ABSTRACTS

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Embodyed Texts, Changing Contexts: New Challenges in Kathak Dance

Dependent on patronage from the kings and feudal lords in the past, the temple-going public and the Indian government in India, and now, the Indian immigrant populations outside India, Kathak dance has struggled to maintain a sense of "tradition" while meeting the needs of its changing audiences. Like all arts, Kathak does not exist in a political vacuum. Each patron has an agenda and the dance form has been used as a commodity to sell varying identities: national, cultural, sectarian, and transnational. Complete with a hierarchy of power relations and laden with the values of the dominant elite, Kathak is a powerful performative expression of socially constructed private and public emotions which reflect shifting sets of cultural values.

My paper investigates the questions of "authenticity" versus modern innovative "impurity" in relation to the funding of and the creation of new dances in the Kathak style. I explore the complexities underlying audience reactions globally to collaborations such as Kathak-tap, Kathak-jazz, Kathak-Flamenco, and Kathak-Bharata Natyam. Lastly, I discuss the social impact of new technologies and the crossing over of cultures in the form of new dances in a fast growing global village. Some of the guiding questions I attempt to answer are: Have Kathak performers been imaginative and resourceful in exploiting and extending the existing limits of the classical style? Have they found inventive strategies that help them survive and grow even in transitional times of rapid social change? Can they maintain a balance of classical purity and artistic integrity while taking part in the technological processes of a growing "Public Culture." Have they been and are they now successful in making new "Kathak" dances for new audiences? Taking into consideration factors such as gender, class, caste, education, and economic background, I address the question of how and why Kathak dancers vary in their ability to cope with the forces of "modernization" and to succeed as contemporary dance performers.

Arun Agarwal
University of Florida

Small is Beautiful, but is Larger Better? Forest Management Institutions in Kumaon Himalayas, India

The paper examines the Van Panchayats in two Kumaon districts -- Almora and Pithoragarh -- in an attempt to tease out two sets of relationships. At the micro level it seeks to investigate the impact of institutional arrangements on resource management. In the process it advances the argument that successful collective action to conserve resources is not related to group size in any direct or straightforward manner. In so doing, it goes against a significant orthodoxy in the collective action literature that views the chances of successful collective action to increase as group size declines. At the macro level, the paper explicates the relationship between the changing political context and responses villagers offer to these altered circumstances. The main thrust of this part of the paper is that villagers are not passive victims of a predatory state, but that they use new laws as fulcrum to leverage ongoing local struggles over access to forest resources. The twin arguments advanced in the paper use general theoretical frameworks to focus attention towards the specificities of local conditions in determining resource use patterns.
Ravina Aggarwal
Smith College

Selling Stories: Fieldwork, Friendship and Fiction in the Bazaars of Ladakh

This paper is based on the controversies that arose during the course of compiling life histories of market women (jokers, storytellers, “antique” sellers) in the main bazaar of Leh, the capital of the Himalayan district of Ladakh in North India. By composing short stories that blur the boundaries between the genres of ethnography and fiction, myth and history, local places and transnational identities, I had hoped to construct a counter-narrative to the documented colonial and post-colonial histories of the marketplace that have largely tended to dwell on the feats of male traders selling wool, silk, salt and tea. In the process of attempting to “recover” a female presence from scattered memories, orally transmitted, and selecting experimental textual strategies through which these lives could be represented, I found that I had to question not only the limits of ethnographic writing and the problems of fiction and concealment, but also to examine critically the ways in which these modes of knowledge are situated, constituted and applied.

Marian Aguiar
University of Massachusetts

The Autobiographic Body: Constuctions on the Self in the Writings of Kamala Das Meena Alexander

This paper proposes to explore the construction of self on a geography of the body in autobiographical works by South Asian women writers. Specifically, I will look at how the discourses of history and community intersect with an understanding of the bodily self in the writings of Kamala Das and Meena Alexander. As a location of (re)production, an agent of love, and an object of violence, the female body has both metaphorical and material importance. Keeping in mind the material reality of the body, I will use these literary works to problematize the notion of the body as "immediate," or not mediated by ideologies. Among other theoretical work, I will include Marxist understandings of subjectivity and feminist discussions of gender, relating this work to a South Asian and diasporic context. To this end, my paper will examine the intersections of such discourses as nationalism and religion with the embodiment of the self.
I will investigate the idea of the body in these works as a dynamic site of union and contestation between inner and outer, self and community.
Laura Ahern  
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor  

I'm Offering you an Invitation to Love  

Through a close analysis of 110 love letters I propose to explore in my paper the issues surrounding incipient literacy and social change among Magars in the Nepali village of Junigau. Building on the work of practice theorists, feminist scholars, and cultural Marxists, I intend to focus on the intersections between the microprocesses of interaction in Junigau and global processes of transformation. This paper not only analyses the linguistic form and content of the love letters but also situates Junigau's new epistolary genre within the concrete social contexts in which villagers read and write these letters that have so quickly become central to their changing practices of courtship and marriage.

Catherine B. Asher  
University of Minnesota

Hindu-Muslim Landscapes in 18th and 19th Century India: Jaipur and Shahjahanabad

Events surrounding the 1992 destruction of the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya stimulated many scholars of South Asia to question our traditional notions of Hindu-Muslim identities and how those identities were represented in Indian culture. This paper seeks to explore how Muslims in what were predominately Hindu cities understood their built environment, and how Muslims in seemingly Hindu cities expressed their own religious identity through structures. This paper will thus examine the 18th and 19th century mosques and temples of Jaipur, Shahjahanabad, Varanasi among other north Indian cities. Probing these built environments and their organization, I believe, can help us understand the complex issue of Hindu-Muslim identities in 18th and 19th century India.
In 1993, as some degree of autonomy for Jharkhand finally appeared
promising, the Jharkhand leader Ram Doyal Munda summed up the cultural
movement for me in a phrase: "nacl se baci," saved by dance. The
expression caught imaginations quickly, especially among fellow musicians,
who invoked it repeatedly in stage performances for months afterwards. The
implications of that timeless phrase (have been saved, are saved, will be
saved) are many-layered, as are the influences of music and dance culture
on the negotiation and renegotiation of social and cultural identities in
the region.

This paper unravels several of those layers of influence: the
nature of communal singing and dancing and the unique social order of the
dancing ground that allowed for cultural exchange and synthesis among
different adivasi and caste groups; the process of musical—and
cultural—approximation (Srivastava 1966:164) that produced a common,
regional cultural base that then became the rationale for the Jharkhand
movement; and the dancing ground as ideal and model for the new, autonomous
Jharkhand. The paper concludes with a brief look at new songs that have
been inspired by the movement and the subtleties of interpretation that
allow them to work as songs of nationalism and protest.

Janice Bailey-Goldschmidt
University of Michigan

Vijayanagara and the Commodity Economy: Porcelain as an Indicator of International Trade

This paper will offer preliminary analysis of porcelain finds from the site of
Vijayanagara (India) and will incorporate a variety of aspects. These include a
breakdown of possible kiln manufacturing sites, which can offer suggestions as to
where porcelain transactions occurred. Another issue is chronological markers offering
possible suggestions on pre-Portuguese and Portuguese era distinctions in consumption
patterns. The identification of South-East Asian ceramics is also valuable information
to be quantified in terms of understanding the role of South-East Asia in the Indian
Ocean economy. Finally, a spatial analysis of porcelain at Vijayanagara should offer
some introductory ideas about indigenous consumption patterns. Ultimately, an
analysis of porcelain at Vijayanagara will contribute to a determination of the level of
market integration for the city of Vijayanagara within the larger Indian Ocean market
economy. As background, a brief analysis of the economic history of porcelain as a
commodity will be included, looking at ways in which porcelain was transformed
during the Ming dynasties, as well as changing patterns of Sino-Portuguese trade.
Sudeshna Baksi-Lahiri

Ritual Politics, Islamic Identity and Island Nationalism

Unique to Maldivian nationalism is the related concept of "island identity". Its meaning can range from a diffuse feeling of cultural belonging to a collective perception of being economically disadvantaged and socially peripheral vis-à-vis the national political economy as well as the other regional islands. To offset such impressions of low socioeconomic status, the promotion of internal cohesion and positive self-identity becomes a crucial endeavor. Towards this end, islanders utilize the potent force of Islam -- a force that has become even more remarkable since the historical rise of the Maldivian nation-state as a distinct Islamic polity -- to affirm their collective identity as devout Muslims in public displays of religiosity.

My paper examines one such ritual venture on the island of Duafaru situated on one of the northernmost atolls. I explore the seemingly ordinary social practice of visitation by the Duafaru residents to a neighboring island. I analyze how such a customary practice is compellingly politicized by both the guests and the hosts in order to reinforce the Islamicity of the proceedings and thereby assert the islanders' nationalistic loyalty in the eyes of the entire atoll.
Mark Baker  
University of California - Berkeley

**Change within the Communal Irrigation Systems (Khuks) of Kangra Valley, H.P., India**

This paper examines and seeks to explain institutional change within the kuhls of Kangra Valley, in District Kangra, Himachal Pradesh. Relatively recent transformations in the regional political economy, especially a rapid expansion of the nonfarm employment sector, have challenged the ability of kuhl regimes to maintain the necessary levels of collective action required for the repair, maintenance and management of kuhl irrigation systems. The magnitude and nature of the impacts of this contextual change vary among kuhls according to their social and ecological characteristics. Kuhl regime responses to these impacts range from little to no change to total collapse and subsequent takeover by the Himachal Pradesh Department of Irrigation and Public Health. Kuhl regimes in the mid range of this spectrum have managed to maintain adequate levels of collective action by instigating a wide range of institutional changes including, for example, the formalization of kuhl management through the creation of kuhl committees and the establishment of new rules governing labor mobilization. I argue that the constellation of social and ecological traits which characterize each kuhl regime account for the resulting pattern of diverse institutional arrangements and the diverse mixes of state and local authority now present in the kuhls of Kangra Valley.

Nandini Balakrishna  
University of Massachusetts - Amherst

**Identity in the Telugu Diaspora in North America**

This paper explores the reception of news of sectarian violence in India (in the aftermath of demolition of the Babri Masjid in December 1992) by a group of Telugu immigrants in northwest Ohio. This study uses the theoretical frameworks of 'cultural studies' and 'reception analysis' (method of mass communication research) to analyze the problems of identity construction within the Telugu diaspora. The central focus of the analysis will be articulation of 'linguistic' with 'national' and 'religious' in making sense of communal violence in India. The results presented will focus on the various parameters of identity and will help situate 'Hindu nationalism' at the ever-unstable intersection between divergent identities.
Cultural Geography of Khush: A Cybernetic Place for South Asian Lesbigay Interactions

In a largely heterosexually ordered space, the landscapes of minorities occupy a lower niche in the hierarchy of places. Very often, they are invisible on the day-to-day landscape. In still other cases, parts of the heterosexually ordered landscape becomes temporarily transformed into lesbigay landscapes. In recent times, the Internet has been an increasingly important cybernetic medium for communication among various groups of people who share common interests. The Internet is also a metaphor of real-world landscapes, but with some unique features. On the Internet, a network for the discussion of issues pertaining to South Asian gays/lesbians/bisexuals and others interested in these issues has emerged, called Khush. Its subscribers are pan-regional in location, brought together in a medium where rapid and free communication is possible. This paper will describe and discuss the cultural geography of Khush as a cyberplace. Khush, as a place of interaction and discourse, will be placed in the context of heterosexually ordered [cyber]landscapes and discussed as part, and metaphor, of an emerging, and hitherto relatively invisible, landscape.

Pallassanna Balgopal and Niranjan Karnik
University of Illinois- Champaign

Coming Out in the Diasporic Context: Indian American Stories

Transnational movements and identities have recently come under academic scrutiny and investigation. Much of this fast growing literature has sought to examine the ways in which cultural identity and values are maintained and changed by diasporic groups. In this paper we seek to situate the coming out experiences of four South Asian males within the context of diasporic communities and identities.

Following four individual stories, with diverse histories and experiences, we examine the basic values and beliefs about sexuality, including narratives concerning homosexuality among Indian Americans, issues of unilateral monogamy, adolescent maturity and sexual exploration among South Asians and the communities they negotiate in the U.S.

Although (1) we have not examined the experiences of lesbian Indian Americans -- facing conflicts and problems, some similar to those faced by gay males and some different; and (2) we find ourselves in the awkward position of being two heterosexuals writing about the experiences of gay males, we, none the less, hope that we have been empathic and believe very strongly that these stories need to be told.

The experiences of these gay Indian Americans cannot be explained purely by gay male American narrative frameworks, but must be contextualized within their transnational and diasporic experience.
Richard Barnett
University of Virginia

Embattled Begums: Women as Power Brokers in Precolonial Indian States

Women in 18th-century regional regimes wielded genuine political and social power, and passed it along to their daughters, some of whom were even adopted. These were not simply dancing girls insinuating themselves into positions of power, but ashraf (well-born) married women and widow dowagers. My North India Between Empires has detailed passages on the Begums of Awadh, whose wealth and influence so tempted Governor-General Warren Hastings that he attempted to take it from them comprised one of the charges at his later impeachment trial in London. Equally fascinating is the prolonged influence of the Begums of Bhopal, starting with the assertion over the state’s affairs by Mamola Begum, who had not even been born Muslim, but converted in her adult life. The question of the role of the Shari’ah Law, which forbids women from taking leadership roles even in leading communal prayers, much less in affairs of state, arises here, as well as the means by which these women managed to exert such sustained control over precarious institutions and often capricious political interests. I regard such women’s roles as another sign of pragmatism and vitality, not effeteness, for they were by definition members of ruling families, whom political core groups chose to retain in power, often in opposition to the British. It was ironic to hear the British resident at Bhopal cite the Shari’ah Law in an attempt to dethrone the Begum in the 1850s, an argument that did not succeed.

Gerald N. Barrier
University of Missouri - Columbia

British Cultural Policy and Sikhism: The Case of Trumpp and Macauliffe

Much of the current criticism of western scholarship on the Sikhs revolves around the legacy of two major interpreters in the 19th Century, Ernest Trumpp and Max Arthur Macauliffe. The former is seen as a spokesman for the enemies of Sikhism, both missionary and within government circles, while the latter is championed as the real scholar who produced the first major English work on the Guru Granth Sahib and the Sikh faith in general. This paper examines the historical setting for their research, their objectives and findings, the degree to which their scholarship was independent, the role of the British government in influencing and financing the research. From the British perspective, both projects had unintended results, and were not satisfactory in terms of cultural goals and agreed upon products. In a concluding section, an attempt will be made to relate 19th Century discourse on Sikhism to some of the current controversies, with particular attention to the role of the Singh Sabha movement and its incorporation within contemporary Sikh institutions worldwide.
Pradeep Barua

"Wogs in the Mess:" The Introduction of Indian Officers into the Colonial Indian Army, 1919-1947

In 1919 Indian officers began to enter the hitherto all white officer corps of the colonial Indian Army. This paper examines the career experiences of these officers in the pre-independence period. It highlights the tremendous pressures they faced in coping with a military career amidst open racism and social ostracism.

Among other things, the paper seeks to explain why the Indians had to work in a hostile atmosphere created by their British colleagues. It examines how these Indian officers reacted to this treatment and the affect it had upon their careers. It also explains why for instance they had to work doubly hard to win the confidence and trust of their own country-men, the Indian sepoys, and were often regarded as collaborators by Indian civilians.

Finally the paper analyses the careers of individual officers as representative of the two kinds that were most likely to either succeed or fail in such a trying environment. In doing so the paper attempts to gain some insight into the mind-set of those pioneering Indian officers who survived this ordeal and went on to lay down the doctrinal and ideological roots of the post-independent Indian Army. The only former colonial army in the world not to have intervened in national politics.
Bernard Bate

The Man who Speaks Fire: Tippori Arumugam and Vulgarity in Tamil Oratory

In this paper I will discuss the speech of one popular political orator in Tamilnadu, Tippori Arumugam. Since the beginnings of the Dravidian Movement in Tamilnadu, and the advent of mass politics, platform Tamil (mēṭaittamil) emerged as a powerful means of mass communication. Spoken primarily by elite, literate leaders to illiterate electorates, the speech has normally involved the uses of "beautiful Tamil" (centamil) in contrast to the languages of everyday life or "rude Tamil" (koccaittamil). This distinction corresponds to the (‘proper’) distinction of statuses between the speakers and their audiences. While most speakers have adhered to the prescriptive norms for metaitamal, a few speakers have intentionally violated these norms in their public speeches. Tippori (‘The One who Speaks Fire’) Arumugam is perhaps the best known of these speakers. His speech is frequently characterized as 'vulgar' (koccaiyy irukku, acinkamai irukku) by the standards of elite public discourse, and yet he maintains the ability to attract some of the largest crowds of any public speaker and the praise of members of the lower classes. In analyzing the speech by Tippori and evaluative statements by himself, other speakers, and members of his audience, I will discuss his intentional violation and inversion of normative rules of Tamil public discourse. Like the clowns, comics, and other social critics of the lower classes, it is exactly this inversion of the ‘proper’ social en-valuation of public speech which gives this speaker his drawing power, and gives him the power to attack not only his political enemies but also to subvert the "standards" within "Tamil culture" (tamil panpātu) unattainable by most people in the land.

Kim Berry
Cornell University

Towards a Better Way of Life: Contested Representations of Rural Women, Tradition, and Progress within the Community Development Era

The Community Development Era of the 1950’s and 60’s was inspired by a variety of early experiments in rural development-ranging from Gandhi and Tagore, to British colonial officers, a New York architect, and the YMCA. With the advent of US Government grants for a comprehensive Community Development program, home economics extension and homemakers clubs were exported to India, presenting the rural Indian ‘housewife’ as a subject of and for development. US domestic discourses, advocating a modern and scientific approach to managing the health and happiness of the home and family, met with divergent responses among India’s new nation builders. Though Indian development officials largely accepted the oppositions of modernity and tradition, science and superstition, and ‘progress and stagnation which were prevalent within US development experts’ discussions of rural Indian women, the meanings of tradition, progress, and rural women’s roles and duties were dramatically contested. Represented by some as ignorant housewives in need of salvation from the darkness and stagnation of a suffocating tradition, rural Indian women were represented by others as the keepers of a magnificent and uniquely Indian tradition, whose moral superiority would save the nascent nation state.
Rini Bhattacharya  
University of Massachusetts

War and Roses; Nation, Woman and the Bourgeois Gentleman: A Political Story

The body of the woman was recently reinvented as the nation's parallel site in popular Indian cinema. Two commercial successes - Roja (1993) and 1942: A Love Story (1994) used the body of the woman as agent and signifier of the Indian male's acquiring the nation. While Roja brought out an interplay of naivety, purity, and confusion in these two bodies (woman and the nation), 1942 synchronized the rites of bourgeois sexual union with the native's gaining authority over the country. The immediate popularity of these two films represents a pre-formatted space in the collective psyche. This paper will examine the phenomenon of the renovation of the myth of the nation in Indian cinema, and the response evoked in the context of the opening of the Indian market to global capitalism.

Anne Blackburn

Scholarly Practice and Monastic Identity in The Kandyan Kingdom

In 1753 Valivita Saranamkara led the re-introduction of monastic higher ordination from Siam and was appointed sangharaja, leader of the monastic community, by King Kirti Sri Rajasimha. From this position Saranamkara began to develop an extensive educational system based in the Kandyan Kingdom's capital city which impacted temple communities throughout the hill country and the maritime regions then under Dutch colonial rule.

This paper argues that Saranamkara's attempt to organize an educational system in the latter half of the eighteenth century, and the scholarly practices emphasized within that system, should be understood as part of an attempt to differentiate members of his monastic lineage from their monastic competitors and to consolidate control over the monastic community based in Kandy. The study of Pali, production and study of commentaries and preaching were three key dimensions of scholarly practice in the Saranamkara lineage's educational milieu.
Ambedkar’s Buddhism and Social Justice: A Doctrinal Analysis

Ambedkar's philosophical thought at once contained political, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions. In fact, much of his strength as a leader came from his ability to see the struggles for social and political justice as not merely secular, but authentically spiritual as well. Claiming to have read the entire Pali Tripiṭaka, he formulated an expanded and often controversial new rendering of the Four Noble Truths, the simplified centerpiece of the Buddha's teachings, adding potentially far reaching social and political implications to a system which had previously been treated primarily as personally transformational in nature. Some of his interpretations of this and other aspects of Buddhist thought have been correctly criticized by Buddhists and scholars alike for taking what are considered to be large and numerous doctrinal liberties. Certainly many of his interpretations of central Buddhist concepts such as the Four Noble Truths, karma, and rebirth are unorthodoxical. In the following analysis of his thought, I will shed light on these doctrinal peculiarities, their place in the general scheme of Ambedkar's and the 'Untouchable' liberation movement's agenda, and their implications both pragmatically and contextually with regard to that agenda. As a part of my methodology I will investigate the extent to which these apparently unorthodoxical ideas do or do not stretch beyond the bounds of Buddhist textual doctrine by assessing potential violations of the Four Seals which signify a Buddhist system. Given these prerequisites, an investigation into the implications of such an expanded and socio-politicized rendering of Buddhist thought is necessary. One of Buddhism's most striking traits has been its ability to adapt contextually across cultural and situational lines. In this sense, Ambedkar was extremely successful in presenting a vision of Buddhism to 'Untouchables' with a relevance that made real positive growth in their lives possible. The question is whether or not, to what extent did Ambedkar's liberality in this respect violate the integrity of a 2,500 year old tradition? And if it in fact did not, then to what extent do his insights offer an expansive new potential to Buddhist and activist communities throughout Asia and around the world?

Kristy Bright
University of California - Santa Cruz

Swadeshi Science and the Paradox of a “Modern” Medical Revivalism, 1876 - 1952

This paper explores medical revivalism as a key discourse in the bid for a "national" science during the decades before and directly after India's independence. In mobilizing Ayurveda, Unani and homeopathy as preferable to colonial biomedicine, organizations such as the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (1876) and the Ayurvedic Congress (1907) sought to institute a swadeshi science based on the restoration and revival of "traditional" and "classical" medicine. Yet these groups also defined revivalism as a "modernizing" science preferable to biomedicine. Divergent in their visions of the "nation" and of "Indian" science, these groups all considered medical education the most viable site for professionalization and standardization of indigenous medicine. How did the process of professionalization produce a "modernizing" trend, in Charles Leslie's words, at the same time that it relied on notions of "traditional" science? And what are the implications of a dual modernist and traditionalist revivalism for conceptions of the history of Indian science as well as the political strategy of nationalism in India during the first half of this century?
Barbara Brower and Ann Denis
Portland State University

Forest Reproduction in Subalpine Forests of Khumbu

A small-scale study of forest dynamics in Sagarmatha National Park (SNP) documents active regeneration in forest plots near Sherpa villages. In 1990 Dennis analyzed small stands of mixed Abies spectabilis woodland in SNP. These plots, located near villages and subject to livestock browsing, limited fuel gathering, and litter collection, have been widely represented as declining remnants of retreating native forest. But previous reports, based on a range of sources including travelers’ and foresters’ intuition, local oral history, selective forest sampling, repeat photography, and GIS analysis, are contradicted by the results of this study. We argue that the risks of generalization, the reliance on limited sources, and the privileging of a single perspective can lead to erroneous conclusions about the functioning of wildland resources which are subject to complex and changing uses. We suggest that multifaceted, complementary strategies of analysis will produce a more balanced and accurate perspective.

Robert P. Brubaker
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor

Fortifications in the Environs of Pre-colonial Vijayanagara and the Infrastructure of Imperial Control

For a period of over 200 years the pre-colonial Vijayanagara empire dominated substantial areas of the Indian subcontinent south of the Krishna River. To a degree perhaps unprecedented among earlier South Indian kingdoms imperial success depended on the ability of Vijayanagara rulers to devote considerable resources of human energy and material to military purposes. In spite of its military effectiveness the character and extent of imperial control within the empire varied over both time and space. This paper focuses on understanding the nature of Vijayanagara control in the imperial heartland through an examination of defensive features in the environs of the imperial capital.

Vijay Burgula
City University of New York

Political Mobilization in Telengana

This paper argues that imbalances in the economic and the cultural development of Andhra Pradesh, in the form of retardation or unsatisfactory progress of the sub-region of Telengana, have led to the various separatist agitations witnessed in that sub-region. This paper will focus on the Telengana armed struggle, the two 'Muki' movements and the separate Telengana agitation to elucidate the causes that lay behind the protests and the specific demands they generated. While these protests have subsided without any resolution in the past, the underlying cause of the protests, i.e. the underdevelopment of the Telengana sub-region remains, and this paper argues that potential for the resurgence of separatism is by no means extinguished.
Jose Cabezón
Iliff School of Theology

The Tibetan Colophon

Focusing on Tibetan Madhyamaka literature of the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries, this paper examines the phenomenon of the colophon as a literary artifact. It suggests that the study of colophons allow us to construct a sociology of literary production. In addition, the paper attempts a tentative structuralist stylistics of the colophon that, though based on a specific genre of literature from a specific historical period, may be applicable in wider historical settings and to other genres of the Tibetan textual tradition.

Sarah Caldwell
University of California - Berkeley

Male and Female Power in Bhagavati Cult Rituals

The rituals of the Bhagavati cult in Kerala are oriented around sacred power (sakti), its invocation, embodiment, management, and control. The organic, feminized conception of power as both productive and dangerous, which underlies the sakta worldview is only murkyly understood due to the flattening effect of univocal uses of the term "power" in Marxist-informed and Foucauldian analyses. Recent scholarship on the relationship between ritual and political "power" tends to conflate gender and caste as abstract conceptual categories, while failing to adequately account for the exclusion of women from the portrayal of female deities or the emotional power of the rituals for men. My interpretation explores the juncture of psychoerotic and political power in ritual and the ways males mystify these to the detriment of women.

This paper explores the differential psychological experience of the goddess’s sakti for men and women in the rituals of the Bhagavati cult. While men impute violent supernatural power to female bodies, and imaginatively experience, respond to, and reify this power, women experience the goddess as the agent of men. Through transvestite possession performance, males reclaim envied feminine procreative power within their own bodies, while denying actual social, sexual, and political power to women.
Mary Cameron
Auburn University

Untouchable Laborers: Embodiment and Aesthetics of Low Caste Artisan Production in Western Nepal

Because of Nepalese farmers' dependence on well-crafted iron tools of many kinds, low-caste ironsmiths (luhar, kaaml) maintain extensive patron-clinet (riti-bhagya, jaimani) ties, and, of all the artisan jaat, are the best "paid" and least threatened by market forces. In this video-assisted presentation of luhar forging new tools and repairing old ones in an outdoor smithy in western Nepal, I draw on the concepts of 'embodied knowledge' (culture contained within the experiencing body) and its aesthetics to comment on the social dimensions of ironsmithing. These include social relationships of kin, friends, and patronage, independence and cooperation of manufacturing, and apprenticeship. The luhar's head, eyes, arms, hands, legs and feet engage, and are engaged in, the firing and tedious pounding of rough iron blades, the whittling of wooden handles, the coiling of metal into chains, and repairing the hearth's "molath". Though they continuously encounter danger and pain, the luhar avoids expressing fatigue and pain, choosing instead to joke, talk, and smoke tobacco with family and friends.

Martha Carter
Bulletin of Asia Institute

Oesho or Siva: An Indian Deity in Afghanistan

There has been much discussion recently among Indologists and Iranologists on the origin of the name of the Kusana deity named in Bactrian as Oesho on coin reverses. Although the name is probably derived from Vayu and is etymologically linked to the Sogdian deity Veshparker at a later date, the coin imagery of Vima Kadphises and later Kusana rulers, and related evidence suggests that the Bactrian Oesho must have been recognized as Siva in their Indian empire. An attempt will be made to unravel the complexities of this dual identity.
"Who is Duryodhan?" Uses of Narrative in a North Indian Potter Community in the Times of Transition

Tales told in a North Indian potter community reveal multiple identities for individuals and for the caste. In the midst of intra-community conflict several types of narratives were used to explain the dispute from various perspectives: The Mahabharat was used by individuals on both sides of the conflict, each identifying with one or another character to justify their position. Traditional stories of the potter caste were used to explain current political intricacies. Finally, women used personal narratives and parody to define their own unique positions. I will explore uses of narratives in covering and uncovering some of the tensions intrinsic to this community which involve growing class differences, land disputes, and accusations of witchcraft. They are intensified by the fact that suburban Banaras is moving into the community and disrupting sources of clay thus further undermining the pan-India decline of the traditional profession of pottery. Ambiguity and multi-layered identity become tactics for survival.

Brian Caza
University of Chicago

Contesting Voices of “India” - The Linguistic Reorganization of India and an Alternative Nationalist Discourse

I would like to suggest that the story of an Indian nationalist discourse has been limited. While it is true that a discourse did emerge which envisioned the Indian nation-state as a unitary centralized entity, I question the existence of a nationalist discourse which expressed itself in a “single, consistent, unambiguous voice” of a nationalist elite. In looking at the linguistic reorganization of India, particularly at its origins in the Andhra movement, it might be possible to uncover additional nationalist discourses at the elite level which came into direct conflict with the nationalist discourse which Partha Chatterjee has highlighted. With the rise of an Andhra Congress Committee and the Nagpur and Nehru resolutions of the 1920’s, it becomes possible to see the emergence of a nationalist discourse which came into conflict with the idea of a centralized state based on a unified vision of “India”. It would then be possible to see how elites competed amongst themselves for varied visions of the Indian “nation” and the form of state power that would be necessary to institute these different visions. Thus, within the nationalist movement and its discourse we can begin to see two strands -- the first being of an all-India elite as illustrated by Chatterjee for example, and a regional elite in the Andhra claim that viewed its nationalism in terms of a regional perspective. In this way, they created a vision of Nation which would accommodate their linguistic claim, while also envisioning a form of State that would allow them to create a sphere of autonomy for themselves.
Rangan Chakravarty
New School of Social Research

The Marginal Voice: Who Counts in this Diaspora

Today when we talk of the South Asian diaspora in North America it is assumed to be distinctly different from the South Asian diaspora in other parts of the world - UK, South East Asia and the Caribbean. The overwhelming evidence posed for such a distinction is the nature of the immigration into the US - the post 60's wave of "professional Indians" as the largest migrating category. And yet, it is been recorded that the earliest wave of migration from the Indian sub-continent into the US were the indentured classes more than a 150 years ago and that a significant non-professional class migrates into the US currently - the growth of working class south Asian communities in New York and New Jersey being ample testimony of this "invisible" migration.

The central question of this paper emerges from the above description of visibility and invisibility of communities: Why is the idea of the South Asian diaspora cast so strictly in "professional" terms, especially when there is a significant section of South Asians who do not fit such a description? Further, how does this clean "professional identity" respond to a small but significant section of the professional class that resists this image of the South Asian? The answers lie in the examination of not just the formations that make for "diasporic communities" in the US but also the work that the "professional" South Asian does to marginalize other ideas of "South Asianess."

Kumkum Chatterjee
Pennsylvania State University

History of Self-Representation: The Recasting of a Political Tradition in Late 18th Century Eastern Indi:

This paper studies the reconstruction of a political tradition by a segment of the late Mughal nobility in Eastern India during the later 18th and 19th centuries. This tradition, which was embodied in a genre of historical works composed during this period, derived its legitimacy from a classicized Mughal past which had been reinterpreted to suit the exigencies of the time. This paper offers: 1) an analysis of the process by which this reconstructed political tradition was created and 2) the world views and cultural perceptions of a class of pre-colonial literati.
Manjari Chatterjee  
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

Female Identity and Intertextuality in Tagore's Novels

Tagore's writings reflect an attempt at bringing together many traditions both indigenous and imported as well as a variety of impulses to define the author's role. While his poetry is frequently preoccupied with epistemic questions of selfhood, his novels, more often than not, explore the extent to which the subject is composed of the unconscious forces of history and society and individual identity. His fictional characters seem to be the result of a complex dynamics of creation. In the process of creation, authors may react to literary traditions and conventions through repetition, rejection, or parody, or through a "double-voiced structuring" of the text. It appears that Tagore, in writing his novels, resorted to a similar technique. Some of Tagore's fictional characters seem to embody a double dimension: a cultural proto-type with a stock or folk value on one hand, and a private individual with a local identity on the other.

Piya Chatterjee  
University of California - Riverside

The Privilege of Weeping: Plantation Politics, Exile and Poesis in the "Field" Encounter

This paper, written as short story and poem, will explore the contradictions within a "native" encounter with a "field" site both home and not-home, the plantation country of North Bengal. Using Chandra Mohanty's assertions about the politics of experience as a point of departure, this paper will suggest that a gendered language imbued by anger and embodiment, elided from most objectivist anthropological presentations, can re-configure in powerful ways the borders between "fiction" and ethnographic writing. However, it will also argue that a fashionable obeisance to "fragmentary knowledge" is inadequate if the "native" woman anthropologist seeks to speak a poesis of practice, sketch the potential of a coalitional and praxiological kind of writing. In short, a poetic foregrounding of the politics of "field" research does not only challenge scientific representations of that "field", it can also pose important questions about the connection between writing and engagement; the inextricable mesh of words within worlds and the creative realpolitik entailed therein.
Shome Chowdury  
University of Chicago  

The Origins of Baroari Puja in Calcutta and the Construction of a Nationalist Icon  

Pujas serve not only as important vehicles for religious worship but also as important sites for public gathering and celebration. They are not only about devotion to a specific god but in certain instances can also be interpreted as indicators of public sentiment. In this sense, the organization of and participation in a puja must be seen as going beyond a purely devotional cause to include political and social concerns. In what ways are these political and social agendas conveyed and how are they linked with the worship of a deity?  

The primary focus of my paper will be to examine when exactly Durgapuja became a non-domestic public festival in Calcutta. The question of when also necessitates asking why it became public and so popular at a particular time, how this popularization was accomplished and what social and political imperatives motivated the popularization? In tracing this history, it seems important to discuss the significance of appropriating a primarily rural or domestic festival to an urban public setting at a time of burgeoning nationalism. The appropriation of Durga as a nationalist icon and the use of the puja space as a site for the expression of nationalist agendas seems to be an interesting negotiation of the "modern" and the "traditional."  

Mousumi Roy Choudhuri  
Rice University  

Reading Female Spaces at the Junctures of Sexual, Class and Religious Hierarchies in Attia Hosain's Sunlight on a Broken Column  

Attia Hosain's novel spans the events in the lives of women from an upper-class Muslim family in pre-independence and pre-partition India. The novel ends with accounts of partition riots and the division of the family. My reading of the text will focus on the female spaces in the novel which range from outside the zenana to the club rooms where the upper-classes in pre-independent India try out free-mixing, and the new electoral offices where the handing over of power takes place in somewhat ironic scenes. In the paper I would like to read the patriarchal spaces inside the zenana where the differences between women get played out in terms of age, marital status, class, religion, and access to public spheres. Though my reading will draw on religious and class-marked identity, my focus will be on sexual differentials within women's relationships. I shall follow the same pattern of reading in the public sphere of club-rooms, etc. From such readings I intend to see how a theory of the narrative space of sexual difference (at the intersections of class and religious differences) can emerge out of South Asian fiction.
Encompassed Dualism and Domestic Spaces: The Kadu Gollas of Karnataka

One of the most characteristic features of a (Kannada-speaking) Kadu Golla (cow herders) hamlet (hatti) is that it is encircled with a fence of thorns. This paper explores the significance of that fence and what it encircles. The term hatti can mean hamlet, but it means house and animal corral. It demarks a protected space and often a place which is regarded as sacred in some sense. Within the hatti are other hattis: one for the deities and one for sheep. Both are regarded as sacred. The hatti also contains houses (mane) of people. As a social space (also sacred) the community consists of people related to one another either as 'brothers' (anna-tamma) or in-laws (nentru), in other words, two exogamous moieties. Although there are typically a large number of intermarriages within the hatti, between the two moieties, the hatti is not endogamous. It is conceived as a family, and the hatti like a single house with rooms (another meaning of mane) and a single, common "god room". The social, sacred, and physical space of the hatti will be used to consider various theories and general characterizations of Dravidian kinship groups and institutions.

