

Aniket Pankaj Aga

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Department of Geography, 116 Wilkeson Quad, Buffalo NY 14261

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2023 -** Assistant Professor of Geography, University at Buffalo
- 2019 - 2023** Associate Professor of Environmental Studies, Ashoka University
Faculty Associate, Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability
- 2021 – 22** Associate Professor of Environmental Studies and Anthropology, Krea University (visiting)
- 2018 - 19** Assistant Professor, Department of Environmental Studies, Ashoka University.
- 2016 - 18** Assistant Professor, School for Environment and Sustainability,
Junior (Postdoctoral) Fellow, Michigan Society of Fellows,
University of Michigan Ann Arbor, USA.

EDUCATION

- Ph.D.** Socio-cultural Anthropology, Yale University, December 2016.
Research Interests: Political Economy; Development; Agrarian & Food Studies; Science & Technology Studies; South Asian Studies; Environment & Sustainability
- Received the 2016 Sardar Patel Best Dissertation Prize from the University of California Los Angeles.** This award goes to the best doctoral dissertation on any aspect of modern India in the US across the fields of social sciences, humanities, fine arts and education.
- M.Phil** Socio-cultural Anthropology, Yale University, December 2013.
- M.S.** Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California, July 2010.
- B.Tech.** Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur, Aug 2005.
- Certificate Course** Centre for Inter-disciplinary Studies, Kerandiguda, India, October 2018.
Area: Agro-ecology and biodiversity conservation

PUBLICATIONS

- Book**
- 2021** “*Genetically Modified Democracy: Transgenic Crops in Contemporary India*” Monograph, Yale University Press (global); Orient Blackswan (South Asia).
Awarded the 2022 Ludwik Fleck Prize from the international Society for the Social Studies of Science (4S)
- Reviewed** in *Antipode, Journal of Peasant Studies, Journal of Agrarian Change,*

Agriculture and Human Values, The India Forum, Contributions to Indian Sociology, International Journal of Community & Social Development, Asian Biotechnology & Development Review, The Hindu, and The Wire Science

Articles

- 2021 “Environment and its forms of knowledge: The regulation of GM crops in India” *Journal of Developing Societies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0169796X211001235>
- 2020 “Manufacturing Consent: Mining, Bureaucratic Sabotage, and the Forest Rights Act in India” *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 31 (2): 70 – 90. (co-authored).
- 2020 “In memoriam: Sociologist and activist Abhay Xaxa,” *The India Forum*, April 3, (with Chitragada Choudhury).
Re-published in *Being Adivasi: Existence, Entitlements, Exclusion* edited by the late Abhay F. Xaxa and G. N. Devy, Penguin, New Delhi, 2021.
- 2019 “The marketing of corporate agri-chemicals in western India: Theorizing graded informality” *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 46 (7): 1458 – 76.
Awarded the Krishna Bharadwaj and Eric Wolf Prize 2019-20 by the Journal of Peasant Studies. ([Link](#))
- 2019 “‘Cotton has now become a headache.’” *People’s Archive of Rural India*, edited by P. Sainath, October 7 (with Chitragada Choudhury). Available in English and other Indian languages. ([Link](#))
Awarded the 2019 Ramnath Goenka Prize for Environmental Reporting, along with the broader climate change series. ([Link](#))
- 2019 “Sowing the seeds of climate change in Odisha.” *People’s Archive of Rural India*, edited by P. Sainath, October 4 (with Chitragada Choudhury). Available in English and other Indian languages. ([Link](#))
Awarded the 2019 Ramnath Goenka Prize for Environmental Reporting, along with the broader climate change series. ([Link](#))
- 2018 “A Dappled Sun: Bureaucratic Encounters in the Working of the Right to Information Act in India’s Federal Government” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 38 (3): 540 - 556 (with Chitragada Choudhury).
- 2018 “Feeding Prometheus: An interdisciplinary approach for solving the global food crisis” *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems* (co-authored) ([Link](#))
- 2018 “Merchants of Knowledge: Petty Retail and Farmer-Differentiation without Consolidation in Maharashtra, India” *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 18 (3): 658 - 676.
- 2018 “Draft Pesticide Management Bill is Out of Sync with the Agrarian Political Economy,” *Economic & Political Weekly*, 53 (18), May 5. ([Link](#))
- 2017 “Demonetisation and the normalization of agrarian distress in India” Hot Spots, *Cultural Anthropology*. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/1215-demonetization-and-the->

normalization-of-agrarian-distress

In Preparation “The architecture of regulatory power: GM crops and the federal bureaucracy”

