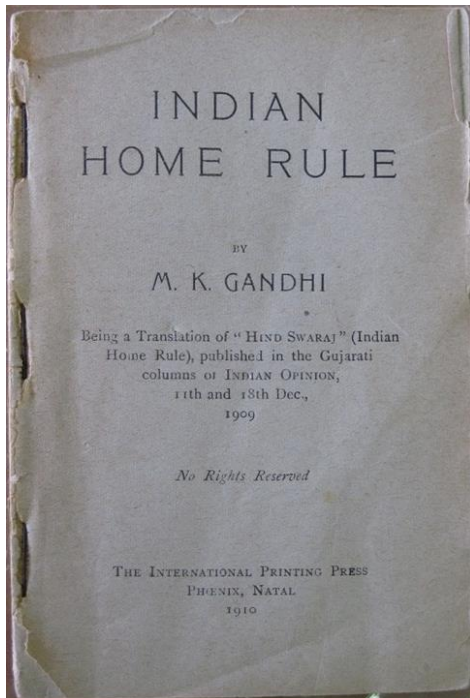




Asian Studies Centre
St Antony's College, University of Oxford
South Asia Seminar, Week 1



An Eminent Victorian: Gandhi and the Crisis of Liberal Democracy in the 19th Century



Dilip M. Menon

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Director, Centre for Indian Studies in Africa,
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Tuesday April 25th, 2 p.m.
Fellows' Dining Room,
St Antony's College

Gandhi's lauded text *Hind Swaraj* is born of and located within the 19th century crisis of liberal democracy and its resolutions of an intimate animosity towards the masses.

Gandhi shares considerable terrain with Indian liberals writing in the late 19th and early 20th century; the text can be seen as articulating a certain kind of conservatism that attempts to think with "recovering liberties" that Christopher Bayly charts in all its nuances of a global historicism, statistical liberalism and a benign sociology. While Gandhi draws upon this burgeoning corpus of liberal thought in India, his work is characterized by its typical impatience with ideas, and a method that combines random observation with apodictic statements. The *Hind Swaraj* resisted many of the impulses of Indian liberalism, even when thinking from within it, in its attempt to forge a politics of indigeneity.

Dilip M. Menon is the Mellon Chair in Indian Studies and the Director of the Centre for Indian Studies in Africa, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa. He works on the social and intellectual history of the colonial world and the global south. He is finishing a book on the writing of history in colonial India between 1860 and 1960.

All are welcome

Convenor: Dr Faisal Devji

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Picture: An image of the first page of the first edition of the English translation (1910) of Hind Swaraj (1909). Public domain