Daniel Cohen
University of Virginia

The Interactions of Ghosts and Deities in Hindu Experience

This paper explores the conceptual relationship for Hindus between ghosts (bhut or pret in Hindi) and deities (devata). This issue was explored during ethnographic field work recently conducted in Varanasi (Banaras), India, on the ghost exorcism practices of Hindus. The curious merging of the conceptual categories of ghost and deity in daily life suggests an interpenetrating continuum rather than a categorical separation of these conceptual terms. Deities sometimes afflict people like ghosts, and at times ghosts may act as deities and grant people special boons. Deities can manipulate ghosts to do their bidding, but the reverse can also occur when ghosts manipulate the actions of deities with whom they are associated, thereby affecting the people who worship those deities. The categories ghost and deity overlap regularly, with each category capable of transforming into the other. Sometimes ghosts develop enhanced status and become deities. Sometimes deities lose their status and are no longer recognized, falling into the conceptual category of ghost that later may have to be carefully supplicated or exorcised.
Sri Aurobindo's path from exile and English education to Extremist freedom fighter to guru seems to culminate in the figure of the Mother, represented both by the French woman who became his sakti and by the Hindu Goddess in many philosophical and symbolic guises, especially Savithri, the Indian Alcestis, whose name became the title of his great philosophical poem. Aurobindo’s preoccupation with the feminine/maternal “goddess of breast” is evident through his thought from the early political writings to the mature integral philosophy. “The Motherland the Goddess” to whom political action was offered as a Vedic sacrifice (yajna) was succeeded by the whole psychophysical cosmos which was to be penetrated by the spiritual essence which Aurobindo experienced within himself. The Mother was icon or metonym for the world, but a “world” lovingly and supportively attuned to his truth. Crucially, she was also Western, and Aurobindo’s traumatic childhood separations and crucifixion on the “wire mother” of England must be acknowledged as causal. Colonialism added its cultural layer to the personal trauma so that in the end Aurobindo could save himself only in being redeemed by the same West that he had to defeat and so save. These questions will be addressed through “Indian self-psychology”, a hybrid for Kohut and Sankhya developed by the author.

Frank Conlon
University of Washington - Seattle

Auto/Biography and Representation of Religious Revival in 19th Century Maharashtra: The Case of Vishnubawa Brahmachari

Religious auto/biography was known in Maharashtra before the imposition of colonial rule. Bahinabai's autobiographical chronicle of her spiritual quest was a distinctive, if isolated example. Biographical and autobiographical writings concerning religious leaders and teachers increased during the colonial period. Vishnubawa Brahmachari (1825-1871), a prominent polemicist against Christian missionaries during the 1850s, also wrote a massive volume concerning Hindu, or as he preferred Vedic, religion and culture. Although he founded no organization or samaj, it is clear that Vishnubawa enjoyed a substantial audience among the educated population of Maharashtra. In his early writings and discourses he offered autobiographical fragments emphasizing the roots of his "mission" and the shaping of his capacities as a teacher and polemicist. I will analyze Vishnubawa's autobiographical fragments in relationship to a biography composed by one of his devotees, and attempt to cast some comparisons with other auto/biographical productions of the era.
American Born Confused Deshis and Their Indian Grandparents

Some grandparents in South Asian extended families are participating creatively in the forming of their grandchildren's sense of themselves as Indian American. When Indian American women are employed, grandparents are brought from India to help care for the children in the home. The relationship of the children and the grandparents is the setting for both the child's sense of India and family past and the grandparent's own sense of the new world and the future of the family. Some grandparents in stories to the children give continuity by retelling family history to accommodate to the circumstances of their grandchildren in this new land. They are creating their culture, inventing tradition as they have done before in times of social change. Grandparents of three extended families of different communities from different regions of India here show their inventiveness arising from their involvement in their grandchildren's concerns. In the grandparents' own words we hear the struggle to understand America, the reformulation of family and cultural background, and the confluence of Indian past and diaspora present that results as they do what they can to help their grandchildren cope.
Sir William Jones and the Development of the English and Indian Constitutions

Sir William Jones, the great scholar and legal administrator in 18th Century British India, is historically central to the initial welding of the diverse polities of Britain with India and her other former colonies.

Yet, there is a great personal mystery in Jones' influence and work in India and Britain: How could he have been a radical in England, but a conservative in India?

This is an important question for the understanding of the relationship between other later liberal thinkers and colonial realities. This inquiry intends to make use of a series of Jones' poems to Hindu gods under the theory that poetry, as a literary form can more easily be analyzed to understand psychological prejudices and impulses that go into the creation of policy.

It was Jones' work which is the basis of European Romanticism and Orientalism which, in turn, has been proven to be a creation(projection) of the "East" by the "West", and these poems, therefore, must be looked at as the first major extended Romantic/Orientalist work. The understanding of these poems will, then, be applied to Judge Jones' other Indian efforts -- particularly his legal work.
Paternal States and Baby Brigades: Violence in the Name of the Nation

This paper concentrates on specific hegemonic practices of the State that interpellate high school students into particular kinds of citizen-subjects within a postcolonial nation-state. It is my hypothesis that within a country that boasts of an extremely high literacy rate among both its male and female population, it is the system of education that plays a crucial role in propagating notions of masculinized valor and feminized nurture along with a particular ethnic identity that is coded as Sinhala Buddhist and phrased in the name of a Sinhala Buddhist nation.

In this paper, I will (1) analyze the interpellation of Sinhala boys into soldiers through two contemporary 'moments' of disciplining: the mind through textbooks and the body through drills; and (2) discuss the militarizing rhetoric and practices of the Tamil militant group, the LTTE, which though framed as a protest against the hegemony of a Sinhala Buddhist state, merely parallels, and often surpasses its interpellative strategies through blatantly coercive structures of ideological and physical control.

Rahul De
University of Western Illinois

The Professional and the Fascist: Two Faces of the Immigrant Identity

As a diasporic minority in a white racist society, it is not surprising that the Indian/South Asian community(ies) have begun to organize themselves, both at the formal/institutional level and more generally through coalitional politics at the informal level. Such actions are after all necessary to counter the racism and intolerance of the dominant groups. Most new immigrant communities feel the need to build such networks and organizations in the US to negotiate their place within the larger society. Such a negotiation often means both the building of an identity for local consumption and also, while at such a task of constructing an identity for local negotiation, re-writing its relation with "home."

The definition that the Indian community has articulated within the context of such a need over the past two decades in the US has, at least at the superficial level, some visible contradictions. The most significant section of the Indian diaspora (numerically and in terms of wealth) in the US is the professional middle class that came to the US since the early 1960's. Most of these immigrants are part of the "technically educated," English speaking elite of the "modern and secular Nehruvian India."

The most well established, geographically widespread and rich of the diasporic Indian organizations is the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council) of America (VHPA) and its sister organization - the Hindu Student Council (HSC). The VHPA and HSC's respond to the needs of the professional Indian Immigrant to negotiate a new relationship with "home" while leaving the local negotiation largely to the individual. Its politics therefore is drawn mostly in terms of "home." Its activities in the US include cultural programming aimed at building "private" Hindu identities and large scale support for the fascist Hindu politics represented by the BJP- VHP-RSS-SS combine in India. This paper attempts to address the issue of "why a professional class contributes to a fascist politics at home while constructing an identity for itself in the US?"
Nityananda Deckha  
Rice University

Transnational Circuit of South Asian Subject Formation

In this paper, I will locate some of the absences and dilemmas of diasporic and postcolonial claims of and about the Indian subcontinent. Much work in contemporary anthropology, literary and cultural studies traffics in the larger cultural-political project of looking for "marginal voices," which are then recuperated in Western sites. I will argue that the increasing prominence of postcolonial theory and currency of "diaspora" participates in this project. Although I support the interrogation of our dominant fictions, and the interruptive and deconstructive potential of critical postcolonial and diasporic studies, I remain wary of how the old anthropological enterprise of naming operates in and around radical cultural discourses and practices.

With this in mind, I will examine two cultural texts: first, Srinivas Krishna's film Masala (1991) and second, Mahasweta Devi's short story, "Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay and Pirtha" (in her Imaginary Maps (1994))). In the ethnographic effort to locate both the diasporan and tribal subaltern in South Asia within the same global circuit. Focused on the problem of subject constitution within the constraints of Canadian multiculturalism and racism, colonialist stereotyping, Hindu-Caste relations, and the trauma of death, Masala attempts to carve out a space for the production of a "new Westerner" of South Asian origin, who names the Western subject from the space of a first-generation diasporan. In its parodic pastiche of Hindu idolatry, Bombay cinema, and the upward mobility tactics of the Indian immigrant bourgeoisie, Masala negotiates nation, home, and the coding of a culturally different agent, but in way, I argue, that forecloses the space to imagine the South Asian subaltern.

Following Gayatri Spivak's claim that, "It is a through a critique of "development" ideology that we can locate the migrant in the First World in a transnational frame shared by the obscure and oppressed rural subaltern (Outside the Teaching Machine [1993:255]), I will read "Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha." In this story, Devi explicates the insertion and management of India's "tribal peoples" by the transnational discourse of development that informs the logic of the contemporary postcolonial nation-state. Here we see the differential operation of gendering, class consolidation, intellectual formation, and ethnicity in the negotiation of nation, citizenship, and modernity. The status of the tribals at the lowest end of the caste/class spectrum parallels the placing of them as "scheduled tribes," the last named group recognized in the Indian constitution.

Taken with Masala, we can trace a transnational circuit of a differential South Asian subject constitution that not only interrupts the reading of South Asian as Other, but also behoves the diasporan and the migrant in the West and the privileged postcolonial in the South to share the name "South Asian," "Indian," or "postcolonial" with the tribal subaltern. As I will suggest, perhaps in this way, an engagement with the agony of the tribals will neither be deferred nor the ethics of representation and naming subordinated to Western-situated identity politics and declarations of marginality.
Michael F. Dega  
University of Michigan

A Complex of Sites in the Southern Metropolitan Region of Vijayanagara

This paper examines a cluster of sites and associated features located several km from the urban core of the Vijayanagara capital. These include the site of VMS-6—a hilltop fort and associated settlement of some 50 to 60 rooms, a Vijayanagara period shrine, a typical Vijayanagara key-shaped well, a reservoir embankment, and a road with shallow rock boundaries, leading toward the urban core. A number of settlement sites have been located and analyzed by the Vijayanagara Metropolitan Survey. In the summer of 1994 VMS-6 was mapped and surveyed. Artifacts were collected and feature functions were inferred. Several points related to VMS-6 are discussed here: 1. the general provenience of the settlement and its room construction, 2. the relation of the settlement to other features in the area showing complementary features consistent with modern village "requirements", 3. artifact types, functions, and densities, and 4. a discussion of ongoing destructive processes at the site. This preliminary analysis will provide valuable information about activities and settlement beyond the Vijayanagara urban core.

Corinne Dempsey  
Syracuse University

The Duplicity of St. George in Kerala Devotion

Imported to the Malabar coast originally by Syrian merchants, devotion to St. George in Kerala was given added impetus and dimension by the colonial powers of Portugal and England, both of whom claimed him as their patron saint. I will argue that the reappropriation and consequent indigenization of the cult of St. George, as relayed through local shrine stories in the district of Kottayam, offer a site from which an ambivalent articulation of independence from and antagonism against these colonial powers is expressed. The current "duplicity" of St. George reflected in the ambivalent nature of Kerala's relationship to foreign religious authority will also be discussed through an exploration of a variety of responses to the Vatican's recent demotion of St. George's status as canonized saint. As posited by one Malayali Catholic priest, "Will the people side with the Pope, or with St. George?"
Prakash Desai
V.A. Medical Center

Mahatma Gandhi’s Self-Revival Through the Gita

Mahatma Gandhi, the liberator of India, transformed himself from a child who was scared and full of doubts, timid and tongue-tied, into a leader who was able to put an end to colonialism and bring down a mighty empire. In this self-transformation, the Hindu scripture Bhagavad Gita functioned as an important vehicle alongside a long line of mentors (gurus) beginning with his mother. The Gita served many purposes in Gandhi’s life. It taught him the path to salvation by freeing action from attachments; it taught him to perform action without desire thus avoiding karmic defilement. It was because of the Gita that Gandhi was able to demand insistently that politics be spiritualized. For him moksha was to be attained through the dharma of service for the welfare of the country. In psychological terms, the Gita enabled him to internalize those values that he had been seeking since childhood; values that he was unable to find in his human mentors because of the presence of defects. These gurus were unable to fill what he called “the vacant throne” in his heart. How Gandhi used the Gita to soothe his fears and doubts and to buttress his ideals will be the subject of this paper.

Mary Des Chene
Bryn Mawr College

Colonial Classification: Martial Race Handbooks as Ethnological Projects

Commentators have vacillated between labelling the British colonial classification of martial prowess a full-blown ideology or, more humbly, an idea. Variation in British usage is one reason for this unsettled historical evaluation. "Race", "Caste", and "Class" were variously appended to "Martial". A mixture of ethnic and caste designations, regions, and religions characterizes martial labels: Pathans, Rajputs, Sikhs, "Hindustani Mussalmans". This varied terminology points to the complex accretions that produced ideas of martiality in colonial India. From the late nineteenth century, a series of commissioned martial race handbooks codified received wisdom. Most authors were serving officers, trained at an English public school and Sandhurst - not at Cambridge or Oxford. Not necessarily well-read in the racial theories of their day, many were nonetheless knowledgeable about district officers' reports, the ethnographic survey, and other ongoing classificatory projects.

I undertake a comparative analysis of the handbooks on different martial races in order to assess the influence of contemporary ethnological theories of race and caste on the development of the martial race "idea". The combination of colonial classifications and military experience that informed the handbooks show them to have been part of the sustained ethnological project that underwrote colonial rule.
Chandra DeSilva
Indiana State University

The Third Elam War: A Battle of Identities

The paper will explore the outbreak of the Third Elam War on April 19, 1995, after a twelve week truce. (The first Elam War began in the 1980s and ended with Indian intervention in 1987 and the second lasted from 1990 to January 8, 1994.) The paper will argue that this third attempt to set up an independent state for Tamils in northeast Sri Lanka, like the first two, is based primarily on differing conceptions of what it is to be Sri Lankan between the Tamil Tigers and the major political parties in Sri Lanka. It will also assess the implications of the war for the Sri Lankan state and its minorities including the Muslims and the Plantation Tamils living in the central highlands.

The paper will be based on a series of interviews conducted in Sri Lanka in late 1994 supplemented by material obtained from the country through personal contacts, newspapers and SLNet.

Pradip Dhillon
University of Illinois - Urbana Champaign

Colonial Contructions of Honour in Martial Traditions

Taking its cue from a panegyric about the colonial Indian Army which is titled A Matter of Honour, this paper is an exploration of the concept of honour as a cultural construct in martial traditions. This will be done through the close analysis of the experience of a "Martial Race" - the Sikhs - in the colonial Indian Army. It will be shown how indigenously Sikh notions of honour were transcribed into the regimental life-world of the colonial Indian Army, and how this process reformulated the ethos of British military institutions into characteristically Indian cultural contexts. Such an analysis goes a long way towards explaining the somewhat paradoxical nature of Sikh Martial heroism for what was essentially, an alien and imperial flag.

Sara Dickey
Bowdoin College

Images and Negotiations of Self and Other in Domestic Service Narratives

Domestic service workers and employers in Madurai, south India, are primarily women--women who form impressions of one another as they work together in close proximity. Domestic service relationships are interactive, their power constructed and contested by both sides, and the narratives told about them are not simply descriptions of the relationships but form a constituent part of it. In this paper, I examine how these women construe selves and construct identities through the images their narratives create of themselves and one another. Narratives are a form of discourse in which speakers are "composing impressions of themselves, projecting a definition of who they are, and making claims about themselves and the world that they test and negotiate in social interaction" (Riessman 1990:74). In speaking about the other, actors reveal much about the self, and vice versa. Because domestic service is a product of caste and gender hierarchies as well as of class--social principles that are interwoven and often inseparable--the negotiated identities are multifaceted. The interplay of identities results in self-images constructed in response to both overlapping and opposing
Keila Dickh
University of Texas - Austin

Why Some Tibetan Babies Change Sex After Birth: Popular, Religious and Medical Explanations in Exile

In this paper, I will discuss the widespread Tibetan belief that babies can (and, most Tibetans maintain, sometimes do) change their sex after birth. Conversations on this topic with lay refugees and monks in Tibetan communities in northern India and with Tibetan and Western doctors and nurses, supplemented by readings in Tibetan medical journals and dharma texts concerned with the intermediate state between life and death (Bardo) and re-birth, have revealed this subject to be a fascinating and complicated entry point for a discussion of a wide spectrum of salient issues, including: the generally denied Tibetan preference for boy children, the self-perception of Tibetan women, discrepancies between "folk beliefs" and "doctrinal explanations" concerning gender acquisition, and broader Tibetan conceptions of sexuality (hermaphroditism particularly). In addition, I discuss new implications of this old phenomenon in exile and in Tibet, including the use and abuse of the ability of Tibetan doctors to "make" boy babies by both Indian and Chinese families. And, briefly, I suggest possible links between this local explanations for and social accommodation of this phenomenon and current Western medical and academic interest in "intersexed babies."

My research for this presentation has been broad-based, combining oral testimonies from those who have "seen it with their own eyes" or were one of these babies themselves, those who have never seen it but believe it, medical explanations (Tibetan and Western), and formal Buddhist perspectives. I am less interested in the "truth value" of this belief than in understanding why people believe it, how they articulate their understanding of sex-changing, and what can be learned from all of this about Tibetan conceptualizations of gender and sexuality (in both physical and social terms).

Edward Dixon
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Rebellion Through Meditation: The Sikh Dharma in Mexico

With followers in the millions, Sikhism has certainly left its mark on the world religious community. Not only on the cultural development of the Punjab in India and Pakistan but, on the world through the diaspora of Sikhs who have emigrated to or grown up in parts outside of South Asia. The faith, however, has transcended ethnic boundaries as have most of the great religions of the world.

This paper will focus on the development of the Sikh Dharma of the Western Hemisphere in Mexico with particular emphasis on the congregation from Xalapa, Veracruz. The reasons for conversion, strain and cohesion within the congregation, and the congregation's perception of the religion and India will be analyzed.

Finally, some of the arguments for and against this strand of Sikhism being included within the larger religion and some of the historical conflicts around its existence will be discussed.
Stephanie Doucette and Eleanor Zelliot  
Carleton College

Reinterpretation and Liberation in Emerging Dalit Theology

Although the majority of Indian Christians are "Dalit"—of Untouchable origin—they suffer from poverty and discrimination both in Church and society. It was in response to this situation that several Dalit Christian scholars and clergy began developing a specific theology in the 1980s, its primary objective being the liberation of the Dalit Christian community.

Focusing chiefly on the work of Azariah, Nirmal, Prabhakar, and Wilson, this essay examines three ways in which such "Dalit theology" revalorizes the identity of Dalit Christians and motivates them to work for social and political liberation. First, the sources for this theology are found both in the experience of the Dalit Christian community and in the liberating aspects of Christian Scriptures. Second, Dalit theology interprets God and Christ—often conceived as an oppressed human rather than as divine and omnipotent—as decisively aligned with Dalit communities and their liberation struggles. Finally, several Dalit theologians revolutionize traditional Christian conceptions in seeking to locate theological concerns in the struggles of the oppressed in this world, rather than in an other-worldly eschatology.

This paper suggests that Dalit theology, though grounded in other related sources, draws significantly on certain 20th cent. European theologians and has much in common with other peoples' liberation theologies.
I investigated the environmental correlates of fish community structure in Nepal's Kali Gandaki/Narayani River from March, 1984 to May 1986. Spatial and temporal patterns of assemblage composition were documented by making 172 samples at 85 sites from headwaters, north of the Himalaya crestline, to the lowlands of the subtropical Tarai, including 14 sites sampled in each season. I collected a total of 120 species, of which approximately 50% were cypriniforms (minnows and carps) and 25% were siluriforms (catfishes). The number of species per sampling site varied from 0 to 66, increasing from the headwaters to lowlands as a result of additions and replacements. Gradient analysis indicated factors of geography (e.g. stream gradient, altitude), water chemistry (hardness, alkalinity), and stream hydraulics (current speed, substrate type) were the main abiotic variables associated with fish community structure in this extreme environment. Seasonal changes had substantial but secondary effects. Rivers are critical to the lives of Nepalese. Nevertheless, negative human impacts on this Himalayan aquatic ecosystem are considerable, including industrial pollution, dynamiting rivers to capture fishes, and construction of water diversions/dams that block fish spawning migrations.

Joseph Elder
University of Wisconsin - Madison

The "Borderless World" and "Sociology of India"

Louis Dumont and other anthropologists and sociologists once argued over whether or not, because of the unique perceptual categories and distinctions used on the Indian subcontinent, there needed to be a "sociology of India." Now, as the world media flow into India, and as India's films and television programs draw heavily on Western categories and plots, what is happening, and what is likely to happen, to the "sociology of India" debate? This paper will look at what is happening to the debate and will make some limited predictions regarding the future of the debate.
The Ayodhya History Debate

From the 18th century till the 1980s, all parties concerned shared the belief that the contentious Babri Masjid at Ayodhya was built on the debris of a Hindu temple. This is verified from court proceedings, local Hindu and Muslim pamphlets, and scholarly publications up to the 1989 edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica. From 1989 onwards, many Indian academics have been claiming that this belief is untrue, and that it was artificially created in the early 19th century, either by the British colonial policy of "divide and rule", or by local communalists. We survey the reasons for this sudden break with the long-established consensus, along with the evidence offered in its defense.

In 1990, the Government of India tried to decide the controversy by organizing a debate between scholars mandated by the Vishva Hindu Parishad and the Babri Masjid Action Committee. These talks, while not yielding an agreed conclusion, did kindle an effort to collect all the relevant evidence, which has continued in public forums until 1994. We survey the proceedings of this informal public debate, with its intriguing omissions and methodological lapses, and its harvest of decisive evidence.
Philip Engblom  
Independent Scholars of South Asia

Through Missionary Eyes: The Scandinavian Alliance Mission in West Khandesh in the Letters of Martha Dahlstrom

The Scandinavian Alliance Mission of North America, founded 1890 largely by Free Church immigrants to America from Sweden, established its mission to the tribal Bhils of West Khandesh 1905. Although espousing a radically evangelical, premillenarian, exclusivistic theology, S.A.M.N.A. found itself adopting many of the mission strategies—vernacular schools, orphanages, medical outreach—that had been developed by its older and theologically more liberal mainline counterparts such as the American Marathi Mission.

As a new S.A.M.N.A. recruit, Martha Dahlstrom arrived in India 1940 to serve as the mission’s first R.N. in its newly founded Chinchpada Mission Hospital. In vivid letters to her family she describes her part in establishing this medical work. Although her theological commitments never waver, we find her, particularly in her culturally liminal role of aiding and comforting the sick and dying, constantly forced to redefine her preconceptions about, and relations to, India and Indians. Having some of her “American conceit” taken out of her is an early lesson she acknowledges having learned. Now long independent of missionary oversight, the thriving Chinchpada community of Christian Mauchi and Vasave Bhils raises questions about the provenance of a highly polemicized issue—the missionary origins of the majority of Indian Christian communities.
Social Welfare and the Politics of Class, Caste, Disability and Gender

This paper illustrates the ways in which voluntary organizations that provide services for disabled persons can become counterproductive to liberationary goals they aspire to uphold. Over the past few years, residential institutions and special schools for children with disabilities have sprung up all over India supported by international aid, social welfare allocations from federal and state governments, and private donations. Such organizations have also been able to provide employment, particularly for lower caste women from both urban and rural areas, who have otherwise historically been excluded from the mainstream workforce. Thus, on both fronts, such organizations illustrate their complete commitment to the goals of social welfare.

This paper seeks to examine the ways in which these voluntary organizations unintentionally work to further this marginality of both the disabled persons and their service providers. An analysis of the personal histories of the staff in these organizations, most of whom were women, indicated that though they as a population seemed physically and mentally able; as a result of racist, classist, sexist, and casteist exploitation, they were socially, educationally, and economically disabled and hence were unable to meaningfully participate within the mainstream economy. Their own deviant status offered them, as their only choice, this form of work, where, instead of being the beneficiaries of social services, they were forced to be the service providers for a group of people who shared their deviant status, albeit in different ways.

It thus appears that under the overwhelming logic of social welfare, voluntary organizations become the chosen sites where all of society's "unfavorables" can congregate - whether as clients or service providers. And in doing this, such practices can now become the newest forms of institutionalizing difference under the guise of social welfare.

Jana Everett
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Gender Images in the Maharashtra Campaign to Ban Sex Determination Tests

Beginning in 1982, Bombay feminists organized a vigorous campaign to ban sex determination tests, the use of procedures such as amniocentesis to identify the sex of the fetus in order to obtain an abortion if the fetus were female. Forming a network with doctors, lawyers and journalists, they pressured the government to take action, educated the public about the deadly consequences of female devaluation, picketed medical facilities offering the tests, and lobbied newspapers that accepted adds from sex determination clinics. In 1988 the Government of Maharashtra State responded by banning sex determination tests. Bombay feminists are extremely disappointed in the manner in which the law has been implemented and in the failure to sustain public debate concerning the devaluation of women.

I studied this topic through a research trip to Bombay, December 1994-January 1995, during which I interviewed activists in the campaign, government officials and politicians and collected English-language and a sample of Marathi newspaper articles on the issue.

In this paper I want to examine the images of the women using sex determination tests that appeared in the newspaper articles that supported the ban and in those that opposed the ban and in the legislative debates on the ban. I am interested in who was speaking about whom and the implications for Indian feminist theory and practice, state policy and women's empowerment of politics of representation that operated with this issue. The newspaper articles span 1982-1994 and the legislative debates were in 1986.
Louis E. Fenech  
University of Northern Iowa

**John Malcom's Sketch of the Sikhs**

First published in 1810 John Malcolm's *Sketch of the Sikhs* is among the earliest European accounts of the Sikhs. The text is often dismissed by scholars of the Sikh tradition as the picture it presents of the Sikhs is at odd with contemporary, orthodox understanding of the Sikhs and Sikhism. This small book, however, merits serious attention. Basing his conclusions on oral tradition and Persian and Punjabi sources Malcolm provides a virtual mine of information on how early nineteenth-century Sikhs viewed themselves and perceived their own tradition. It allows one to clearly see how in fact blurred were boundaries between what we may loosely term Sikhism and Hinduism. This paper will trace Malcolm's often-unmentioned manuscript sources and attempt to reconstruct the *Sanatan* ("eternal") Sikh tradition that dominated Sikh imaginations until the early twentieth century based on the book's observations. Although the Sanatan interpretation of the Sikh tradition was indeed dominant, there are clear hints in Malcolm that a competitive, Khalsa *episteme* was certainly present. It is this understanding of the Sikh religion that is today perceived as Sikhism.

Leela Fernandez  
Rutgers University

**Boundaries and Differences in Feminist Approaches to South Asian Studies**

The paper will address the ways in which recent developments in the field of women's studies can contribute to a rethinking of the boundaries and meanings of South Asian area studies. In particular, the paper examines the ways in which reworkings of the notion of "difference" within feminist theory can provide an impetus for critical analysis within South Asian Studies. The paper builds on two related aspects of this politics of difference: (1) the challenges which recent feminist theory has posed to universalistic narratives of "women's oppression" which represent women's "experience" through predefined categories of patriarchal oppression and (2) the ways in which feminist research has begun to reconstitute difference, (for instance, of ethnicity, race, class and nationality) as a site for the contestation of existing theoretical assumptions and categories. The paper will attempt to demonstrate the implications of this politics of difference for the field of South Asian studies by drawing on the case of postcolonial working class politics in India, differences within the "working class" and specificities of the postcolonial context in India provide a means to rethink the theoretical relationship between categories such as gender, class and ethnicity rather than as a signifier of the "traditionalism" or "exceptionalism" of Indian workers. Hence, the boundaries of "area" in South Asian Area Studies then transform difference from a signifier of "Otherness" into an intervention which unsettles(Eurocentric) categories and the teleologies which may stem from these categories.
Michael Fisher
Oberlin College

Representations of India, Indian States, the English Company and Self by an 18th Century Indian Emigrant

The establishment of English East India Company rule over India required the participation of tens of thousands of Indians, many of whom brought with them traditions of service to the Mughal Empire. How did they explain this transition/revolution? Some of these administrators, military men, scribes, and others who accepted service to the British made deliberate efforts to represent their own traditions, and those of the British, in their own terms. Some wrote for Indian audiences, others for British readers. This paper examines the first such book written directly for a British audience, unmediated by translation: Dean Mahomed’s Travels (Cork, Ireland: The Author, 1794). I argue that Dean Mahomed creatively located himself with respect to other Indians, to the Mughal Empire and regional states, to the English Company, and to his British readers. He selected his illustrations, genre, and the content for his narrative as multiple ways of reshaping himself and his background for his British audience. Through an analysis of this work, therefore, we will move toward an understanding of how at least one Indian represented his complex positions within the burgeoning British Empire.

Joyce B. Flueckiger

Healing Spaces in Hyderabad

Religious healers in Hyderabad, A.P. include men and women, Hindus and Muslims. This paper will discuss aspects of the activities of women healers, both Muslim and Hindu, their organization of space for their activities, including the design and furnishings of their practice spaces, patterns of visitation and access by their clientele (predominantly female, but also male, Muslim and Hindu attending both Muslim and Hindu healers' facilities), and their engagement with other kinds of religiously dedicated spaces and activities. Healers may associate themselves with particular shrines, saints, deities and religious lineages, but their practices overlap across sectarian boundaries. Clients likewise pursue eclectic strategies, moving across sectarian and other kinds of ideological boundaries in seeking out appropriate interventions for a variety of problems. Connections among healers and their clients constitute complex social webs of collaboration and competition, which are articulated partly in spatial arrangements.
Lars Fogelin
University of Michigan

Archaeological Implications in the Vijayanagara Metropolitan Region

Modern brickmaking in the town of Malpanagudi provides an analog for historic brick production in Vijayanagara. Ethnographic research conducted in the summer of 1994 investigated the resource needs, production techniques, and use patterns of traditional rice husk fired bricks. Brick production requires suitable soils, ample water and rice husks for both chaff and fuel. The owners of the Malpanagudi brickyards states that access to water is the most important factor in determining production locations. Historically, this resource need would have placed brick production in direct competition for water and land with wet agriculture. Brick production destroys the agricultural potential of land by converting topsoil into bricks. For this reason, the relative costs of traditional brickmaking included both the cost of manufacture and the loss of agricultural production for many years following brick production. The large brick structures in Vijayanagara represent significant losses of agricultural production through the manufacture of bricks used to construct them. The brickyards of Malpanagudi can be used to illustrate the rate of land use and soil removal in traditional brickmaking.

Jana Fortier
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Simple Labor Reciprocity Ain’t So Simple

One work strategy which is essential to labor intensive wet rice farming is known as *parima*, or simple labor reciprocity (SLR). Although often mentioned by anthropologists, SLR is seldom analyzed as an important labor practice. Most analytical attention focuses on farmer transitions to wage labor. I maintain that Western theoretical strategies marginalize and essentialize non-Western economic features rather than elaborating socio-economic behavior into more fluid interactive paradigms. Further, theoretical marginalization of nonwaged work strategies is influenced by androcentric research biases. Since women’s work strategies are only beginning to become an object of scientific interest, many informal nonwaged work strategies are poorly understood.

Related to the general mystification of this form of exchange, researchers frequently equate simple labor reciprocity with equal exchange. Anthropologists even advocate SLR as an egalitarian countermeasure to exploitative wage labor. Assumptions of SLR as socially symmetrical incorrectly situate reciprocity in an evolutionary framework which idealizes reciprocity as a previous form of exchange more symbolically “pure” than market-driven capitalist economies. Using video stills from Himalayan fieldwork, I show that SLR is only one facet of a greater set of work strategies which are frequently asymmetrical.
Michele Gamburd  
University of Michigan

Nurture for Sale: Sri Lankan Housemaids and the Work of Mothering

Three quarters of the women from a rural Sri Lankan village leave behind small children when they migrate to work as housemaids in the Middle East. Current economic hardship and a dearth of employment opportunities in the village have driven women overseas to earn money for their families. Migrant housemaids ‘mother’ two sets of children: they nurture one set (for money), while providing material benefits to the other (for love). Often pursuing careers of their own, the Arabic mothers leave the child care to foreign nannies. In Sri Lanka both the children left behind and the female relatives who offer them love and attention rely on the migrant’s remittances for their financial well-being. If a woman leaves the ‘work force’ in the Middle East to return home to her duties as a ‘housewife’, is she now ‘unemployed’ merely because she looks after her own children? In this paper I examine how nurture for sale revolutionizes thinking about motherhood, women’s work, and the extended family.

Tejaswini Ganti  
New York University

Dancing to the Beat of a Different Drummer: Bhangra Music in New York City

This paper emerges out of a video project documenting the growing audibility of bhangra among New York City’s large East Indian immigrant community. Bhangra is both a folk dance and music performed during celebratory occasions such as weddings and the spring harvest festival of Vaisakhi in Punjab, a region straddling the post-Partition border of India and Pakistan. Bhangra has been transformed and redefined by South Asian immigrants in Britain, and recorded British bhangra is becoming an indispensable part of Indian social life in New York. The documentary explores how this form of popular/folk music is utilized by the Indian immigrant community to construct and assert a specific diasporic cultural identity. In this paper, I analyze the various sites for the dissemination of bhangra music in New York and show how it is transcending its Punjabi origins and lyrics to become a pan-Indian form of popular music. Bhangra is also a defining feature of Indian-American youth culture and its attempts at promoting its visibility in the urban landscape. I also examine the broader issues of how Indian accounts of popular culture apply to diasporic India, the relationship between nation and diaspora and how popular culture mediates this relationship, and the relationship between popular culture and cultural identity, all with respect to bhangra music.
The Army Dances: Veilcappatu Performance at Kondungallur

Veilcappatu are the oracles dancers who voice the opinions, desires, and frustrations of the Kerala goddess Bhagavati. The veilcappatu, along with thousands of devotees and onlookers, gather at the annual March festival at Sri Kurumba Kavu (temple of the Lady of the Anklet) to honor, placate, communicate with, and oddly, insult the goddess and desecrate her sanctum. The veilcappatu vivify their relationship with her, sing sexually explicit songs about her body and her activities with her consort, and ritually renew the goddess's power in their ceremonial implements, a hook-headed sword and a pair of anklets. As the army of the goddess, they see themselves as her defenders, identify with her tremendous energy to heal, succor, and generate life, as well as to rage, sorrow, and destroy. This energy fills them as they dance holding the ritual sword, sometimes hitting themselves on the forehead with it. Veilcappatu tradition and temple ceremonies combine the narratives of two goddesses, Kali/Durga and Kannaki Devi, the heroine of the 4th century Tamil Silappadikaram (Affair of the Anklet) in their unusual and controversial ritual accosting and titillating of the goddess and possession dances.

