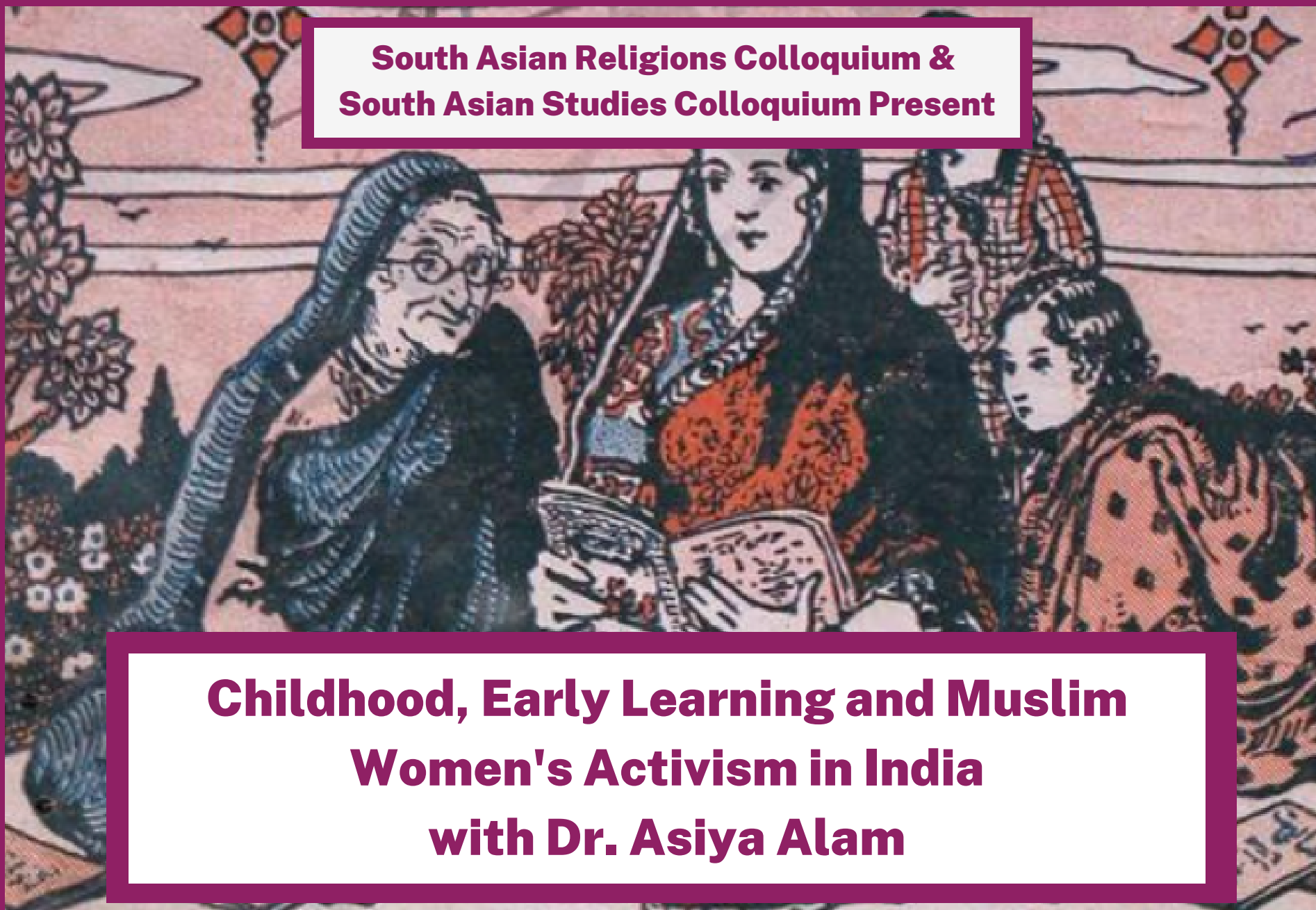


**South Asian Religions Colloquium &
South Asian Studies Colloquium Present**



**Childhood, Early Learning and Muslim
Women's Activism in India
with Dr. Asiya Alam**

This paper explores notions of childhood and early postcolonial India through the educational philosophy of Mushir Fatima, who established a nursery at Jamia in 1955. Using textual sources and oral interviews of people who knew her, I make three broad arguments to connect her contribution with the larger context of pre-school education in early independent India and the understanding of the child in Urdu writings. First, the lack of directives from the State allowed Mushir Fatima to imagine and create an innovative and experimental nursery even with limited resources. Second, early childhood education is a key site for Muslim women's participation in national life in late colonial India, as evinced by female educators like Mushir Fatima and Urdu women's magazines. Third, while she worked primarily in Jamia, Mushir Fatima's life was "transnational" insofar as the world of childhood, education and Muslim women's activism was shaped by the international as much as the local and the domestic.



Asiya Alam is associate professor of history at Louisiana State University. Her book, *Women, Islam and Familial Intimacy in Colonial South Asia*, was published in 2021. She is currently working on the histories of childhood and early education in colonial and postcolonial India.

Thursday April 25, 5:45 PM, One Bow St. 3rd Floor