

LITERATURES OF CRISES

Reflections on Contemporary Philosophy and Literature

FEB
16-17

REV DR DAN THOTTAKKARA
MEMORIAL
NATIONAL SEMINAR 2026



The Two-Day National Seminar is organized by



DEPARTMENT OF
ENGLISH AND
CENTRE FOR
RESEARCH



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10.00 AM Inaugural Session

Inaugural Address: **Adv Sebastian Paul**

10.45 AM Tea Break

11.00 AM Plenary Session 1

Dr Nisha Viswanathan, Asst Professor of English,

NIT Trichy: **Crisis and the Critical Imagination**

12.30PM Lunch Break

01.30PM Plenary Session 2

Dr Amritha R Krishnan: **Drawing the Body in Crisis:**

Graphic Medicine as a Site for Health Activism

03.00 PM Discussion

03.30PM Tea

03.45PM Paper Presentations



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09.30 AM Paper Presentations

10.30 AM Tea Break

10.45 AM Plenary Session 3

Dr M T Ansari, Dean of Humanities, UoH: **Crisis and**

Comparative Literature

12.30PM Lunch Break

01.30PM Plenary Session 4

Dr Abey Koshy, SSUS Kalady: **Nietzsche's**

Ethico-political Thought at a Time of Crisis

03.30PM Valedictory Session

04.00PM Tea

The contemporary world is increasingly understood through the language of crisis—political instability, ecological catastrophe, epistemic uncertainty, technological acceleration, ethical erosion, and the enduring legacies of colonialism, racism, caste hierarchies, and gendered violence. Literature and philosophy, as critical and reflective disciplines, do not merely document these crises; they interrogate the conditions under which crisis itself becomes a dominant mode of experience, governance, and thought.

This National Seminar seeks to explore how contemporary philosophical frameworks and literary practices respond to, theorise, and reimagine crisis as both a historical reality and a structuring conceptual paradigm. From a philosophical standpoint, crisis signals a rupture in inherited systems of meaning and normativity. Thinkers such as Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, Judith Butler, Achille Mbembe, and Byung-Chul Han have examined how states of exception, biopolitics, precarity, neoliberal rationalities, and regimes of surveillance shape subjectivity and social life in late modernity. Crisis, in this sense, is not an occasional disruption but a systemic and normalized condition embedded in everyday life.

Literature emerges as a crucial site where crisis is narrated, embodied, and contested. Contemporary literary texts—across genres, languages, and geographies—deploy fragmented narratives, dystopian imaginaries, testimonial forms, speculative fiction, and experimental aesthetics to articulate experiences that resist stable representation. Literatures of crisis foreground marginalised voices, trauma narratives, ecological anxieties, migrant and refugee experiences, and the psychic dislocations produced by global capitalism and digital cultures. Such texts challenge dominant narratives of progress and coherence, offering instead modes of storytelling attuned to vulnerability, uncertainty, and survival.

By bringing philosophy and literature into dialogue, the seminar foregrounds the relationship between conceptual critique and aesthetic form. While philosophy offers critical vocabularies to analyse crisis, literature provides affective, narrative, and experiential insights into how crisis is lived and remembered. This seminar aims to foster interdisciplinary engagement that moves beyond despair, emphasising critical reflection, ethical responsibility, imaginative resistance, and the possibility of alternative futures. In doing so, it seeks to reaffirm the relevance of the humanities in interpreting, questioning, and transforming contemporary social realities.

IMPORTANT DATES

Last date for submission of abstracts

12 February 2026

Notification of acceptance

13 February 2026

Submission of full papers

15 February 2026

Dates of the seminar

16-17 February 2026

Call for Papers

Scholars, researchers, and postgraduate students are invited to submit original and unpublished research papers.

Indicative Sub-themes

1. Crisis as Concept: Philosophical Genealogies and Theoretical Debates
2. Crisis as Event vs. Crisis as Condition
3. Philosophy, Ethics, and Precarious Life
4. Biopolitics, Necropolitics, and Governance
5. Literature, Trauma, Memory, and Testimony
6. Political Crisis, Authoritarianism, and the State of Exception
7. Migration, Borders, Statelessness, and Refugee Narratives
8. Ecological Crisis and Environmental Humanities
9. Capitalism, Neoliberalism, and Affective Economies of Crisis
10. Pandemics, Health, Illness Narratives, and Medical Humanities
11. Technology, Digital Culture, AI, and Epistemic Crisis
12. Gender, Race, Caste, and Intersectional Perspectives
13. Crisis Aesthetics and Contemporary Literary Forms
14. Global South, Decolonial Thought, and Indigenous Epistemologies
15. Hope, Resistance, Care Ethics, and Imagining Futures

(Themes are indicative and not exhaustive.)

Submission Guidelines

- Abstract length: Maximum 300 words
- Author bio: Maximum 150 words
- Abstracts must clearly indicate the research question, methodology, and theoretical framework.
- Submissions must be based on original and unpublished research.
- The abstract should include:
 - Title of the paper
 - Name(s) of author(s)
 - Institutional affiliation(s)
 - Email ID and mobile number
- Documentation style: Latest MLA format
- Selected participants may opt for online presentation, subject to approval.

Registration

Faculty: Rs 1000/-

Research Scholars: Rs 750/-

Students: Rs 500/-

The Dan Thottakkara National Seminar

The Dan Thottakkara National Seminar was established in 2000 to honour the legacy of Rev. Dr. Daniel Thottakkara CMI, a distinguished academic, visionary, and administrator. Renowned for his profound scholarship and commitment to intellectual advancement, Rev. Dr. Thottakkara played a pivotal role in fostering a culture of research, critical inquiry, and innovation. His vision and leadership were instrumental in shaping academic discourse, inspiring generations of students and scholars alike. His relentless pursuit of excellence and his dedication to higher education transformed the institutions he was associated with, leaving an indelible mark on the academic community. Instituted with the earnest support of Rev. Dan's family, the seminar serves as a lasting tribute to his memory and contributions. Since its inception, it has consistently engaged with frontier areas in literary studies and critical theory, providing a platform for meaningful academic dialogue and scholarly exchange. Over the years, the Dan Thottakkara National Seminar has attracted academics, researchers, and intellectuals from across India, fostering a vibrant space for the exploration of new perspectives and evolving literary discourses. With its commitment to scholarly excellence, the seminar continues to uphold the values that Rev. Dr. Thottakkara championed, ensuring that his legacy remains a guiding force for future generations. Beyond its academic significance, the seminar also serves as a space for fostering interdisciplinary engagement and intellectual camaraderie. By addressing contemporary challenges in literature, culture, and theory, it encourages critical thinking and innovative perspectives, nurturing a dynamic research culture. The annual event not only honours the memory of Rev. Dr. Thottakkara but also reinforces the Department of English's commitment to academic rigour, innovation, and scholarly collaboration.

Organizing Committee

Prof Bijo N. Mathew, Head of the Department
Dr. Sebastian John
Prof Sunil K. V. (Convenors)

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