



2016-17 Events

Monday, September 19

A talk by Daud Ali (Pennsylvania)

“The Death of a Friend: Companionship, Loyalty and Affiliation in Chola South India”

Introduction by Vidya Dehejia, Barbara Stoler Miller Professor of Indian and South Asian Art

Daud Ali is an historian of pre-Mughal South Asia. He taught history at SOAS, University of London, and joined the University of Pennsylvania in 2009. He is Professor and Graduate Director in the Department of South Asia Studies. His area of training and expertise is early medieval South Asia, but his research interests have expanded to include the history of mentalities and practices in pre-Sultanate South Asia. Future and ongoing projects include collaborative projects on the history of friendship in early and medieval South Asia, a translation of a Buddhist text on erotics, as well as a study of the production of the King Bhoja cycles in Western India. His most recent publications include the edited volumes *Garden and Landscape Practices in Precolonial India: Histories from the Deccan* (2011); *Knowledge Production, Pedagogy and Institutions in Colonial India*(2011); *Ethical Life in South Asia* (2010); and the monograph *Courtly Culture and Political Life in Early Medieval India* (2004).

Thursday, September 22

A talk by Peter Sutoris

Visions of Development: Films Division of India and the Imagination of Progress, 1948-75

Moderated by Anupama Rao (History)

Peter Sutoris is a scholar of development, a documentary filmmaker, and an educator. He is the director and producer of *The Undiscovered Country*, a film about education, development and environmental degradation in the Marshall Islands. He has lived and worked in South Asia, the Pacific, the Balkans and South Africa. He earned his BA at Dartmouth College, and is a PhD candidate and Gates Scholar at the University of Cambridge. His current research focuses on cross-cultural scalability of development interventions, with a focus on environmental education. His book, *Visions of Development* examines the Indian state’s postcolonial development ideology between Independence in 1947 and the Emergency of 1975-77 through an analysis of films made by the Films Division of India between 1948 and 1975.

Monday, September 26

A talk by Shankar Ramaswami (Harvard)

“Towards a Grounded, Immanent Critique: The Politics and Cosmologies of Migrant Workers in Delhi”

Shankar Ramaswami is Lecturer on South Asian Studies and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of South Asian Studies at Harvard University, where he teaches courses on anthropology, cinema, literature, and religion. He completed a B.A. in Economics at Harvard College and a Ph.D. in

Anthropology at the University of Chicago. He is currently working on a book, entitled *Souls in the Kalyug: The Politics and Cosmologies of Migrant Workers in Delhi*.

Monday, October 3

A talk by Projit Mukharji (Pennsylvania)

"Dak-Banglor Hatchhani: A Spectral History of State Vampirism, Classical Genetics and Serotribality in South Asia, 1920-66"

Projit Mukharji is the Martin Meyerson Assistant Professor in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He earned an MA and MPhil from Jawaharlal Nehru University, and a PhD from SOAS at the University of London. His publications include the co-edited volumes, *Crossing Colonial Historiographies: Histories of Colonial and Indigenous Medicines in Transnational Perspective* (2010), and *Medical Marginality in South Asia: Situating Subaltern Therapeutics* (2012), and the monographs *Nationalizing the Body: The Medical Market, Print and Daktari Medicine* (2011); and the forthcoming *Doctoring Traditions: Ayurveda, Small Technologies, and Braided Sciences*, (2016).

Wednesday, October 5

A talk by Gajendran Ayyathurai (Göttingen)

"Considering the beneficiaries it should be called ... Brahmin Congress: The Tamil Buddhist Anticaste Critique of the Indian National Movement"

Moderated by E. Valentine Daniel (Anthropology)

Gajendran Ayyathurai is a Post-doctoral Research Fellow at the Centre for Modern Indian Studies, and a member of the Critical Caste Studies Group, at the University of Göttingen, Germany. He earned his PhD in Anthropology at Columbia in 2011. He has taught at William Paterson University and Hunter College. His teaching and research interests include the Anthropology of South Asia; History of Modern South Asia; South Asian Diaspora; Historical Anthropology of Dalits and Non-Dalits; Buddhism and Dalits; Subaltern Religious Movements in South Asia; Historical Anthropology of South Asian Indentured Labor; and Comparative Historical Anthropology of Caste and Race. His current work-in progress is entitled *Casteless Humanism: The Deep History of Anticaste Consciousness, Iyothee Thass, and Tamil Buddhism*.

