

**Alka Raman**  
[a.p.raman@lse.ac.uk](mailto:a.p.raman@lse.ac.uk)  
+44(0)7894667123  
Department of Economic History, LSE  
Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE  
[www.alkaraman.com](http://www.alkaraman.com)

## Employment

**Postan Fellow in Economic History**, Economic History Society, in affiliation with Institute of Historical Research and Victoria and Albert Museum, London 2021-2022

## Doctoral Research

Did imitations of Indian cotton textiles influence industrialisation in the British cotton industry? My doctoral research has assessed the impact of the imitation of pre-industrial Indian cotton textiles on the technological trajectory of mechanisation in the British cotton industry from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century till the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The study has shown that imitations of Indian printed and painted cottons – the benchmark cotton goods of the period – steered the growth of the British cotton industry on a specific trajectory of mechanical innovations, shaped by the quest to match the cloth and print quality of Indian cottons. Using a material evidence and digital, scientific experiments-based approach, I demonstrate that the introduction of Indian cottons into Western Europe stimulated and intensified the evolutionary process of technological change via material exchange, knowledge transfer and through the benchmark product itself, which contained the knowledge necessary for its replication, setting the course of mechanisation along a specific trajectory, and triggering modern economic growth through the first industrial revolution.

## Education

- **PhD in Economic History**, Department of Economic History, London School of Economics and Political Science. Thesis: '*Learning from the Muse: Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization*', funded by LSE PhD Studentship submitted August 2021
- **MSc Economic History (Research)**, with Distinction, London School of Economics and Political Science 2016–2017
- **PhD in Political Science**, University of Delhi, India. PhD titled '*Chinese Foreign Policy and the Sino-Indian Border Dispute*' (thesis not completed due to move to the UK), funded by Senior Research Fellowship, Universities Grants Commission, India 2005-2006
- **M.Phil in Diplomatic Studies**, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. MPhil. International Diplomacy, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Submitted MPhil. Dissertation titled '*Chinese diplomacy towards Pakistan*', funded by Junior Research Fellowship, Universities Grants Commission, India 2001-2003
- **MA Political Science**, Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi 1999-2001
- **BA (Honours) Political Science**, Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi. Received Randhir Singh Award for Excellence in Political Science at the end of undergraduate studies. 1996-1999

## Publications

- Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization: Evidence of Comparative Learning in the British Cotton Industry during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, *The Economic History Review*, 2021, Revise and Re-submit
- Review of '*The Wardle family and its circle: textile production in the Arts and Crafts era*' by Brenda King, *The Economic History Review*, Volume 73, No. 1, February 2020, p. 330-331
- Review of '*Indian cotton textiles in West Africa: African agency, consumer demand and the making of the global economy, 1750-1850*' by Kazuo Kobayashi, *The Economic History Review*, Volume 73, No. 3, August 2020, p. 876-877

## Work in Progress

- *From Muse to Machines: How Indian Cottons led to British Industrialization*, book, work in progress

- Indian cottons and the evolution of printing and dyeing in the British cotton industry in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, paper, planned for submission to journal *Past and Present* in July 2021

### Recent Teaching Experience

- **Guest Lecturer** ‘Indian Cottons and the British Calico Printing Industry’ at Winterthur/University of Delaware Art Conservation Program workshop on Textile Conservation April 2021
- **Guest Lecturer** ‘From Muse to Machines: Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization’ at British Design History 1530-1930, Winterthur Museum Program in American Material Culture January 2021
- **Writing Advisor**, Department of Economic History, LSE 2019-2021
- **Graduate Teaching Assistant**, Department of Economic History, LSE (EH225: Latin America and the International Economy) 2017-2019

### Academic Grants

- PhD Studentship [full tuition + bursary], Department of Economic History, LSE [£18,000 bursary + £6000 tuition fees per annum] 2017- expected submission 2021
- Dissertation Fellowship Award, Winterthur Museum, Delaware, USA [bursary \$7000] 2019-2020
- Residential Training Workshop, full funding, Economic History Society 2018
- Radwan Travel and Discovery Fund Grant for archival research, LSE 2017, 2018, 2019

### Awards and Prizes

- New Researcher Award for Best Poster, Economic History Society Annual Conference, Belfast 2019
- Judge’s Award for Best Poster, Research Festival, LSE 2019
- Students-led Teaching Excellence Award, LSE 2018, 2019

### Public Engagement

- Collaborations to bring digital, scientific analysis of historic textiles into the study of economic history from 2017-2021 with:
  - Victoria & Albert Museum in London
  - Harris Museum in Preston
  - Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris
  - Winterthur Museum in Delaware

### Conference/Seminar Presentations

- ‘The Colour of Clothes in the Early Modern World’ Cambridge University May 2021
- Business History Collective, Global Webinar Series April 2021
- Economic History Society Annual Conference, Warwick, New Researcher Session April 2021
- Winterthur Museum Academic Programs, Research Seminar January 2021
- Graduate Seminar, Nuffield College, University of Oxford 2020
- Asia Seminar Series, Department of Economic History, LSE 2019
- Research Fellows Seminar, Winterthur Museum, Delaware 2019
- Economic History Society Annual Conference, Belfast, Poster presentation 2019
- Economic History Society Residential Workshop, Manchester 2018
- Graduate Seminar, Department of Economic History, LSE 2018, 2020, 2021

### Conference and Workshop Organization

- South Asia Workshop, ‘South Asia through a Global Lens,’ Department of Economic History, LSE 2021
- Graduate Seminar Series, Department of Economic History, LSE 2019

## Previous Work Experience

- **Senior Researcher**, The Key – Service for School Leaders English: research, administration and management for service offering bespoke policy-based guidance to school leaders 2008-2012
- **Senior Research Executive**, Hobsons Plc: research and analysis for generic and bespoke reports on market insights for global higher education sector clients 2007-2008
- **Telecommunications Policy Coordinator**, AA Access Partnership Limited: research and administration for satellite communications clients in Europe and North America 2006-2007
- **Post Graduate Teacher**, St. Mary's School, New Delhi, India: Established the Department of Political Science at St Mary's School for pre-university level teaching. Taught areas of study including Political Theory, International Politics, Indian Government and Politics 2002-2004

## Languages

- Hindi: Mother tongue, fluent in reading and writing, including archival sources
- English: Fluent in speaking, writing and reading, including archival sources
- French: Basic, reading and speaking