



NEUBAUER
COLLEGIUM
FOR CULTURE AND SOCIETY



Dalit Studies and the Study of Caste

The State of the Field

April 14-15, 2022

Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society
The University of Chicago



THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

Thursday, April 14

8:45 a.m.

Coffee

9:15 a.m.

Welcome

Constantine Nakassis (University of Chicago)

Andrew Ollett (University of Chicago)

9:30 a.m.

Keynote Lecture (hybrid)

Charu Gupta (Delhi University), "Critical Caste Studies: Snapshots from Teaching and Research"

[Join via Zoom >](#)

This talk will reflect on the making and meanings of caste, Dalit and Bahujan identities, and the criticality of "Critical Caste Studies." Gupta will also consider the intersections between critical caste and gender studies by focusing on three arenas: first, some of the perils and pleasures of teaching gender-caste at the University of Delhi; second, thoughts on bringing out an issue and book on caste and life narratives; and third, her research on the radical anti-caste Shudra reformer Santram BA (1887-1998). Santram BA can be regarded as one of the early theorists of critical caste studies and an anti-caste, proto-feminist. His staunch support for inter-caste marriages, along with his anti-puritanical stance on sexual matters challenged *savarna* morality, and opened ancillary textures of sex and sexuality and registers of love and intimacy, which punctured dominant upper-caste, male-centric authority.

10:45 a.m.

Break

11:15 a.m.

Paper Presentation

Gajendran Ayyathurai (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen), "Critical Caste Studies: Notes on a New Subfield"

12:30 p.m.

Lunch

1:45 p.m.

Paper Presentation

Ramnarayan Rawat (University of Delaware), "Bhajans in Praise of Liberty: The Making of Dalit Political Thought in Late-Colonial North India"

3:00 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m.

Paper Presentation

Shailaja Paik (University of Cincinnati), "The Rise of Dalit Women in Modern India"

5:00 p.m.

Reception

Quadrangle Club (1155 E. 57th St.)

Friday, April 15

9:00 a.m.

Coffee

9:30 a.m.

Keynote Lecture (hybrid)

Meena Kandasamy (Independent Scholar), "Title to come"

[Join via Zoom >](#)

10:45 a.m.

Break

11:15 a.m.

Paper Presentation (hybrid)

Sanal Mohan (Mahatma Gandhi University), "Dalit Studies and the Creation of Critical Space in Social Science Research"

[Join via Zoom >](#)

12:30 p.m.

Lunch

2:00 p.m.

Roundtable Discussion

Gajendran Ayyathurai (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen)

Laura Brueck (Northwestern University)

Doug Ober (University of British Columbia)

Kaneesha Parsard (University of Chicago)

Moderator: Constantine Nakassis (University of Chicago)

4:30 p.m.

Concluding Remarks

Andrew Ollett (University of Chicago)

5:00 p.m.

Reception

Mesler (1401 E. 53rd St.)

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5701 S. Woodlawn Ave.
Chicago IL 60637

773.795.2329