian Literature

Deepthi Shukla  
*Portraying Gendered Roles and Colonialism in Devdas* 114

### Malayalam Literature

G. E. Sudha  
*Literature Relating to Contemporary Times of Sree Narayana Guru - A Critical Analysis of Socio-Political Factors in Kerala* 123

### Bhojpuri Literature

Neeja Arun  
*Political Systems in Bhojpuri Folksongs of 'Girmitya'* 135

### Telugu Literature

Narshkumar Godepati  
*Religious Politics and Dalit-Bahujans in India: A Reading from Kancha Naiah Writings* 145

### Marathi Literature

Sanjay Ratanparakhi  
*Political Thinking of Yashwantrao Chavan in Marathi Literature* 153

### Gujarati Literature

Tansen Neil Lincoln  
*"Jai Jai Gauri Gujarat": Deconstructing the Idea of Gujarat through Political Thinking and Identity Formation in Gujarati Literature* 165

### Kannada Literature

Vidya G. Rao  
*Progressive Writers Of Indian Ethos* 171

### Urdu Literature

Sayyada Begum  
*Analytical Study of Marxism in Munshi's Work* 177

### English Literature

Akshaya  
*Narantara Sehgal's 'Rich Like Us': A Mirror of Indian Political Thinking* 185

Debarati Dhar  
*Understanding the Political Outlook in Anupam Lalit's 'The Lowland'* 187

About the Contributors 199

Seemant  
Principal

Kanoria PG Mahila Mahavidyalaya  
JALPAIGURI



## Portraying Gendered Roles and Colonialism in *Devdas*: The Films

Deepima Shukla

*Devdas* is one of the all time popular stories and films in Indian literature and cinema. *Devdas*, the hero symbolizes someone who is aristocratic, low-class, sexually impotent, politically disengaged, and ultimately tragic hero. Today he might not be considered as a hero as today's hero can fight, struggle and confront the situations to pave his path for accomplishments. Derived from a popular Bengali novel, written in 1917, by Sarat Chandra Chatterjee—the *Devdas* narrative was first adapted into a silent film in 1928 and thereafter many remakes were made such as: a Bengali version in 1935, three Hindi versions in 1936, 1955 and 2002; two Telugu versions in 1953 and 1974 and a Malayalam version in 1989. Not only has the narrative become a "mythological reference point for Hindi melodrama", but the *Devdas* persona ("Devdas" became symbol of particular character) has become incorporated into the various Indian languages and therefore has become an integral part of South Asian culture. The sorrow of this unfortunate hero of Indian cinema has made the generations weep.

Here we see that the outline of the *Devdas* story constructs a model of colonial male subjectivity which is unfortunate to function within the psychological limits set by stereotypicality. These psychological limits curbed the *Devdas* character to both desire independence from, and seek the recognition of, an absent master. When we explore the social and political

conflicts between colonizers and colonized into the psycho-sexual dynamics of a sadomasochistic relationship between a man and a woman, the melodramatic story omits the real ideological tensions and contradictions of colonial and neo-colonial India, but it has also indirectly opened up a space of resistance for the text's audience, throughout this century.

The *Devdas* films provide us an opportunity to understand the prevailing conditions of psychological, political, cultural and economic domination/submission in the colonial context as these are condensed in the familial and conjugal life of the protagonists of a popular text, and as these conditions ultimately erupt as the dis-ease of their bodily and sexual functions.

While psycho-analyzing the process of social change, the "social pathology" of colonialism does not state any "abnormality" (Western man and high modernity is better); rather, the social curvies seem to be "politics" between colonizer and colonized, master and slave, sadist and masochist, man and woman.

### 1935 Film

The first significant film adaptation of the literary text was the Bengali version of *Devdas* made in 1935. It was immensely successful at the box office. The film was directed by P.C. Barua, an already established star of Bengali cinema and a standing member of the Assam Legislative Assembly as well as a Prince of Guairpur (Assam). He also played the lead role of *Devdas*.

These parallels are important for my ensuing argument, namely that in making *Devdas* Barua wanted to disprove the colonialists' construction of Bengali youth as effeminate and degenerate. But on the other hand, a sympathetic portrayal of the hero was directed at another set of critics: Indian nationalists who saw the hero as straying from the social and religious values of Hindu orthodoxy. Throughout the last half of the nineteenth century and well into the first quarter of the twentieth, the

Principal  
Kanoria PG Mahila Missionary  
JAIPUR