

# Politics and Theatre in Post-Colonial Spaces

## India as the Case Study: Challenging Hegemonies, Building Resistances and Processes of Decolonisation

### Masterclass with Prof. Dr. Bishnupriya Dutt

Temporal Communities Distinguished Fellow  
of Global Literary Studies

The transition to the post-colonial phase (1947 onwards) meant re-thinking theatre and other performance practices from the perspective of citizenship, subjectivities and the newly emerging public sphere. Focusing on two dominant genres of Indian theatre practices – political theatre (1950s-) and feminist theatre (1980-) – the course will explore the intersections of politics and theatre, review landmark productions and offer readings from post-colonial cultural writings. A growing worldview, cosmopolitanism and solidarities at international levels also created important alternate networks within and after the Cold War period. The current scenario in India with the rise of right-wing fundamentalism and the instrumentalisation of culture converging with the global rise of conservative populism has also compelled theatre makers to adopt a critical counterhegemonic approach and will comprise a critical component of the course – reflecting on contemporary times. The course intends to contribute to re-evaluating existing methodological approaches focusing on the growing research interest in international theatre studies in decolonising the field by reckoning with the ongoing historical legacy of processes of racialisation, exploring the boundaries of cultural exchange, intersectional identities and cultural entanglements.

Please register by **October 9, 2023** by sending an email with your subject area and semester to Maraïke Di Domenica ([international@temporal-communities.de](mailto:international@temporal-communities.de)). A confirmation email will be sent after the registration deadline has passed. Following confirmed registration you will receive preparatory reading material and information about the location.

Image credit: Maya Rao, photo by Thyagarajan (National School of Drama Archive)



**Programme** (Mondays 2 – 4:30 pm)

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**October 16, 2023:** *Performing citizenship: The post-colonial moment of departure / arrival*

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**October 23, 2023:** *Activism, theatre and subjectivities*

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**October 30, 2023:** *Crisis of democracy: Theatre's antagonism towards the state*

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**November 6, 2023:** *Post-war / post-colonial world: Internationalism, multinationalism and solidarities*

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**November 13, 2023:** *Difficult pasts: Historicising the colonial and post-colonial pasts: Museums and theatre in contestations*

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**November 20, 2023:** *The resurgence of street theatres: A new aesthetics of resistance, strikes, protests in the face of neoliberalism*

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**November 27, 2023:** *Cultural politics and Brecht: Deconstructing canons and collaborative dialogues*

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**December 4, 2023:** *Activism in contemporary India: Maya Rao and feminist agit-prop*

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**December 11, 2023:** *Inclusions and exclusions in theatrical imagination: Migrations and the margins*

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**December 18, 2023:** *Decolonising theatre, redressing post-colonial alienations*

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