



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Jesus and Mary College



invites you to
A WEBINAR SERIES ON

SITUATING HISTORIES OF SOUTH ASIA IN GLOBAL CONTEXTS

This webinar series is a collection of lectures by noted historians of South Asian history who will highlight the significance of writing global histories of the region, i.e. situating historical developments in India and South Asia within world contexts. While some scholars will comment on conceptual concerns regarding the 'global south', others will delve on unfolding historical developments in India in the wake of important wider changes across the world.

Professor Dilip Menon

Mellon Chair in Indian Studies
and Director of the Centre for
Indian Studies in Africa at the
University of Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg

**DATE: 17TH NOVEMBER
(TUESDAY)**
TIME: 5:00 PM - 6:15 PM (IST)

Professor Jan Breman

Emeritus Professor, University of
Amsterdam, and renowned
sociologist engaged in
anthropological fieldwork in the
study of labour

**DATE: 25TH NOVEMBER
(WEDNESDAY)**
TIME: 1:45 PM - 3:00 PM (IST)

REGISTRATION IS COMPULSORY

To register, please click on

<https://forms.gle/w3PGzaS5zSPmZgFd9>

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Dr. AMITA PALIWAL
Convenor,
History Association

Dr. MAYA JOHN
Co-Convenor,
History Association



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A WEBINAR BY



PROFESSOR DILIP MENON

Mellon Chair in Indian Studies and Director of the Centre for Indian Studies in Africa at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

CHANGING THEORY: THINKING CONCEPTS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

The impulse towards theorizing arises within the urgency of historical conjunctures. Decolonization provided an impetus within the global south to imagine new relations to the past, present, and future; free of the teleologies imposed by the civilizational hierarchies of a colonial epistemology. There was the necessity to look back, neither with nostalgia nor anger. Rather it was the need to recover from the amnesia imposed by colonial rule that allowed an engagement with native pasts only as irrelevant, outmoded, or mired in forms of imagination unsuited to the idea of the modern. Of course, the idea of modernity itself was not a temporal concept. It was a political one, based on the self-regard of the former colonizing powers allowing them to hold themselves up as models for emulation. Addressing amnesia was behind the impulse to theory, to recover the loss of self and imagination under alien rule (Devy, 1995). Sudipto Kaviraj theorizes the emergence of a Euronormality: an implicit reorienting of the social sciences everywhere towards European conceptualizations from its parochial histories (Kaviraj, 2017). One could have said, rather like a compass orients one towards the north. However, this image itself is a normalized one, reflecting amnesia. The Chinese as we know created their compasses to point to the true south which was their cardinal direction: geographical as much as ethical (in the sense in which we use the phrase moral compass). The orientation to the 'South' was not only about physical direction, but about metaphysical balance. The users of early Chinese compasses were as much concerned with orientation as an ethical and metaphysical imperative – in line with the compass' primary geomantic purpose – as they were about finding physical directions in the non-permanent universe.

DATE: 17 November 2020 (Tuesday)

TIME: 5:00 PM (IST)

Link will be shared on registration for the webinar

Facebook Link: <https://www.facebook.com/historydepartmentjmc>

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