

Past Events, 2019-20



South Asia Institute
Columbia University

Monday, September 9

Welcome Reception

Time: 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Location: Room 207 Knox Hall

606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Wednesday, September 18

Jaipur Literature Festival New York: *Each Other's Stories*

Time: 12:00pm - 7:00pm

Location: Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue

Between 70th and 71st Streets

Directions: <https://asiasociety.org/new-york/events/jlf-new-york-0>

12:00 p.m.–12:30 p.m.: *Performance*

Utsav Lal, Raga and Jazz pianist and guitarist Alec Goldfarb

12:30 p.m. Inaugural Address: *Each Other's Stories*

Namita Gokhale, Sanjoy K. Roy, William Dalrymple, Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty, Consul General of India in New York and Tom Nagorski, Executive Vice President, Programming, Asia Society

1:00pm–1:45pm: *Food, Memory, and Culture*

Chandrabhas Choudhary, Krishnendu Ray, and Adam Platt in conversation with Ligaya Mishan

Our taste buds carry receptors of memory and food is an intangible trigger of feelings and emotions, internal states of the mind and body. The complex relationship between food, memory, and narrative has been invoked by writers in literature across the world. To most of us, the food that we associate with home is an essential part of our identity and cultural heritage. Novelist Chandrabhas Choudhury, academic and scholar of food studies Krishnendu Ray alongside iconic food critics Adam Platt and Ligaya Mishan discuss the intersections of food, memory, and culture.

2:00pm– 2:45pm: *These Lands We Call Home*

*Neeraj Kaushal, Prajwal Parajuly, Zarrar Said, and Alia Malek in conversation with Ruchira Gupta
Presented by the South Asia Institute at Columbia University*

In an age of immigrants and global movement, more and more people claim a multiplicity of coexisting identities. They seek better opportunities, flee from the horrors of war and politics, or seek refuge from natural calamities. The pain and suffering of dislocated communities are matched by rising decibels of nativist fervor. A panel of writers and thinkers looks at the forces of nationalism, the demographics and economics of human movement, as well as the personal interpretations and stories of the lands we call home.

3:00pm– 3:45pm: *Caste, Color, and Gender*

Margo Jefferson, Yashica Dutt, and Sharmila Sen in conversation with Prajwal Parajuly

Variables of race and color, class and gender confront and mock the very idea of social justice. Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and critic Margo Jefferson is the author of *Negroland*, a landmark work on privilege, discrimination, and the fallacy of post-racial America. Sharmila Sen's *Not Quite Not White* is a first-generation immigrant's exploration of race and assimilation in the United States. New York-based Indian author and journalist Yashica Dutt's memoir *Coming Out as Dalit* pushes us to confront the injustices of the Indian caste system. Together, they talk about these intersectionalities and share their experiences and convictions.

4:00pm– 4:45pm: *Mapping the Heavens*

Priyamvada Natarajan introduced by journalist Sree Sreenivasan

Professor of Astronomy and Physics at Yale University, Priyamvada Natarajan is noted for her work in mapping dark matter, dark energy, and black holes, she has authored *Mapping the Heavens: The Radical Scientific Ideas That Reveal the Cosmos*. With an extraordinary gift for making abstract and complex scientific ideas accessible to general audiences, she speaks of the missing pieces of the puzzle in our understanding of black holes and how some of her early theories have recently been vindicated.

5:00pm– 5:45pm: *The Healing*

Manisha Koirala in conversation with Sanjoy K. Roy

Bollywood actor Manisha Koirala shares the highs and lows of her life, her career, relationships, and her battle with ovarian cancer. In conversation with Sanjoy K. Roy, Managing Director of Teamwork Arts, she speaks of the pressures of her film career, the life choices she was compelled to make, and how she redefined her priorities and regained a sense of balance and well-being. A no-holds-barred session about the emotional roller-coaster ride of Koirala's life post-diagnosis, her learnings and inspirations, and the process of healing.