Patrick A. George
University of Pennsylvania

Temple Measurements as Traces of Architectural Practice

This paper investigates the traces of architectural practice in a group of temples located at Bandhogarh, Madhya Pradesh, (c. eighth century C.E.). An analysis of temple dimensions indicates two types of measurement procedures, proportional and constructional, corresponding to the two groups directly involved in temple production: priests and craftsmen. While options for overall temple proportions were prescribed by communities of priests in textual form, it was necessary for craftsmen with the most knowledge and skill, i.e. architects, to fix the magnitude of these proportions, and thus the dimensions of the temple to be constructed, with fixed units of measure.

An analysis of the dimensions of temple superstructures further indicates that, in order to fulfill the proportional relationship between temple widths and heights, architects employed mathematical progressions to determine the dimensions of the layers of blocks used to construct these superstructures. Experienced in the calculation of the terms and sums of these progressions, architects were able to construct a variety of temples that both conformed to the prescriptions of the texts and permitted the production of the wide range of superstructure profiles characteristic of temples in North India.
Kaushik Ghosh  
Princeton University  

Jharkhandi Resistance in the Era of Late Capitalism  

This paper is an attempt to delineate the nature of some emergent patterns in Jharkhandi politics in the context of late capitalist culture and economy. I will try to explicate why have a long current of local, popular resistance—from anti-dam struggles to trade union movements—have continually reproduced the Jharkhandi consciousness of protest and in doing so have managed to keep alive the Jharkhand movement itself even during the latter’s setbacks, leadership failures and periodic complicity with the state.  

This concern arises in reaction to a new set of realities that have developed in Jharkhand over the last several years, roughly paralleling the “liberalization in India. While there is the rise of the politics of “indigenous peoples’ movement” in Jharkhand as part of the transnational indigenous peoples’ movement with its organizational focus on the WGIP forum of the United Nations, development agencies including the World Bank have started a scheme for the infrastructural development of the Jharkhand region. So there are different terrain’s of power as well as resistance. How is this phase of Jharkhandi politics different from the earlier modes? What is the discursive nature of this new mode of resistance? What are its ambiguities? What are its connections to the logic of late capitalism, i.e. what are its global alliances and modes of legitimation? How do Jharkhandis understand such a discourse?  

Daniel Gold  
Cornell University  

How the Crazy Yogi Claimed his Land  

Gehla Rawal Nath was a legendary yogi of East-Central Rajasthan, the founder of a large monastery who is still also revered by householder Naths in the surrounding regions. Numerous stories circulate about Ghela, which differ in socioreligious import from the Nath epics concerning well-known heroes like Gorakh, Matsyendra, and Gopi Chand. In contrast to the epics, which focus on existential tensions between the familial and yogic elements of the householder Naths’ identity, the local legends forge these elements into a viable image the Naths can present to themselves and the world. The story of Gehla Rawal Nath gives a definition of Nath political identity against Rajput elites and some yogi antecedents remembered as Muslim. Although his name means “crazy” in Rajasthani, Gehla’s story graphically illustrates the ways in which the Naths’ coarsely envisioned magical power gives the local Naths effective claims to land.
South Asian Studies in the Twenty First Century: By Whom? For Whom? What for?

South Asia Studies in America like may Area Studies, is a creature and a contemporary of the post-colonial era and in some ways an element of the world of the Cold War. As it, and we, its practitioners, confront a rapidly globalizing post-diasporic world characterized by significant demographic change in our student population, great growth in the community of South Asians in America, the downsizing of the Academy, and the decline of governmental inputs into education and research, it is essential that we look at what it is we are doing and how these shifts can and should impact it.

In this context the present paper will raise and examine questions as to what it is we do and for whom we do it. Is South Asian Studies the study of knowledge produced in South Asia or by South Asians wherever they may be? Is there a difference between Area Studies and Ethnic Studies? What should be the role of changing student constituencies and concerned ethnic communities in determining the future of the field?

Riotous Love Stories: Rathnam's Bombay and Chopra's 1942

In the last few years Mani Rathnam and Vidhu Vinod Chopra have emerged as the two most successful directors of the Indian commercial film industry, innovatively combining cinematic technique and narrative mastery. Mani Rathnam's Nayakan (1987) was the first Indian gangster film with distinct local details, and its cinematic excellence is on par with Hollywood and Hongkong films from the same genre; in a sea of poor spin-offs Vidhu Vinod Chopra's Parinda (1991) stands out as the legitimate heir to Nayakan, and it is with this latter film that the basic structure of a gangster film genre was consolidated in Indian cinema. The "dialogue" between Mani Rathnam and Chopra ushers in for the first time a more sustained cinematic interaction between Madras and Bombay film industries, an interaction that had previously been orchestrated only through an exchange of actors. This new and different relationship between the two regional industries throws up a host of issues that have to consider how specific regional cinematic styles are being curtailed to give way to a more national cinematic style and how the audience is repeatedly summoned to deal with national, and frequently nationalistic, narratives.

This paper will examine this directorial and cinematic interaction through two recent films that juxtapose a love story with a historical event--Vidhu Vinod Chopra's 1942--A Love Story (1994) and Mani Rathnam's Bombay (1995). Both films focus on the durability of love when faced with horrifying events--anti-colonial struggles in 1942 and communal riots in Bombay. Interrogating this narrative premise in both films, the proposed paper will interrogate the vicissitudes of cinematic revisions and innovations of the love story, the production of national histories as allegories of the love story, and the representation of secularism to unravel the ways these elements colour the narrative structure of these two films and mark their reception.
The recent advent of cassette and amplification technology offers some Tamil villagers unprecedented control over sound in playback settings. I address how one temple leader creatively incorporated commercially-produced cassettes into a festival to local goddess Muttumaariyammaa. He drew on cassettes' power over sound to inspire and shape devotional practices and sentiments. Songs were selected that called the goddess by name and that embodied devotional sentiments appropriate for her. Some songs even invoked occasional trances. *Mangala issai* or "auspicious sound" was played back as an offering to the goddess on behalf of the village. Devotional sounds and sentiments were amplified and sustained through loudspeakers, which broadcast music continuously over the entire village each festival day. The technology made it feasible for the festival to expand from two days to fifteen. The festival became the most important annual event, giving the village a regional reputation as a devotional center. This enabled the temple leader to demand larger donations from villagers, charge for corporate advertising, and consolidate local interest groups around the goddess, temple, and affiliated institutions. Commercially-produced cassettes thus helped a village goddess, temple, and temple leader become increasingly central in ritual, political, and economic life.
Inverting India: Reading Roja in Film and Fantasy

Film maker Mani Ratnam’s film Roja (1992) has become the center of a controversy between cultural and political critics who see in the film a new understanding and representation of the Hindu communal fantasy: a fantasy played out in a national space populated by a modernized, anti-Muslim and avowedly middle class male subject. Mani Ratnam’s film was not only successful at the box office and technically superior to much of contemporary commercial cinema: what appeared to confirm these critics’ readings was the national award given him by the Indian state—“for wholesome entertainment and national integration.”

This paper does not take direct issue with readings of Roja as fascist or communal by Niranjana, Pandian, Barucha and others. Instead, it addresses two other factors that these readings have largely ignored in order to bring attention to the materiality of film itself as a technology of representation. The first is the question of translation, mediated through regionalism: crudely put, Roja was first made in Tamil and then dubbed into Hindi—what difference does that make (for national integration)? The second is the question of Kashmir: long the overdetermined site of romance in Indian cinema, Kashmir can no longer be seen without reference to the insecurity of the Indian state—what difference does that make?

This paper argues that understanding cinema as a significant locus in the representation of national or regional fantasies requires new strategies of reading and interpretation. Feminist and post-colonial strategies of reading ‘against the grain’ must come to grips with the technologies of representation, in all their materiality. This paper argues that in the present context of ascendant neoliberalism and Hindu chauvinism, consistent and credible representations of the “new” India can only emerge from outside the Hindu heartland and in the absence of Kashmir.
Feminist understandings of transnationalism have focussed on international divisions of labor. Clearly, gender and culture and their relation to the state, to nation and to patriarchy are central to the international division of labor. Recent changes in economic policies in India, directed towards "liberalization" and creating a better "investment climate" for multinationals require us to look at the gendered impact of these multinationals within the breakdown of center-periphery models of globalization. In examining the strategies of the Indian state in inviting multinationals such as Mattel Corp, which produces Barbie, I analyze the recasting of local, national and diasporic patriarchies through transnationals and the objects they bring across borders. In particular I am interested in the Indian diaspora in the United States and its relation to India, as well as the Indian state's role in creating this relation.

Arjun Guneratne
Macalester College

Language, the Census, and the Vicissitudes of the Tharu Identity in Nepal

During the last few decades, various Tarai populations collectively subsumed under the ethnonym "Tharu", have been forging a common ethnic identity in opposition to that of the high caste Nepalese who have immigrated into and settled the Tarai. As a central element in this process, the Tharu elite has defined language as an essential aspect of Tharu identity.

However, the languages that Tharus speak vary from region to region; in some areas, "Tharu" is indistinguishable from local regional languages such as Maithili and Bhojpuri. Because the Nepali state enumerates its people on linguistic rather than ethnic categories, many Tharus are enumerated as being speakers of these languages. While there is no Maithili or Bhojpuri ethnicity as such, there is a strong, politically important "Tarai" identity, generally associated with speakers of Indian languages, who are the descendants of recent Indian immigrants into the Tarai. The census therefore is the principal locus of contestation between the proponents of a Tarai identity and the Tharu elite. This paper discusses two important aspects of this contestation: the question of how the Tharu language itself is to be defined, and a Tharu critique of the census.
Engendering the State: Paternalistic Development Programs as Disciplinary Regimes

Out of a concern for the health of young children and mothers, the Indian government, with the help of UNICEF, launched the Integrated Child Development Services Programme (ICDS), also known as the Anganwadi program. This program provides supplementary nutrition, immunization, and day care for very young children and "lactating" mothers, particularly those who belong to lower caste and class groups. In this paper, I explore the gendered character of state interventions by examining the Anganwadi program in west U.P. The Anganwadi program arose from a concern that development programs neglected the welfare of women and children by assuming that all members of a household had common interests and that men were "naturally" the heads of households. But were there other interests at work as well? There has been a renewed attention to "human capital" in development discourse because of concerns about the "quality" of the population and its effects on fertility rates. Without attempting to evaluate whether the Anganwadi program has been "successful" or not as "development," I will argue that it has succeeded handsomely in advancing the disciplinary agendas of the state in regulating, controlling, and monitoring the population.

The Architect in Mughal India

The role of the architect in Mughal India has neither been adequately studied nor well understood. One of the major reasons for this omission has been the dearth of source materials on the subject. Contemporary sources are virtually lacking in details regarding architects. Even where major architectural ventures are described at length, it is the patron rather than the architect who has remained the focus of glorification. Occasional references to architects are surely to be found. But the information is rarely enough to provide significant insight into their distinctive personalities or their creative endeavor in the process of construction.

The purpose of this paper is twofold: to analyze the reasons for the exclusion of architects from detailed mention in Persian court chronicles and imperial memoirs and biographies and to locate the architects of imperial Mughal monuments in the social and cultural milieu of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. Drawing upon the evidence of literary sources -- fragmentary though they are -- and by trying to overcome the manifold limitations they impose, I shall attempt to reconstruct the identities of architects, delineate their status in society, examine their knowledge, training and skills, and the contributions they made to the manifestation of imperial Mughal grandeur in stone and marble.
Shubhra Gururani  
Syracuse University  

Ecofeminism and the Essential Woman: Women and Nature in the Environment Debate in India

Contemporary environmental discourse privileges local, feminine, and traditional ways of knowing and knowledge production over global, masculine, and modern. Although, it is true that the focus on local/feminine/tradition allows us to explore different sites of resistance and possible alternatives, such claims have valorized the local/feminine modes of survival as a panacea for a sustainable future. This uncritical acceptance of local/feminine as superior forms of knowing and acting has not only sharpened the dualism which informs it, it has also obscured the multiple ways through which local is constituted and ignored the fact that local is not independent of other locales.

This paper in an attempt to explore the limitations of the focus on local/ feminine critically examines the blind acceptance of a spiritual communion between women and nature in the ecofeminist discourse. It is my contention that the valorization of women as traditional environmentalists tends to view women as forbearers of tradition and embodiments of our lost past. Women, thus become the symbol of local, tradition, harmony, and past against men who represent global, modernity, competition, and present. Women, in this logic of argument are reinforced to their traditional roles as caretakers and increasingly represented in the ecofeminist discourse as nurturers, managers and harmless. By taking examples from a Central Himalayan village which contradict such representations, the paper argues for a revision of the environmentalist discourse beyond essentialization and an acknowledgement of women as active agents in processes of democracy and social justice.
Chad Haines  
University of Wisconsin - Madison  

Etching the State Upon the Landscape: Routes and the Frontierization of the Gilgit Region

This paper is a historical study of the colonial encounter in the region today known as the Northern Areas of Pakistan. With the establishment of the Gilgit Agency in the 1870s, the region was subject to a variety of changes in its social and economic relations. Of particular historical importance is the transformation of the geo-economic links of the region. This transformation can be defined as one from a 'closed' region to a 'transit' region.

By 'closed' we do not mean 'isolated', the region of Hunza was firmly oriented northward to the Chinese outpost of Yarkand, with grazing pasturage in the Turkistan Pamirs. As well, there was much mobility of people to and from Chitral, to the west of the region, bordering Afghanistan. The flow of people and goods in such a system is a closed loop between two termini. There is none, or very little, integration between various loops. The exchange of tributary goods of the Mirs of Hunza had no connection with the flow of people to and from Chitral, which had no connection with the mobility of the Wakhi settled in the region and their trade in sheep and yaks with Kyrgyz nomads.

However, through the construction of routes into and traversing the region these various closed loops became integrated and additional linkages were forged. The integration of these traditional patterns of mobility under state control and the attempt to forge trade relations between Chinese Turkistan and British India via Gilgit intensified the fluidity of the region. Established local families were now seeking education for their children in Srinagar; supplies were being brought from the southern cities of Abottabad, Rawalpindi, and Peshawar; members of the Gilgit Scouts were stationed at the British Council in Kashgar; and Pukhtuns migrated to the region to capitalize on the trade flowing between Kashgar and Amritsar in the British Punjab.

The integration of the Gilgit region into the British colonial state did not close it off, but rather opened it up. Route construction and the administrative control of mobility, firmly situated the region at the frontier of the British Empire. This paper argues that, while the mapping of borders at the edges of states was significant, it is also important to understand the changes in flows and mobilities brought about by the infrastructural expansion of colonial states. The rise of the modern state lies in its integrative links as much as in the fixing of its territorial expanse. Thus, the modern state can be said to be etched upon the landscape by the routes it constructs.

Research for this paper was undertaken at various archives in Pakistan and India, and through fieldwork in the Northern Areas, Pakistan, during the 1994-95 academic year, under the auspices of an International Predissertation Fellowship from the Social Science Research Council.
The *Times of India* in Changing Times: The Press and Foreign Policy Change in India

This paper investigates how the dramatic transformation in the international political environment, which occurred in 1990-91, affected the selection of the international news by the *Times of India*. It conducts a content analysis of the every tenth front page of the newspaper between 1985 and 1993 and supplements the data with an analysis of editorial commentary. A fairly even pattern of distribution was found over the period between domestic and international events. Geographical proximity and cultural/historical ties were important determinants of the amount of news coverage, that is, South Asia as a region consistently received more attention than any other region. The United States received far more attention than any other single country, over twice that of the Soviet Union/Russia. The content analysis found only a modest change in the international news coverage after 1991. Economic issues were discussed a little more often, but there was little change in the geographical priorities. News attention did not become more dispersed among a broader range of countries, as would be expected in a more multipolar world. There was no decrease in attention to Russia and only a small increase for the United States. The qualitative analysis of editorial themes helps to explain the continuity in the news coverage after the end of the Cold War. The results of this quantitative and qualitative analysis of the *Times of India* during this decade of global change provide some evidence regarding changes in public attitudes regarding India's role in world politics.

Costumes and Post Colonial Identity in Sri Lanka

Contemporary cultural studies locate "dress" as a meaningful cultural practice. While descriptive studies that document attire and record clothing protocols remain helpful in cultural inquiry, critical investigations of dress as strategic and therefore political enhance theories of the mechanisms by which cultures are constructed and maintained. Dress indicates and constitutes important cultural identity markings, including ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality, and class. Scholars argue that dress, like other cultural practices, is negotiated and contested. Postcolonial cultures feature such negotiations. This paper examines women's dress in contemporary Sri Lanka in an attempt to raise questions about the subject positions invented by differing strategies. In particular, the paper engages the complicated intersections of gender, ethnicity, religion, and class that locate the indigenous subject in postcoloniality.
Holly Hapke  
Syracuse University  

**Petty Traders, Gender and Economic Transformation in the Kerala Fishery**

The Kerala fishery plays an important role in the economy and has undergone tremendous transformation with mechanization of production and the development of an export economy. Despite the attention the development of this sector has received, little attention has been paid to the role of women in Kerala’s fisheries and to the impact such dramatic change has had on them.

Historically, women have played an important part in fisheries, particularly in post-harvest processing and marketing activities. In fact, in recent years, as fish catches have declined in the artisanal sector, women’s marketing activities have became crucial in ensuring household survival -- in many cases, constituting the household’s entire income.

Just as fish production has undergone dramatic change so too has the system for marketing fish. The question, then, is what has been the impact of this transformation on women fish vendors? Have women been marginalized within marketing activities at the same time their labor is increasingly important for household survival? If so, how and why?

This paper seeks to address these questions through a gender analysis of fish markets and the fish economy in Trivandrum District. It will first explore the implications of economic change for women in the production system as a whole. Second, it will explore the implications of change for women in the fish markets themselves asking about the relative roles and participation of men and women traders and how they have evolved historically. The paper will also examine the strategies women have adopted to adapt to the changes fish marketing has undergone and will conclude by speculating about what further developments in the fisheries sector as a whole might entail for small-scale traders.
Farhat Haq
Monmouth College

Gender and Identity Politics in Pakistan

The association of women's emancipation with the modernist forces in Muslim countries has important consequences. First public policies such as education for women or reform of Muslim family laws aimed at improving women's legal position in the Muslim world were introduced by authoritarian regimes such as Ayub Khan, Ataturk or Phalavi. The sponsorship of the 'women's cause' by these authoritarian governments led to a certain 'de-legitimation' of women's rights. Secondly, the support of women's rights by the secular-nationalists elites have made such efforts susceptible to the charge of 'unauthenticity'. The fundamentalists have consistently accused unveiled, urban professional women of imitating the 'corrupt' West and abandoning their own Islamic heritage. Thirdly, relying on the modernist authoritarian state to promote women's rights have left Muslim women vulnerable to regimes like Zia Ul Haq's which used Islamic fundamentalism as a means of legitimacy. The 'democratic' government of Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto have attempted to appease both the fundamentalist and modernist forces. The 'women question' has been at the center of discourse about the national identity of Pakistan. In this paper I will focus on the policies pursued by Benazir Bhutto's government regarding the 'uplifting' of women in Pakistan. The central purpose of this focus would be to analyze the role of gender in the construction of political identity for Pakistan.

Brian Hatcher
Illinois Wesleyan University

Partial Lives: Finding and Reading the Autobiographies of Sanskrit Pandits in Nineteenth Century Bengal

The emergence of the genre of 'autobiography' in modern India is a problem that is beginning to receive increasing attention. If one considers pre-colonial India as an 'anti-autobiographical space' (to use Phillipe Lejeune's terms) then the appearance of the autobiography in the nineteenth century must be related to the convergence of bourgeois idioms of self-help and improvement with classical and vernacular modes of discourse. One suspects that the manifestations of this convergence in the nineteenth-century autobiography necessarily differ with respect to the social location and cultural status of the author: English-educated, middle-class, orthodox Hindu, reformer, etc. This paper explores the case of a type of author who at times shares much with these other categories and yet who is distinguished from them by his traditional status, namely the brahmin pandit. Consideration is given to two short autobiographies written by Sanskrit pandits who were active in Bengal throughout the middle of the nineteenth century: Isvarcandra Vidyasagar and Giriscandra Vidyaratna. Because both men were educated as pandits in colonial Calcutta, they offer fascinating examples of the cultural convergence that produced the modern Indian autobiography. Furthermore, because each author wrote only of his childhood and youth, these two autobiographies force us to wrestle with such questions as: Can a brahmin pandit tell his life story without violating religious norms of humility and non-attachment? What other considerations might lead a pandit to leave his life story only partially told? In other words, what is the meaning or strategic significance of such incompleteness? Finally, can we---following Lejeune---attempt to find ways in which the author has in fact told the remainder of his story, only in other texts?
Neelambar Hatti, Lund University
and James Heimann University of Copenhagen

The Rule of Law and Dharma in Early 19th Century South Indian Villages: Fines and Panchayat Adjudications Recorded in the Yelandur Kaditas

The village Panchayats of South India have historically been known as the mainstay of local level conflict resolution and their decisions the adjudications of a society's de-facto primary judicial body. On the basis the kaditas of Yelandur from the first half of the 19th century we intend to present some cases from the panchayats acting as a judicial body. Each case presented is but one unique event embedded in an ongoing social and cultural context yet each adjudication, though usually not formulated in any normative sense, is a concrete manifestation, not only of common practice, but of the Hindu legal theory as well as the ethos and mores --dharma-- of South Indian culture and states.

Our source is the fines and adjudications recorded in the 230 village account books (kaditas) of Yelandur, Karnataka. As historical documents the kaditas are records of revenue administration. However, the kaditas are also a socio-cultural product reflecting in its detailed accounts pertaining to the individual villager, the social, economic and legal functioning of a localized society in a state system.

Edward Haynes
Winthrop College

Shikar Regulation in the Princely States of Eastern Rajasthan

The Rajput maharajas evolved a tradition of shikar or aristocratic hunt to a high degree of elaboration, in a courtly ritual plus game management in forest and grassland which matched the Mughal and later British traditions of the hunt. In the era of the British viceroys the rulers of eastern Rajasthan solidified their power partly through arranging hunts for elite Englishmen. In the reserves which evolved into today's national parks such as Bharatpur, Sariska and Ranthambhor, these traditions helped shape the social stratification, access to resources, cultural life and wildlife communities of the Princely States.
Heather Hindman
University of Chicago

Authenticity and Authority in the Imagination of the Buddha’s Birthplace

Buddhism has long had a difficult relationship with the land in which it originally was spread. This conflict gains particular importance in the Hindu nation of Nepal where many believe that Gautama Buddha was born. Just inside the current borders of the nation of Nepal, Lumbini, once called Rumini-dev, is thought to be the location of the garden where Queen Maya gave birth to the Buddha of the current era.

Yet, such a claim is difficult to prove. Following upon the writings of Maurice Halbwachs about the Judeo-Christian Holy Land, I explore how scholars both inside Nepal and from outside make claims about what happened in this land thousands of years ago. Paying special attention to what types of information are seen as authentic and whose statements are given priority, I examine the means that are used to establish the location of the Buddha’s birth. This is particularly interesting in light of the ambivalent attitude which the Nepalese government has towards locating the birth site within the Nepal borders, and the quest as to the role Lumbini should play in Nepalese identity. Having such an important world religious site within Nepal could be managed to produce a great deal of revenue for Nepal, and the desires of recent government to maintain its identity as a specifically Hindu state. All of these factors work to affect how the Nepalese government and other parties make claims about the location where Siddhartha allegedly took his first, lotus producing steps.

Hines, Naseem A.
University of Washington, WA.

Striking a Balance: The Home Coming Episode in Maulana Daud’s Indo-Sufi masnavi "Candayan"

"Candayan" of Maulana Daud (d.1395) was completed in 1379. So far it is the earliest Sufi masnavi we have and as such it is considered the pioneer work of the ‘premakhyan’ genre. Composed in Awadi, the eastern most dialect of Hindi, it seems to have served as a model for the later works of this type such as Malik Muhammad Jayasi’s "Padmavat". "Candayan" is based on the contemporary folklore of ‘Canaini’ or ‘Canda-Lorik’. In this paper I propose to trace Lorik’s spiritual journey through the various stations leading up to the last (available) chapter of the composition. By focusing on the Sufi symbols in this masnavi I propose to demonstrate how Mulla Daud advocates the message of striking a perfect balance in a Sufi’s life.
Variation in Hindi-Urdu: Do Speakers Now Control a Continuum?

In recent research on the use of Hindi versus Urdu registers David Lelyveld claims that with the televised version of the Mahabharata, the Indian government has finally succeeded in fostering a Sanskrit-rich version of Hindi over the lexically mixed Hindustani that prevailed throughout the 19th and most of the 20th century in Northern India. As part of his evidence he cites a filming of the Ramayana from the early Forties in which the characters speak a mixed language that includes copious amounts of Urdu. By way of contrast, the serialized version of the Mahabharata recently created for Doordarshan on the basis of a screenplay written by "Rahi" Maasoom Raza features a chastely Sanskritic diction purged of nearly all Perso-Arabic vocabulary. The inference he draws is that in the Forties not enough of the movie-going public could understand the High Hindi that Hindi enthusiasts were promoting to make films using it economically feasible. Now after nearly fifty years of High Hindi education and propagation in independent India the North Indian population has sufficiently been converted from its earlier Hindustani habits to be able to follow the sanskritapracuur dialogue of Rahi's Mahabharata.

In my paper I wish to argue against this view. The usability of High Hindi in Rahi's Mahabharata does not signify a significant change in the linguistic behavior of the various segments of the North Indian public qua speakers so much as it indicates a change in their proficiency qua hearers. With a higher level of education and (through television and the movies) exposure to a broader range of dialect and diction, the North Indian public is now able to comprehend a broader range of lects then before. This permits the viewers of Doordarshan's Mahabharata to understand what they are hearing in a diction more appropriate to its time and setting than what was presented in the filmed version of the Ramayana in the Forties. With the increasing linguistic sophistication of their audience writers in the Nineties are able to use lexical variation as a tool for more effective characterization than was possible fifty years ago.

As evidence for this view we may cite other popular Doordarshan shows such as Tippu Sultan where a highly Urduized diction is used to help create an appropriate historical atmosphere. Of particular interest in this regard are the writings of Krishna Sobati who uses a number of different forms of Hindi, Urdu, and Hindustani to great effect in her writings set at different times and places in northern India.
Mainstream economic theorists have suggested that there is a movement of labor from the low-income sector of agriculture to the high income sector of industry. It is during the period of transition that income inequality is at its peak. The implicit message is that countries should focus on growth and endure inequality in the interest of future prosperity and associated expected equity. This paper focuses on the other side of the current spate of privatization, deregulation and downsizing of the economy in Pakistan and its rationalization based on efficiency and growth. New thinking and some recent evidence has shown the positive effects of equity on growth as well as the political problems associated with inequality which in turn have economic consequences. Policies of privatization and deregulation in their essence are anti-poor and anti-labor. What is not clearly understood is that they are likely to turn out anti-growth as well.

Roger Jackson
Carleton College

The Nature and Origins of a Mahamudra "Corpus"

My studies in recent years of the dGe lugs Mahamudra tradition (preserved in the dBen sa shnyan brgyud, and seminally articulated by the First Panchen Lama) have inevitably led me to move across sectarian lines—especially to the bKa’ brgyud pa and Sa skya pa—and back in history—especially to those texts considered in Tibet to be essential for an understanding or mastery of Mahamudra. Each movement presents its own problems; the one I am concerned with here is the attempt to understand the origins and development of Mahamudra. Leaving aside the difficult historical issues posed by Mahamudra’s being a “tradition” in which orality is fundamental, we discover that the textual tradition is rife with difficulties, too. In particular, the parameters and composition of what is regarded as the foundational “corpus” of Indian Mahamudra literature are far from easy to determine. A certain general agreement on such matters among Tibetans is evident in post-14th century writings on Mahamudra, but there is little unanimity before that time, and scant to no evidence of which I am aware that Indians themselves ever defined a Mahamudra corpus. My paper, then, will briefly address some of the problems involved in trying to write a "history" of Mahamudra, with particular attention to shifting notions of what a Mahamudra corpus might be— notions that are, of course, tied to varying Tibetan ideas of what Mahamudra itself is.
The Esher Report: A New View

The Great War ended with the Indian Army discredited through its failures in the Dardanelles yet expecting to play a wider role than ever in garrisoning the "British Southern World." The appointment of the 1920 Army in India Committee under Lord Esher systematically inquired into the state and future of the Indian Army, proposing a wide range of reforms. Its report, which appeared in stages, triggered a political firestorm from not only Indian Nationalists but also the Govt. of India and the Northcliffe Press in England. This furor diminished its constitutional thrust, but a congeries of unanticipated events undermined its serious efforts to overhaul the Indian Army in the light of what the Great War suggested future war would be like. The collapse of the rupee in 1921, the advent of dyarchy, the Punjab Disturbances, and concerns for the loyalty and contentment (as the phrase went) of the Army forced the Army to choose between alternatives. It opted to preserve its most loyal martial races regiments while foregoing the major commitment to mechanization and air power that postwar analysis suggested it would need.

Signe Jansen
University of Oslo

The Svetasvatara Upanishad Reconsidered

This paper presents the results of a text-critical study of the Svētasvatara Upaniṣad. The SU is considered one of the earliest Śaivite texts. In this theistic upaniṣad, Śiva, who is identified with Ātman/Brahman, is praised as the creator of the universe. However, a text-critical analysis of the SU shows that certain stanzas are linguistically and metrically later than the main part of the text. When these later additions are removed from the SU, very little remains of the text's Śaivite character. When the older part of the text is read by itself, it seems that the "one God" referred to in the SU is not Śiva, but Ātman. This paper will show how a misreading of one stanza may have led to the transformation of the SU from a theistic upaniṣad, deifying Ātman, to a Śaivite text.

Donald Clay Johnson
University of Minnesota

The Gujarati Textile Tradition

Donald Clay Johnson: The Gujarati Textile Tradition

A survey of the nature and variety of textiles produced in Gujarat with illustrated examples of the techniques and people involved with their production is the basis of this talk. This will include block printing, single ikat, double ikat, and tie and dye processes for the production of the fabrics. The focal cities for such work are Ahmedabad, Jamnagar and Patan.
Pradeep Jeganathan
University of Chicago

Traces of Violence, Spaces of Death: The State, Identity and Community in Urban Sri Lanka

This paper explores how state practices and local ethnic identity intersect in confrontation and compromise over questions of death in moments of violence, both brief and long term, in contemporary Colombo. It takes as its primary ethnographic site the general cemetery in Colombo, which has been a central site of dispute in the recent, violent history of Sri Lanka. It is at this cemetery that the dead from the on-going civil war in the North-East of the island are buried. The organization of these funerals are the work of the state, and at each moment the state produces a particular construction of the event, attempting to locate it in its own version of history. Based on research done in the working class communities that adjoin the cemetery, the paper explores the contestations of these multi-lingual and multi-ethnic communities to these efforts of the state. I will argue that these subordinated responses to the violence and death produces histories that are markedly different to the state’s official narratives.

Sharilee Mehera Johnston
University of Texas - Austin

Remembered Expressions and Imaginative Longings:
Mystical Experience and Qawwali Music

This paper addresses the relationship between perception and the productive imagination in the qawwali performance. I understand the efficacy of the performance as resulting from the mimetic abilities of the listeners—to imagine, recreate, and remember a mystical experience outside the realm of everyday experience. Here the heightened emotional space of the performance with its stylized sensual metaphors (musical symbolism within the performance as well as poetic references to taste, smell, and sight) is a re-enactment of and gateway to the mystical experience.

I view the qawwali performance as a structure within which heightened sensual experience is coupled with extreme moments of renunciation: a dialectic between ‘ways of knowing’. The listener’s perception is profoundly effected by his/her understanding of the performance as a sensual representation. I have taken concepts of naturalness coupled with mimesis and the productive imagination from Bordieu, Taussig and Ricoeur, respectively, in approaching the necessary dialectic between the sensual and the beyond-state experiences in qawwali.
Glory Jyothi
Princeton Theological Seminary

Sita, Eve, or Mary? Christian Women and God-Talk in Today’s India

The Indian Constitution provides equal rights to men and women, yet equal opportunity for women in the public realm is still a dream to come true. Basing itself on Scripture, the Church says that in Christ there is neither male nor female, yet Indian women find themselves lagging far behind men in securing a position in Church or seminary. India does not lack professional women. Indeed, we are way ahead in providing space for women even in politics. At home, however, women are expected to preserve the tradition, and in the Church they are expected to “pray for all the souls” and to implement decisions made by male ministers and Church committees. Women may become members of decision making bodies provided they allow themselves to be subjugated by male members therein.

Christianity was undoubtedly a pioneer in educating Indian women and thus bringing them into public life. This has now become history, for the Church has been lagging behind the wider Indian society in implementing constitutional equality for women. It is time to analyse the reasons for this disparity.

Against this background my paper will discuss two major issues. The first is the disparity between the Church and the wider society, a question posed in relation to women’s status in India. The second consists of the role played by women themselves in perpetuating their existing status in Indian Christian society. This will be based on Indian women’s self-identity and the religious and cultural factors—symbols such as Sita, Eve, and Mary—that mould this identity. Finally, my paper will provide some theological bases for reinterpreting the identity of women based on the concept of “Imago Dei”.
Vamsee Juluri
University of Massachusetts

Imagining the Homeland: Telugu Identity on the Internet

Linguistic identity is created and experienced in different ways in the everyday life of the members of the community. This paper examines the Internet group, "Soc.Culture.India.Telugu" as space for the articulation of the Telugu Identity. This group serves as a forum for the people from Andhra Pradesh who currently reside in the United States to exchange information or participate in debate regarding topics ranging from cuisine, films, popular music to caste, religion and politics. This paper argues that this discussion group is emerging as a complex and contested site of representation where divergent discourses are competing for supremacy and redefinition of what constitutes linguistic identity.

