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 multidisciplinarity will include sustained interaction of social scientists with the humanities on the one hand and the 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 and pluralism & diversities.

Message from the Director
The Center for Contemporary South Asia completed its second year in 2017-18. In our previous incarnation, we were the Brown-India Initiative. Our move from India to South Asia has enlarged our intellectual focus and broadened our programmatic offerings.

Over the two semesters, we had 58 events in all. Our offerings went beyond India to cover Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. We also stepped outside the region to cover theoretical materials that were of interest to scholars of the region. The Book Adda on William Mazzarella’s *The Mana of Mass Society* and the scholarly get together on “Steps Towards a Global Thought: Thinking From Elsewhere” were examples of such theoretically inspired larger conversations.

A distinctive feature of the year was our attempt to re-imagine and expand the South Asian Studies concentration. Sarah Besky joined as director of undergraduate student programs, and will continue in that role. In the fall, a new course, “Introduction to Modern South Asia”, which will now be a regular feature of our concentration syllabus, was offered. We provided special recognition to excellent undergraduate papers and theses, and three undergraduates won our summer fellowships for research or internship. In September 2018, a new colleague, Finnian Moore-Gerety, whom we warmly welcome, started offering classes in our undergraduate concentration.

Graduate participation in our programs was significantly scaled up. Senior PhD students taught, and will continue to teach, some undergraduate classes; they also curated a special series of talks by outstation scholars; and their own graduate seminar continued. Seven graduate students were also awarded fellowships for summer research.

Our visitors included Swati and Ramesh Ramanathan (Janaagraha), who continued their work on India’s democracy and also explored the urban complexities of Providence, especially as compared to Bangalore; Sudhir Krishnaswamy (Azim Premji University), who worked on his book on social justice and India’s constitution, and gave two seminar talks; Rana Dasgupta, a British novelist, who continued his teaching at the Department of Modern Culture and Media (MCM); and Srinivas Reddy (IIT, Gandhinagar), who taught in the Department of Religious Studies.

David Mosse, an anthropologist based at SOAS, London, and the novelist Amitav Ghosh delivered our widely attended Jindal Distinguished Lectures — in the fall and spring respectively. Menaka Guruswamy (Columbia University) and Sanjay Subramanian (UCLA) will be our next Jindal Lecturers.

I am on a sabbatical in 2018-19. Leela Gandhi is serving as our acting director. I hope you will enjoy the activities of the year under her leadership.
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.

David Mosse
FALL 2017

NOVEMBER 1
Is Caste a Development Issue?

Commentators:
Sarah Besky, Anthropology
Bhawani Buswala, Anthropology
Bhrigupati Singh, Anthropology

NOVEMBER 3
Narratives, Networks and NGOs: Dalit Rights and Development in South Asia

Commentators:
Adanar Usmani, Sociology
Trina Vithayathil, Providence College

David Mosse is Professor of Social Anthropology. His research combines interests in the anthropology of development and activism, environmental history and natural resources management, in the anthropology of Christianity, South Asian society and popular religion. He is currently involved in a collaborative ESRC research project titled ‘Caste Out of Development: Civil Society Activism and Transnational Advocacy on Dalit Rights and Development’ examining the continuing significance of caste in contemporary development encounters and contentions in India. Mosse has published extensively on the anthropology of religion, environment and development. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, and on the editorial boards of World Development, American Ethnologist and Journal of Development Studies. He worked for Oxfam as Representative for South India, and for other international development agencies as a social development adviser. He joined SOAS in 1997 and was appointed to the Governing Body in September 2013. He studied social anthropology at Oxford University where he received a DPhil.

Amitav Ghosh
SPRING 2018

Amitav Ghosh was born in Calcutta and grew up in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Ghosh studied in Delhi, Oxford and Alexandria and has taught in many universities in India and the USA, including Delhi University, Columbia, Queens College and Harvard University.

Ghosh’s extensive works have received a multitude of awards including the France’s Prix Médicis, Sahitya Akademi Award, Ananda Puraskar, Crossword Book Prize, and India Plaza Golden Quill Award among other Indian prizes.


