



SAI Events 2014-15

Monday, September 15

A talk by Ainsley Embree (Columbia)

“The Burden of Islam in Pakistan”

Organized by the Society of Senior Scholars in the Heyman Center for the Humanities

Co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute

Time: 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Location: Heyman Center for the Humanities

Directions to Heyman Center at <<http://heymancenter.org/visit/>>

Ainslie T. Embree is Professor of History Emeritus, Columbia University. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia University, and has taught at Brown, Duke, Johns Hopkins and Indore Christian College. While at Columbia he served as Chairman of the Middle East Languages and Cultures Department and the History Department; as Director of the Southern Asian Institute; and as Acting Dean of the School of International and Public Affairs. He has served as President of the American Association for Asian Studies and of the American Institute for Indian Studies; as Chair of South Asian sections of the American Council of Learned Societies and of the Social Science Research Council. He was editor-in-chief of the four-volume *Encyclopedia of Asian History* (1989) and editor of the revised *Sources of Indian Tradition* (1988), *Asia in Western and World History* (with Carol Gluck, 1997), and co-edited *India's World and U.S. Scholars: 1947-1997* (1998). Professor Embree's recent publications include, *Imagining India: Essays on Indian History* (1989), *Utopias in Conflict: Religion and Nationalism in India* (1990), and *India's Search for National Identity* (1988).

Monday September 22:

A talk by Rupert Snell (Texas, Austin)

“Biharilal Unplugged: on Translating the Satsai”

Co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute

Rupert Snell is Director of the Hindi Urdu Flagship at the University of Texas at Austin, and a Professor in the Department of Asian Studies. Before moving to Texas in 2006 he taught at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, for three decades. In 1997 Snell received the Sir George Grierson Award from the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan in the Indian Ministry of Human Resource Development, in recognition of his services to the Hindi language. His research interests lie primarily in 16th and 17th century poetry in the Braj Bhasha and Awadhi dialects and he is the author of numerous textbooks, translations, edited volumes. His Current projects include a verse translation of the Satsai of Biharilal, to be published in the Murty Classical Library of India by Harvard University Press.

Monday September 29

Books and Authors

“The Army and Democracy: Military Politics in Pakistan” by Aqil Shah (Dartmouth)

Moderated by S. Akbar Zaidi (SIPA and MESAAS)

Aqil Shah earned his PhD at Columbia and is a Lecturer in the Department of Politics at Dartmouth. He was a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University, and has taught at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), the University of Illinois-Chicago, the University of Chicago, Princeton, and Columbia. His teaching and research focus on democratization, civil-military relations and regional security in South Asia. His new book, *The Army and Democracy: Military Politics in Pakistan* has just been published by Harvard University Press.

Wednesday, October 1

A talk by Wendy Doniger (Chicago)

**“Censorship and Self-Censorship in India or:
How Many Penguins Can Stand On a Book Before It Sinks?”**

Time: 6:15 pm - 8:00 pm

Organized by the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life

Co-sponsored by the Department of Religion at Barnard and in the Faculty of Arts and Science; the South Asia Institute; the Barnard Center for Research on Women; and the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma/

Wendy Doniger is Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Chicago, with joint appointments in the Divinity School, the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, and the Committee on Social Thought. She earned her PhD at Harvard and a DPhil from Oxford University. Doniger is the author of numerous monographs, edited volumes, and translations. Her 2010 book, *The Hindus: An Alternative History*, was one of five finalists selected in the Non-Fiction category for the National Book Critics' Circle Award.

Monday, October 6

Mellon Sanskrit Series

A talk by Lawrence McCrea (Cornell)

"The Dark Age of Nyāya: The Retreat, Resurgence, and Reformation of Brahmanical Logic"

Lawrence McCrea is Associate Professor of Sanskrit Studies in the Department of Asian Studies at Cornell. He received his Ph.D. in South Asian Languages & Civilizations in 1998 from the University of Chicago. His most recent book, *The Teleology of Poetics in Medieval Kashmir*, published in the Harvard Oriental Series (2009), deals with the conceptual revolution in Sanskrit poetic theory brought about by the work of the ninth century Kashmiri Anandavardhana.

