



## 2017-18 Events

### Monday, September 18

**A talk by Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, Victoria University of Wellington**  
**“Situating Dalit in the History of Partition in Eastern India, 1946-64”**

Moderated by Anupama Rao (History)

[Talk Abstract](#)

**Sekhar Bandyopadhyay** is Professor of Asian History and Director, New Zealand India Research Institute at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Educated at Presidency College and University of Calcutta, his primary research interest is in the history of nationalism and caste in colonial and postcolonial India. His many publications include the monograph *Decolonization in South Asia: Meanings of Freedom in Post-independence West Bengal, 1947-52* (2009), and the co-edited volume, with Aloka Parasher-Sen, *Religion and Modernity in India* (2016).

### Wednesday, September 20

**Readings and Discussion with author Nabaneeta Dev Sen**

Moderated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, University Professor, Department of English and Comparative Literature

**Nabaneeta Dev Sen** is an award winning poet and novelist with over eighty books published in Bengali, including poetry, novels, short stories, plays, literary criticism, personal essays, travelogues, humor writing, translations, and children’s literature. She has been a writer in residence at Yaddo and the MacDowell Colony, and at Bellaggio, Italy. In the academy, she has taught at Jadavpur University and Colorado College, and has been a Visiting Professor and Visiting Fellow at Berkeley, Harvard, Oxford, and many Indian, North American and European schools. She earned her BA and MA from Presidency College and Jadavpur University, and MA and PhD in Comparative Literature from Harvard and Indiana Universities (respectively).

Time: 6:15pm-7:45pm

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

### Thursday, September 28

**“Equality and Difference: Theory from the South”**

Featuring

**Prathama Banerjee, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi**

**Aditya Nigam, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi**

Organized and Moderated by Anupama Rao (History)

Co-sponsored by the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society

[Prathama Banerjee](#) is Associate Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, in Delhi. She is an historian, trained at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Her current work focuses on histories of the 'political' in colonial and post-colonial India. Her work seeks to tell the story of how the political emerged as a distinct domain and/or mode of thought, action, and subjectivity in modern times. She is the author of *Politics of Time: 'Primitives' and History-writing in a Colonial Society* (2006).

[Aditya Nigam](#) is Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, in Delhi. His recent work has been concerned with the decolonization of social and political theory and the need to step outside theoretical frames provided by standard theory, derived primarily from Western experience, in order to theorize the contemporary experience of politics, populism and democracy in the non-West. He is the author of *The Insurrection of Little Selves: The Crisis of Secular Nationalism in India* (2006), *Power and Contestation: India Since 1989*, with Nivedita Menon (2007), *After Utopia: Modernity and Socialism and the Postcolony* (2010), and *Desire Named Development* (2011).

Time: 6:00pm – 8:30pm

Location: Second floor Common Room, Heyman Center for the Humanities, East Campus

[Directions to the Heyman Center for the Humanities](#)

### **Wednesday, October 4**

#### **A lecture-demonstration with Mallika Sarabhai and the Darpana Dance Company**

**Mallika Sarabhai** has been one of India's leading choreographers and dancers for over three decades. As a soloist and with her own dance company, Darpana, she has been creating and performing both classical and contemporary works. She came to international notice when she played the role of Draupadi in Peter Brook's *The Mahabharata* for 5 years, performing in France, North America, Australia, Japan and Scotland. In the mid-1990s Dr. Sarabhai began to develop her own contemporary dance vocabulary and went on to create short and full-length works which have been presented in India and in over 50 other countries. She has a PhD in Organisational Behaviour and has been honorary Director of Darpana Academy of Performing Arts for 40 years.

*Seating is limited and first-come, first seated.*

Co-sponsored by the Dance Department at Barnard College, and the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life.