Sundar Kaali

Of Outlaws: Notes on Narrating "Industry" and "Criminality" in Tamil Nadu

This paper attempts to delineate one aspect of the history of industrialization in Tamil Nadu. It argues that the discursive constitution of the notions of 'criminality' and the 'criminal caste/tribe', and that of 'reform' and 'reclamation' which they engender, are intimately linked to the wider process of the development of a new production mode during the colonial period. While drawing on the discursive practices and realities of Europe at that time, this process of disciplining the colonial subject also invented its own institutions, instruments, techniques and discourses. The paper further explores how the colonized was constantly aware of these disciplinary mechanisms that are aimed at the total subjection of his/her body. It argues that while the law forces itself upon the body of the colonized, to be inscribed on it, the latter resists it in a manner that might be well termed as 'delinquent'. Seizing upon discursive spaces that are not its own, and emerging out of the interstices of inscribed legalities, this delinquency points to a not-for-a-moment-silent subaltern politics at work. Inscribed in a symbolic mode, and represented in narrational discourses that employ a wealth of codes and conventions, the material discussed in this paper offers not much of 'empirical data' as such. Nevertheless, when subjected to proper semiotic analyses, it emerges as a most useful means of understanding the tactics (in the sense that Michel de Certeau uses the term) of the colonized. This, perhaps, is the mode of the subaltern, the manner in which s/he lives, speaks, and acts. And the fact that this is constituted as absence in dominant discourse, and perceived as silence in elite historiography, points to the importance of employing a variety of other methods in studying it.
Policing the Boundaries of the Home: The Colonial State as Paterfamilias

This paper will explore the proposition that though the paternal relation in which the colonial administration stood to the "native" woman in early and mid-19th century India reinforced the gendering of public and private spaces in keeping with patriarchal ideology, these divisions were often threatened as in the case of the widows of the rulers of "lapsed" states who became potentially threatening political figures and legal subjects in their demand for the right to adopt heirs. Most of these instances enact the narrative of the failed rescue rather than that of the successful saviour of oppressed native women which had characterized the self-perception of the colonial enterprise in India. Even though families of deceased kings were provided for and pensioned off, these women petitioned the British government and complained about meagre pensions, the theft of private property and the abrogation of their customary right to adopt a son. In many cases, the colonial state used the standard patriarchal tactic of accusing these women of having paramours, of being unreliable, of having offended the family, of falling prey to "wicked" advisors, and of inciting rebellion. The argument for deposing them or declaring them unfit for ruling the state was given a moral colour, while the threat they represented was both political and social, having violated familial equations and appropriate gender roles.

Late 19th-century British fiction that claimed to represent hisotry premised the success of the benevolent project of colonization and its corollary modernity on the pliability and acquiescence of the ideal colonial subject -- the educable native woman, who, even as she is confined to the domestic sphere, is endowed with a free will. In other words, the ideal colonial subject is feminine, domestic, and a liberal subject who is fascinated with the colonizer's culture. The invasiveness of historical events such as the Doctrine of Lapse and the emancipatory legislation against the practice of Sati is reconfigured in fiction as an excessive concern with protecting native women while keeping them within the bounds of the home.
Linking Up: The South Asian Global Networks

The last four years have seen the emergence of an extensive set of Indian electronic networks/groups that are involved primarily in "talking" and "acting" in relation to the events and conditions in India. These networks/groups are similar only in this broad sense of their concern with India and its current politics. At a more detailed level two very distinct types of networks/groups are visible. The first is a set of "lobbying organizations" - Action India, India Net, Info India, to name a few. The second is set of "progressive groups" - Secular Democratic South Asians, India Alert, Namada Net, again to name just a few.

The "lobbying organizations" aim to work as "pressure groups" that monitor the actions of Western governments and media (mostly US) with the purported aim of "correcting the mis-representations" that both the governments and media use and perpetuate. Through such efforts these organizations aim to nudge the media and the governments in directions that are generally "friendly" to the Indian state. They are organized through an extensive email network and work through letter writing and phone call campaigns aimed at Senators, Committees, Newspapers and TV Networks. While, it is true that both Western media and governments often mis-represent the third world (including India), on closer examination of the work of these "lobbying organizations" it becomes clear that the ideology that motivates such groups is not necessarily what they claim it to be - correcting mis-representations - but on the other hand it is distinctly a product of a new transnational elite that is seeking to work within a globalized economy.

The "progressive organizations" on the other hand rarely go beyond a very basic level of coordination. They remain, in most cases, information exchange networks, rather than well organized groups with clear coherent agendas. Occasionally, these groups manage to come together to undertake a brief political campaign but these campaigns are rarely sustained.

By carefully examining the outputs from both these types of organizations, this paper aims at understanding the ideological structures that motivate either type of organization and explores the issue of why the former type of organization produces far greater degrees of coherence and action while the latter remains fragmented.

Pramod Kantha
University of Missouri - Columbia

Ascendence to Power and the Changing Nature of BJP Politics

The recent electoral gains by the BJP in the two industrially heartland states of India, Maharashtra and Gujrat, have raised prospects for substantial gains by the BJP in the national elections even if not to the extent of being in a position to form a government on its own. The gains of the BJP in the two industrially advanced states and more so in urban than in rural areas is yet another challenge to the basic premises of modernization theories posing a positive correlation between industrial advancement and the growth of secular orientation. The true nature of this phenomenon, however, can not be understood without examining the strategies, tactics and the approaches of the BJP on important economic and political issues and the extent to which the BJP is being innovative in adapting its platform in order to broaden its electoral appeal and, thus, enhance the prospects of leading the government at the center. BJP's recent pronouncements makes one wonder if the party is becoming more like a pragmatic catch all party and moving away from its radical Hindutva image that initially boosted its image. This paper will examine the above stated aspects of BJP policies in the context of the recent elections in Maharashtra and Gujrat.
Gendered Meanings: Taslima Nasreen and Immigrant Female Consciousness

The topic of this paper is the reception of feminist writer Taslima Nasreen's writings by Bangladeshi women living in the US. This theme is explored through the recent events concerning the exile of Taslima Nasreen after she was accused by Muslim clerics to have blasphemed the Quran and placed under a fatwa (religious decision) of Tk. 2 lakhs for her head. The polemics surrounding Taslima Nasreen have been used to enter into a dialogue with Bangladeshi women living in the US regarding three issues: (a) how has living in the US as women/marginal/different/other complicated the interpretations of Taslima Nasreen's feminist writings; (b) how are religious and gender identities interpellated in the construction of transcultural identities; (c) and how do gender roles within the community determine knowledge of media events.

The paper is based on a series of interviews with nine women living in the United States. In outlining the subjectivities of the women interviewed and my interpretations of gender roles in the community, the analysis is framed under the rubric of Diaspora as a mode of discourse.

Zillur Khan
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

Values, Leadership, and Education

In a scenario where democratic aspirations of Bangladeshis have been repeatedly thwarted by a few military men, rethinking is in order about how to uphold values crucial to democratic development, the most important being education.

The revival of democratic rule has not been the expected boon to the teeming millions, chiefly because the leaders have failed to emulate certain basic values such as gender equity, equitable dispensation of law, poverty alleviation, etc. Insufficient resource commitments to educational training in different fields have epitomised that failure. Although in the Annual Development Plan, an encouraging 11 per cent has been allocated to the education sector, focusing on women's education, the lack of commitment from the leadership at different levels of society has seriously impeded the process of implementation. The focus of this paper will be the exploration of leadership behavior and values in the context of needed changes for poverty alleviation and resource development.
Meena Khandelwal  
University of Virginia

Discourses of Gender in Renunciant Thought

A close look at the rhetoric of Hindu renunciation (sannyasa) reveals two contradictory discourses regarding the relevance of gender. On the one hand, the philosophy of advaita vedanta holds sannyasa to be ungendered or, more accurately, a transcendence of all differences. On the other hand, Shankaracharya, the ninth century saint credited for institutionalizing Hindu renunciation, admitted only (high caste) men into his order. Renouncers are expected to focus on the inner self, to transcend all social distinctions, and to treat everyone alike, whether rich industrialist or poor farmer, scholar or illiterate, relative or stranger, man or woman. At the same time as renunciation claims to be concerned with the inner self rather than external forms, the distinction between male and female, with the valorization of one or the other, pervades the thought and behavior of contemporary renouncers in important ways. Here I explore biographies and ethnographic accounts to see how these contradictory discourses regarding the relevance of gender are expressed in the lives of male renouncers.

Julie King  
University of Wisconsin - Parkside

The Narrator and the Author in Bankim Chatterjee’s Novels

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee is universally regarded as the father of modern Bengali novel. He created this new literary form in Bengali under the influence of the 19th century British novelists. He was also a staunch conservative and an orthodox Hindu. He wrote many articles to uphold the Hindu religion and tradition. Did he write novels to vindicate his conservative Hindu beliefs? Or did he write novels with an artistic detachment? Krishnakanta’s Will provides us with an interesting example. Is the moralistic message in the novel too obtrusive? Or does the artist Chatterjee’s amoral imagination help him transcend the didactic parameters of the Victorian novel? In the same way, is Rajmohan’s Wife (Bankim’s first novel and his only novel originally written in English) an affirmation of Chatterjee’s traditional views on women and society? The present paper will focus on the possible answers to these questions.
Rebecca Klenk
University of Washington

Interpreting and Negotiating Gandhian Village and “Official” Discourse of Womanhood: Experiences from Lakshmi Ashram

This paper focuses on how students of Lakshmi Ashram in Almora District (Kumaun) interpret and negotiate multiple discourses of Indian womanhood, modernization, and development as expressed in the narratives that they construct of their lives and in their everyday practices. Students of the Ashram’s environmental education programme in Almora are trained as village leaders and social workers to work for the uplift of their village sisters and sow the seeds of “gram swaraj.” This specifically Gandhian style and model of education designed to create a particular kind of village woman has influenced the identities of both teachers and students. I trace the influence of this type of education in student’s later lives in their home villages, and examine the extent to which Lakshmi Ashram offers its students ideological positions that compete with village thinking and “official” discourses on Indian Womanhood, modernization and development.

Robin Kornman
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

The Translation of Lodrö Thaye’s Commentary on Mind Training

Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thaye’s (jam mgon Kong sprul blo gros mtha’ yas) commentary on Chekawa Yeshe Dorje’s The Seven Points of Mind Training is connected with specific oral instructions on how to put this text into practice. This technique involves memorizing the precepts or gdams ngag of the root text and then recalling them suddenly when they apply to a situation of meditation in action. Because of this sudden approach, they are sometimes called in English not precepts or verses, but "slogans." As slogans they are repeated suddenly by the disciple in order to create a moment of relative bodhicitta. The slogans are thus quick, momentary reminders which set back the development of ego. This instantaneous approach to applying the slogans fits with more general approaches to meditation used by students and successors of Jamgön Kongtrül.

It also has interesting repercussions for the translation of The Seven Points into English. In a short time a complex and interesting history of translations has unfolded. In this paper we will look at the relationship between the practice of these precepts among Western Kagyu disciples and the approaches of Kagyu translators within Lodrö Thaye’s lineage.

Robin Kornman, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Chasing Miracles: Postcolonial Identity and Mimesis in Sri Lanka

One of the interesting aspects of the current phase of development in the postcolonial world is the fact that desired models of development in the postcolony have increasingly shifted out of Europe and North America to a space called the Pacific Rim. Hence, one finds increasing reference to "east asian", "nic", and "confucian" models of capitalist accumulation as the ones worthy of emulation by South Asia, Africa, and other parts of the still beleaguered "third world". This paper investigates the thrill exercised by Singapore on the imagination of former President J.R. Jayewardena of Sri Lanka.

Through a textual analysis of his speeches, autobiographies, biographies, interviews and other publications, it seeks to display the degree to which JRJ modeled his vision of himself and of Sri Lanka's future on a construction of Singapore. It does this at two levels. First, JRJ's desire to replicate Singapore as the definitive non-space of global capitalism: an export platform, a chip on the circuits of world finance and information flows, a glittering node on its entrepreneurial circuits. Second, as a society that has "solved" its troubling ethnic questions by the successful imposition of a hierarchy: a hierarchy justified on grounds that in ensures the continued frenetic rate of accumulation under late capitalism.

The final part of the paper argues that Singapore is the definitive simulacrum, a model without an original, of late capitalism. It is regarded as a model worthy of emulation because of its ability to "reproduce" nature (nature theme parks, zoos, aviaries, orchards, tree-lined boulevards, hi-fi electronic equipment, both audio-video and computer etc.) with higher and higher degrees of fidelity. Developing the arguments of Benjamin, Berman and Taussig, this part of the paper argues that mimesis, more than being the dominant signifier of the postcolony, is in reality the principle that hierarchizes societies under the regime of modernity: the most advanced societies under capitalism are the best mimics, to put it baldly. Sri Lanka's mimesis of Singapore is thus entirely appropriate: it stays within the script of modernity.
Private Lives and Public Piety: Women and the Practice of Islam in Mughal India

Current political developments in the Muslim world have led to the creation of a kind of short hand concerning the character of Islam and the kind of lives which women in the Muslim world lead. Islam becomes identified primarily in terms of rigid doctrinal and legal prescriptions. Women must not only believe and obey, but they bear the added burden of having to live their lives in seclusion. An examination of history can, however, provide a much richer view of the character of both religion and the different ways in which women participated in the actual practice of Islam. In this case the Mughal period in India will form the focus for that historical description.

A study of the religiosity of India’s Timurid rulers shows that they were most attached to holy persons. Within the spectrum of Islamiceate views, specific individuals could run the gamut from eminent scholars of the religious sciences to Sufi mystics who seemed completely uninterested in the formal rigors of theology or sharīah. Members of the Timurid house, including royal women, expressed considerable attachment to those holy men, more rarely, holy women. In addition to that private dimension of faith, women, perhaps more often than Timurid men, acted as patrons for the construction of many mosques. Since mosques were sometimes the sites for the distribution of charity, women also had a role in maintaining the dynasty’s image as benefactors to the poor. The paper will thus consider the complexities of both private religious associations along with the very public role which women had in building and sustaining the mosques or shrines which were the most visible locations for the public practice of the faith.

Shabari Kumar
Columbia University

Some Indian Lesbian Images

While elite culture — whether post-Vedic Sanskritic culture, or the nationalist movement that turned to post-Vedic Sanskritic culture to formulate “Indian” identity — has produced fairly negative images of lesbianism, images of lesbianism that are influenced by popular culture — whether Tantrism drawing on folk practices or anthropology recording folk behavior — are far less doctrinaire, and present somewhat more positive attitudes towards lesbian sexuality.
Married to "Dukha"

"If I had known about the nunnery before I got married," a middle-aged Newari woman confided, "Then perhaps I wouldn't have married." With this statement ama began a long narrative about marriage, motherhood, and religion in Newar society. Drawing on the work of Goffman and Bakhtin, I argue that Ama invokes several distinct and conflicting ideological views of marriage circulating among Newars. To teach me about dukha, a sentiment of suffering attributed especially to married women, Ama describes the reoccurring hardships a wife confronts throughout her life. This lesson was not only for me. Next to us sat Ama’s adolescent daughter who interpreted and actively, if relatively silently, participated in our talk. By tracing what Goffman calls "participation frameworks," it becomes clear that ama uses her formulative portrait of dukha to teach her daughter a normative view of marriage. Simultaneously, she tacitly challenges the dominant account, by referring to the recent Theravada movement popular among Buddhist Newars. Ama’s narrative suggests diverse meanings of dukha that illuminate ideological and religious changes occurring in the Kathmandu Valley, which have profoundly affected Newars, in particular, married Newar women.

Chaise LaDousa
Syracuse University

Person and Presence in the North Indian Kirtan and Epic Dhola

Social actors utilize pronouns as a major means for inscribing and negotiating spatial, temporal, and attributional aspects of self and others in discourse. Through an analysis of the indexical uses of pronominal forms, this paper compares the construction of performer and audience vis-a-vis the text in two different performance genres in North India. Kirtan are group singing sessions at which Hindu gods and deities often are addressed to display honor and devotion. The Dhola, on the other hand, is an oral epic. Dhola consists of a much longer, more integrated narrative than kirtan, and is narrated by one performer. Different pronominal forms construct fundamentally different modes of the performer's involvement in relation to the two textual types. The two performance genres, furthermore, provide for very different relationships between performer, audience, and text, and designate different rationales and effects for their performances. This paper traces these relationships through genre-specific pronominal constructions and negotiations of speakers' identity in order to elucidate what semiotic properties found in the two genres make possible the realization of the genres' goals (in this case, one of worship and one of entertainment).
The Uṣṇīṣavijaya-dhāraṇī and its Pali Version of Northern Thailand

Patrick D. Lanaghan
Department of South Asian Studies
University of Wisconsin—Madison

Among the dhāraṇīs found throughout regions where Mahāyāna Buddhism has spread, the Uṣṇīṣavijaya-dhāraṇī is one of the best known. Besides the Sanskrit ms., one of which dates to as early as the sixth century CE, numerous versions are known in translation and transliteration from Tibet, China, Korea and Japan. In addition to these texts, a version in Pali has been identified through several ms. in Northern Thailand. Rendered as the Uṇhissavijaya-dhamma in the "hybrid" Pali peculiar to the region, this work was probably composed around the sixteenth century CE. Although the story accompanying the Uṇhissavijaya-dhamma is very similar to the Tibetan translations, the portion in Pali corresponding to the actual dhāraṇī—invariably left as transliterated Sanskrit in the Mahāyāna texts—is substantially different. After briefly comparing the introductory story of the various versions of the Uṣṇīṣavijaya-dhāraṇī, the actual dhāraṇī will be examined in greater detail, and some concluding observations on the study of Mahāyāna textual evidence in Southeast Asia will be made.

David Lawerence
Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

The Mythico-Ritual Syntax of Omnipotence

My paper will examine the 10th-11th c. Kashmiri philosopher Abhinavagupta's interpretation of monistic Śaiva myth and ritual in terms of Sanskrit action-syntax. Abhinava follows a widely held semantic view, developed from the exegesis of ritual injunctions in the Vedas, that action is the chief meaning of all discourse; and like other Indian philosophers he attempts to demonstrate his tradition's understanding of mythical and ritual action by a distinctive theory of the relation of verbal action and grammatical cases. Most orthodox schools elaborate a syntax which denigrates the role of the agent within the nexus of action, philosophically rationalizing the subordination of "individuality" to the objective ritual social-order. Abhinava develops a radically different syntax to justify the tantric realization of identity with Siva emanating the universe through His power and consort Sakti. In his theory, the agent is the essence of action and all of its secondary accessories. Abhinavagupta describes in his Tāntrāloka a preparatory phase of the tantric ritual, in which the various components are identified with the grammatical cases. He says that one must meditate on their identity with the ritual action, and then experience their absorption in oneself as agent. Relating the Indian debates on action-syntax to Western theories, I will suggest a useful comparative approach to the study of religion.
Omniibus Issues in Buddhism

Study of gotra would be indispensable to the study of tathagatagarbha, because gotra is a synonym of tathagatagarbha, representing a different historical development. In Tibetan Buddhism, however, two important interpretations of gotra have been neither examined nor translated in any Western language, viz. Tsong kha pa’s and Dol po pa’s interpretations. Their interpretations, as they have emerged in their commentaries on the Abhisamayalamkara, are particularly important, as far as the rang stong and gzhan stong debate regarding tathagatagarbha is concerned.

First, we will examine their different interpretations on gotra. Next, we will analyze how their interpretations function within their different interpretations of tathagatagarbha.

Mark Liechty
University of California-Santa Barbara

Inside/Outside: Middle-Class Identity and Public Space in Kathmandu

One interesting feature of middle-class discourse in Kathmandu is the distinction between "inside" and "outside" the home (ghar bhita/ghar bahira). Drawing on recent research I suggest that the distinction, though long in-the-making, is one in which the "outside" or public space is increasingly constructed/imagined through consumer practice, e.g., "fashion." More and more "outside" or public areas become spaces of "doing fashion." As public spaces become increasingly commercialized, so also do public identities. Tracing earlier and related manifestations in 19th century Rana architecture and elite cultural practice, I suggest that new understandings of public space or publicness are slowly taking shape in the city alongside other earlier--and still relevant--epistemic spaces and ways of being. Finally, I propose that the construction of this new public space--and the appropriation of public practice--is tied to the larger middle-class project of claiming, privileging, and naturalizing its own class interests.
The Architect in Select South Asian Inscriptions

Strict adherence to "tradition" and anonymity have been consistent characterizations of South Asian sculptors / artisans, and by implication, also architects. In response to western criticism of the perceived lack of self-expression in Indian art-making, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, as early as 1924, claimed that the purpose of the imager (architect) was to obey a hieratic canon; he regarded his own work from the point of view of a pious artisan, and not as a connoisseur. In traditional societies, such as India, the artisan / architect was therefore anonymous.

Coomaraswamy's study, and even more recent ones, were based on mytho-historical textual sources, most of which are either very early (third century BCE -- early CE) or very late (sixteenth through twentieth centuries). And, because Indian culture was thought to be "traditional" and therefore unchanging, these sources were used by scholars without regard for chronology: early information was applied without qualification to earlier circumstances.

A reading of sets of chronologically and geographically specific lithic and copper plate inscriptions (Early Western Calukya, 6-8th centuries; Pallava, 6-9th centuries, all Orissa, 6-15th centuries) in fact reveals that not only were architects recognized by their contemporaries for their specialized knowledge and skills, their self-proclaimed epithets evidence significant social status. Inscriptions about architects are few in comparison to those naming donors and sculptors (which are also few in number), but enough information was recorded through the centuries to make observations about the training, skills, and status of architects, and how these circumstances evolved through time.

Jennifer Lundal and Kathleen D. Morrison
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Contemporary Pollen Spectra and their Relevance for Vijayanagara Land Use

Previous research on pollen records of stratified reservoir sediments from the Vijayanagara region suggested that Vijayanagara period vegetation was dominated by grasses and weedy plants and that few trees or shrubs existed during this time. However, without studies linking modern plant distributions to modern pollen spectra in the dry interior of South India, little more detail than this can be offered. This paper represented a preliminary attempt to address this lack. Modern pollen spectra from three widely spaced Vijayanagara reservoirs are compared to general vegetation patterns in their vicinity. We specifically address the relative abundance of irrigated vs. dry fields and the proportion of woody plants and their pollen signatures, drawing implications for the analysis of precolonial pollen records.
Calm and Clean: On Samapapatti, Arupya-dhyana, and Fulfilling the Marga

When and how the ārūpya-dhyānas (formless meditations) were actually practiced is uncertain. Early Pāli texts treat nirodha-samāpatti as an innocuous refreshment engaged in by Buddha periodically after his enlightenment. By the time Buddhaghosa describes it nearly a thousand years later, nirodha-samāpatti has become tantamount to fulfilling the “Path of Purification” (Visuddhimagga) and is either the necessary threshold to enlightenment or a synonym for enlightenment itself. The later Abhidhammatthasangaha of Bhadanta Anuruddhācariya treats nirodha-samāpatti as a temporary suspension of the stream of consciousness with no significant soteric value. Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośa contrasts nirodha-samāpatti with āsanjñi-samāpatti. The former arises from the fourth level of the Formless Meditations, but is soterically distracting; the latter arises from the fourth level of the Form Meditations and is a contemptuous, “stupid” product of the misguided notion that being thoughtless is liberating. According to the Kośa, neither samāpatti is effective for counteracting or eliminating samskāras (embodied karmic conditioning) which is the actual goal of Buddhist practice. The Ch‘eng wei-shih lun, drawing on the Kośa, the Vaibhāṣika Mahāvihāra, the Yogācārabhūmī śāstra, and other texts, expands the discussion, tying together cosmology, sectarian polemics, psychology, and a detailed mapping of the soteric path.

This paper will examine how these texts treat the samāpattis in the context of the Form and Formless Dhyānas with an eye to how their expositions shed light on the purification of the consciousness stream, a goal they all share but envision differently.

Atiya Niloufer Mahmood
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Residential Experiences of Home Based Women Workers in Low-Income Communities of Dhaka, Bangladesh: A Review

Research reveals that men and women in societies which have segregated gender roles, adopt different values and attitudes towards the environment and will experience and perceive the environment in different ways. In Bangladesh, gender domains are distinct and gender segregation is maintained through spatial, as well as temporal mechanisms. There women’s lives are deeply embedded in the household and the family. Their positions are best analyzed within these primary references. The home plays multiple roles for women in this country. It serves as a nexus of social bonding and integration into urban life; it is a place of reproduction and raising children; and it is a place of production and economic activities. However, there is a scarcity of research exploring the multiple roles of home environments in women’s lives in Bangladesh.

Women’s contribution towards economic development have been largely overlooked in Bangladesh. In the past fifteen years in the urban settings of Bangladesh there have been an increase in small businesses and many of them use the home as the place of work. A significant amount of the home-based work is carried out by women. Women’s perception of the value of their contribution to family well-being through their productive and reproductive activities play an important role in what they can claim as their need (which includes spatial needs, need for shelter and home), and how they can bargain for their share of family resources. When women’s activities at home are not perceived as work; then women, themselves, are often not aware of the legitimacy of their own spatial needs in 'Third World' nations like Bangladesh. Thus there is a need to look at the broader labor processes of home-based work as well as, the socio-spatial context that support/hinder these types of work.
Incessant and incomplete constitution making in Pakistan for over 40 years represents a remarkable failure at formal organization and political power. This journey has witnessed the rise and fall of five republics, institutionalization of praetorianism and democratic interludes. One thing, however, has remained constant; de facto denial of de jure federalism. The creation of "one unit", "parity principle", secession of East Bengal, military actions in Baluchistan and Sind, and the current reassertion of "Muhajirs", are only the more visible symptoms of this chronic problem. This paper aims at identifying the determinants, nature and implications of this phenomenon as these relate to distribution of power and powerlessness in Pakistan. The analysis will implicate the "ideological basis" of the state, search of identity by the polity, rise of the executive state, geo-strategic constraints of the Cold War, and imperatives of the world market.

John Makransky
Boston College

Selected Problems in Doctrines and Praxis of Mahayana Buddhahood

The focus of this paper is the correlation between certain forms of meditation praxis and particular doctrines of buddhahood. The paper centers on the doctrine of svābhāvikakāya-dharmakāya: buddhahood as buddhas experience it directly in their own innermost realization. It will survey a few key passages in texts traditionally associated with Maitreya, Asaṅga, or Vasubandhu: Mahāyānasūtraālamkāra, Trīṃśikā, Trisvabhāvanirdeśa, and Dharmadharmatāvibhāga. The thesis is that, when the overall pattern of buddhahood in these texts is discerned from amongst the host of inter-related technical terms, svābhāvikakāya represents a direct extrapolation of a specific four staged meditational practice to its projected conclusion. As such, svābhāvikakāya has not been primarily a theoretical or speculative construct, but more properly a code word for what is heralded by a phenomenological experience that emerges from specific methods of meditation. It was understood that, with further incremental development, that yogic experience opens into the unlimited, incomprehensible vastness of buddhahood, like the sky. A related four stage meditation procedure is central to later Indian Yogācāra and Yogācāra-Madhyamaka writers such as Dignāga, Kamalaśīla and Ratnākaraśānti, who conditioned later developments in Tibet. In Tibet, these yogic stages were retained as modes of preparation for or entry into the direct realization of the nature of mind (sams nyid), at the heart of Mahāmudrā practice. This is expressed in writings of sGam-po-pa and the Third Karmapa Rang-byung rdo-rje. While the Mahāsiddhas of late Indian Buddhism were the primary forerunners of Tibetan Mahāmudrā practice, the fuller context for entry into that practice in Tibet also retains the four yogic stages of the texts of Maitreya, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu as mediated Yogācāra-Madhyaymaka. Because of the vivid immediacy of Mahāmudrā thought/practice, there is an even more direct relation of meditational praxis to doctrines of buddhahood in Tibet.
Purnima Mankekar  
Stanford University  

‘Air Force Women Don’t Cry’: Militaristic Nationalism, the State, and Gender

In the late 1980s and early-1990s, the postcolonial Indian state attempted to consolidate nationalist ideologies through different technologies of violence. A relatively benign strategy was the use of television serials to encourage "national integration." Two important themes of one such serial, Param Veer Chakra, were the construction and evocation of nationalist zeal, and the depiction of female sexuality as a threat to masculine patriotism.

In my paper, I will discuss how Param Veer Chakra constituted militaristic nationalism by producing, normalizing, and policing certain kinds of affect, and analyze the processes by which the postcolonial Indian state fostered the construction of discourses of sexuality, masculinity, and femininity. What was the role of the state in cultural politics at this historical conjuncture in postcolonial India? How do analyses of popular culture implicate our conception of the gendered character of the state? This paper foregrounds the power and the limitations of the state in creating specific subject positions for men and women, and emphasizes that the state is far from gender-neutral in how it implicates citizens in the postcolonial Indian nation.
Rama Mantena
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

History, Narrative, and Early Modern India

Nineteenth-century Colonial India witnessed the emergence of a particular kind of historical consciousness, one that developed in a dialogic relationship with modern European notions of historiography. The entrance of precolonial Indian histories into the discursive field of European historiography, force the indigenous genres of history to undergo significant modifications. The late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century can be characterized as a period of symbolic flux, of greater heteroglossia specifically in relation to genres of writing. There was a growing interest in searching out material deemed marginal by orientalists who were more concerned with Indian classical traditions. This parallel phenomenon was exemplified by the figure of Colin Mackenzie in Southern India who was responsible for collection a variety of materials (based on both oral and written sources) on local villages and temples. The discovery of this "unruly" material led to questions concerning the validity of indigenous forms of writing besides classical literature (which had already been authenticated by orientalist scholars). Among these indigenous genres, history figures prominently as an ambiguous and problematic category.

History, inflected by the European encounter with Indian culture became a distinct epistemological category during this period. The writing of history is not new to the generic clarifications of both Sanskrit and vernacular traditions. The difference between precolonial histories and histories written after the emergence of colonialism lies in their formal qualities. The disparate forms of precolonial historical texts are distinct form the greater standardization and centralization of the genre of history in the nineteenth century. The transition from the field of precolonial historical writings to modern Indian historiography (initiated by the colonial encounter) can be characterized as a shift in the discursive formation of history. History emerges as a subject within a set of discursive practices in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century South India.
Internally Conditioned Morphological Variation in Hindi

The above title is in the form of a question, implying a hypothesis, rather than a conclusion, because the research on this hypothesis remains to be done. What makes such a hypothesis possible is the existence in Hindi of syntactic options, for example in the placement of subordinate clauses, or in the use of participial expressions rather than clauses, which might well lend themselves to skewing under areal or other influences. In exploring the hypothesis, substantial portions of representative works by two Bihari writers (probably Nagarjun and Renu) and two Panjabi writers of Hindi (probably Yashpal and Ashk) will be scrutinized with regard to: 1) the placement of complement, adverbial, and relative clauses; 2) the placement of markers on such clauses; and 3) the use of finite clauses vs. participial expressions, e.g., jo aurat udhar bai Thi hai 'the woman who is sitting over there' vs. udhar bai Thi hai aurat 'the woman sitting over there'. The resulting report will include statistics derived from this inspection. The conclusion will be either: a) there are statistically significant differences in the exercise of these options, namely X; or b) there are no statistically significant regional differences in syntactic preferences, at least that are detectable by this method.

A Room of One's Own: Drawing Boundaries of the New Immigrant Community

This paper examines how the diasporic Indian community expresses itself in the public space in the US. From being a community that was "invisible" the diasporic middle class Indian has over the past decade been organizing him/herself. Through such organizations the diaspora has been dropping clues of its existence into public view. Even the very forms of these public presences have been changing quickly over just a decade. If the temple and its construction in the American suburb was the first act of displaying its arrival in the US then the latest markers include the construction of entire departments in academic centers, hospitals and research centers.

This paper attempts to theorize the emergence of the Indian diasporic community into public view through the examination of a project undertaken in Pittsburgh in 1993-94 by a group of middle class Indians to build what is called the "India Room" in the University of Pittsburgh's center piece, The Cathedral of Learning. The project, coming as it did immediately on the heels of the destruction of the Babri Masjid and the subsequent violence, raised, through what had hitherto been 'innocent' design issues, a series of questions about how the Indian middle class in the US sees itself and wished to project itself. While the notion of the "model minority" has received some attention in the literature the process of outlining for itself the status of a "model minority" has remained ambiguous. This paper makes an effort to explicate the process of the construction of the Indian as model minority and who it will include in this construction of itself.
Labour Arrangements and Household Security in Northern Pakistan

In the 'outpost' villages of the Baltistan region of the Karakoram Himalaya, communities have developed specific agro-ecological and social practices to reduce the vulnerability posed by natural and economic hazards. The capacity to provide security to individual members resides, partially, in the diversity of co-operative and reciprocal labour arrangements extant in the village. The effectiveness of these labour arrangements in reducing vulnerability, however, is dependant upon the legitimate authority of the household head and his female equivalent to allocate labour responsibilities. It is also influenced by certain community-wide metanorms that establish a reciprocal nexus between household and village security. In this paper I use examples from a Balti village to demonstrate the relationships between labour allocation and vulnerability, the role played by 'traditional' institutions of authority in allocating labour both at the level of the household and the village, and threats to household security posed by recent changes in village social structure.

Stephen Mc Dowell
Michigan State University

Theoretic Traditions and the Political Economy of India’s Communications Policies

The paper will outline elements of an historical and critical theoretic framework to examine the political economy of India’s policies for electronic information and communications media. It is part of a larger project examining the relations among policies for specific communications sectors in India from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, including: liberalization of overall economic policies; India’s role in international negotiations in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade Uruguay Round talks; telecommunications equipment production and service provision policies; policies for computer software and electronic information services; and policies for broadcasting and audiovisual products and services.

The paper will explore connections arising among the theoretic literature on communications and development, on the international political economy of trade and investment in communications service industries, on economic policies, on communications and development, and on the new capabilities and shifting uses of information and communications technologies. This theoretic discussion will provide a framework to relate shifts in communications policies to the overall changes in India’s national policies to guide economic and social development, to shifts in international communications and trade institutions and global patterns of trade and investment, and to changing designs and uses of communications technology.

In this task, the paper will draw on arguments and approaches found in Richard Stubbs and Geoffrey R.D. Underhill (eds.), Political Economy and the Changing Global Order (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1994); Edward Comor (ed.) The Global Political Economy of Communication (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994); Gerald Sussman and John Lent (editors), Transnational Communications: Wiring the Third World (Newbury Park: Sage, 1991); and Janet Wasko and Vincent Mosco (editors), Democratic Communications in an Information Age (Norwood: Ablex, 1992).
Women's Crafts and Commercialization

Focusing on Gujarat, this paper discusses the way in which textile and craft production involving women has been commercialized for the benefit of the women, and also the way in which the artistic qualities of the crafts have been changed by that economic change. Best known of the organizations that deal with this is SEWA in Ahmadabad and other cities, but organizations in Bhoj and Delhi are also deeply involved in these enterprises and in the development of new crafts.

Michael McIntyre
DePaul University

Failed Hegemony and the Crisis of Class Politics in Post-Colonial India

Following Pranab Bardhan, I read post-colonial India as an unstable pact among "dominant proprietary classes". The formal democracy which allows this fractious coalition to fight for the division of the spoils can be distinguished from the colonial state by its universalization of voice. Elections provide a spectacle of hegemonic appearances in which India's "civil society" can demonstrate its vibrancy, even hounding a corrupt dynasty from office. Not only is voice used, it is fought for and regained. Meanwhile, the range of options to which voice may be given becomes circumscribed: shall we vote for the dominant party which covertly solicits RSS support or the coalition of opposition parties that overtly includes the BJP; shall foreign capital be invited to exploit the Indian market or shall the most corrupt elements of the dominant proprietary classes have guaranteed monopoly rents; shall our left parties opt for social democracy in one state or propaganda of the deed?

Faced with the crisis of class politics, "subalternity" emerges as a potentially fruitful decentering of the notion of class. Because almost everyone is someone else's subaltern, though, subalternity threatens to become a night in which all cats are gray. Class, while discursively articulated, creates the binding illusion of firm objective boundaries, identifying the enemy. In post-colonial India, only communal identities have approached the creation of similar binding illusions. If subalternity has a future as a political project, it must either learn to create its own binding illusions or theorize a politics of opposition in the absence of an oppositional bloc.

