What makes a leader, especially a “woman leader”? Does she have to be an icon accommodated into the mainstream?

Writer, activist, cultural commentator, and our 5th Sarah Kailath Memorial lecturer Githa Hariharan, takes on these questions by recounting the lives and work of a range of women in the Indian mainstream and peripheries. Linking this diversity of individual and collective resistance not only enriches our view of the Indian woman leader, but also of the notion of leadership.

Githa Hariharan was born in Coimbatore and grew up in Bombay and Manila. She now lives in New Delhi. Hariharan’s first novel, The Thousand Faces of Night, won the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize for Best First Book. Her work since then includes the short story collection The Art of Dying, and the novels The Ghosts of Vasu Master, When Dreams Travel and In Times of Siege.