



The Economics of Religion in India



Sriya Iyer

Faculty of Economics and St Catharine's College,
Cambridge

2 p.m., Tuesday 29nd January

Fellows' Dining Room, St Antony's College

This talk on the economics of religion in India is based on research conducted in India for over a decade. The talk asks why we need an economics of religion for India and discusses contemporary attitudes towards religion in the country. It will discuss how religion relates to growing inequality in India, changes in demography, socio-economic status and religious competition. The talk will present original research findings from a survey of 600 Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jain and Sikh religious organisations across 7 Indian states with respect to their religious and non-religious service provision such as health and education. The talk will also touch briefly on religious education, and the issues around introducing subjects such as mathematics, science and computers into a traditional religious curriculum. Ultimately, the talk presents an economic analysis of religion that hopes to inform social policy in countries such as India that have religiously-pluralistic populations.

Sriya Iyer is a Janeway Fellow in Economics and Affiliated Lecturer in the Faculty of Economics, University of Cambridge; and a Bibby Fellow and College Lecturer at St. Catharine's College, Cambridge. She researches in the economics of religion, demography, education and development economics. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Association for the Study of Religion, Economics and Culture, on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Religion and Demography*, is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Labor Economics (IZA), and was awarded a University of Cambridge Pilkington Prize in 2014. She has published two books on *Demography and Religion in India* (Oxford University Press, 2002) and *The Economics of Religion in India* (Harvard University Press, 2018). She has also published articles in economics journals including the *Journal of Political Economy*, *Journal of Economic Literature*, *Review of Economics and Statistics*, and the *Journal of Development Economics*.

All are welcome

Convenors: Faisal Devji, Polly O'Hanlon, Kate Sullivan de Estrada, Nayanika Mathur,
Mallica Kumbera Landrus and Ali Jan.

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