APRIL 6
Embattled Earth: Commodities, Conflict and Climate Change in the Indian Ocean Region

APRIL 13
In Conversation with Leela Gandhi

Chair:
Lina Fruzzetti, Anthropology

Featured above from left to right: Mosse, Singh, Besky and Buswala
Featured Right: Gandhi, Fruzzetti and Ghosh
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 2017**

**OCTOBER 13**
Tarun Khanna, Harvard Business School  
Crowdsourcing memories: Lessons from the 1947 Partition of British India

**NOVEMBER 10**
Raza Rumi, Ithaca College  
Democratic Transition in Pakistan: Prospects and Challenges

**NOVEMBER 17**
Nusrat Chowdhury, Amherst College  
The Body of the Crowd

**DECEMBER 6**
Adnan Naseemullah, Kings College London  
The Colonial Construction of Political Orders: Uneven State-Building and its Consequences in South Asia

**DECEMBER 8**
Sudhir Krishnaswamy, Azim Premji University  
Directive Principles or Social Rights: Constitutional Approaches to Social Justice in India

**SPRING 2018**

**FEBRUARY 2**
Husain Haqqani, Hudson Institute & Former Ambassador  
Reimagining Pakistan

**FEBRUARY 9**
Shahzad Bashir, Brown University  
India as a Sufi Timespace in the work of Jamali of Delhi

**FEBRUARY 16**
Vivian Choi, St. Olaf College  
Enduring Disaster: Tsunami and Civil War in Sri Lanka

**MARCH 2**
Raile Rocky Zaiipo, Harvard University  
Roads, Region Formation, and the Question of Tribes in North East India

**MARCH 9**
Vivek Dehejia, Carleton University  
From the 'Idea of India' to the 'New Idea of India': The Political Economy of Federalism in India

**APRIL 12**
Tariq Modood, Bristol University  
Ethno-R eligious Equality, Islamophobia, Multicultural Equality and Moderate Secularism: Do these concepts have application in South Asia?

**APRIL 20**
Ornit Shani, University of Haifa  
How India Became Democratic

**MAY 4**
Farina Mir, University of Michigan  
Genres of Muslim Modernity: Urdu Ethics Literature and the Diversity of Muslim Thought in Colonial India

**MAY 11**
Hafsa Kanjwal, Lafayette College  
Mohammad Junaid, Hobart and William Smith State and Political Subjectivity in Kashmir
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 us as intellectual interlocutors.

SEPTEMBER 22
The Mana of Mass Society
Author: William T.S. Mazzarella, University of Chicago
Commentators: Jean Comaroff, Harvard University; Leela Gandhi, Brown University; Michael Taussig, Columbia University; Aarti Sethi, Brown University; Bhrigupati Singh, Brown University.

SEPTEMBER 29
When Crime Pays: Money and Muscle in Indian Politics
Author: Milan Vaishnav, Carnegie Endowment
Commentators: Adam Ziegfeld, George Washington University; Ashutosh Varshney, Brown University; Jeffrey Witsoe, Union College; Prerna Singh, Brown University.
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 15
Saad Gulzar, Stanford University
Why Do Citizens Become Politicians? Experimental Evidence on Candidacy

OCTOBER 20
Arjun Subramaniam, Harvard Asia Center
War and Conflict in Contemporary India

NOVEMBER 17
Tara Beteille, World Bank
The Contentious Politics of Teacher Transfers in India: A Way Forward

DECEMBER 1
Soledad Artiz Prillaman, University of Chicago
When Women Mobilize: Dissecting India’s Gender Gap in Political Representation

FEBRUARY 23
Maya Tudor, University of Oxford
India’s Inclusive Nationalism: A Resource for Democracy

MARCH 2
Adam Auerbach, American University
Client Preferences in Broker Selection: Competition, Choice, and Informal Leadership in India’s Urban Slums

MARCH 16
Nicholas Sambanis, University of Pennsylvania
Violence Exposure and Ethnic Identification: Evidence from Kashmir

APRIL 27
Alison Post, UC Berkeley
Infrastructure Networks and Urban Inequality: The Political Geography of Water Flows in Bangalore

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

Patrick Heller
Professor of Sociology and International Studies, Brown University

Emmerich Davies
Assistant Professor of Education, Harvard University
NOVEMBER 16
Irene Pang, Sociology
Contingent Civil Society: Adaptive Strategies of Citizenship Contestation Among Internal Migrant Construction Workers in Beijing and Delhi

DECEMBER 7
Rajeev Kadambi, Political Science
Pathologies of Cosmopolitan Racialism: M.N. Roy on Politics

