

Dr. Shriya Patnaik, PhD | CV

Institutional Profiles: <https://www.graduateinstitute.ch/discover-institute/shriya-patnaik> | <https://worldhistory.columbia.edu/content/shriya-patnaik>
Project Pages: <https://data.snf.ch/grants/grant/207197> | https://www.graduateinstitute.ch/research-centres/gender-centre/re-constructing-and-re-imagining-matriarchal-community-mahari?fbclid=IwAR3DhETfytILaR1ywEeYdMCBdxgRwc9mCnwlwu_Iv6L6eP8Whae9tABCHGg
OrcID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1503-3975>
Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=XiRPIb4AAAAJ&hl=en>
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/shriyapatnaik/>
Email: shriya.patnaik@graduateinstitute.ch | sp3395@columbia.edu
Languages: English, Hindi, Oriya (Full Proficiency); Sanskrit (Medium-level Proficiency); French (Beginner Level)

EDUCATION

GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (August 2019-June 2025)

PhD in International History and Politics (Specialization in Gender Studies)

- Swiss National Science Foundation Doc.Ch Fellow (2022-2025): <https://data.snf.ch/grants/grant/207197>
- Swiss Government Excellence Scholar (2020-2022)
- Doctoral Community Scholar (2019-2020): <https://graduateinstitute.ch/communications/news/shriya-patnaik-receives-graduate-institute-community-scholarship>
- [Graduate Institute Gender Centre Affiliate](#), [Graduate Institute Global Migration Centre Affiliate](#)
- [Grade: Summa cum Laude \(with No Corrections Required\)](#)

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY- LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (August 2015-September 2017)

Master of Arts, Master of Science Dual Degree Program (International History) GPA: 3.8/4; Distinction

CORNELL UNIVERSITY (Cornell Tata Scholar)

Bachelor of Arts (History, Political Science)

(August 2010-May 2014)

GPA: 3.9/4; Magna Cum Laude Honors

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD (MANSFIELD COLLEGE)

Study Abroad Program (History, Political Science)

(October 2012-June 2013)

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS & PODCASTS

- [Shriya Patnaik and Sinjini Chatterjee, Co-Editors of “South Asia’s Courtesan, Hereditary, and Temple Performers: Expanding Discourse and Disrupting Histories,” *Dance Chronicle* Journal – Special Issue \(2026, Routledge-Taylor & Francis, forthcoming\). <https://iftr.org/call-for-papers-a-special-issue-of-dance-chronicle/>](#)
- Shriya Patnaik, “Voicing the Last Maharis: Oral Testimonies and the Politics of Devadasi Sexual Regulation Projects in Colonial and Postcolonial India,” *Dance Chronicle* – Special Issue (2026, Taylor & Francis).
- Shriya Patnaik, “The Last Maharis: A Historical Analysis of the Community’s Extinction,” Geneva Graduate Institute Research Office *Research in Progress Series* Podcast (2025): [SoundCloud: https://soundcloud.com/ro_iheid/the-last-maharis-a-historical-analysis-of-the-communitys-extinction, YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJfK7ZRS_uA]
- Shriya Patnaik, “Mutating Modalities of Performative Culture and Social Regulation in Conceptualizing Histories of *Tawaifs* in Colonial and Postcolonial India,” Book Chapter in Anurima Banerji, Royona Mitra and Jasmine Johnson (eds), *Oxford Handbook of Dance Praxis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2025, forthcoming).
- Shriya Patnaik, “The Colonial Policing of the Devadasi System: Deconstructing Exclusionary Prostitution Legislation and Women’s Sexual Regulation Projects in 19th and 20th Century British India,” Book Chapter in Guillaume Carnino, Alexandre Disser, Liliane Hilaire-Perez and Anaël Marrec (eds), *National Historiographies of Techniques: At the Epistemological Core of Global History of Techniques* (Paris: Presses des Mines, 2025).
- Shriya Patnaik, “[Tracing Historical Disruptions in the Sex Worker Rights Movement in Late Colonial and Postcolonial India through Testimonies from within the Community](#),” Book Chapter in Catherine Phipps (eds) *Histories of Sex Work Around the World* (New York: Routledge, 2024): pp. 188-213. (<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003386612-12>).

