

Dr. MAHESH GOPALAN

Associate Professor
Department of History
St. Stephens College
University of Delhi
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Educational / Technical Qualifications

2012

PhD, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University,

Title of Thesis:

'Southern Coromandel between 1638-1740: European Commercial and Social Participation in the Tamil country from Chandragiri to Nagapattinam'

1999-2001

M. Phil, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University,

Title of Thesis:

'The Portuguese Commercial Enterprise and the Society of Jesus in the Coromandel during 1540-1640'

1997-1999

Masters Degree, Specialisation: Medieval History, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

1994-1997

Bachelors Degree, Specialisation: History, Economics and Political Science, St. Joseph's College of Arts and Sciences, Bangalore University, Bangalore

Linguistic Proficiency

English, Hindi (Advanced), Tamil, Kannada (Spoken)

Broad Areas of Specialization

- Medieval and Early Modern South Asian History
- State and Society in Early Modern South India
- Medieval and Early Modern Urban History
- Medieval and Early Modern Maritime History
- Commercial and Social Histories of the Indian Ocean region
- History of Christianity

Themes of Research Interest

- Early Modern Port Cities in South India
- Maritime Communities in the Early Modern World
- Urban History of Madras

- European Commercial, Cultural and Social Presence in the Indian Ocean Region and South Asia
- History of the English East India Company
- Jesuits in South Asian History
- History of the Anglican and Dutch Reformed Churches in South Asia

Publications

Edited Books:

2016

Pettigrew, William and Gopalan, Mahesh (eds.), *The East India Company, 1609-1857: Essays on Anglo-Indian Connection*, Routledge, New York

Articles in Edited Books:

2016

Maritime Society in an Early Modern Port City: Negotiating Family, Religion and the English Company in Madras, in Pettigrew, William and Mahesh Gopalan, (eds.), *The East India Company, 1609-1857: Essays on Anglo-Indian Connection*, Routledge, New York

2008

War, Movement and Resettlement: The Paravas and the Jesuits in the Seventeenth Century, in Edward Alpers and H. P. Ray (ed.) *Cross Currents and Community Networks: The History of the Indian Ocean World*, Oxford University Press, Delhi

2008

The Jesuits in the southern Coromandel: In the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century, in Yogesh Sharma and Jose Ferreira (ed.) *The Portuguese in Coastal India in the 16th and 17th centuries*, Viva Books, New Delhi.

2008

The Changing Character of the Mission: Francis Xavier, Nobili and the Parava Fishing Community, in Dr. Mata, Carlos and Dr. Kala Acharya (eds.) *St. Francis Xavier: His Times and Legacy*, Somayia Institute Publications, Mumbai.

Articles in Newspapers, Newsletters and Book Reviews:

2025

Indian Christians and the Indian National Movement: From the margins to Mainstream, *Sandesh*, The Diocese of Delhi Newsletter, Volume 7, September 2025

2021

The Same Old Rote Learning, *The Hindu*, April 21

2020

The Lost Voice of the Indian University, *The Hindu*, July 17

2020

Bureaucracy Forgets It Is Staff and Students that Make a University and not Exams, *The Wire*, 19 May

2017

Text and tradition in South India, Velcheru Narayana Rao, review in *Journal of South Asian History and Culture*, July 2017, pp. 240-242

2012

Three Ways to be Alien: Travails and Encounters in the Early Modern World by Sanjay Subrahmanyam
Review, in *Book Review, Volume XXXVI.No. 2 February, 2012*, pp.11-12

2002

TANAP Diary, *IIS Newsletter 27, Spring 2002*

Research Projects Undertaken 2014

“Overseeing and Regulating Urban Growth in 18th century Madras: The English East India Company and the Protestant Church in Madras” May 2014-July 2014 £ 1400/- (Rs.1, 40,000), awarded by the Charles Wallace India Trust

Teaching Experience

Since 2005

Assistant Professor, Department of History, 2005-2018

Associate Professor, Department of History, Since 2018

St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi,

Delhi 110007

July 2004 - April 2007

Assistant Professor, Department of Germanic and Romance Studies, University of Delhi, Delhi (nature of position: Guest Lecturer)

(This paper is taught to BA students studying the German, French, Spanish and Italian languages in the second year of their three year BA course)

2004 - 2005

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi (nature of position: ad-hoc)

Undergraduate Dissertations Supervised:

2020

Diptarka Datta, *Monuments, the State and Communities in India: A Case Study of Some Sultanate and Pre-Sultanate Monuments in Mehrauli, Delhi*

2023

Meg Majumdar, *Agency, Morality, and Substitution: Critiquing Critiques of the Indenture System in the early 20th century* (due to be submitted in May 2023)

2024

Ishan Lal *Reinterpreting the Feminist in Ambedkar*, Co-supervised with Dr. Alphy Geever (department of Philosophy, St Stephen's College, Delhi University Delhi)