Monday, October 10

***What the Fields Remember* (52 mins, Bengali and English, 2015).**

Film screening followed by a discussion with the director, Subasri Krishnan

Moderated by Debashree Mukherjee (MESAAS)

Co-sponsored by Film Program, School of the Arts

Time: 5:00pm – 6:30pm

Location: Lifetime Screening Room, 511 Dodge Hall, 2960 Broadway at 116th Street

See Campus Map at <http://www.columbia.edu/node/4599.html>

On 18th February 1983, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, more than 2,000 Bengali-speaking Muslims were killed in the town of Nellie and its surrounding villages in Assam, India. People's homes were burnt down and their fields destroyed. Most of those who died were old people, women and children. To date, the Nellie massacre remains on the margins of India's public history, and is virtually wiped out from the nation's collective memory.

The documentary film *What the Fields Remember* revisits the massacre three decades later. From the survivors' retelling of the event, and their struggles of coping with loss and memories that refuse to fade

away, the film attempts to explore ideas of violence, memory and justice, to understand how physical spaces continue to mark people's relationship to history and memory, and to raise larger questions around collective memory – of what we choose to remember and why we choose to forget.

Subasri Krishnan is a filmmaker and heads the Media Lab at the Indian Institute for Human Settlement (IIHS), where she teaches and curates the Urban Lens film festival. She is the Director of the International Association of Women in Radio and Television Asian Film Festival, to be held in New Delhi in March 2017. Her films include *Brave New Medium*, on internet censorship in Southeast Asia, and *This or That Particular Person*, which looks at the idea of official identity documents and the Unique Identity number. The latter film was awarded Best Short Documentary Film at the International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Kerala (IDSFFK), 2013.

Monday, October 24

Mary Keating Das Lecture

Sumit Guha (Texas at Austin)

"Did the Subaltern Speak? Some narratives from Western India"

Sumit Guha earned a BA from St. Stephen's College and an MA in History from Jawaharlal Nehru University, and a PhD in History from the University of Cambridge. He has taught St. Stephen's College and the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta. In 2000, he was appointed S.P. Das Distinguished Professor at Brown University, and in 2004, joined Rutgers University of New Jersey. Since 2013 he has been Frances Higginbotham Nalle Centennial Professor in History at the University of Texas at Austin.

His publications include *The Agrarian Economy of the Bombay Deccan 1818-1941* (1985); *Environment and Ethnicity in India, c. 1200-1991* (1999); *Health and Population in South Asia from earliest times to the present* (2001), and *Beyond Caste: Identity and Power in South Asia, Past and Present* (2013).

Tuesday, October 25

A talk by Ahuja Fellow Tapati Guha-Thakurta

"The Object Flows of Empire - I

Cross-Cultural Collecting in Early Colonial Calcutta"

Time: 6:15pm - 7:45pm

Location: Sulzberger Parlor, Barnard Hall, enter at Barnard College gate, 118th Street at Broadway

Introduction by University Professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (English and Comparative Literature)

[ABSTRACT OF TALK](#)

[VIEW LECTURE ON YOUTUBE](#)

Tapati Guha-Thakurta is the Fall 2016 Ahuja Family Distinguished Visitor. She is the Director and Professor of History, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, where she has taught since 1989. She earned a D.Phil. in the History Faculty at the University of Oxford, and has taught at Presidency College and the University of Calcutta. Prof. Guha-Thakurta has been a Fellow at the Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and Humanities, Los Angeles, and at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. She has been a Visiting Professor at Smith College, the Yale Centre for British Art in New Haven, the University of California at Berkeley, and Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Professor Guha-Thakurta's most recent book is *In the Name of the Goddess: The Durga Pujas of Contemporary Kolkata* (2015). Her publications include the monographs *The Making of a New 'Indian' Art: Artists, Aesthetics and Nationalism in Bengal, c.1850-1920* (1992); *Monuments, Objects, Histories:*

Institutions of Art in Colonial and Post-colonial India (2004), and the exhibition monographs, *In her own Right; Remembering the artist Karuna Shaha* (2000); *Visual Worlds of Modern Bengal*, (2002); *The Aesthetics of the Popular Print*, Birla Academy (2006), and *The City in the Archive: Calcutta's Visual Histories* (2011). She co-edited (with Janaki Nair and Anjan Ghosh) *Theorising the Present; Essays for Partha Chatterjee* (2011); and with Partha Chatterjee and Bodhisattva Kar, *New Cultural Histories of India: Materiality and Practices* (2012).

