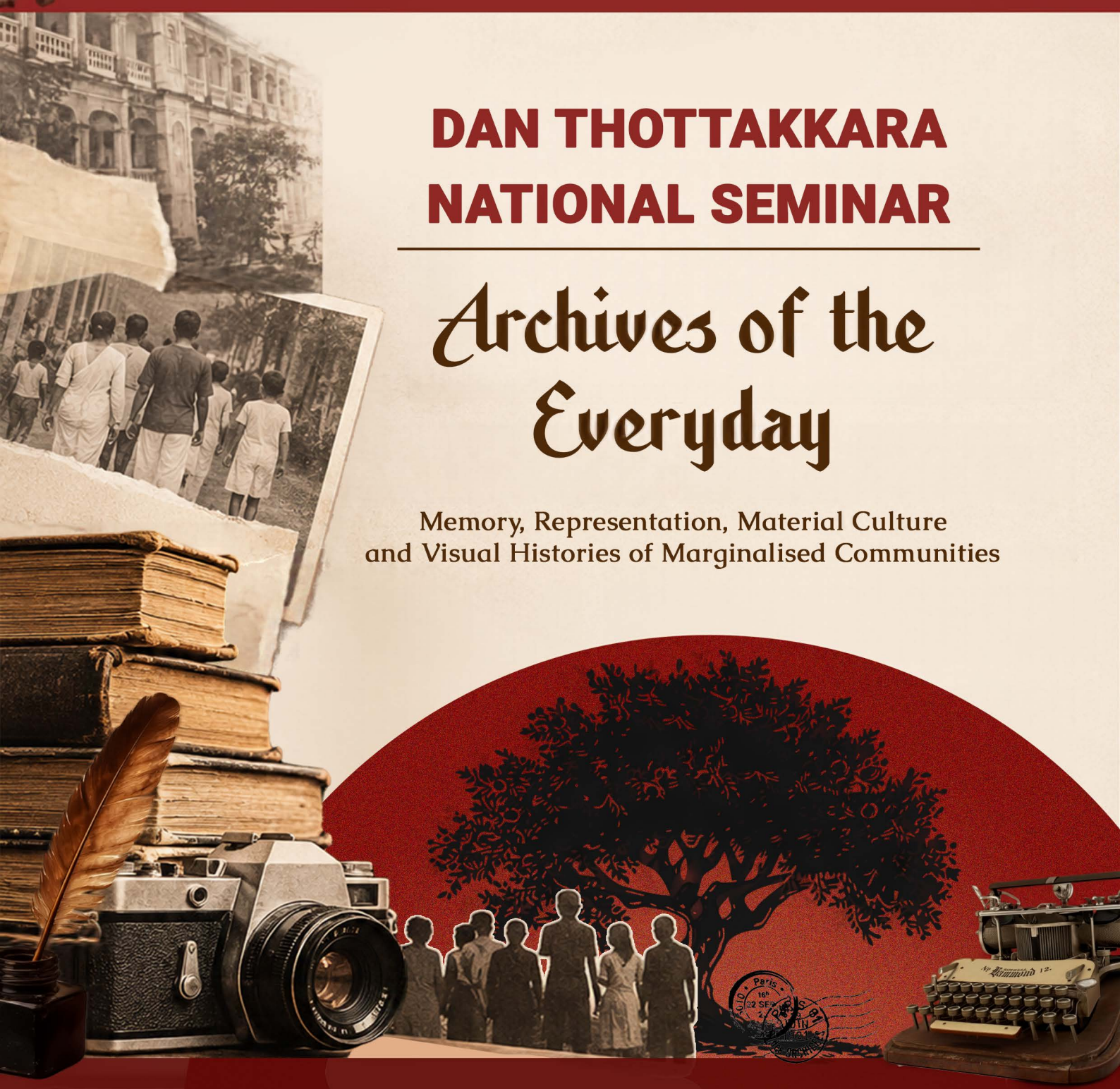
SACRED HEART COLLEGE
(AUTONOMOUS) KOCHI, KERALA, INDIA

CALL FOR PAPERS

DAN THOTTAKKARA NATIONAL SEMINAR

Archives of the Everyday

Memory, Representation, Material Culture
and Visual Histories of Marginalised Communities



LITERATURE | HISTORY | CULTURE | SOCIETY | MEMORY | REPRESENTATION

The Dan Thottakkara National Seminar was launched by the Department of English and Centre for Research, Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Thevara, in the year 2000 to revitalize the memory of the late scholar, Rev. Dr. Dan Thottakkara. Since its inception, the seminar has focused on frontier areas in literary studies and critical theories and has attracted scholars from all over India. This year's seminar, **Archives of The Everyday: Memory, Representation, Material Culture And Visual Histories Of Marginalised Communities** titled is conceived to address the forgotten archives of our lives.

SEMINAR CONCEPT NOTE

ARCHIVES OF THE EVERYDAY

Memory, Representation, Material Culture and Visual Histories Of Marginalised Communities.

Archives are not just repositories of the past. They are selected, classified, kept, and forgotten, and in this way, they shape whose lives count as evidence and whose lives pass without record. Trouillot (1995) shows that silence enters history at four points: when sources are created, when archives are built, when sources are retrieved as narrative, and when significance is finally assigned. Stoler (2009) reads colonial archives as places of anxiety and uncertainty as much as of authority. This raises a hard question: how can we engage the lives of those recorded only through violence, such as the enslaved, the poor, and the dispossessed, without repeating that violence (Hartman, 2008)?

