

10<sup>th</sup> P.K. Rajan  
MEMORIAL LECTURE



*Disenchanted  
Religion and  
Re-Enchanting  
Imagination:  
Tracing a Cultural  
Trajectory*

Speaker

**Dr. Jibu Mathew George**

Department of Indian and World  
Literatures, School of Literary Studies,  
The English and Foreign Languages  
University, Hyderabad

**29<sup>th</sup>  
January  
2016  
2.30 p.m.**

Senate Chamber

University Senate House Campus  
Palayam, Thiruvananthapuram



**Dr. P. K. Rajan (1947-2006)** A leading educationist, literary critic, impressive speaker and gifted teacher, Dr. P.K. Rajan was a many-faceted personality. As the founder Editor of *Litcrit*, a leading research periodical reflecting Indian response to literature, Dr. Rajan initiated meaningful discussions on contemporary issues in literature and brought out the journal single-handedly for long thirty years.

As Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Rajan raised Kannur University to the level of a prestigious centre of higher learning. Dr. Rajan began his career as a teacher at Parama Kalyani College in Tamil Nadu and later served at the Institute of Distance Education and Institute of English, University of Kerala.

His readings were by and large informed by the Marxist approach to literature and offered a fresh dimension to the studies on Indian Writing in English. Widely accepted as a scholar, Dr. Rajan extensively lectured at universities in Britain, Germany and Australia, and is the author of two seminal studies on Mulk Raj Anand, *Mulk Raj Anand (1986)* and *Mulk Raj Anand: A Reevaluation (1995)*. He also edited several research publications on Indian Writing in English.

In a lecture entitled “Science as a Vocation,” delivered at Munich in 1917, Max Weber, German sociologist and philosopher, outlined a process which Western civilization had been experiencing for several millennia, and had reached a highpoint with the scientific revolutions of modernity – “Disenchantment of the World” (*Entzauberung der Welt*). This famous phrase refers, on the one hand, “to a development within the domain of religion from ritual and magic to . . . paths to salvation completely devoid of magic.” On the other, it denotes “a broad historical development . . . according to which knowledge of the universe is less and less understood by reference to supernatural forces and salvation doctrines, and more and more by reference to empirical observation and the experimental method of the natural sciences.” The concept of Disenchantment, in its numerous forms, surfaces in discussions that cut across disciplinary boundaries, and in popular and academic discourses often points to ‘compensatory’ possibilities of re-enchantment (through art, technology, new esotericisms, and so on). What exactly is the relation between supernatural fascinans (one of Rudolf Otto’s attributes of the ‘numinous,’ the other being tremendum) and ‘modern’ enchantments? Might the world have ever been enchanted? What are the sources of imaginative enchantment? The answers are to be sought along the spectrum of ways in which humanity conceptualized the supernatural and its effects. The present exploration engages the ontological structures of belief and wonder as well as subtleties of cognition along the disciplinary continuum of philosophy of religion, hermeneutics, literary theory, the cognitive science of religion, sociology, and *histoire des mentalités* (‘history of attitudes’).

**Jibu Mathew George** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Indian and World Literatures, School of Literary Studies, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad.. He has published on James Joyce, Indian writing in English, literary theory, philosophy of literature, history, time, and mythology, in national and international academic journals and critical anthologies. His book *Ulysses Quotidianus: James Joyce’s Inverse Histories of the Everyday*, to be published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, is at press. At present he is working on his second book, *The Ontology of Gods*. He was a Research Fellow at the Zürich James Joyce Foundation, Switzerland, in 2008. In the same year he also received a DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst – German Academic Exchange Service) Scholarship for studies at Technische Universität Dresden. University College Dublin granted him a scholarship to participate in the James Joyce Research Colloquium in April 2008.