Wednesday, October 26

Christophe Jaffrelot (CERI-Sciences Po/CNRS)

"Quota for Patels? The neo-middle class syndrome and the (partial) return of caste politics in Gujarat"

Co-sponsored by the [Alliance Program at Columbia University](#)

Dr. Christophe Jaffrelot is Senior research fellow at CERI-Sciences Po/CNRS, and Professor of Indian Politics and Sociology at the King's India Institute (London). Among his publications are *The Hindu nationalist movement and Indian politics, 1925 to 1990s* (1999), *India's Silent Revolution*(2003) and *The Pakistan Paradox. Instability and Resilience* (2015).

Monday, October 31

A talk by Ahuja Fellow Tapati Guha-Thakurta

"The Object Flows of Empire - II

The Changing Landscape of Calcutta's Colonial and Postcolonial Statuary"

Time: 6:15pm - 7:45pm

Location: East Gallery, Maison Française, Beull Hall (Upper Campus, West of Low Library. Enter at 116th and Broadway)

Introduction by Vidya Dehejia, Barbara Stoler Miller Professor of Indian and South Asian Art

[ABSTRACT OF TALK](#)

[VIEW LECTURE ON YOUTUBE](#)

Tapati Guha-Thakurta is the Fall 2016 Ahuja Family Distinguished Visitor. She is the Director and Professor of History, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, where she has taught since 1989. She earned a D.Phil. in the History Faculty at the University of Oxford, and has taught at Presidency College and the University of Calcutta. Professor Guha-Thakurta has been a Fellow at the Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and Humanities, Los Angeles, and at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. She has been a Visiting Professor at Smith College, the Yale Centre for British Art in New Haven, the University of California at Berkeley, and Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Professor Guha-Thakurta's most recent book is *In the Name of the Goddess: The Durga Pujas of Contemporary Kolkata* (2015). Her publications include the monographs *The Making of a New 'Indian' Art: Artists, Aesthetics and Nationalism in Bengal, c.1850-1920* (1992); *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Post-colonial India* (2004), and the exhibition monographs, *In her own Right; Remembering the artist Karuna Shaha* (2000); *Visual Worlds of Modern Bengal*, (2002); *The Aesthetics of the Popular Print*, Birla Academy (2006), and *The City in the Archive: Calcutta's Visual Histories* (2011). She co-edited (with Janaki Nair and Anjan Ghosh) *Theorising the Present:Essays for Partha Chatterjee* (2011); and with Partha Chatterjee and Bodhisattva Kar, *New Cultural Histories of India: Materiality and Practices* (2012).

Monday, November 14

A talk by Ali Riaz (Illinois State)

"Bangladesh: Beyond the Binaries"

Ali Riaz is University Professor and the Chair of the Department of Politics and Government at Illinois State University, at Normal, Illinois. His primary areas of interest are political Islam, madrassahs, South Asian politics, and Bangladeshi politics. He has taught at Dhaka University and was a Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington D.C. From 1995-2000, he was Senior Broadcast Journalist for the BBC World Service, Bengali Section, in London. Among his many publications are *Islam and Identity Politics among British-Bangladeshis: A Leap of Faith* (2013); *Inconvenient Truths about Bangladeshi Politics* (2012); a volume of essays co-edited with Christine Fair, *Political Islam and Governance in Bangladesh* (2011), another edited volume, *Religion and Politics in South Asia* (2010); *Faithful Education: Madrassahs in South Asia* (2008); and *Islamist Militancy in Bangladesh: A Complex Web* (2008). His talk will be based on his most recent publication, *Bangladesh: A Political History since Independence* (2016).

