

The Center for Race & Gender presents the
Spring 2019 Distinguished Guest Lecture



Renisa Mawani

Across Oceans of Law

Monday, March 18, 2019

5:30 pm - reception • 6:00-7:30 pm - lecture & discussion

Anthony Hall, UC Berkeley

crg.berkeley.edu



Renisa Mawani

is Professor of Sociology at the University of British Columbia, and works in the fields of critical theory and legal history. She is the author of *Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871-1921* (2009), and *Across Oceans of Law: The Komagata Maru and Jurisdiction in the Time of Empire* (2018). She is also the co-editor of the forthcoming *Animalia: An Anti-Imperial Bestiary of Our Times*.

In 1914 the S.S. *Komagata Maru* left Hong Kong for Vancouver carrying 376 Punjabi migrants. Chartered by railway contractor Gurdit Singh, the ship and its passengers were denied entry into Canada and eventually deported to Calcutta. In *Across Oceans of Law*, Renisa Mawani retells this well-known story of the *Komagata Maru*. Drawing on what she terms “oceans as method”—a mode of thinking and writing that repositions land and sea—Mawani places the Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic Oceans into conversation to track the circulating legalities that connected the Dominions, colonies, and territories; the shifting intensities of racial, colonial, and legal violence that joined indigenous dispossession, transatlantic slavery, and Indian indenture to so-called “free” migration; and the transoceanic repertoires of anticolonial critique that challenged the empire’s underlying racial, spatial, and temporal divides. By following the movements of a single ship and bringing these three oceans into sharper view, *Across Oceans of Law* offers a novel method of writing colonial legal history.



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