

CONCEPT NOTE

International Conference on

Divergent Paths, Converging Visions: India and Greece – Philosophical and Theological Dialogue

24th, 25th and 26 April 2026 | Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala, India

Organised in partnership with:

- *NKUA Applied Philosophy Research Laboratory, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece)*
- *DE'THRI (Drahma Eastern Theological and Historical Research Institute) Foundation (India)*
- *Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Chair, Mahatma Gandhi University (India)*
- *School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies, Mahatma Gandhi University (India)*

1. Background and Rationale

India and Greece—two of the world’s oldest civilizational centres—have generated philosophical and theological systems that continue to shape human self-understanding, ethics, political imagination, and spiritual inquiry. Classical Greek foundations in metaphysics, logic, ethics, and political theory find rich parallels in Indian philosophical traditions such as Vedanta, Samkhya, Nyaya, and Buddhist thought. These traditions, though emerging from distinct cultural matrices, frequently converge on fundamental questions of reality, knowledge, virtue, and the nature of the human person.

Historical interactions—ranging from Indo-Greek kingdoms and Buddhist-Hellenistic encounters to cross-cultural translations—demonstrate deep intellectual contact between these civilizations. In the contemporary period, global challenges such as ethical governance, conflict, ecological crisis, and psychological well-being call for renewed intercultural dialogue and philosophical exchange.

The **School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies** enriches this dialogue by introducing Gandhian perspectives on nonviolence, truth, selfhood, ethical governance, and civilizational synthesis—offering a modern Indian lens through which Indo-Hellenic connections can be interpreted. This partnership strengthens the conference’s interdisciplinary character

and expands its relevance to developmental ethics, peace studies, and socio-political transformation.

This conference—jointly organized by the NKUA Applied Philosophy Research Laboratory, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, DE'THRI Foundation, the Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Chair, and the School of Gandhian Thought and development—aims to create a meaningful platform for scholars worldwide to examine the convergences and creative tensions between Greek and Indian philosophical-theological traditions.

2. Objectives of the Conference

1. To facilitate a sustained academic dialogue between Greek and Indian philosophical traditions.
 2. To compare foundational ideas in metaphysics, ethics, anthropology, and political theory across cultures.
 3. To explore theological intersections between Greek patristics, Indian religious philosophy, and contemporary comparative theology.
 4. To examine how language, ritual, and liturgical cultures shape theological and philosophical articulation.
 5. To highlight Gandhian contributions to intercultural philosophy, ethics, and socio-political development.
 6. To promote collaborative research and future academic exchanges among partner institutions.
 7. To establish a long-term Indo-Hellenic platform for philosophical research, comparative studies, and scholarly networks.
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3. Dates and Venue

Dates: 24th–26th April 2026

Venue: Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala, India

4. Format and Structure

The three-day conference will include keynote lectures, academic panels, themed sessions, interactive discussions, and collaborative planning for future research.

5. Proposed Sessions and Themes

Day 1 – Friday, 24 April 2026

Session 1: Plato and Parallels in Indian Philosophy

- Forms and metaphysics in Plato and Vedanta
- The soul, virtue, and liberation
- Dialectics and Indian methods of philosophical inquiry
- Parallels with Samkhya, Buddhism, and classical Upanishadic thought

Session 2: Aristotle and Resonances in Indian Philosophical Systems

- Comparative metaphysics: substance, causality, and ontology
- Virtue ethics and dharmic ethical traditions
- Aristotelian logic and Nyaya epistemology
- Natural philosophy and Indian cosmologies

Day 2 – Saturday, 25 April 2026

Session 3: Dominance of Liturgical Languages—Greek, Sanskrit, and Syriac

- Language and revelation
- Liturgical, ritual, and philosophical expressiveness
- Transmission of sacred knowledge through textual cultures
- Role of translation in intercultural theological development

Session 4: The Role of the Ruler/King in Greek and Indian Philosophies / Political Theologies

- The philosopher-king, dharmic kingship, and political virtue
 - Conceptions of justice and statecraft
 - Gandhian reinterpretations of power, authority, and moral governance
 - Early Christian and Indian political theologies compared
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Day 3 – Sunday, 26 April 2026

Morning: Free Time / Institutional and Cultural Interactions

Lunch Break

Session 5: Psychology / Psychotherapy in Greek and Indian Philosophical Traditions

- Ancient Greek conceptions of the psyche
 - Indian models of mind, consciousness, and liberation
 - Stoicism, Yoga, and meditative therapeutic practices
 - Contemporary integration into psychology, counselling, and well-being
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Closing Session: Synthesis and Future Directions

- Insights from Indo-Hellenic and Gandhian comparative studies
 - Discussion on publication plans
 - Proposals for exchange programs, networks, and recurring conferences
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6. Expected Outcomes

- **Edited volume and special journal issue (DOI)** featuring conference proceedings.
 - **Academic collaboration strengthened** among the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, MG University's Paulos Mar Gregorios Chair and School of Gandhian Thought, and DE'THRI Foundation.
 - **Potential development of Indo-Hellenic and Gandhian philosophical research clusters.**
 - **Creation of new academic pathways**, including student and faculty exchanges.
 - **A permanent scholarly network** advancing comparative philosophy, theology, and developmental ethics.
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7. Target Participants

- Scholars of philosophy, classics, theology, political science, psychology, and comparative religion
 - Researchers in Greek and Indian intellectual traditions
 - Scholars of Gandhian studies and peace/development studies
 - Postgraduate students, doctoral candidates, and early-career researchers
 - Cultural historians, educators, and clergy interested in intercultural dialogue
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8. Organising Partners

NKUA Applied Philosophy Research Laboratory, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece)

A highly reputable academic institution, embedded within a globally recognized academic centre for philosophy, classics, and theology.

DE'THRI Foundation (India)

An interdisciplinary research foundation promoting dialogue across philosophy, theology, ethics, and global scholarship.

Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Chair, MG University

Promoting cross-cultural and interdisciplinary philosophical and ethical-theological inquiry inspired by the legacy of Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios.

School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies, MG University

A nationally significant institution advancing Gandhian philosophy, peace studies, ethical governance, and developmental perspectives.

9. Contact Information

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