Monday, November 28

A talk by Karuna Mantena (Yale)

"Satyagraha and Collective Power: Gandhi and the Dilemmas of Mass Action"

Karuna Mantena is Associate Professor of Political Science and Chair of the South Asian Studies Council at Yale University. Since 2011, she has served as co-director of the International Conference for the Study of Political Thought. She earned a BSc(Econ) in International Relations from the London School of Economics, an MA in Ideology and Discourse Analysis from the University of Essex, and a PhD in Government from Harvard University. Her research interests include modern political thought, modern social theory, the theory and history of empire, and South Asian politics and history. Her first book, *Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism* (2010), analyzed the transformation of nineteenth-century British imperial ideology. Her current work focuses on political realism and the political thought of M.K. Gandhi.

Monday, December 5

"A Celebration of Mahasweta Devi (1926-2016)"

An evening to honor the life and work of Bengali writer and social activist, Mahasweta Devi, organized by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, University Professor in the Humanities, and Gauri Viswanathan, Class of 1933 Professor in the Humanities.

Co-sponsors

Department of English and Comparative Literature
Global Cultural Studies
Heyman Center for the Humanities
Institute for Comparative Literature and Society
Institute for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality
South Asia Institute

Panel One, 4:00pm to 6:00pm

Opening remarks by University Professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (English and Comparative Literature)

Moinak Biswas, Director of Film Studies, Jadavpur University

Naveen Kishore, Seagull Books

Richard Peña, School of the Arts, Columbia University and Director Emeritus, New York Film Festival

Panel Two, 7:00pm to 9:00pm

Moderated by Gauri Viswanathan (English and Comparative Literature)

Sadia Abbas (Rutgers)

Meena Alexander (CUNY)

Ben Baer (Princeton)

Etienne Balibar (French and Romance Philology)

Partha Chatterjee (Anthropology and MESAAS; Acting Director, South Asia Institute)

Ybette Christiansë (English and Africana Studies, Barnard)

Sudipta Kaviraj (MESAAS)

Lydia Liu (East Asian Languages and Cultures, and Director, Institute for Comparative Literature and Society)

Rachel McDermot (Religion and AMEC, Barnard)

Sonali Perera (CUNY)

Time and Schedule:

4:00pm - 6:00pm: Panel One

6:00pm - 7:00pm: Intermission, light refreshments

7:00pm - 9:00pm: Panel Two

Location: Room 1501, International Affairs Building, 420 West 118th Street, 15th floor.

Morningside Campus: [Map and Directions](#)

Monday, February 13

A talk by Naveeda Khan (Johns Hopkins)

"Madness as Auguring Extinction"

Abstract: A sepulchral note has finally entered the insistently optimistic global discourse on climate change produced by the Conference of Parties (COP). With the introduction of the language of "loss and damage," several parties to the UN framework convention on climate change (UNFCCC) have acknowledged that climate change may not be mitigated or adapted to, that there is lasting damage to human settlements and ecosystems, even to species being. In this paper I explore how the language of loss and damage allows us to speak of the damage wrought by the social as much as by the environmental, embodied in female figures of the traumatized, the mad or the psychically afflicted. These figures, explored more specifically on silt islands in Bangladesh, provide a further vantage to a consideration of extinction as not only the sudden vanishing of species, as it is represented in extinction studies, but also as modes of self-extinguishing. They remind us that life is not only about self-preservation but also about destruction.

Naveeda Khan is Associate Professor, Anthropology Department, at the Johns Hopkins University. She earned a PhD from Columbia University in 2003. Prof. Khan is the author of *Muslim Becoming: Aspiration and Skepticism in Pakistan* (2012), which was awarded the 2012 American Institute of Pakistan Studies Book Prize, as well as *Beyond Crisis: Re-evaluating Pakistan* (2010). She is presently working on a new manuscript tentatively titled "Towards a Romantic Anthropology: River Life and Climate Change" based on her research on the Jamuna River in Bangladesh.

Monday, February 20

A talk by Layli Uddin

"Maulana Bhashani: The Making of the Modern King"

Introduction by David Ludden, Professor and Chair, Department of History, New York University

Layli Uddin is a researcher at the Department of History, Royal Holloway, University of London, and is Project Curator for "Two Centuries of Indian Print," at the British Library. She earned an MPhil from the University of Oxford in 2011 and a PhD from the University of London in 2015.

