



**CHRIST**  
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)  
BANGALORE, INDIA

# NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Extending Postcolonialism:  
*Living in an Age of  
'Precariousness' and 'Precarity'*

4-5 February 2019

CHRIST (Deemed to be University)  
Hosur Road Campus  
Main Auditorium

*Hosted by*  
**Department of English**



# CHRIST

(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)  
BANGALORE, INDIA

CHRIST (Deemed to be University) was born out of the educational vision of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, an educationalist and social reformer of the nineteenth century in South India. He founded the first Catholic indigenous congregation, Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) in 1831 which administers CHRIST.

Established in 1969 as Christ College, it undertook path breaking initiatives in Indian higher education with the introduction of innovative and modern curricula, insistence on academic discipline, imparting of Holistic Education and adoption of global higher educational practices with the support of creative and dedicated staff. The University Grants Commission (UGC) of India conferred Autonomy to Christ College in 2004 and identified it as an 'Institution with Potential for Excellence' in 2006. In 2008 under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956, the Ministry of the Human Resources Development of the Government

of India, declared the institution a Deemed to be University, in the name and style of Christ University. One of the first institutions in India to be accredited in 1998 by the NAAC, and subsequently in 2004 and 2016.

CHRIST has the top grade 'A' in the 4-point scale. The multi-disciplinary institution which focuses on teaching research and service, offers bachelors to Doctoral programmes in humanities, social sciences, science, commerce, management, engineering, education and law to over 18,000 students. The campus is a living example of the harmonious multiculturalism with students from all the states of India and from around 60 different countries. CHRIST publishes six peer-reviewed research journals and has published more than 300 books in Kannada and English. A promoter of sports, music and literary activities, it is a nurturing ground for creative excellence.

## The Department of English

The Department of English at CHRIST comprises a dynamic and enterprising group of individuals, ready to take on any epistemic challenge and make meaning out of it. As part of the Deanery of Humanities and Social Sciences, this department is truly one with a human face. The department is committed to critical reading of the self, society, and the imagined. It opens up the syllabus to texts of various kinds, visual, verbal, cultural, and social. It aims at reading intensively into not just literatures but the politics of the society, at large, that reveals itself through various texts.

## Extending Postcolonialism: Living in an Age of 'Precariousness' and 'Precarity'

India and the Global South are emerging as powerful influencers in matters of international policies, multilateral relations and peace work. However in Indian academia, there is still a strong tendency, especially in departments

associated with Humanities and Social Sciences to stagnate with Postcolonial Studies' engagement only with the colonial past, and not with the global present and future. Post 9/11, there is a need to extend the Postcolonial epistemological deliberations to a more expansive and interdisciplinary framework to understand and respond to social challenges and political issues in the twenty first century narratives especially when the globe is shrinking and the communities are bound ever closer with a tacit social contract that begs to be respected and maintained. Though poverty and precarity are global phenomena their representations in English/Anglophone literatures and other fictional and non-fictional media can be approached by using established frameworks of Postcolonial Studies which should now explore the power of and over representation, questions of agency and voice, of authenticity and essentialisms, of marginalisation and subalternity of precarious and precarity lives. This conference might then also address the current debate that Postcolonial Studies' engages only with the colonial past and not with the global present and future.

Philosopher and Gender Studies scholar Judith Butler's writings are seminal to the growing body of literature on precarity and precariousness. Butler draws a critical distinction between 'precariousness' and 'precarity'. She sees precariousness as a generalized human condition that stems from the fact that all humans are interdependent on each other and therefore all are vulnerable. In her distinction, precarity is different precisely because it is unequally distributed. Precarity for Butler is then, experienced by the marginalized, poor and disenfranchised people who are exposed to economic insecurity, injury, violence, and forced migration. Other pertinent social issues like Neoliberalism, war, and climate crises also brings to the fore these inequalities. She contests politics that provides stability for select groups and chooses an egalitarian precariousness for all as a liberating moment (Butler 2004, 2010).