6:00 p.m.– 6:45 p.m.: *The Anarchy*

William Dalrymple introduced by Sanjoy K. Roy

In August 1765, the East India Company defeated the young Mughal emperor and forced him to set up in his richest provinces a new administration run by English merchants who collected taxes through means of a ruthless private army, what we would now call an act of involuntary privatization. The East India Company's founding charter authorized it to "wage war" and it had always used violence to gain its ends. The creation of this new government marked the moment that the East India Company ceased to be a conventional international trading corporation dealing in silks and spices, and became something much more unusual: an aggressive colonial power in the guise of a multinational business. It had trained up a security force of around 200,000 men and had subdued an entire subcontinent, conquering first Bengal and finally, in 1803, the Mughal capital of Delhi itself. The Company's reach stretched until almost all of India and was effectively ruled from a boardroom in London. *The Anarchy* charts how the Mughal Empire disintegrated and came to be replaced by a dangerously unregulated private company, the East India Company.

Monday, September 23

Article 370 and Its Aftermath: A Panel Discussion

Panelists include:

Partha Chatterjee (MESAAS and Anthropology)

Hafsa Kanjwal (History, Lafayette College)

Madhav Khosla (Ashoka University, Columbia Law School)

Suchitra Vijayan (The Polis Project)

Moderated by Gauri Viswanathan (Class of 1933 Professor in the Humanities, Department of English and Comparative Literature, and Director, South Asia Institute)

Link to Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKqDFpaOruw>

Time: 6:10pm – 8:00pm

Location: Kellogg Center, Room 1501 International Affairs Building
15th floor, 420 West 118th Street at Amsterdam Avenue

Partha Chatterjee is a political theorist and historian. He studied at Presidency College in Calcutta, and received his PhD from the University of Rochester. He divides his time between Columbia University and the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, where he was the director from 1997 to 2007. He is the author of more than twenty books, monographs and edited volumes and is a founding member of the Subaltern Studies Collective. He was awarded the Fukuoka Asian Culture Prize for 2009 for outstanding achievements in the field of Asian studies.

Hafsa Kanjwal is an Assistant Professor of South Asian History at Lafayette College. She received her PhD in History and Women's Studies from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Her research focuses on post-Partition state-building in Kashmir. She has written and spoken on Kashmir for a variety of news outlets including the *Washington Post*, *Al Jazeera English*, and the *BBC*.

Madhav Khosla is the B. R. Ambedkar Visiting Associate Professor at Columbia Law School. He is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Ashoka University and a Junior Fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows. He studied political theory at Harvard University, where his dissertation was awarded the Edward M. Chase Prize for "the best dissertation on a subject relating to the promotion of world peace", and at Yale Law School and the National Law School of India University, Bangalore. Khosla's interests range across the fields of public law and political theory, and much of his work is on the theory and practice of constitutionalism under conditions of rapid democratization, weak state capacity, and low levels of socio-economic development. His work has been cited by courts in India and Pakistan.

Suchitra Vijayan is a Barrister-at-law, writer, and a photographer, working across research, human rights, and visual storytelling. She is the founder and executive director of The Polis Project, Inc. a New York-based hybrid research and journalism organization that studies critical human rights and political issues. As an attorney, she previously worked for the United Nations war crimes tribunal for Yugoslavia and Rwanda. She co-founded and was the Legal Director of Resettlement Legal Aid Project, Cairo, that gives legal aid for Iraqi refugees. As a graduate student at Yale, she researched and documented stories along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Her book *Midnight's Border* is forthcoming.

Gauri Viswanathan is Class of 1933 Professor in the Humanities and Director of the South Asia Institute at Columbia University. She has published widely on education, religion, and culture; nineteenth-century British and colonial cultural studies; and the history of modern disciplines. She is the author of *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (1989, 2014); and *Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity, and Belief* (1998), which won the Harry Levin Prize awarded by the American Comparative Literature Association, the James Russell Lowell Prize awarded by the Modern Language Association of America, and the Ananda K. Coomaraswamy Prize awarded by the Association for Asian Studies.

Monday, September 30

A talk by Bhrigupati Singh

“Can a Nation Fall Sick?

**Thoughts on the Opioid Epidemic and other forms
of Collective Self-Harm in Contemporary India”**

Time: 4:15pm – 5:45pm
Location: Room 208 Knox Hall
606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Moderated by Katherine Pratt Ewing (Religion)

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9PB7U9yIIM&t=766s>

Bhri Gupta Singh completed his PhD in anthropology at Johns Hopkins University in 2010 and is currently Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Brown University, and a faculty fellow at the Watson Institute. His recent monograph, *Poverty and the Quest for Life: Spiritual and Material Striving in Rural India* (2015), was awarded the AIIS Joseph Elder Prize in the Indian Social Sciences, the Award for Excellence in the study of religion by the American Academy of Religion, and was a finalist for the Clifford Geertz Book Prize. He is the co-editor of *The Ground Between: Anthropological Engagements with Philosophy* (2014).

