



**WATSON INSTITUTE**  
INTERNATIONAL & PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
**BROWN UNIVERSITY**

**CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY**  
**South Asia**



**Annual Report 2021-2022**

# About the Center

## Mission

*The Center for Contemporary South Asia (CCSA) promotes research, teaching and public engagement on key issues of modern South Asia in an interdisciplinary framework and in a historically and culturally grounded manner.*

## About

*CCSA is based at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University. The Center supports faculty, graduate and undergraduate research and teaching on the region and is home to the South Asian Studies concentration.*

*CCSA functions within the larger framework of the Watson Institute, which is seeking to define a new approach to regional studies for the 21st century. Anchored in the social sciences, this new approach is problem driven, comparative and multidisciplinary. Our multidisciplinaryity will include sustained interaction of social scientists with the humanities on the one hand and disciplines such as medicine and public health on the other.*

## Research & Programs

*At this time, the Center's programmatic and research themes focus on inequalities, development, urbanization, democracy, public health and pluralism & diversities.*

*Cover Image: Bandra Worli Sea Link Mumbai*

# Message from the Director

After nearly a year and half, we returned to in-person activities in 2021-22 — substantially, not wholly. Some events continued to be fully virtual, especially if the main speakers were based abroad and international travel was not possible. Ram Guha spoke to us from Bangalore on his new book, *Rebels Against the Raj*, and a full panel on the withdrawal of India's farm law was entirely online. Some other events took a hybrid form, as some panelists spoke in person while others zoomed in from elsewhere. Thus, Arvind Subramanian (Brown) analyzed “Whether the Indian Economy is Back” in person, while Raghu Ram Rajan (Chicago) commented on his arguments online from Boston.

In my message last year, I had said that our Center would collaborate with the School of Public Health (SPH) on developing a better understanding of the Covid-19 pandemic, leveraging the arrival of Ashish Jha as the new Dean of SPH. We explored this collaboration quite deeply with our opening one-day hybrid conference on “Covid-19 in South Asia”. We had scholars, policy makers, journalists and activists from all parts of South Asia, some speaking to us from Islamabad, Dhaka and Colombo via Zoom.

The OP Jindal Distinguished Lectures were given by Mira Nair, the noted film maker, reflecting “On Being Brown Before It Was Fashionable” and Siddharth Varadarajan, the trail-blazing editor of *The Wire* (Delhi), who spoke on “The Press and India's Democracy”. Experimenting with form, we also had an “OP Jindal Conversation”, in which professors of literature, religion and politics engaged Salman Rushdie, the novelist, in a two-hour exchange, which was also widely watched online.

In collaboration with the Watson Institute, we have recruited Arvind Subramanian as a senior fellow for three years. In his first year (2021-22), he offered two undergraduate seminars, one on Indian economy



and another on comparing the economic trajectories of India and China. These offerings will continue in the coming year(s), hugely adding to what we teach at the undergraduate level.

As Covid-19 subsided, it was possible to visit South Asia for research. Through winter and spring funding cycles, CCSA provided travel grants, to support the projects of 18 fellows (11 PhD candidates, 5 undergraduates, and 2 postdoctoral fellows).

But the biggest news of the year was that we received a generous \$10 million endowment gift from Parag and Usha Saxena, Brown parents '13, '14 and '15. Starting July 1, 2022, Saxena Center for Contemporary South Asia will be our new name. This endowment, in perpetuity, will give us resources to develop new ideas for research, collaboration, teaching and programming, while building on what we already have become known for. We are grateful to the New York-based Saxena family. The inaugural activities of the new center will take place during the week of September 9-10, and will cover economic, political and cultural trends in the region after the Second World War focusing on marginalization and inclusion. With the help of leading scholars and artists, we will do a stock-taking of where the different countries of South Asia have arrived and where they are headed.

Our events, both past and incoming, are listed on our website ([watson.brown.edu/southasia](http://watson.brown.edu/southasia)). We hope to see you at many of our activities this coming year.

**Ashutosh Varshney**

Director, Center for Contemporary South Asia  
Sol Goldman Professor of International  
Studies and the Social Sciences  
Professor of Political Science



# OP Jindal Distinguished Lecture Series

*To promote a serious discussion of politics, economics, social and cultural change in modern India, Sajjan and Sangita Jindal have endowed, in perpetuity, the OP Jindal Distinguished Lectures by major scholars and public figures.*

## Salman Rushdie

Fall 2021

**Salman Rushdie** is the author of fourteen novels: *Grimus*, *Midnight's Children* (which was awarded the Booker Prize in 1981), *Shame*, *The Satanic Verses*, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, *Fury*, *Shalimar the Clown*, *The Enchantress of Florence*, *Luka and the Fire of Life*, *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights*, *The Golden House* and *Quichotte*. His books have been translated into over forty languages.

Rushdie is also the author of a book of stories, *East, West*, and four works of non-fiction: *Joseph Anton – A Memoir*, *Imaginary Homelands*, *The Jaguar Smile*, and *Step Across This Line*. He is the co-editor of *Mirrorwork*, an anthology of contemporary Indian writing, and of the 2008 *Best American Short Stories* anthology.

A Fellow of the British Royal Society of Literature, Salman Rushdie has received, among other honours, the Whitbread Prize for Best Novel (twice), the Writers' Guild Award, the James Tait Black Prize, the European Union's Aristeion Prize for Literature, Author of the Year Prizes in both Britain and Germany, the French *Prix du Meilleur Livre Étranger*, the Budapest Grand Prize for



Salman Rushdie

Literature, the *Premio Grinzane Cavour* in Italy, the Crossword Book Award in India, the Austrian State Prize for European Literature, the London International Writers' Award, the James Joyce award of University College Dublin, the St Louis Literary Prize, the Carl Sandburg Prize of the Chicago Public Library, and a U.S. National Arts Award.

