ABSTRACTS

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Najmul Abedin, Tuskegee University

Bangladesh Liberation Movement (March-December 1971) and the Indian Parliament: Lok Sabha's Response to the Demand for the Recognition of Bangladesh as a Sovereign State

The Indian Parliament devoted an enormous amount of time in debating various issues pertaining to the liberation struggle in the then East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. One of the most pressing issues was India 'immediately' recognize Bangladesh as a separate sovereign independent state. While some were in favor of the 'immediate' recognition, others wanted to pursue a wait and see policy as the politico-military situation was gradually unfolding. India eventually recognized Bangladesh in December 1971. It was the first country to take such a step which was soon followed by a good number of other countries.

This paper examines analytically Lok Sabha's (Lower House's) response to the demand for 'immediate' recognition of Bangladesh. It is divided into three parts: In part I efforts have been made to discuss briefly, in a chronological order, various developments pertaining to the demand for recognition. Part II gives a brief account of some arguments that were put forward for and against granting 'immediate' recognition. In part III some analytical observations have been made. The paper is almost solely based on parliamentary debates on the floor of Lok Sabha over a period of about nine months.

Sara Abraham, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Limits of Indian Nationalism in the Caribbean

The English-speaking Caribbean gained independence from Britain in a process marked by the conspicuous absence of anti-colonial nationalist movements. Independence was more a product of Britain’s desire to end its empire than from any inexorable pressures inside its Crown Colonies of the Caribbean. The forging of a national unity was thus left for the post-colonial states to accomplish. It was expected that sectarian sentiments would decline in the process of building the nation — that, for instance, the Indian community of Trinidad would become assimilated into a general Trinidadian national culture. However, sections of the Indian community in Trinidad have, in recent years, promoted a cultural nationalism whose substance largely derives from the ideology of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (part of India’s ‘Sangh Parivar’). Some members of the Indian community are identifying with the aggressive Hindu nationalism in India. The attempt to draw Indians into a pan-Hindu culture may be the first stage towards an attempt at political organizing in the manner of the Bharatiya Janata Party, especially now that the Indian community in Trinidad constitutes a majority of the population (just barely). This phenomenon, contrary to common expectations, not only requires some explanation, it also requires a recognition of its severe limitations. Trinidadian politics, like that of Guyana where Indians are facing similar appeals of pan-Hinduism, imposes certain limits on this type of chauvinist politics and it is likely that Indians will remain more inclined to work within racially-mixed labor unions, political parties and cultural forms.
"Guru Guru, Off the Wall, Who is Pure and Who Will Fall?": The hare Krishna's Guru Dilemma

1996 is the year of the celebrations honoring and deifying His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada, the founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (more commonly known as the Hare Krishnas or ISKCON). Events have been planned for the year which include celebrations in India and all the various temples around the world.

On Memorial Day weekend I attended the Prabhupada Festival at the Los Angeles ISKCON temple. It consisted of two days of festivities and devotional functions which included a chanting and dancing procession of over one hundred devotees in the streets, classical Indian dance performances, and the recitation of sanskrit prayers by the children raised in the ISKCON gurukula. All these were offered as worship to the murti of Srila Prabhupada.

Two events, however, were strikingly unique. One was a devotional play depicting the horrors of the age of Kali, who in personified form has a discussion with Sin personified. Sin explained to Kali that he must go into hiding, as he had done when Krishna descended to Earth 5,000 years ago. He had to go underground again 500 years ago when Lord Chaitanya (the most recent incarnation of Krishna) appeared in Bengal to inaugurate the Sankirtan movement (congregational chanting of the holy name and dancing) as the Yuga Dharma. At the present time there was no place for Kali and his evil ways because Srila Prabhupada spread the transcendental chanting of Hare Krishna throughout the world. Thus in the play, Srila Prabhupada is portrayed as being directly connected to Krishna and Lord Chaitanya, establishing him as the foremost spiritual authority for the Golden Age.

The play ends with devotees chanting their way out of the temple and into the street to greet a limousine driving up carrying a lifelike deity of Srila Prabhupada. This second event was a re-enactment of his many visits to the LA temple. The deity was then seated on a palanquin and a lively procession led him to a seat of honor on a dias, where he was worshipped by an extensive arati and several homa sacrifices.

Surviving two heart attacks with no medical attention on his boat ride to America, Srila Prabhupada arrived in Boston in 1965 with seven dollars in his pocket. One devotee writes, Before leaving India he had written three books; in the next twelve years he was to write more than sixty. Before he left India he had initiated one disciple; in the next twelve years, he would initiate more than four thousand. Before he left India, hardly anyone had believed that he could fulfill his vision of a worldwide society of Krishna devotees; but in the next decade he would found ISKCON and open more than a hundred centers...

Srila Prabhupada's accomplishments seem super-human indeed. Although he left a vast wealth of scholarly spiritual literature and established hundreds of temples, ashrams, farms, and gurukulas throughout the world, his passing away in 1977 at the age of 81 created a void that was impossible to fill. The last two decades have been marked by a chain of controversies regarding the proper implementation of the disciplic succession. As a result of the misdirection of the current leadership and the heated politics amongst the members of ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada's exalted position as the pre-eminent Acharya has become clearly evident.

In my paper I will give a brief description of the events, show some video footage of the festival, and analyze the current heated debate on the ISKCON Guru issue which is taking place in devotee exchanges on the Internet, in newsletters, and meetings. Finally I will look at the reasons for the deification of Srila Prabhupada and its practical consequences for the devotees in ISKCON.
Marian Aguiar, University of Massachusetts-Amherst

The Reproduction of the Home(land) in the Indian Diaspora

Salmon Rushdie writes in his seminal essay "Imaginary Homelands" that the displaced Indian writer looks back to reclaim a lost home, only to find a fragmented object. These remnants must then be collected into an imaginary homeland. Home, for these diasporic writers, becomes an idea: an idea of nation, of community and ultimately, of identity. This conception of home as an intangible, inaccessible place has become the dominant paradigm of dislocation.

But what about the material home? How does the reproduction of the material conditions of the home by Indian women of the diaspora problematize the dichotomy of "here" and "there." Rather than simply an imaginary location to be looked back upon by the alienated emigrant, the material home is produced and reproduced, primarily through female labor. My paper argues that the material home of the diaspora is a site at which the imaginary homeland is both concretized and problematized. In this essay, I integrate literary and political readings of the emigrant home to consider the conflicts and coincidences of the imaginary and material home of the diasporic Indian.

Hena Ahmad, University of Massachusetts-Amherst

"Putting an End to Frontiers" in Salman Rushdie's The Moor's Last Sigh

This paper will examine the ways in which the concept of the Indian nation and Salman Rushdie's South Asian diasporic location in Britain inform his latest novel, The Moor's Last Sigh, which, as my paper will show, paradoxically transcends the "national," even as the "nation" feeds the author's imagination. The novel demonstrates how Rushdie negotiates the idea of the Indian nation from his diasporic location and reconfigures the role of nation in shaping identity. Rushdie's choice of a protagonist who is half-Jewish and half-Christian is a significant departure from the mainly Hindu or Muslim protagonists in his earlier novels. The Moor's Last Sigh reinscribes Rushdie's engagement with the hybrid nature of postcolonial Indian identity by highlighting the multiple origins of the central character, Moraes Zogoiby, and thus showing the complexity of Indian identity. Zogoiby's quest for answers that will give meaning to his life leads him to discover the meaninglessness of identity. He finds meaning by finally realizing the importance of, as the novel says, "putting an end to frontiers" and "dropping . . . the boundaries of the self."
Rafique Ahmed, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

Monsoon Prediction in Bangladesh: A Preliminary Study

The arrival date, duration and rainfall amount of the summer monsoon season in Bangladesh vary from year to year and from place to place. Although Bangladesh is located in a major monsoon region of the world, very little is known about the various characteristics of its summer monsoon. Especially, no study has been done on monsoon prediction.

This paper presents the results of an empirical study on the prediction of the arrival date, duration and rainfall amount of the summer monsoon season in Bangladesh. Daily rainfall amount and mean wind direction (azimuth) at 19 stations, for the period May 1 through October 31, for each of the 30 year period (1961 through 1990), were used to determine the arrival dates and withdrawal dates of the summer monsoon. These, in turn, were used to determine the duration and rainfall of the summer monsoon season for each of the 30 year period. Relationship of the weekly temperature difference between Chittagong and Rajshahi during the early part of the pre-monsoon season (i.e., for each week of March 1 through mid-May) with the arrival date of the summer monsoon were used in this study to develop the empirical model for the prediction of the arrival date of the summer monsoon. Separate empirical models were developed for the prediction of the duration and rainfall amount of the summer monsoon season, based on their relationships with the arrival date of the monsoon, using the same 30 year data.

Vidyut Aklujkar, University of British Columbia

Queer Guests and Gracious Hosts

In the Marathi Sant tradition, several stories are told and retold about demanding guests and generous hosts. I explore in this paper the historical and cultural underpinnings of such stories in the discourse of Bhakti. My focus is on trial stories or stories of hospitality fitting the paradigm of sattva-pariksha. I contextualize the trial stories along their Saiva or Vaishnava heritage to bring out their inherent differences, and finally, discuss in detail a story of Anasuya / the birth of Dattatreya, as told by Eknath, in the context of trials of hospitality and the triumph of female creativity.
Humaira Afzal, University of Michigan-Dearborn

Immigrant Muslims in the American Political Process: Making Muslim Voices Heard in the 1996 Elections

This paper examines the role of group affiliations as a basis for political mobilization among new immigrant groups in the United States by analyzing political participation among "immigrant" Muslims—the people of mostly South Asian and Middle Eastern heritage who comprise nearly half of America's Muslim population. I compare political activity among Muslims from Indo-Pakistani and Arab ethnocultural groups, with particular emphasis on Pakistani- and Lebanese-Americans from 1967 to 1996. Immigrant Muslim participation in the American political process is not only increasing, it is shifting from organizations based on ethnicity or national origin which are concerned primarily with U.S. foreign policy towards their ethnic homelands (e.g. Pakistan, Kashmir, Lebanon, Palestine) to multiethnic, multiracial organizations which emphasize their Muslim American identity and are concerned with domestic issues as much as foreign policy. I focus on the role of the international context (especially crises in the immigrants' homelands and other parts of the Muslim world) and the U.S. context (anti-Muslim sentiment and demographic change) in sparking group mobilization and conditioning which identity provides the basis for group-based activity. The comparative examination of political activity among these ethnocultural groups provides important information on not only when and how ethnic or religious identities affect political participation, but also which affiliation group mobilization is based on.

