

November 26, 2020

Press Release

JMI organises Online International Conference on “Cosmopolitan Cultures and Oceanic Thought: Thinking through History Across the Waters”

A Three-Day Online International Conference on “Cosmopolitan Cultures and Oceanic Thought: Thinking through History Across the Waters” was hosted by the Department of English, Jamia Millia Islamia from 23-25 November 2020 on Zoom. Supported by the Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration, Ministry of Education, Government of India, the conference was organised in collaboration with Center for Indian Studies in Africa, University of Witwatersrand.

Prof. Nishat Zaidi, the Head of English Department, JMI, and the conference chair inaugurated the conference by giving the welcome address. She spoke about the conference as being a part of the larger academic collaboration of the University under the SPARC scheme, begun in 2019 and aimed at charting transoceanic flows of people, ideas and material as an alternative way of understanding experiences, spaces and identities.

JMI Vice-Chancellor Prof. Najma Akhter, welcoming all the international and national intellectuals as well as the research scholars, highlighted the importance of the oceanic world and the maritime route for the exchange of goods, people ideas, religion and the cultural transformations facilitating trade and travel.

Emphasizing the themes accentuating the conference, Prof. Dilip Menon, Director, CISA, University of Witwatersrand talked about the question of space and time, moving beyond the terrestrial imagination and subaltern history of movement, thus imagining the world as a composite space of land and water. This was followed by the talks of the five keynote speakers divided into two sessions.

The first session included Prof. Isabel Hofmeyer's talk on 'hydrocoloniality', Prof. Lakshmi Subramanian's talk on the cosmopolitan history of the Indian Ocean and Dr Fahad Bishara's discussion about the circulation and capitalism in the Indian Ocean. The next session included keynote addresses by Prof. Elleke Boehmer, University of Oxford and Prof. Ananya Jahanara Kabir, Professor of English at King's College, London.

The second day comprised three sessions where the participants spoke on myriad themes of water journeys and networks, voyages and oceanic poetics. The sessions were chaired by Prof. Samina Hassan, Prof. Saugata Bhaduri and Prof. Alok Bhalla.

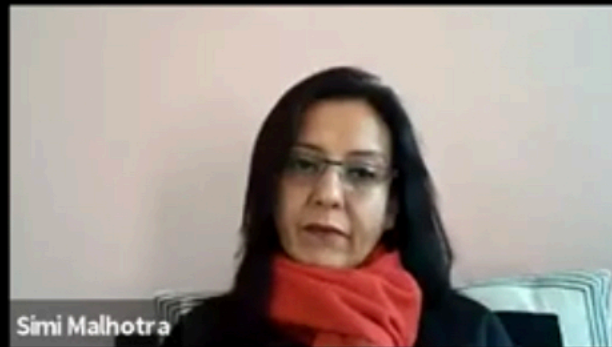
The final day of the virtual conference also included three sessions followed by a plenary meeting. The thematically divided sessions encompassed various themes analyzing the cosmopolitan identity, queer coalitions and circulation of texts across cosmopolis, chaired by

Dr. Anupama Mohan, Prof. Nishat Haider and Prof. Anuradha Ghosh. The plenary speakers Dr Nidhi Mahajan discussion centered on trade, mobility and temporalities in the Western Indian Ocean.

Embracing an international audience with the different time zones, the virtual three-day conference concluded with the valedictory function. The research scholars of English Department, JMI, and Grace Mariam Raju and Steven S. George read out the conference report, following which, a formal vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. Saarah Jappie, SSRC Conference International Co-Chair. To ensure a wide range of viewership and participation, the entire conference was also live streamed on you tube.

Ahmad Azeem

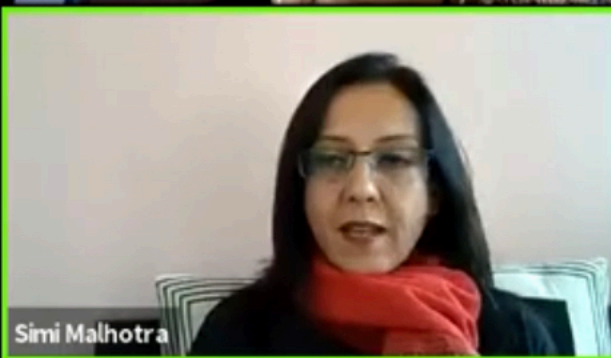
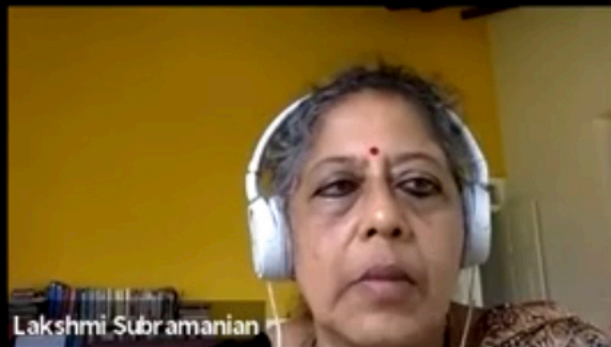
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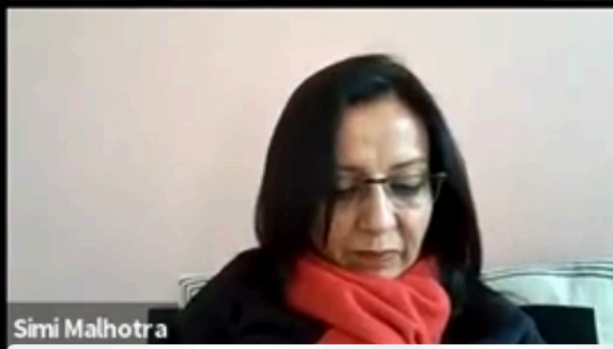
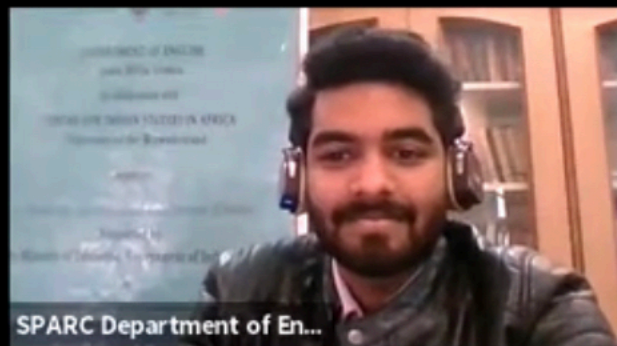
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Elleke Boehmer



