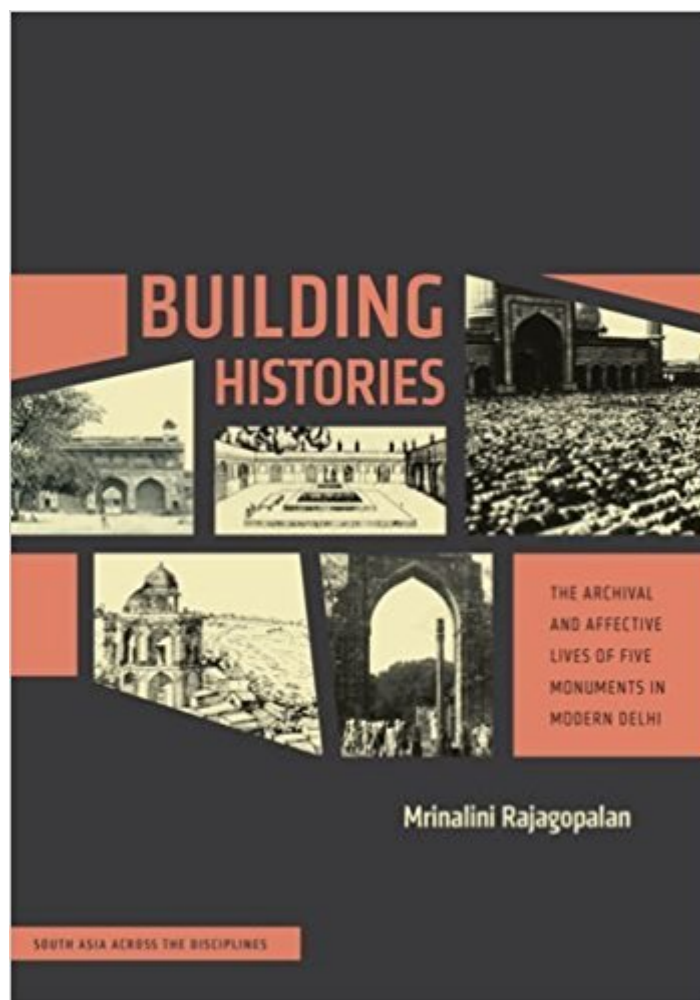


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Building Histories: The Archival And Affective Lives Of Five Monuments In Modern Delhi (South Asia Across The Disciplines)



Synopsis

Building Histories offers innovative accounts of five medieval monuments in Delhi—the Red Fort, Rasul Numa Dargah, Jama Masjid, Purana Qila, and the Qutb complex—tracing their modern lives from the nineteenth century into the twentieth. Mrinalini Rajagopalan argues that the modern construction of the history of these monuments entailed the careful selection, manipulation, and regulation of the past by both the colonial and later postcolonial states. Although framed as objective “archival” truths, these histories were meant to erase or marginalize the powerful and persistent affective appropriations of the monuments by groups who often existed outside the center of power. By analyzing these archival and affective histories together, Rajagopalan works to redefine the historic monument—far from a symbol of a specific past, the monument is shown in Building Histories to be a culturally mutable object with multiple stories to tell.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Building Histories” is methodologically innovative, interdisciplinary in spirit, conceptually ambitious, and highly synthetic in its approach. The result is a portrait of the monument that does not stand still. Instead, Rajagopalan’s monument spaces shape-shift relentlessly over time as vessels of meaning making and contested, at times violent, histories. This book, which narrates extraordinary stories about Delhi and its monuments—many of them previously unknown—will significantly impact the field and raise the bar for future work in this

vein. — (Saloni Mathur, University of California, Los Angeles) — “This insightful and eloquent book traces the complex narratives of five buildings in Delhi, balancing the uniqueness of each example with an eye for larger patterns. Examining a number of violent confrontations — reaching from the Red Fort at the time of early British conquest to recent Hindu-Muslim conflicts over the Qutb Mosque — Rajagopalan shows how each of these monuments unleashed an affective power, an outpouring of popular emotions about subjects like religion, partition, nationalism, and social change. Building Histories signifies an exciting shift in architectural history and colonial studies. — (Gwendolyn Wright, Columbia University)

Mrinalini Rajagopalan is assistant professor in the Department of History of Art and Architecture at the University of Pittsburgh.

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