Rimjhim M Aggarwal, University of Maryland-College Park

Falling Water Tables and Increasing Rural Inequities: The Political Economy of Groundwater Use in India

The present paper focuses on two alarming aspects associated with the current pattern of groundwater utilization in rural India: falling water tables and growing inequities in distribution. A number of recent studies have emphasized the role of water markets in promoting access of poor farmers to groundwater irrigation. Based on data collected from a primary level survey in western India, we examine the structure of these markets and point to a number of factors that determine who gets access to irrigation and the quality of service in terms of the timing of the water deliveries. The impact of alternative policies to regulate these markets is very sensitive to local conditions and this poses some interesting questions regarding the appropriate role for state-level management and its links with local-level initiatives, which we explore in this paper.
Sanjay W Anand, Cornell University

Nominal Christians and Authentic Tribals: A Reading of the Conversion Movement in 19th Century Chotanagpur

This paper proposes to examine the conflicts between missionaries and colonial administration surrounding the doubted 'authenticity' of conversions of Mundas in the latter half of the nineteenth century in Ranchi District. The contradiction involved in the conflicting interpretations of conversion as motivated by 'genuine / spiritual' or 'insincere / material' interests stemmed, to a large extent, from the collective nature of conversion and the perceived 'simplicity' and primitiveness of tribals. Questioning the genuineness of conversion usually amounted to arguing that the converts had only taken the outer 'emblems' of the new religion but had not, 'in their hearts', accepted the tenets of the new faith. Seen differently, however, the emblematic practices signifying conversion call attention to the fact that conversion was more a public than a personal act. Reading such 'emblematic' practices in terms of their intelligibility for the tribals shows conversion to be embedded in broader processes constituting tribal identity. It is proposed that tribal identity and difference is best understood not as residual primitiveness or primordial glory but as part of a creative response to processes of incorporation and interaction with 'outsiders'.

Mark Baker, University of North Carolina-Asheville

Mistaken Rights: The Effects of Colonial Redefinitions of Property in Kangra on Resource Use, Access and Control

When the British assumed control of the Trans-Sutlej states, in the mid 1800s, they initiated a set of dramatic changes in property rights and the nature of the state's interest in property. The first revenue settlement of Kangra hill state in 1850 employed models of land tenure and property rights derived from the plains where the settlement officers were trained. Because pre-colonial property rights in hill areas significantly differed from those on the plains, the result was an unintended "revolution" in property rights in Kangra. Examples included the creation of village common property (shamilat) whose ownership rights were vested in landowning families, and the temporary abdication by the colonial state of property rights in the extensive forests of Kangra. This paper examines how the colonial redefinition of property influenced access to and control over cultivated and uncultivated lands among different socio-economic groups, as well as the administration's interest in irrigation and forests. I show the administration's objective of revenue maximization resulted in quite different policies regarding water and forests; in the former subsidies and other forms of support were provided, in the latter state control was re-asserted.
This paper will examine the iconography of the south wall or shrine facade of Uku Baha in Patan. Since the shrine facade is the devotional focal point of the baha, a detailed analysis can reveal much about the symbolic function of the monument as a whole. Because the field of Nepalese art history is at a very early stage, the conclusions reached in this paper must be largely speculative. Nevertheless, I will argue that there is a fairly coherent iconographic program that demonstrates the complete process of enlightenment as it is understood in Newar Buddhism. In particular there is an explicit reference to the Buddhological understanding of the three "bodies," or kayas, of the Buddha: Nirmanakaya, Sambhogakaya, and Dharmakaya. The metal sculptures placed along the wall of the shrine facade represent various Bodhisattvas who manifest the Nirmanakaya, or "Transformation Body," while the Jina Buddhas on the first level of struts manifest the Sambhogakaya, or "Bliss Body." I will also discuss the yogic and cosmological symbolism that is found on the shrine facade, including the concept of Mount Meru and the sun/moon symbols.

In addition, this paper will grapple with some of the problems of identifying which mandala might be represented in the iconography of a baha. Very rarely do the sculptures adhere to the standard texts, such as the Nispannayogavali and the Sadhanamala. In the strut figures of Uku Baha, there are features of at least two distinct mandalas: the Dharmadhatu Vagisvara Mandala and the Vajradhatu Mandala. Is there a deliberate conflation of mandalas in Newar Buddhism, or is this evidence of an entirely different tradition unknown to scholars?

In short, it is clear that Uku baha contains a highly complex and fully developed symbolic system that attempts to communicate some of the central notions of Newar Buddhism.
Swapna Banerjee, Temple University

From Being "Figures in the Landscape" to Becoming Important Actors: The Politics of Representation of Servants in Bengali Middle-Class Writings of Colonial Calcutta

My paper is about the politics of representation of servants in the dominant middle-class discourse of colonial Calcutta. Recent scholars of South Asia repeatedly point out that the nineteenth century construction of the Bengali middle-class self-identity was predicated on the position of its women who were defined by the ideologues in opposition to the lower classes engaged in the income-earning activities in the urban economy. While the scholars emphasize the self-fashioning of the middle-class cultural identity, they do not trace the processes by which the middle-class differentiated themselves from the lower classes. By examining the Bengali ideologues' construction of the mistress-servant relationship, my paper will identify the processes by which the differences between the dominant middle-class and the subordinate lower classes were structured in the middle-class culture. My paper argues that the middle-class males' concern with the changing relationship of servants and their upper-class mistresses reflected their hegemonizing effort to establish their sway over not only their women in the domestic domain, but also over other subordinate social groups. The multifaceted and paradoxical references to servants in middle-class writings indicate the politics of the representation of the "other"—the lower classes and different races—who needed to be controlled, disciplined, and punished, but with temperance and love under the aegis of middle-class paternal authority.

Dina Bangdel, Ohio State University

Dharmadhatu Mandala Iconography at Kwa Baha

One of the major artistic themes found in many Buddhist bahas of the Kathmandu Valley is the Mandala of Dharmadhatu Vagisvara Manjughosa. This iconographic theme emerges time and again in the baha context: as complete mandalas in the courtyard, as strut figures supporting the shrine facade, or as part of the torana iconography over the shrine door. The preeminence of this iconographic theme suggests its significance in Newar Buddhism.

In the Newar Buddhist context, the central deity of the Mandala—Dharmadhatu Vagisvara Manjughosa—is identified with the Swayambhu Mahacaitya. The little-known connection between the Stupa and the Mandala appears to be the underlying basis of Newar Buddhism, and this relationship is expressed symbolically through complex iconographic programs in the vast number of Buddhist monuments in the Kathmandu Valley. The focus of my paper is to analyze the iconography of the Dharmadhatu Mandala, as it appears in Kwa Baha, Patan, and to examine how the symbolism of the Mandala defines and reiterates its identification with Swayambhu Mahacaitya.
Daniel Bass, University of Michigan

Gender and Renunciation in Manimekalai

Within the context of the history of bhikkhuṇīs in India, Manimekalai, a fifth-century Tamil Buddhist text by Cāṭṭagār, is a curious text, since it seemingly advocates female renunciation in an age that witnessed its decline, but does not endorse traditional Buddhist institutional methods of renunciation. Cāṭṭagār borrowed extensively from both Tamil and Buddhist texts, and his use of the Buddhist theme of rebirths and the Tamil theme of the chaste and nurturing wife undermine the feminist potential of Manimekalai. Despite its strong female characters, Manimekalai provides few opportunities for oppositional, liberating readings for Buddhist women, but rather promotes an austere life for all Tamil Buddhist laypeople regardless of gender. The Buddhism of Manimekalai is a quasi-Mahāyāna that endorses renunciatory practices among laypeople over renunciation within the institutional setting of the saṅgha, especially because Manimekalai resembles a supernaturally powered bodhisattva more than she does an ordained nun governed by the Vinaya. Cāṭṭagār’s use of Manimekalai as his central character strengthens his Mahāyāna Buddhist propaganda by showing how even a passion-filled courtesan can progress on the Buddhist path and by referencing Cilappatikāram and Caṅgam poetry, which allows him to Buddhisicize his Tamil audience while Tamilizing Buddhism in the process.
Srimati Basu, Ohio State University

Mapping Wealth and Well-Being: Indian Women's Negotiations of Discourses of Property and Propriety

Analyses of property transmission in contemporary India reveal that ideological rather than legal restraints lie behind women's ubiquitous exclusion from family property; women themselves routinely refuse natal property, citing numerous reasons relating to the construction of gender roles, kinship, entitlement and responsibility. On the basis of interview data, this paper presents a close reading of some myths of property evoked by women in explaining their marginality from family assets, showing how these hegemonic beliefs were accepted, neogotiated, contested and recuperated. These myths include notions that dowry substitutes for natal inheritance, that property goes to eldercaregivers, or that women's relationships with natal families should be severed upon marriage. While the analysis of some legal skirmishes shows that women's fears of incurring family wrath upon requesting natal property were not unjustified, these negotiations around property reveal a complex mix of consternation, affection, empowered munificence and optimized survival strategies, of cultural locations neither contained by nor independent from dominant ideologies. The play between relations of production, state apparatuses like education and law, and gendered evocations of "tradition" and "culture" in determining the maintenance of property relations in the postcolonial milieu can thus be traced.

Jane Baxter, University of Michigan

Tamil Literature and Terra Sigillata: Indo-Roman Trade From the Perspective of the Sangam Kingdoms

Indo-Roman trade has long been a subject of scholarly inquiry. The vast majority of these studies have focused primarily on Roman aspects of this trade partnership, and often portray the contemporary Indian cultures as passive recipients of a Roman engineered trade network. This paper combines an analysis of the literature and archaeology of the three Sangam kingdoms, with anthropological models of how prestige goods and elite ideologies operate to "normalize" social inequalities. In so doing, this paper explores the dynamic internal features of these Indian kingdoms, and how these dynamics may have provided potential motivations for the rulers of the Sangam kingdoms to engage in the Indo-Roman trade partnership.
Wendell Charles Beane, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

The Paradox of Violence and Non-Violence in the Bhagavad-Gita

Action in the Bhagavad-Gita is inevitable. Its teaching on violence and non-violence, however, seems to involve two contradictory perspectives: the performance of duty without attachment in devotion to the Absolute under the form of Krishna; and with a view that maintains the unity of all things in Krishna, thus precluding the separation of all "others" from one's own self. This paper will deal with the familiar scholarly claim that the Gita's accommodation of margas does not really solve the problem raised by Arjuna in Gita III.1. Yet an understanding of the paradoxical quality of its teaching on violence and non-violence requires first, an appreciation of the convergence of a number of concepts associated with its Krishna theology and worship; and second, the nature of its Upanishadic background, both of which enable one to interpret more coherently a work that is often held to lack philosophical-religious integrity.

Katheryn Besio, University of Hawaii-Manoa

Keep the Home Fires Burning: Colonial and Postcolonial Representations of Reproductive Labor in the Himalayas

The richly geographic travel writing of colonial women played an integral role in empire formation. It delivered to metropolitan areas images of the "exotic" Other, aiding in the formation of colonial categories. The images found in these writings reinforced imperial notions of class, race, and gender superiority. While these women's writings reflect dominant masculine colonial discourses, they also resist those discourses in ways that vary significantly. In this paper I examine the intersection of feminist and colonial discourses within the context of Western explorations of the Himalayas. I look at the writings of Fanny Bullock Workman, Ella Maillart, and Jennifer Bourdillon, paying close attention to their representations of Himalayan women and their reproductive labours, as well as to the children of those women. I argue that these female authors fashion themselves as "moderns" via a vis their representations of working women and children, thus aligning themselves with colonial authority. Despite sharing an authorial position, the writings do not conform to a coherent "discourse of difference", but reflect the writers' particular geographies and imaginings of the work spaces of non-Western women and children.
Ashok Bhargava, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Foreign Direct Investment, Multinationals, Economic Nationalism, Sovereignty and All That: What Is a Reasonable Policy

Indian economic policy has made a qualitative change from a closed, inward looking policy to a slow move towards opening the economy to international competition, infusion of international equity capital, liberalization in the international trade sector, convertibility of the currency which inevitably opens up the economy. All these measures together may be said to constitute a tentative movement towards joining the World economy without any constraints - this has often been referred to in the past decade as globalisation. A significant part of this new policy is the change in policy towards foreign direct investment by the multinationals and the entry of foreign institutional investors who for the first time can invest in the equity of Indian companies.

