

Name: Naina Dayal

Designation: Associate Professor, Department of History

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Degrees

Ph.D., Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Title of dissertation: 'Tellers of Tales: *Pauranikas*, *Sutas*, Kusilava, Vyasa and Valmiki'.

Supervisors: Professor Romila Thapar and Professor Kunal Chakrabarti.

M.A. in Ancient History, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

B.A. History (Honours), St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi, Delhi.

First in Delhi University in History (Honours).

Prize/Fellowships

2014 - 2015: Fulbright-Nehru Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at the University of California, Berkeley.

Faculty Associate: Professor Robert P. Goldman, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley.

1999 - 2002: Junior Research Fellowship to conduct doctoral research, awarded by the University Grants Commission.

1995: The Dip Chand Memorial Prize for being the best candidate in the B.A. (Honours) Examination in History held in 1995.

Teaching Experience

2010 - till date: Assistant/Associate Professor, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi, Delhi.

2006 - 2010: Lecturer/Assistant Professor, Lady Shri Ram College for Women (University of Delhi), New Delhi.

1998 - 1999: Lecturer, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi, Delhi.

Publications

Books

Uma Chakravarti, Naina Dayal, Bharati Jagannathan and Snigdha Singh, eds, *Of Thieves and Theris, Potters and Pativratas: Essays on Early Indian Social History for Kumkum Roy*, Delhi: Primus Books, 2023. ISBN: 978-93-5687-033-8.

Kumkum Roy and Naina Dayal, eds, *Questioning Paradigms, Constructing Histories: A Festschrift for Romila Thapar*, New Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2019. ISBN: 978-93-88292-34-4.

Religious Traditions and the Ideology of Bhakti (Vol. 3 of the Indira Gandhi National Open University's M.A. Course on *Religious Thought and Belief in India*), New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Open University, 2003. ISBN: 81-266-0992-3.

Forthcoming from Permanent Black

Working title of book: 'The Premier Performances of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*'.

Articles

'Buddhism in early India', in G.N. Devy, Tony Joseph and Ravi Korisettar, eds, *The Indians: Histories of a Civilization*, New Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2023, pp. 178-81, ISBN: 978-93-95853-09-5.

'When a man raises the flag of *dhamma* but conceals his sins: Notes on fake ascetics in the Jatakas', in Uma Chakravarti et al., eds, *Of Thieves and Theris, Potters and Pativratas: Essays on Early Indian Social History for Kumkum Roy*, Delhi: Primus Books, 2023, pp. 81-96. ISBN: 978-93-5687-033-8.

'*Sutas, nastikas* and retelling the *Mahabharata*', in Kumkum Roy and Naina Dayal, eds, *Questioning Paradigms, Constructing Histories: A Festschrift for Romila Thapar*, New Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2019, pp. 196-210. ISBN: 978-93-88292-34-4.

'Teaching early Indian history in 2015', Chapter 9 in *Nation Building through Higher Education*, New Delhi: New Delhi Publishers & Centre for Professional Development

in Higher Education, UGC-Human Resource Development Centre, University of Delhi, Delhi, 2016, pp. 47-50. ISBN: 978-93-85503-20-7.

Roy, Kumkum, Romila Thapar, and Naina Dayal, 'Asoka', in Richard Payne, ed., *Oxford Bibliographies in Buddhism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. ISBN: 9780195393521.

'On the premier performances of the *Ramayana* of Valmiki', in Kumkum Roy, ed., *Insights and Interventions: Essays in Honour of Uma Chakravarti*, Delhi: Primus Books, 2011, pp. 117-142. ISBN: 978-93-80607-22-1. A longer version of this article is available on sahapedia.org.

'Cities in early historic north India', in *Hindi: Language, Discourse, Writing*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2000, pp. 266-276.

Academic Book Reviews

Review of Xinru Liu, *Early Buddhist Society: The World of Gautama Buddha*, in *The Book Review*, Vol. 46, No. 9, 2022, pp. 48-50, ISSN: 0970-4175.

Review of Himanshu Prabha Ray, *The Return of the Buddha: Ancient Symbols for a New Nation*, in *The Book Review*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2016, pp. 9-10, ISSN: 0970-4175.

Review of Simon Brodbeck and Brian Black, eds, *Gender and Narrative in the Mahabharata*, in *Culture and Religion*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 2010, pp. 169-171. ISSN: 1475-5610 (Print) 1475-5629 (Online).

