

A Reading & Discussion of Prasenjit Duara's Book on **THE CRISIS OF GLOBAL MODERNITY** Asian Traditions and a Sustainable Future

Date 30 April 2015, Thursday
Time 6:00 – 7:30 pm
Venue Singapore International Foundation
International Involvement Hub
60A Orchard Road, Level 4M, Tower 1,
The Atrium@Orchard, S 238890

PROGRAM

5:30 PM REGISTRATION & LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

6:00 PM INTRODUCTION & OPENING REMARKS
Prof Tommy Koh
Ambassador-at-Large,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore

6:10 PM BOOK READING
The Crisis of Global Modernity:
Asian Traditions and a Sustainable Future
Prof Prasenjit Duara
Asia Research Institute, NUS

6:40 PM COMMENTARY REMARKS
Assoc Prof Itty Abraham
Dept of Southeast Asian Studies, NUS

7:00 PM QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

7:30 PM CONCLUDING REMARKS
Mr K. Kesavapany
Singapore Ambassador to the
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

REGISTRATION

Admission is free, however, registration is required. Kindly register early as seats are available on a first come, first served basis. RSVP to valerie.yeo@nus.edu.sg.

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In this major new study, Prasenjit Duara expands his influential theoretical framework to present circulatory, transnational histories as an alternative to nationalist history. Duara argues that the present day is defined by the intersection of three global changes: the rise of non-western powers, the crisis of environmental sustainability and the loss of authoritative sources of what he terms transcendence—the ideals, principles and ethics once found in religions or political ideologies. The physical salvation of the world is becoming—and must become—the transcendent goal of our times, but this goal must transcend national sovereignty if it is to succeed. Duara suggests that a viable foundation for sustainability might be found in the traditions of Asia, which offer different ways of understanding the relationship between the personal, ecological and universal. These traditions must be understood through the ways they have circulated and converged with contemporary developments.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Prasenjit Duara is Raffles Professor of Humanities and Director of Asia Research Institute at NUS. He is Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Chicago. Author of *Culture, Power and the State: Rural North China, 1900-1942*, winner of the Fairbank Prize of the AHA and the Levenson Prize of the AAS. Duara also wrote *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (1995) and *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (2003). He has edited a volume on *Decolonization* (Routledge, 2004) as well as a selection of his writings, *The Global and Regional in China's Nation Formation* (Routledge, 2009). Duara has also contributed to volumes on historiography and historical thought. His work has been widely translated into Chinese, Korean and Japanese.

Itty Abraham is Head of the Department of Southeast Asian Studies at NUS and an associate of the Science & Technology & Society Cluster at Asia Research Institute. He moved to NUS from the University of Texas at Austin, where he directed the South Asia Institute and was a fellow of the Marlene and Morton Meyerson Centennial Chair. Before that he served as program director for Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Global Security and Cooperation at the Social Science Research Council, New York. He is the author, most recently, of *How India Became Territorial: Foreign Policy, Diaspora, Geopolitics*, published by Stanford University Press in 2014; the editor of volumes on borderlands, political violence, and nuclear power; and numerous scholarly articles and book chapters. He has received grants from the US National Science Foundation, and the Ford, Rockefeller, and MacArthur foundations, among others. His research interests include science and technology studies, postcolonial theory, and international relations.