He holds honorary doctorates and fellowships at six European and six American universities, is an Honorary Professor in the Humanities at M.I.T, and University Distinguished Professor at Emory University. Currently, Rushdie is a Distinguished Writer in Residence at New York University.



From Left to Right: Ashutosh Varshney, Gauri Viswanathan, Salman Rushdie, and Shahzad Bashir

NOV 05

*Politics, Religion and Literature:  
India and Pakistan*

**Discussants:**

Gauri Viswanathan, Columbia University  
Shahzad Bashir, Brown University  
Ashutosh Varshney, Brown University



NOV 05 2021 2PM

OP JINDAL CONVERSATION WITH AUTHOR

**SALMAN RUSHDIE**

Politics, Religion and Literature:  
India and Pakistan

ASHUTOSH VARSHNEY  
Brown University

GAURI VISWANATHAN  
Columbia University

SHAHZAD BASHIR  
Brown University

True North Classroom  
Stephen Robert '62 Hall  
280 Brook St

ROBERT ROSENTHAL INSTITUTE  
FOR CONTEMPORARY STUDIES

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY  
South Asia



# OP Jindal Distinguished Lecture Series

## Mira Nair

Fall 2021

**Mira Nair** is a world-renowned Indian-American film director and producer. Born and raised in Rourkela, India, Mira went on to study at Delhi and Harvard universities. She began her career as a stage actor in India before moving to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she transitioned to documentary films at 20 years old, with films such as *So Far from India* (1983) and *Children of a Desired Sex* (1987). Her narrative feature debut, *Salaam Bombay!* (1988), won the Camera d'Or and was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language film.

A resourceful and determined independent filmmaker who casts unknowns alongside acclaimed actors, Mira has directed many films, including *Mississippi Masala* (1991), *Hysterical Blindness* (2002), *Vanity Fair* (2004), *The Namesake* (2006), *Amelia* (2009), *Queen of Katwe* (2016), and *A Suitable Boy* (2020). She also directed a segment of the anthology film *New York, I Love You* (2008).

She is the founder of the production company Mirabai Films and the Maisha Film Lab, an annual filmmaking workshop in Uganda.

### NOV 08

*Mississippi Masala* — Film Screening and Q&A with Director Mira Nair



NOV 8 & 10 2021  
4PM  
TRUE NORTH CLASSROOM  
STEPHEN ROBERT HALL '62

OP Jindal Distinguished Lectures with  
**Mira Nair**  
FILM DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER

NOV 08 | MISSISSIPPI MASALA:  
FILM SCREENING & DISCUSSION

NOV 10 | ON BEING BROWN BEFORE IT  
WAS FASHIONABLE: REFLECTIONS  
ON A CROSS CULTURAL JOURNEY  
Commentators:  
Ashish Chadha, University of Rhode Island  
Karan Mahajan, Brown University

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### NOV 10

*On Being Brown Before it was Fashionable: Reflections on a Cross Cultural Journey*

#### Commentators:

Ashish Chadha, University of Rhode Island  
Karan Mahajan, Brown University



Featured Above: Mira Nair, Leela Gandhi, Karan Mahajan, Ashish Chadha



Featured Below: Mira Nair with Brown University Students



# OP Jindal Distinguished Lecture Series

SIDDHARTH  
VARADARAJAN  
THE WIRE

EDWARD LUCE  
FINANCIAL TIMES

SALIL TRIPATHI  
AUTHOR

PAULA CHAKRAVARTTY  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

THE MEDIA  
& INDIA'S  
DEMOCRACY  
TODAY

OP JINDAL  
DISTINGUISHED  
LECTURE

15 APRIL 2022  
2PM - 4PM

JOUKOWSKY FORUM  
WATSON INSTITUTE  
111 THAYER ST

DISABILITY REQUESTS:  
SOUTHASIA@BERKEDU.EDU  
OR 401.863-7665

WATSON INSTITUTE  
BERKLEE COLLEGE OF  
MUSIC

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY  
South Asia

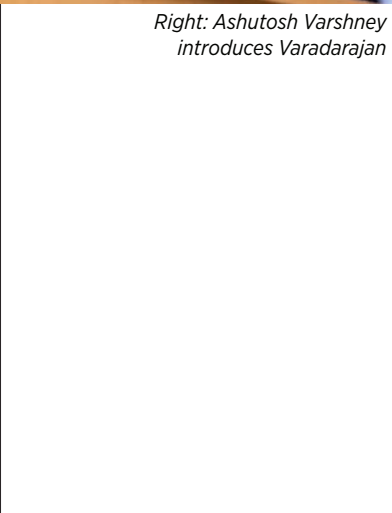
## Siddharth Varadarajan Spring 2022

**Siddharth Varadarajan** is a Founding Editor of *The Wire* and senior fellow at the Centre for Public Affairs and Critical Theory, New Delhi. Previously, he was the Editor of *The Hindu*. An economist by training, he studied at the London School of Economics and Columbia University. He taught at New York University before returning to India to work as a journalist. He has been a visiting lecturer at the journalism school at the University of California, Berkeley and a Poynter Fellow at Yale University.