Monday February 27

Parimal G. Patil (Harvard)

"Why Buddhists Argue"

Introduction by Sheldon Pollock, Arvind Raghunathan Professor of South Asian Studies, MESAAS

Parimal G. Patil is Professor of Religion and Indian Philosophy, and Chair of the Department of South Asian Studies at Harvard University. He earned his PhD at the University of Chicago. Professor Patil is a philosopher and intellectual historian of religion who is interested in South Asian intellectual practices and their relevance to broader issues in the Study of Religion, Philosophy, and Area Studies. He is particularly interested in Indian Buddhism, its intellectual history in Southern Asia, and Buddhist, Hindu, and Jaina debates in aesthetics, epistemology, metaphysics, and philosophy of language. His current work includes a book length project on one such debate during the "final phase" of Buddhism in India, and articles on Buddhist narrative literature, epistemology, and philosophy of language. More recently, he has become interested in classical South Asian literature and literary theory, and its relevance to historiography and religious ethics. His publications include *Against a Hindu God: Buddhist Philosophy of Religion in India* (2009); and with Lawrence J. McCrea, *Buddhist Buddhist Philosophy of Language in India: Jñanasrimitra on Exclusion*.

Monday March 6

Andrew Sartori (NYU)

"Property and Political Norms: Hanafi Fiqh in Colonial Bengal"

Andrew Sartori is an intellectual historian of modern South Asia, and Professor in the Department of History, NYU. He earned his PhD from the University of Chicago in 2003. His work focuses on the relationship between histories of concept-formation and the history of capitalist society. He has written on the history of the culture-concept, property, political economy, and liberalism. His publications include the edited volumes, *From the Colonial to the Postcolonial: India and Pakistan in Transition*, co-with Dipesh Chakrabarty and Rochona Majumdar (2007); *Global Intellectual History*, with Samuel Moyn (2013); and *A Companion To Global Historical Thought*, with Prasenjit Duara, and Viren Murthy (2014); and the monographs *Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital* (2008), and *Liberalism In Empire*, (2014).

Friday March 24

Book Talk and Panel Discussion

"Beyond the Secular West"

Akeel Bilgrami, Sidney Morgenbesser Professor of Philosophy
Prasenjit Duara, Oscar L. Tang Family Professor of East Asian Studies, Duke University
Sudipta Kaviraj, Professor of Indian Politics and Intellectual History, MESAAS

Co-sponsored by the Committee on Global Thought and the South Asia Institute

Time: 3:00pm - 4:30pm

Location: International Affairs Building, Room 918, 420 West 118th Street, at Amsterdam Avenue

Thursday, March 30

“Defending British India Against Napoleon: The Foreign Policy of Governor-General Lord Minto (1807-13)”

Featuring Editor Dr. Aditya Das, Ritu Birla (University of Toronto) and University Professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Department of English and Comparative Literature)

Co-sponsored by Global Cultural Studies, the Department of History, and the South Asia Institute

The book launched at this event outlines the diplomatic and external policies of Gilbert Elliot, the first Earl of Minto, who held the office of Governor-General of Bengal from July 1807 to October 1813. Minto’s period of office coincided with the last years of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, which had their inevitable repercussions in the colonial sphere, and influenced the shaping of Minto’s foreign policy. Napoleon’s treaty with Russia at Tilsit (July 1807), the treaty of Finkenstein (May 1807) with Persia, and the predominance of French influence in Turkey and Persia, created a short-lived alarm for the security of British interests in India. The main aims of Minto’s foreign policy were the defence of the Company’s trade and territories in India, and the expulsion of the French from the neighbouring states of Asia and from bases of operation in the Indian Ocean. The edited and updated publication is based on the doctoral thesis in Modern Indian History earned by Amita Das (née Majumdar) from Oxford University in 1962 under the supervision of Cuthbert Colin Davies. The work has recently been edited and updated by her son Aditya Das and published by Boydell and Brewer.

Time: 6:00 p.m – 7:30pm

Location: Room 411, Fayerweather Hall

Morningside Campus: [Map and Directions](#)

Monday, April 3

A talk by Jonathan Eacott (California, at Riverside)

“The Jewel Before the Crown: India and the Rise of British Imperialism in the Atlantic”

Introduction by Manan Ahmed, History Department

Jonathan Eacott is Associate Professor in the Department of History, at the University of California, Riverside. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan as well as M.A. in British History from Queen's University, Kingston and a joint B.A. in History and International Development Studies from McGill University, Montreal. Eacott's research focuses on the British and their empire from the eighteenth century to the present. His first book, *Selling Empire: India Goods in the Making of Britain and America, 1700-1830* (2016) explores the far-reaching economic, industrial, social, and political importance of decisions made by Britons, colonists, and Americans to assimilate the production and consumption of such India goods as cotton cloth and umbrellas into their local economies and societies, while they associated other India goods, such as hookah pipes and palanquins, with the East.