In this paper I will examine the changes in policy towards foreign direct investment and the multinationals and compare it with the policy in China and the Pacific rim countries. The paper will evaluate the concerns of various political and economic groups who have been critical of the new policies. Are the new policies too liberal - how far do they conflict with the goal of economic self-sufficiency? Who are the losers and winners? Are the issues of Nationalism and sovereignty real issues representing the interests of particular economic groups, or are they the result of xenophobia left over from the colonial era? What policies would be appropriate for the near future? The literature on Multinational enterprises provides a framework for evaluating policies with respect to foreign direct investment - this will be used to evaluate and propose policies.
Karni Pal Bhati, University of Notre Dame

Gender and Community in Qurratullain Hyder's Fiction

The contemporary Urdu novelist Qurratullain Hyder is credited with a complex historical and social consciousness that enables her to depict the fluidity of collective identities in north India before the process of communalization brought about a hardening of Hindu and Muslim identities. Her novel Akhir-e-Shab ke Hamsafar (published, 1979 and translated into English by the author as Fireflies in the Mist, 1994) encompasses the lives of five families—two Hindu, one Muslim, one Indian Christian, and one British, and spans the period 1939-1972: a period that saw the consolidation of separate Hindu and Muslim identities leading up to the partitioning of the subcontinent, armed conflicts between the post-colonial states of India and Pakistan, as well as several communal riots.

My paper reads this novel with some of Hyder's other fiction as a possible genealogy of the shift from syncretic or fuzzy identities to communal ones. Crucial to an understanding of this transformation of identities are contemporary Indian debates over communal identity and gender which have not only provoked a rethinking of issues such as cultural (or group) rights versus rights of individuals (as in the Shah-Bano controversy, and the continuing debates over a uniform civil code), but have themselves contributed to the formation of collective identities. My paper therefore attempts to read Hyder's work as especially relevant to the utopic but necessary project of "non-denominational principles of collectivity."
Rini Bhattacharya, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Screening Politics: Subverted Voices in Indian Popular Cinema: The Legacy Continues

Indian Popular Cinema is a fine example of mainstream cultural artifacts in which the dominant discourse (à la Raymond Williams) deals with contradictions and oppositions in a way conducive to resolvability in the context of the narrative itself. Secular, Feminist and Socialist discourses get unfolded in the body of the unilinear visual narrative, get explored via the hero's Lukacsian journey, and is signed off along with a catharsis at the end of the story. Rebellions/protests which occur in the body of the narrative are always contained within it. The traditional, realistic narrative structure—centered around one or more chief protagonists—is hardly ever challenged.

In this paper, I shall talk about some films which claim political content/intent—like Rudaali, Krantiveer, Damini, Bombay, etc.—and some other ones which do not, and try to show how these films subvert oppositions/contradictions and finally end up as re-visions of the dominant ideology.

Monolina Bhattacharyya, University of Minnesota-Minneapolis

Native Space and the Questions of Identity: Calcutta in the 19th Century

In contrast to the earlier research on 19th century Calcutta, based on lithographs by European artists, accounts of travellers, maps, British architecture, etc., accentuating British domains of habitation, administration, trade and commerce, which credited Europeans for dominating the physical layout of Calcutta and reforming its material well-being, my paper focuses on indigenous forces in the native areas of Calcutta in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the process, such earlier research has overlooked the role of the native population, the way people lived and worked, their habitation patterns, architecture, street pattern, society and culture all of which formed the complete character of a city. From the fieldwork that I conducted in its old neighborhoods, Calcutta provided a picture of segments of well balanced units that represented visually and physically a strong combination of varied communities and professional groups that formed distinct localities north of the city.

Thus, in this paper, I propose a re-examination of the representations of Calcutta’s native areas in European lithographs, travelogues and official documents, substituting these for extant visual elements, such as, native settlements, with their naming pattern of streets, neighborhoods and bazaars, that were determined by caste, profession and wealth, and architecture (that continued from the late 18th century till today). I seek to investigate what constituted the urban space, how the natives were constituent elements in the functioning and development of the city, and how that reflected the identity of Calcutta in the British colonial period.

In place of the earlier elitist and Euro-centric research, that has misrepresented or deliberately avoided the role of the colonized populace, my research approach proposes an alternative methodological model for the subsequent study of any city in South and Southeast Asia branded as a colonial creation.
Thomas J Bickford, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

Bangladesh, China and India: The Political Economy of Cooperation and Conflict

This paper will examine the prospects for economic cooperation and conflict between China and South Asia in the Post-Cold War era with especial attention to Sino-Bangladeshi relations now that Bangladesh is celebrating its 25th year as an independent country. While China’s impact on South Asia in the past has been primarily in the area of security issues, China’s rapidly growing economy means that economic issues are becoming increasingly important.

The paper is divided into three sections. Section one will look at increased prospects for South-South trade and investment between China and the countries of South Asia, especially Bangladesh. Section two will examine global economic issues of mutual interest such as technology transfer and recent negotiations on global warming where China and India have very similar negotiating stances. Section three will make the argument that while the prospects for cooperation are good, there are also several areas of contention as some of China’s economic policies are not in the interests of Bangladesh or India.

John and Naomi Bishop, UCLA

Himalayan Herders (film)

Himalayan Herders

HIMALAYAN HERDERS is an ethnographic portrait of the village of Melemchi in Yolmo (Helambu) between 1971 and 1993. Melemchi residents are agropastoralists living at 8,500 feet altitude in east-central Nepal. They herd cow-yak hybrids called zomo, for butter production. The film includes scenes of subsistence activities, Buddhist and shamanic rituals (including the most important Yolmo Buddhist festival, Nara), a funeral, a capture wedding, and interviews with residents about important issues facing the village today: the increase in circular migration to India for wage labor, the incorporation of the village into the Langtang National Park, their hopes and concerns for the future of Melemchi, and the changes they have seen in their lives. Based on a twenty-five year association with the village, the film is a document of culture change and stability in contemporary Nepal.
The Social Architecture of Imperial Ceremony: Mughal Shahjahanabad and Safavid Isfahan

I examine the architecture of the imperial palaces and the activities in the imperial audience halls in both Shahjahanabad and Isfahan. My aim is to explore what the architecture and activities reveal about the nature of political legitimacy and authority in the two imperial capitals. In Shahjahanabad, a single structure combined the functions of palace and fortress. The palace housed both the domestic departments of the imperial household (harem, kitchens, workshops, and records) and the treasury, soldiers, and arsenal. In Safavid Isfahan, however, the two functions were separate. The imperial palace in the Naqsh-i Jahan garden contained the harem and the domestic household departments, but the Qa' a Tabarakh held the principal treasury, the arsenal, and most cavalrymen. In the audience halls of Shahjahanabad the imperial ceremony was regular, rigidly controlled, and forbiddingly formal. In Safavid Iran, on the other hand, the imperial ritual in the open audience halls of the imperial palaces and garden-retreats was irregular, less formal, and less structured. My basic conclusion: in Isfahan, the division between palace and fortress, and the informal nature of imperial ritual reflected the greater strength of the Safavid emperor's legitimacy and the greater force of his authority compared to that of his Mughal counterpart.
Constructing Kingdoms: the Unity of Difference in the Kathmandu Valley

This asks the questions, "what makes a desh? How in the Kathmandu Valley did architecture help constitute the unity and difference between the three Malla Kingdoms? And what role did architecture play in reconfiguring space and populace in the ancient Kathmandu Valley?"

25 Years of NGOs in Bangladesh

Any appraisal of Bangladesh after 25 years would be remiss if it didn't include a discussion of the main connection to many of Bangladesh's materially poor: nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as BRAC, the Grameen Bank, and Proshika. That these NGOs have a visible presence in rural areas is undeniable, now the focus is beginning to shift to the rapidly growing urban population.

What is open for contestation are the effects of NGOs upon the rural poor. Have NGOs been a source of empowerment and income-generation or have they only created marginal economic opportunities, while opening the way for further capitalist penetration, dependence, and exploitation? The tensions between NGO advocates, government apologists, and critical development theorists are evident in this debate.

This paper will necessarily be limited to brief summaries of the history of several Bangladeshi NGOs, their original philosophical diversity and their current programs. The majority of the paper will focus on the historical convergence of NGO programs and an analysis of local successes and failures. This will lead to a broader assessment of these NGOs based on the aforementioned perspectives.
Jana Evans Braziel, University of Massachusetts-Amherst

"WOW": Bodily Inscriptions and Nomadic Subjectivities in Sammy and Rosie Get Laid

In this paper, I explore the intimate relationship between corporeality and language—literally, the bodies of knowledge that construct identities in the postcolonial film Sammy and Rosie Get Laid. I interrogate not only the hegemonic production of knowledge and ideology—specifically sexual and national—on the discursive and epistemological site of the body, but also the possible insurrectional re-inscription of bodily meaning and knowledge as an act of cultural, linguistic, and subjective transgression and redefinition.

My analysis will center primarily on female materia as a linguistic and corporeal site for discourse and for subversive alterities: the female bodies in this film confound the traditional Cartesian split between the mind and the body, subjectivity and materiality, language and corporeity. Utilizing the Spinozistic conceptions of the body as theorized first by Deleuze & Guattari, then forwarded by the feminist critic Elizabeth Grosz, I will address the postcolonial ramifications of this revaluation of the body in the work of the writer Hanif Kureishi and the director Stephen Frears.

Yigal Bronner, University of Chicago

Making Two Stories One: Kaviraja's Poetic Combination of the Two Sanskrit Epics

Shlesha, the poetic device of double entendre, is a major vehicle of the Sanskrit kavya canon. It occupies a wide spectrum of practice which extends from single verses to complete poems. On the farther end of this range lies the genre of divisandhanakavyas: poems that simultaneously tell two narratives. In my paper I will discuss this unique poetic genre, rarely described by Sanskrit poeticians, primarily through one representative, the twelfth century Kaviraja's Raghavapandaviya, which combines the stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Examining a number of examples from the poem, I will demonstrate that Kaviraja carefully matches episodes of the two epics and that this matching amounts, on the level of the work as a whole, to a combined, well-crafted, single notion of both epics. I will claim that the way Kaviraja forces his audience to think the two epics together is one important purpose of this genre which, like the practice of shlesha in general, has so far been relegated to an anecdotal status by the study of Indology.
Beyond Descriptive Types: Some Possible Social Implications of South Indian Megalithic Cemeteries

Scholarly research on the megalithic cemeteries of South India began at least as early as the 19th century. Despite this long tradition of interest, research on the megaliths in this region has, until recently, focused overwhelmingly upon issues of description and classification. This paper moves beyond such preoccupations to consider what megalithic cemeteries might reveal about the character of Iron Age society in South India. Although the difficult issue of chronological control constitutes a serious obstacle to understanding the development of Indian society in any but the broadest terms during this long period, analysis of the geographic distribution of megaliths in South India provides some general clues about possible forms of sociopolitical organization in the region.

