

Imagining a Nation in Contemporary India

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Abstract

If a nation is an "imagined community," what are the contours of these imaginations in contemporary India? Using the late Benedict Anderson's celebrated thesis (one of the most cited works in all of twentieth century social sciences) as the point of departure, this talk will meditate on the historical contours of Indian nationalism. In particular, the talk will focus on how the Indian nation has delivered on its egalitarian promise to ameliorate the gap between *puraskrit* (privileged) and *bahishkrit* (excluded) experiences.

Speaker Profile

Gopal Guru is the leading theorist of the intersections between the ontological structure caste and its everyday experience in contemporary India. His many works include *Humiliation: Claims and Context* (OUP, 2009) and *The Cracked Mirror: An Indian Debate on Experience and Theory* (OUP, 2011). He is a professor of political science at Jawaharlal Nehru University.