



Victoria Memorial Hall

cordially invites you to a lecture on

Vivekananda: A New Vision

Speaker

Ruth Harris

All Soul's College, University of Oxford

Monday, 30 January 2023, 6.00 pm

**Conference Hall, Library Building
Victoria Memorial Hall**

1 Queen's Way, Kolkata – 700 071

Vivekananda is a seminal figure of the global nineteenth-century, but the pattern of his fame does not match his influence. In India he is a household name but in the West, few have heard of him. Why this is so goes to the heart of his life, his ideas, and his programme. This talk will elucidate why he both challenged and enticed so many different audiences, from respectable New Englanders to Swadeshi activists. Rather than reinforcing the tired vision of Vivekananda as the first to unlock eastern spirituality for a materialist West, it will focus on the paradoxes and uncertainties of his teachings. It will also investigate his relationship to nationalism, anti-colonialism, and Karma yoga. However, the speaker will reinterpret his impact by integrating the 'Indian Vivekananda' with the 'global guru' by reconsidering his relationship to women, global intellectual history, and universalism in the fin-de-siècle world.

*Entry through East Gate (opposite St Paul's Cathedral) till the capacity is full;
entry/parking of vehicles inside the VMH campus not allowed*



Professor Ruth Harris, whose latest book is *Guru to the World: The Life and Legacy of Vivekananda* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2022), is a Senior Research Fellow at All Souls' College, and Professor of Modern History at the University of Oxford. She has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for research in French History and the Wolfson History Prize for her work. In 2011, Professor Harris was elected a Fellow of the British Academy (FBA), the UK's national academy for the humanities and the social sciences. She has published widely in the history of science and medicine, history of gender and religion, and the history of politics and emotion.