Works in progress include a book of essays on philosophical and literary concepts of vitalism and its relation to anthropological understandings of everyday life, titled “Waxing and Waning Life,” and a new anthropological monograph on urban poverty, mental health, drug addiction, and collective violence, set in the “resettlement colony” of Trilokpuri in East Delhi. This monograph grows out of a year of research he conducted over the past academic year, with grants from the Wenner-Gren Foundation and the American Institute of American Studies, based at the Department of Psychiatry, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS, Delhi). In collaboration with psychiatrists at AIIMS, he is in the process of creating a consortium for longitudinal research on issues of mental health and urban poverty.”

Tuesday, October 1

A Talk by Tridip Suhrud

“Reading Gandhi in two tongues”

Time: 4:15pm – 5:45pm
Location: Knox Hall, Room 208
606 West 122nd Street between Broadway and Claremont

Co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute and the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QF05Zk6Kw0>

Tridip Suhrud is a distinguished Gujarati author, and one of India’s leading scholars working on Gandhi. He has published the recent critical editions of Gandhi’s *Autobiography* (2018), and, with Suresh Sharma as co-editor, *Hind Swaraj* (2010). These unique editions compare the English and the Gujarati versions of Gandhi’s texts. Tridip Suhrud is a prolific writer in Gujarati and English, and was given the Katha Award in 1996 and the Sahitya Academy Award in 2010.

Tridip Suhrud is Professor and Director, Archives and University Press, CEPT University, Ahmedabad; Director, Lalbhai Dalpatbhai Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad; and Chairman, Governing Council, MICA. Earlier he was Director and Chief Editor, Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust, Ahmedabad (2012-2017). He is the series editor of *Gandhi Studies*, Orient Black Swan, since 2006.

Friday, October 4, 2019

**A Panel Discussion Celebrating Mahatma Gandhi's 150th Birth Anniversary
"Gandhi: His Ideas and Politics"**

Featuring

Akeel Bilgrami (Philosophy)

Uday Mehta (History Department, CUNY Grad Center)

Tridip Suvrud (CEPT University, Ahmedabad)

Moderated by Sudipta Kaviraj (Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies)

Organized by the South Asia Association, School of International and Public Affairs

Co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute

Time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm (followed by reception)

Location: Room 1302, International Affairs Building

Entrance at 420 West 118th Street, at Amsterdam Avenue

Map and directions: <https://visit.columbia.edu/content/maps-and-directions>

Tuesday, October 15, 2019

A talk by Iftikhar Dadi (Cornell University)

"Situating Contemporary Art and the Secular"

Time: 4:10pm - 6:00pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sjXuQ3EJNg&t=166s>

This lecture is organized by the Institute for Religion, Culture and Public Life, and co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute, as part of the project "Rethinking Public Religion in Africa and South Asia." The project is a collaboration with the South Asia Institute and the Institute for African Studies. Register [here](#).

Abstract: This lecture will look at two frameworks for situating the question of the secular in Pakistan and its diaspora. The first is exemplified by Rasheed Araeen, who has deployed "Islamicate" forms in his practice, along with his criticism of valorizing exoticized subjectivity and cultural difference. Araeen brings to the idea of "modern Islamic art" a persistent practice of self-critique and social engagement. By contrast, another framework has emerged in Pakistan during the recent decades, in which social concerns are seemingly peripheral to emphasis on repetitive practice. What are possible terms for evaluating these intensive formalist procedures? This paper will offer tentative lines of inquiry into these developments, informed by recent theoretical debates on secularism.

Iftikhar Dadi is Associate Professor, Department of the History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University. He is co-director of Cornell's Institute for Comparative Modernities, and served as Chair of Cornell's Department of Art (2010-14) and Director of Cornell's South Asia Program (2015-16). Prof. Dadi teaches and researches modern and contemporary art from a global and transnational perspective, with emphasis on questions of methodology and intellectual history.

His writings have focused on modernism and contemporary practice of Asia, the Middle East and their diasporas. Another research interest examines the film, media, and popular cultures of South Asia, seeking to understand how emergent publics forge new avenues for civic participation. Publications include *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia* (2010), which received the 2010 Book Prize from the American Institute of Pakistan Studies. Other publications include the edited monograph *Anwar Jalal*

Shemza (2015), the co-edited catalog *Lines of Control* (2012), and the co-edited reader *Unpacking Europe* (2001).

