

# A critique of O.V. Vijayan's select works and underlying power equations: A systematic review

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study focuses on the critiquing O.V. Vijayan's translated novels, *The Legends of Khasak*, *The Saga of Dharmapuri* and *The Infinity of Grace* in the purview of the power equations within them. Being at a point convergence between the Bhasha writers and Indian Writers in English (IWE), O.V. Vijayan has been less studied as an IWE. This study probes into Vijayan's novels as an embodiment of power struggles between nation/nation-state, marginalized and the oppressed.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The study has included varied sources of literature including books, research articles, newspaper articles, and research theses. The research has extensively reviewed past research in this domain to understand the scope of the study, identify the research gaps and frame relevant questions. Accordingly, this study will include a qualitative research of the primary and secondary texts. It would employ textual and thematic analysis approach.

**Findings/Result:** A thorough reading and review of relevant research works have inferred that the themes of power have been a recurrent theme in the select novels of O.V. Vijayan combined with the underpinnings of nation/nation-state debate. However, the theme has not been analyzed extensively in his translated novels.

**Originality/Value:** The proposed research will be original and add value to the domain of research because the study explores the theme of power equations in O.V. Vijayan's texts. The theme is studied with the underpinnings of nation/nation-state, a typical attribute of the Bhasha writing. The analysis will add value to IWE studies as it deliberates on concepts of nation formation, power and class struggle, marginalization in the local Indian communities.

**Paper Type:** Review Article

**Keywords:** Order/knowledge; nation/nation-state; discourse on power; Bhasha writing; Indian writing in English; Malayalam literature; class struggle; marginalization; regional literature; Foucault; vernacular.

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

Indian Writing in English (IWE) also labeled as Indian English literature (IEL) includes a humongous canon comprising of Indian writers writing in the colonizer's language i.e., English. The rationale for describing it as a humongous canon is mostly justified by the Indian playwright and screenplay writer in Marathi language, Elkunchwar as he describes that the domain of Indian writers in English is marked by an "acrimonious divides" [8]. Elkunchwar [8] outlines that IWE includes:

Resident Indian-English writers, Indian-English writers who live abroad ... first generation Indians living abroad vs [sic] second generation Anglophones published by Indian publishers and those who are lucky enough to be published by publishers from abroad.

The earliest contributions to the IWE were by Indian renaissance reformers such as Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, Bankim Chandra

Chattopadhyay, RK Narayan, MR Anand, Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and others in the early 18th century [29]. The pre-independence IWE gained international visibility with Tagore even bagging the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 for *Gitanjali*, qualifying to be the first non-European, Asian, and Indian to receive the prestigious award. The colonizer's language in the Indian subcontinent continued to produce a distinct body of work even after independence. When Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* hit the bookstores in 1981, India attained "foothold in the international literary arena, by making the Indian terrain come exuberantly alive in a way the older texts could not" [14].

### 1.1 IWE and the Bhasha:

While IWE has been a new addition to the Indian literary domain, one cannot forget the rich and diverse Indian literatures thriving in the vernacular languages, which have been also referred to as *Bhasha* texts by the scholars for an ease of reference. Among the numerous literary canons in the Indian literary domains that "shape [the global readers'] sensibilities and also their place in the literary world is the *bhasha* canon too" (emphasis in original) says the widely published scholar and first woman editor of *South Asian Review*, Nalini Iyer [12]. The others in this domain that enrich an IWE writer's literary sensibilities include, "the Western literary canon (British and American literature), the ethnic American literary canon, and postcolonial anglophone writing (especially from India)" adds Iyer [12].

