

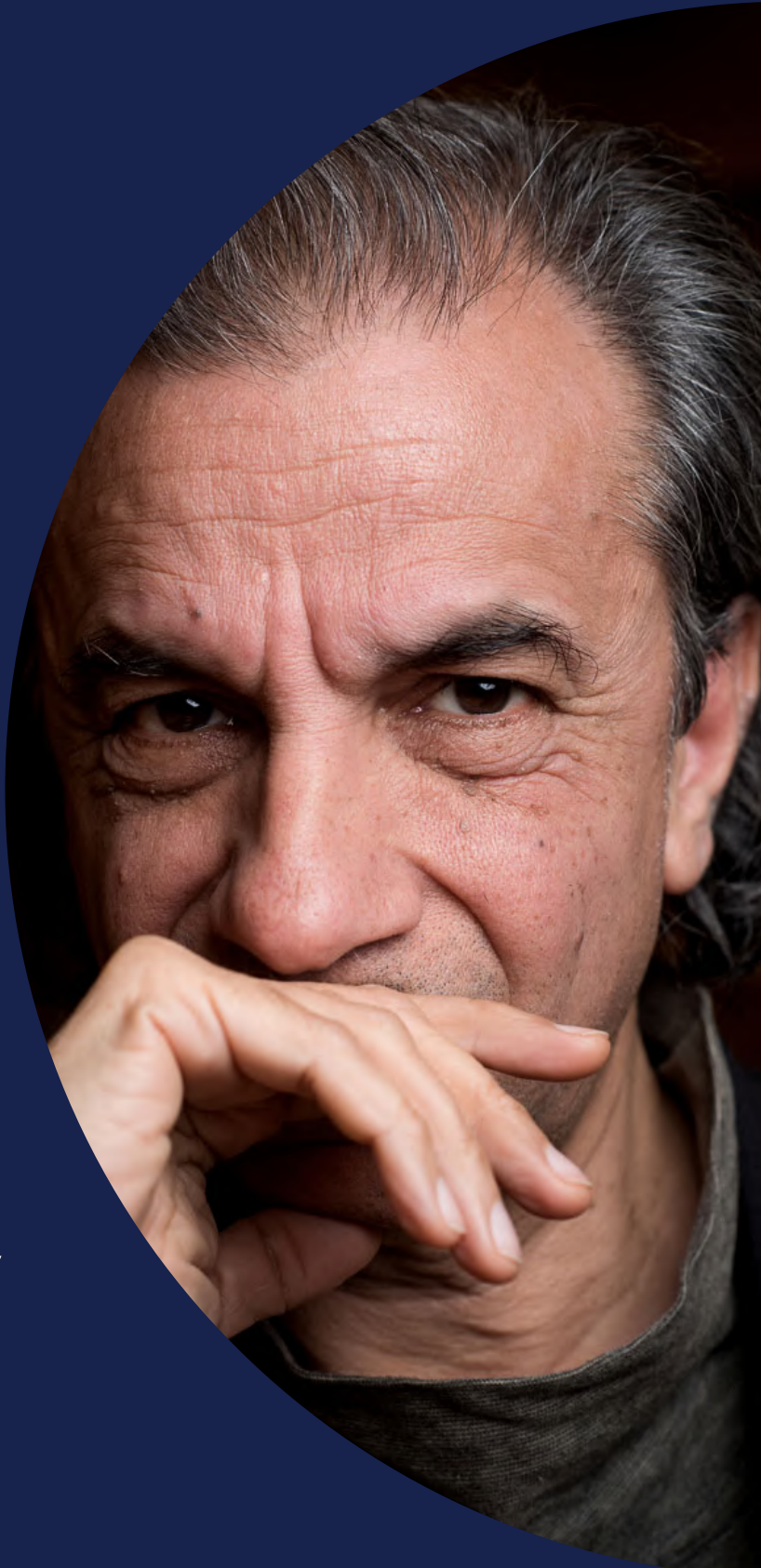


PRAJÑĀ FOUNDATION

What is Alienation?

Prof. Akeel Bilgrami delivers
the Third Endowment Lecture
of Prajñā Foundation

Co-hosted by
The Department of English and
Centre for Research,
Sacred Heart College, Thevara,
Kochi



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What is alienation?

Alienation has been the object of deep and extensive analysis by a wide range of thinkers from Rousseau through Marx to Sartre. Almost all who have written of it have considered it to be a malaise that afflicts modernity. In his lecture, Prof Akeel Bilgrami will explore some of the more unusual symptoms of this malaise and thereby seek to come to some understanding of the nature of politics and society in the modern period. A wide range of questions will be addressed. If it is a malaise of modernity, would overcoming alienation simply mean a recovery of a condition that existed prior to modernity? What sort of ideal do we fall short of when we are alienated? Is the ideal of an 'unalienated' life like other political ideals? How does it relate to our other political ideals? Is it more fundamental? In addressing some of these questions, he will argue that the significance of coming to a proper understanding of alienation and its overcoming is essential to a humane reconfiguration of politics as well as to a deeper understanding of the nature of law and its relation to society and culture.

Prof. Akeel Bilgrami

Prof Akeel Bilgrami got a B.A in English Literature from Elphinstone College, Bombay University and went to Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, where he read Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. He has a Ph.D in Philosophy from the University of Chicago. He has held the Johnsonian Professorship of Philosophy and holds the Sidney Morgenbesser Chair of Philosophy at Columbia University, where he is also a Professor on the Committee on Global Thought. He has been the Director of the Heyman Centre for the Humanities as well as the South Asian Institute at Columbia. His publications include the books *Belief and Meaning* (Blackwell, 1992), *Self-Knowledge and Resentment* (Harvard University Press, 2006), and *Secularism, Identity and Enchantment* (Harvard University Press 2014 and Permanent Black, India 2014). He is due to publish two new books in the near future: *What is a Muslim?* (Princeton University Press) and *Gandhi's Integrity* (Columbia University Press). His long-term future work is on the relations between agency, value, and practical reason.



Prajñā Foundation

Prajñā Foundation, a Forum for Literature, Theory and Criticism, was conceived by the research students and friends of **Prof. N. Prasantha Kumar**, former Professor and Head, Department of English, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady. The primary objective of the foundation is to explore the domains of cultural and literary theories and to carry out research of the finest quality, as exemplified by his contribution to teaching and research. The foundation works towards nurturing a community of committed teachers, researchers and students interested in engaging with cultural and literary theories, and directing this effort to resolve the problems of human life. Prajñā will cultivate scholarly conversation by publishing research, launching a Journal, and by conducting Annual Endowment Lectures by internationally reputed scholars in cultural and literary theories. Endowments/Awards will be instituted in honour of Prof. N Prasantha Kumar. An Academic Centre with a library and archive will be established to facilitate study and research in literature, theory, translation, films and other cultural productions. Prajñā will offer consultancy, resources, and experts for translation, curriculum design, seminars, workshops, orientation programmes, teaching, and other academic activities.