David Butz and Kenneth I MacDonald, Brock University and University of Toronto

Serving Sahibs with Pony and Pen: The Discursive Uses of "Native Authenticity"

In 1923 Ghulam Rassul Galwan, erstwhile caravan bashi, published "Servant of Sahibs: A Book to be Read Aloud", an autobiographical account of his service with various English and American travellers. For two of Rassul's employers, James Barrett who initiated and edited the project, and Francis Younghusband who wrote the book's introduction, the autobiography authentically represents Himalayan natives' views of their work, their world, and especially their White employers. According to Younghusband's introduction the book allowed readers to "see [natives'] ways of looking at things, and looking at us, and we understand them better and find they are after all not so very different from what we were as boys"; he is especially relieved to learn that "most wonderful of all, they are full of gratitude to their employer when they leave his service". Clearly, for its sponsors, the appeal (and value) of Rassul's account lay in its legitimisation of sahibs' self-representations. An examination of the book's content, and the conditions of its production, allows us to deconstruct its "native authenticity", and to situate the text as a carefully crafted (and edited) public transcript, the main purpose of which was to legitimise and naturalise colonial labour relations.
Timothy Cahill, University of Pennsylvania

Classifying the Poetic Universe: Typologies in Alamkarasastra Texts
One of the modifications presented in the Rasagangadhara to the Rasadhvani theory so elegantly systematized by Mammata is a new classification of kavya. Anandavardhana's system had three varieties: 'highest' (uttama), 'middle' (madhyama), and 'lowest' (adhama). Jagannatha's well-known variation posits a fourth class, adding the term uttamatattva.
What exactly is meant by these three or four terms is the subject of the paper. Do these terms mean the same for Jagannatha as for Anandavardhana? Does a difference in typology merely involve a difference in evaluating the characteristics which underlie various classifications or something more? Of particular interest here is an opinion offered by D. H. H. Ingalls in his extensive and insightful introduction to the recent translation of the Dhvanyaloka. He traces the origin of the idea that madhyama is a pejorative classification to a remark found in H. Jacobib's introduction to his German translation of the Dhvanyaloka. Ingalls points out that Anandavardhana does not anywhere make such a valuation. He goes on to attribute this pejorative sense to Mammata. This paper will consider the merit of such an attribution. I will argue that despite the seeming transparency of the names themselves, the hierarchy involved in the classification of creative literature is best seen as applying to the process through which beauty is revealed.

Catherine Candy, Loyola University-Chicago

Delineating India: Margaret Cousins and the Configuration of Identity
This paper explores how “India” functioned in the configuration of the sexual identity and politics of Margaret Cousins (1878-1954) from Cousins’ days in Ireland as the leader of the militant suffragist movement, to her days with Annie Besant’s Theosophical Society in Madras, to her days as the Founder and leader of the All India Women’s Conference through the turbulent decade of the 1930’s. Selected orientalist images of woman in both Irish and Indian contexts were practically used to combat as well as to advance a twentieth century international feminist ideology by Cousins and her circle of Indian feminists; for example, popular notions of Ireland were redrawn by Irish feminists in terms of orientalist devotional myths of universal bisexuality (Ardhanarishwara etc.) for suffrage manifestos.
Lori J Cayton, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Variations of Shape of the Buddhist mChod rTen: Doctrinal or Cultural?

Although the Buddhist *mchod rten* (stūpa) is the symbolic representation of the enlightenment mind, all aspects of its shape are not always uniform. There are some scholars who assert that the variations in the *mchod rten* shape are an example of the doctrinal changes which occurred in Buddhism. For example, the differences in the shapes of the *mchod rten* indicate the differences within the Buddhist tenets, such as in the Lesser Vehicle versus the Greater Vehicle. Although there may be truth to this, however, it is my belief that the various changes in the shape of the *mchod rten* resulted from specific instructions of the Buddha; the differences in the shape of the *mchod rten* may indicate the different path systems, but the specific changes were instructed by Shakyamuni Buddha.

In my presentation I will explain which aspects of the shape of the *mchod rten* existed from the time of the Buddha and which aspects are the result of cultural differences. First, the root shape of the *mchod rten*, as explained by the Buddha, will be presented. This explanation will be followed by an analysis of whether the other changes in the *mchod rten* shape are the result of the Buddha's instructions, or the outcome of the influences of time and culture, etc.
Chaya Chandrasekhar, Ohio State University

Rato Macchendranath

The Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, who has forsaken his own enlightenment until all sentient beings are saved, is a primary deity in the Nepal Valley. Ardent devotion to the Bodhisattva has resulted in the development of a prominent cult. He is worshipped as red (rato) and white (seto) Macchendranath and associated with the Buddha Amitabha, the Buddha presiding over the present kappa or eon, is considered a significant component of the meditational process of enlightenment. As an embodiment of absolute compassion, Macchendranath, along with the personification of pure wisdom, is believed to lead one to the ultimate realization.

However, despite the overwhelming popularity and importance of the cult, scholarship regarding the subject is modest. The complexity of the faith and its close almost inextricable connections with local traditions and Hinduism has probably deterred scholars from conducting any extensive research. Thus, the focus of this paper will be the Rato Macchendranath Temple and the baha associated with the deity, in the city of Patan, Nepal. I will consider the ways in which the iconographic program of the temple attempts to create the environment of absolute compassion and the ways by which ritual and sacred space is used and defined by the devotees.

Nilanjana Chatterjee, Queens College, CUNY

Refugee Women and the Re-Working of Gender and Class in Postcolonial West Bengal

This paper uses displacement as a lens to examine the reproduction and reconstruction of the categories of class and gender in post-partition Bengal—arguably the first such public contestation since the 19th century. The division of British India into independent India and Pakistan in 1947 led to the displacement of several million Muslims and Hindus across a newly mapped Bengal, and the predicament of East Bengali Hindus seeking refuge in West Bengal came to be widely represented through the figure of the "public woman" ("wrenched from seclusion", "wage-earning"). The association of these images with social disorder constructed East Bengali women not only as victims of displacement but also of their "guardians"—the state and refugee men. Drawing on research conducted in 1994, I will explore refugee women's "work" towards rehabilitation, the discursive construction of work they negotiated at the time and the impact of their work on the dominant ideology of "womanhood". The refugees represented themselves as "respectable people"—a strongly gendered construction of class which mediated female labor force participation. Therefore, tempting though it is to apply metaphors of boundary-crossing to the experiences of refugee women—east to west, domestic to waged work, dependence to autonomy—what emerges is a more contingent recoding of "woman" and "respectability" as refugee women both manipulated and challenged the imbricated formations of gender and class.
Rita Chattopadhyay, Rabindra Bharati University

20th Century Sanskrit Dramas of India: Tradition & Innovation

The primary objective of the present paper is to bring into limelight the status of Sanskrit Dramas produced in India in the later half of the 20th Century A.D.

In spite of the fact that the present day society, commercialized to a great extent, along with its educational system, is highly hostile to the propagation and appreciation of Sanskrit yet a number of devoted sanskrit scholars and sanskrit lovers as well are trying their level best to sail against the tide and endeavouring to make us understand that Sanskrit language can still be a force to reckon with.

The dramas may be classified into seven categories e.g.

1) Historical plays, 2) Biographical plays, 3) Plays based on Modern Theme, 4) Plays based on Quasi-Historical episodes, 5) Plays based on Purāṇas etc, 6) Plays Adapted / Translated from other Languages, 7) Miscellaneous.

Here, the area of appreciation will encompass primarily the dramas belonging to the third category. In this category experiments are made not only in theme, but also in structure, technique and spirit as well. For instance the themes are as diverse as from "the horror of the second world war" to "present humiliating condition of Sanskrit"; from "Gherāo" to "the Naxalite movement" etc.

The present researcher has carefully chosen, in this paper, a few dramas produced in different parts of India (with a focus on Bengal) to highlight the commendable juxtaposition of "tradition and innovation" which is conspicuously found in 20th Century Sanskrit Dramas of India.
SAARC and the UN
South Asian regional cooperation has made significant strides towards coordinated oversight and management of policies in respect to criminal justice, drugs, immigration, tourism and trade, among others. Coordination and management of such activities has been done essentially through the SAARC Secretariat headed by the Secretary General, appointed by rotation and for a limited term. The paper will focus on the state of cooperation between the SAARC secretariat and selected government/non-government agencies at the national and international levels, particularly examining the present and prospective support system provided by the UNCF.

The paper is based on author's direct contact with the functionaries of SAARC and UN agencies, dealing with regional cooperation for the alleviation of poverty and dysfunctional conflicts.

Daniel J Cohen, University of Virginia

The Neglected Guest: When an Ancestor Haunts You

This paper is based upon ethnographic research conducted in Banaras, India. Specialized ghost exorcists, called ojha, diagnose the sources of their afflicted clients' problems. Sometimes the ojha determines that a client has an ancestor who was incorporated as a lineage deity (kul devata) while in ghostly form (pretatma). However, for some considerable time- probably for several generations- it has not received any offerings through regular household worship.

Forgotten long ago, this important household guest, a previously propitiated member of the household pantheon, formerly protected the family and provided boons for the lineage. In return, the ghostly deity received regular worship and was treated with hospitality appropriate for any revered household deity. However, due to its long neglect, the ghostly ancestor is angry, and expresses this by troubling living members of the lineage through ghost (bhut-pret) affictions.

To remedy such afflictions, according to ojhas, requires discovering which deceased relative an affiliating ghost represents, and then convincing it to stop. Once such lineage ghosts are duly propitiated they may become proper family ancestors (pitr). They no longer represent mistreated lineal relatives who might return and cause additional problems for future generations of the family or lineage because of prior inhospitable treatment.
Stephen P Cohen, University of Illinois

Towards a Peace Process in South Asia?

The general assumption of most outsiders is that South Asia is a war-prone region. However, a comparison of South Asia with other regions, especially the Middle East, indicates that many of the elements of a gradual and systematic movement towards "real" peace are in place. There is scope for enhanced economic trade and growth, a new generation of Indians and Pakistanis do not share the trauma of partition, and the possible presence of nuclear weapons makes war almost unthinkable—although it may complicate a peace process. Another difference may be the role of outsiders, which was important and intrusive in the Middle East, but which can only be marginal and

Geoffrey Cook, International Institute of India Studies-Canada

The Visual and Poetic Picturesque of Bishop Heber

The second Anglican Bishop of Calcutta Reginald Heber (1783-1826) was—besides being a substantial scholar and a seminal figure in the missionary project in India—a respected professional poet and hymnist. He was, also, an amateur artist.

His drawings were transferred into engravings, and were published posthumously under the title of A Series of Engravings from the Drawings of Reginald Heber (1829) and an illustrative sequel to his immensely popular classic of colonial discourse Narrative of a Journey Through the Upper Provinces of India (1828).

During this same visitation he wrote an extended major Georgian Anglo-English Orientalist poem, "An Evening Walk in Bengal." The composition of this poem and the sketching of these drawings are parallel in time, place and authorship. Something that is very rare in history, and it would take some research to find other tri-parallel visual/literary examples during the Colonial period in India.