Time: 7:00pm - 8:30pm

Location: Glicker-Milstein Theatre, Diana Center, Barnard College

Entrance at 117th Street and Broadway

See campus maps and directions at <http://www.columbia.edu/node/4599.html> and <https://barnard.edu/about-barnard/visit-barnard/barnard-campus-map>

### **Monday, October 16**

#### **A Symposium on the Photography of Raghbir Singh: Engagements with "[Modernism on the Ganges,](#)" an Exhibition at the Met Breuer**

Featuring:

**Max Kozloff**, former art critic for *The Nation* and executive editor of *Artforum*, and photographer and writer

**Glenn Lowry**, Director, Museum of Modern Art, New York, and writer and art historian

**Ram Rahman, independent curator and photographer and founder member of SAHMAT collective**



Raghubir Singh, Crawford Market, Bombay, 1993. Copyright Succession Raghubir Singh.

Moderated by Gauri Viswanathan, Class of 1933 Professor in the Humanities, Department of English and Comparative Literature; Director, South Asia Institute

Co-sponsored by the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures at Barnard College, and the Heyman Center for the Humanities

[Link to Symposium poster](#)

[Link to Video Recording of Panel Discussion, Part One](#)

[Link to Video Recording of Panel Discussion, Part Two](#)

From the New York Times, October 9, 2017: [Seeing India Through a Contemporary Lens](#)

New York Times Slide Show, October 9, 2017: [Raghubir Singh: India's Color Pioneer](#)

**Max Kozloff** is a former art critic for *The Nation* and executive editor of *Artforum*, where he was also associate and contributing editor. He earned a BA and MA at the University of Chicago, and studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the NYU Institute of Fine Arts. He has taught at Yale, NYU, and Cooper Union, among other schools. He has been awarded Pulitzer, Fulbright, and Guggenheim fellowships, and in 1990, the International Center of Photography Prize for Excellence in Writing on Photography. As a photographer, he has exhibited in museums and galleries around the world, including one-man shows in New York, Bombay, London, Mexico City, Tel Aviv, and group shows in New York, Zurich, Paris, Bonn, and Havana. He is the author of fifteen books, including the seminal *New York: Capital of Photography* (2002) and *Theater of the Face: Portrait Photography Since 1900* (2007). He has also published numerous portfolios of photographs, among them *India's Streets* (1997). Kozloff often chooses photographic subjects that pay tribute to the photographers who have figured prominently in his writing: shop windows that reference Eugène Atget, for example, or street scenes informed by Henri Cartier-Bresson's narrative compositions. He asks not only "What is it they show?" but also "Why do we look?", drawing attention to larger issues of image-making and social construction, while also focusing on the particular reality of the photographs.

**Glenn Lowry** is Director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York since 1995. He received a BA from Williams College, and MA and PhD degrees in the history of art from Harvard University, and has been awarded honorary degrees from the College of William and Mary and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Dr. Lowry came to MoMA as a renowned specialist in Islamic art, and has lectured and written extensively in support of contemporary art and artists and the role of museums in society. Recent publications include *Designing the New Museum of Modern Art* (2004), *Oil and Sugar: Contemporary Art and Islamic Culture* (2009) and *The Museum of Modern Art in This Century* (2009). He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a member of the steering committee for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, and a resident member of the American Philosophical Society. In 2004 the French Government honored Dr. Lowry with the title of Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

**Ram Rahman** is a photographer, curator, activist, and co-founder of SAHMAT, a Delhi-based collective of artists and scholars dedicated to promoting cultural pluralism and secularism in India. After earning a BA in physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he went on to study graphic design at the Yale University School of Art. Working in both color and black-and-white, Rahman is known for his street photographs of India and his environmental portraits of artists and intellectuals. His photographs have been exhibited in Canada, Europe, India, and the US. His co-curated exhibition, with Jessica Moss, "The Sahmat Collective: Art and Activism in India since 1989," at the Smart Museum of Art in Chicago, was honored by the 2014 Forbes Art Award for an Exhibition of Indian art curated on an international stage. His most recent publication is *Sunil Janah: Photographs 1940-1960* (2014). Rahman is involved in [Project 365](#) which seeks to photograph and preserve glimpses of the ancient Indian culture and lifestyle, focusing on the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu. He is interested in encouraging public art projects so as to take art to the masses, especially in the rural areas. It is part of Rahman's larger ambition to use photographs as historical documents and develop a visual archiving culture in India.

