

Conversations on society since 1960

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi
<http://sociology.du.ac.in/sociological-research-colloquium/>

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SRINIVAS SEMINAR ROOM, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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AHMED**



RESEARCHING MUSLIMS AS A 'QUESTION'

Abstract:

Indian Muslim identity is always seen as an unresolvable puzzle – the Muslim question. The participation of Muslim communities in political processes is often reduced to an imagined Muslim vote bank politics, while their social life is always seen as a symbol of backwardness. The events of 9/11 intensified such apprehensions. Popular global phrases like 'Jihadi Islam', 'Islamic terrorism', or 'Sharia Rule' offered new meanings to already established debates on Muslim separatism and isolation. The merger of global anti-Islamism and anti-Muslim communalism has led to a new political consensus. This presentation attempts to unpack the postcolonial political afterlife of the "Muslim question" while focusing on Hindutva's imagination of Muslim identity; Pasmanda Muslim assertion; and the nature of contemporary Muslim politics.

The Speaker:

Hilal Ahmed is an Associate Professor at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. He works on political Islam, Muslim politics of representation, and politics of symbols in South Asia. He is the author of *Siyasi Muslims: A Story of Political Islam in India* (2019) and *Muslim Political Discourse in Postcolonial India: Monuments, Memory, Contestation* (2014). He has co-edited the *Companion to Indian Democracy* (2021), *Democratic Accommodations: Minorities in contemporary India* (2019), and *Rethinking Muslim Personal Law* (2022). He has produced two documentary films *Encountering the Political Jama Masjid* (2006) and *Qutub: Ek Adhura Afsana* (2016), and co-produced a mobile-phone travel app on Delhi, *Safarnama*.