- Shriya Patnaik, “[Marginalizing the Matriarchal, Minority Subject: A Study of the Policing and Disenfranchisement of the Mahari-Devadasi of Orissa in Colonial India](#),” Book Chapter in R. Srinivasan (eds) *Borders: Physical, Social and Cultural* (New Delhi: HOW Academics, 2024): pp. 111-141. ISSN 978-93-95522-94-6.
- Shriya Patnaik, “[Exploring the Contested and Controversial Nature of the Sex Industry in India: Experiential Encounters by Sex-Workers from the Periphery](#),” Book Chapter in Abhiruchi Ojha and Pramod Jaiswal (eds) *South Asian Women and International Relations* (Singapore: Springer-Palgrave Macmillan, 2023): pp. 261-287. (https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-9426-5_15)
- Shriya Patnaik, “[Sex-workers Defying Patriarchy and Challenging State Reform and Rehabilitation Projects in India: Voices from the Margins](#),” *Feminist Encounters: A Journal of Critical Studies in Culture and Politics*, Special Issue on Gender Activism in India, 7:1 (2023): <https://doi.org/10.20897/femenc/12883>
- Shriya Patnaik, “[Marginalizing the Matriarchal, Minority Subject: A Critical Analysis of Human Rights and Women’s Reform Projects in Colonial and Postcolonial India through the Case-Study of the ‘Mahari-Devadasi’](#),” *Electronic Journal of Social and Strategic Studies*, Special Issue (2021). (DOI: 10.47362/EJSSS.2021.2105)
- Shriya Patnaik, “[The Invisible Voices of India’s Informal Sector Sex Workers](#),” *LSE South Asia Centre Blog* (2021): https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2021/03/22/the-invisible-voices-of-indias-informal-sector-sex-workers/?fbclid=IwAR3Z3Zr4yirSxGjAxxrAj7bh-7g3cSgvX0QTXDNNZSuIs_Mbq11pX79Vw2tI
- Shriya Patnaik, “[The Lost Life Stories of Mahari-Devadasis in Postcolonial India \(1947-2015\)](#),” *Borderlines* (2021): https://www.borderlines-cssaame.org/posts/2021/5/24/the-lost-life-stories-of-mahari-devadasis-in-postcolonial-india?fbclid=IwAR2XgDC9WpEwaG1fj2Ohj_KvqmNVlrEMb5SYaPsHhgrtEI16LU5zTlgFv0M
- Shriya Patnaik, “[The Missing Life Stories of India’s Sex Workers](#),” *Graduate Institute Gender Centre* (2020): <https://www.graduateinstitute.ch/communications/news/missing-life-stories-indias-sex-workers?fbclid=IwAR1EBjCvP1f5NlSei-4iFhpcvHa4gXs2w-iphGuxaCORnAYrPRJxv42vG0>
- Shriya Patnaik, Swiss Network of International Studies Podcast (2021): <https://soundcloud.com/snisgeneva/snis-io-stipend-interview-with-shriya-patnaik>

