Multiple Temporalities: South Asian Historiography and Its Transcultural Implications

a talk by

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Talk Abstract: In the past, the analysis of South Asian historiography has been preoccupied by arguments based on an understanding of history that highlights facts and events. A transcultural and multidisciplinary approach, however, would overcome the common dichotomies of factuality and fictionality, history and myth, or evidence and truth. Recognizing the various temporalities of South Asian historiography, the paper develops an approach to bridge asymmetries and entanglements in the academic use of the past in a way that also opens up a new perspective on Western historiography. By analyzing the Nepalikabhupavamshavali (better known as “Wright Chronicle”), a nineteenth-century chronicle from Nepal, and by using “fieldwork” as a methodological tool for studying historiography, it is proposed to understand the framing of time and the making of sequences and historical periods as an open process that results in the constant and synchronic creation of chronological spaces.