The object of this paper is to comparatively study out the visual and the textual to re-create the Bishop’s perceived vision of an “India” as he was creating it while on his episcopal visitations.
Darius Cooper, San Diego Mesa College

Satyajit Ray’s *Jalsaghar* and Rasa

Satyajit Ray’s films are often accounted for in what he has learnt from the West. My aim is to show how Ray’s films are not difficult to account for in Indian aesthetic and critical terms as well. In his early work, namely the *Apu trilogy* and *Jalsaghar*, the *rasa* intent and formulation is clearly discernible. *Rasa* is an ancient Sanskrit theory of dramatic presentation dealing with eight emotions: love, mirth, grief, energy, terror, disgust, anger, and wonder; which are translated by the skill and *prathibha* (imagination) of the artist into their relevant and corresponding moods or *rasas*. My paper deals with the masterful skills essayed by Ray in establishing, consolidating, and setting the stage for the dominant *rasa* of sorrow in his 1958 film *Jalsaghar* (The Music Room). The paper examines many *rasa*-related issues, such as: what are the conflict’s main sources and what accompanying emotions do they give rise to? What important *dhvanis* or suggestions are manifested by Ray’s theatricalisation of space in his *mise-en-scene*? How is the *rasa* of sorrow sustained by an intelligently maintained contrast with the subordinate emotion of fear? How is *rasa* created by the juxtaposition of certain important signifiers like the river Padma, the haveli and the music room, the clash of a vanishing feudal India and a new Industrial India? By reasserting the Indianess in the film, I have tried to place Ray’s film within the Indian aesthetic and critical tradition and give it an Indian validity and dignity it richly deserves.
John E Cort, Denison University

Museums, Texts, Doctrines, Practice, Religion

Scholars of religion tend to go to texts as sources of information in their research. Much of the study of religion consists of the careful analysis and interpretation of written sources, just as humanistic education in general has long been considered to be based primarily upon a canon of classical texts. In this context, it is worth asking what a study of religion would look like that took as its starting points not texts, but instead material culture. If we look first at the objects, and base our attempts at understanding on them, will we emerge from our study with a different view of the tradition?

These reflections are prompted by the exhibition of Jain art entitled The Peaceful Liberators: Jain Art from India, an exhibit which was not in any literal sense a study of the material culture of Jainism but an exhibit of fine art, on display at four museums which view themselves as vehicles for the expression of the artistic and aesthetic values of civilization and which are thus firmly located within the post-Renaissance tradition of western art history. This exhibit may be used as a starting point to ask, “What does the Jain tradition look like when viewed through the lens of a museum exhibition?” These reflections are aimed at heightening our awareness of the strengths and limitations of several media of presentation, both textual and art historical, and raising questions concerning what precisely constitutes the data required for approximating an adequate understanding of something as complex as a cumulative historical religious tradition.

Ann Cunningham, University of Chicago

Archaeological Settlements of "Time Immemorial"

Settlement archaeology in historic India confronts a special obstacle: persistent images of the ancient Indian landscape as fragmented and vague and, therefore, easily mythologized. Three periods will be discussed during which ancient communities of rural India have been defined in terms of modern counterparts: (1) early British perceptions of the Indian village as a primeval human community, arrested at an early stage of an Aryan evolution shared with the west -- a relict image against which an expanding empire could measure itself; (2) efforts in the first half of the twentieth century to resuscitate an ailing rural India and bring it into the modern post-war world by "reviving" ancient village institutions and values; and (3) the inclination of the rapidly industrializing world of the late-twentieth century to perceive "continuity" and "timelessness" in the rural Indian landscape. The serviceability of ancient Indian communities as "not modern" indicates deeply held authoritative traditions that archaeology must counter when constructing the past complexities of rural Indian settlements.
Bringing Up Baby: Raising "Third World" Children in the "First World"

As the second generation of Asian Indians are coming of age in the U.S., various complex and potentially explosive issues are emerging within our communities. The majority of these issues cluster around factors of identity formation and gender relations. For instance, the development of an "authentic" ethnic identity has been bound to the unquestioning acceptance of a monolithic, heterosexist, Hindu-centered, hierarchical, and conflict-free, mythical "Indian culture" that immigrant parents have constructed for their children. Furthermore, this identity often seems to rely heavily on an overtly patriarchal model of gender relationships promoted in the immigrant community as the "true tradition" of India. Consequently, the second generation and the young women in particular, feel obligated to play the passive, unprotesting, ritual-bound gender-typed role to be considered a "good Indian." Women who are politically engaged and social change activists are viewed by their compatriots as "western" and a traitor to the "culture." These inter- and intra-gender oppositions have thus created schisms which may foretell intergenerational and intergender discord. This paper will explore some of the issues around rearing socially conscious children in an immigrant culture from a participant observer's point of view.

Cross-Purposes of "Sisterhood": Solidarity and Fictive Kinship at a Women's Development Project in Nepal

In the Terai region of Nepal, overlapping caste and ethnic systems intersect with economic and educational stratification to produce configurations of positionality vis-a-vis the machinations of modernization and development. Relationships of village women of the Terai to their country's modernization and development most often have been mediated through male kin and other village men. At the Janakpur Women’s Development Center (JWDC) in the Terai town of Janakpur, a group of local women of various caste, class and ethnic backgrounds are now intensely encountering "development" first hand through their participation as JWDC craft producers and management personnel. One of JWDC’s express and primary goals is "women's empowerment", and considerable time and effort is devoted to encouraging a consciousness and activation of unity and solidarity among employees. In this paper, I explore the problematic of group identification and solidarity among women involved in this development project. I analyze the manipulation of tropes of "sisterhood" by parties differently invested and positioned in the project -- from international funders to planners to management to craft producers. Women draw on both (Western) feminist-inspired and local fictive kinship usages of "sisterhood" in efforts to align themselves in relations to others in the project and to development and modernization discourses generally. I argue that these usages at once reflect aspirations of gender identity and solidarity across class, caste and ethnicity, and also point to deep ambivalences about such a project.
Malathi de Alwis, University of Chicago

Motherhood as a Space of Protest: Women's Political Participation in Sri Lanka

This paper seeks to explore how the Mothers' Front, a grassroots women's organisation protesting the 'disappearance' of their male relatives, mobilise the privatised and feminised category of 'motherhood' to inaugurate a public protest campaign against the state. While the state's reprisals and counter-rhetoric occupy the same discursive terrain as that of the Mothers' Front's rhetoric, I argue that the Front's innovative use of feminised strategies of protest such as tears and curses in the context of religious rituals of resistance, should be understood in terms of their contingency rather than being framed by a feminist discourse that requires us to choose between maternalised and radicalized politics.

Steve Derne, SUNY-Geneseo

Audiences at Play in Hindi-Film Reversals

This paper explores how hierarchies are reversed in recent Hindi films. While in their day-to-day lives, most Indians seem to want to be guided by nurturing authority, in the topsy-turvy world of film, authorities are often portrayed as unworthy of respect. Filmmakers often reverse gender and age hierarchies. Like Hansen's study of folk theater, Raheja and Gold's study of women's oral traditions, and Alter's study of wrestling, this study of popular films reveals an arena that challenges the notion that Indians embrace age, status, and gender hierarchies. While cinematic messages help some Indians find ways to buck social hierarchies, my ethnographic study of male filmgoers suggests that viewers often reject cinematic reversals as a guide in their day-to-day lives, and instead savor filmgoing as a liminal period in which they can play with social hierarchies.
Sisterhood is Global? Globalization and the Women's Movement in India

When northern feminists declared the universality of sisterhood at the start of the International Women's Decade, southern feminists were skeptical about feminism as well as global sisterhood. At the end of the decade, the skepticism had, for the most part, been transformed into solidarities of differences. Such global solidarities have, however, accompanied the increasing unequal integration of southern economies into the world market place. In this paper, I reflect upon the such contradictions based on the women's movements in India. In particular, I analyze the movements' discourses at the NGO Forum in Huairou in Aug. 1995 and at the Indian Women's Studies Association's seventh conference in Jalpur in Dec. 1995. I will show that the discussions reveal a complex interrelationship between the local/regional and international networks of women's movements and their responses to India's economic globalization. My focus will be to understand these relationships and their implications for the movements in general and women in particular.

Ramesh C Dhussa, Drake University

Fictional Bhagalpur: A Run Away City

Gone are the days when Bhagalpur was a glorious city. This was the prestigious center of Anga Pradesh of Mahabharata. Yuga. Ganga waters washed and watered the Ghats of this city. The city was famed for its world famous Tasar silk industries. It had the pride of being associated with famous literary figures such as Sarat Chandra Chatterji, Dr. Balai Chandra Mukherji 'Banaphul', and the Nobel laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore. Many other brilliant feathers adorned this ancient city. But, as the name of the city appropriately suggests good qualities and elite personalities of this metropolis are all running away from here. (Translated in English the name Bhagalpur will closely read 'A Run Away city'). This presentation will explore Dr. Bechan's writing in order to get literary glimpses of this once glamorous but now decaying city of Bhagalpur.
Sarah Diamond, University of Pennsylvania

Let This Dirty Work End With Me: Accommodation and Resistance By Female Performers in India

This paper examines the experiences and practices of professional female performers of Karagattam, a folk dance of South India. More particularly, I examine how the dancers both accommodate and resist domination both through their performances and in their daily lives. This paper is based on dissertation fieldwork I conducted in Tamil Nadu, South India during 1995. Karagattam performances take place in a wide range of social settings including temple festivals, funerals, and National Day celebrations. Both men and women, mostly from lower castes and classes, perform in professional troupes. Performing is their primary source of livelihood. My conversations with female Karagattam performers and observations of their performances revealed to me contradictions between normative constructions of Indian womanhood and these women's life experiences. To view their performances only in terms of resistance to the dominant culture, common in much of performance theory, would be to vastly oversimplify the power relations which effect their lives. As the title of this paper indicates, I will explore these contradictions and power relations by considering the female performers’ ambivalent attitudes toward their work and toward other aspects of their lives.

Sara Dickey, Bowdoin College

"They Exploit Us": Indian Women’s Construction of Class Images Through Domestic Service

This paper examines the increasingly salient identities of class in urban India through the lens of domestic service in the city of Madurai. Domestic service in this southern city is heavily dominated by women, both as workers and as employers. Most middle- and upper-class households hire lower-class servants, and domestic service interactions generally constitute the most intense, sustained contact with members of other classes that its participants encounter. Based on research carried out in 1991-92, I examine interview narratives to discern how servants and employers build images of the other's class, and in the process construct largely oppositional portrayals of their own. These narratives reveal the range of symbolic markers that women see as distinguishing classes, and the moral basis of their judgments. They also point to local definitions and models of class. Together these issues help provide an understanding of what “class” means to women in different socioeconomic positions, and how women use their work experiences to construct the images they invoke. This paper aims to produce a more thorough understanding of the production of class ideologies by attending to women’s roles in their construction.
Anuradha Dingwaney and Lawrence Needham, Oberlin College

Who (or What) Speaks for India and for Whom?: On the Reception of Diasporic Indian Poets Writing in English

One of the more significant debates in post-colonial studies on India revolves around the issue of who speaks for, and what constitutes, an "authentic" or "representative" India or Indianness. This debate often pits the formulations by diasporic Indians located in the west (mostly US and UK) against those by resident Indians, who claim (and are granted by many) their right to speak for India on the basis of their actual, physical location within India. In our presentation, we will address this contentious issue by examining some of the stated and unstated assumptions that inform such views of authenticity/representativeness. We will also argue for a more complicated account of location (assumed, but often unarticulated) by looking specifically at the work in English of two diasporic Indian poets, A.K. Ramanujan and Agha Shahid Ali, who have been differentially assessed, in some critical writings in the west and in India, as "authentic" and "cosmopolitan" (read "inauthentic" because "western") respectively.