These questions are most pressing in the everyday. Ordinary life leaves fragile traces: a ledger entry, a photograph, a recipe, a work song, a ritual gesture, a graffito, a voice note. Everyday practice is also a way of inhabiting systems, and it carries memory in forms that documents do not. The archive of written records and the repertoire of embodied practice, which persists through performance and transmission, hold different kinds of knowledge. Affect, trauma, and inherited memory also live in ephemera and images.

The conference asks how everyday experience survives, in texts, images, objects, oral traditions, and embodied practice. It asks how that experience disappears, through erasure, neglect, censorship, disaster, and obsolescence, and how it acquires meaning through representation, curation, and cultural memory. Finally, it asks how it can be recovered through critical, collaborative, and community-led methods that are ethical and attentive to who holds authority over the record.

Memory, representation, and the politics of ordinary life run through all of this. Memory concerns what is kept and passed on. Representation concerns who depicts ordinary lives and who contests those depictions. Politics concerns who holds power over the record, whose everyday counts as worth keeping, and whose is left out.

CENTRAL QUESTIONS

1. How do archival structures produce silence, and how can silence be read as evidence?
2. Which non-textual archives (oral, material, visual, performed) carry the memory of everyday life?
3. Who represents ordinary lives, and how do communities challenge those representations?
4. What are the ethics of recovery: consent, ownership, care, and the risk of re-exposing harm?
5. How does digital media shape the survival and disappearance of everyday records?
6. How do marginalised communities represent, read, and retell the story of their own survival?

OBJECTIVES

- To build a comparative, interdisciplinary approach connecting literary studies, history, anthropology, visual and material culture, performance studies, archival science, and the digital humanities.
- To theorise archival silence and erasure in relation to caste, class, gender, race, colonialism, migration, and disability.
- To develop ethical, participatory, and context-sensitive methods for the recovery of marginalised lives.
- To bring scholars together with archivists, curators, artists, writers, and community custodians.
- To produce publications and open resources that advance archival and memory studies.

POTENTIAL TOPIC AREAS INCLUDE (BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO) THE FOLLOWING:

1. Archive, Silence, and Erasure: archival power, the colonial record, silences and absences, reading against and along the grain.
2. Textual and Literary Archives: novels, poetry, life-writing, diaries, letters, marginalia, print ephemera; fiction as archive and counter-archive.
3. Visual and Material Archives: photography, family albums, cinema, posters, comics, paintings; things, places, tools, textiles, food, and the social life of things.
4. Oral, Sonic, and Performative Archives: oral history, song, testimony, storytelling, language loss; ritual, theatre, dance, gesture, and repertoire.
5. Representation and Marginalised Lives: caste, race, gender, sexuality, indigeneity, labour, migration, disability; community archives and liberatory memory work.
6. Digital, Environmental, and Future Archives: born-digital records, social media, algorithmic bias, data sovereignty, climate and disaster loss, preservation and obsolescence.

ABSTRACTS

We welcome original, unpublished papers, panel proposals, archive-lab proposals, and creative or practice-based papers on the above. Literary and cultural studies, history, anthropology, visual culture, museum and archival studies, performance studies, and the digital humanities are all welcome, as are comparative and South Asian perspectives. Participants are requested to send the abstracts based on their original and unpublished research articles related to the above mentioned topics. The names, affiliations, mobile number, email address and full mailing address of all authors must be mentioned. The abstracts are to be sent conforming to the latest **MLA style** of documentation. Send your abstracts to ***danseminar@shcollege.ac.in.*** Abstracts will be selected after a review by the select committee. **Selected papers will be invited for an edited volume and a special issue of a peer-reviewed journal.** A limited number of registration waivers is available for research scholars and community participants.

GUIDELINES FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

1. Abstracts should be submitted as an attachment to email with 'Archival Afterlives' typed in the subject field.
2. The attachment should include a 300-word abstract, name(s) of the author(s), affiliation(s), and complete and final email ID(s).
3. Use Microsoft Word, Times New Roman, 12 pt.
4. Title: less than 15 words, first letter of each word in upper case (capital) and, 12 pt in bold.

5. Abstract should be a continuous expository narrative, not a list of points or PowerPoint presentation.
6. Avoid using any advanced word-processing features like lines separating footnotes and titles, background or font colour, highlighting and embossing.
7. The draft should be thoroughly checked and proofread before submission.
8. Revised versions or re-submissions will not be accepted. Each presenter will be given 15-20 minutes for presentation followed by 3-5 minutes for discussion. All the conference halls are equipped with PPT.

ORGANISERS

- Bijo N. Mathew
- Fr. Joseph Varghese, Ph. D.
- Fr. Sabu Thomas
- Fr. Sebastian John, Ph.D
- Rajesh M. Ph. D.
- Rajesh James, PhD
- Aravind R Nair, Ph.D.
- Sunil K. V.
- Shijo Varghese
- Neenu Mary Francis
- Steffy Antony, Ph.D.
- Saranya S
- Anna Samson

Department of English and Centre for Research,
Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Thevara, Kochi – 13.

IMPORTANT DATES

Last date for submission of abstracts : **30th December 2026**
Last date for submission of full paper: **10th January 2027**
Date of seminar : **28th and 29th January 2027**

Proposals (abstracts) for presentation can be submitted to ***danseminar@shcollege.ac.in*** in as an attachment on or before 30 December 2026. Approval/Acceptance of the proposal will be communicated in 4-6 working days.

FOR QUERIES PLEASE CONTACT:

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Fr. Sabu Thomas - 7907074011

Scan to Register