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Nishat Zaidi



Arivajagane Gautier



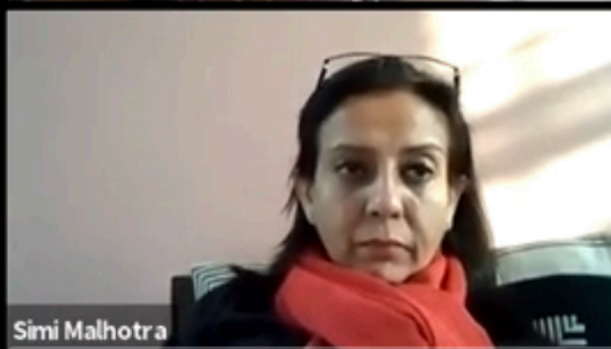
Ananya Kabir



Dilip Menon



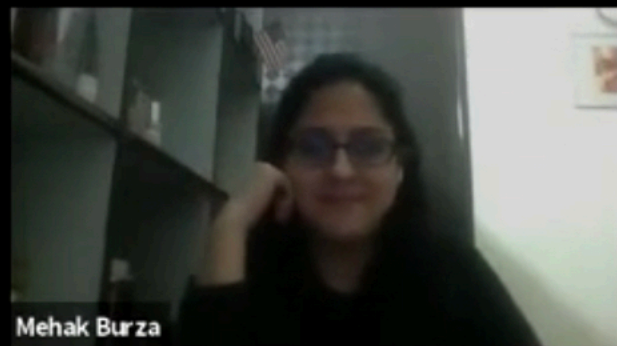
Mehak Burza



Simi Malhotra



Dr. Yatri Buch



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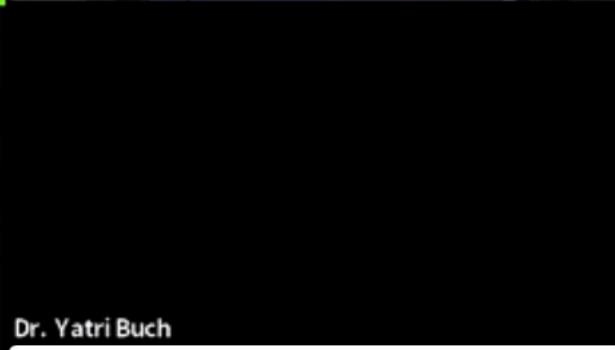
Dilip Menon



Asiya Zahoor



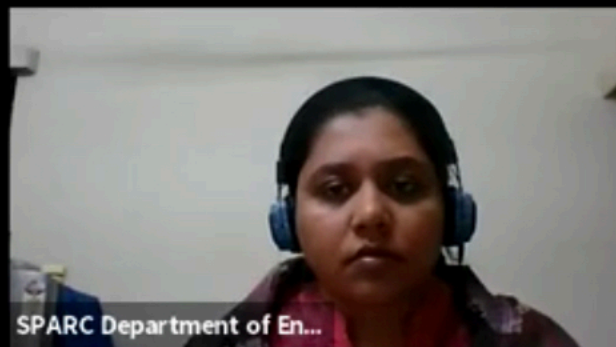
Simi Malhotra



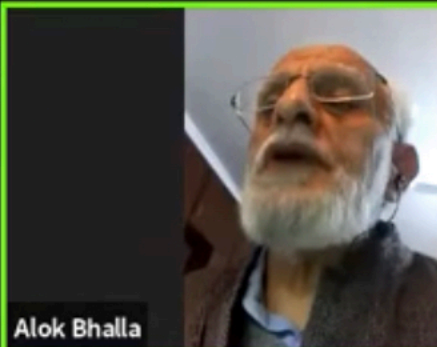
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