In Preparation *Seed Stories*, Ethnographic film, 50 minutes. (with Chitragada Choudhury)

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

- 2021** “How biotech crops can crash – and still never fail,” *Scientific American* (with Maywa Montenegro de Wit). ([Link](#))
- 2021** “Modi government keeps financial deal with Bharat Biotech secret, Covaxin among world’s costliest vaccines,” *Article 14*, November 16. (with Chitragada Choudhury) ([Link](#))
- 2021** “Farm protests in India are writing the Green Revolution’s Obituary,” *Scientific American*, January 24. ([Link](#))
- 2020** “Parliament’s Question Hour was subverted before suspension,” *Article 14*, September 14, (with Chitragada Choudhury) ([Link](#))
- 2017** “Notebandi takes the sauce out of Nashik’s tomatoes” *People’s Archive of Rural India* (edited by P. Sainath), January 4, (with Chitragada Choudhury). ([Link](#))
Re-published in *Economic & Political Weekly*, 51 (53).
- 2015** “Why are Government Deliberations regarding the Land Ordinance a Secret?” in *The Caravan*, April 20. (with Chitragada Choudhury). ([Link](#))

POLICY RESEARCH

- 2023** “Genetically modified crops: Twenty years of debate in India,” commissioned by the Heinrich Boell Stiftung, September 23. ([Link](#))
- 2023** “A push for GM mustard disregarding science, the law,” *The Hindu*, July 19. ([Link](#))
- 2021** “A fatal war on transparency,” *The Hindu*, July 1, 2021 (with Chitragada Choudhury). ([Link](#))
- 2020** “Green-lighting ecological decimation amidst a pandemic,” *The Hindu*, July 9 (with Chitragada Choudhury). ([Link](#))
- 2020** “India’s pandemic response is a caste atrocity,” *NDTV*, May 27 (with Chitragada Choudhury). ([Link](#))
- 2019** “‘We too yearn for peace’: Voices from a land under siege for a month,” *The Wire*, September 3 (with Chitragada Choudhury). ([Link](#))
(also published in [Hindi](#), [Marathi](#), and [Urdu](#) by the *BBC*, and in [Malayalam](#) by *Azhimukham*).
- 2019** “Serious concerns over Bt brinjal,” *The Hindu*, June 18. ([Link](#))

- 2018 “Opacity in the name of privacy,” *The Hindu*, September 27 (co-authored). ([Link](#))
- 2017 “Information at the court’s discretion,” *The Hindu*, December 13. ([Link](#))
- 2016 “Seeds of discontent,” *The Hindu*, September 30. ([Link](#))
- 2016 “Golden Rice isn’t ready yet,” *The Hindu*, August 5. ([Link](#))
- 2015 “The Supreme Court still adamantly refuses to yield to RTP” in *The Wire*, September 3. ([Link](#))
- 2014 “Studying the Rural: Report of the Third Workshop of the Network of Rural and Agrarian Studies (NRAS),” December.
- 2014 “Grand Narratives of the Budget,” in *Economic & Political Weekly*, 49 (28), July 12. ([Link](#))

SELECT INTERNATIONAL GRANTS

- 2022-24 Climate Change Research & Communication Grant from the Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability, Ashoka University
- 2019-22 Engaged Anthropology Grant, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, USA
- 2013-15 National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Award
- 2013-14 Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Research Grant
- 2013-14 American Institute of Indian Studies Junior Research Fellowship (declined)

AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2022 Ludwik Fleck Book Prize from the international Society for Social Studies of Science (4S)
- 2020 Bharadwaj-Wolf Prize from the Journal of Peasant Studies
- 2020 Prem Bhatia Award for writing on climate change (shared)
- 2019 Ramnath Goenka Award for Environmental Writing & Reportage from The Indian Express (shared)
- 2016 Sardar Patel Prize for the best dissertation on modern India in the USA, from UCLA

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, University at Buffalo

GEO 100: World Regions and Issues

GEO 632: Seminar on International Trade & Development

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, Ashoka University

Undergraduate teaching:

FC-011: Introduction to Environmental Studies: (100-student strong core course for all undergraduate students introducing them to political ecology).

ES-306: Decoding Genetically Modified (GM) Food: (advanced undergraduate course on the global politics of agriculture and biotechnology, cross-listed with Anthropology and Sociology, and Political Science).