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS & PRESENTATIONS

- Panelist, for Panel “Performance and Gender After Empire,” *European Conference on South Asian Studies* (October 2025, Heidelberg). Paper Title: “Exploring Historical Disruptions in the Quotidian Practices of Mahari Temple-Dancers in Postcolonial Odisha, while Juxtaposed with Oral Testimonies from the Community.”
- Panelist, “Odisha-Beyond Jagannath,” *Madison 53rd Annual Conference on South Asia* (October 2025, Madison).
- Moderator at Conference on *Odissi Odyssey: Novel Research Perspectives* (Online, September 2024).
- Public Lecture at *Heidelberg University – South Asia Institute Colloquium Series* (Heidelberg, May 2024).
- Presenter at *LSE Inequalities Conference* themed on Labour Inequalities Bound In Histories Of The Colonial And Postcolonial (London School of Economics and Political Science, May 2024).
- Organizer and Moderator at the *Expert Lecture Series with Professor Philippa Levine, “The Empire Has No Clothes: Naked Imaginings, Colonial Obsessions.”* (Geneva Graduate Institute Gender Centre, March 2024).
- Co-organizer of the Roundtable Session – “[Problematizing Depictions of Female Temple/Hereditary/Courtesan Performing Communities vis-a-vis histories of Performativity, Sexuality, Subalternity, and Human Rights Frameworks in Colonial and Postcolonial India](#),” Roundtable at *Madison 51st Annual Conference on South Asia* (October 2023, Madison).
- Panelist at *South Asian Anthropologists’ Group (SAAG) Conference* (September 2023, SOAS, London).
- *Panelist* at *Pierre Du Bois Conference – “Women and Children as Sites of Intervention.”* (October 2023, Geneva).
- Panelist at Conference on *National Historiographies of Techniques – Techniques and Production in History* (September 2023, Université Paris Cité).
- Presenter at *Cambridge Cultural History Workshop* (June 2023, University of Cambridge).
- Moderator at *University of Geneva Conference – Addressing Recent Debates on Colonialism and Uyghur History* (November 2022, University of Geneva).
- Presenter at *American Comparative Literature Association – Literature after Rights Conference, Panel on “Activism Beyond Rights.”* (June 2022, online).
- Panelist at *Harvard International History Conference – Indian Ocean Worlds* (March 2022, Harvard University).

- Presenter at Freie University Conference, *Gender, Empire, Expansion - Imperial Legitimacy and Gendered Conduct since the Eighteenth Century* (February 2022; Freie University, Berlin).
- Panelist at [Cambridge Politico - Intellectual History Workshop on Twentieth Century India](#), University of Cambridge (June 2021, online). Panel: “Interrogating the everyday ‘Political’ through Caste, Class and Gender”.
- Presenter at [Oral History Association Conference](#) – Panel: “Dissident Women: Re-imagining and Re-Performing Gender Through Life Narratives”. North American Oral History Association (October 2021, online).
- Expert Speaker with Professor Nicole Bourbonnais at *Graduate Institute Global Health Centre Roundtable Panel* (April 2021): “Decolonizing Global Health: Examining the Legacies of Colonialism”.
- Presenter at [Brian Bertoti 24th Annual History Conference](#): Virginia Tech University, (March 2021, online): “Shifting Modes of Collective Memory and Popular Culture in the Re-construction and Re-imagination of *Mahari-Devadasis*: A Critical Analysis of Gender, Subalternity and Human Rights Projects in 20th Century India.”
- Presenter at [Cambridge World History Workshop](#), University of Cambridge (December 2020, online). Panel: “Gender & Feminism Across Empire”.
- Presenter at [Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs](#) (Michigan State University: November 2020, online).
- Presenter at [Southeast World History Association Conference](#) (Arkansas Tech University: November 2020).
- Discussant in Seminar, “Feminist Movements in India” (*Brookings Institution India Centre*: October 2018).

GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS, & AWARDS

- Laura Bassi Scholarship – Bassi Foundation Junior Academic Fellow (2025-2026)
- [Swiss National Science Foundation Doc.Ch Fellow \(2022-2024\)](#)
- Swiss National Science Foundation Gender Equality Grant (2022-2024)
- Swiss National Science Foundation Project Completion Grant (2024)
- Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship – FCS Switzerland Government (2020-2022)
- Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences Conference Travel Grant (2023)
- Swiss Network of International Studies International Organizations Research Stipend – PhD Fellow (2021)
- North American Oral History Association Conference Grant (2021)
- Pierre Du Bois Foundation Research Grant (2021)
- [Geneva Graduate Institute Community Scholarship \(2019-2020\)](#)
- London School of Economics Postgraduate Merit Scholarship (2016-2017)
- Davis Peace Projects Award (2016)
- Service Fellowship – Odisha State Government (2016)
- Columbia University Graduate Teaching Scholarship (2016)
- Columbia University Dean’s List (2016)
- Columbia University Alliance Fellowship (2015)
- Women’s International Leadership Award – International House, New York (2015)
- Cornell University Anne Macintyre Litchfield History Award (2014)
- Cornell University Cornelis W. Dekiewet History Award (2013)
- Cornell University Dean’s List (2011-2014)
- Cornell University Tata Scholar (Tata Trust India, 2010-2014)

