

AHONA PANDA

850 Columbia Avenue | Claremont, CA 91711 | (312) 866-0346 |
Ahona.Panda@ClaremontMcKenna.edu

EMPLOYMENT

- July 2022-present Assistant Professor in History
Claremont McKenna College
- 2021–2022 Visiting Assistant Professor in History
Claremont McKenna College
- 2019–2021 Humanities Teaching Fellow
Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations & the College
University of Chicago
- Faculty Affiliate, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality
University of Chicago

EDUCATION

- 2012–2019 PhD in South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago
“Philology and the Politics of Language: The Case of Bengali, 1893-1955” (**Won the 2020 Sardar Patel Award for best doctoral dissertation on modern India in the humanities, education, fine arts, or social sciences, UCLA Center for India and South Asia**)
Committee: Rochona Majumdar, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Thibaut d’Hubert
- 2011–2012 Probationary research student (towards the DPhil)
Department of English, University of Oxford
- 2009–2011 MA in English Literature, Jadavpur University
- 2006–2009 BA in English Literature with Film Studies and History, Jadavpur University

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Modern South Asia; British empire; decolonization; nationalism; critical theory; print history; history of political movements; Bangladesh; gender and queer theory; caste and race; postcolonialism; world literatures; Sanskrit literature; translation; critical theory.

PUBLICATIONS

Book Project

In progress *Bengal Undivided: The Politics of Language and the Limits of Nationalism*

Articles and Book Chapters

- In progress “From Philology to Linguistic Nationalism: Language and Popular Sovereignty in East Pakistan, 1947-1971”
- “Rabindranath Tagore as Political Thinker”
- 2022 “From Fascism to Famine: Complicity, conscience, and the narrative of ‘peasant passivity’ in Bengal, 1941-1945,” *Modern Asian Studies*, special issue on “World War II in South Asia” coedited by Isabel Huacuja Alonso and Andrew Amstutz (in press)
- 2021 “How to Be Political without Being Polemical: The Debate between Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay and Rabindranath Tagore over the *Krsnacaritra*,” in *Many Mahābhāratas*, eds. Nell Shapiro Hawley and Sohini Sarah Pillai (SUNY Press, 2021), 279-304.

Reviews and Short Essays

- 2021 Review of Partha Chatterjee, *I am the People: Reflections on Popular Sovereignty Today* (Columbia University Press, 2020), *South Asian History and Culture* [in press]
- 2021 Review of Sanjib Baruah, *In the Name of the Nation: India and Its Northeast* (Stanford University Press, 2020), *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 58:2 (2021): 283-6.
- 2015 “The Religious History of the Hindus and the Liberal Present of India,” an essay on Wendy Doniger’s *The Hindus: An Alternative History*, trans. into Hebrew by Eilat Maoz, *Theory and Criticism (Teoria U’vikoret)* 44 (2015): 303-10.

Public Writing

- 2022 Review of Wendy Doniger, *Winged Stallions and Wicked Mares: Horses in Indian Myth and History* (Speaking Tiger Books, 2021), *The Telegraph*, February 4.
<https://www.telegraphindia.com/culture/books/decoding-the-pegasus-puzzle/cid/1850393>
- 2021 Review of Bihani Sarkar, *Classical Sanskrit Tragedy: The Concept of Suffering and Pathos in Medieval India* (I.B. Tauris, 2021), *The Telegraph*, September 3.
<https://www.telegraphindia.com/culture/books/review-classical-sanskrit-tragedy-the-concept-of-suffering-and-pathos-in-medieval-india-by-bihani-sarkar/cid/1829183>
- 2021 “Radio, Ghazals and Islami Gaan: What Nazrul’s Shift to Music said about his Syncretism” *Daily Star*, Dhaka, September 2.
<https://www.thedailystar.net/daily-star-books/news/radio-ghazals-and-islami-gaan-what-nazruls-shift-music-said-about-his-syncretism-2166716>

- 2020 “In Memory of Professor Anisuzzaman, a Scholar of Bengals Past and Present,” *Daily Star*, Dhaka, May 22.
<https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/tribute/news/memory-prof-anisuzzaman-scholar-bengals-past-and-present-1904782>
- 2018 “‘Kaikeyi to Dasharath’: How Michael Madhusudan Dutt’s Radical Poetry Reworked the Narrative: A translation by Ahona Panda of the Bengali poet and playwright’s most anthologized poem,” *Scroll.in*, March 18.
<https://scroll.in/article/872379/kaikeyi-to-dasharath-how-michael-madhusudan-dutts-radical-poetry-reworked-the-narrative>
- 2015 “What Karna and Kunti Talked about the Night before the Battle of Kurukshetra: A New Translation of the Poem ‘Karna Kunti Samvad’, Recreating a Meeting between Them,” *Scroll.in*, November 8.
<https://scroll.in/article/767802/what-karna-and-kunti-talked-about-the-night-before-the-battle-of-kurukshetra>

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

- 2022-2023 Selected as one of six “Emerging scholars in Political Theology”, Political Theology Network and Center for Political Theology, Villanova University
- 2022 2020 Sardar Patel Award for best dissertation on modern India in the humanities, education, fine arts, or social sciences, UCLA Center for India and South Asia.
- 2021 Faculty Research Grant, Claremont McKenna College
- 2020 Research Associate, “Digital Scholarship for South Asian Studies”, Regenstein Library, University of Chicago
- 2018–2019 Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Franke Institute for the Humanities, University of Chicago
- 2017–2018 International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Social Science Research Council
- 2017 Dissertation Support Fellowship, Committee on Southern Asian Studies, University of Chicago
- 2016 Graduate Fellowship Award, Nicholson Center for British Studies, University of Chicago
- 2015 Pre-Dissertation Research Fellowship, Committee on Southern Asian Studies
Graduate Fellowship Award, Nicholson Center for British Studies

