

Dear Colleagues,

As many of you know, Professors Suvir Kaul and Ania Loomba will be with us as Distinguished Visiting Fellows during the first two weeks of June.

As well as giving research seminar papers, they will also deliver keynotes at two one-day colloquia. The first of these, on Creative and Critical Responses to Structural and Longterm Violence in the Public Sphere (CFP below) will be held on 7 June. The second of these, on Race at the Juncture (title TBC), will be held on 11 June (details in the next week or so). Please feel free to forward the CFP to anyone you think might be interested.

Best wishes,
Patrick

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Of Survival and Struggle: Creative and Critical Responses to Structural and Long-term Violence in the Public Sphere

A Colloquium hosted by the School of English and Drama, Queen Mary University of London

7 June 2018

Keynote speaker: Suvir Kaul, A. M. Rosenthal Professor of English, University of Pennsylvania, author of *Of Gardens and Graves: Kashmir, Poetry, Politics* (2017)

As the texture and parameters of the public sphere have, in the recent past, come to be influenced profoundly by social media, entertainment, and for-profit information platforms, so the distinction between news and entertainment, between fact and fiction, between true and false, has been aggressively eroded. In an age of renewed hyper-nationalism in a number of countries, the public sphere often becomes the site not only of resistance movements, but also counter-movements whose use of rhetorical and actual violence operates fluidly in virtual and in physical public spaces. As Habermas wrote a decade ago, anticipating the role of the internet in, for instance, the Arab Spring, as much as in the Brexit referendum result and the election of Donald Trump, 'although the Internet has a subversive effect on public spheres under authoritarian regimes, at the same time the horizontal and informal networking of communications diminishes the achievements of traditional public spheres'. As the highly mediatized public sphere becomes a space—virtual or

actual—in which claims to truth value are simultaneously asserted and imperiled, how might intellectuals and artists across the disciplines respond to a climate marked by sustained structural violence in multiple forms?

We invite proposals for 20-minute papers or creative presentations from writers and artists. Work that thinks specifically about the struggle against violence in relation to the following would be especially welcome. Topics might include (but are not limited to):

- Partition and borders
- Migrant and refugee experience (including experiences of human trafficking)
- Gender equality (including experiences of misogyny, sexism, harassment, assault, domestic violence, forced marriage)
- Queer equality (including experiences of LGBTQ refugees)
- Social media platforms in the age of ‘fake news’
- Virtual public spheres and social activism
- Alt-Right / Alt-Left media, propaganda, and tactics
- Slow violence, human rights discourse, and the Anthropocene
- Life writing, reportage and other creative non-fiction in response to structural violence

Please send 250-word proposals and a short (100-word) bio by 31 March 2018 to:

Professor Patrick Flanery, Queen Mary University of London at:

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