"India is best seen, understood, and experienced in the bhasha texts," says Indian novelist and poet, Makarand Paranjpe in the critically acclaimed essay, "Vernacularizing the Master Tongue" [20]. Also known as vernacular or regional literature, Bhasha literature in India includes a grand literary canon of, "literature produced in the country's twenty-two official languages," [31]. Deconstructing Paranjpe's perspective, scholar Cielo Griselda Festino [9] describes Bhasha as "a channel through which the multilingual and, by extension, multicultural quality of India can gain visibility." Appreciating the power of Bhasha texts in achieving higher pan-Indian sensibility, Paranjpe [20] urges readers to:

Read Arundhati Roy alongside O. V. Vijayan, or read Salman Rushdie along with U. R. Anantha Murthy. We at once begin to see how the vernacular serves as the con/text for the English. The English text is both underlined and undermined by this process. Of course, for this exercise to work, the 'right' con/text needs to be found for each text.

These insights throw light on the "non-negotiable divide between IWE and Bhasha writing," [31].

### 1.2 Distinct features of Bhasha texts:

In the critical narrative, "The Play of Contestatory and Contesting Perspectives: Exploring the Debate about Representation of Nation in Bhasha Writing and Indian Writing in English," literary critics Som (Bipasha) and Das (Saswat) explicitly point out that Bhasha texts often sketch the "failure of nations as 'imagined communities'" [31]. In doing so, they critically examine the concept of the nation by:

Pitting it against micro-political, marginal, social and sub-national contexts...[to depict] the interaction between the nation and the sub-nation, between mainstream political and social life and the life of the marginalized and oppressed [31].

Som & Das [31] derive the "interaction between the nation and sub-nation" from the post-colonial researcher, Vibhu S Chauhan (2007) who discusses this as he analyzes the novels of Hindi fiction writer, Maitreyi Pushpa [6]. This simply means a Bengali Bhasha writer's notion of nation will explore the geographic boundaries, social-cultural sensibilities of the state. Typically, Bhasha stories reflect, "the hope of a peaceful, solid nation," unlike in the stories of IWE writers such as Arundhati Roy and Amitav Ghosh who celebrate the "loss, exulting in the fragmentation of the nation" [31]. While many critics have extensively discussed the unfair advantage the IWE writers have with regard to visibility, opportunities, and global voice [8], critics confirm that "the future holds possibilities of many kinds" for Bhasha writers too [31].

### 1.3 Translation to the rescue:

Translation is a "derivative activity" and its pivotal aim should be "fidelity to the original" [5]. Nevertheless, it also creates an "unease" in the foreign elements found in most translations [7]. There is a "dependency on the foreign" which Italian-English translator/author Tim Parks (2000) calls as the "Perils of Translation" [21]. In the Indian translation domain:

Deeply intertwined multiple forces have led to the marginalization of Bhasha texts. A lack of good translations may be seen as the most crucial of these forces, plotting the decline of this

category...this lack of good translations is to be blamed for the fact that Indian regional literature remains virtually unknown across the country, as well as in the West [31]. Bhasha texts are published in 22 or more regional Indian languages. It is the act of translations that, “completes the Bhasha,” opines Paranjape [20]. He breaks down that staying within the boundaries of their linguistic community is bound to make them, “limited and incomplete. Only, through translation can they acquire the kind of attention or understanding that they deserve” [20]. Indo-American writers such as Meena Alexander, whose roots belong to Kerala, also credit their knowledge about Malayalam literature through their readings of translation literature [12]. Postcolonial researcher Nalini Iyer, in her work “Embattled Canons: The Place of Diasporic Writing in Indian English Literature,” describes “[Alexander] accesses Malayalam literature through translation and by having works read aloud to her,” [12].

Having said so, one of the key issues in translation is the loss of the original or essence because the translator and the author have separate lived experience. But what happens when the translator is the original writer of the text too [5]. A Belgian expert in translation studies, Peter Flynn prefers to use the term “total overlap” [10]. He explains the possibility of “total overlap” between original writer of the work and its translator can happen only when:

The author is the translator...in representing the creative work of an author the translator taps into similar forms of creative artistic expression in another language, as it were [10].