Time: 6:15pm – 8:00pm

Location: Julius S. Held Lecture Hall, 3rd floor, Barnard Hall

Entrance to Barnard College at 117th Street and Broadway

[Map and directions to Morningside Campus and Barnard College](#)

### **Monday, October 23**

**A talk by New York Times Reporter Somini Sengupta**

**"Noonday's children: How ambition, hate, and fury are roiling India"**

Moderated by Gauri Viswanathan, Class of 1933 Professor in the Humanities, Department of English and Comparative Literature; Director, South Asia Institute)

**Somini Sengupta**, a George Polk Award-winning foreign correspondent, has reported from a Congo River ferry, a Himalayan glacier, the streets of Baghdad and Mumbai and many places in between. She now reports from the United Nations about various global challenges, from war to women's rights to climate change. Her first book, *The End of Karma: Hope and Fury Among India's Young*, was published in 2016. She grew up in India, Canada and the United States, graduating from the University of California at Berkeley.

### **Tuesday, October 24**

**A talk by Vasileios Syros, The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America (Columbia)**

**"State Failure and Medieval Indian Historiography: A New Interpretation of 'Afīf's Tā'rikh-i Firūz Shāhī"**

Introduction by Manan Ahmed (History)

Organized by the The Center for International History and co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute

In a novel interpretation of the work of the major historian of medieval India Shams Sirāj Afīf (fl. 1360) *Tā'rikh-i Firūz Shāhī*, this presentation will recover and discuss hitherto understudied aspects of 'Afif's History and foreground its importance as a manual on political reform as exemplified by Firuz Shāh Tughluq's reign (1351-1388). In addition, the presentation will relate Afif's narratives about the challenges that confronted the Delhi Sultanate and Muḥammad bin Tughluq's vagaries (d. 1351) to present-day debates on state failure.

Time: 4:00-5:30 pm

Location: Fayerweather Hall, Room 411

[Map and directions to Morningside Campus](#)

### **Monday, October 30**

**A talk by Daniel Jeyaraj (Liverpool Hope University)**

**“Adopting Reformation ideals and practices in South India: Impact on Indian Agents”**

Moderated by Rachel McDermott (Religion)

Organized by the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures at Barnard College

Co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute and the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life

**Daniel Jeyaraj** is Professor of World Christianity at Liverpool Hope University and Director of the Andrew F. Walls Centre for the Study of African and Asian Christianity. His teaching and research deal with the life, work, and writings of European missionaries and Tamil Christian leaders in 18th century India; and the study of the Royal Danish-Halle Mission, Pietism, and the emergence of Protestant churches in eighteenth century India. He earned his first PhD in the field of German Studies from the University of Mumbai, and a second PhD in the field of Historical Theology from Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. He is the author of *Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg: the Father of Modern Protestant Mission - An Indian Assessment* (2006)

Time: 4:00pm - 6:00pm

Location: James Room, Fourth floor, Barnard Hall, Barnard College

Enter at Barnard College Main Gate, 118th and Broadway

### **Monday, November 13**

***In Memoriam: Ainslie T. Embree (1921-2017)***

***Tributes will be paid to Ainslie Embree by former students, colleagues, and friends, including the former US ambassador to India.***

**Ainslie T. Embree** was Professor of History (1958-1991) and Professor Emeritus of History (1991-2017), Columbia University. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia University, and had taught at Indore Christian College, Duke University, and Columbia. While at Columbia he served as Director of Contemporary Civilization, of the undergraduate Asian civilization program; 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 served as President of the 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. From 1978-80, he served as the Counselor for Cultural Affairs at the

American Embassy, New Delhi, and from 1994-95, he served as consultant to American Ambassador in India, Frank Wisner.