Note: New this year! Poster sessions may also be proposed. One hour will be allowed. Please provide a complete description below to make a proposal.
Pramada Menon
Dastkar, A Society for Crafts and Craftspeople

This paper is an attempt to view craft as a live subject that goes beyond the realm of being a mere indicator of people's economic life and social customs. In a country like India where 23 million craftspeople form the second largest employment sector, second only to agriculture, craft becomes more than cultural activity, it becomes an entry point for many other aspects of the development process. Craft can become a key and catalyst to independence, education, health, community building, women's emancipation and the discarding of social prejudices. In short, craft can effect a revitalisation, both economic and social, of splintered and marginalised rural and urban communities. The belief that craft is an industry with the power to transform society is illustrated through the presentation of a case study of an organisation, Urmul Manushali Bunkar Vikas Sansthan, based in Western Rajasthan, India. This organisation, comprised of 134 weavers belonging to the Meghwal community, began as an income generation programme of a local NGO. Its members have now moved on to handle by themselves all aspects of production and marketing - local as well as export - and issues of non formal education and health.

Hanifi Shah Mehmoud
University of Michigan

The Social Categories of a Frontier

From the Mughal period until today the frontier between Central and South Asia has been discussed mainly from the vantage point of states, that is, from the military/political perspectives of outsiders. These analyses are designed to account for the region's geo-strategic value and operate under the assumption that the frontier is a product state involvement. These views of the frontier differ substantively from analyses centering first on the societies surrounding the Khaibar Pass then how those societies affected the nature of state presence in the region. Although each school of thought accords differing significance to the relationship, both approaches to this frontier consider the prominence of Pashtun tribes and Peshawar city.

This talk deals with some facets of social identity in Peshawar, the dominant urban center of the region now known as the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan. It examines the notion conveyed in much of the region's historiography and anthropology of Peshawar as a Pashtun 'tribal city.' A pattern of migration to Peshawar is discussed in an attempt to account for the historical demography of the city. The conclusion takes the form of questions about the nature of Hindko and Pashtun identities.

Reference to early Islamic, Mughal North Indian, and Afghan history can be expected in an attempt to elucidate general features of tribal interaction with urban environments. The talk derives from doctoral research in South Asia during the Spring of 1995 sponsored by the American Institute of Iranian Studies and the University of Michigan Graduate School.
John Metz
Northern Kentucky University

Species Composition and Dynamics of Temperate and Subalpine Forests of West Central Nepal

Indirect Gradient Analysis of 77 0.1ha stands of forest on the southeastern flank of Dhaulagiri Himal between 2000 and 3600 m groups the vegetation into 7 types: (1) south-facing woodlands dominated by Quercus lanata, Lyreria ovalifolia, and Rhododendron arboreum between 2000 and 2600 m; (2) diverse, mesic stands between 2300 and 2600 m on westerly and northwesterly sites, with Symlocos ramocissima, Quercus glauca, and Persea duthei constituting 62% of stand importance; (3) south facing sites between 2400 and 2800 m with Rhododendron arboreum and Quercus semicarpifolia contributing 57% of importance and no other species exceeding 9%; (4) highly diverse forests on northwest facing sites between 2400 and 2800 m with Rhododendron arboreum, Acer campbellii, Ilex dyphrena, and Symlocos ramocissima equaling 52% of stand importance; (5) Abies spectabilis, Rhododendron barbatum, and Tsuga dumosa dominated stands on west, northwest, and north facing sites between 2900 and 3300 m; (6) A. spectabilis and R. arboreum dominated stands on south facing sites between 3100 and 3600 m; and (7) Betula utilis, R. campanulatum, and Sorbus microphylla stands on west to northerly sites between 3300 and 3600 m. In all of these forests, canopy trees (except Symlocos ramocissima) are not producing sufficient saplings and seedlings to sustain their populations.

Rachel Meyer
University of Texas-Austin

Blurring the Line Between Women and Commodities: The Power of Objects in Dowery Narratives

This paper will investigate how Indian women negotiate, through narrative, interpretive spaces in a world in which powerful cultural threats come in various guises. In recent years, due to a rapidly growing economy, new liberal economic policies and an increase in India's own manufacturing capabilities, we have seen the steady distribution of consumer goods cropping up next to persistent conditions of poverty. We have also seen a continued fascination for the "west"--"rich with technology"--growing along with an increased desire to return to Hindu "roots" and a longing for a "golden Hindu age."

I will consider women's narratives on dowry and marriage as performative spaces where women interpret and expose the shifting powers in which they are caught. In the contest between tradition and modernity, ideal notions of the family and a growing middle-class consumer culture, Indian women, like the objects they narrate, become caught in a process of double coding. Through an attentive preoccupation with their exchanged narratives about commodities, women blur the line between dangerous, desirable consumer objects and the "endangered," desiring bride.
Margaret Mills  
University of Pennsylvania

**Vertical, Lateral, Secular and Sacral: Hindukush Houses in Conception and Use**

Very little is on flat ground in the Hindukush. The traditional house form in use among Muslims of various ethnic groups, particularly Kho and Hunzakut, arranges interior space in both vertical and lateral dimensions, assigning spaces for men and women, work and leisure, secular and ritual/religious purposes. Seasonally, the pillars of the house and its various walls are marked with religious inscriptions which mark the religious year, the agricultural sequence, and the varying degrees of sacrality of different zones of the single-room dwelling space. The house's physical design and building techniques make it well suited to earthquake- resistance, but additionally, in architecture and daily use patterns, the house is organized and decorated to accommodate and articulate sacred and everyday use and access. In keeping with the consistently gendered division of labor in the region, the single domestic space is also organized in terms of gender and seniority of family members. This paper will provide a guided slide-tour of the so-called Chitrali house, as a technical and conceptual structure suited for multiple use, expressive of family structure and religious ideology, and conceptually integrated with certain other general notions of space and sacrality pertaining to large patterns of land use.

Diane Paull Mines  
Washington University

**Telling the Village: Multiple Markings of Self, Other, and Ur**

Residents of Yanaimangalam, a village in southern Tamilnadu, tell stories about the many fierce gods who populate the outskirts of the village. They tell of their own historical connection to the gods, they tell of how the gods come to the village, and of how the gods affect their own capacities for creative action. Through these tellings, tellers do several things: they connect their present courses of action to past events; they define their connection to places in the village; they comment on the social and spatial contours of the village (Ur). This paper analyzes multiple tellings of one story about a particular fierce god in order to show how tellers use their stories discursively to define and debate their place in the village as well as the quality of their social relations, and to make and remake the contours of the village itself.
Mattison Mines  
University of California-Santa Barbara  

Where do I Belong: Towards a Dialogic Sense of Self

The paper focuses on the narrative of a young Madrasi woman, Priyanka, who describes her struggle to develop her adult sense of self. Her father is a Christian and her mother is a Hindu. She begins her narrative stating, "Growing up in a mixed background, constantly there is a question in one's mind: As a child, the question is, 'Where do I belong?' Then, after college, I met Prem, and the question became, 'Where do I want to belong?'" The paper explores the internal dialogues she describes as she struggles to construct a viable sense of her self that preserves her multiple interactions with sets of valued others who stand in contested opposition to one another. The paper explores the teller's conception of agency and notions of self as actor. What emerges from Priyanka's tale is a sense of self and society that is interactive, dialogical, and multiple. There is neither a fixed and unitary self nor a fixed and unitary society. The sense of self takes the form of dialogical interactors.

Raza A. Mir  
University of Massachusetts

At the "Cutting Edge of History": Subaltern Bodies as the Sites of Liberalization, Glocalization and Resistance

The discourse of the liberalization of the Indian economy has always been presented in economic and management theory in terms that are ahistorical, decontextualized and sanitized. In debates surrounding acronyms such as "FDIs", "TRIPs", "GNP" and "ROI", what is lost is any sense of the kinds of vital and physicalistic issues that lie at the heart of industrial progress in India. Ironically, the consequences of liberalization, and indeed, of various modes of resistance against them, may be located at "unassuming" sites, such as the bodies of those subjectivities that are exposed to "the cutting edge" of discourse.

This paper attempts to map one such space that is deemed outside the pale of theory, relating to the practice of female feticide using sophisticated sex-determination tests. At this location, international capital flows, governmental priorities, patriarchal agendus and resistance to internationalization all come to a curious intersection when we examine this practice at the site of the bodies of the involved subjectivities.
Raza A. Mir
University of Massachusetts

"Sounds of Silence": Female Feticide and the Use of Technology

Consequent to the opening up of the Indian economy to foreign direct investment during the course of the last decade, a number of large corporations have substantially expanded their interests in the Indian market, offering a variety of product innovations that are posited to be of great use to the technological advancement of the nation state. One such innovation is the portable ultrasound monitor being manufactured by a number of multinational corporations, which finds application in a variety of imaging techniques for medical purposes.

An "unintended" consequence of this innovation has been the use of this device in fetal sex determination tests, which may then be linked to the practice of female feticide. Indeed, the issue of female infanticide has been a matter of great concern in India, with dwindling sex ratios standing as mute testimony to the urgency of the issue. The government has recently passed a bill outlawing the practice of sex determination, but this bill interestingly makes no demands on the manufacturers of these devices.

The paper explores the nature of discursive arrangements that lead to this conflation of dominant national and international business interests, and their complicity in "incarcerating" any voice of protest that may emerge from the local, in a rhetoric of globalization, progress and global interdependence.

Mithilesh Mishra
University of Chicago

Patterns and Sources of Variation in Bihari Hindi

The paper will discuss the salient and defining features of Bihari Hindi to show that the so called Bihari Hindi has quite a broad range of variation at different levels of structure. In order to trace the sources of these variations the paper will discuss the complex interaction of linguistic and social factors in the state of Bihar. Lastly, the paper will show that some of the features of variation in Bihari Hindi are shared by other regional varieties as well which in turn poses serious challenges for the creation of a well accepted Standard variety of Hindi.
Variation in Fiji Hindi

This paper argues for redefinition of the concept of "koiné" as defined by Samarín (1976) based on the types of variation found in Fiji Hindi (here and after FH) which includes two distinct types of regional variation as well as several types of social variation (Moag; field notes).

There is general agreement by those who have studied it that FH is a koine-ized variety (Barz: 1978, Moag 1979, Siegel 1992). A koine is normally defined as a variety possessing no regionally marked forms (Samarín: 1976). This leads one to expect no regional variation in FH. The paper first distinguishes two types of regional variation with respect to koine-ized transplanted varieties: 1) that characteristic of regions in the home country, which would seem to be precluded by Samarín's definition, and 2) that obtaining within the area in which the transplanted and koine-ized variety is spoken. It will be shown that both types exist within FH. The author reiterates the point made in his earlier work (Moag; 1979) that the Eastern Hindi dialect agglomerate, not Standard Hindi must be taken as the base form from which the Fiji Hindi koine was developed. Even though a good deal of dialect leveling can be shown to have taken place, there is in addition a significant amount of admixture of features from the Western Hindi dialect area of India. Further, a certain amount of regional variation has been noted between the two large islands of Fiji (Moag: 1979, Pillai: 1968, Siegel: 1992). Samarín's definition of a koine, therefore, must be modified to include the kind of variation found in Fiji Hindi.

FH serves as the "low" (L) variety in a situation of classic diglossia as defined by Ferguson (Moag 1977, 1979). It will be shown that increasing divergence between rural and urban FH may be observed. Special marked varieties, including one for male homosexuals, will be described. Where fruitful, similarities and differences in the degree and type of variation in other overseas varieties of Hindi will be brought into the discussion. It will be shown that these are within the parameters of variation for a L variety described by Ferguson (1959), and that his definitions need no revision.

The paper will close by pointing out areas for further research, and theoretical questions still unresolved concerning the types of variation in transplanted varieties.
Patterns of Vijayanagara Land Use: Implications for Regional Models

The work of the Vijayanagara Metropolitan Survey has indicated the existence of a diverse and intensive regional record of settlement and land use around this precolonial city. In this paper, I consider the problem of defining land use patterns and their change through time, using information from archaeological, historical and botanical analyses. In particular, I attempt to define general zones of land use and major routes of transportation and areas of settlement. The Vijayanagara data are then compared with data from other archaeological and historically known cases and discussed in terms of their implications for general models of regional land use such as those proposed by Von Thunen and Chisholm.

Hyman Muslin
University of Illinois-Chicago

Gandhi in the End: The Fast as the Ultimate Psychological Decision

Mahatma Gandhi undertook at least 16 fasts. The central psychological element in those actions was his willingness to offer himself as a sacrifice through the painful deprivation of deliberate starvation. The action of starvation contained a medley of strivings that were partially hidden from the Mahatma’s self-awareness. One wish that appears to have been fulfilled is doing penance for his wrongdoings and thereby regain union with God. Another aspiration was to alter the behaviour of others - whether it was the government whose policies he abhorred or the violent tendencies of his followers that he deemed unacceptable. In Gandhi’s mind both these forms of fasting - the Penance fast and the Coercion fast - represented forms of establishing or reestablishing a union with God. Perhaps it is because of this psychological Merger that he had so often a feeling of exaltation during his fastings. This paper will discuss at length the psychological effect of being infused with the power of God that the fasts appear to have created on Gandhi.
Mehta’s “Smrutichitre”: Post-colonial Feminist Construct or Hindutvavadistortion?

Why might it be that Smrutichitre, a non-English film, made in the early 1980s for Bombay TV by Vijaya Mehta, an elite Hindu, won critical acclaim 1983, yet failed to please Ashok Tilak, the greatest known authority on the lives of his grandparents, Lakshmibai and the Rev. Narayan Vaman Tilak?

The invisible hub around which this otherwise excellent movie rotates is the baptism 2/10/1895 in Bombay of Tilak, acknowledged modern Marathi poet and renowned Hindu pandit. Some of the Tilaks’ Hindu years (1885-1895) are accorded 90 minutes and some of their Christian years (1895-1906) 50 minutes of this 150 minute docudrama based on Lakshmibai’s classic autobiography.

To some extent this celluloid production may be viewed as an instance of the post-colonial construction of colonial discourse, or arguably even as a fragment of feminist discourse from the Two-Thirds World. Indeed, some of the appeal in Maharashtra of this award winning movie may stem from its being the portrayal by one illustrious woman during Indira Raj of another illustrious woman’s uxorial relationship to a controversial Christian convert during the British Raj. But the essay asks whether it may not be plausible, rather, to see the film primarily as embedded in its Sitz im Leben of escalating Hindu fundamentalism.

Deborah Neff

Some Thoughts on Ritual Power in South Asia

Ethnological data from South Indian ritual and performance will be discussed in ritual and cross-cultural context. The presentation will address issues concerning theory and method in the study of ritual power, including the potentially emergent nature of ritual process, the relation between performance and its broader socio-political contexts, and indigenous theories of power and ritual efficacy. Most importantly, the paper will examine ritual contestation including both its structural aspects and the impact of individual will and creativity in performance.
Gopal Singh Nepali  
Tribhuvan University  

Tribe, Caste and National Integration in Nepal

This paper proposes to discuss the diversity of race, culture and language in Nepal and the ideological conflict existing in between them. It also discusses the mechanism by which they were brought together into a single territorial state and how, through a state regulated system, an attempt was made to homogenize them into a single nation based on the supremacy of Parbatiya values of Hinduism, caste, Nepali language and Parbatiya king.

Subsequently the paper discusses how, after the return of democracy, the Parbatiya culture as a reference model for national integration has become obsolete, since most of the Tibete-Burman tribes and the low caste groups have begun to assert themselves against domination by the Parbatiya high castes.

Finally, the paper points out the need for an alternative model of integration which should be based on recognition of cultural pluralism, development of all-Nepal value system that adequately reflects the sentiments of the various ethnic groups, greater involvement of the non-Parbatiya groups in the functioning of democracy and the institution of constitutional monarchy as the rallying point to unite the people cutting across all divisive groupings.

John Newman  
New College

Syncretism and Tradition in the Kalachakra Tantra

Among the major world religions Buddhism is remarkable for its proliferation of scriptural revelations. Instead of establishing a closed canon, the creative traditions of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism have tended to fit new revelations into received hermeneutical categories. The Kālacakra Tantra is renowned as the last and most complex product of Indian Vajrayāna Buddhism. This paper examines the ways Indian and Tibetan followers of the Kālacakra accounted for the overtly syncretic doctrines of the tantra, and established it as a legitimate expression of the Buddhadharama.
A. Noor  
World Bank  

Resource Development at the Micro-level: The Role of Basic Education and Literacy  

Commitment of investments for the development of human resources in Bangladesh has increased steadily during the past decades. The commitment is also significant in terms of quality of input, quantity of coverage; and distinctive conceptual tools employed to attain the developmental goals. Such a commitment, woven from a variety of sources, both external and internal, has also helped in the design of several innovative and experimental approaches. Despite such an wide prong effort, it seems most of the resource commitment over the period may have remained unutilised. Implementation of the of the human resources program, seem to have impeded; more so at the micro level then at macro level. While a variety of programs has been designed, and an wide range of policies has been framed to reflect the developmental needs of the society, their impact at the micro levels appears as minimal.  

My paper will analyze the factors which are inhibiting implementation, identify the constraints which are rooted in the social values and practices of the society; and analyze the role of expanded basic education and literacy in overcoming the implementation constraints, particularly at micro levels in Bangladesh.  

Goldie Osuri  
University of Massachusetts  

Diaspora, Community and the Cinematic Female Body: Negotiating the Cultural Narratives of Immigrant Communities  

Within the frame of the diaspora, the cinematic body of the Indian woman becomes a Foucauldian “inscribed surface of events.” The inscriptions bear the stamp of the anxieties of immigrant communities seeking to hold on to a cultural identity when faced with alienation in an unfamiliar geo-cultural space. The terror of the loss of a community governed by specific cultural norms and ultimately an uncertainty about the identity of the self find the female body as a material terrain for placing boundaries against an alien world. Two films concerned with the subject of diaspora, Mississippi Masala and Bhaji on the Beach examine how the women challenge and negotiate with the narrative of the community and its authorial, patriarchal relationship with the female body.
Tribal Christian Identity: An Enigmatic Experience in North East India

Political turmoil has characterized the North East "tribal" hills since India's Independence in 1947. This paper attempts to show that a religio-cultural identity crisis lies at the heart of dissenting "tribal" movements in North East India.

The Constitution of India categorizes some eight percent of today's 894 million Indians as "Scheduled Tribes." It baldly states that this category includes those communities declared to be such by the President of India. This categorization has placed "tribals" in the lowest stratum of the Indian social hierarchy along with the "Scheduled Castes" or "Dalits". For the predominantly Christian hill "tribes" of Northeast India, to whom the caste system is culturally and religiously foreign, this is not only unacceptable but also irritating.

The English word "tribe" is a derogatory term. To cite The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (1994), the term refers to a "pre-civilized stage of human society" and "denote[s] emotional, pre-scientific, and irrational behaviour." As a stage it indicates a temporary positioning, but the Constitution of India has fixed it as a permanent identity. The paper explores from a Mizo standpoint the socio-political ramifications of being "tribal" and Christian simultaneously in the midst of growing Hindu fundamentalism.
Rajeshwari Pandharipande
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Nagpuri Hindi: The Patterns of Convergence of Marathi and Hindi in Central India

The contact of Marathi and Hindi in Central India (through widespread bilingualism) has resulted in the convergence of the two languages in the Nagpur area thereby creating a distinct variety of Hindi which is generally known as Nagpuri Hindi. This paper (a) examines those structural features of Nagpuri Hindi which set it apart from other varieties of Hindi, (b) points out that Nagpuri Hindi shares those features with Marathi, and (c) discusses the socio-linguistic function of this variety of Hindi in the context of the linguistic repertoire of the bilinguals in the Nagpur area. Additionally, I will compare Nagpuri Hindi with Bazaar Hindi spoken in Bombay to show that the patterns of Marathi-Hindi convergence in these two varieties of Hindi differ considerably from each other. It will be further demonstrated with evidence from literary texts and films that those differences are explicable on the basis of the difference in (a) the socio-linguistic function of the two varieties, and (b) the degree of Marathi-Hindi bilingualism of the users of these varieties.
Are all the female deities in the Hindu tradition different manifestations of one divine Sakti, one overarching goddess? Or are they different goddesses of different origins altogether?

This paper seeks to analyze the manner in which various aspects of power (sakti) intrinsic to the cult of the goddesses in village or folk traditions were assimilated and then valorized by localizing and developing Sanskritic Hindu tradition. My analysis will be based upon the methodical examination of transformation that takes place: 1) in the form or symbolization; 2) in ritual and worship and 3) and in myth and theology. My study is based on a collection of data about goddesses in different villages and urban areas in varying geographical areas of Andhra Pradesh.

The identification of village tutelary goddesses with supreme divinity by Brahmanical tradition represents a pivotal transformation resulting from the interaction between village and Sanskritic traditions: the metaphysical status of village goddesses was theologically and metaphysically greatly enhanced. At the same time, village goddesses retained their this-worldly relevance as supernatural powers accessible to the entreaties of villagers seeking various forms of immediate assistance. As such, the village goddess becomes a functional "Mahadevi."
Discourse of Negation: Vaidehi’s “Sakuntala Yondige Kaleda Aparahna” as a Subversive “Revision” of Kalidasa’s “Abhijnanasakuntalam”

Kalidasas’s classic dramatic masterpiece Abhijnanasakuntalam (composed in the fifth century A.D.) revolves around the tumultuous, love story of the two mythical characters, Dushyanta and Shakuntala, with its various painful and joyous twists and turns. Several supernatural events intervene to sublimate the earthly, passionate love of the young couple into a higher, purer love, cleansed of its impulsive, passionate intensity.

The Kannad writer Vaidehi (Janaki Srinivas Murthy, b.1945) rewrites the story of Shakuntala entitled “Sakuntala Yondige Kaleda Aparahna” (“An Afternoon with Sakuntala”), first published in 1986. In this story Vaidehi allows Shakuntala to tell the “otherside” of her story, as things ‘really’ happened to her, to a sympathetic (feminist?) visitor from the twentieth century in order to negate the presentation of events as depicted in Kalidasa’s play.

In this paper I propose to analyse how Vaidehi in her story subversively re-evaluates the traditional representations of Indian women in literature (using Kalidasa’s Abhijnanasakuntalam as an illustration). She fulfils her task by allowing Shakuntala to reveal the “truth” about her story, which according to her, Kalidasa concealed by using supernatural interventions in order to protect and appreciate the actions of Dushyanta and thereby justify his existence as a righteous king to the whole world.

For Vaidehi, Kalidasa’s Abhijnanasakuntalam is not a story of love but of delusions and deceptions. To show this Vaidehi’s Shakuntala negates all the supernatural interventions and brings the story down to an earthly, realistic plane of only human discourse. So in Kalidasa’s play, Dushyanta’s forgetfulness is the outcome of the curse on Shakuntala by the sage Durvasas for neglecting her duties as an hostess on account of being lost in her love dreams. Vaidehi’s Shakuntala explains why she was neither cursed by Durvasas, nor did she ever lose her ring and that Kalidasa made up the story of the curse and the lost ring to cover Dushyanta’s debauchery. She was never wisked off by the nymph Sanumati to a heavenly abode, after being repudiated by Dushyanta in the royal court. Instead, she had asserted her independence and accepted her responsibility of giving birth to her child by taking refuge in the sage Maricha’s hermitage. In the end when Dushyanta came to her, it was primarily to claim his heir to the throne. Even though he invited her to join them, Shakuntala had rejected his offer of reacceptance.

Vaidehi’s subversively revised version of the story shows Kalidasa’s “vision” of Shakuntala as an erring woman who willingly accepts the punishments meted out to her for misconstrued mistakes and ill deeds, and the rewards that follow her painful repentance and reformation, as erroneous. Instead, Vaidehi’s “re-vision” presents a reevaluated image of a traditional Indian woman who maintains her human dignity and integrity at all costs.
Pramod Parajuli
Syracuse University

Ecological Ethnicity? Genealogy of Resistance in Jharkhand

Why is the Jharkhand region in middle India also the hotbed of ethnoregionalism? Why are ethnic groups fighting to stop big dams or to gain control over their land and forest resources, demanding autonomy of governance at the community and regional level? More significantly, why would the resolution of ecological conflict require self-governance of communities?

I explicate these questions by providing an ecological reinterpretation of ethnic movements in Jharkhand. I show that while ethnicity might be the form in which they are expressed, these movements are firmly grounded in ecological subordination. Ecology, I will argue, is at the core in which ethnicity is reproduced as well as altered. If ecological subordination is the content, ethnicity is the form in which it is experienced and expressed. What is emerging is an "ecological ethnicity" which goes beyond the narrowly defined ethnic politics and enters into relations of equivalence with other historical subjects who are also subordinated in different equations of power.

Samuel K. Parker
University of Washington - Takoma

The Identity of the South Indian Sthapati

Drawing on my field research in Tamil Nadu I propose to address the question of the sthapati's identity in relational terms. Extending the Vedantic notion of a person's embodiment as a processual series of concentric sheaths outward into the social realm, I will examine the significant distinctions that mark the sthapati's intellectual and physical presence on the construction site, within his immediate family, his extended family, his caste, and among the social categories constituting the total society. These include markers of his relation to other relevant identities such as yajamana, nul potupavar/mestiri, silpi, coolie, brahman, government official, engineer, or university trained architect. I will consider those contemporary distinctions that are consistent with the evidence of ancient practices -- as prominently described by Coomaraswamy, Kramrisch and noted in the many translations of the vastusastras and silpasastras -- in relation to modern circumstances in which official bureaucratic redefinitions of the sthapati's identity are made more narrowly in terms of technical competence, and not primarily in terms of caste or other relevant personal and social distinctions. Government sponsored education, combined with the administration of licenses and patronage through the Tamil Nadu Religious and Charitable Endowments department is ironically generating conditions for radical re-valuations of the nature of sastra and the sthapati's identity, all in the name of preservation, restoration and "authenticity."
The dominant discourse on politics in Pakistan continues to focus on questions of governance to the exclusion of the growing powerlessness of vast sectors of society, including women, ethnic and religious minorities, and the socially disadvantaged. What is the nexus between social and political powerlessness and the discourses of power in Pakistan? This paper critically examines how the dominant discourse on politics is implicated in structuring power relations in Pakistan. In this regard, the role of the 'new' intellectuals provides a focal point of our inquiry. The central theme of this paper is the emergence of a new division of labor between state and civil society in the production and reproduction of the discourses of power. Critical in this new arrangement is the rise of new intellectuals in civil society and their mediation with the state. Relying on recent works in feminist and critical theory, an analysis of these emergent trends is offered and the ambivalent role of the 'new' intellectuals scrutinized.

Janaki Patrik
New York City

American Multiculturalism with a South Asian Flair: Arts and Education Policy or Power Politics?

The concept encapsulated by the popular buzz word "multi-culturalism" acknowledges the ethnic diversity within the fabric of American society and encourages its preservation. Public funding of ethnic community-based artistic and social activities, as well as modifications in public school curricula, are intended as concrete steps in the celebration of ethnic uniqueness. At the same time the ideal of a distinctly "American" citizenry mitigates against the type of ethnic fragmentation and segregation which can destroy a democratic nation. The phrase "unity within diversity" expresses this ideal.

Some of the concepts of multi-culturalism appear to be antagonistic when concrete choices of artistic patronage, decision in educational policy and accusations of "cultural appropriation" are made. This paper examines these issues in the light of the author's personal experiences as an American-born classical Indian dancer, who has performed and taught in the field of arts-in-education for twenty-five years.
This essay offers a reconsideration of the legend of Urdu generally found in literary histories. In particular it challenges the received wisdom which identifies the eighteenth century as the earliest—and finest—days of vernacular Mughal poetry (rekhita). Further challenged is the myth that Urdu ghazal is a particular expression of Dihlavi or Hindustani genius. Suggested, instead, is a far more comprehensive mythic past for Urdu, one that includes both Dakhani poetry from 16th nd 17th courts of Bijapur and Golkonda; and Lakhnavi poetry of the 19th century, during much of which Lucknow was the best-patronized and most productive center of Urdu culture in North India. Central to my argument are the impact of regional rivalry and colonial discourse on the writing of literary histories, which (1) have been written only in the last century or so and (2) often centered on issues of cultural masculinity and femininity.

Kavita Philip
Cornell University

Nature in the Nilgiris 1858-1930

The phrase 'ecological imperialism' coined by Alfred Crosby in 1986 is taking on new meanings in light of the vast amount of new research published in the last few years on the environmental impact of colonialism. Crosby's initial claim, that European colonialism had less of an impact on older and "more ecologically resistant civilizations" like India and China than on temperate regions of the Americas, can and must be strongly contested through examples of ecological change during the eighteenth through to the early twentieth century in South Asian and other British colonial territories.

In this paper I show the diverse environmental effects of British colonialism in the Western Ghats (in the Nilgiri and Malabar districts, 1858 - 1930). I argue that, by examining different colonial discourses, we can see that long-term environmental effects resulted not only from policies specific to planting, clearing and felling, but also from the creation of ideological paradigms within which to conceptualize 'nature'.

Within British imperial administrative policy itself, differing views were expressed on the 'environment', which itself in fact was not seen as a single coherent category (as it often is in international environmental discourse today). 'Nature' (a term more commonly used in this period than 'environment') was variously seen as picturesque, divine, worthy of preserving, chaotic, dangerous, exploitable or in need of taming. Nevertheless, much of what is now regarded as early 'environmentalist' writing was in fact generated by foresters and surgeons within the colonial system.

Thus it is difficult to endorse simplistic models of environmental change that seek to draw conclusions about the 'devaluation of nature' by imperial science from the study only of forest or agrarian policy records, or on the basis of assumptions about the inherently reductionistic or violent nature of western science/modernity. I argue that a case can indeed be made for radical shifts in the meanings and uses of 'nature', under a set of historical phenomena we might term 'modernity'; but that this is one that can only be described by a more complete analytical framework: one that takes into account the establishment of national and global networks of trade, the influence of post-industrial notions of efficiency, labour and production, and the gendered and racialized socio-cultural processes of the production of ideology. I illustrate the use of such an analytical framework through a case study of colonial narratives of progress, and local responses to colonial 'environmental' discourses, in the Nilgiris and Malabar.
David Pinault
Loyola University

Community and Muharram Observances in Darjeeling

This paper examines an Indian Shi'a Muslim minority community in its relations with a neighboring population of Hindus, Buddhists, and Sunni Muslims. I propose to look at the ways in which the public celebration of Muharram (the season in which Shi'a Muslims annually lament the death of the Imam Husain in the seventh-century battle of Karbala) serves to strengthen Islamic identity in the setting of Darjeeling. Drawing on personal interviews and observations made in 1991 and again in 1995, I will describe the following three aspects of the lamentation-liturgies: preparations for the Muharram season; the public processions of Shi'a mourners through the streets of Darjeeling; dramatic re-enactments of the battle of Karbala, held on Ashura (the Tenth of Muharram, the day of Husain's death). I will conclude with comments on the relation between religious commemorative ritual and the maintenance of communal identity.

Bhawani R. Prasad
V.A. Medical Center, Chicago

Jinnah’s Use of Islam for Protest and Revival

Mohammed Ali Jinnah underwent a crucial transformation when he was in his late 40s. Until then he was the darling of India’s nationalists and the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity. However the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi on the scene caused a sea change in the psychological and political atmosphere of India. Jinnah could not fit well with this change of environment. His private life was also in serious disarray at that time culminating in his separating from his wife. Jinnah responded to these earthquakes by turning to Islam. But it was a very idiosyncratic interpretation of Islam that he embraced. He avoided completely the devotional and ritualistic aspects of Islam. Instead he established himself as the unlikely defender of Islam fighting for the establishment of an Islamically oriented government in exactly those areas of India where Islam was least in danger. He increasingly showed an angry side to his personality frequently making global anti-Hindu statements which made it impossible for Hindus and Muslims to come together to solve India’s political problems. Both Gandhi and Jinnah infused India’s politics with religion but they did that in diametrically opposite ways. The psychological aspects of this curious transformation of Jinnah’s personality will be discussed in this paper.
In India, the 1995 elections to the five important state legislative assemblies have sent out mixed signals. They have a very significant bearing on the forthcoming parliamentary elections in 1996. Unlike the states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Orissa, the incumbents were not thrown out in Bihar, the second largest state in population. Despite a dismal economic performance of the Laloo Yadav government, a clear mandate for the second term was phenomenal. Survival of Laloo Yadav's administration for full five-year term and his reelection is of enormous importance to Binar which is economically backward, socially explosive and politically unstable. This could be possible because of a new alignment of social forces under Laloo's stewardship.

This paper will examine the factors leading to the consolidation of backward class leadership under Laloo Yadav and seek to identify the salient trends in 1995 elections. This may broadly be contrasted with the trends in other states. The paper will also weigh the future of the politics of leading political parties at the national parliamentary elections of 1996.

Omar Qureshi
University of Chicago

Re-forming Pakistani Nationalism: State, Society and the 1972 Language Riots

The language riots which took place in Karachi in 1972 became a formative event of Mohajir nationalism in Pakistan. While Urdu remains an important element of Mohajir identity, as a political issue it disappears from public discourse in the immediate aftermath of the riots and has since remained a non-issue. This paper reconstructs the events surrounding the riots, including an examination of the language policies pursued by the Pakistani state since independence in 1947. It argues that the language riots took place not merely because those policies were perceived to threaten Mohajir interests and identity; they were also the culmination of the beginnings of a critique of state ideology and official nationalism on the part of the Mohajir population of urban Sindh. Mohajir re-examination of their own unquestioning support for Pakistani nationalism was occasioned by the brutal suppression of East Pakistan by the state, and the unsuccessful attempt to prevent the emergence of Bangladesh. During the state's attempts to rehabilitate itself after this debacle, Mohajir debates surrounding language hold several important counter-
Gloria Goodwin Raheja
University of Minnesota

Struck out if Considered Befitting: Women’s Speech in the Colonial Archive

The insertion of the reported speech of the colonized in administrative documents from nineteenth century India is in nearly every instance connected to the colonial demand for authorization. Sometimes the demand is explicit, when for example panegyric songs that praise British administrative policy are set down in a text and described as “the voice of the people,” while songs that valorize revolt are described as emanating from a “criminal tribe.” Sometimes the demand is implicit, as in the case of the insertion of the imagined speech of the colonized in the “dialogues” of Hindi grammar texts, or the appropriation of proverbial speech in land settlement reports. In this paper, I consider the entextualizing strategies through which women's speech is appropriated in such demands for authorization: the imagined speech of a sati in a colonial grammar from the early nineteenth century, the speech that is deleted or written with the possibility of erasure because of its “obscenity,” the song texts that are presented as instances of “tradition.” In each case, representations of women's speech—imagined speech, reported speech, or allusions to the “obscene”—are used to authorize the colonial presence and to represent a decontextualized and unitary voice of “tradition” to which all women supposedly submit.