**APRIL 15**  
*The Media and India's Democracy Today*  
**Commentators:**  
Edward Luce, Financial Times  
Salil Tripathi, Author  
Paula Chakravartty, New York University



Left: Siddharth Varadarajan



Right: Ashutosh Varshney  
introduces Varadarajan



From Left to Right:  
Siddharth Varadarajan,  
Salil Tripathi, Paula Chavravartty

# South Asia Seminar

*This series of public lectures facilitates a convergence of figures from across the lines of academia, civil society, literature, public policy, and journalism to contribute to the discourse on contemporary South Asia.*

## FALL 2021

### SEPTEMBER 17

**Neha Sahgal**, Pew Research Center  
**Pradeep Chhibber**, UC Berkeley  
**Elaine Fisher**, Stanford University  
**Finnian M. Gerety**, Brown University  
**Anand Vivek Taneja**, Vanderbilt University  
*Interpreting the Pew Report on Religions in India*

### SEPTEMBER 23

**Kalaiyaran A.**, Madras Institute of Development Studies  
*Caste and Racial Inequality: Competing Narratives*

### OCTOBER 1

**Debashree Mukherjee**, Columbia University  
*Bombay Hustle: Labor and Ecological Entanglements in 1930s Cinema*

### OCTOBER 8

**Arvind Subramanian**, Brown University  
**Raghuram Rajan**, University of Chicago Booth  
*Is the Indian Economy Back?*

### OCTOBER 13

**Christopher Clary**, SUNY, Albany  
**Christine Fair**, Georgetown University  
**Husain Haqqani**, Hudson Institute  
**Dipali Mukhopadhyay**, University of Minnesota  
*Understanding the Crisis in Afghanistan*

### OCTOBER 15

**Rema Nagarajan**, Times of India  
*India's Private Health Sector's Response to Covid — No Surprises*

### OCTOBER 15

**Mushfiq Mobarak**, Yale University  
*Returns to International Migration: Evidence from a Bangladesh-Malaysia Visa Lottery*

### NOVEMBER 15

**Swarnim Wagle**, UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific  
*The Twin Challenge of Development Catch-up and Democratic Consolidation in Low-Income Countries: The Case of Nepal*

### DECEMBER 10

**Debjani Bhattacharyya**, Drexel University  
*Climate Ledgers: Law and Imperial Finance in the Indian Ocean World*



## SPRING 2021

### FEBRUARY 4

**Shoumitro Chatterjee**, Penn State University  
**Harish Damodaran**, Centre for Policy Research  
**Andrew Foster**, Brown University  
**Ashok Gulati**, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations  
**Mekhala Krishnamurthy**, Centre for Policy Research  
**Yogendra Yadav**, Swaraj India  
*Indian Agriculture After the Revolt*

### FEBRUARY 18

**Sangeeta Banerji**, Brown University  
*Fixing Mumbai: Broker-life, Expertise, and Technology in the Urban Bureaucracy*

### FEBRUARY 25

**Karen Coelho**, Madras Institute of Development Studies  
*Remaking the Urban in the Margins: Resettlement Colonies and Differential Inclusion in India*

### MARCH 14

**Pallavi Raghavan**, Ashoka University  
*Animosity at Bay: An Alternative History of the India-Pakistan Relationship, 1947-52*

### MARCH 18

**Farhana Sultana**, Syracuse University  
*Critical Climate Justice*

### APRIL 8

**Ramachandra Guha**, Historian & Author  
**Leela Gandhi**, Brown University  
*Rebels Against the Raj: Western Fighters for India's Freedom*





# Brown-Harvard-MIT Joint Seminar on South Asian Politics

*The Brown-Harvard-MIT Joint Seminar on South Asian Politics approaches some of the big questions of politics, political economy and security, on which the South Asian region offers engaging perspectives. The series is co-sponsored by CCSA, the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs and Lakshmi Mittal South Asia Institute at Harvard University, and the MIT Center for International Studies.*

## SEPTEMBER 24

**Sumitra Badrinathan**, University of Oxford  
**Adam Berinsky**, MIT  
*Political Misinformation in India: Evidence from Experimental Solutions*

## OCTOBER 29

**Kanti Prasad Bajpai**, National University of Singapore  
**Vijay Gokhale**, Carnegie India  
**Shivshankar Menon**, Centre for Social and Economic Progress  
*The Past and Future of India-China Relations*

## NOVEMBER 19

**Harish Naraindas**, Jawaharlal Nehru University  
*Vaccinating India Against Covid: Lessons from History*

## DECEMBER 3

**Zuheir Desai**, IE University  
**Tanushree Goyal\***, Harvard University  
*How do Gender Quotas Impact Accountability?*

## FEBRUARY 11

**Ambassador Nirupama Rao**, former Foreign Secretary of India  
*The Fractured Himalaya: India • China • Tibet 1949-62*

## MARCH 4

**Neelanjan Sircar**, Centre for Policy Research  
**Jason Jackson\***, MIT  
*Colossus: The Anatomy of Delhi*

## MARCH 25

**Sanjoy Bhattacharya**, University of York  
*Smallpox Eradication: A Racially Inclusive History*

## MAY 6

**Nikhil Gaikwad**, Columbia University  
**Pia Raffler\***, Harvard University  
*Bridging the Gulf: Experimental Evidence on Migration's Impact on Tolerance and Internationalism*

*Discussant\**



## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

### CHAIR

**Ashutosh Varshney**  
Sol Goldman Professor of International Studies and the Social Sciences, Brown University

### CO - DIRECTORS

**Emmerich Davies**  
Assistant Professor of Education, Harvard University

**Patrick Heller**  
Lyn Crost Professor of Social Sciences, Professor of Sociology and International Studies, Brown University