Ishita Banerjee Dube, El Colegio de Mexico

Contestations and Conformities: Frontiers of Hinduism in Eastern India

This paper explores the dynamic relationship between dissent and domination, margins and centers within Hinduism by focusing on the career of Mahima Dharma, a sectarian movement of Orissa primarily drawn from low caste and tribal groups. In the nineteenth century Mahima Dharma challenged and questioned the double authority of the Brahman and the Raja. Its contestatory activity peaked in a highly charged moment in 1881, when a handful of Mahima Dharmis entered the temple of Jagannath in Puri to take out and burn the images of the Jagannath trinity. From the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the sect has undergone mutations and changes, and in a large measure contestation has given way to containment. Complex processes of the institutionalization of the sacred have brought authoritative protagonists of Mahima Dharma close to Advaita Vedanta tradition of Hinduism. Nonetheless, interrogations and the redrawing of boundaries continue through other modes, in other arenas.
Recasting Margins: Interrogating 'Hinduism' in Central India

This paper explores the multiple negotiations and interrogations, reworkings and contestations of Hinduism and Hindu identities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by drawing upon the pasts of an untouchable and heretical group, who combine the features of a caste and a sect, the Satnamis of Chhatisgarh. From the theories of the nature of power in the caste order to the dominant conceptions of the relationship between caste and sect in Hinduism, from the changes in the constructions of 'otherness' within Hindu communities between 1820’s and the 1990’s to the various efforts toward the fashioning of homogenized caste identities (particularly since the late nineteenth century), from the ordering of contestatory pasts in myths and oral testimonies to the construction of 'authoritative' Hindu histories inscribed with the power of writing, from gendered Brahmanical blueprints that recast(e) the Satnamis to the group's own refashioning of Hindu symbols of authority, the perspectives form the past of an untouchable group reveal the many meanings of 'Hinduism' and the place of 'Hindu' identities as a negotiated, reworked and contested resource.

The Iqta from Iran to the Deccan

From the establishment of Turko-Persian power in northern India, we hear of the iqta -- a wage collected directly at source, without mediation of state treasury. Though the institution apparently had no precedent in pre-Turkish India, under Turko-Persian rule, and possibly even beyond such rule, it flourished mightily. My paper will trace the evolution of the term from 10th century Iran under the Buyids to the Seljik, Ghaznavid, and Ghorid Turks, and ask: to what degree did the term appropriate existing practices, and to what degree was it entirely new? The paper also traces the term's diffusion into the 14th c. Deccan. By using both epigraphic and literary data (for 13th c. North India, Juzjani; for mid-14th c. Deccan, 'Isami; for late 15th c. Deccan, Mahmud Gawan; and for early 16th c. Deccan, Firishta and Tabatabai), I explore who got iqta and under what terms. Other questions include: how did Persian sources refer to land assignments in the Deccan beyond the rule of the Bahmanis or their successors? How "portable" or generic was the term "iqta" before its arrival in Deccan, and how might it have been extended to usages beyond domains of Turko-Persian rule?
James Egge, University of Chicago

**Discourse on Merit in Early *Theravada* Buddhist Literature**

Most references to *puñña*, or merit, in early *Theravāda* literature show a high degree of uniformity in how they conceptualize and describe *puñña*, so that we may usefully talk about them as constituting a discrete and coherent discourse on merit. In this discourse *puñña* refers to the proximate effect of good action (and not to the actions themselves). Merit and demerit (*apuñña, pāpa*) condition rebirth but are not its primary cause. Merits lead one to heaven and demerits to hell, but this discourse does not present other realms of rebirth as places of karmic retribution. One makes merit paradigmatically by giving to religious, a theme developed through the idiom of sacrifice. These characteristics all suggest a relatively early understanding of karma, and raise questions about the relationship of this discourse to other treatments of karma. A study of the literary forms in which this discourse appears also indicates its integrity as a distinct body of literature, and shows the place this literature may have held in the life of early Buddhist communities.

DeWitt Ellinwood, University at Albany (SUNY)

**Two Masculine Worlds: The Army Cantonment and Jaipur Rajput Male Society**

In considering social life in early twentieth century India, we observe that one of the juxtapositions was that of British-dominated cantonment communities and princely-aristocratic Indian-dominated communities. Both were predominantly masculine worlds in a colonial context. We can view them together through the experiences and diary of Amar Singh, a Jaipur Rajput aristocrat who was one of the first Indian commissioned officers. These social settings were similar in terms of their overwhelmingly male character and male dominance; their emphasis on sports, horses and hunting; emphasis on the importance of honor and status; their hierarchical character; and in the peripheral position of women. They differed in these ways when viewed through Amar Singh's experiences: British dominance in the cantonment and Rajput dominance in Jaipur; more extensive interaction of Amar Singh with Indians in Jaipur; purdah in Jaipur and a limited but open position for British women in the cantonment; a more institutionalized social system in the cantonment and a more customary one in Jaipur. Through the examination of these societies we may better understand both Indian and British masculinity and the nature of colonial interactions and power.
Koenraad Elst, Katholieke Universiteit

Linguistics and the Arayan Invasion

Many linguists believe that at some point in the past, the question of the Original Homeland (or Urheimat) of the Indo-European (IE) language has been investigated and settled on the basis of linguistic evidence, and this to the detriment of the original idea of India as the Urheimat. In the 19th century, the Indian Urheimat theory was gradually abandoned because of a new linguistic insight, known as linguistic paleontology (though political fashions, especially nationalism and Eurocentric colonialism, may have contributed). But many assumptions at the basis of linguistic paleontology have been questioned and are not taken seriously any more. Furthermore, the types of lexical exchange between IE and Dravidian do not fit the “Aryan barbarians conquered Dravidian Harappa” scenario (the way Latin/Germanic or English/Hindi patterns of lexical exchange testify to socio-cultural inequality), nor do they necessitate any other invasion scenario. Wherever we look, we cannot find the clinching “linguistic evidence” for a European Urheimat and an Aryan invasion into India. An Indian Urheimat has not been firmly proven either, but at any rate, linguistics has not disproven it, so that other types of evidence (such as literary indications of migrations from rather than into India) must now be given a fair and serious hearing.

Sandra L Evenson, University of Idaho

A History of Indian Madras Manufacture and Trade: Dual Use and Shifting Patterns of Exchange

This study synthesizes work published to date with primary sources to describe Indian madras trade history, from the earliest likely date of trade up to the present day. Both Guinea Stuffis and Rumals are identified as early forms of Indian madras that coalesced into the Real Madras Handkerchief variation traded in the twentieth century. The trade history of Indian madras is a case study of shifting patterns of exchange within the expanding realm of global trade between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries.

Contained within this history are dual uses of Indian madras as medium of exchange and article of dress. Madras was used as currency to finance global trade in spices and slaves. This ubiquitous cotton cloth was extremely important in the larger scheme of global culture history.

Also madras was and is important as dress for local communities around the world, including the Kalabari, a once powerful trading group in the Niger Delta. As middlemen between European trading vessels and the African interior, the Kalabari amassed large quantities of cloth. Indian cloth came to have the greatest material significance for them. Donning of madras for daily and ritual events is vital in the construction of Kalabari local ethnic identity.
"Afghani Sikhs": Interrogating Notions of the Sikh Diaspora

Contemporary literature on the Sikh diaspora generally tends to posit India, specifically the Punjab, as the diasporic center of the Sikh world. Such a theoretical framework necessarily prohibits inclusion of the Afghani Sikhs and their multi-migrant position in the Sikh world, as their connections to the Indian Punjab (narratively, financially, and culturally), appear to be minimal. It seems that we have a limited vocabulary for imagining global patterns of Sikh migration. That is to say we imagine flows of people emerging from the homeland, posited as the Punjab, to various locations around the globe. However, the situation in Pakistan has caused us to radically reflect upon and revise our own conceptions of the Sikh diaspora and what it means to be diasporic. Specifically, we have found that unspecified numbers of Afghani Sikhs, due to the reconfiguration of political power in Afghanistan, have left their homeland for Pakistan. The culmination of various political, social, and existential factors has lead these Afghani Sikhs to take residence in the vacated historical gurdwaras of NWFP and Punjab. Thus, buildings that were once mere historical treasures have now been re-constituted as loci of new and growing, transplanted Sikh communities.

What will become apparent in this study is that these communities are establishing important cultural, material, and financial links with other Sikh communities in Pakistan, such as Balochistan and Sindh, as well as Sikh communities in Europe, Thailand, Malaysia, etc. We had come to imagine centers of the Sikh diaspora creating and maintaining links, via remittances, cultural and social flows, etc., with Punjab. What is unique here, however, is that the Sikh communities of Pakistan are establishing important relationships with countries other than India. For instance, religious texts, turbans, funds for gurdwara construction and maintenance are obtained from Singapore. Khalistani literature, published in the UK, is distributed at the annual gurpurab celebrations in Nankana Sahib. Funds for establishing a Sikh newsletter, based in Peshawar, have been collected from Sikh industrialists in Sindh. Last but not least, cultural productions (audio and video cassettes, _gutkas_), are made in Sindh and sold at the Nankana celebrations. Unlike other Sikh communities scattered about the Sikh world who are concerned about raising their children with an awareness of Punjabi and _Punjabi_, these communities are negotiating a very different set of questions. What does it mean to be a Sikh in an Islamic republic? What does it mean to learn Gurmukhi when your mother tongue is Pashto, not Punjabi, and the state language is Urdu? What is the imagined homeland of these communities: Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, or Khalistan? It is our hope that our informal observations will facilitate a re-imagining of the Sikh diaspora and provoke further studies of the predicaments, experiences, and contributions of the Sikhs of Pakistan.
The Art of Cultural Contestation: Sadequain, State and Society in Pakistan

Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali, University of Michigan

Since Partition, Pakistan has suffered from an acute identity crisis: the problem of legitimizing its existence as a nation for the Muslims of South Asia, when most of the Muslims of South Asia remain outside its borders, has intersected with the embattled issue of the place of Islam in the construction of national identity. The life and work of the painter Sadequain (1930-87) provides a site for mapping and interrogating some of the cultural contestation over national culture and identity within Pakistan.

With national galleries dedicated to his work in three major cities of Pakistan, Sadequain has been accorded the stature of a national artist. At the same time, he was and remains a very controversial public figure. A theatrical personality, he painted both figurative nudes and Quranic calligraphy with equal flamboyance. As a result, over the thirty years of his career, his work came to be both appropriated and severely attacked by the liberal intelligentsia and the Islamic religious right. This paper maps the shifting public debates between these two groups and examines two nodal points in particular.

The first nodal point is marked by Sadequain's exhibition of figurative paintings, at the Punjab Arts Council in Lahore, in May 1976. It became the subject of one of the most aggressive debates on art and obscenity, as the Jamaat-e-Islami denounced the exhibition as "obscene and immoral", large demonstrations were held, and finally the exhibition was bombed. The second nodal point is marked by the opening of the Sadequain Gallery, in 1988, by General Zia-ul-Haq in recognition of Sadequain's contribution to Islam. The liberal intelligentsia denounced Sadequain for "betraying his commitment to people", by accepting this honour.
Representing, Policing, Practicing the State

The conception of the state as a unitary actor defined foremost through its coercive agencies of the army and the police is a central trope of the modern state's self-representation, articulated variously in judicial discourse, the ordering of the physical environment and at the level of such day-to-day practices as police uniform and code of conduct. Such rhetorical and representational strategies engender normative claims to moral ascendancy and are, in a colonial context, at once more visible, transparent and indeterminate.

