

MESAAS Graduate Student Conference 2024: *Extra/ordinary*

April 18-19, 2024

The Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies (MESAAS) at Columbia University is pleased to announce its annual Graduate Student Conference to be held on 18th and 19th of April, 2024. This conference is a space for graduate scholars, activists, artists, and others to think through colonial systems and confront complex questions of politics, ethics, history, language, and solidarity.

Our conference this year aims to investigate the *Extra/ordinary* as a category and rhetoric of socio political, historical and cultural thought. What makes a particular event, invention, time, war, crisis, or phenomenon extraordinary? On the contrary, what is relegated to the realm of the ordinary? During a time of multiple compounding crises, where must we look, focus and thoughtfully respond? Is it helpful to highlight the multiplicity of crises or is our crisis-ridden world best understood through an overarching analytical framework?

In order to pursue these questions, we must also ask what we mean by the extraordinary and the ordinary, and excavate the powers that construct these categories across various settings: academic, artistic, practical, etc. In what ways does the extraordinary contrast with the ordinary, what does each position offer, and what possibilities are opened and foreclosed by reorienting from one to the other? Does the classification of a time as ordinary mask persistent everyday violence?

We encourage papers and presentations which speak to our theme. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- (Re)presentation
- Textual Genealogies & Peripheries
- Conceptual History
- Translation and Untranslatability
- Practices of the Everyday: Food, Rest, & Consumption
- Decolonial Aesthetics
- Conceiving Ruptures & Continuities

This conference will be held on Zoom, with some in-person components for those in the New York City area.

Please submit your abstracts for a 20-minute presentation by the 20th of February, 2023 to this link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Yqh5_ZS3zOHNwUMVQLOLIchohCn4zdIQ1j00nvvvEFc/edit

The abstracts should be no longer than 350 - 400 words. Please include a short biography of no more than 100 words in your submission. Notification of paper acceptance will be sent by mid-March.

If accepted, final papers are due April 5th. You can follow the conference on our Twitter page:

https://twitter.com/MESAAS_GSA

Please direct any questions to the following email: mesaasgraduateconference@gmail.com

We look forward to welcoming you to our conference.

Warmly,

MESAAS Graduate Student Conference 2024 Organizing Committee