One of the earliest translators cum author in the domain of IWE is the renowned Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath Tagore. He was known to have translated his magnum opus work, *Gitanjali*, from Bengali to English. Among the few post-independence Bhasha writers who translated their own works to English is O.V. Vijayan. He translated all his works except his last novel from Malayalam to English. He is one of the IWE who has contributed significantly to the domain adding a potential value to the pan-Indian sensibility. In 2024, the *Routledge* publication extensively reviews scholarly work in IWE, which features Vijayan and his texts too [14]. The text justifies that the writers included are “(a) writers of Indian origin who use the English language (not translated works), and (b) their works that stand out for rightful spotlighting” [14]. This research literature review is designed to examine O.V. Vijayan as an Indian Writer in English for his global visibility in the contemporary world literature. The study assesses how his most celebrated translated texts, *Khasakinte Ithihaasam (The Legend of Khasak)* (1969) [hence referred as *TLK*], *The Saga of Dharmapuri* (1985) [hence referred as *TSD*], *The Infinity of Grace* (1987) [hence referred as *TIG*] display humongous potential in analyzing the power equations concerning the notion of a nation, a key aspect of the characterization, narrative techniques and plot in the Bhasha writing.

## 2. OBJECTIVES:

The paper is a scientific review of published research in the specified domain pertaining to the research proposal. O.V. Vijayan’s writings reflect power equations at varied levels of the society. As a Bhasha writer, his works have interrogated “the concept of India as a nation, pitting it against micro-political, marginal, social and sub-national contexts” [31]. In doing so, the works enable “the interaction between the nation and the sub-nation, between mainstream political and social life and the life of the marginalized and oppressed” as evident in many other Bhasha writings [31]. In the Foucauldian sense, this interaction between the nation and sub-nation, marginalized and oppressed represents the deep-rooted power equations with immense scope for study. Reading Vijayan’s self-translated works in English can offer immense scope of analyzing these concepts. The hypothesis of this paper is that there have been limited studies on O.V. Vijayan as an IWE and as an agency for the attributes upheld by the Bhasha writers. The research objectives of this paper include to:

- (1) Examine O.V. Vijayan as an Indian Writer in English as much as a Bhasha writer.
- (2) Analyze the past research themes concerning Vijayan’s novels.
- (3) Determine the gaps in research following a thorough understanding of relevant literature
- (4) Construct a scientific agenda for research and document a research proposal for further progress.

### 3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE/ RELATED WORKS:

Table 1 summarizes the various research works on O.V. Vijayan and his works. This study has included research conducted until recently (year 2024). The research studies, by far, have analyzed one or many themes, conflicts, writing/narrative style, as portrayed through his works which include novels, and short stories.

**Table 1:** Summary of research findings with focus of discussion

Sl. No	Area & Focus of the Research	The result of the Research	Reference
1	O.V. Vijayan's <i>The Legends of Khasak</i> as a Geo-Narrative	The research closely analyzes, <i>TLK</i> as a geocritical work wherein the study examines the interplay of culture, geography and literary imagination in the imaginary nation-state, Khasak. The study infers a postmodern perspective about how Vijayan's narrative strategy succeeds to establish Khasak as a real geographical space with various physical with metaphysical elements. The study finds out that until the final chapter, the reader fails to generate a coherent mental picture of Khasak.	Ashwathy et al. (2020) [4]
2	Myth and Reality in OV Vijayan's <i>The Legends of Khasak</i>	The research examines the interplay of myth and reality in <i>TLK</i> . It identifies the themes of rebirth, death and nature, lust and mystic experience, sense of sin. The study has identified Vijayan's mythmaking with reality, the presence of superstitions, traditions and the like that makes a nation.	Jangale, J. (nd). [15]
3	O. V. Vijayan	Sharon Pillai, in her biographical reading of O.V. Vijayan, traces the diverse vocational choices of Vijayan in the fields of cartoons, translations, story/column/novel writing in India. This text shares a detailed note of all of Vijayan's works. Interestingly, it identifies that Vijayan translated three of his early novels ( <i>Khasak</i> , <i>Dharmapuram</i> and <i>Gurusagaram</i> ) and many of his short stories into English. It also points out Vijayan's shift from communism to magical realism through his course of writings.	Pillai, S. (2016). [22]
4	Inhabiting the Space of Literature: An Ecocritical Study of Arundhati Roy's <i>God of Small Things</i> and O.V. Vijayan's <i>The Legends of Khasak</i>	The research is a comparative reading of Roy's <i>God of Small Things</i> and Vijayan's <i>TLK</i> from the lens of green criticism. It analyzes the social landscape of India, literary natuescape, "natural/social" paradigms with an ecocritical background.	Anand, D. (2005). [3]
5	The Figure of OV Vijayan	The article is an autobiographical narrative of the author's first-hand experience with the celebrated author, O.V. Vijayan. The article reveals Vijayan's quiet nature, his love for reading, and his complaints about Marxism [that it made no room for spirituality]. The author's critical finding was that while the world compares Khasak as	Gowda, C. (2016). [12]