2026

Pinju Sanjay, *Labour, Emporia and Transformations: The Impact of Colonial Capitalism on the Indian Ocean network*

D Adithya Rahul, *From Mission to Memory: Tracing St. Francis Xavier's Impact on Coastal Catholic Communities of South Tamil Nadu*

Samuel Ashwin W, *Counter-Appropriation and Musical Hybridity: The Localization of European stringed Instruments in Colonial Contexts.*

Undergraduate Projects Supervised:

2026

Sanath Sabastian, *From Reformation Division to Ecumenical Dialogue: Origins, Development, and Limit of Christian Unity.*

Administrative Positions:

Member, Management Committee and Governing Body, St. Pauls Diocesan School, Jangpura, New Delhi

Academic and Administrative Committees and Responsibilities at St. Stephen's College and in the University of Delhi

2025-2026

Departmental Research Committee, Department of History, St Stephen's College, University of Delhi, Delhi

2024

Deputy Superintendent, Delhi University Examinations, St. Stephen's College, May-June 2024

2024 - 2025, 2020 - 2021, 2016-2017, 2013 - 2014, 2010 - 2011

Faculty Representative, Student Faculty Committee, Department of History, St. Stephen's College

2023 - 2026

Dean Residence, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

2023 - 2026

Convenor College Scrapping Committee, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

2023 - 2026

Member of the Internal and Continuous Assessment Monitoring Committee, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

2022 - 2026

Nodal Officer for SEC, VAC and AEC courses under the NEP-FYUGP, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

2021 - 2026

President, Shakespear Society

2021-2023

Staff Advisor, College Year Book

2021-2023

Coordinator College Time Table Committee

2020 - 2023 & 2005 - 2007

Block Tutor, Mukarji West

2020 (March-December)

Tutor for Admissions, Undergraduate & Post Graduate Admissions St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

2018 (May-July)

Associate Tutor for Admissions, Undergraduate & Post Graduate Admissions St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

2017 - 2026 College Workload Committee

Coordinator (2017-2024)

Member (2024-2026)

2017-2020

Member of the Department Committee of Courses for Honours and Masters program, in the Department of History, University of Delhi

2016

Special invitee to the Committee of Courses (for the revision of the all CBCS courses in History) Department of History, University of Delhi

2015

Member, of the committee overseeing the undergraduate end semester examinations, for the paper "History of Modern Europe 1789-1945" in the Department of History, University of Delhi (for the university examinations November 2015)

2014

Deputy Superintendent, Delhi University Examinations, St. Stephen's College, November- December 2014

2013

Undergraduate and Post Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of History, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi.

2011 - 2016

Course Faculty Coordinator, Engaging with Unequal India, St. Stephen's College

2008 - 2017

Staff Advisor, History Society, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

2008

Undergraduate and Post Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of History, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

Seminars, Conferences and Lectures

2025

War, trade and politics in mid seventeenth century Coromandel presented in National Seminar organised by the Bihar State Archives, "*Indian Warfare, Strategies and Peace Through The Ages*", 23-24 July 2025

2025

Problematising Polity, Society and Urban Spaces: The Official Company Archive and its Impact on History Writing presented in National Seminar organised by the Bihar State Archives, "*History and Archives: The Making of Indian History - Past and Present*", 8-10 February 2025

2024

Narrativising the early modern city, presented a paper in a panel on *Redrawing Global: The Politics of Spatiality.* 'Reflecting on non-Western experiences in the context of global history' in a roundtable discussion titled Towards Inclusive Global Histories: Challenges and Possibilities Organised by the Department of History and Archaeology Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence and Max Weber Forum- South Asian Studies on April 4, 2024

2019

The Historian and the City: Reading the Colonial into the many pasts of Madras, September 12, 2019, Shiv Nadar University, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, India

2018

‘The European Presence in the Tamil Region: Revisiting the English Company and Missionary Archives’ lecture at a workshop, Problems of Research in Medieval India at Centre for Advanced Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India, 17 March 2018

2018

‘Problems of Research in Medieval Indian History Challenges in Researching 16th and 17th century South Indian History’ lecture at a workshop, Problems of Research in Medieval India’ at Centre for Advanced Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India, 17 March 2018

2018

‘The Early Colonial in Nationalist Historiography: Questioning the ‘early modern’ in C. S. Srinivasachari’s ‘History of Madras’, in a conference, Debating the ‘Early Modern’ in South Asian History at Ashoka University, Sonapat, Haryana, India, 9-10 February, 2018

2017

‘Institutionalising a New Moral and Economic Order in Early Modern Madras’, paper presented at a conference, ‘Moralizing Commerce in a Globalized World’ at the German Historical Institute, London, 22-24 July 2017 (International Conference)

2016

‘The Birth of a New Order: Reconfiguring the English Presence in Early Modern Madras’, paper presented in the Colonial Formations Conference, University of Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia, 23-25 November 2016. (International Conference)