Against this background, some questions like- what is it to be human today? What constitutes 'liveability' in the present geo-political, socio-cultural ferment? How precarious is human life

and what is the nature of this precariousness? How precarity contributes to precariousness? - are important and calls for understanding and some policy redresses. Precariousness is used to denote a general, pervasive ontological condition of vulnerability, displacement, and insecurity characteristic of transhistorical and existential forces. Precarity is a social condition which describes and conceptualizes the unpredictable cultural and economic terrain and conditions of life. This philosophical framing inspires descriptions of precariousness and precarity that highlight experiences and feelings of anxiety, disenfranchisement, and loss of hope for the future. From the revered Canonical literary works to the new age formats of literary output this strand of precariousness is evident.

Exploring the precariousness and precarity of 'lifeworlds' do not rest solely within the discipline of Literary Studies, it should be a multi-disciplinary as well as an interdisciplinary endeavor for which a host of disciplines can provide valuable insights and strategies. The objects of study

could be besides printed literary narratives and texts, digital (visual and aural), filmic, cultural and New Media texts.

*Some of the topics and themes that could be explored but not restricted to are:*

- Refugee Narratives
- Narratives of the Displaced
- Narratives of the War injured
- Narratives of Migrant Experiences
- Human Rights, Ethics and Literature
- Narrativisation of the 'human' in Memoirs, Testimonies, Eyewitness accounts, and literatures
- Graphic Novels of suffering and 'personhood' of the victims
- Ecological Crisis and Human Rights
- Biomedicine and Ethics
- Canons and construction of victims/ victimhood
- Human and Sub human in Narratives
- Youth Narratives of Precarity
- Gendered narratives of Precarity
- Narratives of Everyday Precarity



## Keynote Speaker



Harish Trivedi, former Professor of English at the University of Delhi, was visiting professor at the universities of Chicago and London, and has lectured at various universities in the USA, Canada, South America, the UK, Europe, China, Japan, South-East Asia and Australia. He

was Chairperson of the Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (2005--2014) and Vice-President of the Comparative Literature Association of India (2007--2015).

He is the author of *Colonial Transactions: English Literature and India* (Calcutta 1993; Manchester 1995), and has co-edited *Interdisciplinary Alternatives in Comparative Literature* (New Delhi 2013); *The Nation across the World: Postcolonial Literary Representations* (New Delhi 2007; New York 2008); *Literature and Nation: Britain and India 1800-1990* (London 2000); *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice* (London 1999); and *Interrogating Post-colonialism: Theory, Text and Context* (Shimla 1996; rpt. 2000 and 2006). He guest-edited a special issue on "Comparative Literature in India" (1997) of the British journal *New Comparison*, and has edited with an introduction and notes Thomas Hardy's *Tess* (Oxford University Press, 1988; several reprints) and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (Penguin Classics, 2011). He has contributed to the *Cambridge Companion* volumes on Gandhi and Kipling (both published 2011) as well as Tagore (forthcoming). He also writes in and translates from Hindi. Currently, he is one of the contributing editors of an international project based in Stockholm for writing a history of World Literature.

## Timeline for Abstracts and Papers/ Poster/ Documentary Submissions

Submission of abstract  
**15 December 2018**  
*(all submission formats require an abstract)*

Approval of abstract  
**17 December 2018**

Submission of registration form along with the registration fee  
**5 January 2019**

Last date to submit the final paper/ poster/ documentary  
**15 January 2019**

Send your abstracts/submissions /queries to: [engpostcolonial@conference.christuniversity.in](mailto:engpostcolonial@conference.christuniversity.in) or to Abhirup Sarkar : [abhirup.sarkar@eng.christuniversity.in](mailto:abhirup.sarkar@eng.christuniversity.in)

*Select papers will be published*

*(Please check the website for submission details)*

## Registration

Faculty and Research Scholars  
(Presenters and Participants)

**Rs 1500**

*(includes seminar kit, certificate  
and lunch)*

Faculty and Research Scholars  
Poster/ Documentary Presentation

**Rs 1000**

Faculty and Research Scholars  
In Absentia Presentation

*(includes skype and other services)*

**Rs 1000**

Student Presenters

**Rs 750**

*(includes certificates and lunch)*

Poster/ Documentary Presentation

**Rs 500**

In Absentia Presentation

**Rs 500**

Student Participants

**Rs 300**

*(includes certificate)*

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## Payments Details

Registration fee can be paid through the online portal:

*<https://christuniversity.in/online-payment-portal>*

Registration amount is non-refundable

For further details, please visit our website:

*[www.christuniversity.in/nationalseminar](http://www.christuniversity.in/nationalseminar)*



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