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 India's World and U.S. Scholars: 1947-1997 (with others, 1998). Professor Embree authored, among other publications, Imagining India: Essays on Indian History (1989), Utopias in Conflict: Religion and Nationalism in India (1990), and India's Search for National Identity (1988), and chapters to many books on India and Southern Asia.

Time: Reception at 5:30pm, Event begins at 6:00pm – 8:00pm  
Location: Kellogg Center, Room 1501, International Affairs Building  
Enter at 420 West 118th Street, at Amsterdam Avenue  
Directions and map: <http://www.columbia.edu/content/directions-parking.html>

### Friday, November 17

#### A Talk by Dr. Aman Hingorani *Unravelling the Kashmir Knot*

*Unravelling the Kashmir Knot* offers insights from a geo-strategic, legal, historical and political perspective, and a framework to understand the multi-layered Kashmir problem. **Dr. Aman M. Hingorani** is a lawyer and mediator in the Supreme Court of India and the High Court of Delhi, and Senior Partner at Hingorini and Associates. He earned an LLM at the University of Warwick, and a PhD at the University of Delhi. Dr. Hingorani has acted as an arbitrator and as adjunct faculty to teach law students and run training courses for judicial officers, lawyers and law teachers. He has taught in programs at the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal; Campus Law Centre, University of Delhi; Indian Law Institute, New Delhi; Keble College, University of Oxford; Law School, Warwick University; and the South Asian Institute of Advanced Legal and Human Rights Studies, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Hingorini is the author of *Unravelling the Kashmir Knot* (2016).

Time: 5:00-6:00pm  
Location: Knox Hall, Room 208  
606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont  
Directions: See <http://www.sai.columbia.edu/location-directions>

### Monday, November 20

#### A Talk by Shahid Amin (Visiting Professor, Columbia Department of History) "A Learned Clerk in the Colonial Archive: Ram Gharib Chaube, c. 1880-1900"

Moderated by Partha Chatterjee (Anthropology and MESAAS)

**Shahid Amin** is a Visiting Professor in the Columbia Department of History during Fall 2017. He specializes in Modern South Asian History, with a special interest in the political, social and intellectual history of the unlettered women and men. He is interested in combining close readings of colonial texts, political and judicial, with historical fieldwork. He earned his PhD at Oxford, and has been a Visiting Fellow at Princeton, Stanford, and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. His publications include, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922-1992* (1995); and the edited volume, *A Concise Encyclopedia of North Indian Peasant Life* (2005). His latest work is *Conquest & Community: the Afterlife of Warrior Saint Ghazi Miyan* (2016). He is completing a study on the role of learned Indian clerks, working under colonial official-scholars, in the compilation and systematization of linguistic knowledge and dialectology during the period 1890s-1920s.

**Monday, January 29**

**A talk by Menaka Guruswamy (Columbia Law School)**

**"Crafting Accommodation and Alienation in South Asia:  
The Constituent Assemblies of India, Pakistan and Nepal"**

Moderated by Gauri Viswanathan, Class of 1933 Professor in the Humanities, Department of English and Comparative Literature; Director, South Asia Institute.

[Link to Video Recording](#)

**Dr. Menaka Guruswamy** is the B. R Ambedkar Research Scholar at Columbia Law School, 2017-18. Dr. Guruswamy was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, a Gammon Fellow at Harvard Law School, and a gold medalist from the National Law School of India. She has law degrees from all three schools, with a Doctor of Philosophy in Law (D. Phil.) from Oxford University. She has been Visiting Faculty at Yale Law School, New York University School of Law, and a fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin/Institute of Advanced Studies, Berlin.