		Marquez's Macondo, Vijayan sneered that his work, in Malayalam, was published way ahead of Marquez's <i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i> .	
6	A Voyage from Emptiness to Amplitude with the Reference to Selected Novels of O. V. Vijayan	The research article is an attempt to critically read Vijayan's <i>TLK</i> and <i>TIG</i> . The study uncovers and traces the trajectory of the lead protagonists in the novels, Ravi and Kunjunni, respectively. It analyzes their untiring quest, and journey of life until they understand the meaning and purpose of their life. The reading is undertaken from an existentialist lens.	Acharya, LT. (2019). [1]
7	Reading Taboos as Allegory in O. V. Vijayan's <i>The Saga of Dharmapuri</i>	Singh, in this research, attempts to investigate the social taboos existing under the sharp satire on the political administration of that era. The novel studied here is <i>TSD</i> and the analysis decodes the symbols, metaphors, political allegories, cultural commentaries interwoven in the novel.	Singh, R.P. (2015). [30]
8	A Comparative Study of Marxist Literary Criticism in <i>The Mayor of Casterbridge</i> by Thomas Hardy and <i>The Legends of Khasak</i> by O.V. Vijayan	The research studies the varied forms of power struggles are portrayed subtly within the novels of OV Vijayan and Thomas Hardy. The study is a comparative literature studied with the aim of tracing Marxism and its elements in the novels. The study has investigated female subjugation, dominance of humankind over environment, the latter's retaliation and other such forms of power struggles.	Shivani, S. (2023). [28]
9	The Self-made Victim in the Crosshairs of East-West Confrontation: Ravi's Odyssey in OV Vijayan's <i>The Legends of Khasak</i>	This paper analyzes the protagonist Ravi from <i>TLK</i> and draws parallel with Derrida's "The Gift of Death." The study focuses on Ravi's education, his reception of women (such as Padma), the atrocities inflicted on the female gender at the imaginary town, the problematic sexual life which determines his journey to the town, Khasak.	Vadackel, J. (2023). [33]
10	A Study of the Multiple Themes in O.V.Vijayan's <i>The Legends of Khasak</i>	This study is a comprehensive outlook of multiple themes in OV Vijayan's <i>TLK</i> . The study has analyzed themes including rebirth, myth, death and nature, lust and mystic experience, sense of sin, pursuit of life. These themes are also represented through use of imagery such as water, and time.	Jayan.T. et al. (2018). [16]
11	Concept of "Go Green" in OV Vijayan's <i>The Legends of Khasak</i> : Growing Consciousness towards Mother Nature	While the "Go Green" movement has been making waves globally, and there are many striving for sustainable living and prioritize environmental conservation, this research critiques the sustainability and green representations at the imaginary town as sketched in the novel. The study infers that the novel traces the interactions between the varied living beings (man/woman and nature) and nature's response to destruction of its natural order.	Yadav, S., et al. (2024). [34]
12	The Demeanor of Nature in O. V. Vijayan's <i>The Legends of Khasak</i>	This study has studied the novel <i>TLK</i> by OV Vijayan. The research traces the elements of nature in the fictional world of Khasak as	Saran, S. et al. (2018). [25]

