

Anthropology Colloquia

Spring 2014

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Friendship and Work:

Reading the Lives of Romain Rolland, Madeleine Slade and Gandhi

The paper looks at the way in the friendships which informed the Freedom Movement were marked by introspection and intellectual concerns typical of those who were battling the dominant ideologies of the 1930s whether in Europe or India. The matter of freedom and humanism were essential to their task. They, however, were alert to the ways in which the questions of why their differences were indeed important to them. The question of homespun cloth was a key symbol, for khadi became the idiom by which Gandhi wished to communicate that villages would show modern India the question of survival of farmer, spinner and weaver. The materials of 1942 are still relevant today, as 60 percent Indians remain basically agricultural in their motivations, and Khadi has become an important textile in the contemporary fabric industry, with many new debates which contemplate on world views very different from that offered in an industrialising political rhetoric.

Susan Visvanathan is a sociologist, social anthropologist and a fiction writer. She is well known for her writings on religious dialogue and sociology of religion. Her first book, *Christians of Kerala: History, Belief and Ritual among the Yakoba* (Oxford University Press) is a pathbreaking work in the field of sociology of religion.



Wednesday, April 16

3:30-5:00 pm

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