WORK EXPERIENCE

PIERRE DU BOUS FOUNDATION

Geneva, Switzerland (January 2024-Present)

Associate Researcher: <https://www.fondation-pierredubois.ch/associate-researchers/shriya-patnaik/>

UTKAL UNIVERSITY

Bhubaneswar, Odisha (January 2025-Present)

Adjunct Lecturer for the Department of History

- Deliver online and in-person guest lectures for the following courses for the University’s Department of History (2-3 lectures per course per semester):
 (1) History of the Women’s Rights Movement in Postcolonial India: 1947 to the Present

(2) Introduction to the Cultural Heritage of Odisha

(3) Introduction to Empire and Colonialism in the Indian Subcontinent

- Prepare reading lists for my delivered lectures; formulate essay assignment topics with the course professors.
- Collaborate with departmental faculty to ensure that my lectures align with the course's curricular goals and effectively enhance students' research, learning, and writing outcomes.
- Work with the department faculty to determine coursework, class presentations, and writing assignment topics.

DANCE CHRONICLE JOURNAL: <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/ldnc20> (March 2025-Present)

Editorial Board Member

- Peer Reviewer for the Journal's submitted articles; work to identify pertinent topics and appropriate authors for the journal's special issues, with the possibility of engaging them as guest editors when appropriate.
- Co-Editor of Journal's Special Issue, "South Asia's Courtesan, Hereditary, and Temple Performers: Expanding Discourse and Disrupting Histories": <https://iftr.org/call-for-papers-a-special-issue-of-dance-chronicle/>

GENEVA GRADUATE INSTITUTE (IHEID)

Geneva, Switzerland (August 2021-June 2022)

Teaching Assistant for: (1) International History and Politics, (2) International and Development Studies Departments

SWISS NETWORK FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Geneva, Switzerland (March 2021-July 2021)

Doctoral Research Fellow

The SNIS International Organisation research stipend for scholars is an opportunity aimed at promoting human rights research on International Organisations. As part of this grant, I worked with the International Labour Organization (ILO) archives in Geneva on laws pertaining to sex-worker rights, international trafficking norms, and civil society movements in postcolonial India as a part of my doctoral research. During this opportunity, I also prepared a podcast of my work: <https://soundcloud.com/snisgeneva/snis-io-stipend-interview-with-shriya-patnaik>

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION (INDIA CENTER)

New Delhi, India (July 2018-July 2019)

Research and Development Officer

- Coordinated the Research Director's projects for Gender and Education related research publications and policy papers; Wrote Policy Reports on Gender, Education and Women's Rights developmental initiatives in India.
- Managed dissemination of research, fundraising and outreach for the Brookings Institution's India Office.
- Worked with Research Fellows and Scholars on: Proposal-writing, Concept Papers and Utilization Certificates.
- Supported the Chairman's outreach and fundraising efforts; Prepared grants for funding bodies and foundations.
- Oversaw development strategy especially with regards to Gender, Education and Human Rights related research.
- Liaised with the Brookings Institution USA's Development team on Gender and Education research projects.

UGAM EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Hazaribag, Jharkhand (October 2017-June 2018)

Outreach and Education-Development Consultant

- Directed the Field Research and Teacher Training teams to help reduce the lack of opportunities and barriers to education experienced by backward caste and tribal communities in Jharkhand.
- Organized teacher training workshops and student assessments for greater capacity building in district schools.
- Conducted surveys, designed Monitoring & Evaluation tools to assess impact on learning methodologies.

