

“BRIDGING THE GAPS: AN EXAMINATION OF NEGLECTED ASPECTS IN KERALA RENAISSANCE”

In association with the Departments of History and Malayalam, Alphonsa College, Pala, organised a one-day National Seminar titled *“Bridging the Gaps: An Examination of Neglected Aspects in Kerala Renaissance”* on 6th January 2026 at Alphonsa College, Pala. The seminar aimed to critically revisit the Kerala Renaissance by foregrounding themes and perspectives that have often remained marginal in conventional historical narratives, particularly those related to lower castes, women, spirituality, and subaltern social movements. The programme witnessed active participation from teachers, research scholars, and students from various institutions, contributing to a rich academic atmosphere.



The seminar was presided over and inaugurated by Msgr. Rev. Fr. Joseph Thadathil, Manager of the college. In his inaugural address, Rev. Fr. Thadathil emphasised the relevance of the Kerala Renaissance in shaping a progressive and inclusive society. The inaugural session also featured a keynote address which outlined the central theme of the seminar and underscored the need to bridge historiographical gaps by incorporating voices from the margins into the study of Kerala’s social transformation.



The first plenary session was delivered by **Dr. Sivaprasad Ponnann**, Assistant Professor, Department of Indian Languages and Literary Studies, University of Delhi. His lecture, titled “*Spiritual Freedom of the Lower Classes During the Renaissance Period in Kerala,*” examined how spiritual assertion and religious reform enabled oppressed communities to challenge caste domination.



The second session was led by **Dr. Ani Tresa Ephrem**, Professor, Department of History, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady. Her lecture, titled “*Domesticity*”

to Mobility: The Question of Interiority of Women 'Movements' in Modern Kerala," focused on women's experiences and agency in modern Kerala.



The seminar also included paper presentations by scholars and students, which reflected diverse perspectives on the Kerala Renaissance. The papers addressed themes such as caste struggles, gender questions, cultural reform, literary interventions, and social movements. The sessions encouraged critical discussion and academic exchange, providing young researchers an opportunity to engage with established scholars and present their ideas.

The National Seminar was academically enriching and succeeded in meeting its objectives. By focusing on neglected dimensions of the Kerala Renaissance, the seminar contributed to a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of Kerala's social history. The programme inspired further research and dialogue on the complexities of social reform and renaissance movements in Kerala.