ES-2401: Agriculture, Food and Sustainability: (undergraduate course on the science and politics of sustainable agriculture and food justice – covering certified organic agriculture, fair trade food, and agroecological cultivation)

ES-3406: Ecology and Unrest (experiential learning course on exploring the ecological and sociological roots of unrest and environmental injustice. The course involves small student research projects on urban ecological issues in New Delhi). Cross-listed with Anthropology and Sociology, and Political Science).

SCHOOL FOR INTERWOVEN ARTS AND SCIENCES, Krea University (2021-22)

Undergraduate teaching:

Engaging the Environment: compulsory core course for all undergraduate students introducing them to environmental studies. I devised the curriculum for the university and tailored the syllabus for online instruction.

Exploring the Social and the Historical: compulsory core course for all undergraduate students introducing them to history and sociology.

SCHOOL FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY, University of Michigan Ann Arbor

Graduate teaching:

NRE 501.002: Decoding Genetically Modified (GM) Crops: The Global Politics of Agriculture and Biotechnology (graduate course cross-listed with anthropology and included in the roster for the major in Science & Technology Studies and Science, Technology and Public Policy Certificate Programs), Fall 2017.

The class included graduate students from anthropology, engineering, and management and public policy schools, mid-career journalists and development practitioners.

Nominated for the Outstanding Teaching Award, 2017-18

CAPSTONE THESIS SUPERVISED

Abhimanyu Sengupta, Social Studies, Krea University, “The environmental and social cost of unequal development: An example from Godda, Jharkhand,” 2021-22.

RECENT CONFERENCES & INVITED PRESENTATIONS

“Agribusiness and petty commodity production,” Plenary Session at the International Conference on Critical Agrarian Studies in the 21st Century, October 11, 2023.

“Levers of Power: Genetically modified crops, the bureaucracy and the political executive in India,” Columbia University Seminar on South Asia, September 19, 2022.

“Seed Stories: How scientific agriculture transformed democracies,” Podium Discussion with Gabriela Soto Laveaga and Debjani Bhattacharyya, University of Zurich, May 17, 2022.

“Genetically Modified Democracy,” Book Event with Jairam Ramesh, Suman Sahai, and L. S. Shashidhara, Ashoka University, March 25, 2022.

“Bureaucratic epistemes and regulatory disputes: GM crops between science and legal-administration,” National Seminar on the Environment as Meta-narrative organized by the Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, March 5, 2020.

“Ethics and technology development in agriculture,” Conference on Universal Ethics for the 21st Century: Towards a common understanding, organized by the Samyeling Tibetan Settlement Office, Majnu ka Tila and the Tibet House, New Delhi, February 2, 2020.

“Framing the problem of agrichemicals management as if the agrarian crisis mattered,” Beyond Productivity and Populism: Reimagining India’s Agricultural and Rural Policies, organized by the Network of Rural and Agrarian Studies, IIT Delhi, New Delhi, September 26, 2019.

“Bureaucratic epistemes and regulatory disputes: Genetically modified (GM) crops between science and legal administration” Science, Technology, Medicine and Society Colloquium, University of Michigan Ann Arbor, March 26, 2018.

RECENT CONFERENCE PANELS ORGANIZED

“Beyond Productivity and Populism: Reimagining India’s Agricultural and Rural Policies,” Second Conference of the Network of Rural and Agrarian Studies, IIT Delhi, New Delhi, September 26 – 28, 2019 (I was a member of the core group which put together the conference).

CONSULTANCY

2014 Consultative Meeting on Developing Guidelines and Methodologies for Socio-Economic Assessment of Living Modified Organisms (LMOs), July 15, organized by Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) on behalf of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Member, International Advisory Board, Journal of Peasant Studies (Jan 2022 - 2026)

Ad hoc reviewer – World Development; American Ethnologist; Isis; Minerva; Geoforum; Culture, Agriculture, Food and Environment; Modern Asian Studies; American Anthropologist; Critical Asian Studies; Routledge; Cambridge University Press.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

McKINSEY & COMPANY

Mumbai, India
August 2005 – June 2007

Business Analyst

Worked in the areas of agricultural produce supply chain, retail, oil, real estate and pharmaceuticals.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Network of Rural and Agrarian Studies, India

Indian Psychoanalytic Society (Affiliate)

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Hindi – native • **English** – native • **Marathi** – proficient