Dr. Guruswamy practices law at the Supreme Court of India, and has worked at the Office of the Attorney General of India. She has practiced law in New York, as an associate at Davis Polk & Wardwell, and has advised the United Nations Development Fund, and United Nations Children's Fund, on various aspects of International Human Rights Law. Among other cases, she successfully represented a group of retired civil servants in a constitutional case that brought reform of public administration and the bureaucracy in the country; has successfully defended federal legislation that mandates that all private schools admit disadvantaged children; and litigated successfully against Salwa Judum—state sponsored vigilante groups in Chhattisgarh. She has challenged laws that criminalise consensual same-sex relations, and is amicus curiae appointed by the Supreme Court in a case concerning 1,528 alleged extra-judicial killings by security personnel in the state of Manipur.

**Monday, February 12**

**A talk by Daniel Sheffield (Princeton)**

**"Zoroastrianism and the Idea of Universal Religion between Safavid Iran and Mughal India"**

Moderated by Mana Kia, Assistant Professor, Indo-Persian Studies, MESAAS

[Link to Video Recording](#)

**Abstract:** The event of the Islamic millennium at the end of the sixteenth century was accompanied by widespread speculation about the end of an Arab dispensation and the beginning of a new era of Persian rule. As the rulers of Safavid Iran and Mughal India sought out ancient apocalyptic texts from the Zoroastrian subjects of their empires, new groups of freethinkers and occultists claiming to revive the ancient religious practices of the Persians arose across the eastern Islamic world. Focusing on the messianic thinker Āzar Kayvān (1533–1618 CE), who moved from Safavid Iran to Mughal India with his followers in the 1570s, this talk examines the hermeneutics of the new ideas about religious difference and universalism that emerged during this period. At the conclusion of the talk, I trace the quotation of works from this period in diverse sources ranging from the Persian writings of Rammohan Roy (1772–1833) to early Indian vernacular translations of Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* to early Iranian nationalist publications of the late nineteenth century to explore the overlapping histories of early modern Islamic and European discourse on religious diversity.

**Daniel Sheffield** is Assistant Professor, Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University. He earned his AB, AM, and PhD from Harvard University. He specializes in the religious, intellectual, and social history of the medieval and early modern Persian-speaking world. Before joining Princeton, he was a member of the Department of History at the University of Washington. Sheffield is a specialist in

exchanges between Safavid Iran and Mughal India, and in particular, the history of Zoroastrian communities during this period. More broadly, he is interested in the transmission and transformation of ideas from Late Antiquity into Early Modernity. His current research project examines the role that ideas about language and translation play in the development of religious and historical thought. Sheffield has recently completed a book manuscript entitled *Cosmopolitan Zarathustras: Religion, Translation, and Prophethood in Iran and South Asia*, which tells the story of the Zoroastrian communities of Iran and South Asia by tracing how the embrace of a cosmopolitan theological vocabulary and the reception of the canon of Classical Persian literature affects these communities, promoting the production of new forms of meaning-making and literary production under the specter of scholastic traditions inherited from Late Antiquity. He is currently pursuing research on a second book project, tentatively entitled *On Translation and Toleration: The Free-Thinkers of Safavid Iran and Mughal India*. He co-edited, with Alireza Korangy, *There's No Tapping around Philology: A Festschrift for Wheeler McIntosh Thackston Jr.'s 70th Birthday* (2014).

**Monday, March 5**

**A talk by Andrew Nicholson (SUNY Stony Brook)**

**“Hindus Against God: Anti-theistic Arguments in Sāṃkhya and Vedānta Philosophy”**

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

[Link to Video Recording](#)

**Andrew J. Nicholson** is Associate Professor at State University of New York at Stony Brook. He earned his PhD in South Asian Languages and Civilizations at Chicago. Nicholson's primary area of research is Indian philosophy and intellectual history, most recently focusing on medieval Vedānta philosophy and its influence on ideas about Hinduism in modern Europe and India. His first book, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (2010) was part of the *South Asia Across the Disciplines* book series sponsored by the university presses at California, Chicago, and Columbia. In 2011, it won the American Academy of Religion's Award for Best First Book in the History of Religions. His second book is *Lord Śiva's Song: The Īśvara Gītā* (2014).