**Purna Singh**  
Mahatma Gandhi Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Studies, Brown University

**Vipin Narang**  
Associate Professor of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

# Book Adda

*Adda means a site for collective deliberation in South Asia. This series features panel discussions of important new books written by our colleagues, or those significantly involved with the Center as intellectual interlocutors.*

OCTOBER 6

*Modi's India: Hindu Nationalism and the Rise of Ethnic Democracy*

**Author:**  
Christophe Jaffrelot, Center for International Studies and Research

**Commentators:**  
Amrita Basu, Amherst College  
Neelanjana Sircar, Centre for Policy Research  
Patrick Heller, Brown University



Christophe Jaffrelot

COMMENTATORS:

AMRITA BASU  
Amherst College

PATRICK HELLER  
Brown University

NEELANJAN SIRCAR  
Centre for Policy Research

MODERATOR:

ASHUTOSH VARSHNEY  
Brown University

OCT 6, 2021  
4PM - 6PM  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA

**BOOK ADDA**

CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT  
Center for International Studies & Research

**MODI'S INDIA**

HINDU NATIONALISM  
AND THE RISE OF  
ETHNIC DEMOCRACY

ADDA MEANS A SITE FOR COLLECTIVE DELIBERATION IN SOUTH ASIA

MARCH 11

*Ordering Violence: Explaining Armed Group-State Relations from Conflict to Cooperation*

**Author:**  
Paul Staniland, University of Chicago

**Commentators:**  
Yelena Biberman, Skidmore College  
Fotini Christia, MIT  
Vipin Narang, MIT  
Megan Turnbull, University of Georgia



Paul Staniland

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA

**BOOK ADDA**

PAUL STANILAND  
University of Chicago

COMMENTATORS:

YELENA BIBERMAN  
Skidmore College

FOTINI CHRISTIA  
MIT

VIPIN NARANG  
MIT

MEGAN TURNBULL  
University of Georgia

MAR 11, 2022  
2PM - 4PM  
JOUKOWSKY FORUM  
WATSON INSTITUTE  
111 THAYER STREET

**ORDERING VIOLENCE**

EXPLAINING ARMED GROUP-STATE RELATIONS  
FROM CONFLICT TO COOPERATION

**PAUL STANILAND**

ADDA MEANS A SITE FOR COLLECTIVE DELIBERATION IN SOUTH ASIA



From left to right: Fotini Christia, Megan Turnbull, Yelena Biberman, Vipin Narang



# Book Adda Continued

APRIL 22

*The Deoliwallahs*

**Author:**  
Joy Ma, Author  
Dilip D’Souza ’84 Sc.M, Author & Journalist

**Commentators:**  
Payal Banerjee, Smith College  
Sarah Besky, Cornell University



Joy Ma



Dilip D'Souza '84 Sc.M

JOY MA  
Author  
DILIP D'SOUZA '84 Sc.M  
Author & Journalist

COMMENTATORS:  
PAYAL BANERJEE  
Smith College  
SARAH BESKY  
Cornell University

APR 22, 2022  
2PM - 4PM  
JOUKOWSKY FORUM  
WATSON INSTITUTE  
111 THAYER STREET

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA

**BOOK ADDA**

The True Story of the 1962 Chinese-Indian Internment

**the deoli wallahs**

JOY MA  
DILIP D'SOUZA

WATSON INSTITUTE  
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South Asia

ADDA MEANS A SITE FOR COLLECTIVE DELIBERATION IN SOUTH ASIA

MAY 2

*Patching Development: Information Politics and Social Change in India*

**Author:**  
Rajesh Veeraraghavan, Georgetown University

**Commentators:**  
Rachel Brulé, Boston University  
Zehra Hashmi, Brown University  
Robert Jenkins, Hunter College, CUNY  
Vijayendra Rao, The World Bank



Rajesh Veeraraghavan



Patrick Heller, Rajesh Veeraraghavan, Robert Jenkins, Rachel Brulé, Zehra Hashmi, Vijayendra Rao

RAJESH VEERARAGHAVAN  
Georgetown University

COMMENTATORS:  
RACHEL BRULÉ  
Boston University  
ZEHRA HASHMI  
Brown University  
ROBERT JENKINS  
Hunter College, CUNY  
VIJAYENDRA RAO  
The World Bank

MAY 2, 2022  
4PM - 6PM  
JOUKOWSKY FORUM  
WATSON INSTITUTE  
111 THAYER STREET

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA

**BOOK ADDA**

**patching development**  
INFORMATION POLITICS AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA  
Rajesh Veeraraghavan

WATSON INSTITUTE  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
South Asia

ADDA MEANS A SITE FOR COLLECTIVE DELIBERATION IN SOUTH ASIA



# Co-Sponsored Programming

## SEPTEMBER 10

### COVID-19 in South Asia Workshop

The School of Public Health led by Ashish Jha and CCSA held a conference on Covid-19 and South Asia. While the pandemic affected all countries, the outcomes varied significantly. Suffering in some countries and regions within countries. The workshop aimed to look at how we might account for the variations in outcome. Government policies, the strength of public health systems, citizen mobilization, vaccine availability and administration have all mattered in different ways.

