



Research Students Workshop

Memory, History, Forgetting: Philosophical Perspectives

Workshop Coordinator: Professor Sanil V.

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Dates: 12- 16 September 2022

KCHR invites applications from researchers who have completed M. Phil, enrolled Ph.D, Post Doc students and young faculty members, for the Research Students Workshop on 'Memory, History, Forgetting: Philosophical Perspectives' to be held from 12-16 September, 2022 at KCHR, Thiruvananthapuram.

The reality of the past, and the nature and need for our knowledge concerning the past have been the major concerns of historians and philosophers. The past no longer exists but can be an object of our knowledge. Natural science claims that it can predict the future using atemporal causal explanatory laws. Do historians predict the past though they do not have such laws of history? If not, what do they do with the past? What is the nature of evidence in historical research? If resources for research are mainly representations, how do we hope to know anything beyond those representations? Why do we need to know the past? How does the past, which is no longer there, have any influence on us? Are all cultures destined to have a history? Can historical knowledge be articulated in forms other than narratives and descriptions? Are we obliged to remember all that is past or be selective? Doesn't

forgiving the errors and acts of violence of the past demand active forgetting? The digitization of memory on the one hand, and the yearning of human history towards the cosmological dimension of the Anthropocene on the other, heighten the contemporary relevance of these questions.

All practicing historians may not find time to pause their work and pose these philosophical questions. However, many great historians have pursued them with urgency often producing breakthroughs in their practice. This workshop takes up some of these philosophical queries about epistemology, ontology and politics of history by placing the latter within a spectrum ranging from memory to cosmology. The readings and lectures will address issues like the phenomenology of memory, truth and fiction in history, archaeology and genealogy of discursive practices and technology and history.

The workshop aims to aid students at different stages of their research life – so those entering a PhD after completion of an MPhil, currently enrolled in a Ph.D programme, and a few postdoc students and young faculty members are encouraged to apply for this workshop. The sessions will focus on the careful and critical readings of some seminal texts in the philosophy of history.

Structure: The workshop will be divided into two parts. Each day, the morning session will be devoted to a critical reading of pre-circulated texts, which will be organized thematically. Experts in the field will open up this discussion. In the afternoon session, the participants will present their critical and creative reading of the pre-circulated texts. Each text will be assigned to a group of two members to present and to another group of two to respond. The participants are encouraged to relate these texts to their research concerns.

Application process: Each student should submit a detailed write-up (1000 words) on the nature of their interest in the theme of this workshop. They may indicate their area of research and the philosophical questions they have encountered. This should be done by 21st August 2022. Shortlisted candidates will be informed by 27th August 2022. Applications should be submitted through the link provided in the KCHR website. KCHR offers travel (train) and accommodation to selected participants.

Workshop details: A packet of readings will be sent electronically (as zipped file or via a dropbox folder) to all shortlisted candidates. Every student researcher is expected to read all the texts in the folder. The final programme will be sent to the shortlisted candidates close to the workshop. KCHR staff will coordinate the logistics of the workshop and will be in touch with participants, once shortlisted.

Professor Sanil V.

Professor G. Arunima

Dr. Dineesh Krishnan

Dr. Fashiya P.S.

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