- 2012–2017 Graduate Aid Initiative Fellowship, Division of Humanities, University of Chicago
- 2009 Krishna Kripalani Award and University Medal, Jadavpur University

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- 2023 Talk at Syracuse South Asia Center, Syracuse University, April 6
- 2021 “The Muslim Periodical: Print and Identity in Twentieth-Century Bengal” in *Rethinking the Politics and Practices of Print in Comparative Colonial Perspective* (January 8-9), virtual workshop at the Edinburgh Center for Global History.
- 2021 “Politics Through Other Means: Moral Sovereignty and Citizenship Practices in South Asia,” *Mutations of Sovereignty: Perspectives on Sanjib Baruah’s “In the Name of the Nation”* (pre-conference symposium), 49th Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- 2018 “Kazi Nazrul Islam and the Partition of Bengal,” South Asia Seminar Series at the British Library, London, November 20.
- “A Language of Hunger: Representing World War II and the Bengal Famine,” *Rethinking World War II in South Asia* (pre-conference symposium), 47th Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 11.
- 2017 “How to Be Political without Being Polemical: The Fallout of Rabindranath Tagore and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee over the *Mahābhārata*,” *Many Mahābhāratas* (pre-conference symposium), University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 26.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2022 "Postcolonial Partitions and Borders", Presenter at the Beyond Partitions Working Group Annual Conference, June 11 2022.
- Chair and discussant, "The O-bhodromohila in Calcutta: Gendered Mobility, Labor and Caste in the Colonial City", 50th Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 20 2022.
- “Twilight of the Subcontinental Imagination”, Presenter at panel organized by Anustup Basu with Amit Rahul Baishya, Rochona Majumdar and Amir Mufti, 50th Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 21.
- 2021 “Fifty Years of Bangladesh: Tracing Law, Literature, and Liberty in Transition,” Panel Organizer and Presenter, American Historical Association Virtual Colloquium, March 30.

- 2016 “*Dobhāshī*, or the Case of an Obdurate Category: Philology and Politics in Twentieth-Century Bengal,” *MESAAS* Graduate Students Conference, Columbia University, February 25-26.
- 2014 “From *Sikṣā* (Education) to *Vidyā* (Wisdom): Rabindranath Tagore’s Construction of Knowledge and Selfhood, 1901-1941,” South Asia Graduate Students Conference, University of Chicago, April 17-19.
- 2013 “From *Nabyatā* to *Ādhunikatā*: Nostalgia and the Various Forms of the Modern,” South Asia Graduate Students Conference, University of Chicago, April 4-5.

WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

- 2021 Participant, Dissertation to Book Workshop, American Institute of Indian Studies, October 20-21.
- 2021 *Revising the Dissertation*, workshop with William Germano, University of Chicago.
- 2018 “A Language of Unity, A Language of Loss: Kazi Nazrul Islam’s Bengali,” Theory and Practice of South Asia, University of Chicago, November 1.
- 2014 “Towards a Genealogy of Play: Rabindranath Tagore and Aesthetic Education,” Brown Bag Talk, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago, April 15.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Department of History, Claremont McKenna College

AY 2021- present

Makers of Modern India and Pakistan (Seminar)
Sex and Censorship in South Asia (Special Topics/Research Seminar)
Caste, Race and Equality (First-year Humanities Seminar)
Gender and History in South Asia (Seminar)
Caste, Race and Equality (First-year Humanities Seminar)

Humanities Teaching Fellow, University of Chicago

AY 2019-2021

Race and Caste in South Asia

South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Sociology, Global Studies, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, Stevanovich Institute on the Formation of Knowledge

- Winter *The Other Woman: Sexual Deviancy in South Asia*
South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality
- Autumn *Readings in World Literature I: The Epic*
Humanities Collegiate Division
- Spring *Can Women Think? The Female Intellectual in South Asia*
South Asian Languages and Civilizations
Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality
- Winter *Sex and Censorship in South Asia*
South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, History, History of Religion
- Autumn *Readings in World Literature I: The Epic*
Humanities Collegiate Division

ORGANISATION/SERVICE

- 2022-2023 Humanities Lab at Claremont McKenna College on *Caste, Race and Diaspora*
- 2016 Conference Organizer, *Dying in South Asia*
Annual South Asia Graduate Student Conference, University of Chicago, March 3-4.
- 2014–2015 Representative, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Humanities Division Graduate Student Council, University of Chicago
- 2013–2014 Humanities Representative, Graduate Council, University of Chicago

LANGUAGES

- Bengali Native language
Hindi Near-native fluency
Urdu Basic reading and speaking proficiency
Sanskrit Reading proficiency
French Reading proficiency

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Historical Association

REFERENCES

Rochona Majumdar

Associate Professor of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago

rmajumda@uchicago.edu

Dipesh Chakrabarty

Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor of History, South Asian Languages and Civilizations, and the College, University of Chicago

dchakrab@uchicago.edu

Gary Hamburg

Otho M. Behr Professor of the History of Ideas

Claremont McKenna College

gary.hamburg@cmc.edu

Heather Ferguson

Associate Professor of History

Claremont McKenna College

hferguson@cmc.edu

Robert Kendrick

William Colvin Professor in Music, Romance Languages and Literatures, and the College, University of Chicago

rkendric@uchicago.edu

Wendy Doniger

Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor Emerita of the History of Religions; Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, the Committee on Social Thought, and the College

don8@uchicago.edu