Arvind Rajagopal
Purdue University


The major question for this paper will be the issue of how discussions of national identity change with mass mediation, in the context of liberalization and globalization. Uneven development preserves paradoxic combinations in culture, and the liminal category of the nation expresses and reflects key contradictions in the condition of modernity. The premier force involved in bringing the two together in recent times in India has been the Hindu right, the sahaj parivar and its political arm, the BIP. The ideology and the political threat posed by the Hindu right over the last several years in India have dominated much of the public debate about the Indian polity and society, in an attempt to grapple with the causes and the affiliations of communalism, and to fiercely resist its advances. While the recent electoral victories of the Hindu right have disturbed the complacency following the November 1993 elections (where the BJP suffered severe setbacks, and Dalit-OBC led coalitions came to power in U.P.), in the aftermath of the Babri Masjid demolition, we can attempt to understand changes in the political culture without the overriding sense of threat experienced during the last few years. We can distinguish, very broadly and simply, between the phase of Nehruvian consensus, of a relatively secure Congress ideology of secular antikle developmentism, and that which succeeded it. In a number of different ways, the question of how the boundaries of national identity will be redefined becomes crucial from the mid-eighties onwards. While the Hindu right have certainly been the most energetic contenders in the ensuing debate, its own terms, of communalism versus (pseudo)secularism need to be revised and recontextualized. I will focus on the materiality of the televisual medium in examining the traces of these discourses in televisual texts, and in arriving at some tentative suggestions on the changing contours of national identity.
Gita Rajan
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor

Narratives from Tranquebar

My paper focuses on the writings of German pietist missionaries from Halle an der Saale, who at the command of the Danish king, founded the first Lutheran Mission. Die Danische Mission zur Bekehrung der Heiden, in the Danish colony of Tranquebar (Southeast India) in 1706. The texts have been written in genres like letters, diaries, journals, request-lists, treatises, etc. I concentrate on the first fourteen years of the mission.

Instead of writing the history of the mission or of the mercantile city of Tranquebar, I focus on strategies of writing that were evolved/deployed in order to narrate colonial encounter. I was a little alarmed to discover the "slenderness" of the textual representation of colonial encounters. The only time they take up any space is in conversion narratives and religious discourses. It is this "anorexic" representation of, if I may say, the "other in terms of textual time, content, and context that set me thinking as to why writings would suppress the possibility of giving vent to curiosity. Why were these terribly mundane details about everyday life being recorded, sent to Europe, published and distributed. In

Aneil Rallin
Ohio State University

Desiring / Risking Perversion: Theorizing My Queer South Asian Body

Since the body has become central to the articulation of political, legal, medical, and social claims, it is imperative to think about and through the body and its location in culture. Queer and postcolonial theorists have begun to theorize "the" body, but rarely through their/our bodies. This implies the critical and crucial need to extend existing commentaries on "the" body by theorizing through other/our bodies and exploring how our/other bodies are represented, inscribed, contained, commodified, orientalized, desired, territorialized.

Reflecting on her subject position, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has said that "the space that I occupy might be explained by my history. It is a position into which I have been written. I am not privileging it, but I do want to use it." In this presentation, I want to witness the history and historicization of my own marked body and of bodies like mine—queer and South Asian, perverse and risky. By locating the space of my theorizing within personal struggles, I hope to queer and to race the production of my own text; to perform my identities and to enact my politics of affiliation in and through speaking/writing; and to initiate a dialogue on the implications of these issues for South Asian studies.
"Siting" Visuals as Transcultural Logic: Global Advertising and (Neo)colonial Imagery

Advertising as an ideological discourse is a necessary component of the very process of globalization. My attempt at the outset, would be to unpack the nature of ideological determination of global or transnational advertising as it traverses in an apparently borderless world. In other words, what is the ideological identity of global advertising given the proliferation of (neo)colonial representations originating from the metropolitan centers and the so-called margins. I shall focus on the trafficking of gender within the movements of transnational capital and in the process attempt to provide some directions in answering the following questions that I propose in my paper:

How can one problematize and politicize the representation process of global advertising? Does gender work as the central operating mechanism in the attempts of transnational corporations to create a cross-cultural appeal for advertising? If it does, to what extent does the specific portrayals of women in global advertising undermine the attempts of a male gendered nationalism (Indian, in this case) is a purist to protect the "female cultural whole?"

S. Rashid
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Higher Education in Bangladesh: A Case Study

The rise of private universities in Bangladesh is a new phenomenon, spurred by a perceived decline in the quality of academic discourse at the public universities as well as by numerous academic and political delays in completing an academic program. North-South University was opened in the belief that the time for a private university had come and that the private sector should come forth to support the sort of education needed for Bangladesh. This paper will review the extent to which North-South University has succeeded in achieving its goals and to present a comparative perspective on private education in Bangladesh.
They were our Servants: ‘Small Caste’ Perspectives on jati in Newar Society

Based on fieldwork in the Newar town of Sankhu, this paper considers the caste system from several, 'small caste' vantage points. Origin myths of the meat cutter, or Nay caste, for instance, overtly challenge the Dumontian, brahmanical view of caste as a social hierarchy based on pure/impure distinctions. Research on networks of patronage among the castes in Sankhu suggests that, while an idea of hierarchy may prevail, the caste statuses of an individual vary in different contexts and from different perspectives. Finally, the paper considers why low castes in Sankhu resist or have abandoned altogether their economic and ritual relationships with their jajmān, but both continue their ritual work vis-à-vis the kingdom, or desh, and continue to expect the services of their own patrons.

Anupama Rao
University of Michigan

Narrating the Self: Caste, Violence, and the (Im)possibility of Autobiography

Narrating the Self: Caste, Violence, and the (Im)possibility of Autobiography

This paper will argue that there are links between emergent Dalit autobiography in Maharashtra, and "public" narratives of caste violence and oppression in post-colonial India. I seek to make the point that literary tellings of the self as marked by caste identity, and legal, "public" narratives of caste atrocities impact upon each other in structuring possibilities for the emergence of Dalit autobiography as a genre in post 1970s Maharashtra. The traces of caste violence in Dalit autobiography, then, must be read as containing the memory of the larger narratives of the liberal, Indian nation-state with its contradictory affirmation of a substantive caste identity on the one hand (i.e. reservations), and its avowed dismissal of caste as a troubling category which marks citizenship (e.g. the legal discourse around caste atrocities).
Shishar Rawal  
North Carolina State University

**Gir National Park: A Historical Retrospect**

The Gir National Park in Gujarat is the last natural refuge of the Asiatic Lion, and the traditional home of semi-tribal Maldhari cattle herders and others. This paper will trace the natural history and shrinking geographical distribution of the lions. It will then survey the cultural history of the resident people, including the traditional religious patterns and subsistence strategies which mediated their coexistence with the lions and their livestock. It will next discuss the management history of the species and the protected area, and the rise of the modern effort to conserve the remnant lion population. It will clarify the dilemmas and controversies which the conservationists have faced in their relations with the Maldharis.

William Reese  
University of California, San Diego

**“A Certain Little Magazine Editor”. The Literary Scene of a Bengali Populist**

Populism accommodates the Brahminical tradition in many ways, as sociologist Edward Shils, in a book otherwise resting on rather suspicious conceptions, was one of the first to note. My paper explores this relationship, focussing on a new Bengali short story written by a promising writer who publishes most of his work in Bengali little magazines. In keeping with the contemporary tradition of leftist writing in Calcutta, author Swapnamoy Chakraborty cultivates an ideal of atonement for the ongoing oppression of laborers and the poor. But in this story he explores the scene of writing itself, and the populist virtues he espouses appear as unconscious props. Swapnamoy contrasts the world of professions and of money-making—the hated world of traders and of formal associations—with the ideal world of journal writing. This is a world of traditional culture and of genteel poverty that he endows with brahminical qualities of sacrifice and merit. It opens on little magazine editor, Animesh Majumdar, lost in a rich part of Calcutta and looking for the home of an established colleague who promised him an essay. It closes with his anguished realization that vain ambition suffuses even the better world.
Contestatory Discourse on the Asvamedha Parvan of the Mahabharata

The framing of the Mahābhārata battle in terms of the eternal competition between the devas and the āsuras points to the centrality of the agonistic paradigm of sacrifice in the Mahābhārata. I am interested in a relatively unexplored dimension of this agonistic paradigm. I believe it makes place for a textual dynamic which results from the pitting of competing, sometimes antagonistic, discourses against each other. It makes an open-ended, dialogic discursive mode possible.

Clearly, a totalizing vision which claims to transcend all differences pervades the Mahābhārata. The discourse associated with this vision denies the reality of the individual subject and claims that all points of view are subordinate to its absolute truth. However, contestatory, dialogic discourse resists these totalizing claims. My reading of the Asvamedha Parvan, a Parvan structured around the event of the horse sacrifice, highlights the contestatory paradigm which I think animates it. I emphasize the Sāṇvāṭa-Bṛhaspati contest, the actual horse sacrifice, the Utaṅka story, and the mongoose episode -- parts which participate most intensely in the contestatory paradigm by challenging the consistency of the very term "sacrifice".

Leah Renold
University of Texas, Austin

Gandhi and the Gospel of Wealth

According to Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of trusteeship, rich capitalists should regard themselves solely as trustees of their wealth and dispense their wealth wisely as trust property for the benefit of society. Gandhi put forward trusteeship as an alternative both to overt capitalism and socialism. The industrialists Jamnalal Bajaj and G. D. Birla were known for their philanthropy and were pointed out by Gandhi as examples of trusteeship put into practice. Gandhi was not against wealth in itself and was opposed to forced redistribution of wealth in India. Gandhi was looked to by his wealthy supporters as a deterrent against the socialist policies proposed by Jawaharlal Nehru. At the Lucknow Congress in 1936, for instance, when Nehru’s proposal for the Congress to link itself with labor unions was pushed aside, Gandhi’s capitalist patrons praised the act as the triumph of Gandhi over socialism.

While Gandhi claimed that his idea of trusteeship was taken from a verse in the Isha Upanisad, there is a stunning resemblance between Gandhi’s trusteeship and that of the American millionaire Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie presented his concept of trusteeship as a means of justifying capitalism in the face of the growing threat of socialism in the late 1800s. Carnegie first published his ideas on trusteeship in England in a series of articles called the "Gospel of Wealth", explaining that England was more challenged by socialist ideas than America. Gandhi was a student in England at the time when Carnegie’s articles were published. The articles received much public attention in England including a review by the Prime Minister William Gladstone. Not only is there a strong possibility that Gandhi learned of Carnegie’s trusteeship because of the controversy initiated by the articles in England, but Gandhi himself, in his autobiography, claimed to have read on a daily basis the periodical in which Carnegie’s articles were published when he was a student in England. The similarity of Gandhi’s trusteeship to Carnegie’s, together with the simultaneity of Gandhi being in England when the articles were published and Gandhi’s daily reading on the periodical in which they appeared, would seem to make a case for Gandhi’s borrowing of his concept of trusteeship from the American millionaire.
Beatrice Reusch
University of Wisconsin, Madison

The Sarasvati River

In the Rg-veda, the Sarasvati is a mighty river that runs from the mountains all the way to the sea (RV 7.95.2). It is also a major protagonist in the confrontations between aryas and non-aryas, always on the side of the aryas. It is praised in several hymns as a powerful deity and a secure refuge for her devotees. From a list of rivers given in RV 10.75.5-7 we can gather that the Sarasvati River was to be found west of the Yamuna and east of the Sindhu. Yet nowadays nowhere in the Panjab such a powerful and lengthy river is to be found. Are we to conclude that the Sarasvati River is merely a mythological entity with no geographical reality? In this paper I review some of the pertinent passages in the Rg-veda and the Mahabharata, after bringing in some modern archaeological and geological findings. I can thus define three ages in Sarasvati's life span: her young, Rg-vedic age; her middle age, characterized by her disappearance place, spoken of in the Mahabharata; and her current traces in a desert area. I rely on textual analysis to describe and contextualize some of the features of Sarasvati's first and second ages. And I wrap up the discussion with a tentative explanation for the river changes that reconciles the textual and the archaeological/geological views.

Robin Rinchart
Lafayette College

The Neo-Vedantin Self: Swami Rama Tirtha's Autobiographical Writings

Swami Rama Tirtha (1873-1906) was a Panjabi Hindu saint who espoused a philosophy of "Practical Vedanta" or "Balanced Recklessness." His numerous lectures and writings have been published, and he is also the subject of an extensive hagiographical tradition. However, Swami Rama Tirtha was reluctant to discuss or analyze the events of his personal life despite requests from his devotees who thought that they might find guidance in studying the events of the Swami's life. Although Swami Rama Tirtha composed no formal autobiography, he did write several short autobiographical pieces and also made autobiographical references in his published notebooks. This paper will consider Swami Rama Tirtha's representation of himself in these writings. How does a renunciant describe and interpret his pre-renunciant life? How exactly is the "self" represented in a neo-Vedantic context?
The Dis-embodiment of the Beloved: Hariaudi’s Priyaparvaas and the Revision of Bhakti

Hindu devotional literature became an object of moral and literary critique in the intellectual discourse of early twentieth-century North India. British scholarship compared the merits of various bhakti poets, and Indian literary societies claimed bhakti for their canon while promoting a modern Hindi literature that avoided the "sweetness" and "decadence" of Vaishnava Brajbhasha poetry and associated erotic courtly verse. This paper examines Priyaparvaas, a literary response to debate about the "decency" of Krishna-bhakti. Published in 1914 by Ayodhyasingh Upadhyay "Hariaudh," this poetic work in Hindi attempted to redefine devotion for the Beloved as a method of social reform. As a devotee of Krishna and "progressive" litterateur, Hariaud's literary project spanned the worlds of Krishna's lila and Protestant sensibility. His strategy involved dis-embodying Radha's love for Krishna by merging the landscape of Braj with the moral muse of English Romantic "Nature." I will discuss the sixteenth chapter, in particular, for its chaste redrawing of Radha, and her expression of the philosophy behind this revisionism. In summary, Priyaparvaas exemplifies a unique preservation and alteration of Vaishnava convention amidst controversy about the acceptability of bhakti into a newly-defined literary canon that was both "modern" and nationalistic in intention.

Marguerite Roulet
Madison, Wisconsin

Creating Community Within the Conjugal Village

In northern India a primary symbol of community is that of the joint family -- a community of relatives that shares resources, labor and interests. Within this construct, which is oriented around male agnates, women (particularly in-married women) are represented as a divisive influence that threatens the stability of the community through their unwillingness to share resources and labor, their divergent interests, and their orientation toward other social units. This paper explores ways in which women create other communities alongside those of the joint family in the context of their conjugal homes; communities that emerge not out of formally defined social categories but out of their everyday experiences. I look at the actions and interpretations of a Brahman woman living in eastern Uttar Pradesh and how she operated within a community of women within her village that was premised on an understanding of her own position and that of other women as poor. Within this construct, notions of generosity, sharing and convergent interests -- often found wanting in her and other members of her joint conjugal family -- were important aspects of the manner in which she represented the experiences of herself and the other women.
Anjishnu Roy  
University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

The Use of Icons and Symbols in Tagore's Poetry

Tagore's poetry is often stereotyped as romantic or religious. His affinity with the nineteenth century British Romantic poets seems much too obvious to readers who focus superficially on Tagore's preoccupation with Nature, metrical patterns etc. Gitanjali offers, particularly to Western readers, an unmistakable testimony to his religious or spiritual leanings. None of this can be disputed. However, what is often forgotten is a voice underneath the facade of a vast array of his poems that is distinctly unique and not in conformity with the beliefs of other Nature poets. This voice is characteristically his own, and expresses through symbols of space and time a resolution of his own inner conflicts. More often than not, the resolution has also a universal applicability.

Parama Roy  
University of California, Riverside

The Endurance of Nargis: Stardom and Muslim Identity in Bombay Cinema

This paper examines the intimate and uneasy relationship of gendered national and religio-political identities in Bombay cinema, focusing for the most part upon the (Muslim) actress Nargis, who was most notable for her role as the eponymous heroine of the great nationalist epic Mother India (1957) but whose identity as "Muslim" was, and is, notoriously ill-defined. Part of the fascination of the film for Indian audiences is the iconicity of various definitive filmic moments: the trial by fire and the rescue, the prestige of motherhood, and the attainment of mythic status, all of which were repeated in the star's life. This paper ponders the way in which she literalizes the figure of the nation, and literalizes it to such a degree that acting itself becomes impossible after the making of that film. In taking up this question of the iconicity of the actress, it also takes up perforce the question of Nargis' elusive (but inescapable) Muslimness: how does the Other become the icon that represents nationness? It posits the story of the female star's religio-political identity as that of an undead Muslimness that is neither present nor absent, not quite there but not quite convincingly buried either. My story therefore is as much about Nargis dead as it is about Nargis alive, and about her afterlife in the current conjuncture of Hindutva's ascendancy. In taking up the question of who or what bears the burden of Nargis' Muslimness, this story finds itself to be as much about the son of Mother India as it is about the mother herself. This paper, then, functions as a brief speculative analysis of the functions of iconicity and surrogacy in the registers of (Bombay) cinema and politics and the discursive displacements from one to the other in the figures of Nargis and Sanjay Dutt.
Srirupa Roy  
University of Pennsylvania

National Identity in Post-Independent India

In publications of the National Integration Council, in the colorful floats that participate in the annual Republic Day Parades in various Indian cities, Indianness is represented as a mosaic of different religions, languages, and cultures. What are the implications of such appeals to diversity that are ever-present in post-independent Indian nationalist discourse? How can such a "nationalism of difference" be reconciled with prevailing theoretical discussions of the homogenizing thrust of nationalist ideologies? My paper represents an attempt to answer such questions through a detailed investigation of the discourse of national identity in India, between 1947 and the present. I examine official nationalist discourse as well as the discourse of the Hindu nationalist organizations, which claim to represent an alternative vision of the Indian national community. My research draws upon written texts such as government documents, policy statements, party manifestoes, and pamphlets; visual texts such as the television "infomercials" produced by the National Integration Council (the "Mera Bharat Mahaan" series); and behavioral texts such as activities undertaken in public arenas (Republic Day parades, adn the Yatras organized by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bharatiya Janata Party). I rely on theoretical insights from scholars of nationalism, state-building, and state-society relations.

Vasant Saberwal  
Yale University

Access to Grazing Resources among the Gaddi of Himachal Pradesh, India

Pastoral communities world wide have become increasingly marginalized as a result of government policies that have restricted herder access to traditional grazing areas. In addition policy induced changes in herder land use practices have resulted in large scale land degradation. In contrast, the Gaddi of Himachal Pradesh, northern India continue to herd profitably, despite a century old effort on the part of the forest department to restrict Gaddi use of grazing lands. Through archival research, an examination of current official documents and open-ended interviews, I examine the means used by the Gaddi to circumvent forest department policies. The use of political influence to undermine bureaucratic policy implementation and the development of a flexible property system that enables herders to accommodate one another at times of forage scarcity appear to be two key factors that have enabled the Gaddi to sustain a successful herding tradition. Whether or not Gaddi herding contributes to land degradation is unclear. However, a clear implication of these results is that the forest department appears to be bypassed in the decision making with regard to management of Himachal’s forests and grasslands. More inclusive policies, that are more cognizant of the Gaddi’s lifestyle, may ensure more effective conservation in Himachal Pradesh.
Aarti Saihjee  
Syracuse University

Structures of Constraint: Gender, Household, Economy and the State in Jharkhand

This paper explores the changing nature of women's work and gender relations in the Jharkhand region of Bihar, India within the larger context of the political economy of the region. By focusing on the household as a privileged and a primary site for the analyses of gender relations and gender division of labor, an attempt is made to mediate the 'social interface' where culture, gender, caste, class, ethnicity, economy, and the state critically intersect to contextualize and explicate women's everyday existence. The reproduction of the larger social relations of domination and subordination are analyzed through the study of gender-specific strategies of household survival and the onerous burden it imposes on women to reproduce the very structures which marginalize them.

Women's role and participation in the Jharkhand movement, negotiated through the emergent contradictions of gender and ethnicity, are also analyzed to develop a dialectical understanding of the construction of women's "agency" and "political consciousness" within an interactive framework. The research raises important questions regarding the differing nature of women's participation: as independent political subjects, or does gender identity get subsumed under the larger ethnic identity for regional autonomy or do women's roles get expediently politicized to meet the need of the hour?

S. Yasmin Saikia  
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Making the Assamese "Frontier": What Frontier is it Anyway?

This paper is a preliminary inquiry into the historical process which made India's northeast 'frontier' in Assam. More specifically my attempt here is to raise questions why the 'frontiers' of India stopped in Assam and further examine how the Assamese peoples place and act out the imposed 'frontier' character. Emphasis will be on the local Assamese actions and reactions aimed at disintegrating the 'frontier', while opening up Assam as the new crossroads of South and Southeast Asia.

As recently, as 1971, Assam's other-name was the North-East Frontier Agency. The legacy begins in the nineteenth century British colonial enterprise whereby the Brahmaputra Valley was demarcated as the outpost of British territory in India. In paper and through military actions Assam was fixed as the 'frontier' between the three contending rivals, namely the British, the Burmese and the Chinese. Since then, a new kind of 'frontier' literature emerged about the 'Tribes of Assam'. In modern India, many kinds of 'frontiers' overlap in Assam. Politically it is frowned upon as the bastion of terrorism and militancy, which therefore necessitates the central administration of Delhi to make the entire north-east a 'Restricted Area' where even today to travel from one point to another one needs an 'Inner Line Permit'. Culturally, Assam is the backwaters of Bengal. Caste hindus, more so, brahmans, deem Assam as the legendary land of mleechas and asuras. The economy of Assam has never taken off. The government of India is afraid to invest in the 'frontier' due to the aggressive designs of the Chinese. For justification the Chinese invasion of 1962 provides a reasonable excuse.
The Political Economy of Song: Rethinking Nationalism in Jaffna

"The people of Jaffna are living under a totalitarian fascist regime. They are awaiting the opportunity to be released from the claws of the Tigers."

At the height of the recent peace initiatives between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), these comments characterized the analysis of the intellectual elite and educated circles in the peace constituency in Colombo. This paper challenges this interpretation of nationalisms as experienced in Jaffna, in the 1990s.

With the political, economical and geographical isolation of the Northern region of Sri Lanka, the Jaffna peninsula, as a territory under the administration of the LTTE, has been reduced to a set of homogenized, militarized representations of nationalism. In the face of aerial bombardment, military occupation and economic deprivation, nationalism is not only demonstrated in terms of bearing arms (picking up a gun and joining the movement) towards the objectives of national integrity and liberation. Multiple experiences of nationalisms are also felt most poignantly through a variety of cultural forms such as, drama, community theater, video, dance and song.

In this paper, my intent is to complicate the reductionist notions of a singular and absolute interpretation of nationalism through an analysis of a song played on a radio broadcast of the "Voice of the Tigers," during my recent stay in Jaffna: "Thamila Nee Peasavathu Thamila." The immediacy of the song’s text speaks to nationalism, ethnicity and the post colonial condition. While addressing these issues with relevance to Jaffna, "Thamila," - produced and released in Norway, performed by an exiled South Indian singer, distributed from New York City to Toronto to Oslo and Jaffna - demands that we examine broader systems of political economy involving negotiations of power, resistance and historical change in the experience of nationalisms.
Rituals of Transformation: Paramanand’s Padas and Seva

Paramanand’s padas facilitate the transformation of the bhakta’s consciousness from the laukika to the alaukika and function as a heuristic device for the sacred. As rituals of transformation, his lyrics cultivate the bhāva that enables the bhakta to relate intimately with Krishna and ultimately to sport in Krishna’s alaukika lilā. The padas function as sites on a pilgrimage by promoting and facilitating bhāva and darsana of Krishna’s lilā. The padas (just as the pilgrimage sites) present vignettes of the lilā to which the bhakta supplies the interpretive narrative and context. Paramanand leads the bhakta on this journey within, a cognitive and internal pilgrimage rather than a physical or geographical trip.

This paper discusses the padas as ritual and their role in the ritual of transformation with an initial explanation of sevā as ritual and the svārūp. I also explain the ontological assumptions underlying this transformation. Ideas regarding the sacred and profane, particularly those regarding "embodied divinity," differ vastly from those commonly held in the West, and this ritual of transformation must be understood through Braj notions of reality and possibility of "embodied divinity."
Mahua Sarkar  
Johns Hopkins University

Muslim women in India: Rethinking an Old Question

A review of the existing secondary literature on Muslim women in India reveals that there is an overwhelming tendency of explaining the problems faced by Muslim women today in terms of their religion, the general poverty of Muslims, the larger contexts of gender and class oppressions, or more obscurely, to their minority status. The present paper argues that the specificity of the problems of Muslim women in India today has to be understood in the light of their exclusion from, and invisibility to, the nineteenth century nationalist project of "imagining" the Indian nation. Much has been written about this project of creating an "essential national culture" which privileged orientalist ideas of a classicised Aryan/Hindu past, and in which upper caste Hindu women from the upper and middle classes played an important role as the symbols of the new nation. However, the history of this process of creating a nation has been written from the standpoint of upper caste Hindu women who were incorporated into the project even if as symbols; the story of the exclusion as experienced by the excluded has unfortunately been left untold. Thus, Muslim women are denied visibility and voice even in the writing of history.
Buddhist Art of Ancient Greater Gandhara

Despite the steadily growing volumes of scientific data from recent research, which have produced a more defined understanding than was possible previously of the early political and cultural history of the northwestern sector of the South Asian subcontinent, there remain many difficult issues concerning chronology, ethnic diversity, and patterns of cultural influence and exchange. Stone reliefs and individually carved figures of the Buddhist school, which flourished in that region for more than a millennium, represent an enormous body of resource materials for further addressing these issues. In addition to recording changes in the elusive details of religious development, these sculptures provide a variety unique opportunities for increased understanding of the first several centuries A.D. Most of the large stone reliefs and images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas were sculpted during these centuries under Kushan hegemony when the Buddhist school reached its apogee.

Among the many features of interest are replicas of long necklaces with zoomorphic terminals that adorn the major stone images of Bodhisattvas and the male deity Pancika from Gandhara, Swat, and adjacent districts. Each of these necklaces represents one piece in a set of ornaments that became conventionalized for these deities at the end of the first or beginning of the second century A.D. Although no necklaces of this type with zoomorphic terminals have been recovered from the northwest, their repeated occurrence in sculpture together with the recovery of dies and tools that could have been used to manufacture such ornaments suggest that this type of necklace was fashionable among individuals of wealth and position.

Preferences for the use of zoomorphic terminals similar to those replicated in Buddhist sculpture have a long and fascinating history beginning with the ancient Elamites of western Iran during the second millenium B.C. By the end of the first quarter of the first millenium B.C., interest in this type of ornamentation had become widespread. During the Hellenistic era, as a corporal part of the Parthian, Greek, and Central Asian nomadic vocabularies, ornamentation of gold jewellery with zoomorphic terminals became extremely fashionable. Such terminals were used widely on earrings, bracelets, necklaces, and torques. The purpose of this presentation is to draw attention to the value of these ornaments and to their stone replicas as points of reference which permit insight into complex issues, such as ethnic affiliations, provenance, chronology, and patronage as well as patterns of transmission and assimilation.
Petitions and Parliament: Narratives of British Middle-Class Evangelism

In this paper I would like to locate this 'imperial' tension between Christian evangelizing and the British East India Company's project within a more complex intersection of the changing relationship between the middle classes and the British government in the 19th century. The nineteenth-century, in Britain, was marked by great religious revival. Christianity and Christian evangelism came to be one of the main narrative structures through which the emerging British middle-classes expressed themselves. Thus the petitions, debates and sermons surrounding the passage of the missionary inclusion act was also a narrative of middle-class aspirations and political desires in the 'civilizing mission' to the East.

While the Company's solution to zealous Muslims and deluded Hindus lay in a certain 'tolerance' of and diffidence to the religious practices of their colonial subjects, the Christian evangelicals and their middle-class supporters insisted that the only long term path for British colonial governance lay in active Christian proselytizing and conversion. Thus I would read the debate and activity around the passing of the 'pious clause' of 1813 as an attempt to make Christian imperialism a politically tenable project in India.

S. Shankar
Rutgers University

Main Azad Hoon and Meet John Doe: Indian Popular Cinema, Hollywood and the Question of Originality

In this paper, I explore how critical attitude to Indian popular cinema has repeatedly divided over the question of its originality. The criticisms of Indian popular cinema fault particular films for their imitativeness with regard to Hollywood films; the defence, on the other hand, has surmounted the charge of imitativeness mainly through the assertion that an alternative "Indian" aesthetic is at work in such cinema. However, I point out, both these attitudes remain committed to aesthetic principles which privilege what might be called a nationalist paradigm.

By making use of the opportunity for a comparative analysis offered by Frank Capra's 1941 Hollywood film Meet John Doe and an Eighties commercial Bombay remake of it entitled Main Azad Hoon, I test the adequacy of these "nationalist" conceptions of originality. By the end of the paper, I am able to suggest that the "nationalist" approach to understanding "originality" is not adequate to the specific nature of Indian popular cinema and to offer other ways of thinking about this question of "originality."
Internally Conditioned Morphological Variation in Hindi

Among the numerous patterns of morphological variation found in modern standard Hindi are several patterns which cannot be explained easily in terms of geographical, dialectal, or stylistic conditioning. It has been common in grammars or linguistic studies to treat such variation as "optional" and not to speculate as to conditioning factors for these patterns. The particular morphological features that enter into such patterns include, but are not limited to, the marking of infinitives to agree with their direct objects, alternations between adjectival and adverbial forms of participials, the alternation between an invariable imperfective participle in -te and a newly formed analogical feminine imperfective participle in -ti, and the alternation between the invariable marker cáhiye and a plural form cáhiye. In this presentation I will provide an overview of such patterns of "internally conditioned" morphological variation in Hindi and describe the extent to which it is possible to ascribe these patterns of variation to specific conditioning factors.

Sandhya Shetty
University of New Hampshire

Sanitary Subjects: A reading of Indian Modernity in Indian Cinema

In my paper I will address the question of colonial resistance to interpellation by a particular discourse of modernity, namely medical and sanitary discourse. Gandhi is a key figure in this connection and his antimonad text, Hind Swaraj, constitutes a definitive moment in the negotiation of an alternative to modernity, which he saw as the problematic principle of post-Enlightenment western civilization and as itself a self-inflicted disease infecting both colonizers and the colonized. However, curiously and contradictorily enough, Gandhi seemed also to have great faith in western notions and practices of public sanitation. In his autobiography and writings on caste, he attempts a fascinating and strategic negotiation with sanitary discourse by wrenching it from the problems of western modernity; specifically from its function in producing civil and modern bourgeois bodies and spaces; and relocating it in an ethical nonmodern critique of Hindu caste institutions and their hierarchical production of polluting and pure bodies, a critique levelled not in the service of bourgeois modernity but which gestures toward an intriguing if shadowy space that was both new and yet nonmodern.

I am also interested in the significance of the US in the deployment of medical and sanitary discourse in British India, particularly the entanglement of Christianity and scientific medicine in the form of medical missions, many of which were funded and operated by US charities and church groups/missions. In this connection, I will be examining Dominique Lapierre's City of Joy and the Roland Joffe film based on the novel, as well as the 1940s
Population and Habitat of the Saurus Crane in Nepal’s Tarai

Paper is an interim report on a long term study of the populations and habitat requirements of the Saurus Crane in Nepal’s Tarai. In addition to analyzing the population structures and habitat requirements, the study includes research identifying the perceptions of local villagers on the status and importance of the Saurus Crane and explores the implications of villager attitudes to the conservation of this and related species.

Grazing pressures are intense and are at least partially responsible for this poor reproduction, but it is also likely that major disturbances are needed to initiate widespread reproduction of most canopy trees. Foresters in association with forest users need to initiate experimental plots to develop silvicultural systems which will ensure the regeneration of desired trees, many of which are current dominants.

Tashin Siddiqui
University of Michigan

Attitudes toward Hindi and Urdu among Literary Writers and Grammarians

Several studies have discussed the socio-political issues related to the Hindi-Urdu controversy. The question, whether Hindi and Urdu be treated as two variants of one language or as two different languages, has been a topic of discussion among various scholars for a long time. Grammarians and literary writers have also faced this problem and have expressed their opinion directly or indirectly. This paper presents their views about Hindi-Urdu and attempts to present a historical perspective on the controversies related to classifying Hindi and Urdu as completely separate languages or classify these two lects of one common language.

Pashaura Singh
University of Michigan

A Critique of Early European Accounts of the Sikhs

British intelligence on the Sikhs became a matter of urgency in view of their fast growing political influence in North India in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. As part of this strategy Colonel A.L.H. Polier, George Forster and Major James Browne were given special instructions by the East India Company to prepare their reports on the strengths and weaknesses of the Sikhs from a military point of view. For the most part their observations deal with the military order of the Khalsa. As pioneers they set the tone of British historiography on the Sikhs of the Punjab. Although they were severely handicapped on account of the paucity of source material, the difficulty of general communication with native people, and limited means of collecting information, they made significant observations on contemporary Sikh institutions, customs and manners. This paper argues that the observations of early Europeans reflect a partial view based on imperfect perception. Although their own European biases enter into their descriptions, their contribution is an important one since it is based on actual observation.
The Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan is not new but has been contentious issue between the two countries since 1947. It is unfortunate that as a result of Kashmir insurgency, the old question of accession of Kashmir to India has been resurrected and old charges are repeated. It is notable that throughout the period from 1947 to date, the basic, arguments-political moral and legal about the Kashmir problem have remained the same. They have centered around three questions: the accession, the withdrawal of Pakistani troops and the ascertainment of the wishes of the people. The Indian part of Jammu and Kashmir is the place of all the recent controversies. To this day, the official rhetoric on both sides of the border still refers to Jammu and Kashmir as if it were a monolithic entity. In fact, three major religious represented in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The vast majority of the people of Kashmir valley and Gilgit are Muslims, Jammu is Hindu; Ladakh and Baltistan are Buddhist. Only the Muslims of the Kashmir valley demand that their divided province be united and that they be given the option to decide the question of their final accession.
Subir Sinha
Northwestern University

Management of Ecological Limits

The relationship between the developmentalist state in India and 'nature' is a paradoxical one: citing its responsibilities for directing programmes of 'national development', the state claims exclusive rights to constitute nature as resources, and then place them within 'sectors' of the economy. With the depletion of resources, the state, as steward of nature, then claims exclusive power over designing programmes of conservation, and over extending state control to those arenas of nature that have so far remained outside the domain of state control.

This paper places the recognition of 'ecological limits' on marine fisheries by the Indian state within a wider political economy of 'national development'. Here, I will place fisheries use within the context of populist politics in a closed economy in the 1970s, the recognition of fisheries depletion in the 1980s, and the proliferation of state control over new fishing grounds in the late 1980s during on-going liberalization.

The constitution of natural resources by the developmentalist state not only shapes the deployment of state power and depletion of the fisheries in specific ways, it also implies specific relations between the state and 'fishing communities'. My paper will also look at the roles open to these communities within state-led programs of resource use, and in plans to manage ecological limits. Finally, I will review how this narrative of progress, in which the state is the protagonist, is ruptured by the organized, public and popular politics of fishworkers since the 1980s.

Marcella Sirhandi
Oklahoma State University

The Bombay School of Art in the 1920s: Defending European Realism

The Bombay School (style of art) was challenged by proponents of Abanindranath Tagore's Bengal School as unIndian due to their reliance on European realism and use of oil and canvas. This paper will examine the debate on what constitutes Indian (and therefore nationalistic) art through a series of debates defending Bombay artists presented by Gladstone Solomon, principal of the J J School of Art (1919-1936).
Elizabeth Smaller
University of Toronto

The Effects of Gender on Class Mobility

The data for this paper are from a 1992 and 1993-4 study of a mountain village in Himachal Pradesh. In it, I examine the contemporary restructuring process of the village production system in light of the introduction of two new commodities: apples and tourism. This paper focuses on the perpetuation of gendered inequalities throughout policy-driven changes in production and despite changes in household class position.