Monday, October 20

Mellon Sanskrit Series

A talk by Jonathan Gold (Princeton)

"Searching for Nonviolence in Medieval Buddhist Causal Theory"

Jonathan Gold is Assistant Professor and Julis Foundation University Preceptor in the Department of Religion at Princeton University. His research focuses on Indian and Tibetan Buddhist intellectual traditions, especially theories of interpretation, translation, learning and knowledge. He is the author of *The Dharma's Gatekeepers: Sakya Pandita on Buddhist Scholarship in Tibet* (2007), and *Paving the Great Way: Vasubandhu's Unifying Buddhist Philosophy* (forthcoming in November). Current projects include studies in Buddhist ethics through the Tibetan "three vows" (*sdom gsum*) literature and Śāntideva's Bodhicaryāvatāra, and a trans-national history of the doctrine of non-violence.

Monday, October 27

A talk by C.M. Naim (Chicago)

"Urdu Mystery Fiction: The First Fifty Years"

Tuesday, October 28

"A Life in Urdu Literature"

A discussion with C.M. Naim, with Allison Busch (MESAAS) and Manan Ahmed (History)

Times: 4:00pm-5:30pm (Monday) and 6:15pm-8:00pm (Tuesday)

C. M. Naim is Professor Emeritus at the University of Chicago. He served as Chair of the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago, 1985-91, and taught in the Department from 1971-2001. Naim has been a Visiting Professor at the Universities of Pennsylvania, California (Berkeley), Rochester, and at Aligarh Muslim University. His many monographs, edited volumes, translations, and articles includes two recent collections *A Killing in Ferozewala: Essays / Polemics / Reviews* (2013) and *The Muslim League in Barabanki: Essays / Polemics* (2013).

Monday, November 17

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Thursday, November 20, 2014

Film Screening and Discussion

Zinda Bhaag

(2013, 180 minutes, Punjabi and Urdu with English subtitles)

Followed by a discussion with director Meena Gaur and producer Mazhar Zaidi.

Co-sponsored by the Film Program at the Columbia School of the Arts

Zinda Bhaag was co-directed by Meenu Gaur and Farjad Nabi, and features the award-winning actor Naseeruddin Shah. *Zinda Bhaag* was the second-highest grossing movie in Pakistan in 2013. It won four awards at the International South Asian Film Festival in Vancouver, and a 'Special Jury Award' at the Jaipur International Film Festival.

Monday, December 1

A talk by Velcheru Narayana Rao (Emory)

"Print and Silence: Death and rebirth of literary texts in Telugu"

Velcheru Narayana Rao is Visiting Distinguished Professor of South Asian Studies in the Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies at Emory University. He taught Telegu and Indian literatures for thirty eight years at University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 2009-10, he was a Visiting Professor at the University of Chicago. His recent publications include *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India*, in collaboration with David Shulman and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, (2003); *Girls for Sale (Kanyasulkam): A Play from Colonial India*, a translation of the Telugu play by Gurajada Apparao (2007); and *How*

Urvashi Was Won, a translation of Kalidasa's *Vikramorvasiyam*, in collaboration with David Shulman, (2009).

Thursday, December 4

A film screening of *Firaaq*

Followed by a discussion with the director Nandita Das

Time: 7:00pm - 9:30pm

Firaaq follows the irrevocably changed lives of victims, silent observers, and perpetrators one month after the 2002 violence in Gujarat. *Firaaq* won top honors at the 2008 Asian Festival of First Films in Singapore, including Best Film, Best Screenplay, and the Foreign Correspondents Association Purple Orchid Award for Best Film.

Nandita Das has acted in over 30 feature films, including critically acclaimed performances in the films *Fire*, *Earth*, *Bawander*, and *Before the Rains*. *Firaaq*, her directorial debut feature film, traveled to over 50 festivals, and won over 20 festival awards. In 2008, the French Government conferred her with the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters (Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres). Nandita Das did her BA at Delhi University and earned a Masters from the Delhi School of Social Work. She has worked with various NGOs as an advocate for issues of social justice, especially those of women, children and the marginalised communities, through various platforms.

Monday, February 2

A talk by Tariq Thanchil (Yale)

"Elite Parties, Poor Voters: How Social Services Win Votes in India"

Tariq Thachil is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at Yale University, and a Research Fellow at the MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies. His research focuses on political parties and political behavior, social movements, and ethnic politics. His forthcoming book examines how elite parties can use social services to win mass support, through a study of Hindu nationalism in India. He earned a PhD at Cornell University, and his doctoral dissertation was awarded the 2010 Gabriel A. Almond Award for best dissertation in comparative politics by the American Political Science Association, and the 2010 Sardar Patel Prize for best dissertation on modern India in the humanities and social sciences.

