



UNIVERSITY OF THE  
WITWATERSRAND,  
JOHANNESBURG



Centre for Indian  
Studies in Africa

## Satadru Sen Memorial Lecture 2021

October 2 2021  
5 pm SAST



Prof Kama Maclean  
Heidelberg University

### “Beyond Failure: Implications of Revolutionary Politics in Interwar India”

Recent scholarship following the ‘revolutionary turn’ in South Asian history has questioned the paradigm of ‘failure’ that has been assigned to radical politics of the interwar period, on the basis that it did not bring about an immediate shift in power relations in colonial South Asia. This presentation considers a relatively unexplored outcome of revolutionary politics of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA), to focus on the impact on Indians working in British institutions. The primary target of the violent actions of the HSRA has been thought of as the British functionaries in the Government of India: the public assassinations of two police officials in Lahore, and the attempts on the Viceroy and Governor of Punjab are the best examples of this. Recent scholarship makes it clear that the revolutionaries strove to nurture anticolonial sentiments among the public, in the HSRA’s case, through their effective manipulation of media outlets, and the staging of their hunger strikes from prison. My presentation will extend this by demonstrating how the revolutionaries of the HSRA aimed and succeeded, to a point, in crafting their actions in such a way as to garner the active sympathies of Indians working in British coercive institutions, such as prisons and the police, who then began to undermine them from within.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89115919344...>

Meeting ID: 891 1591 9344

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