April 5 and 12, 2017

Two talks by Janaki Nair (Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Spring 2017 Ahuja Family Distinguished Fellow

Wednesday, April 5

“The Publicness of the Mysore Matha in the Time of Modernity”

Time: 6:15pm – 7:45pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208

606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Introduction by Sheldon Pollock, Arvind Raghunathan Professor of South Asian Studies, MESAAS

Wednesday, April 12

"Un/Common Schooling: Alternative Education in the Time of Democracy"

Time: 6:15pm – 7:45pm

Location: Presidential Room, Faculty House, Morningside Campus

Faculty House is located on Columbia University's East Campus on Morningside Drive, north of 116th Street

Video Recording:

[Part One, Lecture](#)

[Part Two, Discussion](#)

Introduction by University Professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Department of English and Comparative Literature, Institute for Comparative Literature and Society

Janaki Nair is Professor of History at the Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, where she has taught since 2009. She was formerly Professor at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, from 2002-2009. Professor Nair has been a Visiting Professor at the University of Wuerzburg, the German Historical Institute (London), and the University of California, Berkeley. She has been a Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Social and Economic Change (Bangalore), the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society (Bangalore), the National Centre for Biological Sciences (Bangalore), and the Madras Institute of Development Studies (Chennai).

Her publications include the monographs *Mysore Modern: Reconceptualising the Region under Princely Rule* (2011); *The Promise of the Metropolis: Bangalore's Twentieth Century*, awarded the 2005 New India Foundation Book Prize; *Miners and Millhands: Work, Culture and Politics in Princely Mysore* (1998); and *Women and Law in Colonial India: A Social History* (1996). She co-edited *Theorising the Present: Essays For Partha Chatterjee*, with Anjan Ghosh and Tapati Guha Thakurta, (2011); and *A Question of Silence? The Sexual Economies of Modern India*, with Mary John (1998).

Saturday April 8

Hindi Urdu Workshop

The Heartbeat of Poetry: Meter

Organized by Frances Prichett and Allison Busch (MESAAS)

Workshop Website: [The Heartbeat of Poetry: Meter](#)

The workshop is co-sponsored by the [South Asia Institute](#) and the [Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies](#), Columbia University. It is free and open to the public, but advance registration is required. Register at the workshop website.

Time: 10:30am - 3:30pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208

606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Monday April 10

A talk by Ranjani Mazumdar

"Technological Encounters in Contemporary Bombay Cinema"

Moderated by Debashree Mukherjee (MESAAS)

Co-sponsored by the Film and Media Studies Program, School of the Arts

Abstract: This paper looks at the role of media and communication technologies in the imagination of urban spaces in contemporary Bombay cinema. If surveillance practices and their resultant structuring becomes one part of this imagination (*No Smoking* 2007, *LSD* 2010, *Ugly*, 2013), we also see the role of the internet and social media in the framing of spatial encounters in small town India (*Masaan* 2015). A fascination for ‘obsolete’ technology frames another order of space linked to the recent past (*Gangs of Wasseypur* 2012, *Miss Lovely* 2012, *Dum Lagake Haisha*, 2015), while documentary films like *John and Jayne* (2005) invoke the call centre imagination within a fractured urban subjectivity. In these films, the themes of violence, love, tragedy and comedy are enacted within a spatial terrain triggered by new media technologies. Taken together these films offer a new geography of the experiential changes unraveling in contemporary India.

Ranjani Mazumdar is Professor of Cinema Studies at the School of Arts & Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her publications focus on urban cultures, popular cinema, gender, and the cinematic city. She is the author of *Bombay Cinema: An Archive of the City* (2007) and co-author with Nitin Govil of the forthcoming *The Indian Film Industry*. She has also worked as a documentary filmmaker and her productions include *Delhi Diary 2001* and *The Power of the Image* (Co-Directed). Her current research focuses on globalization and film culture, the visual culture of film posters and the intersection of technology, travel and design in 1960s Bombay Cinema.

