

# English Association

Department of English

Motilal Nehru College

University of Delhi

## NATIONAL SEMINAR

25th-26th APRIL 2023

### CALL FOR PAPERS

#### WAR - AN IDENTARIAN FULCRUM

A proverbial *Foucault's pendulum*, war is intrinsically diabolical but absolutely essential to national identity and survival. A subject of countless diverse works, like Picasso's *Guernica*, or the ancient epics such as *Mahabharata*, or modern novels like *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, or movies/serials like *Tamas*, war continues to be a recurring theme across literature, cinema and media. It indelibly shapes human experience, leaving behind scarred individuals, displaced communities and an era of rabid memories. War trauma manifests as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions. Every war is an ecological catastrophe which subsequently marginalizes certain communities, causes involuntary migration and demographic imbalance.

Documenting the ordeals of war enables survivors to question, assess and make sense of its inhumanity and cruelty. Literature, mass media and fine arts have facilitated research not only into this extremely complex phenomenon, but also into ways of healing war ravaged societies by helping process experience within the ever-shifting dynamics of self and society. Orature or formally unscripted oral literature too provides nuanced and personal perspective on war which requires rigorous close study to understand the praxis of survival and growth in tribal communities.

The concept of *motherland or fatherland* has a sanctity that continues to remain inviolate and sacrosanct. Martyrdom is celebrated which nevertheless causes grief, displacement and manslaughter. War heroes are scarred but it is their confrontation with unsurmountable odds that gives a nation's denizens the wind beneath their wings. The explosion of war games on the internet reveals this fascination and fixation. Nevertheless, the clamour for a world without borders has grown to unprecedented levels. Nationalism is very often understood as jingoism by many who are averse to violence and reject the mainstream. Anti-war campaigns constantly strip the romantic gloss off war narratives to highlight its brutalisation of women and children, and bare its astute stratagem to access and control economic resources, or gain an international foothold. Proxy wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan are signposts to conflicts that have created acute socio-economic crisis in their wake.

In this backdrop of conflicting and complementing stances on war, we would like to invite papers that can trigger nuanced discussions on the subject. We welcome proposals from scholars across a range of disciplines, including literature, film studies, history, cultural studies, media studies, fine arts and philosophy. In addition to the 'official' portrayals of war,' we seek submissions that illuminate, critique, deconstruct and engage with war subcultures that demand sophisticated and nuanced intellectual investigation.

Following are some of the suggested themes, papers can be written around:

- Dysmorphia and War
- The paradox of war heroism
- Politics of creating an enemy
- War and civilian unrest
- War criminals versus human rights
- Wars and fragmentation of the self
- War and trauma in literature
- War and internet games
- The impact of war on environment and landscape
- War and cinema
- Post war dystopian worlds
- Narratives of war in orature

Paper proposals should include a title, abstract (300 words), and a brief biography (150 words). Full paper word-limit is 2,500 words.

### Tentative Dates

**Abstract Submission: 27th March 2023**

**Intimation of Acceptance: 1st April 2023**

**Last Date of registration/payment: 15th April 2023**

**Full Paper Submission: 21st April 2023**

**Abstracts may be sent to: [deptofenglish.mlnc@gmail.com](mailto:deptofenglish.mlnc@gmail.com)**

**Registration fee of Rs 500/- will be charged from paper presenters.**

### **Convenor**

**Dr. Vandita Gautam**

**Teacher In-charge,**

**Dept. of English**

**Motilal Nehru College, D.U**