		portrayed or sketched by the writer. It analyzes how Khasak is a mythical place of purity.	
13	OV Vijayan: Death and Afterlife of a Writer	This work is a biographical narration by the writer, Mukundan about his lived experiences with O.V. Vijayan. The write-up published after the writer's death discusses how his death was imminent due to his disease. The writer further traces the trajectory of Vijayan's writing style that ranged occupied divergent spaces: pro-communist musings, anti-communist, followed by a migration to spirituality. The writer concludes attributing immortality to Vijayan owing to his masterpieces.	Mukundan, M. (2005). [19]
14	"Many Truths Make the Big Truth.": Magical Realism in OV Vijayan's <i>The Legends of Khasak</i>	The research paper is an attempt to explore the concept of magical realism through Vijayan's novel. The study identifies how the writer adopts a paradoxical impulse to naturalize the supernatural in the imaginary town of Khasak. Also, the study examines the indigenous cultural elements as an underpinning in the backdrop of cultural modernity and industrialization evident in the novel.	Semwal, S., et al. (2023). [27]
15	When a Work Walks Ahead of Times: OV Vijayan's <i>Khasakkinte Ithihasam</i> as the Product of Postmodern Sensibility	This study is a postmodern critique of <i>Khasakkinte Ithihasam</i> . The article has traced elements of myth, supernatural, magical realism, in the post-independent Malayalam literature. In the postmodern sense, the article has tracked the metamorphosis of a colonized identity which is rather "unfamiliar" towards an acceptance of its indigenous identity through use of irrational language, absurd realities in the fictional city of Khasak, and mysteries.	Sruthi, S., et al. (2022). [32]
16	OV Vijayan's <i>The Infinity of Grace</i> : A study in philosophy of literature	This article analyzes the philosophy and spirituality in the novel, <i>TIG</i> . In this, the research conceptualizes the connotations of philosophy and traces its elements. The paper identifies the treatment of Advaita philosophy as sketched by the author.	Rajendran, N.P. (2018). [23]
17	The Novel and the Crisis of the Nation/Nation-State: A Reading of Some Malayalam Novels	This research published as a chapter has examined three Malayalam novels, Muhammad Basheer's <i>Shabdangal (Voices)</i> , OV Vijayan's Dharmapurnam ( <i>TSD</i> ), and Anand's <i>Marubhumikal Undakunnathu (Desert Shadows)</i> . This study analyzes the nationalist discourse in the postcolonial nation-state. These novels, from the vernacular spaces, are urging the audience to re-imagine notions of a nation, that is torn apart in many states, as an inclusive space. The chapter analyzes how each author's sketch of self, community and nation differs from each other. However, each novel had sketched event/s of violence internalized by the nation-states.	Ramakrishnan, E. V. (2011). [24]
18	Vijayan, O.V. (1930–2005)	Muhammed Afzal, in this chapter, traces the literary and creative pursuit of O.V. Vijayan. He	Afzal, M.P. (2024). [2]

		identifies Vijayan as novelist, short story writer, cartoonist and political commentator who wrote in Malayalam and English language. The chapter briefly traces his first novel <i>Khasakinte Ithihasam</i> (TLK), a compilation of short stories, <i>Moonnu Yuddhangal</i> (Three Battles), and many others. This chapter states that the original author (Vijayan) was also the translator of his three novels. They include <i>Khasakinte Ithihasam</i> (TLK), <i>Dharmapuram</i> (TSD), and <i>Gurusagaram</i> (TIG).	
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#### 4. MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Any comprehensive research for studying art-based work such as fictional texts should possess, “the power to raise significant questions regarding commonsensical notions lodged within the prevailing cultural landscape that would otherwise be left undisturbed” [11]. Also in studying fictional texts in social science research, the research should be able to address, “the social phenomena under study” so as to “move the reader beyond the constraints of the particular and local” and be able to achieve “generalizability” [11]. This study adopts a qualitative research to study O.V. Vijayan’s select novels. This study conducts the qualitative research. Qualitative research is often conducted for data that is written (but fictional), oral and non-verbal data in the form of behavior [11]. This research conducts a textual analysis wherein the text is dissected for tracing, “variation, contradiction, and paradox,” in a given text by closely reading the, “language, meaning, power-knowledge frames, discursive interplays, and constructions of self” [11].