**COVID-19 IN SOUTH ASIA**

**SEPT 10 2021**

**10AM TO 5PM**

**CHAIR:** ASHISH JHA, Brown University

**REPORTS FROM THE FIELD:** BARKHA DUTT, Mojo Story & The Washington Post; P. SARAVANAMUTTU, Center for Policy Alternatives; MALIHA MANNAN AHMED, Organikare Bangladesh

**PLENARY:** COVID-19 IN PAKISTAN: SANIA NISHTAR, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of Pakistan; MASHAIL MALIK, Harvard University; MUHAMMAD OMAR AFZAAL, Brown University; BEENA SARWAR, Emerson College

**COVID-19 IN INDIA:** ARVIND SUBRAMANIAN, Brown University; BHARAMAR MUKHERJEE, University of Michigan; PATRICK HELLER, Brown University

**COVID-19 IN BANGLADESH, PAKISTAN, & NEPAL:** ASIM KHAWAJA, Harvard University; MUSHFIQ MOBARAK, Yale University; RAMU KHAREL, Brown University

**WATSON INSTITUTE**

**111 THAYER ST**

**Barkha Dutt**, Mojo Story & The Washington Post  
**P. Saravanamuttu**, Center for Policy Alternatives  
**Maliha Mannan Ahmed**, Organikare Bangladesh  
*Field Reports From Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka*

**Sania Nishtar**, Special Assistant of Pakistan's Prime Minister and Federal Minister  
**Moderator:**  
**Beena Sarwar**, Emerson College  
**Commentators:**  
**Mashail Malik**, Harvard University  
**Muhammad Omar Afzaal**, Brown University  
*COVID-19 in Pakistan*

**Bhramar Mukherjee**, University of Michigan  
**Arvind Subramanian**, Brown University  
**Patrick Heller**, Brown University  
*COVID-19 in India*

**Mushfiq Mobarak**, Yale University  
**Asim Khwaja**, Harvard University  
**Ramu Kharel**, Brown University  
*Covid-19 in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal*

## OCTOBER 1

**Sienna Craig**, Dartmouth College  
*The Ends of Kinship: Connecting Himalayan Lives between Nepal and New York*

*\*Co-sponsored by the Departments of Anthropology and Contemplative Studies*

## FEBRUARY 3

**Gowri Vijayakumar**, Brandeis University  
*At Risk: Indian Sexual Politics and the Global AIDS Crisis*

*\*Co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice and the Marshall Woods Lectureships Foundation of Fine Arts*

**AT RISK:**  
**INDIAN SEXUAL POLITICS AND THE GLOBAL AIDS CRISIS**  
 with Gowri Vijayakumar

**AT RISK**  
 INDIAN SEXUAL POLITICS AND THE GLOBAL AIDS CRISIS  
 GOWRI VIJAYAKUMAR

**4:00 PM**  
 February 3, 2022

Joukowsky Forum  
 Watson Institute

Center for the Study of **SLAVERY** and **JUSTICE**

WATSON INSTITUTE  
 BROWN UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY **South Asia**

**Vocal & Sarangi Recital**

Free & Open to the Public

Nitin Mitta, Matthew Rahaim, Suhail Yusuf Khan

Presented by Brown University Contemplative Studies along with Brown University Religious Studies Department and Music Department

**Friday, April 22, 2022 - 7pm**  
**Friedman 102**

## APRIL 22

**Matthew Rahaim**, Vocalist  
**Suhail Yusuf Khan**, Sitar Player  
**Nitin Mitta**, Tabla  
*Vocal and Sarangi Recital*

*\*Co-sponsored by the Department of Religious Studies*

## MAY 12 - 14

**Borayin Larios**, University of Vienna  
**Finnian M. M. Gerety**, Brown University  
**Carola E. Lorea**, National University of Singapore  
**Gudrun Bühnemann**, University of Wisconsin  
**Dominik A. Haas**, University of Vienna, Austria  
*Mantras: Sound, Materiality, and the Body*  
*A workshop hosted by the University of Vienna*

*\*Co-sponsored by CCSA & the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore*



# Meera & Vikram Gandhi Fellow

*Meera and Vikram Gandhi Fellowships enable major journalists, public figures and scholars working on India to undertake substantial projects while in residence at Brown. The fellowships are funded by a gift from Meera and Vikram Gandhi.*

## Arvind Subramanian

Fall 2021 & Spring 2022

Arvind Subramanian was professor of economics at Ashoka University and founding director of the Ashoka Center for Economic Policy (ACEP). He is also a non-resident senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE). He was chief economic adviser to the Government of India between 2014 and 2018. Previously, he was a visiting lecturer at the Harvard Kennedy School. Subramanian's areas of interest include global development and the global economic, financial and trading systems.

Prior to his time in India, he was the Dennis Weatherstone Senior Fellow at PIIE, a senior fellow at the Center for Global Development, and an assistant director in the research department of the International Monetary Fund. He also worked for the GATT (the predecessor of the World Trade Organization) during the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations. In 2011, Foreign Policy magazine named him a Top 100 Global Thinker.

In 2018, Professor Subramanian published *Of Counsel: The Challenges of the Modi-Jaitley Economy*, reflecting on his time guiding India's economy. His previous award-winning book, *Eclipse: Living in the Shadow of China's Economic Dominance* has been printed in four languages.



**OCTOBER 8**

*Is the Indian Economy Back?*

**Commentator:**

**Raghuram Rajan**, University of Chicago Booth

**COURSES:**

IAPA 1404: Economic Development in China and India

SAST 0750: Understanding the Indian Economy

# Visiting Faculty



## Finnian M.M. Gerety

In the fall of 2018, Finnian M. M. Gerety joined CCSA as a visiting assistant professor for a three year term. He also serves as the Director of Undergraduate Studies for South Asian Studies. Professor Gerety works on texts, rituals, and the senses in South Asian religions, with a focus on Hindu traditions of India. He is especially interested in Sanskrit mantras: how they are performed, textualized, and passed on; how they are embodied and sensed; how they are reflected upon and interpreted; how they are transformed in the digital age; and how they influence identity, community, and heritage within religious traditions. He teaches classes in South Asian Studies, Contemplative Studies, and Religious Studies.

