

# India, China, and the World: A Connected History

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**Prof. Tansen Sen**

Director of the Center for Global Asia at NYU Shanghai

## **Abstract:**

By focusing on the early material exchanges, transmissions of knowledge and technologies between ancient India and ancient China; the networks of exchange during the colonial period; and some of the less-known facets of interactions between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China, this presentation contends that the analysis of India-China connections must extend beyond the traditional frameworks of nation-states or bilateralism. Instead, it is proposed that that a wide canvas of space, people, objects, sources, and timeframe is needed to fully comprehend the interactions between India and China in the past and during the contemporary period. It is argued that these interactions were multidirectional, involved people from diverse parts of the world, and were not constrained by the entities called "India" and "China." The presentation also examines the ideas of "connected histories," "circulatory connections," "convergence," "contact zones," and "disjuncture" as the conceptual methods for studying transregional and transcultural connections and exchanges.

## **About the Speaker:**

**Tansen Sen** is Professor of History and the Director of the Center for Global Asia at NYU Shanghai, and Global Network Professor at New York University. Previously he was a faculty at the City University of New York and the founding head of the Nalanda Sriwijaya Center at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore. He is the author of *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600-1400* (2003; 2016) and *India, China, and the World: A Connected History* (2017; 2018). He has co-authored (with Victor H. Mair) *Traditional China in Asian and World History* (2012), edited *Buddhism across Asia: Networks of Material, Cultural and Intellectual Exchange* (2014), and co-edited (with Burkhard Schnepel) *Travelling Pasts: The Politics of Cultural Heritage in the Indian Ocean World* (forthcoming), and (with Brian Tsui) *Beyond Pan-Asianism: Connecting China and India, 1840s-1960s* (under review). He is currently working on a book about Zheng He's maritime expeditions in the early fifteenth century, a monograph on Jawaharlal Nehru and China, and co-editing (with Engseng Ho) the *Cambridge History of the Indian Ocean*, volume 1.