

The Department of English at the University of Jammu hosted the Prof. D. K. Rampal Memorial National Seminar on the 29th of July, 2022.

This one-day seminar delved into the intricate theme of "Texts and Contexts of Identity through Literature and Language," reflecting upon the profound significance identity holds in contemporary society. Identity, a concept both elusive and omnipresent, oscillates between localized concretized views and fluid globalized perspectives. Embedded within the dynamics of continuity and mutability, literature serves as a responsive medium to explore the complexities of identity. From classical bildungsroman narratives to postmodern texts, literature reflects shifting perceptions of identity, from stable to fragmented manifestations. The recent theoretical frameworks, including postmodern self-reflections, feminist theorizing, and social constructionism, have significantly influenced identity studies, leaving a notable imprint on literary representations of identity. Within literary texts, the interplay of micro and macro identities—such as culture, religion, race, gender, and language—complicates any essentialist understanding, presenting identity as a negotiated process within various ideological, political, and social contexts. The seminar aimed to unravel this intricate tapestry of identity through scholarly discourse, inviting papers that explore various facets of identity formation and discourse within literature. Additionally, since language plays a pivotal role in shaping identity, papers examining the issue from linguistic perspectives were also encouraged. Furthermore, while the seminar acknowledged the conceptual affinity between 'identity' and 'self,' it emphasized that the focus of discussions should primarily revolve around the former. Scholars were encouraged to engage with the multifaceted nature of identity, challenging simplistic or hegemonic understandings, and instead, embracing identity as a dynamic process open to negotiation and re-negotiation. The call for papers attracted academics and researchers from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, promising a rich exchange of ideas and perspectives. Through critical engagement with literary texts and linguistic analyses, participants sought to deepen our understanding of identity's complexities and its role in shaping individual and collective experiences in contemporary society.

