

NAME OF THE CANDIDATE :UMESH JHA
NAME OF SUPERVISOR :PROF. SUNITA ZAIDI
DEPARTMENT : HISTORY AND CULTURE
TITLE OF THE THESIS

**Nagarjun Ke Sahitya Mein Pratibimbit Uttari Bihar Ka
Samajik Evam Rajnitik Itihas(1930Isvin Se 1964Isvin)**

This thesis is a study of how the great Hindi Litterateur, Nagarjun's writings may be used for unraveling crucial social and political currents in the history of Northern Bihar for the period 1930-1964. The research is original and establishes useful linkages between Nagarjun's vast literary production- especially the novels and other types of sources, including secondary writings. It is informed by a deeper understanding of hermeneutics, an excellent grasp of varying historical contexts pertaining to the subject and a considerable insight into how History and Literature may relate to each other.

Some of the central research questions which are raised in this thesis are as follows.

What kinds of social and political problems of Northern Bihar of the period, c.1930-64 are reflected in the literature of Nagarjun (1911-1988)? How can Nagarjun's literature be used to construct a socio-political history of this region for the period under consideration? Is a 'biographical social history' of Nagarjun possible? Why do historians treat the 'evidence' of literary genres skeptically and how and why should it be given importance? How are literary and historical narratives similar as well as different? Was Nagarjun a 'people's intellectual' and how are we to understand his changing positions on several matters: those related to colonialism, nationalism and socialism, the peasant movements of the area, questions of caste and class, the position and rights of women and matters of language and literary style. These are significant and wide-ranging issues and their interplay has been seldom emphasized by Nagarjun's literary critics.

This thesis convincingly depicts Nagarjun as Nationalist-Socialist whose novels portray class, caste and gender exploitation as woven into the structures of everyday life. Nagarjun sees class and caste as symmetrical and I demonstrate this to be a valid proposition for mid-twentieth century Mithilanchal. My argument is that the *littérateur* privileges class consciousness over all other forms of consciousness. This leads Nagarjun to offer political solutions based on class struggle. He assumes caste and gender inequities to be a function of class differences, inequities that would gradually dissolve with the removal of class exploitation. While Nagarjun is successful in showing how exploitation occurs in terms of caste and gender, yet he does not believe in fighting for the cause through lower-caste or women's organizations. This is a classic feature of Nationalist-Marxist thinking of the period.