As an artist, Iftikhar Dadi works collaboratively with Elizabeth Dadi. Their work investigates the salience of popular media in the construction of memory, borders, and identity in contemporary globalization, and the potential of creative resilience in urban informalities. Their work is frequently realized in large-scale installations and has been exhibited and published internationally.

Monday, October 21

A talk by Nabanjan Maitra (University of Chicago)

“The Double Life of Doxography”

in conversation with Andrew Nicholson (Stony Brook)

Time: 4:15pm – 5:45pm

Location: Room 208 Knox Hall

606 West 122nd Street, between Broadway and Claremont

Moderated by Jack Hawley (Religion)

Abstract: This paper follows the social life of the doxographic genre by examining its use in two texts composed in the same institutional context: the Advaita Vedānta monastery at Śrīṅgeri. I argue that the use of the genre had two rhetorical goals; the formulation of a unified Vedic canon, and the concomitant marginalization of a pair of Vedānta schools. In the competitive religious politics of 14th – 17th century Karnataka, doxography was a versatile vehicle for the advancement of the religious supremacy of the Śrīṅgeri monastery.

Friday, November 8

Suraj Yengde in conversation with

Prof. Anupama Rao (History and MESAAS)

on his recent publication

Caste Matters

Time: 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Location: Common Room, Heyman Center, Upper Morningside Campus

[Directions to the Heyman Center for the Humanities](#)

IDs will need to be presented at the door

Organized by the Ambedkar Initiative at the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society
Co-sponsored by the South Asia Institute and the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies

Monday, November 11

A talk by Debashree Mukherjee (MESAAS)

“Impassioned Speech:

Talkie Cinema in Colonial Bombay”

Time: 4:15-5:45pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rDPOW3KNhM>

Abstract: Sound transformed the career of cinema in India. But, in 1931, the “all talking, singing, and dancing” Indian film did not enter an empty space of silence. This talk locates Indian cinema’s transition from the silent era to the talkies within a dense acoustic ecology of already existing aural and technological practices, proposing that the newness of the talkies relied on the ambivalent modernity of the embodied voice. While the early talkie in South Asia is credited with the consolidation of the musical song-dance format of Bollywood, speech and dialogue, both highly understudied, were critical to the consolidation of India’s film industries. In considering the status of speech and dialogue in early talkie films of the 1930s, the talk draws continuities between a thriving public culture of political and pedagogical speechmaking and a declamatory drive in cinema. What is particularly intriguing is that while public speechmaking was a realm presided over by men, filmic scenes of passionate argumentation were predominantly enacted by women. The corporeality of the cinematic voice was heightened by its location in the charged social body of the film actress.

Debashree Mukherjee is Assistant Professor of film and media in the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia University. She is currently completing a manuscript titled “Bombay Hustle: Making Movies in a Colonial City,” which provides a practice and practitioner-oriented history of the consolidation of the Bombay cine-ecology at a time of intense social, political, and economic flux in colonial India. The book is inspired by Debashree’s prior career in Mumbai’s film and television industries (2004-2007). Debashree edits the peer review journal, *BioScope: South Asian Screen Studies*, and has curated archival exhibitions of film ephemera and photographic objects. In Spring 2020, she will be based in Paris on a fellowship at the Institute of Ideas & Imagination, Reid Hall, where she begins work on a new project on the monsoon, media, and migration in the Indian Ocean region.

Monday, November 18

A talk by Rajbir Singh Judge (IRCPL and SAI)

"A Critique of Contextual Reason:

The Law’s Threshold and Darbar Sahib in the Late 19th Century"

Time: 4:15-5:45pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208

Abstract: Though historians are critical of unilinear and teleological notions of time, the form of reasoning that accompanies this time, contextual reasoning, remains dominant. This paper grapples with the problem of contextual reasoning by examining a central Sikh institution, Darbar Sahib in Amritsar, in the late 19th Century and its relation to colonial law. More specifically, this paper explores the colonial state’s violent attempt to control Sikh sites and institutions through Act XX of 1863, which created a foundational law for the management of religious endowments. But Darbar Sahib caused much trouble for the colonial state, as officials noted Darbar Sahib refused effective management and functioned as the threshold of colonial law. Unable to be situated within customary or secular law, colonial officials continually suspended the law at the site and explicitly produced Darbar Sahib as an exception that refused the state's contextualizing attempts. I examine both the reach and the absence of colonial law by considering how Sikhs became situated temporally and spatially within the colonial imagination.

