



Hirsh Sawhney: Mahasweta Devi and the Devastation of the Indigenous Peoples of India

Date: Tuesday, 5th November 2019

Time: 12:00 - 14:00

Venue: Building 1483, Room 354, Nobelparken

Based on his current non-fiction book project, which has been, in part, inspired by the style and structure of nonfiction books by Maggie Nelson, Ryszard Kapuscinski, and Jamaica Kincaid, this talk traces US-based Hirsh Sawhney's 2005 journey from the city of Calcutta to a remote part of the eastern Indian state of Orissa, where indigenous peoples are being devastated by multinational corporations and government paramilitary forces, which seek to extract aluminium from their mineral rich lands. This journey to Orissa was prompted by his reading of the acclaimed Bengali writer Mahasweta Devi, whose stories and novels documented the plight of these peoples. The talk is also a personal meditation on literature, class, inequality, and South Asian culture, one that contemplates the formation and utility of the particularized hyphenated identities around which people organize themselves in North America.

Hirsh Sawhney is Assistant Professor of English at Wesleyan University, USA. He is also the author of a novel, *South Haven*, which was a 2016 Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers Pick and was nominated the 2017 DSC Prize for South Asian Literature. The book was shortlisted for the Shakti Bhatt First Book Award and the Tata LitLive First Book Award. His writing has appeared in the Times Literary Supplement, the New York Times Book Review, the Harvard Review, the Guardian, the Indian Express, the Financial Times, and numerous other periodicals. Hirsh is the editor of *Delhi Noir*, a critically-acclaimed anthology of original fiction.

Hosted by Department of English and Department of Global Studies, Aarhus University.