**Monday, March 26**

**A talk by Anastasia Piliavsky (Cambridge)**

**“Hierarchy as a value in Indian democracy”**

Moderated by Allison Busch, Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies

Co-sponsored by the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies.

[Link to Video Recording](#)

**Dr. Anastasia Piliavsky** is Newton/ Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH); Fellow and Director of Studies, Girton College; and Affiliated Anthropologist, Department of Social Anthropology, Cambridge University. Her research interests include political anthropology, South Asia, democracy, hierarchy, the morals of crime, secrecy and publicity, and political normativity. Over the past dozen years she has performed ethnographic and historical research in the Indian province of Rajasthan, writing about crime, policing, secrecy, publicity, and gangster politics. Her current focus is political life in South Asia, and the normative categories of demotic political thought and the distinctive shape that democracy has assumed in the region. She has written on the symbiosis of democracy and corruption in the region, and how it may inform democratic theory at large, in her edited volume, *Patronage as Politics in South Asia* (2014). Dr Piliavsky is Co-investigator of ‘Democracy and the criminalisation of politics in South Asia’ funded by the European Research



Council and the Economic and Social and Research Council. From 2016-2019 she will be working on 'India's democratic boom and its implications' funded by the Leverhulme Foundation.

### Monday, April 2

#### A talk by Sonali Perera (Hunter College)

##### "Truth, Reconciliation, and the Persistence of Memory:

##### Lessons Learned from Ambalavaner Sivanandan (1923-2018)"

Moderated by Gauri Viswanathan, Class of 1933 Professor in the Humanities, English and Comparative Literature; and Director, South Asia Institute

**Author Abstract:** Novelist, short story writer, and anti-racist activist Ambalavaner Sivanandan was Director Emeritus of the London-based Institute of Race Relations (IRR). He was editor of the famed *Race and Class* journal and a writer of polemical essays as well as political fiction. In my talk I reflect on the multifaceted body of work of this Sri Lankan Tamil/Black British author, giving special attention to his prescient novel set in Sri Lanka, *When Memory Dies* (1997). The phrase in my subtitle ("lessons learned") is also a reference to the name of the 2010 Sri Lankan government-appointed truth commission – "The Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission" (LLRC). Taking my bearings from Sivanandan, my talk aims to return us to the politics of memory and history explored in *When Memory Dies* during this current post-war moment in Sri Lanka when the mandates of how, when, and what to remember (and what to forget) are being debated anew.

**Sonali Perera** is Associate Professor, at Hunter College and the CUNY Graduate Center, where she teaches courses in postcolonial literature and theory, working-class literature, feminist theory, globalization studies, and world literature. At Hunter, she is a faculty associate of the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute Human Rights Program, and a member of the steering committee of the Department of Women and Gender Studies. She earned her Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University.

Prof. Perera is the author of *No Country: Working-Class Writing in the Age of Globalization* (2014, 2018) and is working on her second book, *Between Imperialism and Internationalism: World Literature and Human Rights*. Her work has appeared in *PMLA*, *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, *Postcolonial Studies*, *Signs: Journal of Women and Culture in Society*, and in interdisciplinary anthologies, including *South Asian Feminisms* (2012). From 2006-2008, she served on the executive board of directors of SAALT (South Asian Americans Leading Together), a national non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring civil rights and social justice for marginalized members of the South Asian immigrant community in America. She currently serves on the Modern Language Association's global Anglophone executive forum committee.

### Saturday, April 7

#### Annual Hindi-Urdu Workshop

##### "The Romance (?) of the Rainy Season"

Organized by Francis Pritchett (Professor Emerita, MESAAS) and Allison Busch (Associate Professor, MESAAS)

The workshop is sponsored by the South Asia Institute and the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, at Columbia University. It is free and open to the public, but advance registration is required. Registration will be possible starting one month before the workshop. For more information, [see the Workshop website.](#)

To register,

visit <http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00urduhindilinks/workshop2018/index.html>

Time: 10:00am - 3:30pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 308, 606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

### Wednesday, April 11

#### Film Screening

#### *An Insignificant Man*

(2017, Documentary, 95 mins)

**Followed by a Q&A with filmmakers Khushboo Ranka and Vinay Shukla**

Moderated by Debashree Mukherjee (Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies)  
Co-sponsored by the Department of Art and Archaeology, and the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies.