Friday, April 21

Film Screening with Director Suman Mukhopadhyay

***Asamapta* [Incomplete]**

(2017, In Bengali, with English subtitles; 1 hour and 58 minutes)

Time: 6:15pm - 8:30pm

Location: Diana Center, Room 504

Barnard College campus, entrance at 118th and Broadway

[Map and Directions](#)

Asamapta is theatre and film director Suman Mukhopadhyay’s sixth feature film, and is based on a novel by Shirshendu Mukherjee. Suman Mukhopadhyay’s cinematic directorial debut, *Herbert* (2005), won the National Award for Best Bengali film. His second film *Chaturanga* (2008), based on Tagore’s novel, was screened at 36 national and international festivals. The film was honored with a Gran Prix award at Sarajevo; Best Director award at the Philadelphia Independent Film Festival and the Golden Palm at Mexico International Film Festival. His other films include *Shesher Kabita* (The Last Poem, 2015); "Kangal Malsat"(The War Cry of the Beggars, 2013); and *Mahanagar@Kolkata* (2009). Mukhopadhyay’s theatre productions have ranged from adaptations of Bengali works to European drama, and have been presented in Bangladesh, India, the US, and Europe.

Monday, April 24

A talk by Ajantha Subramanian (Harvard)

“Meritocracy and Democracy: The Social Life of Caste in India”

Ajantha Subramanian is Professor of Anthropology and South Asian Studies at Harvard University. Her research interests include political economy, political ecology, colonialism and postcoloniality, space, citizenship, South Asia, and the South Asian diaspora. Her first book *Shorelines: Space and Rights in South India* (2009), chronicles the struggles for resource rights by Catholic fishers on India’s southwestern coast, with a focus on how they have used spatial imaginaries and practices to constitute

themselves as political subjects. She is currently working on a book project titled *Gifted: Merit and Caste in Indian Technical Education*, which tracks the relationship between meritocracy and democracy in India in order to understand the production of merit as a form of caste property and its implications for democratic transformation.

Thursday, April 27

A Talk by Saurabh Dube

"Time/space, the subaltern, and the decolonial"

Introduction by Anupama Rao, Department of History and Barnard College

Saurabh Dube is Professor of History in the Center for Asian and African Studies, El Colegio de México. He earned his PhD in History at the University of Cambridge. He has been a Visiting Professor at Cornell, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Delhi, and was a Guggenheim Fellow in 2007-08. His most recent publications include *Subjects of Modernity: Time/Space, Disciplines, Margins* (2017); *Formaciones de lo contemporáneo* [Formations of the Contemporary] (forthcoming, 2017); and the co-edited volumes, with Anupama Rao, *Crime Through Time* (Themes in Indian History, 2014), and with Ishita Banerjee-Dube, *Culturas políticas y políticas culturales: Escenarios de Asia, Africa, Medio Oriente, Mexico* (forthcoming 2017).

Time: 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 207, 606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Monday, May 1

A Panel Discussion at the New School University

"Imperialism: Is it a relevant concept today?"

Organized by the South Asia Institute and the New School University

Panelists:

Duncan Foley (New School)

Nancy Fraser (New School)

David Harvey (CUNY Graduate Center)

Prabhat Patnaik (Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Chair: Sanjay Reddy (New School)

Time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Location: University Center, Room UL105

New School University, 63 Fifth Avenue at 14th Street

Directions: <http://www.newschool.edu/about/visit/directions/>

Wednesday, May 10

A talk by art historian Geeta Kapur

"We the People: situational politics in contemporary art"



Moderated by Alexander Alberro
 Virginia Bloedel Wright Professor of Art History and Chair, Department of Art History at Barnard
 College

Co-sponsored by the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia
 and the Barnard College Department of Art History

Geeta Kapur is a critic and curator. Her essays are extensively anthologized; her books include *Contemporary Indian Artists* (1978); *When Was Modernism* (2000); *Critic's Compass: Navigating Practice* (forthcoming). A founder-editor of *Journal of Arts & Ideas*; (former) member advisory council, *Third Text*; member advisory board, *ArtMargins*; trustee and advisory editor, *Marg*. Curatorial projects include: 'Dispossession', Johannesburg Biennale (1995); 'Bombay/Mumbai', Century City, Tate Modern (co-curation, 2001); 'subTerrain', House of World Cultures, Berlin (2003); 'Aesthetic Bind', Chemould, Mumbai (2013-14). Jury member: Biennales of Venice (2005), Dakar (2006), Sharjah (2007). Member advisory board, Tate Research Centre: Asia, London; Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong; (former member) Asian Art Council, Guggenheim Museum, New York. Visiting Fellowships include: Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla; Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Delhi; Clare Hall, University of Cambridge; Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi.

