

TINDOWS International Seminar

**'Eastminsters - State-Building in India and Sri Lanka Following British Rule'
by Dr H. Kumarasingham**

Date & Time : 14 September 2023 (Thu) 15:00-17:00

Venue : Room 407, Bldg No.14, Komaba Campus, The University of Tokyo / Zoom (*)

Map: https://www.u-tokyo.ac.jp/campusmap/cam02_01_13_j.html

*Please fill out the online registration form below by 11 September if you are planning to participate in the seminar online. We will inform registrants of zoom URL on 13th September. (オンライン参加をご希望の方は、下記フォームより 9 月 11 日までに登録下さい。9 月 13 日 (水) に Zoom URL をお送りいたします。)

Online registration form: <https://forms.gle/eihLBA3U4yjPcxah6>

Talk by **Dr Harshan Kumarasingham** (University of Edinburgh)

'Eastminsters - State-Building in India and Sri Lanka Following British Rule'

Abstract:

All of the Asian States that emerged from British rule in varying degrees took key substantial elements of the British Westminster system. This system was more commonly associated with the British settler countries like Australia, Canada and New Zealand where "kith and kin" links with Britain seemed to make this appropriate. However, the British and the South Asian indigenous elites in states like India and Sri Lanka saw advantages in applying this very British system to the very different context of the East. India and Sri Lanka did not have centuries to interpret and adjust in order to develop their constitution as the British had. Instead within months they needed to formulate and design a constitution and therefore invariably drew upon the system of their imperial master. The local elites with the involvement of external actors determined that Westminster could work in the East. Since the Westminster system is based on convention and ambiguity and not rigid rules and clarity the same Westminster system could be adopted and manipulated to produce diverse results and reactions that would shape their countries forever. These states therefore became *Eastminsters* that had clear institutional and political resemblances to Britain's system, but with cultural and constitutional divergences from Westminster. This talk will compare India and Sri Lanka's experience in the crucial state-building phase following independence and see how Eastminster impacted them with lasting importance

Bio

Dr H. Kumarasingham is Reader in Politics and History at the University of Edinburgh. He is a political historian of Britain, the British Empire and the Commonwealth. His recent work cover

the decolonisation of the British Empire and subsequent state-building that followed. He is the author of many works, including *A Political Legacy of the British Empire: Power and the Parliamentary System in Post-Colonial India and Sri Lanka*, *Constitution-Making in Asia - Decolonisation and State-Building the Aftermath of the British Empire*, and most recently he co-edited *The Cambridge Constitutional History of the United Kingdom*. He is Co-Editor of the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*.

共催：環インド洋地域研究プロジェクト京都大学拠点（KINDOWS）、東京大学南アジア研究センター、東京外国語大学南アジア研究センター