Review of Alf Hiltebeitel, *Rethinking the Mahabharata: A Reader's Guide to the Education of the Dharma King*, in *The Book Review*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 2004, pp. 8-9. ISSN: 0970-4175.

Review of Shereen Ratnagar, *Understanding Harappa: Civilization in the Greater Indus Valley*, in *The Hindu*, 3 June 2001/16 June 2001 (International Edition). No. 28171/75.

Review of Paula Richman, ed., *Questioning Ramayanas: A South Asian Tradition*, in *The Book Review*, Vol. 25, No. 3, 2001, pp. 35-36. ISSN: 0970-4175.

E-lessons (peer reviewed)

Three e-lessons for the ancient India course developed at the Institute of Life Long Learning, University of Delhi, Delhi. (This was part of a Ministry of Human Resource Development, India project to develop e-content for teaching history to university students. The national coordinator of this project was Professor Upinder Singh of the Department of History, University of Delhi.)

My three lessons were on 1) Early Indian notions of history

2) The making of Puranic Hinduism

3) Forms and features of Puranic Hinduism. Published in 2011.

Invited Lectures/ Invited Paper Presentations/ Book Discussion

2025: 'Knowledge systems in India'. Papers presented by Nandini Sundar and Naina Dayal at seminars and a conference organized by the British Association of South Asian Studies (BASAS) and King's College, London.

2025: 'Notes on fake ascetics in the Jatakas'. Talk organized by the Department of History and Archaeology, Shiv Nadar University, Delhi NCR.

2025: 'When a man raises the flag of *dhamma* but conceals his sins: Notes on fake ascetics in the Jatakas'. Paper presented at a workshop on 'Entangled knowledges of the subcontinent: Research and pedagogy'. Organized by the Centre for Comparative Politics and Political Theory and the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

2025: 'When a man raises the flag of *dhamma* but conceals his sins: Notes on fake ascetics in the Jatakas'. Lecture at the School of Arts and Sciences, Ahmedabad University, Ahmedabad.

2025: 'India before Islam: Notes from teaching the history of religion in early India'. Paper presented at the History for Peace Regional Conference. Organized by the Seagull Foundation for the Arts and Vidyashilp Academy, Bangalore.

2024: 'Notes on fake ascetics in the Jatakas'. Paper presented at Miranda House College. Organized by The English Literary Society, Miranda House, University of Delhi.

2023: Discussant for Upinder Singh's *Ancient India: Culture of Contradictions*, Ashoka Book Discussion Series. Organized by the Department of History, Ashoka University, Sonapat.

2023: 'When a man raises the flag of *dhamma* but conceals his sins'. Lecture in the Frontiers of History (International) Lecture Series. India International Centre, New Delhi.

2021: 'When a man raises the flag of *dhamma* but conceals his sins: Notes on fake ascetics in the Jatakas'. Paper presented at an international conference ('Of Thieves and *Theris*, Hunters and Housewives') in honour of Professor Kumkum Roy. Organized by the History Society of Miranda House, University of Delhi.

2019: 'The asceticism of Krishna Dvaipayana and Kanha Dipayana'. Paper presented at an international conference on Religion and Region in Indian History, Organized by The Asiatic Society, Kolkata.

2019: '*Sutas*, *nastikas* and retelling the *Mahabharata*'. Lecture at the Ashoka History Spring Seminar. Organized by the Department of History, Ashoka University, Sonapat.

2018: 'Deconstructing Indian and Pakistani textbooks on our ancient pasts'. Presentation at an international conference on 'Teaching History'. Organized by The Seagull Foundation for the Arts in Kolkata.

2018: 'The epics in an age of religious plurality'. Lecture at the international seminar series at Nalanda University. Organized by the School of Historical Studies, Nalanda University, Rajgir.

2018: '*Sutas*, *nastikas* and retelling the *Mahabharata*'. Paper presented at an international conference in honour of Professor Romila Thapar at the India International Centre, New Delhi. Organized by The Book Review Literary Trust, Kumkum Roy and Naina Dayal.

2017: 'The *sutas* of the *Mahabharata*'. Paper presented at an international conference on 'The Mahabharata and Inter-Asian Cultures'. Organized by the Department of English, University of Delhi, held at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi.