### COURSES:

SAST 0034: Dharma: A History of Classical Indian Civilization

SAST 0140: Food, Religion and Politics in South Asia

SAST 0145: Karma, Rebirth and Liberation: Life and Death in South Asian Religions

SAST 0525: The History and Practice of Yoga in India and Beyond

**MAY 12 - 14**

*Mantras: Sound, Materiality, and the Body*

**Borayin Larios**, University of Vienna

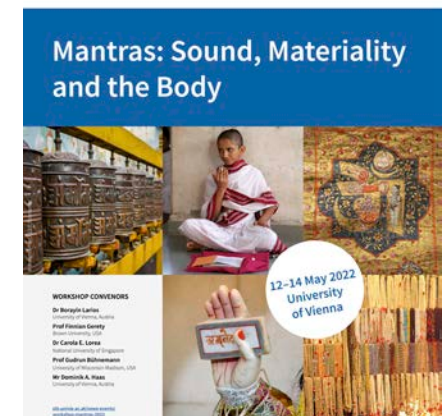
**Finnian M.M. Gerety**, Brown University

**Carola E. Lorea**, National University of Singapore

**Gudrun Bühnemann**, University of Wisconsin-Madison,

**Dominik A. Haas**, University of Vienna, Austria

*\*A three day workshop hosted by the University of Vienna; co-sponsored by CCSA & the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore*



# CCSA Fellows 2021-2022

*Projects selected represent a variety of research topics related to social, political, cultural and economic change in South Asia.*

In 2021-2022 the Center awarded funds for research projects, language programs, and internships to two postdoctoral fellows, five undergraduate students, and eleven graduate students.

## POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS



**Sangeeta Banerji, International & Public Affairs**  
*Fixing Mumbai (Summer 2022)*



**Zehra Hashmi, International & Public Affairs**  
*Data Infrastructures for Surveillance in Postcolonial Pakistan (Summer 2022)*

## UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWS



**Priyanka Mahat**  
*Climate Change and Nepal: An environmental justice perspective (Winter 2021)*



**Srinaath Kidambi Perangur**  
*AIIS Summer Language Program in Tamil (Summer 2022)*



**Kanha Prasad**  
*Gujarati Language Training for Research on Gandhi (Summer 2022)*



**Rhythm Rastogi**  
*Social Audit Toolkit (Winter 2021)*



**Aryan Srivastava**  
*Hate Speech on Social Media in India (Winter 2021)*



# CCSA Fellows 2021 - 2022

## GRADUATE FELLOWS



**Arnav Adhikari, English**  
*Transnational Marxisms: Tracing Revolutionary Dialogues Between Mexico and India*  
(Winter 2022)



**Muhammad Omar Afzaal, Political Science**  
*Picking Your Battles: A Story of Pakistan's Perceptions* (Winter '21 & Summer '22)



**Geetika Nagpal, Economics**  
*Impact of housing supply on FSI regulations*  
(Winter 2021)



**Jocelyn Bell, Sociology**  
*Reimagining within-movement conflict: Ideology and the anti-sex trafficking movement*  
(Summer 2022)



**Ruchi Mahadeshwar, Economics**  
*The Impacts of Diversity in Mumbai's Annual Public Housing Program* (Summer 2022)



**Subadevan Mahadevan, Sociology**  
*A subnational comparative Analysis of Decarbonization in India* (Summer 2022)



**Aarushi Kalra, Economics**  
*Hate at Scale: Wealth Shocks, Backlash, and Hate Speech on Social Media* (Summer 2022)



**Beenish Pervaiz, Political Science**  
*Old Wars, New Tools: How alliance politics shapes vertical nuclear proliferation and technological diffusion in Pakistan & India* (Summer 2022)



**Radhika Moral, Anthropology**  
*Silk Frontiers: Supply Chains, Gendered Labor, and the Politics of Belonging in Northeast India*  
(Summer 2022)



**Alex Zhou, Economics**  
*Beneficiary Targeting in Mumbai's Subsidized-Housing Program* (Summer 2022)

# South Asian Studies & South Asia in the World

*South Asian Studies is an interdisciplinary concentration in which students work across the humanities and social sciences, geographical locations and historical periods.*

Through their coursework, SAST concentrators work across the humanities and social sciences, geographical locations and historical periods. The concentration emphasizes both the diversity of South Asia as a region, as well as the long-term historical connections among people and places in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka.

## COURSES SPONSORED BY CCSA

**Finnian M.M. Gerety**, Religious Studies  
SAST 0034: Dharma: A History of Classical Indian Civilization  
SAST 0140: Food, Religion and Politics in South Asia  
SAST 0145: Karma, Rebirth and Liberation: Life and Death in South Asian Religions  
SAST 0525: The History and Practice of Yoga in India and Beyond

**Aarushi Kalra**, Economics  
SAST 0730: Economic and Human Development in South Asia

**Nabila Islam**, Sociology  
SAST 0735: South Asia in the World and the World in South Asia

**Arvind Subramanian**, International & Public Affairs  
IAPA 1404: Economic Development in China and India  
SAST 0750: Understanding the Indian Economy

## THESIS PRIZE

**Jamila Beesley `22**  
*"The Architects of the Solutions They Need": Dalit Feminism in the U.S. Caste Abolition Movement*

**Lavanya Krishnan `22**  
*The Politics of Privatisation in India*

**Akshaan Parikh `22**  
*Let Us Alone to Die: Plague Camps in Bombay City, 1896-1902*

## UNDERGRADUATE PAPER PRIZE

**Aryan Srivastava `22.5**  
*Hate at Scale: Elections, Leader Identity and Hate Speech in Rural Uttar Pradesh*  
\*Co-authored by Aarushi Kalra & Saket Tiwari

