

SCHOOL OF SANSKRIT, PHILOSOPHY AND INDIC STUDIES • GOA UNIVERSITY

“DOES SMARTPHONE ACT LIKE A ROSARY?”
BYUNG-CHUL HAN, SZYMON WRÓBEL
AND MAGGI SAVIN-BADEN

20 OCTOBER 2023, FRIDAY
3:00–5:00 PM

An online guest lecture by

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ABSTRACT

Big data, especially all personal data, is accumulated by surveillance platforms and acts as an all-time and all-out panopticon, argues Byung-Chul Han. He had allegorically put it as “smartphone as Rosary” where we confess before an invisible panopticon and also submit ourselves to such control and surveillance on our own free will. Byung-Chul Han argued that we use our freedom to lose it in the name of being free to do so. The torture chambers are replaced by acceptance of surveillance where one simultaneously confesses and agrees to be watched over and regulated, which Byung-Chul Han termed as psychopolitical programming that uses new gadgets like smartphones to turn human subjects into willing manouverers and manipulators to enjoy the freedom of being surveilled. “Lateral surveillance” keeps track of each others’ lives by way of mutually engaged spying for our own willing good of telepresence and in our postdigital life, as characterised by Maggi Savin-Baden and Szymon Wróbel. The presentation decodes this idea of willing acceptance of postdigital continuity and acceptance of surveillance as a way of life.

BIO

Prof. Prasenjit Biswas is a Professor of Philosophy at North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, since 2011. His specialisations include Phenomenology and Continental Philosophy, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of North East Indian Communities and Tribes, Contemporary Indian Philosophy, and Consciousness Studies. He is also an independent political analyst and commentator. He taught Philosophy at IIT Dhanbad, IIT Bombay, IIT Guwahati, and Assam University as his previous assignments. He has been visiting fellow at Cambridge University, TISS Mumbai, JNU, Rabindra Bharati University, Paderborn University, and University of Tartu. A widely read and travelled scholar, he looks after the newly created Office of International Affairs at NEHU, Shillong. He is a recipient of Keast Lion Residential Scholarship at Wayne State University, USA, and received Doctoral Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Scholarship of Government of India.