My investigation draws from research on the village police and constabulary in colonial Kanpur based on a critical reading of various archival sources, diaries, interviews and judicial records. I focus on the subordinate police as a site where state/society categories of identity are enacted, affirmed and reproduced. I explore this double-articulation, effecting, on the one hand, an organic seamlessness (and hence, invisibility) to structures of power and, on the other, a boundary through which is constituted a "society" in need of policing and a "state" as its transcendant, rational Other. I argue that the subordinate police are a useful entry point into critically rethinking state discourse precisely because they are a resistant layer where "state" and "society" cannot be split. Included in my discussion is a critique of dichotomous approaches to power (eg Subaltern Studies) which leave no space to interrogate the state's representations of itself and hence to create a counter-narrative of the "approved selves"—including the police—which they entail.

James L Fitzgerald, University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Brahman Resentment and the Making of the King in the Mahabharata

There are two major cycles of stories about brahmins in the MBh (and many others scattered here and there in the text). They record numerous instances of brahmin abuse at the hands of kṣatriyas and they record a variety of brahmin responses to that abuse, ranging from Vasiṣṭha's attempted suicide to Rāma Jāmadagnya's sustained murderous rage. This paper will present and discuss a selection of these stories and argue that they play a basic role in defining the fundamental ethical and political argument advanced by the Mahābhārata. That argument is that armed military men, men of kṣatra, who have a tendency to lapse into greed, lust, and arbitrary violence, must be resisted by force by a kṣatriya agent who has a sense of inner restraint (who is niyata), is devoted to the 'Good Law' of dharma, and is devoted to supporting and honoring the brahmins who are the fundamental source of human knowledge of dharma. The MBh formulates an argument for kingship, that is, an argument defining the proper use of violence in society, against a perceived history of inappropriate violence. This argument is partially represented in the story of the seers' churning King Pṛthu out of his wicked father King Vena (which is told to the new King Yudhiṣṭhira at the very outset of his rule), and it is fully represented in the Pāṇḍava-Kṛṣṇa (i.e., Indra-Viṣṇu) narrative at the heart of the MBh.
Religious Identities at the Crossroads of a Muslim Female Healer's Practice

When the female Muslim healer with whom I work asked me what I wrote down in my notebook as I sat at her healing table, I responded that I noted whether a patient was Hindu or Muslim, their gender and relative age, and the nature of their complaint, her diagnosis and prescriptions. In a tone that indicated her disappointment in how little I seemed to have learned, she exclaimed, “But there’s no question of Hindu and Muslim!” This and numerous other statements made in the teachings challenge frequently presupposed boundaries (or the strength) of religious identities in South Asia. This paper provides a Muslim and Female perspective of margins of Hindu identity, from the outsiders’ of those margins. It examines the identification, negotiation, and significance (or lack thereof) of religious identities in the context of healing practice and rhetoric of a South Indian Muslim female healer (a piranima) and the teachings and initiatory rituals of her husband, a Sufi pīr.

Presentation and Ritual in Early Buddhist Stupas

The physical organization and layout of Buddhist reliquary mounds, stupas, provides a window into the forms of ritual practiced by Buddhists in the first few centuries BC. The analysis of these forms suggests that fundamental differences existed between the forms of ritual conducted at the large open-air stupas like Sanchi, and the rock-cut temples of the Western Ghats. More specifically, the architectural layout of the pilgrimage sites fostered a more egalitarian form of worship, while the monastic centers of the Western Ghats supported a more direct and formal form of ritual. This approach, when combined with an analysis of associated inscriptions, informs upon the different uses of Buddhism by distinct social and economic groups in South Asia.
Medical Education for Indian Women: The Campbell Medical School Experiment

In 1888 fifteen Indian women were admitted to Campbell Medical School to begin working towards the V.I.M.S. or Vernacular Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery. In this paper I will address the Campbell Medical School experiment in training Indian women to be medical doctors. I argue that these female 'hospital assistants' played a subversive role, undermining the goal of the colonial authorities. The aim of the program at Campbell was to train female medical practitioners who would staff district hospitals and dispensaries for women and thereby demonstrate the value of the imperial connection. Records exist to suggest the hospital assistants did not share the Medical College graduates' disdain for traditional systems. In practicing in the districts, they brought western medicine to a new group of women without breaking the purdah system. What we see here is a conjuncture of self-interest and structural constraints operating to subvert the original intent of the imperial authorities.

Radhika Gajjala, University of Pittsburgh

Cyberethnography and South Asian Cyborg-Diaspora

For the diasporic individual, "home" is a disembodied construct, situated primarily in memory and nostalgia. Cyberspace, a new frontier, offers the possibility of creating a sense of home and community for diasporic individuals. In Cybersociety, S. Jones (1994) writes that "like any new frontier, [cyberspace] is colonized first by our imagination." In seeking to study the "colonization" of cyberspace in an email list for South Asian women, I started a study of the list as a participant-observer. However, when confronted with the idea of being studied, many women in the list protested and voted not to allow anyone to do a study that would describe the group as a whole. My paper is an attempt to address several questions this situation raised for me. Some questions relate to the nature of the medium itself (e.g., is an email list a private or public space?), others relate to the negotiation of identity (e.g., who has the privilege of being able to resist hegemonic narratives in the name of resistance?) and the struggles of not-Western ethnographers writing about the East, and still others concern the politics of representation in email lists where no single writer has complete authority and where each reader/writer actively participates in the production of the text/ethnography.
Kathleen Gallagher, Harvard University

Origins and Processes: An Investigation into the Causes of Squatter Settlements in Nepal

In the past five years alone the estimated number of squatter settlements in the Kathmandu Valley has risen from sixteen to over fifty, with a commensurate increase from a few hundred to several thousand in the squatter population itself. This paper is a small portion of research conducted between 1987 and 1992 investigating both contemporary as well as historical causes of squatting in the Kathmandu Valley.

An examination of Kathmandu’s past illustrates how the groundwork for the proliferation of squatter settlements was inadvertently being laid long before the actual appearance of any settlement by a historical shift in the form and function of a traditional ‘Hindu’ city. An analysis of contemporary factors indicates that in addition to poverty and socio-economic considerations, other forces are contributing to the incidence of squatting in the valley. Powerful networks control the distribution of land and housing in Kathmandu, and accessibility to these networks is determined through financial (i.e. bribery) and personal channels (i.e. the presence of kinsmen, friends from one’s birthplace, etc. within the said network).

Ironically, many of the most marginalized households that really do lack land and shelter cannot afford to squat, a situation exacerbated by recent political changes in which nominally ‘democratic’ forms of governance continue to be characterized by clientelism and other vestiges of Nepal’s past.

Michele Gamburd, Portland State University

Migration to the Middle East: Status Markers and Social Change in a Sri Lankan Village

In the rural Sri Lankan village of Kosgahakanda, a quarter of the adult women now work or have worked abroad as housemaids in the Middle East. The scope and pace of change brought on by this new economic opportunity create not only great mobility in social relations, but also, and more fundamentally, a reconfiguration of the core categories of caste and gender. A series of case studies captures the dynamic and fluid nature of class as an emerging category of social stratification in the village. I use the term 'class' not only as a division of market-oriented society based on occupational skills and income, but also as a matter of life-style, taste, values and views. At the same time I question which diacriticals mark which hierarchies, and to what extent the organizing categories of caste, class, and gender retain any meaningful identity. Ambitions and goals shift as different families and individuals apportion their new wealth to get ahead in a number of more and less traditional social arenas. At the same time, women’s positions in family and village power structures change, as their employment as domestic servants abroad transforms their work, usually done at home, for free, for the family, into work done abroad, for wages, for strangers. I examine the extent to which older village ideologies of caste and gender incorporate new employment opportunities for women, and how these historically contingent structures and practices mold economic development and class formation.
Widowhood has not been the subject of systematic investigation among Muslim communities in India. This paper seeks to explore the lives of widows among the Ismaili Bohras in Western India. The paper is divided into two segments. The first deals with the textual sanction and the contextual practice of the observance of iddat (seclusion) and ihad (mourning). The word iddat means literally "a period that can be reckoned, a term". When the husband dies, the wife has to observe iddat during which she practices seclusion (ihad) and is not allowed to remarry. The paper also highlights the variation, if any, in the custom within the Bohra community and makes a cursory comparison between the lives of widows among selected sects of Muslims in Western India. The second section examines the social-cultural and economic conditions under which Bohra widows live. The focus in the literature is almost entirely on widow-remarriage and widow-consort relationship. Besides these worn out interests, the paper examines the autonomy and responsibility of widows for their own lives and their economic role, if any, that contribute to their survival and independence. Related to economic independence is the question of widows' rights to inheritance and social and kin arrangements. These are examined from the widows' perspective.
Gautam Ghosh, University of Chicago

'Jews' or 'Germans'? Displacement, Representation and the Language of Diaspora in the 1947 Partition of Bengal

Although the 1947 Partition of India is, for most Bengali Hindus, the signal event of the 20th century, remarkably little has been written about how this population experienced and interpreted this event, and the displacement precipitated by it. The limited scholarship that does exist on the subject sees the displacement within a "normative" nationalist framework -- thereby reducing it to "broader processes" and obscuring the specificities of the experience in Bengal. Alternatively, studies of Bengal during this period do not adequately address the ways in which the affected population appropriated global discourses in order to represent their experience. This paper describes and analyzes the ways in which a set of categories emerging from World War II were deployed in the aftermath of the Partition of Bengal, namely discourses of "Jewishness" and "Germanness." In doing so, the paper problematizes the ways in which the local, national, and global spheres intersect in India more generally.

Partitions in South Asian Politics of the Diaspora

Kaushik Ghosh, Princeton University

Certain moments in subcontinental history, like partition, the war over Bangladesh's independence or the recent liberalization experience, have enabled different processes of formation and fragmentation of South Asian identity. Looking from the perspective of Bangladesh and Bangladeshi immigrants in North America this paper highlights certain ways in which such moments continue to shape and challenge the contours of South Asian politics in North America. Specifically, by exploring these moments in the past and the present, what can we learn about South Asian identity as a hegemonic process and the resistances from the margins to that hegemony.