**Catherine Nelli `23**  
*Krishna Drinking Flames: A Kangra Painting of the Bhāgavata Purāna*

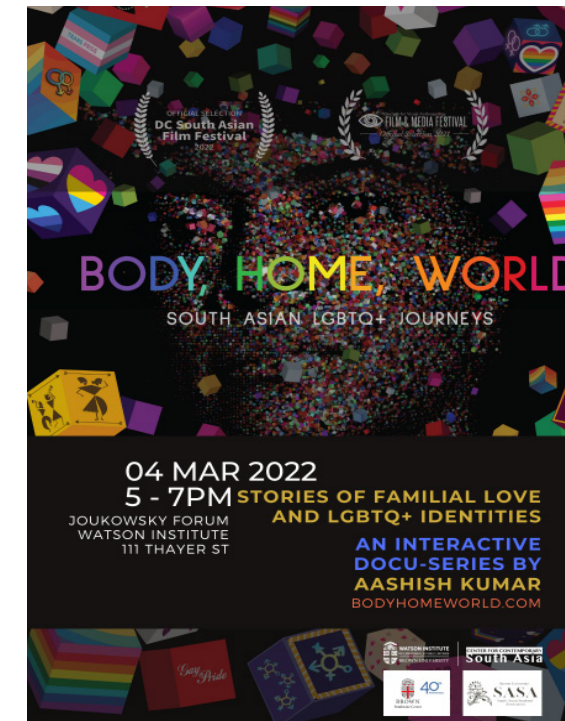
**Leo Fleissig `24**  
*The Story of Ekalavya: an Embodiment of Hopelessness or a Beacon of Hope*

# Undergraduate Student Programming

## MARCH 4

**Aashish Kumar**, Hofstra University  
*Body, Home, World: South Asian American LGBTQ+ Journeys*

\*Co-sponsored by the Pembroke Center and the South Asian Students' Association



## APRIL 15

**Vaisakhi - Naya Barsa - Pohela Boishakh New Years Celebration**

\*Co-sponsored by the Himalayan Cultural Association, Sikh Students Association, and the South Asian Students' Association



## APRIL 29

**Shrayana Bhattacharya**, World Bank  
*Desperately Seeking Shah Rukh: India's Lonely Young Women and the Search for Intimacy and Independence*



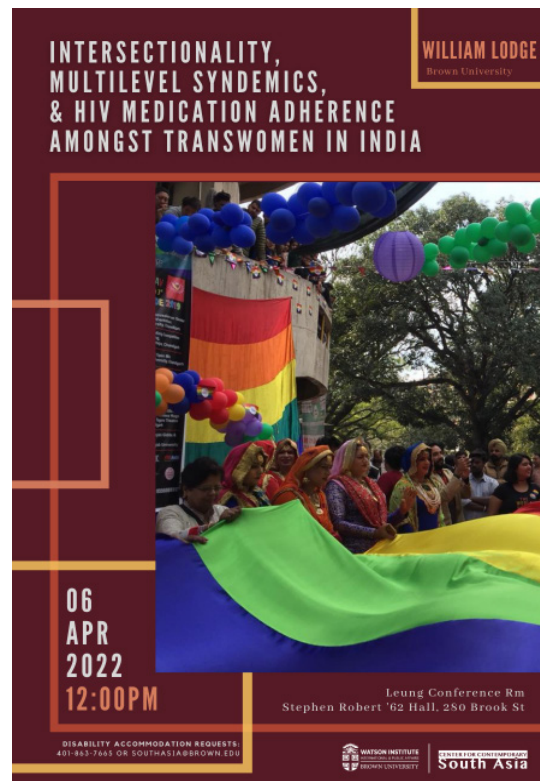
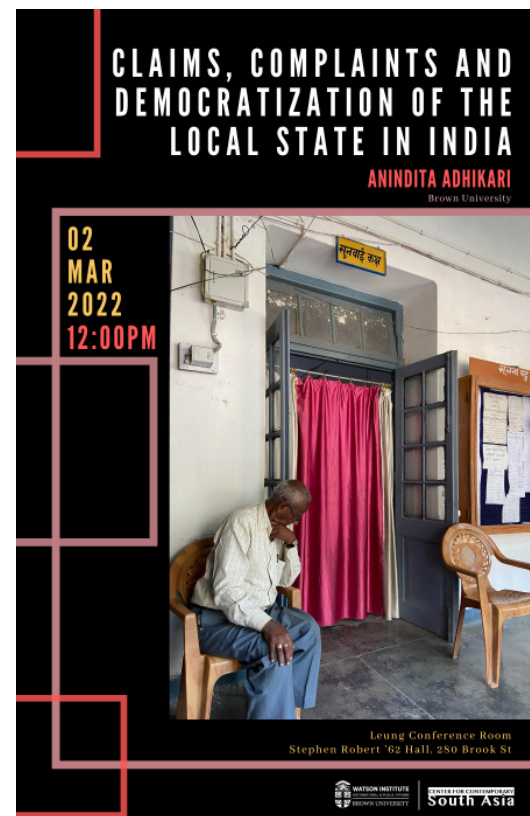
# Graduate Student Programing

Graduate students from across the disciplines working on South Asia are a vital part of the CCSA community. Students present their own work, recieve fellowships to support their research and invite speakers to be part of the South Asia Seminar Series.