The recent State-offered, capital intensive development incentives dictate very precisely the forms of the labour process employed by the family farm enterprise. As places for women in the production system narrow and, perhaps, disappear, places for men have started to expand. As the class position of the household as a whole becomes mobile as a result of capital-intensive development interventions, the status of women within the household has begun to change. Women are acquiring a heavier burden of work, losing power in family decision-making and neutralising the advantages of higher education.

J.R. David Smith
University of Minnesota

Forests of the Terai: A Tiger’s Perspective

The Terai of Nepal harbors a diverse large mammal community of 15 species ranging from elephant, rhino, and gaur to sloth bear, leopard, and tiger. The forest ecosystems in which they live represent some of the best remaining examples of southern Asia’s unique biological heritage. Tigers and the Terai jungles symbolize this rich faunal diversity and are an integral part of the region’s cultural history. Isolationism, malaria, and religious and philosophical traditions all contributed to the survival of the forests of the Terai. Now tourism has replaced isolationism; human immigration and a rising birth rate have followed the decline of malaria; and development goals have replaced traditional value systems. The result has been rapid change in land use and widespread decline in forest cover, that continues at a rate of 1.3% per year. The effects of forest loss on the Terai’s natural ecosystems are compounded by the spatial configuration of the remaining forest cover. These lands form an 800 km long narrow belt, ranging from 2 to 25 km in width, which has already fragmented in several places. Because the tiger needs the largest area to maintain a viable population, it is likely to be the first species to become locally extirpated. During the past 8 years, degradation of the forest on the west side of the Karnali River appears to have isolated tigers in western Nepal from Royal Bardia National Park, and this population is too small to survive for long. In this paper I discuss the landbase needed to support the Terai’s diverse large mammal fauna and outline a landscape scale information system for the Terai that could be used to resolve land use conflicts between sustainable development, local people’s needs and conservation goals.
Ethnolinguistic Identity and Language Policy in Nepal

This paper analyzes the impact of Nepal's new language policy on ethnolinguistic identity. The new policy implements multilingualism in education and broadcasting, replacing the monolingual Nepali-only policy of the past. The criteria adopted by the language-policy-recommending bodies for selecting those languages to be used in education and broadcasting set the constraints under which ethnolinguistic groups must compete for state recognition and resources. The paper analyzes the response of two groups to these new constraints: the Tamang and the Tharu. The response of the Tamang is spurring the creation of a pan-Tamang ethnic identity; inversely, the response of the Tharus is to create a language to add to the belongings of their imagined community. The former is a case of a language in search of an ethnic group, the latter a case of an ethnic group in search of a language. The searching is a by-product of the new language policy.

Walter Smith
Nelson- Atkins Museum of Art

Modern Indian Sculpture: The Transition from Pre to Post Independence

The interaction of Art and politics in South Asia has taken a variety of forms in recent years in relation to the Ayodhya crisis, which climaxed in the destruction by Hindu militants of the Babri Masjid in December 1992. This paper will consider two types of artistic responses to Ayodhya. Discussion will begin with the "propaganda art" supported and even commissioned by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which includes lavish designs for a Rama temple to be built at the site. Here art is being used to stir up sentiments related to "Hindu fundamentalism," playing upon anti-Islamic sentiments and strongly felt Hindu devotionalism for purely political ends. Also to be considered however, is the response of India's artistic community to the crisis. These responses have at once been anguished, conciliatory, and idealistic. Whether these responses are the isolated ramblings of an elite avant-garde or something that resonates with the larger community and constitutes part of a psychological healing process will be debated.

Lotus Stack
Minneapolis Institute of Art

Foreign Markets, Home Production: the Kashmiri Shawl in the 19th Century

The paisley pattern familiar on Kashmiri shawls has enjoyed periodical revivals since it was first used in the 18th century in England and Scotland and is currently much used in many items of clothing. The 19th century is a vital period in the history of the Kashmiri shawl and its adoption by the west. The Minneapolis Institute of Art contains an important collection of textiles. Shawls from that collection will be the basis for this investigation of the way foreign markets affected the weaving of shawls in India during the height of this commercial and artistic exchange.
The Martial Races concept was a central plank of the Colonial Indian Army’s ideology. It was a factor in many recruitment questions that confronted British military policy in colonial South Asia, such as the Indianization of the Indian Army’s officer corps. Yet, there is little agreement among scholars as to the origins and intellectual roots of the concept. This paper will focus on the European roots of the Martial Races theory. Beginning with a discussion of Orientalism, it will show how Nineteenth century European racial thought, anthropological formulations and the notion of racial Anglo-Saxonism contributed to an idea of “Martial Races” that was transposed onto the Indian setting. The paper will also demonstrate how the re-orientation of the defence of British India to frontier areas—mainly the northwest frontier—had some impact upon the Martial Races concept, which again, can be seen as a reflection of the cult of the physique prevalent in Europe, and especially in the English public schools that produced most of the Colonial Indian Army’s officers responsible for military recruitment in India.

Michael Sweet
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Tending the Flowers of Hatred: The Uses of Anger in Mental Purification

Mental purification (blo sbyong) is a Tibetan genre of homiletic summations of the Mahāyāna path meant as guides to meditative practice. blo sbyong texts usually emphasize methods for actualizing a universally compassionate and loving attitude and extirpating anger and hatred. Two unusual works, however, the Wheel Weapon (blo sbyong mshon cha ’khor lo) and the Peacock’s Conquest of Poison (rMa bya dug ’joms), both ascribed to Atiša’s teacher Dharmarakṣita, take more of a tantric approach to this subject, seeking to transform anger from an obstacle into an enhancement of the path. The central metaphor of these texts is the Bodhisattva as a spiritual warrior, using violent feelings and thoughts as weapons against the inner enemy of egocentricity. The Bodhisattva is compared to a peacock, who is believed to be able to digest virulent poison and use this to create his brilliant plumage. The presiding deity of these texts is Yāmāntaka, whose destructive power is invoked in the spiritual battle. The provenance and sources of these texts will be considered, and their approach to anger and to mental purification in general will be analyzed from psychodynamic, interpersonal, and other contemporary psychological perspectives.

Gary Tartakov
Iowa State University

Nationalism and the Baroda School

The Baroda School is a set of artists connected more by their proximity than any particular philosophy or programmatic goals. Still, as individuals living, working and teaching, in the same west Indian city over many decades they do share a combination of attitudes and approaches that link their art and their impact on Indian culture interesting ways. Critics such as Geeta Kapur have pointed to this shared interest in figurative and narrative approaches as well as the high level of their esthetic production. It is interesting to consider the development of this art in the culture of post-independence India.
Kathmandu Beauty Parlour

When I walked into the back of Ritu’s beauty salon—where hair is cut and styled, manicures given, and henna applied—the room was abuzz. “She shaved her head?” one woman queried with her head inside a dilapidated pink hairdryer.

“All her hair is gone?” an unmarried Newār woman asked incredulously, smoothing the creases out of her green sarwal kurtā as she sat on the arm of her sister’s chair.

“But why did she do that? It wasn’t necessary,” the first woman continued taking her head out from under the dryer to hear the response more clearly.

“You know Indiraj,” the senior stylist Kumari commented. “She has always worn her hair short, especially since she never married.”

The second woman’s sister was having her nails manicured. “So when her mother died, she shaved her head. Did you hear, she even went to Pashupati and lit the funeral pyre?”

I had lifted my sari to knee-height and was lowering my dirty feet into soapy water. “Wait!” I interjected in confusion. “How can a woman light the pyre?” I asked, knowing women do not have the right to go to the cremation.

Kumari’s sister, Shima, was removing large plastic rollers from another woman’s hair, and ventured, “Do you think she did it for the property? She didn’t even give her brother time to come from India.”

“But what kind of woman is she to shave her head like a man and light the pyre? She’s too greedy,” an Indian woman said as green henna powder was applied by Solin, a stylist from Calcutta.

Kumari tried to clarify, having known Indira for many years, “She didn’t do it for the property, but to show that women should have rights like men, that we should be equal.”

The henna slathered woman remained unconvinced. “If she had only married when she had that offer, she wouldn’t need to fight for her father’s property; her husband would have taken care of her.”

The conversation continued like this, back and forth, women leaving off as they left the back rooms to hurry home or back to work, other women picking up the tails of the talk as they entered.

This is the beginning of a story of unmasking and potential betrayal among beauticians and customers and an anthropologist at Ritu’s beauty salon in Kathmandu. Is it fiction or is it ethnography? What can I reveal in one genre that might be outlaw in the other? Reading selections from my ethnographic fiction and my narrative ethnography, I explore issues of unmasking and betrayal in representation. By forefronting authorial accountability—my own—in these different genres, I explore the different types of truth revealed through these genres,
Bradley Tindall  
University of Georgia

Rabindranath Tagore and the Reorganization of the Calcutta Art Gallery

When Calcutta Art School principal, E.B. Havell and Vice Principal, Abanindranath Tagore decided to sell off the European paintings in the Calcutta Art Gallery and replace them with Mughal miniatures and other specimens of native art, the students rose up in outrage. This paper will examine the socio-political and aesthetic attitudes that fostered this controversy and the far-reaching consequences of its fulfillment.

Richard Tucker  
Oakland University

The Evolution of India's National Park System

India's 1972 Wildlife Protection Law, the legal basis of today's system of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, evolved from over a century of experimentation with wildlife and hunting management in both the provinces of British India and the Princely States. Many preserves originated in Reserved Forests under British law and management; hunting and fishing there was regulated by systems rooted in English and Scottish social history. Just a few emerged after 1947 from shikar reserves in the Princely States, some of them created by the rulers in tandem with Victorian British advisors. A few began as private holdings in British India. And the national network was fostered by a national network of natural history societies. In the difficult years after 1947 the debate over wildlife protection versus rapid economic development revealed the political influence of an international network of wildlife biologists, including the implicit social philosophy of the wildlife advocates.
Apropos of Two Biographies of Vanaratna

Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp

While fifteenth century Tibet was visited by a number of Indian and Sri Lankan Buddhist monks and laymen, the most outstanding of these was undoubtedly Vanaratna, known in Tibet as Nags kyi rin chen, the well-known scholar who also lived in the Kathmandu Valley for a number of years. His two closest Tibetan disciples were 'Gos Lo tsā ba and Khrims khang Lo tsā ba. The latter even visited him in the Kathmandu Valley shortly before he passed away. In this paper we shall examine several aspects of his life in Tibet and Nepal, using his biographies by these two Tibetans, as well as Khrims khang Lo tsā ba’s biography written by Zhwa dmar Chos grags ye shes.

R. Vaitheswaran
Coc College

Gandhian Hinduism and the Hindu Resurgence of the Nineties: A Retrospective Evaluation

The resurgence in the nineties of one version of Hindu nationalism that traces its origins to the modernizing vision of Hedgewar and Savarkar raises the question of its relationship to the gradual decline in influence of the earlier dominant vision of a universalist, modernizing Hinduism—that of Mahatma Gandhi. In the decades of the Indian struggle for independence and the years following when the secularized version of the Gandhian emphasis on Hindu-Muslim unity was practiced by Jawaharlal Nehru, it overshadowed by far the Hedgewar-Savarkar perspective. This paper seeks to provide as a background the substance of the two visions and the basis of their respective appeals to different sections of the Indian population. With waning of the power and influence of Gandhi’s own personal life as a fundamental expression of his “Hinduism”, Gandhian philosophy has had few adherents in practice. Equally important, the appeal of his teachings as a unifying national force has declined. Even in Gandhi’s own life time, Hindu-Muslim clashes were a regular feature of social and political life. This reality needs to be explained. Questions also arise as to possible flaws in the ideology underlying the pursuit of national and communal unity. To what extent were perspectives on the Hindu-Muslim issue rooted in history? Why were there relatively few Muslims who shared his vision of the country and the nation? What are the historical and psychological forces to which the Gandhian perspective failed to give adequate importance? To what extent did vision outstrip the real, even if the latter were stretched to its ideal potential? How do the "flaws" of this vision contrast with and explain the apparent appeal, growing in strength, of the others? The paper will address these questions.
Gautam Vajracharya
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Vedic Axis Mundi and Asokan Pillar

In a series of articles John Irwin has convincingly demonstrated that Asokan pillars are the development of the Vedic cosmic pillars. My study of same subject matter, however, prevents me to accept some of his explanation of symbolism particularly because the author excluded the study of the textual references to the cosmic pillar where it is regarded as a water pillar, a Vedic notion that correlates very well with the iconography of the Asokan pillars.

Rajagopal Vakulabharanam
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Linguistic Hegemony as Hegemonic Ideology

This paper will argue that members belonging to the dominant social and economic groups of a certain sub-region (Andhra) derived maximum benefit by the creation of a separate linguistic province of Andhra Pradesh. These dominant groups have succeeded both in the past and in the present in rallying the whole of the linguistic community behind them. Agitations for the creation of an independent administrative unit out of the sub-region of Andhra are to be understood as backlash against similar demands by neglected sub-regions and as effort to exert pressure and retain dominance.

Rashmi Verma
University of Illinois - Chicago

Gender in Sara Suleri’s ‘Meatless Days’

Meatless Days straddles several worlds: Pakistan, the American midwest and New Haven, as also the worlds of politics, domesticity and the university, and of the nation and the diaspora. My paper will explore the various spaces laid out by Suleri, and in it I will attempt to argue that Suleri’s memoir points to the fact that there are no separate and autonomous spaces, that each space is configured only in relation to its opposite, and that to seek a pure women’s space in South Asia might be an ultimately self-defeating and frightening task. I taught this book as part of a course on "Women in the Third World." Suleri’s bleak and sad declaration of the absence of women in the Third World came as a shock to my students after fourteen weeks of relentless confirmation of women’s unheard voices and unseen spaces. The task was to prepare my students to read Suleri’s comment ironically, and yet the discursive space of the novel militated against that process of reading. My paper will use this text to show how the very act of configuring space is complicit with shifting subjectivities, and that in its failure to emerge as a feminist text, MD offers new challenges to feminist geographies in South Asia.
Jayaprakash Narayan: Walking the Gandhian Path in Independent India

Jayaprakash (JP) Narayan is considered by many in his country to be a modern hero of India. He established himself through his long career as a man of integrity with a sincere interest in improving his nation for all who lived in it. His activities after India became independent and until his own death, in 1979, made him naturally comparable to M. K. Gandhi. This paper argues, through a comparison of ideology and action, that Narayan indeed conformed to the Gandhian mold, perhaps more completely than any other Indian of his time. He not only shared Gandhi’s political vision for India’s future, but he faithfully implemented a Gandhian satyagraha in the mid-1970s in the hope that India might begin to realize that vision. Though they worked in very different political contexts, Gandhi and Narayan each discovered the power inherent in a disciplined, mass movement for the attainment of short-term political goals. Like Gandhi, Narayan also failed to transform his non-partisan campaign into a sustained movement for “total revolution.” As in Gandhi’s case, the major reasons for Narayan’s ultimate political failure were his inability to stifle partisan interests, his failure to effectively institutionalize himself into an independent, organic, powerful force, and his fateful death at the moment when his leadership was most needed.

Martin Wainwright
University of Akron

“With the Empire’s Fighters”: India’s Armed Forces in Imperial Propaganda during the First World War

During the First World War, Indian forces saw active duty in the Middle East and on the Western Front. Their participation in the war effort added weight to Indian nationalist demands for greater autonomy from Britain. But it also served as an example of loyalty which British authorities used to legitimize their rule over India. During the winter of 1916-17, the British War Office circulated a motion-picture slide show, entitled “With the Empire's Fighters,” which showed the lives of Indian soldiers serving on the Western Front. The movie film is lost, but the India Office Library holds photographs and discards used in preparing the presentation.

My paper will analyze this movie using slides and overheads of these photographs. It will discuss how “With the Empire’s Fighter's” compared to other examples of imperial propaganda aimed at showing Indian acceptance of British rule. It will also explore the military, cultural, and racial assumptions about India’s armed forces that this movie reveals. This in turn will lead to an examination of the role of propaganda in British efforts to keep the Indian armed forces a loyal and useful strategic tool in the context of the challenges of world war and Indian nationalism.
William Waldron
Independent Scholar

Buddhism, Human Nature and the Origins of Evil

This paper aims to contextualize the Buddhist teachings on negative human actions, by articulating a Buddhist middle path between extreme views of human 'nature' and evil, and to exemplify it by outlining the teachings concerning these negativities as found in the Pali Canon and later Abhidharma materials.

Buddhists critique the 'nature' versus 'nurture' dichotomy between 1) the essentialist view that human evil is biologically determined, and thus can never be completely eradicated, and 2) the behaviorist view that human evil is wholly conditioned by environmental factors, and thus can be eliminated through properly designed 'socialization' alone. The Buddhist middle path reconciles and transcends these two views by recognizing the biologically innate (inborn) forces that drive samsāra, but at the same time advocating their ultimate purification on the path toward liberation.

To exemplify this position, we will examine the status and functions of the latent defilements and manifest afflictives (anuṣaya, klesa) within early Indian Buddhism. We will argue that the conception of innate impurities concerns not only the means toward purification and liberation, but also reflects deeper presuppositions about the nature of mind (citta) itself, both before and after liberation. Purification is thus intimately related to ultimate conceptions of sentence and Buddhahood.

Jonathan S. Walters
Whitman College

Pushing POSON: Power and a Buddhist Pilgrimage in Postcolonial Sri Lanka

This paper analyzes the political, economic and social forces at work in the modern transformation of a central Sinhala Buddhist pilgrimage, that which honors Arhant Mahinda (supposed son of Ašoka Maurya and apostle of Buddhism to Sri Lanka) each year during the lunar month of Poson (June-July). My work on the precolonial and colonial history of this festival and the story that it enacts, part of a work-in-progress on the cult of Arhant Mahinda, highlights numerous dimensions of the contemporary pilgrimage which are unique to the postcolonial period. In particular, it highlights the uniqueness of the modern nationalist ideology of Sinhala history, in which Arhant Mahinda is cast as a proponent of Sinhala nationalism and "development". I demonstrate that since Independence a wide range of powerful, largely urban, Sri Lankans – including politicians of both main parties, leading businessmen, scholars, archaeologists and Buddhist monks – have collaborated in a conscious mobilization of the Sinhala people to make Poson the center of their liturgical year, and thereby to make this nationalist ideology of Sinhala history central to their identity as Sinhala Buddhists. Having set out the contours of this modern transformation of the Poson festival, I investigate its relationship to wider issues confronting modern Sri Lanka, including civil war and "Westernization".
The relationship between non-revolutionary political change and women's consciousness and mobilization in Pakistan needs to be put within a framework in which the different manifestations of gendered power are seen as embedded in the larger power configurations in Pakistan. The tensions and dynamics involved in the negotiations of power on the personal level relate to the larger state structures. This paper focuses on the ways in which receiving higher education is enabling women to aspire to have power in their own lives, if not in the larger society. Such an analysis allows an insight into the complexity of the issues involved. In particular, it raises the issue of Muslim women and universal rights, with specific reference to Pakistan. Furthermore, it brings attention to the nature of the democratic process within an Islamic nation, and the consequent gendered contradictions inherent in the Pakistani situation.

Jennifer Wenzel
University of Texas - Austin

The Female Body all Over India: Mahasweta Devi's 'Imaginary Maps'

*Imaginary Maps* (1995) collects three stories about India's *adivasis* by Mahasweta Devi, translated from the Bengali by Gayatri Spivak. As the title of the book suggests, the project of the stories is to reimagine various "cartographies", including the relationship between *adivasis* and "mainstream" India and the global maps of exploitation constructed by institutions such as the World Bank and the multicultural academy. Two of the stories, however, explicitly engage the relationship between the female (*adivi*) body and the various scales of space that constitute the nation of India. "Douloti", set in 1962 Bihar, maps the pervasiveness of bonded labour across the subcontinent at the same time that it focuses on the plight of Douloti, an *adivi* woman sold into bonded prostitution under the pretext of marriage. "The Hunt", also set in Bihar, narrates the "true" story of Mary Oraon, a half-Australian, half-Oraon young woman who kills the "biggest beast," a dishonest forest contractor, during her community's traditional women's hunting festival of justice.

Both stories examine the relationship between mobility and sexuality; Douloti's enforced deployment of her sexuality literally saps her body of life, and her spatial movements both within countryside and house are completely determined by the men who exploit her. Furthermore, her socialised desire to be a "good wife" prevents her from recognizing her actual status. When Douloti is finally too sick to work and is thus released from what is effectively captivity, her putrid body collapses over a chalk map of India that had been prepared for independence day. "Douloti is all over India," Mahasweta writes, and the ironies are multiple: bonded labour is superimposed over the nationalist typography of India; the previously immobile Douloti "transcends" her bounds and engulfs the subcontinent. Mary Oraon, by contrast, enjoys a marginal yet almost completely autonomous position because of her mixed birth. She is able to manipulate her sexuality strategically in any of the spaces (village, market-town, forest) to which she has access. When she lures the contractor into the forest and ultimately to his death with the promise of her body, the forest becomes a site of resistance, rather than the locus of defeat, deprivation and desperation. While the close of the story finds Mary leaving her village on a journey to an unknown destination, her successful manipulation of her mobility and her sexual appeal has at least temporarily preserved the forest for the villagers she leaves behind. The contrast between these characters' trajectories preliminarily reveals the hollowness behind injunctions which restrict the movement of female bodies in order to protect their sexuality; Douloti's immobility makes her a whore-as-good-wife, while Mary's mobility allows her
Maya K. Yagnik, Ali H. Mir  
University of Massachusetts  

Technology and the Third World: The Redefinition of Space and Place  

The contention of observers of business and industry is that late 20th century capitalism is experiencing a transformation of work to a new regime which has been variously categorized as post-industrial, post-modern, post-fordist, or simply, the new industrial paradigm. The leading edge of this change purportedly lies in the use of new technologies, particularly those of computer and information systems.  

This presentation examines some implications of the use of information technologies in India particularly in the area of software development. Based upon a study of the practice of bodyshopping (the hiring of Indian programmers for contract work in the U.S.), the industry of software development in India for Western consumption, the use of networks that permit the utilization of Indian workers for work "in" the U.S., and the information technologies in the pipeline of U.S. research agencies, this paper asks the following questions:  

How are modern information technologies limiting the mobility of labor while facilitating the mobility of capital? How are the transnational industries of software development and network design transforming the nature of space and place in the Indian context? What is the nature and the agenda of the new technologies that are being developed in the Western world for transfer to the "developing" nations? What implications does this have for the nature of production that will be "permitted" to workers and businesses in India?  

Mathew Zachariah  
University of Calgary, Canada.  

Friendship across Cultures: Lessons from the Relationship of G.H.Hardy and Srinivasa Ramanujan  

Abstract of the paper: This paper is based on Robert Kanigel’s The Man Who Knew Infinity: A Life of the Genius Ramanujan (Toronto: Collier MacMillan Canada, 1991). Although the Library of Congress classifies this as a book in Mathematics, it is, to quote Kanigel, "a story about social and educational systems, and about how they matter and how they can sometimes nurture talent and sometimes crush it." The book, also, is about the remarkable friendship that developed from 1913 to 1918 between an English Mathematician of aristocratic mein, G.H. Hardy and a poor Tamil Brahmin; Ramanujan had written to Hardy for help as he was "striking out a new path." The papers Ramanujan was able to publish as a result of his work in India and strengthened by his labours in England, says Kanigel, are still plumbed for their secrets seven decades after his death. There are lessons we can learn from Kanigel’s book about respectful relationships between persons across material and spiritual divides.
Towards a "Doubtless" Mentality: The Representation, Actualization, Exercise and Failure of Power(s) in Kathakali and Kalarippayattu of Kerala

Kathakali dance-dramas of Kerala enact the trials and tribulations of epic heroes like Arjuna, Bhima, Rugmangada, Nala, etc. as they are called upon to exercise their "heroic" powers in particular circumstances. Practitioners of Kerala's closely related martial art, kalarippayattu, were traditionally those local "heroes" trained to actualize in practice similar powers. This paper reads across kathakali and kalarippayattu in order to understand 'power' (sakti) not as a singular concept, but as a complex, nuanced, and contextually specific set of discourseS. practices, and behaviors. The paper will explore how both social actors in the ethnographic present and dramatic characters on stage negotiate 'power' in its multiple facets as substantive, as immanent and capricious, as an ideal state of "doubtlessness" and "mental power," etc. in order to gain particular forms of agency and/or behavior. Attention will be given to the constraints which impinge upon these various facets of power as they are negotiated and exercised in particular contexts by particular actors.

Leonard Zwilling
Madison, WI

Vadava: Male-Mare or Just Plain Horse?

vaḍava, the masculinized form of vaḍava "mare" is found twice in late Vedic literature, once at Taittiriya Saṃhitā 2.1.8.3, and again at Gopatha Brāhmaṇa 2.2.1. In both instances the context is the same; an optional animal sacrifice to Tvaśṭi for progeny and cattle where the vaḍava is the victim. In his translation of the TS passage Keith renders the vaḍava as "horse" and opines in a footnote that the gender has been changed to suit the context. However, an examination of similar passages in the Maitrāyaṇī and Katha Saṃhitās, the śrauta literature, and the commentaries on the TS all point to a deliberate change of gender for the purpose of expressing the sexual ambiguity of the victim, making it the offering par excellence for the purpose of the sacrifice. In establishing the true sense of vaḍava we shall also elucidate the proper meaning of other terms expressive of sexual ambiguity, such as naṃsaṇaka and naṃsakāra.
Panel Proposals for the 24th Annual Conference on South Asia
The Architect in South Asian History

One of the noteworthy features of South Asian Studies is that while much research and scholarship abounds on the monumental glories of India, almost no thought has been given to those who created them. This panel, first in a series of proposed panels devoted to the study of the builders' craft, will explore the role and significance of the architect in South Asian history.

The subject of the architect, interesting though it is, has so far been neglected by scholars due largely to the paucity of source materials dealing with them. New and informed methods, however, are now being used to overcome the perceived limitations as scholars venture into territory once considered impossible to access. Architects are being approached through direct and indirect methods. Direct contact with architects of bygone days is being established, to a very limited extent, through stray treatises composed by some of them and the inscriptions they have left behind and, to a greater extent, by association with practicing architects of today whose families have pursued the profession for generations and whose prized inheritance consists of skills and secrets that go back centuries. Indirectly, the architects are being approached through the witness of court historians, imperial personages, nobles and officials, painters, poets and foreign travelers, and through the monuments which they created. They are being studied, also, through the chronologically oblique method which allows for the cautious use of evidence from earlier and later periods as supplement to those available from contemporary sources and in comparison to their counterparts in other areas of the world.

The panelists here presented are drawn from the fields of architecture, art history, and history and bring together differing perspectives to the over-arching theme of the architect in South Asian history. Their papers transport us over centuries, from classical to modern times, and over distinct geographical regions covering the north, central, and southern parts of the subcontinent. What they present, based on their choice of primary source materials, is different facets of the architect in South Asia and the evolution from the priest-architect to the present day sthapati.
Panel Title: Analyzing State/local Relations and Explaining Local Institutional Change: Examples from Grazing, Forest and Irrigation Resource Systems in the Western Himalaya.

Panelists: Vasant Saberwal, Yale University; Arun Agrawal, University of Florida, Gainesville; Mark Baker, University of California, Berkeley.

Discussant: Richard Tucker, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Panel Abstract

The three papers in this panel explore the dynamics of change within local natural resource management institutions, how local institutions articulate with broader and changing regional political economies, and the various strategies local groups employ to secure access to and control over resources in the face of competing state claims. Saberwal examines how a flexible property rights system and political influence enable the Gaddi herders of Himachal Pradesh to herd profitably despite Forest Department attempts to restrict their herd sizes and access to forage resources. Agrawal, in his study of local forest management institutions in Kumaon, argues against the conventional wisdom that group size is inversely related to successful collective action, and he examines the relationship between political context and villager’s strategies in their ongoing struggles with the state over forest access. In his study of the communal irrigation systems (kuhls) of District Kangra, H.P., Baker argues that local social and ecological factors account for the different impacts of increasing nonfarm employment on kuhl regimes as well as the diverse responses among kuhls. The panel thus provides an unusual opportunity to examine similar dynamics across different resource systems within a geographically circumscribed region.

Panel Title: Power and the Performing Arts of Kerala

Panel Abstract - Below include a brief abstract of the panel (150-200 words) and attach separate abstracts for the papers proposed for the panel (required for consideration).

Much of the previous literature on the different kinds of ritual and performative power has been satisfied with simply identifying a power in something or someone: women, 'low castes,' religious practitioners, deities, mantras, mandalas, etc. Questions arise: when, where, in relation to whom and what, and what happens when and where one power conflicts with other powers. Many writings quote informants who claim "So-and-so has the greatest power of all; even over such-and-such," but when one comes down to the ground level of social interaction, So-and-so is clearly has less power in achieving his/her goals than these claims assert. Another problem is that many writers are content with an understanding of 'power' in an ethnomental (an often mystical 'native concept') sense, but are vague about what 'power' is to mean as a term in comparative social sciences. That being the case, it is difficult to relate South Indian 'powers' to theories of power in the rest of the world.
PANEL ABSTRACT

Bangladesh 1995: Unfinished Revolution Revisited

Every five years since 1975 I have been offering a panel on Bangladesh. The focus of this panel is on problems and issues of resource development, and how they have been affected by the uneven democratizing process. Having gone through a revolution during 1970-71 culminating in a successful liberation war and independence, Bangladesh's drive towards democracy abruptly stopped with the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975. What followed was a cycle of coups/counter-coups, attempted legitimization of military rule, brief interlude of civilian rule, the return of military rule and attempted legitimization of the military rule. Democratic aspirations soared when the military rule collapsed under pressure of a concerted mass movement spearheaded by the opposition parties in 1990. It seemed to signal the completion of the unfinished revolution of the 1970s. But the parliamentary deadlock over the issue of a care-taker government as the most effective mechanism for a fair and non-violent election seems to have jeopardized the democratizing process without any direct military intervention.

Education being the key to resource development, the panels major emphasis will be the role of both formal and informal education, the prospects of post-graduate education and the needed leadership commitments in this context.

Panel Title
Diasporic Power:
Emergent Indian American Politics in a Global Economy

Panel Organizer:
Kaushik Ghosh
84, Western Way
Princeton, NJ 08540
{609} 921-3941
kgosh@phoenix.princeton.edu

Panel Abstract
If the proliferation of diasporic institutions within the American political economy is an indicator, then the Indian diaspora has indeed arrived. Over the last decade the Indian community in the US has emerged from its "closet". Its image as a silent community that worked in the professional sectors and then vanished into the privacy of the home to be seen again only following morning at work has been gradually changing. A number of diverse institutional forms have been created in the public space by the community over the last decade. These include quasi trade and commerce organizations such as the NRICC, religious/cultural organizations such as the VHP and HSC, electronic lobbying and Information groups (Action India or India Alert) and a new wave of "area studies" type centers - community sponsored India Chairs in universities, Vedic studies programs, India research centers etc, to mention a few.

This panel seeks to examine the multiple facets of the "public emergence" of the Indian community. It begins with the premise that the emergence into the open of these organizations marks a new and pro-active stage in diaspora politics. Also, in many ways these groups are the clearest indicators of the public politics of the diaspora - or at least of those powerful within the diaspora. Through individual papers the panel first attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding of some of these emergent public forms. Through the comments of the discussant and the theoretical outlines drawn by the individual papers the panel hopes to investigate several questions: How are these organizations linked? Is it correct to assume that their agendas are multiple and unrelated? Or, would it be possible to hypothesize that a coherent politics underlies these multiple forms? Are there common ideological and material structures that bind these seemingly diverse set of organizations?
Panel Abstract

Panel brings together papers focused on the functioning of terrestrial and aquatic ecological systems in various parts of Nepal. The papers will emphasize the ecological functioning of the communities studied, but will also explore the implications of the scientific evidence for conservation and sustainable development. The first paper explores the habitat requirements of Tarai large mammal populations within and without Chitawan National Park. The second paper, a summary of research now in progress, describes Saurus crane habitat requirements and interactions with humans. The third paper summarizes a comprehensive analysis of fish populations in one of Nepal's three major river systems. The fourth paper examines species composition and reproduction in forests on the southeast flank of Dhaulagiri Himal. The fifth paper reports on surprisingly successful forest reproduction in Sagarmatha National Park.

Panel Abstract:

From the Colonial Archive and Development Rhetorics to Renunciant Thought: Heterogeneous Discourses of Gender in India

The papers in this panel examine the politics of gender ideologies at sites of colonial appropriations, at the intersection of discourses of development and nationalism, in educational settings as young women negotiate conflicting rhetorics of gender, and in male religious ideologies. Raheja's paper examines British appropriations of Indian women's real and imagined speech, as representations of a unitary "tradition" are produced by containing and deleting recalcitrant talk. Berry's paper examines the contradictions and dissonances which emerge during the Community Development era as American discourses of housewifery are juxtaposed with nationalist imaginings of Indian women as the savior of the new nation state. Klenk explores how women students of a north Indian ashram interpret Gandhian, village and "official" discourses of womanhood within the construction of their identities and lives. And finally, Khandelwal explores male renouncers' representation of their gender identities as they negotiate gynophobic and transcendent discourses of gender. Each of the papers describes particular sites at which heterogeneous rhetorics of gender are acknowledged and negotiated, whether by those in power or by those who are subject to it.
Panel Abstract

Gender and Space in South Asia

This panel brings together four papers that analyze and demonstrate the centrality of space in the ways in which patriarchy, colonialism and postcolonial ideologies have sought to dominate women in South Asia. Recent critical theories have pointed out that space can no longer be treated as dead matter and as a homogeneous entity, but is radically heterogeneous and multiply layered. For feminist theory this notion of space is of crucial significance, for it allows another avenue from which to approach women's oppression. It is the organization of space that has been at the heart of the separation of public and private spheres. Attention to space also enables us to examine women's agency in the ways in which women reorganize space themselves, and challenge its patriarchal and colonial formations.

The first paper on this panel by Shuchi Kapila focuses on the colonial state and its configuration of the native woman who was supposed to straddle the domestic realm and certain designated public spheres. This paper will examine late 19th-century British fiction and read it in light of historical events such as the ban against Sati and the Doctrine of Lapse. Mousumi Roy Choudhuri's paper will be concerned with Attia Hosain's novel dealing with pre-independent India, and the lives of women in an upper-class Muslim family. This paper will twill examine sexual, class and religious hierarchies expressed in women's spaces framed within a colonial state. Jennifer Wenzel's paper on Mahasweta Devi's short stories depicting lives of tribal women in postcolonial India points to the continuity between colonial and postcolonial ideologies of gender and its proper place within the state. Doubly oppressed as women and as tribals, these stories reflect the control of female body and the restrictions of mobility placed upon it, but they also demonstrate how these women have also established sites of resistance. Finally, Rashmi Varma's paper on Sara Suleri's Meatless Days deals with postcolonial Pakistan, a society in transition, where national and gender spaces collide in violent and complicit ways. Suleri's position as an academic writing about her life from New Haven complicates the ways in which she sees women's space in South Asia and in a trans-national world, at great remove from Mahasweta's fictional world. What all four papers will attempt to demonstrate are the conjunctures between different systems of patriarchal domination in South Asia, as well as throw light on women's agency as depicted in literature and history.