2017: Discussant for papers by R.P. Goldman and Sally J. Sutherland Goldman on the *Uttarakanda* of the *Ramayana* of Valmiki. Organized by the JNU Forum for Mutual Understanding, held at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

2016: Lecture on the Sanskrit epics at Gargi College, University of Delhi. Organized by the English Department of Gargi College, New Delhi.

2015: 'Aspiring to Ramarajya? The epics and good governance in India'. Lecture at the American University, Washington D.C. Organized by The Asian Studies Program, Department of Philosophy and Religion, and School of International Service, American University, Washington D.C.

2015: 'The Sanskrit epics in an age of religious plurality'. The Indu Bhatt Memorial Lecture at Yale University. Organized by the South Asian Studies Council, Yale University.

2015: 'On the *sutas* of the *Mahabharata*'. Lecture at Yale University. Organized by the South Asian Studies Council and the Department of Religious studies, Yale University.

2014: 'On the *sutas* of the *Mahabharata*'. Lecture at the University of California, Berkeley. Organized by the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley.

2014: Lecture on the Mauryas at the University of California, Berkeley. Organized by the Department of History, University of California, Berkeley.

2012: Discussant of a paper presented by Mekhola Gomes on the representation of the *kshatriya* as king in the *Dharmashastras* and Valmiki's *Ramayana* at the International Young Researcher's Conference on 'Writing histories of power/contestation' organized by the History Association, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi held at the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

2010: 'The *sutas* of the *Mahabharata*'. Lecture at the Wednesday Faculty Seminar of the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi held at the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

2010: 'The transmission of brahmanical texts in early India'. Paper presented at an international workshop on 'Travelling cultures of knowledge' organized by the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science and the Zakir Husain Centre for

Educational Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi held at the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

2007: 'Telling the *Mahabharata*: A *sattr* in a holy forest and a theatre of the macabre'. Paper presented at a University Grants Commission sponsored national seminar on the *Mahabharata* held at the Sri Venkateswara College (University of Delhi), New Delhi.

2007: Discussant of a paper presented by Brian Black on the *Mahabharata* at an international seminar on 'Revisiting transitions' organized by the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi held at the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

2005: 'On the premier performances of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*'. Paper presented at a seminar on 'Ancient India: New research' organized on behalf of Manana: Reflections on Indian Civilization by Professor Nayanjot Lahiri and Professor Upinder Singh (both of the Department of History, University of Delhi, Delhi). The seminar was held at the India International Centre, New Delhi.

Editorial Experience

2010: Editor of the e-lessons on ancient India developed at the Institute of Life Long Learning, University of Delhi, Delhi (see above).

2000- 2004: Editorial Assistant, *Studies in History*. (*Studies in History* is an international journal published by Sage Publications, New Delhi/ Thousand Oaks/London.) Edited essays and reviews, communicated with authors around the world and oversaw the production of the journal.

Other Academic/ Educational/ Administrative Work

At St. Stephen's College

Member of the Timetable Committee, 2024-26.

Helped with undergraduate admissions at St. Stephen's College in 2012, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2023 and 2024.

Staff Advisor to the Debating Society, St. Stephen's College, 2021-2025.

Staff Advisor to the History Society, St. Stephen's College, 2017-2021.

At the University of Delhi

Paper setting and evaluation work at the University of Delhi since 2007.

Department Research Committee for selecting PhD candidates at the Department of History, University of Delhi 2016-2019.

Curriculum development: On the Committee to develop 'History of India I' & 'History of India II' (New Courses at the University of Delhi) in 2015-2016.

Other work

One of the organizers (with Ajay Dandekar, Kumkum Roy and Sreedeeep Bhattacharya) of 'Romila in Conversation: Many Pasts, Many Futures' (held online in December 2021).

One of the organizers (with The Book Review Literary Trust and Kumkum Roy) of an international seminar ('Questioning Paradigms, Constructing Histories') in honour of Professor Romila Thapar held at the India International Centre, New Delhi in March 2018.

Reviewer for the *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, *Religions of South Asia*, Permanent Black and Primus.

Advisor for *Bharat ka Itihas: Bhag I* (Trans.: *History of India: Part I*. Textbook in Hindi for Class VI for use in Delhi Government schools), New Delhi: State Council of Educational Research and Training, 2004.