FEBRUARY 27
Andrea Wright, Anthropology
Tired Hands: Race, Gender, and Labor in Contemporary India

APRIL 9
Vinay Shukla, Filmmaker
An Insignificant Man

APRIL 12
Purnaprajna Bangere, Musician
&M. Kavthekar, Musician
North Meets South: An Evening of Indian Classical Music

APRIL 18
Tishani Doshi, Author & Dancer
Vivek Narayan, Author
Poetry Reading & Discussion

APRIL 19
Tishani Doshi, Author & Dancer
Vivek Narayan, Author
Performance & Presentation

Featured Above: Tishani Doshi

APRIL 19
Tishani Doshi, Author & Dancer
Vivek Narayan, Author
Performance & Presentation

MAY 4
Farina Mir, University of Michigan
Genres of Muslim Modernity: Urdu Ethics Literature and the Diversity of Muslim Thought in Colonial India

MAY 11
Hafsah Kanjwal, Lafayette College
Mohamad Junaid, Hobart and William Smith Colleges
State and Political Subjectivity in Kashmir

MARCH 21, MAY 11 & APRIL 2
Graduate Student Reading Group

The Center continues to co-sponsor events with many departments across campus.

FALL 2017
OCTOBER 6-7
Bhrigupati Singh, Brown University
Steps Towards a Global Thought: Thinking from Elsewhere

OCTOBER 16
Anupama Bhagwat, Musician
An Evening of Music and Conversation

OCTOBER 26
Harsh Mander, Social Activist and Writer
Love as Solidarity and Resistance to Hate: Violence in India: A Caravan of Love

OCTOBER 26
Avijit Mukul Kishore, Filmmaker
& Rohan Shivkumar, Architect
Nostalgia for the Future: A Film Screening

OCTOBER 30
Ifat Fatima, Filmmaker
Khoon Diy Baarav (Blood Leaves its Trail)

SPRING 2018
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An Insignificant Man

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State and Political Subjectivity in Kashmir

MARCH 21, MAY 11 & APRIL 2
Graduate Student Reading Group
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.

In Fall 2017, CCSA relaunched the South Asian Studies (SAS) concentration, adding a new introductory course, South Asia in the World course collaboration grants and appointing a new Director of Undergraduate Studies. This has reinvigorated student interest in the interdisciplinary study of the region, broadly defined.

Through their coursework, SAS 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.

SOUTH ASIA IN THE WORLD COURSE COLLABORATION GRANTS

Faiz Ahmed, History
Islam in America: A Global History

Finnian Moore-Gerety, Religious Studies
Karma, Rebirth and Liberation: Life and Death in South Asian Religions

David Buchta
Godesses and Women Gurus in South Asian Religion

Holly Shaffer, History of Art & Architecture & Shahzad Bashir, Religious Studies
Cultures of Translation: Painting and Poetry across India, Iran, and Europe

Jeffrey Moser, History of Art & Architecture
Arts of Asia

INTRODUCTION TO MODERN SOUTH ASIA COURSE

Brian Horton, Anthropology
SAST 0700: Introduction to Modern South Asia

CCSA's first-ever DUG leaders inspired undergraduate-driven programming that focused on creating informal learning environments where students could learn about the research and experiences of professors and postdocs, critically analyze popular culture by examining films and share their own research with the Brown community.

OCTOBER 12
Sarah Besky, Anthropology & DUS
Meet the Professor

NOVEMBER 9
Adaner Usmani, International and Public Affairs
Meet the Postdoc

NOVEMBER 20
Double Take: Critical Engagement with Popular Films

FEBRUARY 8
Patrick Heller, Professor of Sociology
Meet the Professor

FEBRUARY 15
Double Take: Critical Engagement with Popular Films

MARCH 12
CCSA Undergraduate Paper Presentations

MARCH 14
Aarthi Sethi, International And Public Affairs
Meet the Postdoc
Visiting Fellows

Ramesh Ramanathan
Ramesh Ramanathan is a social entrepreneur, and works on urban issues in India. He is co-founder of Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, a non-profit focused on transforming quality of life in Urban India. He is also Chairman of Janalakshmi Social Services, a not-for-profit social business holding company that has promoted enterprises in urban financial inclusion and urban affordable housing.