## PRESENTATIONS BY GRADUATE STUDENTS

**MARCH 2**

**Anindita Adhikari**, Sociology  
*Claims, Complaints and Democratization of the Local State in India*



**APRIL 6**

**William Lodge II**, Public Health  
*Intersectionality, Multilevel Syndemics, and HIV Medication Adherence Amongst Transwomen in India*

## EVENTS ORGANIZED BY GRADUATE STUDENTS

**OCTOBER 1**

**Debashree Mukherjee**, Columbia University  
*Bombay Hustle: Labor and Ecological Entanglements in 1930s Cinema*

**OCTOBER 15**

**Rema Nagarajan**, Times of India  
*India's Private Health Sector's Response to Covid-No Surprises*



**FEBRUARY 25**

**Karen Coelho**, Madras Institute of Development Studies  
*Remaking the Urban in the Margins: Resettlement Colonies and Differential Inclusion in India*  
*Technology in the Urban Bureaucracy*

**MARCH 18**

**Farhana Sultana**, Syracuse University  
*Critical Climate Justice*





# Research Partnerships



## AIIMS PARTNERSHIP WITH BHRIGUPATI SINGH

Since 2015-16, Bhri Gupta Singh has partnered with the psychiatry department at AIIMS to explore how the idea of “quality of life” is understood. Since summer 2020, Singh and his partners have been preparing a second round of surveys in urban poor neighborhoods in Delhi based on the World Health Organization’s Quality of Life instrument, [WHO-QOL BREF], a 26-item questionnaire created in 1991 with the aim of creating “an international cross-culturally comparable quality of life assessment instrument.” The second round of surveys will include questions regarding the impacts of COVID-19 in these communities.



## JANAAGRAHA PARTNERSHIP WITH ASHUTOSH VARSHNEY & PATRICK HELLER

The Janaagraha-Brown Citizenship Index (JB-CI) project focuses on measuring the quality of citizenship in urban India by measuring the extent to which Indian citizens can effectively use their civil, political and social rights in cities. The project is a unique and equal partnership in both its concept and execution between academic researchers at Brown University and practitioners from the Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy on a crucial contemporary subject.



Ashutosh Varshney, Patrick Heller, Bhanu Joshi, and Conor Staggs conducting focus discussion group in Kolkata.

In March 2022, fieldwork for the JB-CI project was able to resume. Brown faculty and graduate researchers traveled to India to conduct focus group discussions and key respondent interviews in Kolkata and Bhubaneswar. In 2021-2022, the project supported two graduate student researchers and seven undergraduate research assistants. Undergraduate research assistants utilized their research skills identifying and summarizing any previous research done on citizenship and urban service provision in 12 cities being studied by the project. Our graduate researchers shared the following reflections on how the project has contributed to his professional development at Brown:

“Working on the JB-CI project has been a formative opportunity for me to apply much of my statistical and quantitative training on a large-scale, ongoing research collaboration. The project has also introduced me to the field of urban studies and helped me to make connections that will improve my dissertation field research. As a result, I expect that I will keep working on the issue of urban governance in India once the project itself has concluded.”

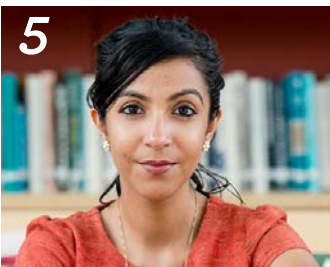
This summer, draft reports from three cities in Gujarat (Ahmedabad, Vadodara, and Bhavnagar) will be presented to local stakeholders in Ahmedabad for feedback before publication. Similar events will be planned to coincide with the publication of additional city reports, the first seven of which will be completed by the end of August. Smaller excerpts of findings will also be released via various news outlets over the course of the year. Fundamentally, this project aims at improving on understanding an issue of great emerging significance: urban governance in India. The city reports will provide detailed, contextually-rich pictures of this key issue. They will, moreover, serve as definitive reference documents for urban researchers, policymakers, and practitioners for each of the 17 cities surveyed in the project.



Photos by Bhanu Joshi



# Steering Committee



- 1 Ashutosh Varshney**  
Director, CCSA  
Sol Goldman Professor of International Studies and the Social Sciences  
Professor of Political Science  
[ashutosh\\_varshney@brown.edu](mailto:ashutosh_varshney@brown.edu)
- 2 Andrew Foster**  
George S. and Nancy B. Parker Professor of Economics, Director of Social Science Research Institute  
[andrew\\_foster@brown.edu](mailto:andrew_foster@brown.edu)
- 3 Shahzad Bashir**  
Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Humanities Professor of History  
[shahzad\\_bashir@brown.edu](mailto:shahzad_bashir@brown.edu)
- 4 Patrick Heller**  
Lyn Crost Professor of Social Sciences, Professor of Sociology and International Sciences  
[patrick\\_heller@brown.edu](mailto:patrick_heller@brown.edu)
- 5 Prerna Singh**  
Mahatma Gandhi Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Studies  
[prerna\\_singh@brown.edu](mailto:prerna_singh@brown.edu)

# Staff



**Stephanie Abbott-Pandey**  
Program Manager  
[stephanie\\_abbott@brown.edu](mailto:stephanie_abbott@brown.edu)



**Grace Cardogno**  
Events & Communications Coordinator  
[grace\\_cardogno@brown.edu](mailto:grace_cardogno@brown.edu)





Center for Contemporary South Asia  
Watson Institute  
Brown University

280 Brook St  
Box 1970  
Providence, RI 02912  
+1 401.863.5059

[www.watson.brown.edu/southasia](http://www.watson.brown.edu/southasia)  
[southasia@brown.edu](mailto:southasia@brown.edu)



**WATSON INSTITUTE**  
INTERNATIONAL & PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
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**South Asia**