Time: 5:00pm - 6:30pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208

606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Clarmont

Wednesday, May 10

A conversation with artist Vivan Sundaram

and Andreas Huyssen, Villard Professor of German and Comparative Literature



Co-sponsored by the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia and the Barnard College Department of Art History

Vivan Sundaram will briefly present three installations engaging with history over the last 25 years. *Memorial*, 1993-2014 uses the photographic image in multiple formats of a dead man killed during the communal strife in Bombay, post the demolition of the Babri Mosque. *History Project*, 1998, a site-specific installation in the Durbar Hall of the Victoria Memorial, Calcutta deals with making of the modern in Bengal from the 19th century till 1947. *Meanings of Failed Action: Insurrection 1946*, 2017 with Ashish Rajadhyaksha. This refers to the Royal Indian Navy uprising presented as a 40 minute sound work in collaboration with David Chapman exhibited in a mobile sculptural object that stands in as a mini theatre.

Vivan Sundaram, born 1943, studied painting in Baroda and London. Since 1990 he has made sculpture, installation, photography and video. He has exhibited in the Biennales of Sydney, Seville, Taipei, Sharjah, Shanghai, Havana, Johannesburg, Kwangju and Berlin, and the Asia-Pacific Triennial, Brisbane. He has participated in group shows at Arken Museum, Copenhagen (2012); International Centre for Photography, New York (2008); Mori Museum, Tokyo (2008); Haus der Kunst, Munich (2006); Tate Modern, London (2001); and Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2001). He has had solo shows at Fowler Museum, Los Angeles (2015), Sepia International, New York (2008, 2006), Walsh Gallery, Chicago (2008, 2005), and Photographers Gallery, Copenhagen (2003).

Time: 7:00pm - 8:30pm
Location: Knox Hall, Room 208
606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Friday, May 12

Shujaat Husain Khan (sitar) and Samir Chatterjee (tabla)
in Concert at the Miller Theatre at Columbia University

Presented by the South Asia Institute and the World Music Institute <www.worldmusicinstitute.org>.

Shujaat Husain Khan is one of the leading North Indian classical musicians of his generation. He belongs to the *Imdadkhani Gharana* (tradition) of the sitar and his style of playing sitar, known as the *gayaki ang*, is imitative of the subtleties of the human voice. Khan has performed at music festivals in India and throughout Asia, Africa, North America, and Europe. He has headlined at concert halls such as the Royal Albert Hall in London, Royce Hall in Los Angeles, and Congress Hall in Berlin. In 2007, he was the featured artist at musical concerts celebrating India's 50th anniversary of independence at Carnegie Hall in New York, and at celebrations in Seattle and Dallas. Khan was the sole artist representing India in a special performance at the United Nations General Assembly Hall in Geneva commemorating India's independence the same year. Shujaat Khan has been affiliated as a visiting faculty at the Dartington School of Music in England, the University of Washington in Seattle, and the University of California, Los Angeles.

Samir Chatterjee is a virtuoso Tabla player from the *Farrukhabad Gharana* (school). He has traveled widely across the world to perform at festivals as a soloist or with other outstanding musicians from Indian and western musical traditions. In concert Samir has accompanied many of India's most celebrated musicians and has played with jazz, classical, and experimental musicians and ensembles around the world. Chatterjee performed at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo, Norway in 2007 and has performed several times at the United Nations General Assembly. Chatterjee has been teaching for 35 years and is the Founder-Director of Chhandayan, an organization dedicated to promoting and preserving Indian music and culture. He has taught at Yale University, Manhattan School of Music, the New School, and the Universities of Pittsburgh and Bridgeport.

Time: 7:30pm - 10:30pm

Location: Miller Theatre, 2960 Broadway (at 116th Street)
For a campus map including the Miller Theatre, please visit
<<http://www.columbia.edu/content/maps.html>>.