



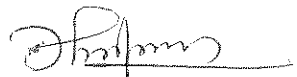
Notice for the PhD Viva-Voce Examination

Mr Thomas A Mattappallil, Registration Number: 1980504, PhD Scholar at the Department of English and Cultural Studies, School of Humanities and Performing Arts, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend his PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Friday, 21 November 2025 at 11.30 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R & D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru – 560029, Karnataka, India.

- Title of the Thesis** : **A Study of Paradox, Dilemma, and Responses of Characters in Select Works from Lockdown Literature**
- Discipline** : **English Studies**
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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 03 November 2025


Registrar (Academics)

ABSTRACT

The thesis analyses the paradox in human life depicted in *The Day Before Today: Lockdown Stories* by Gayathri Gill, *Thought Unlocked: Lockdown Days Musings* by G. Sreenivasan, *My Days in Solitude: Stories From Lockdown Days* by Anita Issac and *Letters from Lockdown* by Natasha Kaplinsky. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous countries declared lockdowns to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus; allowing people to leave their homes only for necessities. Lockdown restrictions made people's lives paradoxical during the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors of lockdown novels narrate various dilemmas faced by their characters within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The thematic alignment of paradox and dilemma necessitates a study of select works of Lockdown Literature. The thesis argues that characters experience socio-cultural, psychological and physical dilemmas (existential crisis) that drive them to paradoxical choices which they have to mediate through agencies of existence, space, and biographical memories to instil meaning in their lives and strengthen their relationships with others to coexist in the new normal. The research method employed in this study is textual analysis, which examines the problems arising from the characters' predicament and their responses to coexist with other characters. This study analyses the predicaments in the characters' minds due to the experience of paradox as depicted in specific instances in the selected works from Lockdown Literature. The study examines the characters' minds as they navigate between contradictory options in the new normal. The research explores the influence of agency of existence, biographical memory and space in characters' minds to find possible ways to exist in a paradoxical situation. The study analyses the importance of meaning-making in the characters' lives and strengthening relationships with other characters to coexist in the new normal.

Keywords: *Paradox, Dilemma, Responses, Human Mind, Choices, Existence, Space, and Biographical Memories.*

Publications:

1. **Thomas A Mattappallil**, Saji Varghese, "An Interrogation and Analysis of Postmodern 'Self' in Robert Lowell's Sonnet *Reading Myself*", Conference Proceedings, 2022, ECS Transactions.
2. **Thomas A Mattappallil**, Saji Varghese, "*Lockdown: A real-life Paradoxical Experience to Survive in New Normal Conditions*" article, *Agathos: An International Review of the Humanities and Social Sciences* (Wos Indexed in November 2024). Accepted before June 2024.