Ramesh works closely with government on urban issues in a pro-bono capacity. His current positions include being the National Technical Advisor, Government of India for the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, the country’s flagship urban mission. Prior to his social initiatives, Ramesh held leadership positions with Citibank in New York and London, in the bank’s capital markets business. Ramesh has an M$ in Physics from BITS Pilani, an MBA from Yale University and a CFA from AIMR. In 2007, he was chosen as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum.

Swati Ramanathan
Swati Ramanathan is co-founder of Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy — a thinker-practitioner “do-tank” — committed to transforming India’s cities and citizenship. Janaagraha takes a systems approach to addressing urban challenges, working both with citizens at the grassroots, as well as with all three federal tiers of government. Ms. Ramanathan leads Janaagraha’s innovations in technology for greater government accountability and citizen participation. She has received international recognition for ipaidabribe.com on retail corruption; and ichangemycity.com on hyper local citizen participation, most recently winning Google’s Global Impact Challenge, 2013. Ms Ramanathan is also Chairperson of Jana Urban Space Foundation, committed to improving urban planning and urban design in India’s cities. She was honored by the Government of Rajasthan with the Rajyotsava Puraskar — Rajasthan’s highest civilian award — for her work on the Jaipur 2025 Master plan. She has prepared the National Urban Spatial Planning and Development (NUSPD) 2013 Guidelines, for planning India’s cities, at the behest of the Ministry of Urban Development, and the Planning Commission, Government of India.

Sudhir Krishnaswamy
Sudhir Krishnaswamy is a co-founder of CLPR, and a partner at Ashira Law. He is currently a faculty member at the Azim Premji University. He was also the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Visiting Professor of Indian Constitutional Law at Columbia Law School. His main areas of interest are constitutional law, legal education, legal theory, intellectual property law and administrative law.

He graduated from the National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bangalore (B.A. LL.B). He read the BCL and obtained a D.Phil. from Oxford University. He has been a Teaching Fellow in Law at the Pembroke College at Oxford University, an Assistant Professor at NLSIU and a Professor at the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata. In the past, Sudhir has also worked in the Prime Minister’s Committee on Infrastructure and the Kasturirangan Committee on Governance of Bangalore. He is author of Democracy and Constitutionalism in India (Oxford University Press 2009).

Rana Dasgupta
Rana Dasgupta is an award-winning novelist born in the UK in 1971 and grew up in Cambridge. As an adult he lived in France, Malaysia and the US before moving to Delhi in 2000.

For three years, in collaboration with the Dean of Faculty, CCSA has teamed up with the Department of Modern Culture and Media (MCM) to offer new courses with a South Asian focus, taught or co-taught by Rana Dasgupta. In 2018, Dasgupta taught two courses, “Does Utopia Still Exist? Media, politics and the hope of something else,” in spring and, “In Order to Write About the Twenty-First-Century City, We First Have to Imagine it,” in fall.

Siddharth Swaminathan
Siddharth Swaminathan is a Professor of Political Science at Azim Premji University in Karnataka, India. Swaminathan teaches courses on Politics in India, Welfare Rights, and Empirical Policy Analysis. He received an MA and PhD in political science from the Claremont Graduate University. His research focuses on political demography, voter behavior, citizenship, and urban governance in India. Prior to joining Azim Premji University, he held faculty positions at the Institute for Social and Economic Change, La Sierra University and California State University.

His most recent publications include: Statistical Methods and Political Analysis: Examining the ‘Economic Vote’ in Indian Parliamentary Elections (Knowing the Social World: Challenges and Responses, 2015) and Politics, Development, and Deaths: Comparing China and India (Konark Publishers Private Ltd, 2015).

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Research Partnerships

JANAAGRAHA PARTNERSHIP WITH ASHUTOsh VARSHNEY & PATRICK HELLER
In August, 2017 a research paper by Ashutosh Varshney, Patrick Heller, Siddharth Swaminathan, and Ebony Bertorelli, titled, “Does Citizenship Abate Class? Evidence and Reflections from Bangalore,” was published in India’s leading peer-reviewed social science journal, Economic and Political Weekly. The research was based on work conducted for the Janaagraha-Brown Citizenship Index (JB-CI) project.