The study also includes a thematic analysis approach. Researcher Given [11] explains that studying themes in a social science research has the potential to bring out:

Meaningful patterns, stances of the participants, or concerns. Themes may be qualitatively distinct from one another. A theme is kept close to the text, and textual examples of the theme are required to identify another portion of text exemplifying the same theme.

This study, hence, will closely investigate recurring themes, contradictions, and identify the patterns across the various texts of O.V. Vijayan.

#### 5. CURRENT STATUS AND NEW RELATED ISSUES:

The current issues as described in the previous sections have been:

- (1) The limited research on Bhasha literature, consequently the magnanimity in the scope of studies in this domain in comparison to literary works by Anglophone writers.
- (2) The works in translation has the potential to pose interesting questions for Indian writing in English even as late as in 2024, as claimed by Afzal (2024) [2].
- (3) Writer and critic EV Ramakrishnan [24] points out that at the rudimentary social level, “the narrative of the nation manifests itself around questions of power and desire, contest and consent, aggression and accommodation.” These themes have not been explored exclusively for OV Vijayan’s literary works as proven in the literature review.
- (4) Bhasha literature paints the concept of India as a nation by pitting it against, “the micro-political, marginal, social and sub-national contexts” [31]. There is a sense of loss, fractures and fragmentation in the Bhasha writers —a potential to trace in O.V. Vijayan’s texts, says EV Ramakrishnan as he analyzes Vijayan’s *The Saga of Dharmapuri* (*Dharmapuram*) [24]. This promotes significant scope in studying the essence of Bhasha literature in the other translated novels of Vijayan.
- (5) In the purview of the author being the translator of his/her/their own text, there is a peculiarity that authors of Bhasha narratives who become the translators for their own texts, “[leaving] the marks of their vernacular languages both in the vocabulary and the syntax of the new text...these new renderings...acts as a trans-text or con-text of the original and neither version surpasses the other”



[9]. There has been limited readings of Vijayan's translated texts analyzed as a "trans-text or context of the original" [9].

## 6. RESEARCH GAPS:

An extensive survey of relevant literature has identified these research gaps:

- (1) O.V. Vijayan's three translated works are chosen for this study: *TLK (Khasakinte Ithihasam)*, *TSD (Dharmapuranam)*, and *TIG (Gurusagaram)*. Vijayan, being the author and translator of these three select novels [2] thus qualifies as an Indian writer in English. This study can have the potential to be the agency so as to bridge the gap between writers of Bhasha (vernacular medium) and IWE.
- (2) This study has the potential to be studied with the underpinning of power equations (contest and consent, aggression and accommodation at various levels) as none have extensively studied O.V. Vijayan's literary pursuit in the purview of power equations.
- (3) While critics such as E.V. Ramakrishnan, Makarand Paranjpe, or Elkunchwar have analyzed O.V. Vijayan for the issues of nation-nation-state, vernacularizing the state language, limited studies have extensively studied multiple works of O.V. Vijayan. For instance, E.V. Ramakrishnan's critical essay has analyzed the fractures and fragmentations in Vijayan's novels *Dharmapuranam* [24]. This study aims to delve deeper into these concepts by selecting three celebrated novels authored and translated by Vijayan himself.

## 7. RESEARCH AGENDA:

The agenda lies in analyzing O.V. Vijayan's select works at a point of convergence (where Bhasha meets English). To achieve this, three works that are translated by the author himself are chosen for the study. The power equations, political and social structures of the post-colonial and independent India can be analyzed in the writings of O.V. Vijayan using the qualitative research tools. The study aims to understand the underlying power discourse through a Foucauldian lens. In doing so, it investigates Vijayan's portrayal of power/knowledge, Panopticon and surveillance that play a key role in interplay between nation/nation-state debate [26], [18] through sketches and representations in the text. Further, in critiquing the state, the Althusserian concepts of Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA) and Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) [17]. In the likes of EV Ramakrishnan's idea, this study also aims to trace "the national subject" through Vijayan's various characters such as Ravi (in *TLK*), Siddhartha (in *TSD*) if they appear:

Split and fragmented, revealing the internal contradictions, and from this moment onwards, these contradictions interrupt and inhibit the nation's capacity to address its people [24].

