

**DEVELOPMENT
THOUGHT & POLICY**
at The New School

Presents a Seminar with

Rohan D'Souza

Assistant Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India

**“The Great Hydraulic Transition: Modern
Origins of Land and Rivers in South Asia”**

Thursday, December 12, 2013, 4:00-6:00pm

Room A513

66 West 12th Street, 5th floor

This seminar is co-hosted by GPIA and The India China Institute

* Please RSVP by sending an email to development.newschoo@gmail.com *

Abstract: Most writings on lands and rivers in South Asia have disingenuously accepted the “politics of separations.” Land as property and river as resource, thus, are overwhelmingly recognized as distinct conceptual domains. Histories about land settlements, rent extraction, the burdens of revenue, legal ownership, or the commons have occupied discussions only as the political economy of the soil. Rivers, on the other hand, became a technical subject involving infrastructure and the biographies of engineering and control. Professor D'Souza will argue that this politics of separations acquired a defining force in the region only through the course of the long nineteenth century. An amphibian South Asia with its soil-water admixtures actually characterized its environmental and social worlds before being transformed into the reptilian terrain of colonial modernity.

Bio: Dr. Rohan D'Souza is Assistant Professor at the Centre for Studies in Science Policy and the author of *Drowned and Dammed: Colonial Capitalism and Flood Control in Eastern India (1803-1946)*, Oxford University Press, 2006. His edited books include *The British Empire and the Natural World: Environmental Encounters in South Asia* (Oxford University Press, 2011) and *Environment, Technology and Development: Critical and Subversive Essays* (Orient BlackSwan: Hyderabad, 2012). His interests and research publications cover themes in environmental history, environmental politics, non-traditional security, sustainable development and modern technology.

Chair: **Manjari Mahajan**, Assistant Professor of International Affairs, New School University

Discussants: **Nikhil Anand**, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, University of Minnesota and Fellow, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, and **Vyjyanthi Rao**, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, New School University