

Rila Mukherjee (Retired Professor, University of Hyderabad, India)

28 July 2023, 17:00--19:00 (Indian time IST) (JST 20:30-22:30)

The title:

'Seeing Continuities and Changes in the Indian Ocean World in Space-Time until 1800'

Abstract:

My talk, organized around spaces, challenges, literatures, images, and debates in maritime history, will integrate the latest scholarly literature on the entire Indian Ocean region from Africa to China to depict the vast complexity of the Indian Ocean World. It will present evidence and arguments that render India an open space of mobility over land and sea connecting northern Asia and the southern seas with East Africa, Southeast Asia, and China.

It will provide a survey of India's connected history in the Indian Ocean region starting from the archaeological record and ending with the coming of the British Empire. It will study the emergence of the Indian Ocean basin as a global arena for cross-cultural networking and nation-building. It will discuss issues of trade and commerce, the circulation of ideas, peoples and objects, and social and religious themes, focusing on Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam.

And my presentation will question, however, the notion of India's ideological centrality in the Indian Ocean over time. Issues such as India's history, India's changing status in the region, and India's cross-cultural networking over a long period will be explored, incorporating modern research on India's strategic significance in the Indian Ocean arena until 1800.