To achieve the above, the researcher plans to adopt the following methods to bridge the research gap and offer appropriate solutions to the proposed research questions:

- (1) Participation in research activities or projects concerning the themes: O.V. Vijayan, power discourse, IWE, Bhasha writings and the like to ensure the data gathered is focused and narrowing down on the topic.
- (2) Gather information from internet, national and global libraries, books and e-books, peer-reviewed, print and online journals, regarding the topic to ensure the data collection is conducted appropriately.
- (3) Submission of abstracts and research papers about the topic to esteemed conferences for further guidance, exchange of knowledge and expertise on these domains.
- (4) Publication of papers in scholarly journals through consultation with guide, peers and experts to expedite the knowledge gained about O.V. Vijayan and his select works.

## 8. ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH AGENDA:

Publication of any research works acts as the reinforcement for the research hypothesis, literature review, research gaps and research objectives outlined. Publication, in the form of chapters in books or papers in journals, helps the researcher gain focus and critical reviews. Peer-reviewed journals on international platforms can help the researcher engage in intellectual discussions with global audiences.

Research agendas are a way forward for addressing research gaps and ensuring the research is contributing to the global knowledge domain.

### 9. FINAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL IN THE CHOSEN TOPIC:

The proposed research will explore three select translated works of the Malayalam and IWE writer, O.V. Vijayan. They include:

- (1) *The Legends of Khasak (Khasakinte Ithihasam)*,
- (2) *The Saga of Dharmapuri (Dharmapuramam)*,
- (3) *The Infinity of Grace (Gurusagaram)*,

The proposed research broadly aims at conducting a qualitative research through reading the primary texts text of O.V. Vijayan and also other relevant secondary literature that offers insights, directly or indirectly, about the primary texts. In doing so, the research aims to:

- (1) Understand the existing knowledge in the realm of IWE writings in India
- (2) Analyze closely connected concepts: the power equations in the making of the nation or nation state in the purview of the select novels
- (3) Examine the insights, controversies and debates pertaining to the research topic
- (4) Understand the principles of literary theory and criticism
- (5) Apply relevant literary theories in the critical readings of the select texts

### 10. EXPECTED OUTCOME:

The literature review proffered significant insights about the need to study O.V. Vijayan's works. Despite being written decades ago, Vijayan is still considered as one of the Indian writers in English whose works can share key insights on understanding the building of Indian nation/nation-state, power equations and the like. His trajectory as a pro-communist to anti-community and the gradual shift towards spirituality also offers scope for analyzing the Bhasha writers lens about the Indian political, socio-cultural set-up.

### 11. LIMITATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL:

The limitation lies in the reading of only English works of O.V. Vijayan. Translation, as is often regarded, can lose the essence of the original. However, the researcher plans to overcome the limitation by selecting works that are translated by the author himself. Secondly, while there are multiple writers in IWE, selecting only O.V. Vijayan can limit the scope of analyzing the Bhasha literature, translated in English. However, future studies can be extended in this domain by considering other Bhasha writers' translated works for more critical insights.

### 12. IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO THE PROPOSAL:

The implications of the research activities are to conduct an in depth critical reading of O.V. Vijayan's select works. In doing so, the research can add to the limited knowledge that is available about O.V.Vijayan, a celebrated writer for the perusal of global audience.

### 13. CONCLUSION:

The research study aims to conduct an exhaustive study of O.V. Vijayan, the renowned IWE whose original writing medium is Malayalam. While the research aims at achieving every objective, the study has the potential to expand its potential by allowing further research about other Indian or even post-colonial translated texts to be studied in similar lens.

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