GENERAL SEMINAR

Dr. Arundhati Virmani
EHESS, Centre Norbert Elias, Marseille

will give a talk titled:

“Between Two Societies: National History from Afar”

Abstract

This presentation begins with Claude Lévi Strauss’s reflection that if one wished to understand the human being, it was essential to avoid both narrow introspection or be satisfied with considering one single society - one’s own. It was necessary to “look into the most distant and different cultural experiences” and learn to observe one’s own culture “from afar, as if one belonged to another culture”. Taking this as a point of departure, I discuss the effects of dislocation on writing national history. Both the long history and persistence of the national paradigm in the construction of national identities and its mobilization as a powerful political tool have invested the practice of the discipline with emotion and ideology. The paper debates the effects of distancing on the historian’s choice of problems, objects or methodologies. It then reflects on the implications of such constructions of historical knowledge selections on her/his engagement in the civic space.

Date: Wednesday, 19 February, 2020; Time: 3 – 5 pm

Venue: CSSSC Seminar Room 2, Patuli Campus

Maidul Islam
(Convener, Seminar Committee) 
All are welcome to attend.