

The 2009-2010 Klopsteg seminar series in  
SCIENCE IN HUMAN CULTURE presents:



# KAPIL RAJ

Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris

“Circulation as a problem for the history  
of science: constructing knowledge in the  
early modern world”

MONDAY  
MARCH 1,  
2010  
4:00 -  
5:30 PM

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HAGSTRUM  
ROOM  
UNIVERSITY  
HALL 201  
EVANSTON  
CAMPUS

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**ABSTRACT:** In order to reconcile modern science's claim to be universal and European at the same time, historians of science have essentially had recourse to one of two strategies, the Needhamian one to assume a continuity between non-western knowledge traditions and modern science, or the more widely spread diffusionist one. At the same time, recent research in science studies has brought to the fore the immense difficulties involved in making scientific objects travel any distance. based on case studies of early modern scientific practices, this talk will try and bring to light the crucial role of circulation in the making and reconfiguration of scientific knowledge.

**BIO:** Kapil Raj is Directeur d'études (professor) at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris and co-chair of the Alexander Koyré Centre for the history of science. His research questions the commonly held assumption of the western origins of modern science and, instead, examines its making as a global and mediated process. His recent book, *Relocating Modern Science* (2007) focuses on the role of circulation and the encounter between South Asian and European skills and knowledges in the emergence of important parts of what are called the modern sciences. He had recently co-edited *The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770-1820* (2009) and is currently engaged in researching for his next book on the urban and knowledge dynamics of Calcutta in the 18th century.

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