The Gender of the State

This panel examines the gender of the state by considering both the gendered effects of state practices, as well as the gendered assumptions implicit in the cultural construction of "the state." Our objective is to analyse the manner in which postcolonial states mediate the relationship between nation and gender, development and disciplinary regimes, militarisation and sexuality, and consumption and pleasure. We emphasize that state practices are never gender-neutral in how they implicate national and transnational subjects.

We will focus on the "gendering" of states through their participation in the creation of specific subject positions through mass media (in the case of India), the educational system (Sri Lanka), development programs (India), and the transnational labor market and consumption (India). Grewal examines how Barbie dolls and multinational jobs create certain gendered formations in India and among Indian immigrants in the United States. Gupta looks at the regulation of population implicit in a particular central government program aimed at the welfare of mothers and children in west Uttar Pradesh. De Alwis demonstrates how schooling produces militaristic minds and bodies in Sri Lanka. Finally, Mankekar shows how feelings of militaristic nationalism are produced by television programs such as Paramveer Chakra.

key words: gender, sexuality, pleasure, discipline, consumption, development, education, transnational labor market, foreign investment
"Historical Dimensions of Wildlife Management in India"

Panel Abstract:

Today's intensive debate over strategies to maintain biodiversity and wildlife populations in India (just as throughout the tropical world) has been shaped profoundly by the historical evolution of its terms. Wildlife managers are well aware of this, but they have little published historical analysis available to them. This panel is the first step toward a survey of wildlife management in India during and after the colonial era. It samples both British India and the Princely States, and considers the cultural mystique of aristocratic hunting, as well as social stratification, penetration of commercial markets and evolution of law, politics and management, all of which have helped produce the dangerous depletion of wildlife and the rancorous debate over wildlife protection versus social equity which India struggles today. Finally, the panel probes methodological issues imbedded in the effort to merge historical and ecological studies with contemporary policy debates.
Indian Cinema, the State, and Questions of Modernity

This panel on the cinemas of India seeks to bring together some of the recent work on the production of national, religious and secular nationalist, and modernist identities in the last half-century. While the papers take up a range of filmic and non-filmic texts, they all address themselves to a set of common, interlocking concerns: questions of intertextuality or "dialogue"; the film industry's self-consciousness about certain kinds of "national" enterprises; questions of law and the state, and its interpelling of juridical subjects; and the (uncertain) production of "modern identities.

Participants

Lalitha Gopalan, "Riotos Love Stories: Rathnam's Bombay and Chopra's 1942"
Sandhya Shetty, "Sanitary Subjects: A Reading of Indian Modernity and Indian Cinema"
Parama Roy, "The Endurance of Nargis: Stardom and Muslim Identity in Bombay Cinema"
Chair, Parama Roy

Panel Abstract for Annual Conference on South Asia

"INDIGENOUS WORK STRATEGIES IN THE HIMALAYAS"

The study of indigenous work strategies is often overlooked in South Asian studies, yet it is full of interesting folklore, indigenous knowledge, and practical applications for development. The papers in this panel devote attention to a wide range of work related topics, including livestock raising, rice transplanting, patronage, aesthetics of artisanship, simple labor reciprocity, home security strategies, and the hierarchy of choices between indigenous and introduced work strategies. Most of the papers are descriptive in nature since the actual terms and rules of local working strategies have not been discussed in depth in previous literature. The papers presented in this panel all have in common a focus on indigenous work strategies as the "ethnomanagement" of human resources. Ethnomanagement refers to the study of the act, manner, or practice of handling, supervision, or control over work for productive ends, the prefix 'ethno-' referring to originally non-Western approaches specifically, though not soley. Overall, the panelists feel that the management of human resources is an important aspect of maintaining sustainable and permanent biodiversity in the Himalayan region.
Issues in the Cultural Geography of Indian Lesbian/Space: Identities, Movements, Interactions

The cultural geography of Indian gays/lesbians/bisexuals is the topic of this panel. Indians in the diaspora carry with them the legacies of their original culture, its ordering of space, identities, movements, and interactions. From the personal to the community level, this population has to explore a diasporic space that is differently ordered in which they find themselves in minorities along many different dimensions such as class, gender, ethnicity, race, color, and sexual orientation. These make for a very complex and arduous task in the formation of identities and the subsequent adjustment, perchance even of creating or re-ordering, space for them to express themselves and to conduct a discourse with which their diasporic space becomes not only tolerant, but nurturing as well. Several of these issues are explored in this panel including: individual identities, images of lesbians from pre- and post-colonial texts, case studies of gay Indian males in the diaspora, and the emergence of cybernetic networks as discourse space.

A Question of Place: Perspectives on South Asian Lesbian Diasporic Place-experience

This panel will feature a discussion of several issues and dimensions of the experience of South Asian lesbian people in the diaspora. The format will be a round-table discussion involving audience-participation and will include among, other topics, the following as they pertain to this community: discrimination, immigration, identity, emotional and physical health, relationships, support networks, and others. The problems of returning to the original cultural space and carrying the diasporic place-experience will also be discussed. This panel will be a follow-up to the panel “Issues in the Cultural Geography of Indian Lesbian Space: Identities, Movements, Interactions.”

Literary Facades: Explorations For Meaning in the Literary Works of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore.

The literary works of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore are usually put neatly in convenient categories dictated, more often than not, by conventional critical canons. This doubtless facilitates a serious study of these authors. But a close study of these authors reveal that the seemingly simple literary modes they used often conveyed a deeper aesthetic meaning in the form of a distinctive iconic language or in a deliberately ambiguous narrative technique.
Panel Proposal:
Language, Identity and the State in South Asia

Omar Qureshi, University of Chicago
Pradeep Jeganathan, University of Chicago
Arjun Gunaratne, Macalester College
Discussant: Bernard S. Cohn, University of Chicago

Drawing on case studies from Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal, this panel explores how different communities in multi-ethnic states enter into conflict and negotiate categories of identity. In all three histories discussed here, language has become the central element in the reformulation of identity by minority or marginal groups in the context of and in relation to official state ideology and practices predicated on received notions of linguistic identity. In every case, the relationship of various ethnic categories to the state is being renegotiated; in two of the cases discussed here, this is happening in the context of violent upheaval. In Pakistan, rioting between supporters of Sindhi and Urdu in 1972 served to unsettle the place of Urdu in Pakistani nationalism and in the Pakistani state. In Sri Lanka, a multilingual community contests the official state narrative of ethnic conflict in the aftermath of violence. And in Nepal, an ethnic group vigorously affirms the role of language as a central aspect of its identity, even though its members have no language in common, and organizes to ensure that the state enumerates them at census time on this basis.

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Panel: The "Martial Races" and Military Collaboration in Colonial India
Organizer: Chandar S. Sundaram, Doctoral Candidate, McGill University

Panel Abstract:

The Colonial Indian Army was one of the main institutions buttressing British rule in India. As with other such institutions, the Indian Army relied to a large extent upon Indian manpower, which it engaged in a collaborative relationship. The dynamics of this military collaboration have been largely neglected by scholarship, as has been the method by which it was sustained. This was the theory of the "Martial Races", which exercised a dominant influence upon the recruiting policies of the colonial Indian Army from the early Nineteenth Century until 1947. Essentially, the theory held that, in the subcontinent, certain "races" were warlike, and therefore more fit for military service than other Indian "races".

During the period of its greatest influence, the Martial Races theory was thought merely to be a reflection of Indian societal norms. The papers in this panel, however, demonstrate that the reality was a great deal more complex, encompassing what Edward Said terms "Orientalism", European conceptions of "race" and "the other", and the manipulation of indigenous concepts of "honour". These elements culminated in the writing of ethnographies to classify the various groups deemed martial in colonial India. In this way, the Martial Races theory served to channel and confine military collaboration in South Asia to certain specified avenues.

"MULTIPLE SELVES, MULTIPLE SOCIETIES: DIALOGIC APPROACHES TO SELF AND SOCIETY"

Much writing about narratives of self-representation analyzes them from the perspective of the actor embedded in dominant social and cultural forms: power, colonialism, gender. For example, scholars write about narratives of resistance; they write about colonial constructions of identity; they write about discourses of womanhood embedded in feminist literature that are played out in womens’ sense of themselves. These are discourses organized by external causes, from the outside. What do narratives of the self and of society look like if we analyze them not from the perspective of external forms, but from the perspective of the self and/or of groups engaged in dialogues with multiple others (groups)? Society, then, is produced in part through dialogic interactions and takes multiple forms. It is heterogeneous, constituted of overlapping communities in a process of interaction. Similarly, the self is constructed of multiple dialogues. Much of a person’s sense of self is part of ongoing interactions. When people talk about themselves, they emphasize interaction, the self constituted of relationships with others. This panel contributes to emerging approaches that theorize the self to be not solely an actor, embedded in social forms, but importantly an interactor creating both self and society.
Panelists: Rama Mantena, Gita Rajan, Anupama Rao, Parna Sengupta
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

The four papers in this panel are connected, as the title would suggest, by an interest in narrative. The subjects of the paper are geographically and chronologically diverse, from German pietists in the eighteenth century to Dalit writers of the twentieth. Rama Mantena's paper is explicitly interested in historical narrative, as it changed and evolved dialogically through contact with Western historiographies. Gita Rajan's interest is in the narratives of colonial encounter, suppressed within the various genres of German pietist texts. Parna Sengupta's paper is also interested in the missionary project, traced however through the narrative of British middle class religious and political culture articulated through the rhetoric of foreign missionizing. Anupama Rao's work is directly tied into issues of self-narrative in Dalit autobiographies, especially through the representation of caste and caste violence. The four papers attempt to critically interrogate, through the analyses of narratives, the boundaries which separate genres, peoples and histories.

"Negotiating Modernity with Bodies: Hinduism and 'Revivalism' in North India, 1875-present."

Chairperson: Valerie Ritter

"Modernization" has often been equated with "Westernization" in the study of South Asia. A closer examination of Hindu cultural institutions that have participated in "revivalism" while self-consciously seeking relevance to the "modern Western world" yields a more complex vision of the negotiations of Hindu identity. In literature, medicine, public devotion, or even the contents of a dowry, definitions of "traditional" and "modern" have merged in creative ways which complicate these terms of representation for colonial and post-colonial North India.

This panel addresses the body as a key site of these negotiations. Subject to the larger ideational structures of religion, medicine, and economics, the body--both symbolically and physically--has been a site of contention between conflicting worlds. Hinduism's plethora of embodied divinities was both a sore point of elite Indian religious revisionism and the most popularly compelling element of early Hindu nationalism. Dowry and medical practices--the exchange and treatment of bodies--have transformed in response to "secularization," yet are fraught with revivalist significance as well. These papers will examine these various Hindu bodily conceptions within a "modernizing" and nationalist India.
A Roundtable Discussion on Development in Nepal

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the “cold war” ushered in a new era of international relations beginning in 1990. Within a few years, vast political changes would occur in not only Second and Third World states, but also in the First World. For the first time in fifty years, conservative political leaders were swept into office in the Fall of 1994 in the United States. These new political actors swore themselves to a new covenant with the American public that included a vast reduction in the place and the power of the Federal Government in the lives of Americans. One of the many ramifications of this pledge is a reduction in what we have come to call “foreign aid.” Newspaper headlines in the late Spring of 1995 reported large cuts in the foreign aid contribution that the United States would make in this and future years. USAID, as we now it know, would be moved into the State Department. And newsletters, such as “Monday Developments” that relate to a Third World development audience, appeared to be panicked at the thought of loosing the sponsorship of the government of the United States for assistance to American and Third World non-profit organizations. Arguments were mustered and, in addition to taking credit for the achievement a wide variety of development goals and objectives, it was stated that foreign assistance “only represents 1% of the total US budget” and that ending foreign assistance would erode the ability of the US government to conduct its foreign policy, and so on.

The question the organizers of this roundtable discussion is: what impact, if any, will this have on development in Nepal? Will this cripple Nepal or is it possible that, in the long run, it will be beneficial? Will it matter at all, and if so where? In Kathmandu? In the rural sector and in large towns in other parts of Nepal? And then, what will “development” be like in the future and what role in particular can scholars and students of Nepal play in such a future?

The roundtable organizer is Paul Benjamin, independent scholar in the Madison, Wisconsin area, and the moderator of the roundtable will be Naomi Bishop, of. Although participants have been invited to present their ideas in brief remarks, we are hoping that the audience too will want to participate as well. The other participants, the theme they will be discussing, and their institutional affiliations are as follows:

Brief Keynote address by Paul Benjamin, organizer.


Dr. Pramod Parajuli, The Maxwell School of Public Policy, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY: “Nepali options within and outside the global economy; some case studies in sustainability and implications for grassroots practice.”

Mr. Om Gurung, Department of Anthropology, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: “Resource Management in Central Nepal.”

Dr. Kamal Adhikary, South Asia Center, University of Texas, Austin, Texas

Dr. Bishwa Acharya, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

Mr. Amulya Tuladhar, Graduate School of Geography, Clark University, Worcester, MA: “Modernization, Development, and Environmental Change in Nepal.”

This Roundtable Discussion on Development in Nepal will be held during the Annual South Asia Conference the 20th, 21st, and 22nd of October, 1995. The exact time and place will be determined later. The discussion will be recorded on tape and transcribed. The transcripts will be made available to the participants for additions and amendments. This will be done twice prior to publication in the Himalayan Research Bulletin.
THE INCARCERATION OF THE LOCAL WITHIN THE GLOBAL:

Systemic production and signification
in the Indian experience

3) How is nuclear non-proliferation as a treaty and political regime, as a prescriptive and normative foundation concerned with the establishment of political, legal, and technical barriers to the diffusion of nuclear weapons? How does the discursive production of nuclear non-proliferation in the West provide strategies of containment that are couched in dominant interpretive frameworks for the rest of the world? How does the discourse of nationalism intersect with nuclear discourses in the context of strategic geopolitics?

4) How can one problematize and politicize the representation process of global advertising in the Third World? Does gender work as the central operating mechanism in the attempts of transnational corporations to create a cross-cultural appeal for advertising? If it does, to what extent does the intervention of specific portrayals of women in global advertising undermine the attempts of a male gendered nationalism seeking to protect the female cultural whole?

The attempt of the panel is to submit a multi-disciplinary critique of the nature of uneven development and to underscore the insidious agenda of globalization. It offers insights from within fields such as Computer Science and Engineering, Communication and Management in an effort to draw linkages between the multiple discourses in the professions of the West and thus extend the boundaries of this crucial debate.

In an age characterized by the “big” distractions, (at least) by the porosity of nation-state boundaries to the entry and exit of transnational capital, “globalization” is a theme that has taken on hegemonic dimensions. This panel argues that the dominant logic of globalization is dependent upon the incarceration of the “local” through a circumscription of spaces of production, power, and signification available to “developing” nations.

The panelists draw upon their ongoing research within the fields of International Management, Organization Studies, Computer Science, Cultural Studies, and Social Theory to present specific case studies that throw light on the implications of the techniques of globalization for certain constituencies in India. The individual papers focus on the following issues:

1) What are the implications of the marketing of portable ultrasound scanners (by GE) in India? How has its potential impact in perpetrating female feticide generated multiple discourses which intersect in a manner that inhibits local action? More broadly, how has the influx of modern technologies in India systematically excluded certain subjectivities from the discourse of globalization?

2) How are modern information technologies limiting the mobility of labor while facilitating the mobility of capital? How are the transnational industries of software development and network design transforming the nature of space and place in the Indian context? What is the nature and the agenda of the new technologies that are being developed in the Western world for transfer to the “developing” nations? What implications does this have for the nature of production that will be “permitted” to workers and businesses in India?
NUCLEAR SIGNS, NUCLEAR TIMES: STRATEGIZING THE POLITICS OF SIGNIFICATION

Sathish K. Kolluri
Department of Communication
University Of Massachusetts
Amherst, 01003.

If one is interested in making an intervention in the nuclear debate within the discursive displacements of the much contested realm of International Relations Theory, then, one is forced to take a critical look at nuclear literature, that is produced under the postmodern aegis; diverse themes and regimes appear chart the map of nuclearism, nuclear deterrence, nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear phrase regimes, and nuclear criticalism. Postmodern semiotics analyses of nuclear weaponry achieve theoretical fluency, in that they valorize the nuclear weapon as a sign and theorize nuclear terror as a condition into lexical significance.

My paper advances a critique of nuclear politics. In doing so, the nuclear non-proliferation treaty is laid bare, revealing its inherent Eurocentric biases. The paper is an interrogation of the normative and prescriptive foundations of the treaty. Simultaneously it is also an enunciation of a positionality that points to the political naiveté of some of the more recent works of the postmodern variety that circulate in the theater of International Relations Theory.

Some fundamental questions arise. Here are a few. How is nuclear non-proliferation as a treaty and phrase regime, as a prescriptive and normative foundation concerned with the establishment of political, legal and technical barriers to the diffusion of nuclear weapons? How does the discursive producion of nuclear non-proliferation in the West provide strategies of containment that are ouched in dominant interpretive frameworks for the rest of the world? How does the discourse of (Indian) nationalism intersect with nuclear discourses in the context of strategic geopolitics?
In this section of our panel, we will investigate the issue of whether the consciousness is actual (dravyatas, rdzas. nyid.) or concealing (samvritih, kun. dzob.). We will focus on two primary sources for our investigation: Candrakirti's (6th century C.E.) Prasannapada (chapter six, Ragaraktapariksa) along with comments from rGyal. tsap.'s commentary on the Abhisamayalamkara with regard to this issue. On the Yogacara side, we will refer to Sthiramati's (7th century C.E.) commentary on Vasubandhu's Trimsika called the Trimsikavijnaptibhasyam.

This issue looms large later, in different ways involving all later schools of Mahayana Buddhism with regard to their stands on this issue, whether those positions are explicitly or implicitly taken. We will only touch on later implications for the dispute above briefly in our conclusion.

Panel Abstract

Political Natures, Naturalized Politics: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of Environmental Change in South Asia

Chair: Shubhra Gururani, Syracuse University
Discussant: Paul Greenough, University of Iowa

The unprecedented transformation in our natural landscape has posed us with a challenge which demands re-examination and understanding of modern principles of organization and production. It is widely argued that modern developmentalist ideology of growth and progress has systematically exploited nature and transformed nature into an economic resource. Environmental historians, ecofeminists, and social theorists all argue for an abandonment of masculinist, scientific, and capitalist ways of knowing and acting. According to them, in order to map a truly sustainable future, we have to recover non-modern, pre-colonial, feminine models of survival.

Although, not endorsing discourses of modernity, in this panel we evaluate the contradictions embedded in these arguments. It is our view that although such critiques reject contemporary models of economy and polity, they present an essentialist view which is marked by the dichotomies of modern-traditional, destructive-regenerative, masculine-feminine. The panel argues that in order to analyze the present predicament we need to explore the many complexities which shape these discourses in global socio-economic and historical context. By looking at colonial environmental accounts, ecofeminist narratives, and fishworker's movement, we suggest a critical evaluation of the dominant environmental narrative in India.
Mainstream literature on Pakistan continues to leave unexplored the realm of the powerlessness in politics. The papers presented in this panel reflect the need to bring the concerns of the peripheralized to the fore. Mahmud maps out a background in which 40 years after independence, the Pakistani state remains in a precarious position, its power under siege from both internal and external economic and political forces. Weiss and Pasha reflect on the changing roles of citizens, particularly women and intellectuals, and the mediating positions that they play vis a vis the state. Hussain's paper attempts to reinscribe the role of the marginalized in economic policies, pointing out the the long-term ramifications of current practices. Reinterpreting the positions of the powerlessness, and placing them in the context of the state, is key to furthering analysis of Pakistani politics.

Panel Title: Power and the Performing Arts of Kerala

PANEL ABSTRACT

Much of the previous literature on the different kinds of ritual and performative power has been satisfied with simply identifying a power in something or someone: women, 'low castes,' religious practitioners, deities, mantras, mandalas, etc. Questions arise: when, where, in relation to whom and what, and what happens when and where one power conflicts with other powers. Many writings quote informants who claim "So-and-so has the greatest power of all; even over such-and-such," but when one comes down to the ground level of social interaction, So-and-so is clearly has less power in achieving his/her goals than these claims assert. Another problem is that many writers are content with an understanding of 'power' in an ethnosemantic (an often mystical 'native concept') sense, but are vague about what 'power' is to mean as a term in comparative social sciences. That being the case, it is difficult to relate South Indian 'powers' to theories of power in the rest of the world.

This panel begins a stock-taking of the various theoretical proposals and claimants for power and explore the concepts of performative power in either an historical or social context.

Kathleen D. Morrison, Carla M. Sinopoli
University of Michigan

Recent Archeological Research at Vijayanagara

The pre-colonial South Indian capital of Vijayanagara has been the focus of intensive archaeological research by foreign and Indian archaeologists since the late 1970s. In this paper we summarize some of the contributions of that research toward understanding of Vijayanagara history and economy, with particular focus on our ongoing project: "The Vijayanagara Metropolitan Survey." Our program of systematic survey in the fortified hinterland of the imperial capital has revealed an intensively utilized and modified landscape, characterized by zones of intensive agricultural production, nucleated and dispersed settlements, craft production locales, roads, fortifications, and temples and shrines. The temporal and spatial distribution of sites
RECONSIDERING CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

This panel presents for reconsideration some important areas of recent Christian experience in India in light of forms of discourse—Dalit, tribal, missionary, and inter-religious—prominent in church and academia today.

Focusing on the works of four Indian Christian theologians, Doucette examines three specific ways in which their Dalit theology empowers Dalit Christians in their uniqueness as an oppressed community and motivates them to strive for liberation from poverty and discrimination in both Church and society. Pachuau explores the socio-political ramifications of "tribal" Christian specificity in North East India from a Mizo perspective. He suggests that a religio-cultural identity crisis is what lies at the heart of the chronic recurrence of political turmoil in the region since Indian Independence. Engblom analyzes the family correspondence of an American nurse who worked in tribal Maharashtra during the 1940s. Challenging popular stereotypes of the Christian missionary as a blind stooge of Western imperialism, he reopens and nuances the much polemicized issue of the missionary origins of the majority of Indian Christian communities. Working from a bi-partisan, inter-religious perspective, Nazareth critiques a Marathi docu-drama made by an elite Hindu woman. He asks whether her celluloid interpretation of the lives of a Christian couple—the Tilaks, who are eminent figures in the history of modern Marathi literature—does justice to the life and work particularly of Rev. Tilak.
Religion, Nationalism, and Secularism in Sri Lanka

Panel Organizer: Tessa Bartholomeusz
Florida State University

This panel will explore the relationship between politics and religion in chiseling and honing contemporary identities in Sri Lanka. In papers that deal with the pre-colonial, and the post-colonial, world, the panelists will explore identity from the point of view of monastic education and its influence upon the politics of the Kandyan Kingdom (Blackburn); the impact of "westernization" on a pilgrimage and its subsequent politicization (Walters); the variety of Tamil identities that have emerged from recent civil strife in Sri Lanka; and costumes and clothing and what they mean in post-colonial Sri Lanka (Hantzis).

Panel Title: Purifying the Mind (blo sbyong): Theory and Application of a Buddhist Psychological Praxis.

Purifying the mind of defilement has been a central objective of Buddhist practice from the earliest period. This panel will deal with the theoretical background and the application of the Tibetan Buddhist meditative practice of mental purification (blo sbyong), which has been widely popular among all of the Tibetan sectarian traditions. Dan Lusthaus's paper examines the early Pāli conceptualization of the formless meditations, especially the meditative state known as nirodha-samāpatti, and the varying interpretations of these states in Buddhaghosa, Vasubandhu, and Xuan-zang. William Waldon's paper will look at inborn defiling tendencies and manifest defilements as presented in the Pāli canon, and the implications of these ideas for the process of mental purification, as well as for an essentialist vs. constructionist view of human-evil. Robin Korman's point of departure is the Kagyu commentarial tradition on the Blo sbyong don bdun ma, its use of precepts (gdams ngag) as psychological slogans, and the difficulties in translating this text. Michael Sweet concentrates on two blo sbyong texts attributed to Dharmarakṣita which utilize tantric imagery and ideas; his paper will examine the mobilization of anger as a tool for radical spiritual transformation.
THE RELIGIOUS SELF AND ITS REPRESENTATION: REFLECTIONS ON AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PRACTICE AND MEANING IN COLONIAL INDIA

Autobiography, the self-representation of a life story is primarily a phenomenon of the Modern. This view reflects the 18th century origins of the term "autobiography" and its conceptual emphasis upon an individual as subject and actor. While a few pre-colonial autobiographical accounts existed, in South Asia the culture of autobiography developed during the nineteenth century. Most early instances of this form were produced by Indians apparently aware of European models of self-representation. Biographical appreciations of South Asians also grew in number during the colonial epoch.

Scholars may read South Asian autobiographical and biographical accounts as sources of social and cultural history. Discourses of modernity and acculturation may easily provide conventional paths for interpretation. However at least one subset of South Asian auto/biographical production warrants further consideration -- those texts which represent lives of religious individuals.

This panel explores dimensions of auto/biographical writings by a variety of Hindu religious figures of modern South Asia. Beyond introducing the specific texts and their authors and subjects, the panelists seek to explore how autobiographical and biographical representations are framed by cultural meanings and expectations. Are the subjects represented as exemplary models? Are the "lives" of the subjects presented so as to stress their individual qualities and powers, or to demonstrate the encapsulation of religiously significant relations and manifestations within the "self" of the subject? When autobiographical and biographical writings present only portions of a life, is the balance told in other productions? How may religious auto/biographical writings be engaged in our broader understandings of modern South Asian life?

Panel Title: Rethinking Jharkhand: Culture, History, Politics
Organizer: Pramod Parajuli, Anthropology, Syracuse University

Panel Abstract

The Jharkhand region in East-Central India has a long history of resistance to a variety of forces including colonialism, internal colonialism, racism and state and global capitalism. The Jharkhand movement, though most curiously identified as a movement for the establishment of separate Jharkhand state, has always embodied a broad popular tradition and practice of protest against the modes of exploitation mentioned above. Continuing that tradition, Jharkhand region has also become visible for movements against social forestry, big dams and other programs of development since the last decade.

This panel will bring together a diverse group of academics and activists who have been looking at different dimensions of Jharkhand problematic. The purpose is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the traditions of protest, their manifestations today and what prospects lies for the future. Each paper will highlight at least two dimensions in the respective topic. First, we will examine what are the shifting discourses within the topic/movement or concern overtime in Jharkhandi history. Secondly, we will explicate what implications can Jharkhandi experience have to the larger discourses such as ethnicity, ethno-regionalism, ecology, development and identity politics.
The members of this panel are fiction writers as well as ethnographers who have discovered the necessity of utilizing both genres in coming to terms with their own research experiences in South Asia. Through panelists' readings of their own fiction, theoretical issues are raised which lead us to question the genres of narrative anthropology, ethnographic and anthropological fiction. What can be expressed in fiction that we often dare not in ethnography? What does the label ethnography conceal that fiction can reveal? What kind of ethical, methodological, and intellectual issues arise when we recognize the fine line between these genres? Is the friction between the fields of anthropology and literature paralleled by the tensions between the genres of ethnography and fiction? Can fiction address the problems of representation and subject positioning differently than ethnography? How do the fictions of ethnography and the ethnography in fiction inform academic theory and representation and shed light on the ambiguities of life?
Title: Technologies of Imagination in Contemporary South Asia

Chair: Itty Abraham, Social Science Research Council, New York

Outline

For any student of South Asia it ought to be apparent that we are in the midst of a fairly important re-negotiation of the politics of identity. For example, in India, the original Nehruvian consensus around secularism and utopian economic development is unravelling; in Sri Lanka, the ethnic conflict has brought to the forefront issues of federalism and regional autonomy even as Sri Lanka positions its economy to become the first South Asia "tiger;" in Pakistan, women's movements and human rights organizations are striving to politicize the hegemony of a national security state that has eclectically used versions of Islam as a "cementing" force; in Bangladesh, the ongoing tension between Islam and Bengali-ness has manifested itself in new contradictions in civil society, most visibly apparent in the Taslima Nasrin controversy; in Nepal, the newly elected Communist government is embracing increasingly free market orthodoxies.

All these (at present) democratically governed societies are increasingly integrating with a global capitalist system and er being pulled into a communication vortex that has brought CNN, BBC, MTV, and a host of other abbreviations into their daily public and private spaces. What is the impact of economic liberalization, integration into a global communication grid, and changing state-civil society relations on the politics and the reconstruction of identities in South Asia? Tersely put, this is the central thematic that connects the three papers that comprise this proposed panel.

In "What's Left of the Hindu Right's Agenda?" Arvind Rajagopal assess the impact of economic liberalization and globalization of Indian capital on the efforts of the Sangh Parivar (the BJP-VHP-RSS combine) to discipline ambiguity and forcibly produce an exclusivist and militant Hindu identity for the majority community. In particular, he looks at the materiality of television as a medium reconstituting time and space as wholly inter-related with the strategies adopted by the right wing. In "Chasing Miracles: Postcolonial Identity and Mimesis in Sri Lanka," Sankaran Krishnamoorthy investigates the role of the simulacrum called Singapore in producing a vision for the future for Sri Lanka. He argues that, by reading J. R. Jayawardene against William Gibson, Singapore, a combination of hyper-commodified capitalist society and a rigid authoritarian state, is an especially attractive model for Asian countries like Sri Lanka. Finally Lalitha Gopal and Itty Abraham in their paper, "Inverting India: Reading Rohs in Film and Fantasy," argue for a counter-intuitive reading of the Tamil film Rohs based on the materiality of cinematic conventions and filmic institutions. They suggest that, increasingly, the most dominant and regressive visions of a naturalized/nationalized Indian landscape will emerge primarily from areas considered peripheral to the Hindu/Hindu hearth.

These three papers are variations on a common theme - the impact of contemporary technologies of imagination on local mediations of identity production. While they take seriously the interplay of material forces with the reconstructions of selves and states, they each explore a different facet of this transformation. They argue that far from being merely derivative of a unitary global capitalism, South Asian responses to the new world orders are complex, and are in transition as they seek to produce a new hegemonic framework.
Panel Abstract:
"Stories That Come To Life: Narrative Figures as Local Advocates For Political and Socioreligious Disputes"

Discussant: Susan Snow Wadley
Department of Anthropology
Syracuse University

This panel will explore the appropriation by local communities of religious and narrative figures for their particular political uses. While the manipulation of legendary texts is being contested at the national level, we are interested in the ways in which this process functions locally. The story of Ghela Rawal Nath, the "Crazy Yogi" of southeastern Rajasthan, presents the ambiguous identity of householder Naths in the area against Rajput elites and comparable Muslim groups. The shifting economic landscape in a potter community near Banaras has actors on both sides of an intra-caste feud claiming identification with the heroes of the Mahabharat and telling caste purana stories for their personal and political advantage. Saint George, originally imported to Kerala by Syrian merchants and later as patron saint of colonial Portugal and Britain, emblematizes a cult in South India that maintains a multi-layered history of contact and conquest. Local histories of St. George shrines reveal the ways in which this 'foreign' saint has not only taken on indigenous qualities but has also acted as a form of resistance against the foreign powers for whom he was representative. By examining local processes of appropriation we hope to better understand the larger implications for communal tensions and post-colonial disputes.


VARIATION IN HINDI

Panel series proposed and
organized by:

Mithilesh K. Mishra
University of Chicago

Rajeshwari Pandharipande
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

'Language' and 'variation (in language)' are the two facets of the same phenomenon, conceptually as well as empirically. Yet almost all the studies undertaken in the different fields of linguistics (especially informal linguistics and sociolinguistics) have explicitly or implicitly treated language and variation in language as more or less independent phenomena. The proposed panel series titled 'Variation in Hindi' will not only attempt to clarify various important issues related to language and variation, but it will also bring to light the entire range of variation in Hindi in terms of its various structural and functional contexts. The panel series will also provide discussion on the role of the widespread variation in Hindi in conceptualizing and defining the 'Hindiness' of Hindi -- Standard or otherwise. In our opinion, an in-depth discussion on variation in Hindi is both timely and urgent, because even such a basic question as 'who is a native speaker of Hindi?' can not be answered in a straightforward manner without incorporating various provisos.
WESTERN PERSPECTIVES ON SIKHISM

Since the late eighteenth century Sikhs of the Punjab have been scrutinized by western interpreters. The tone for such an encounter was set early in this relationship and for the most part continues unabated, particularly by Sikh religious elites and Punjabi-based academics. For such people these early, military-biased sources provide a very reliable account on Sikhs of the period. Ultimately the observations of these early writers have become incorporated into the very ways that Sikhs view and represent themselves. Any attempt to engage this clearly constructed category (that is "Sikh") is thus met with great hostility from many pious Sikhs in this transnational world. This panel proposes to examine the early accounts on the Sikhs as well as accounts by contemporary non-Sikh Western interpreters of the Sikh tradition. No doubt early European authors viewed the Sikhs through an essentially orientalist lens --the Sikhs as a "martial race" for example. By engaging these sources -- prior to the Singh Sabha movement which standardized the Sikh tradition (1873-1925) -- we are privy to a much more inclusive Sikh tradition whose boundaries were basically open. Ironically, it is this very openness, which scholars have reconstructed, that the contemporary Sikhs have derided as an attempt to undermine corporate Sikh identity.

The three proposed papers for this panel, Women in the Mughal Empire and in the Muslim successor-states: power, patronage and piety, address themes in Indo-Islamic history - i.e., the role of women in society - which have hitherto been largely neglected. The first paper is concerned with the Mughal Empire at its height; the second, with the rather unusual role of the Begums of Bhopal in the evolution of that state; and the third, with what might be termed the 'feminization' of culture at the Nawabi court of Awadh. All argue that a traditional misreading of Indo-Islamic society, which has relegated women's role exclusively to that within the zenana walls, has obscured the several and varied roles played by women in traditional Islamic society - the exercise of political power, extensive patronage in areas of religion and the arts, and a model-setting role in the enrichment of spiritual life. It is anticipated that, after testing these hypotheses before an audience of peers, these three papers will eventually be included in a broad study of the role of women in the pre-modern Dar al-Islam society.
WRITING ON THE BODY:
Inscriptions of Nation, Progress, and Community on the Gendered Subject

Panel Abstract

How does the Indian woman's body become a site where the interplays of state, technology, and culture intersect? What are the effects of nationalisms, liberalization, and traditionalism on the real and symbolic woman? Our panel proposes to consider these questions, situating ourselves within the frameworks of diverse disciplines. Raza Mir's paper will examine the practice of female feticide, recontextualizing the discourse of liberalization at the site of the involved subjectivities. Through an analysis of the parallel constructions of woman and nation in two commercial Indian films (Roja; 1942: A Love Story), Rini Bhattacharya will introduce a critique of the rhetoric of nationalism into this discussion. The third panelist, Goldie Osuri, will describe the site of the body of the diasporic Indian woman as she appears in the film Bhaji on the Beach, where women struggle with the responsibility of preserving and delineating a given community's culture. Finally, Marian Aguiar will move the discussion into the medium of literary autobiography to consider how two women, Kamala Das and Meena Alexander, have written their own bodies as active locations of communal and self-identity construction.