The Indian Novel as an Agent of History

Tuesday, Oct. 22
5:00-6:30 PM
302 Schaeffer Hall

Presented by: Chandras Choudhury

Chandras Choudhury is an Indian novelist based in New Delhi. His first novel, Arzee the Dwarf (2009), was chosen by World Literature Today as one of "60 Essential Works of Modern Indian Literature in English."

What happened when the Indian novel met Indian history? From the mid-19th century onwards, the novel opened out a new way for writers and readers to contemplate the history of the civilization and social order to which they belonged. Gradually, Indian novelists began to perceive that with all the imaginative and analytical narrative resources at their disposal, they could write complex stories that, inflected by a private and sometimes visionary scheme of values, sought to be slightly in advance of history, not just in step with it. The Indian novel became, like Indian democracy, a new site of freedom and idealism within Indian history. As democracy sought to create a new social contract, so the Indian novel sought to both find and form a new kind of reader/citizen.

This event is co-sponsored by the South Asian Studies Program in International Programs and the International Writing Program.