2016

‘Reorienting the Gaze: The Protestant church and the English East India Company in early Eighteenth Century Madras’, paper presented in Ecclesiastical History Society, 55th Summer Conference, University of Edinburgh, 26–28 July 2016 (International Conference)

2015

‘Negotiating Trade, Religion and Politics in the Southern Coromandel: The Protestant Missionary Enterprise in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries’, paper presented in a workshop, ‘Sharpening the Edges: instating state and power in Indian Ocean history. An agenda for critical research and teaching, organized by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden, Netherlands, in collaboration with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Department of History, Princeton University, Leiden, 17th August, 2015. (International Conference)

2015

Special Lecture on ‘Democracy and regionalism, lack of reforms, Majoritarianism and Hindu Nationalism’ to undergraduate students from SOKA University, Tokyo at St. Stephen’s College, Delhi on 9th March 2015

2015

Special Lecture on 'Post-colonial triumphalism and post-colonial state' to undergraduate students from SOKA University, Tokyo at St. Stephen's College, Delhi on 10th March 2015

2015

'Making Sense of the Company State: European and Indo-European Society in seventeenth century Madras' paper presented in a seminar 'Anglo-Indian Corporate Connexion from the Seventeenth Century' at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, organized in collaboration with the Political Economies of International Commerce, University of Kent on January 15, 2015 (International Conference)

2014

Special Lecture on Indian History, Culture and Religion in Indian History, to Students from Stanford Business School, Stanford, USA on December 20th, 2014

2014

Special Lecture on 'Post-colonial triumphalism and post-colonial state' to undergraduate students from SOKA University, Tokyo at St. Stephen's College, Delhi on 20th March 2014

2014

Special Lecture on 'Democracy and regionalism, lack of reforms, Majoritarianism and Hindu Nationalism' to undergraduate students from SOKA University, Tokyo at St. Stephen's College, Delhi on 5th March 2014

2012

'Continuity and Change in the southern Coromandel: Protestant Missionary activity in the early eighteenth century' paper presented in a national seminar on 'Revisiting the eighteenth century in Indian History' organized by the UGC-DRS programme of the Department of History & Culture, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi, March 22nd and 23rd, 2012

2012

'Establishing a Protestant missionary enterprise in early eighteenth century Madras: Strategies, Debates, Dilemmas' - a lecture, delivered at Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi on 28.02.2012

2012

Special Lecture on 'History and Culture' in a program titled 'the Discovery of India' to employees of Alue Group, Japan at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, April 20th -2nd May, 2012

2011

'The Protestant Catholic relations in the Southern Coromandel and the Fisheries Coast in the mid seventeenth century' paper presented in a international conference on Christianity in History: Encounters, Engagements and Experiences in India and South Asia, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, February 2011(International Conference)

2011

Special Lecture on 'Indian history and Culture' to undergraduate students from SOKA University, Tokyo at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, 2011

2011

'Francis Xavier and the Jesuit Mission: The Fisheries Coast and South East Asia'. Paper presented in a conference on 'Saint Francis Xavier, a Universal Navarrese and the Jesuit Missionary Enterprise: Elements, Conflicts and Assimilations of two cultures' Organised by the University of Navarra and the University of Delhi, Goa, December 2011. (International Conference)

2007

'The Changing Character of the Mission: Francis Xavier, Nobili and the Parava Fishing Community.' Paper presented in an international conference on the fifth centenary of Francis Xavier titled CENTENARIO DE SAN FRANCISCO JAVIER Congreso internacional sobre San Francisco Javier y su tiempo (Goa, 22-25 enero 2007) Bridging Europe with Asia: Francis Xavier. Fifth Centenary. Organised by the University of Navarra and the University of Delhi. (International Conference)

2007

'Imaging the English Society at Fort St. George in the mid-seventeenth century' Paper presented in a conference on Coastal Histories: The Interface between Maritime Societies and the Environment organised by the DSA program, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, January 2007.

2006

'Debating 'Syncretism': The Jesuit interaction with the Parava fishing community in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Paper presented in the 19th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, Hosted by the IIAS, University of Leiden, Leiden, The Netherlands, June 2006. (International Conference)

2004

The Jesuits in the southern Coromandel: In the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century. Paper presented in a workshop on 'The Portuguese in Coastal India in the 16th and 17th centuries', organised by the DSA program, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, June 9th and 10th 2004.

2003

'A Protestant-Catholic Encounter: In the Southern Coromandel During the Seventeenth century' Paper presented in the 64th Session of the Indian History Congress, Mysore, December 28-30, 2003

2001

'Understanding the Other: Rev. Philip Baldaeus and the Dutch Reformed Church in Jaffna, Mannar and the Fisheries Coast.' Paper presented in a conference titled 'Indo Dutch Histories' organised by the Royal Netherlands Embassy with the Tamil Nadu Archives and the Indian Council for Historical Research, Chennai, December 4-6, 2001. (International Conference)