Rajbir Singh Judge is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life with affiliations in the Department of Religion and the South Asia Institute at Columbia. He received his PhD in History at the University of California, Davis. His current project examines the ways in which Sikhism at the end of the 19th Century remained a generative site through which Sikhs and their diverse milieu in the Punjab contested not only British rule, but the very nature of sovereignty. More broadly, he specializes in the cultural and intellectual history of South Asia, with a particular emphasis on the Punjab. His most recent publications can be found in the *Journal of the History of Sexuality* and *History & Theory*.

Monday, February 3

A talk by Arjun Appadurai

**“The Campaign to Kill a Mass Democracy:
The Long and Short of India's Durée”**

Time: 4:15pm-5:45pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tylQsDmy4nY>

Arjun Appadurai is the Goddard Professor in Media, Culture and Communication at New York University, where he is also Senior Fellow at the Institute for Public Knowledge. He serves as Honorary Professor in the Department of Media and Communication, Erasmus University, Rotterdam; as Tata Chair Professor at The Tata Institute for Social Sciences, Mumbai; and as a Senior Research Partner at the Max Planck Institute for Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen. Previously, at the New School in New York City, he was a Senior Advisor for Global Initiatives; John Dewey Distinguished Professor in the Social Sciences; and from 2004-06, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. He was formerly the William K. Lanman Jr. Professor of International Studies, Professor of Anthropology, and Director of the Center on Cities and Globalization at Yale University. Prof. Appadurai is the founder and now the President of PUKAR (Partners for Urban Knowledge Action and Research), a non-profit organization based in and oriented to the city of Mumbai.

During his academic career, he has also held professorial chairs at Yale University, the University of Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania, and has held visiting appointments at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris), the University of Delhi, the University of Michigan, the University of Amsterdam, the University of Iowa, Columbia University, and New York University. He has authored numerous books and scholarly articles, including *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger* (2006) and *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (1996; 1997). His books have been translated into French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese, and Italian.

Tuesday, February 4

A talk by Arvind Rajagopal

“Technopolitics and Hindu Populism”

Time: 4:15pm-5:45 pm

Location: Common Room, Heyman Center for the Humanities

Directions: <http://heymancenter.org/visit/the-heyman-center/>

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTPSZafNTpU>

This event is part of IRCPL's “Rethinking Public Religion in Africa and South Asia” project, funded by the Henry Luce Foundation. This event is cosponsored by the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, the Institute of African Studies and the South Asia Institute.

Abstract: Arvind Rajagopal will offer a broad outline of popular politics' successive phases in modern times with a reinterpretation threaded through the question of technology. The latter, he argues, has typically been glossed over in most accounts. The emergence of contemporary technopolitics in India, culminating in "Hindu populism," can be understood in part as post-Cold War triumphalism - witness Hindutva ideologues' comparison of Nehru with Stalin or Mao, or of Nehruvian developmentalism with socialism as such. Critiquing this triumphalism requires revisiting the international context of secular nation-building, and as well, early postcolonial/decolonial responses to the problems and challenges of mass mediation.

Arvind Rajagopal is Professor of Media Studies at NYU and is an affiliated faculty in the Departments of Sociology, and Social and Cultural Analysis. His books include *Politics After Television: Hindu Nationalism and the Reshaping of the Public in India* (2001), which won the Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy Prize from the Association of Asian Studies and the Daniel Griffiths Prize at NYU, both in 2003, and *The Indian Public Sphere: Structure and Transformation* (2009). He has won awards from the MacArthur and Rockefeller Foundations and has been a Member in the School of Social Sciences at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington DC, and a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford.

Monday, February 10

A talk by John Stratton Hawley

"Krishna's Playground:

Vrindavan in the 21st Century"

Time: 4:15pm-5:45pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRCpHips0-w>

Abstract: Located at a dramatic bend in the River Yamuna, a hundred miles from the center of Delhi, Vrindavan is the spot where the god Krishna is believed to have spent his childhood and youth. For Hindus it has always stood for youth writ large, enacting a realm of love and beauty that enables one to retreat from the weight and harshness of the world. Now, though, the world is gobbling up Vrindavan. Delhi's megalopolitan sprawl inches closer day by day—half the town is a vast real-estate development—and the waters of the Yamuna are too polluted to drink or even bathe in. Temples now style themselves as theme parks, and the world's tallest religious building is under construction in Krishna's pastoral paradise. What happens when the Anthropocene Age makes everything virtual? Vrindavan throbs with feisty energy, but is it the religious canary in our collective coal mine?