*An Insignificant Man* tells the story of the anti-corruption movement in India, and the 2012 campaign of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), focusing on Arvind Kejriwal, now Chief Minister of Delhi, and 2012-15 AAP Strategist Yogendra Yadav. Distilled from 450 hours of deep access footage, the film is a 95 minutes long procedural woven through campaign strategies, heated arguments and inside jokes, laying bare the party's tactics, vulnerabilities and shortcomings.

Time: 6:15pm - 8:15pm

Location: 612 Schermerhorn Hall, Upper Campus, Morningside Campus

Morningside Campus Map and directions: <https://visit.columbia.edu/content/maps-and-directions>.

### Thursday, April 12

#### A conversation between Kamila Shamsie and Colm Tóibín

#### “Haunting Heroines: Greek Plays and Transnational Novels”

Co-sponsored by the Heyman Center for the Humanities; the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality; the School of General Studies, and the South Asia Institute.

**Registration is required to attend the event, via the [Heyman Center website](#).**

**Kamila Naheed Shamsie** is a novelist whose works have been translated into twenty languages. In 2013, *Granta Magazine* named her in a list of “20 young British novelists to watch out for” in the next decade. She was born and brought up in Karachi, Pakistan. Kamila Shamsie’s first novel, *In the City by the Sea* (1998), was shortlisted for the Mail on Sunday/John Llewellyn Rhys Prize, and her second, *Salt and Saffron* (200), won her a place on Orange's list of '21 Writers for the 21st Century'. Her other novels include *Kartography* (2004), which won the Patras Bokhari Award from the Academy of Letters in Pakistan, and was shortlisted for the John Llewellyn Rhys award; *Broken Verses* (2005), earning a second Patras Bokhari Award; *Burnt Shadows* (2009), shortlisted for the 2009 Orange Prize for Fiction; *A God in Every Stone* (2014), shortlisted for the 2015 Walter Scott Prize and the Baileys Women's Prize For Fiction and most recently, *Home Fire* (2017), longlisted for the 2018 Booker Prize.

**Colm Tóibín** is Irene and Sidney B. Silverman Professor of the Humanities at Columbia University, and Chancellor, University of Liverpool. His essays, short stories, novels, poems, and plays have been translated into thirty languages. Tóibín studied at University College Dublin and has received honorary doctorates from the University of Ulster and from University College Dublin. He has taught at Manchester, Princeton, Stanford, and the University of Texas at Austin.

Colm Tóibín's novels include *The South* (1990), shortlisted for the Whitbread First Novel Award and winner of the Irish Times/ Aer Lingus First Fiction Award; *The Heather Blazing* (1992), winner of the Encore Award; *The Story of the Night* (1996), winner of the Ferro-Grumley Prize; *The Blackwater Lightship* (1999), shortlisted for the IMPAC Dublin Prize and the Booker Prize; *The Master* (2004), winner of the Dublin IMPAC Prize; the Prix du Meilleur Livre; the LA Times Novel of the Year; and shortlisted for the Booker Prize; *Brooklyn* (2009), winner of the Costa Novel of the Year; and *Testament of Mary* (2012), shortlisted for the Booker Prize; *Nora Webster* (2014); and *House of Names* (2017). His short story collections are *Mothers and Sons* (2006, winner of the Edge Hill Prize) and *The Empty Family* (2010, shortlisted for the Frank O'Connor Prize).

