

Webinar On

Indian Leaders,Western Disciples and the Campaign Against Indenture :1911-1931

By Dr Somak Biswas

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VIRSA: The History Society of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Khalsa College, University of Delhi organised a webinar on "*Indian Leaders, Western Disciples and The Campaign Against Indenture: 1911-1931*" on Friday, 9th April 2021 at 2:30pm in which Dr. Somak Biswas, Fellow, Institute of Historical Research, London joined us for a lecture.

Webinar began with an introductory note welcoming Dr. Somak Biswas who received his Doctorate in April 2020. His PhD thesis is titled 'Indian Gurus, Western Disciples and the transnational politics of Indophilia'. It looks at how networks of western discipleship were mobilised for a series of representative projects around India and Indians in the early 20th century. In his pathbreaking work he elaborated on how these discipleships, produced through a series of complex affective practices and protocols, were inevitably inflected by the caste/class/religious presumptions contingent to their mentors' worlds. Bringing themes such as intimacy, discipleship and migration together, he argues that Indophile deployments around transnational projects such as the abolition of indenture and global Hinduism, while often anti-colonial, were not necessarily emancipatory. Rooted in a politics of respectability, they insistently sought to produce and normalise an idea of India that was often itself hegemonic in formation.

Dr. Somak started his lecture with History of exploration. Continuing to Firangis, he told about who were the firangis, from where they belong and what was their actual identity. He illustrated through presentation how the technology of rule the abolition of slavery came into existence. He told us about some famous leaders who played important role in mobilisation, geographies of indenture and network around indenture namely Swami Vivekanand & Bhagini Nivedita, Ravindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. Dr. Somak Biswas ended his lecture with the question-and-answer session. He answered the questions of the students and the faculty as well. At the end of the session, Convenor of department delivered the vote of thanks in honour of Dr. Biswas. Students from Sri Ram College of Commerce, Shyam Lal College, Ram Lal Anand college of university of Delhi also joined the webinar. The webinar was successfully conducted with over 40+ participants including the students and the other guests.