Monday, February 16

A talk by Davesh Soneji

"Tukaram in the Tamil Country: Marathi Kirtan, Multilingualism, and the Making of South Indian Musical Tradition"

Davesh Soneji is Associate Professor of South Asian Religions in the Faculty of Religious Studies at McGill University, where he earned his PhD. He is Associate Director of the Centre for Research on Religion, and a member of the Women's Studies Advisory Committee at McGill's Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies. Soneji is author of *Unfinished Gestures: Devadāsīs, Memory, and Modernity in South India* (2012), a social history of women in devadasi communities over the past two hundred years, which was awarded the 2013 Bernard S. Cohn Book Prize from The Association for Asian Studies.

Thursday, February 19

A discussion with Prabhat Patnaik and C.P. Chandrasekhar

"Narendra Modi, 'Development', and the Indian Economy Today"

Prabhat Patnaik held the Sukhamoy Chakravarty Chair of Planning and Development at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning (CESP) in the School of Social Sciences at Jawaharlal Nehru University at the time of his retirement in 2010. **C.P. Chandrasekhar** is a Professor at Centre for Economic Studies and Planning (CESP), School of Social Sciences, at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Monday, February 23

A talk by Gyan Prakash (Princeton)

"Between Politics and Law: Emergency in India, 1975-77"

Gyan Prakash is Dayton-Stockton Professor in the History Department at Princeton University. Educated in India and the United States, Prakash specializes in the history of modern India. His general field of research and teaching interests concerns urban modernity, the colonial genealogies of modernity, and problems of postcolonial thought and politics. His recent publications, *Mumbai Fables*, and an edited volume, *Noir Urbanisms: Dystopic Images of the Modern City*, and a co-edited volume, *Utopia/Dystopia: Historical Conditions of Possibility*, were published in 2010.

Monday, March 30

A Talk by Siddharth Varadarajan

"Modi as Prime Minister: A Preliminary Balance Sheet"

Siddharth Varadarajan is a journalist and senior fellow at the Centre for Public Affairs and Critical Theory, New Delhi. He was until October 2013 the Editor of *The Hindu*. An economist by training, he studied at the London School of Economics and Columbia University and taught at New York University before returning to India to work as a journalist. He has been a visiting lecturer at the journalism school at the University of California, Berkeley and a Poynter Fellow at Yale University

Monday, April 6

A talk by Joyce Flueckiger (Emory)

"Performativity and Agency of the Material Guise (Vesam) in a South Indian Goddess Tradition"

Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger is a Professor in the Department of Religion at Emory University. She earned her Ph.D. in South Asian Language and Literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has carried out extensive fieldwork in central and south India, working with both Hindu and Muslim traditions. Her research projects focus on indigenous categories and in everyday, vernacular religion, to bring unwritten traditions into the mainstream of the study and teaching of religion, with an emphasis on gendered performance and experience. Flueckiger's latest publication is *When the World Becomes Female: Possibilities of a South Indian Goddess* (2013). She has received a John Simon Guggenheim and Summer NEH fellowships for 2014-2015 to support her new project titled *Material Acts: The Agency of Materiality in India*.

Monday, April 13

A talk by Munis Faruqi

"Princes of the Mughal Empire, 1504-1719"

Moderated by Allison Busch

Co-sponsored by the Departments of MESAAS and History

Munis D. Faruqi is an historian and Associate Professor in the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He focuses on the Muslim experience in South Asia, especially during the Mughal period. His books include *Princes of the Mughal Empire, 1504-1719* (2012) and *Expanding Frontiers in South Asian and World History*, co-edited with Richard Eaton, David

Gilmartin and Sunil Kumar (2013). Another co-edited volume (with Vasudha Dalmia) is forthcoming later this year: *Religious Interactions in Mughal India*. He is currently working on a book about the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb.

Monday, April 20

A talk by Atul Kohli (Princeton)

"Corporate Imperialism: East India Company Revisited"

Atul Kohli is the David K.E. Bruce Professor of International Affairs and Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University. His principal research interests are in the areas of comparative political economy with a focus on the developing countries. He is the author of *Poverty amid Plenty in the New India* (2012) (a Foreign Affairs Best Book of 2012 on Asia and the Pacific); *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery* (winner of the Charles Levine Award (2005) of the International Political Science Association); *Democracy and Discontent: India's Growing Crisis of Governability* (1991); and *The State and Poverty in India* (1987).