The work of the JB-CI project has been completed in Bangalore, Mysore, and Shimoga. The project has two aims: (i) construction of various measures of citizenship, including a citizenship index - a measurable statistical index assessing the quality of citizenship across individuals within a city; and (ii) examination of the determinants of basic service delivery in urban centers. The research asks how citizenship is distributed across the various categories of class, caste and religion. Who shows higher levels of citizenship? The project also asks how basic services - education, health, power, sanitation, water, etc. - are provided to the city and how citizens experience the bureaucracies and organizations associated with such services. How does citizenship matter relative to caste, class and religion?

AIIMS PARTNERSHIP WITH BHRIgUPATI SINGH
Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Bhrigupati Singh, is conducting a multi-year study with faculty at the All India Institute of Medical Studies (AIIMS), New Delhi. Professor Singh spent his 2015-2016 sabbatical year conducting ethnographic research on mental health and illness, as a Visiting Faculty member at the Department of Psychiatry at AIIMS.

While Singh’s proposal was framed around the cultural life of diagnostic categories, such as depression and anxiety, the actual research became wider in focus. Patient interviews during ward rounds at AIIMS led Singh to a community clinic in the lower-income neighborhood of Trilokpuri (in East Delhi), described by news media as a “riot laboratory” of contemporary India. Forms of subjectivity, tensions and everyday life in this neighborhood became a major focus of Singh’s research. In Trilokpuri Singh also continued his longstanding interests in spiritual healing, in particular working with a popular healer in the neighborhood known as “Sufiji,” who took him on a journey to a Sufi Muslim shrine in Badaun, Uttar Pradesh, one of the leading sites for the treatment of mental/spirit afflictions in north India. Singh made numerous visits to Badaun with Sufiji, including one visit where they took along a team of psychiatrists from AIIMS to study the kinds of clinical diagnoses one might find among treatment-seekers in a shrine such as Badaun.

Gradually, Singh realized that the ethnographic journey between AIIMS, Trilokpuri, and Badaun was not random. Rather, in what is globally beginning to be called the “post-asylum era,” this journey between hospital, home, and shrine is quite common and may even be the norm for mental health trajectories in India. To further examine concepts of the normal and pathological in popular culture, Singh also teamed up with a filmmaker to create an archive of film and media material related to mental health (available at indiancine.ma). Singh is now at work on his next book, tentatively titled Lunar Enlightenment: Essays on Life-Force.

Singh’s research was funded by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, the American Institute for Indian Studies, CCSA and the Watson Institute.

CCSA Fellows 2017

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

In 2017-2018 the Center awarded funds for research projects and summer internships to three undergraduates students, seven graduate students, one postdoctoral fellow and one faculty member. In the fall, student fellows from the previous year presented their work in two workshops.

RETURNING FELLOW WORKSHOPS:

SEPTEMBER 14
Returning Graduate Fellow Presentations

SEPTEMBER 27
Returning Undergraduate Fellow Presentations

FACULTY & POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Nasifa Nur
Resident Physician of Internal Medicine
Disease Burden Analysis and Analysis of Diphtheria Outbreak in Displaced Rohingya from Myanmar in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh

Aarti Sethi
Postdoctoral Fellow in International and Public Affairs
Kapsi Mata - Cotton Fever in Central India
Ahona Palchoudhuri, Anthropology
Malhar, Monsoon, and the Cartography of Aesthetic Experience: Tracing Indian Classical Music’s Relation with the Environment

Anabelle Sutor, Anthropology
Marking and Being Marked by Territory: Productions of a Home for the Urban Poor and Street Dogs Chittagong, Bangladesh

Andrea Wright, Anthropology
Tired Hands: Race, Gender, and Labor in Contemporary India

Ieva Zumbyte, Sociology
Pre-dissertation fieldwork “Childcare regimes in urban India”

Jocelyn Bell, Sociology
Local-Global Connections: Global Governance and the Indian Anti-Sex Trafficking Movement

Rehan Rafay Jamil, Political Science
Social Policy. Democracy and Uneven Citizenship in Pakistan

Sagar Wadhwa, Economics
The Impact of Demonetization on Household Income and Consumption

Christopher Lingelbach ‘19
Environmental Subjectivity Creation through Community-based Development Organization WASH Intervention (New Delhi)

Drashti Brahmbhatt ’19
The Sexual Politics of Partition

Kudrat Wadhwa ’19
Investigating the Economic Aspect(s) of Occupation in Kashmir

Ahona Palchoudhuri, Anthropology
Malhar, Monsoon, and the Cartography of Aesthetic Experience: Tracing Indian Classical Music’s Relation with the Environment

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