

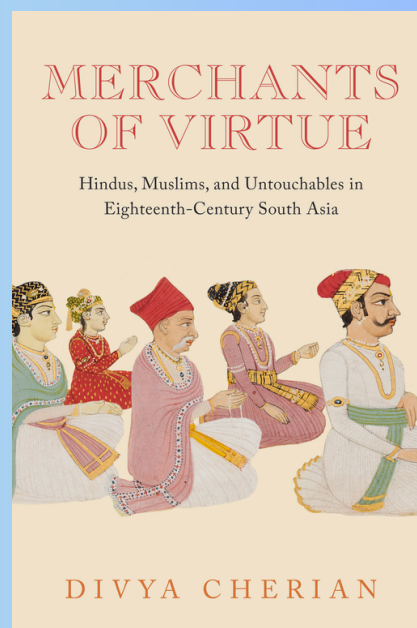
BOOK TALK

Merchants of Virtue: Hindus, Muslims, and Untouchables in Eighteenth-Century South Asia

Merchants of Virtue explores the question of what it meant to be Hindu in precolonial South Asia. Divya Cherian presents a fine-grained study of everyday life and local politics in the kingdom of Marwar in eighteenth-century western India to uncover how merchants enforced their caste ideals of vegetarianism and bodily austerity as universal markers of Hindu identity. Using legal strategies and alliances with elites, these merchants successfully remade the category of “Hindu,” setting it in contrast to “Untouchable” in a process that reconfigured Hinduism in caste terms. In a history pertinent to understanding India today, Cherian establishes the centrality of caste to the early-modern Hindu self and to its imagination of inadmissible others.

Divya Cherian is a historian of early modern and colonial South Asia, with interests in social, cultural, and religious history, gender and sexuality, ethics and law, and the local and the everyday. Her research focuses on western India, chiefly on the region that is today Rajasthan.

A PDF version of the book can be downloaded for free from the following link:
https://webfiles.ucpress.edu/oa/9780520390065_WEB.pdf



Speaker: Divya Cherian
(Princeton University)

Chair: Tariq Sheikh
(TUFS)

11 January 2025 11:00-12:30 (Japan Standard Time)

Format: Online (Zoom) Language: English

Participation fee: Free

Prior registration required. Please register by 9 January using the QR code on the right.