SAI SEVA GRAM (an NGO)

Cuttack, India (June 2016-October 2017)

Co-Founder and Project Manager

- As part of the internationally acclaimed [Davis Projects for Peace Award](#), this initiative helped build a robust healthcare, psychological services, educational and vocational training program tailored to the needs of homeless and trafficked children from the railway stations of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar in Odisha.
- Worked with policymakers from the *Odisha State Government (Department of Women & Child Development)* to set up an NGO to rehabilitate homeless and trafficked victims living on the railway stations of Odisha, India.
- Collaborated with *Save the Children* NGO to introduce scholarship schemes and educational loans to assist children enroll into schools and vocational training programs. Successfully raised funds and donor grants as part of the CSR initiatives of the Tata and Birla Groups; recruited social workers for the continuation of the NGO.

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

New York (October 2015-July 2016)

Legislative Research Assistant

- Conducted policy research pertaining to socio-economic and resource disparities in the K-12 education system.
- Helped in the development of a Grant Management Database towards donor identification and sponsorship of education programs at low-income neighborhood schools across New York boroughs.
- Designed and implemented a Monitoring and Evaluation System to assess and improve course curricula, scaling systems and standardized testing performances amidst high-school students across New York City schools.

COLUMBIA RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY

New York (January 2016-July 2016)

Archival Research Assistant

- Digitized and archived rare manuscripts collections for the *Butler Library South Asia Collections* and *Digital Humanities Center*, pertaining to the indigenous literature, folk cultures, and oral histories of indigenous groups.
- Recorded oral, historical, linguistic, socio-cultural and anthropological data on the preservation of minority group cultures and indigenous tribal communities from across Indian regions onto the Columbia library database.
- Curated human rights reports for social policy research at Columbia's *School of International and Public Affairs*.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SIPA

New York (September 2015-June 2016)

Graduate Teaching Assistant

- TA for the Columbia School of International and Public Affairs Courses: **(1) INAF U6143 Gender, Globalization, and Human Rights; (2) INAF U6960 Gender-Based Violence against Women**. Helped course instructors with admin work, research support, handling course content and assigned readings on *CourseWorks*.

CENTRE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

New Delhi, India (October 2014-August 2015)

Research Assistant

- Prepared questionnaires, scraped survey results, analyzed qualitative data, and wrote policy reports on infrastructural poverty and social welfare in slum districts in the National Capital Region.
- Collated data to evaluate causal factors for the skewed male-female sex ratio in rural villages of North India, as well as conducted rigorous impact evaluations to ascertain the effectiveness of education policy.

SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

New Delhi, India (June 2013-August 2013)

Legal Intern

- Researched on Section 372, 373 & 374 of the Penal Code and rights of trafficked persons under UN protocols.
- Attended court sessions pertaining to human rights, drafted case reports under a Senior Human Rights Advocate.
- Conducted case law research on women and child rights pertaining to cases of child labour, domestic violence and sexual abuse under legal mechanisms and United Nations protocols implemented in India.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA-MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS New Delhi, India (June 2012-September 2012)

Research and Development Intern

- Worked in a team of 5 Research Assistants on a project to combat indentured labour trafficking, along with the skewed male-female ratio in rural districts of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh; Conducted Impact Evaluations.
- Administered fieldwork questionnaires, baseline surveys, and statistical surveys on legal and occupational avenues to redress rights of trafficked victims and rehabilitate them into mainstream society.

CORNELL LANGUAGE ACQUISITION LAB

Ithaca, NY (January 2011-May 2014)

Research Assistant

- Archived, digitized, and transcribed Hindi and Oriya natural speech data from adolescents to evaluate the influence of environmental markers on language learning; this data is now used for linguistic studies across Cornell.
- Developed modules towards language-training; Transcribed audio files using data analysis software.
- Conducted case-studies and impact evaluations to strengthen the effectiveness of speech-learning.

MEMBERSHIPS IN SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES; OTHER RESEARCH ROLES

- [Research Scholar at United Nations International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation Project](#)
- [PhD Member – Conférence Universitaire de la Suisse Occidentale \(CUSO\)](#)
- [Research Scholar – Women Also Know History Research Forum](#)
- Research Assistant under Professor Satya Mohanty – *Cornell Future of Minority Studies Project*