

## AHONA PANDA

850 Columbia Avenue | Claremont, CA 91711 | (312) 866-0346 |  
Ahona.Panda@ClaremontMcKenna.edu

### EMPLOYMENT

July 2022–present	Assistant Professor in History Claremont McKenna College
2021–2022	Visiting Assistant Professor in History Claremont McKenna College
2019–2021	Humanities Teaching Fellow Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations & the College University of Chicago  Faculty Affiliate, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality University of Chicago

### EDUCATION

2012–2019	PhD in South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago “Philology and the Politics of Language: The Case of Bengali, 1893-1955” <b>(Won the 2020 Sardar Patel Award for best doctoral dissertation on modern India in the humanities, education, fine arts, or social sciences, UCLA Center for India and South Asia)</b> Committee: Rochona Majumdar, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Thibaut d’Hubert
2011–2012	Probationary research student (towards the DPhil) Department of English, University of Oxford
2009–2011	MA in English Literature, Jadavpur University
2006–2009	BA in English Literature with Film Studies and History, Jadavpur University

### RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Modern South Asia; British empire; decolonization; nationalism; critical theory; print history; history of political movements; Bangladesh; gender and queer theory; caste and race; postcolonialism; world literatures; Sanskrit literature; translation; critical theory.

### PUBLICATIONS

#### Book Project

In progress     *Bengal Undivided: The Politics of Language and the Limits of Nationalism*

### Articles and Book Chapters

- In progress     “From Philology to Linguistic Nationalism: Language and Popular Sovereignty in East Pakistan, 1947-1971”  
“Rabindranath Tagore as Political Thinker”
- 2022     “From Fascism to Famine: Complicity, conscience, and the narrative of ‘peasant passivity’ in Bengal, 1941-1945,” *Modern Asian Studies*, special issue on “World War II in South Asia” coedited by Isabel Huacuja Alonso and Andrew Amstutz (in press)
- 2021     “How to Be Political without Being Polemical: The Debate between Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay and Rabindranath Tagore over the *Kṛṣṇacaritra*,” in *Many Mahabharatas*, eds. Nell Shapiro Hawley and Sohini Sarah Pillai (SUNY Press, 2021), 279-304.

### Reviews and Short Essays

- 2021     Review of Partha Chatterjee, *I am the People: Reflections on Popular Sovereignty Today* (Columbia University Press, 2020), *South Asian History and Culture* [in press]
- 2021     Review of Sanjib Baruah, *In the Name of the Nation: India and Its Northeast* (Stanford University Press, 2020), *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 58:2 (2021): 283-6.
- 2015     “The Religious History of the Hindus and the Liberal Present of India,” an essay on Wendy Doniger’s *The Hindus: An Alternative History*, trans. into Hebrew by Eilat Maoz, *Theory and Criticism (Teoria U’vikoret)* 44 (2015): 303-10.

### Public Writing

- 2022     Review of Wendy Doniger, *Winged Stallions and Wicked Mares: Horses in Indian Myth and History* (Speaking Tiger Books, 2021), *The Telegraph*, February 4.  
<https://www.telegraphindia.com/culture/books/decoding-the-pegasus-puzzle/cid/1850393>
- 2021     Review of Bihani Sarkar, *Classical Sanskrit Tragedy: The Concept of Suffering and Pathos in Medieval India* (I.B. Tauris, 2021), *The Telegraph*, September 3.  
<https://www.telegraphindia.com/culture/books/review-classical-sanskrit-tragedy-the-concept-of-suffering-and-pathos-in-medieval-india-by-bihani-sarkar/cid/1829183>
- 2021     “Radio, Ghazals and Islami Gaan: What Nazrul’s Shift to Music said about his Syncretism” *Daily Star*, Dhaka, September 2.  
<https://www.thedailystar.net/daily-star-books/news/radio-ghazals-and-islami-gaan-what-nazruls-shift-music-said-about-his-syncretism-2166716>
- 2020     “In Memory of Professor Anisuzzaman, a Scholar of Bengals Past and Present,”

*Daily Star*, Dhaka, May 22.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/tribute/news/memory-prof-anisuzzaman-scholar-bengals-past-and-present-1904782>

- 2018 “‘Kaikeyi to Dasharath’: How Michael Madhusudan Dutt’s Radical Poetry Reworked the Narrative: A translation by Ahona Panda of the Bengali poet and playwright’s most anthologized poem,” *Scroll.in*, March 18.  
<https://scroll.in/article/872379/kaikeyi-to-dasharath-how-michael-madhusudan-dutt-s-radical-poetry-reworked-the-narrative>
- 2015 “What Karna and Kunti Talked about the Night before the Battle of Kurukshetra: A New Translation of the Poem ‘Karna Kunti Samvad’, Recreating a Meeting between Them,” *Scroll.in*, November 8.  
<https://scroll.in/article/767802/what-karna-and-kunti-talked-about-the-night-before-the-battle-of-kurukshetra>

## FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

- 2022 2020 Sardar Patel Award for best dissertation on modern India in the humanities, education, fine arts, or social sciences, UCLA Center for India and South Asia.
- 2021 Faculty Research Grant, Claremont McKenna College
- 2020 Research Associate, “Digital Scholarship for South Asian Studies”, Regenstein Library, University of Chicago
- 2018–2019 Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Franke Institute for the Humanities, University of Chicago
- 2017–2018 International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Social Science Research Council
- 2017 Dissertation Support Fellowship, Committee on Southern Asian Studies, University of Chicago
- 2016 Graduate Fellowship Award, Nicholson Center for British Studies, University of Chicago
- 2015 Pre-Dissertation Research Fellowship, Committee on Southern Asian Studies  
Graduate Fellowship Award, Nicholson Center for British Studies
- 2012–2017 Graduate Aid Initiative Fellowship, Division of Humanities, University of Chicago
- 2009 Krishna Kripalani Award and University Medal, Jadavpur University

## INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- 2021 “The Muslim Periodical: Print and Identity in Twentieth-Century Bengal” in *Rethinking the Politics and Practices of Print in Comparative Colonial Perspective* (January 8-9), virtual workshop at the Edinburgh Center for Global History.
- 2021 “Politics Through Other Means: Moral Sovereignty and Citizenship Practices in South Asia,” *Mutations of Sovereignty: Perspectives on Sanjib Baruah’s “In the Name of the Nation”* (pre-conference symposium), 49<sup>th</sup> Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- 2018 “Kazi Nazrul Islam and the Partition of Bengal,” South Asia Seminar Series at the British Library, London, November 20.
- “A Language of Hunger: Representing World War II and the Bengal Famine,” *Rethinking World War II in South Asia* (pre-conference symposium), 47<sup>th</sup> Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 11.
- 2017 “How to Be Political without Being Polemical: The Fallout of Rabindranath Tagore and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee over the *Mahābhārata*,” *Many Mahābhāratas* (pre-conference symposium), University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 26.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2022 “Twilight of the Subcontinental Imagination”, Presenter at panel organized by Anustup Basu with Amit Rahul Baishya, Rochona Majumdar and Amir Mufti, 50<sup>th</sup> Annual South Asia Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 21.
- 2021 “Fifty Years of Bangladesh: Tracing Law, Literature, and Liberty in Transition,” Panel Organizer and Presenter, American Historical Association Virtual Colloquium, March 30.
- 2016 “*Dobhāshī*, or the Case of an Obdurate Category: Philology and Politics in Twentieth-Century Bengal,” *MESAAS* Graduate Students Conference, Columbia University, February 25-26.
- 2014 “From *Sikṣā* (Education) to *Vidyā* (Wisdom): Rabindranath Tagore’s Construction of Knowledge and Selfhood, 1901-1941,” South Asia Graduate Students Conference, University of Chicago, April 17-19.
- 2013 “From *Nabyatā* to *Ādhunikatā*: Nostalgia and the Various Forms of the Modern,” South Asia Graduate Students Conference, University of Chicago, April 4-5.

## WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

- 2021 Participant, Dissertation to Book Workshop, American Institute of Indian Studies, October 20-21.
- 2021 *Revising the Dissertation*, workshop with William Germano, University of Chicago.
- 2018 “A Language of Unity, A Language of Loss: Kazi Nazrul Islam’s Bengali,” Theory and Practice of South Asia, University of Chicago, November 1.
- 2014 “Towards a Genealogy of Play: Rabindranath Tagore and Aesthetic Education,” Brown Bag Talk, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago, April 15.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### *Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of History, Claremont McKenna College*

AY 2021-2022

- Spring *Makers of Modern India and Pakistan* (Seminar)  
*Sex and Censorship in South Asia* (Special Topics)  
*Caste, Race and Equality* (First-year Humanities Seminar)
- Fall *Gender and History in South Asia* (Seminar)  
*Caste, Race and Equality* (First-year Humanities Seminar)

### *Humanities Teaching Fellow, University of Chicago*

AY 2020-2021

- Spring *Race and Caste in South Asia*  
 South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Sociology, Global Studies, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, Stevanovich Institute on the Formation of Knowledge
- Winter *The Other Woman: Sexual Deviancy in South Asia*  
 South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality
- Autumn *Readings in World Literature I: The Epic*  
 Humanities Collegiate Division

AY 2019-2020

Spring	<i>Can Women Think? The Female Intellectual in South Asia</i> South Asian Languages and Civilizations Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality
Winter	<i>Sex and Censorship in South Asia</i> South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality, History, History of Religion
Autumn	<i>Readings in World Literature I: The Epic</i> Humanities Collegiate Division

***Instructor, Teaching Assistant, and Writing Intern, University of Chicago***

2016	<i>Sex and Censorship in South Asia</i> (Instructor) South Asian Languages and Civilizations, History History of Religion, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality
2015–2016	<i>Readings in World Literatures</i> (Writing Intern) Humanities Collegiate Division
2014	
Winter	<i>Gender and Sexuality in World Civilizations</i> (Teaching Assistant) Social Sciences Division
Autumn	<i>Reading Cultures</i> (Writing Intern) Humanities Collegiate Division

**SERVICE**

2016	Conference Organizer, <i>Dying in South Asia</i> Annual South Asia Graduate Student Conference, University of Chicago, March 3-4.
2014–2015	Representative, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, Humanities Division Graduate Student Council, University of Chicago
2013–2014	Humanities Representative, Graduate Council, University of Chicago

**LANGUAGES**

Bengali	Native language
Hindi	Near-native fluency
Urdu	Basic reading and speaking proficiency

Sanskrit	Reading proficiency
French	Reading proficiency

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Historical Association

## REFERENCES

Rochona Majumdar  
Associate Professor of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of  
Chicago  
rmajumda@uchicago.edu

Dipesh Chakrabarty  
Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor of History, South Asian  
Languages and  
Civilizations, and the College, University of Chicago  
dchakrab@uchicago.edu

Gary Hamburg  
Otho M. Behr Professor of the History of Ideas  
Claremont McKenna College  
gary.hamburg@cmc.edu

Heather Ferguson  
Associate Professor of History  
Claremont McKenna College  
hferguson@cmc.edu

Robert Kendrick  
William Colvin Professor in Music, Romance Languages and Literatures, and the College, University  
of Chicago  
rkendric@uchicago.edu

Wendy Doniger  
Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor Emerita of the History of Religions; Department of  
South Asian Languages and Civilizations, the Committee on Social Thought, and the College  
don8@uchicago.edu