

# South-south migrations under colonisation and their sociolinguistic effects



**By : Rajend Mesthrie**

Large scale movements of indentured workers and accompanying free traders occurred in the 19<sup>th</sup> century from Asia to European colonies in the aftermath of the abolition of slavery. The focus of this talk is on linguistic and cultural change evident as migrants interacted with each other in new ways and adapted to host societies in the Caribbean, Fiji, South Africa and elsewhere.

Insights on language maintenance, change and loss will be drawn from past research on varieties of Bhojpuri-Hindi (of North India) and Tamil (of South India) in Kwazulu-Natal, as well as present research on Gujarati (the language that Gandhi actively used for twenty years in South Africa) and Kokni a lesser-known but highly valued heritage language of Cape Town for over a century.

Rajend Mesthrie is Professor of linguistics at UCT and holder of a SARCHI chair on Migration, Language & Social Change. Among the positions that he has held in the past are Head of the Linguistics section at UCT, President of the Linguistics Society of South Africa, and editor of *English Today*. He holds an A-rating from the NRF in the field of linguistics and sociolinguistics.

**Tuesday 16 May**

**18.00–19.00**

**LT3 Kramer Building,**

**Middle Campus, UCT**

**R100 (full fee); R50 (staff); Student (R30)**

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