John Stratton Hawley is Claire Tow Professor of Religion at Barnard College, Columbia University. He has written or edited some twenty books on Hinduism, India's bhakti traditions, and the comparative study of religion. His latest book is *Krishna's Playground: Vrindavan in the 21st Century*, published by Oxford University Press in 2020. His previous books include *A Storm of Songs: India and the Idea of the Bhakti Movement* (2015), *Sur's Ocean* (with Kenneth Bryant, 2015), and a poem-by-poem commentary on the early Sursagar called *Into Sur's Ocean* (2016). *A Storm of Songs* received the Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy book prize of the Association for Asian Studies in March 2017. Prof. Hawley has directed Columbia University's South Asia Institute and has received multiple awards from the NEH, Smithsonian, and AIIS. He has been a Guggenheim Fellow and was recently elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2016-17 he was in India as a Fulbright-Nehru Fellow, working on his project on "The New Vrindavan."

Wednesday, February 19

"Unmaking Citizenship in India"

With Aman Wadud and Rohit De

Time: 4:30pm – 5:30pm

Location: Room 105, Jerome Greene Hall

Columbia Law School, 116th & Amsterdam Avenue

Map and Directions: <https://visit.columbia.edu/content/maps-and-directions>

Co-sponsored with the Columbia Law School Human Rights Institute, the South Asian Law Students Association, and the Columbia Society of International Law.

Abstract: In 2014, the Supreme Court of India ordered an update of the National Registry of Citizens (NRC), a register of all Indian citizens in the state of Assam. Wadud's talk argues that the NRC, serving as an exercise to separate Indian citizens from "foreigners," has been responsible for the unimaginable harassment of a large section of society, sparking protests across the country. Aman Wadud will be in conversation with Prof. Rohit De on the human rights implications of the NRC and India's recently passed Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

Aman Wadud is a human rights lawyer based in Guwahati, Assam. He litigates before the Gauhati High Court and various Foreigners Tribunals across Assam. He defends people accused of being illegal migrants and those who are detained in various detention centers in Assam. He represented several detainees and secured their release after they had spent years in detention. He has also been organizing training programs for lawyers who work before the Foreigners Tribunal. He recently founded the Justice and Liberty Initiative to provide pro bono legal aid to people excluded by the NRC who can't afford lawyers. Wadud has also been continuously writing about the citizenship issue in India and the violation of due process before the Foreigners Tribunal.

Rohit De is Associate Professor, Department of History, Yale University. He is a lawyer and historian of modern South Asia and he focuses on the legal history of the Indian subcontinent and the common law world. His research interests include Modern South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh), Global Legal History, Law and Society, Law and Colonialism, British Empire, Nationalism and Decolonization in Asia and Africa, Comparative Constitutionalism. Prof. De received his PhD from Princeton University and his law degrees from the Yale Law School and the National Law School of India University in Bangalore. Prof. De's book *A People's Constitution: Law and Everyday Life in the Indian Republic* (2018) offers a constitutional history from below, exploring how the Indian Constitution, despite its elite authorship and alien antecedents, came to permeate everyday life and imagination in India during its transition from a colonial state to a democratic republic.

Monday, March 2

A talk by Karuna Mantena

"The Means and Ends of Gandhian Swaraj"

Time: 4:15pm-5:45pm

Location: Knox Hall, Room 208

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5h5LpN59z7g>

Karuna Mantena is Professor of Political Science at Columbia University. She specializes in political theory with research interests in the theory and history of empire, South Asian intellectual history, and postcolonial democracy. Karuna holds a B.Sc. (Economics) in International Relations from the London School of Economics (1995), an M.A. in Ideology and Discourse Analysis from the University of Essex (1996), and a Ph.D. in Government from Harvard University (2004). Her first book, *Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism* (2010), analyzed the transformation of nineteenth-century British imperial ideology. She is currently completing a book on M. K. Gandhi and the politics of nonviolence, tentatively titled *Gandhi's Realism: Means and Ends in Politics*. She is also co-director of the International Conference for the Study of Political Thought.