Time: 6:15pm – 8:00pm

Location: Butler Library, Rooms 522-523

Link to Butler Library directions: <http://heymancenter.org/visit/butler-library/>

**Monday, April 23**

**Mary Keatinge Das Lecture**

**Sumathi Ramaswamy (Duke)**

**"Gandhi in the Gallery: The Art of Disobedience"**

Moderated by Gauri Viswanathan, Class of 1933 Professor in the Humanities, Department of English and Comparative Literature; Director, South Asia Institute

**Abstract:** Mohandas K. Gandhi has been described as “an artist of non-violence,” crafting a set of practices of the self and politics that earned him the mantle of Mahātmā, “the great soul.” There is an enormous body of scholarship that has explored and critiqued Gandhi’s philosophy and praxis of *satyāgraha*, non-violent civil disobedience. Yet what does it mean to think of *satyāgraha* as an aesthetic regime, and its principal practitioner as the paradigmatic artist of disobedience? In this presentation, I set out to answer these questions with the help of India’s modern artists who have over the past century, but especially in recent decades, turned to the Mahātmā as their muse. In the process, they have transformed Gandhi into an aesthetic subject worthy of artistic investment across a wide range of media ranging from painting and sculpture to video installation works and digital productions. At a time when Gandhi has been reduced to a hollow symbol and set of empty platitudes in the land of his birth, why have India’s artists lavished so much attention on the Mahātmā? This is especially ironical given that in his own lifetime, Gandhi himself appeared to have had little time for the visual arts, or for artists for that matter. I reflect on this irony even as I make a conceptual argument for how the tools of visual and media history reveal the intimate connection between aesthetics, ethical action, and non-violent politics in our time.

**Sumathi Ramaswamy** is Professor of History at Duke University. She was elected President of the American Institute of Indian Studies and formally begins her term on July 1, 2018. Prof. Ramaswamy is a cultural historian of South Asia and the British Empire. Over the course of her academic career, her research has focused on linguistics and language politics, gender studies, spatial studies and the history of cartography, visual studies and the modern history of Indian art, and more recently, digital humanities. In the next few years, she expects to be busy on two new projects. With a five-year Anneliese Maier Research Award from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany, she is working on a collaborative digital humanities exhibit titled “No Parallel? The Fatherly Bodies of Gandhi and Mao.” Building on her work in the last decade as a Program Officer for the Ford Foundation in its New Delhi Office, she is engaged in a multi-site project, “Giving and Learning,” on educational philanthropy in colonial and postcolonial India.

Born and raised in India, Prof. Ramaswamy has a Bachelor's degree in History from Lady Shri Ram College in New Delhi, and a Master's and Master of Philosophy Degree in History (with a specialization in ancient Indian history) from Jawaharlal Nehru University. She has a Master's degree in Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania, and received a Ph. D. in History from the University of California at Berkeley. Prior to her current appointment at Duke, she taught at Penn and at the University of Michigan. Along the way, she has served as Director for the Center for South Asian Studies at the University of Michigan, for the North Carolina Consortium of South Asian Studies, and for the Center for South Asian Studies at Duke. Currently, she is Co-Director of the India Initiative at Duke, where she has served as Interim Chair of the Department of History.

Among her numerous publications are the monographs *Passions of the Tongue: Language Devotion in Tamil India, 1891-1970* (1998); *The Lost Land of Lemuria: Fabulous Geographies, Catastrophic Histories* (2004); *The Goddess and the Nation: Mapping Mother India* (2010); *Husain's Raj: Visions of Empire and Nation* (2016); and *Terrestrial Lessons: The Conquest of the World as Globe* (2017). Her edited volumes include *Beyond Appearances?: Visual Practices and Ideologies in Modern India* (2003); *Barefoot Across the Nation: Maqbool Fida Husain and the Idea of India* (2010); *Empires of Vision* (co-edited with Martin Jay, 2014); and *Visual Homes, Image Worlds: Essays from Tasveer Ghar, the House of Pictures* (2015, co-edited with Christiane Brosius and Yousuf Saeed).