Vinay Gidwani, University of California-Berkeley

Elements for a Dialectical Theory of Agrarian and Ecological Change

I will attempt to re-think the 'society-nature' dialectic. Existing social science approaches, visible in the work of various geographers, human and political ecologists, ecological feminists, and some historians, fall short in their efforts to model the dialectic. They either continue to treat 'society' and 'nature' as interacting but exclusive domains, else remain mired in a static and often reified account of 'society' and 'nature', or lapse into teleological narratives about the dialectic. This paper will suggest that the physical landscape is socially constituted at one level but displays at other levels logic capable of reconstituting social relations. The landscape, at once produced and the basis for production, of livelihoods and cultural worlds needs analysis at various scales and locations like households, villages, markets, regions, states, and world-systems. Analytic registers have to span and interrogate categories like class, caste, age, gender and ethnicity, to understand the embodied histories of situated agents. This paper, drawing on my research in Gujerat and points from other papers in the panel, will make a plea for dissolving recurrent antinomies between material-ideal, nature-culture, base-superstructure, being-consciousness in the human sciences through careful attention to the experienced history of subjects and places in India.
Janice M Glowski, Ohio State University

The Goddess Kumāri: Structural Hints of Religious Identity

For centuries, inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal have worshipped young girls as the goddess Kumāri. Like the yoginis of the Valley, Kumāri is worshipped in various contexts by followers of several religious paths (mārga), such as Buddhāmārga, Śivamārga, and Saktimārga. Scholarship, such as that of Michael Allen, John Locke, and Mary Slusser, that examines Kumāri worship practices and the bahās that house these deities has brought forth interesting questions regarding the "religious identity" (i.e. Buddhist or Hindu) of the goddess Kumāri.

This paper explores the "religious identity" of Kumāri by examining the overall structure and iconography of Kumāri Bahā, the home of the Royal Kumāri located in Nepal's capital city, Kathmandu. The various iconographic themes present on the structure serve not only to generate a sacred abode for the goddess, but like other religious structures in the Valley, provides clues that lead to a greater understanding of the goddess' identity.

Ann Gold, Syracuse University

Grain Stories from the Rajasthani Field(s)

This paper looks at multiple meanings and values of grain in a North Indian village's oral traditions, ritual transactions, and daily practices. Over the past thirty years many farmers in this village have changed their major grain crop from corn and barley to wheat, eating habits have naturally changed as well, and grain stories become evaluations of social grain crop from corn and barley to wheat, eating habits have naturally changed as well, and grain stories become evaluations of social transformations. Using highly condensed versions of three oral tales gathered in 1993, I trace grain as a key image, theme, metonym, and medium, and look at the ways it stands from unbroken wholeness as well as fertile, and mutable multiplicity. Grain is food but also money; it is offered to the gods and traded in the market place. In its various guises and uses, grain serves both to unify and to differentiate persons within the community of eaters and growers: Gods and ants; kings and sweepers; farmers, gardeners, and tribals; men and women.
Robert Goldman, University of California-Berkeley

Ravana's Kitchen: A Testimony of Desire and Other

The construction of alterity in South Asia has, as in many parts of the world, focussed centrally on issues of desire with reference chiefly to exotic or forbidden practices in the areas of sexuality and diet. Contemporary scholarship has tended to highlight the former of these areas in a plethora of books and articles on women, sexuality, and gender. Less intensively studied but equally important in the construction of identity is Brahmanical India's related fascination with food-permitted and forbidden--as a marker of discrimination between the self and the other and as a site of revulsion and desire. The present paper examines some aspects of the relationship between diet and sexuality, attraction and revulsion as they are illuminated by Vatsiki's meditations on food and sex in his Ramayana.

Kanishka Goonewardena

Cultural Politics of Global Capital: From Colombo to Los Angeles

Political struggles around the contemporary globalization of capital have assumed an unprecedented—and a highly aestheticized—tendency to be played out in the realm of *culture.* At the level of the *nation-state,* this foregrounding of the *cultural* can especially be seen in a spectacular inflation of the *nation* vis-à-vis the decline in power and scope of the *state* in *local* oppositions to the spread of *global* capitalism. In Sri Lanka, the recent ascent of the so-called Jathika Chinthanaya (National Ideology) as a potentially formidable challenge to the global sweep of commodity culture offers an exemplary lesson in the political possibilities latent in the complex interplay between *national culture/identity* and *commodity culture,* *tradition* and *post/modernity,* among other things. For a striking feature of this political movement—also aesthetic sensibility—is the manner in which its thoroughgoing anti-modernism and deep-seated mistrust of anything *western* couples with an uncompromising *Sinhala-Buddhist* nationalism and a militant call for an environment-friendly *socialism,* going *beyond* Marx in the process, but conjuring specters of Nietzsche, Heidegger, and indeed a home-grown variety of National Socialism. At a different level, and in a different place, a canonical example of a similar—comparable—interplay of aesthetic and political forces is postmodern architecture—which is hailed, at least by western critics fond of the exemplary case of Los Angeles, as the least mediated cultural expression of late-capitalism's patent attempt to articulate the local and the global, particular and the universal, difference and equality, and so on. The *ecology of fear* of Los Angeles's landscape (seen in not only Proposition 187, but also the ubiquity of gated communities, gangs, big dogs, *armed-response* security firms . . . ), however, gives us a fair warning of the fascist tendencies alive within this cultural logic of late-capitalism—and what those may have to do with what goes on in Colombo . . .
Deserted Masculinities in J.P. Dutta's Films

Relying on a very tight relationship between violence and men in desert landscapes, Dutta's films—Ghulami, Hathvar, Batwara, and Kshatriya—draw on the "bandit" genre of Indian cinema and the Hollywood Western at both the visual and narrative registers. Articulations of masculinity in these genres have all too frequently called on vigilante resolutions that subvert the authority of the state; Dutta's films undoubtedly unfold along these lines, but they also ask us to consider the feudal traces of power that circumscribe the authority of the secular postcolonial state. Linking mise en scène and masculinity in Dutta's films, my paper argues that Dutta's films simultaneously rely on the pleasures of a film literate audience and the anxieties of a spectator-citizen seeking stable and secular resolutions to law and order problems.

My paper addresses Dutta's repeated use of the Rajasthan landscape in the mise en scène of his films. I argue that the narratives deftly uses stories of hoary feudal violence and tensions between caste and communities against this backdrop to convey Rajasthan's distance and alienation from the national secular ideology. These films, I argue, play out the paradoxical presence of the nation state: the feudal structure in this region occludes the entry of the secular state, yet the grand palaces and desert landscapes in the mise en scène form an integral part of official tourist narratives of glorious pre-colonial past.

Stewart Gordon, Independent Scholar

Integration of the Khilat Ceremony into Hindu Courts, 1600-1800

If we have a notion of "Hindu" kingship which has "core" ceremonies and symbols of sanctity and power, the Khilat ceremony seems an unlikely candidate for widespread adoption, which, in fact, happened in the two centuries under discussion. Khilat involves the wearing of garments either worn or handled by the king and would seem to have "worn clothing" pollution problems, depending on the castes of king and receiver. Yet, we find its use widespread in the seventeenth century, blossoming into an ambassadorial and honorific lingua franca in the eighteenth century. I shall widen the discussion to Iran, Byzantium, Central Asia, and Europe, suggesting that the utility of the ceremony allowed it in other contexts to overcome obstacles at least as formidable as caste pollution. I shall conclude with a more open-ended notion of kinship in India.
Manu Goswami, University of Chicago

The Production of 'India': Territorial Nativism and Nationalist Discourse, 1858-1880

An investigation of nationalism, I argue, must begin with challenging the assumption of an already existent, territorially fixed, singular entity-'India'. This paper poses a central question: what are the social processes and historical transformations that anchored the emergent conception of India as a unitary socio-spatial form? As the constitutive presupposition of political nationalism, this specifically modern territory oriented the construction of the nation and marked a radical conceptual shift from prior indigenous person-oriented, dynastic conceptions of space.

The focus of this paper is a close reading of a range of indigenous historiographies, geography texts, travel and pilgrimage accounts and maps. Written by vernacular elites, these texts illumine the formation of a specifically modern territory-oriented conception of the nation. A central thematic focus of this paper is the formation of 'territorial nativism,' or a hierarchical ordering of various nationals defined in terms of originary, organic natives. In effect, 'Hindus' were deemed the primordial inhabitants of the imagined space of Bharat. In this hierarchically structured order of 'territorial nativism,' 'Muslims' were now conceived as 'outsiders' to the putatively ancient socio-spatial unit of 'India.'

I shall explore various questions: what accounts for the emergent territorial definition of nationality/citizenship? Why does the organizing principle of the periodization of history become the fixed socio-spatial form of Bharat? I shall chart the shifting significations of notions of 'Bharat,' 'Aryavarta' and 'India' with reference to both larger transformations in colonial socio-spatial practices and the specific historical moment of their formation.
Peter Gottschalk, University of Chicago

Multiple Narratives and Multiple Identities among Hindus and Muslims in Bihar

Contemporary historians and historians of religion often privilege religious difference in their depictions of South Asian culture. From Panipat to Partition historiography often relies on a narrative of Muslim versus Hindu. This bifurcation rules from the Middle Era to the Modern, from Muhammad Ghuri to Advani. In this way, residents of the Subcontinent become typed primarily according to their supposed religious identities. However, the religious identity of any individual exists within a nexus among other identities which adjusts itself according to social context. Religious identities must, therefore, be understood relative to the other identities which coexist in any broad social context.

Drawing on narratives commonly told by the inhabitants of a group of villages in Bihar, the paper will demonstrate how these residents create identities for themselves which include, but are not exclusively, religious identities. Developed around shared interests, religious identities exist among both complementary and competing identities associated with family, neighborhood, village, and nation, among others. This study suggests how a nexus of cross-interests finds expression in individuals through narratives as they construct multiple identities derived from multiple pasts.

Gregory P Grieve, University of Chicago

A Dilemma of Dogmas: (Re)Constructing An Authentic Temple

This paper uses the reconstruction of the Cyasilin Mandap in Bhaktapur to explore the interaction between development and traditional culture. It concentrates on the contention and ultimate compromise between the Western architects’ and the local artisans’ understanding of authenticity. The ‘Dilemma of Dogmas’ revolves around four gray steel pillars which are visible just beneath the Mandap’s second level.
Pamila Gupta, University of Michigan

Charles Boxer as Archive: Intellectuals, Hegemony and the State
During this period of a so-called 'crisis of representation,' many anthropologists have turned to history to supplement ethnographic data. The direct result of this 'historical turn' is that many anthropologists are doing research in archives which were and continue to be created by and for the state. This paper is an attempt to look more closely at how archives must be critically analyzed in relation to the state, hegemony, and the role of intellectuals. An archival collection must not be accepted uncritically as an 'accumulation of texts,' but rather as a hegemonic system whereby statements are allowed to be represented as unique events. I argue that the process of thinking through archives can lend itself to a more careful reading of historical sources and a richer ethnographic analysis. By employing Michel Foucault's discussion of archives alongside Antonio Gramsci's discussion of intellectuals, I treat the work of Charles Boxer, a 20th century British historian writing on Portuguese colonialism in India, as an archive, showing that his work is seminal in opening up the Portuguese archives not only as a site of imperial but also academic investment, which is predicated on and reflects particular historical relationships between the state, hegemony and intellectuals. This paper addresses several theoretical questions about the complex relationships between subjects, texts and audiences: How can archives be understood as both sites of knowledge production and circulation? How can such a reading of archives serve to counter hegemonic representations? Can ethnography be a useful tool for archival research?

Kimber A Haddix, University of California at Davis

"Excess Women": The Family, Marriage, and Work Fates of Unwed Women in Tibetan Polyandrous Villages of Humla, Nepal

Life experiences of Tibetan women in polyandrous communities of the the Nepalese Himalaya vary dramatically depending on whether or not they marry. This presentation describes how factors such as wealth, sibling set configuration, number of fathers, and personal choice can affect whether or not a woman marries in these communities. Attention will also be focused upon the drastic differences between the lives of unmarried women in two separate valleys of Humla. Though both valleys are peopled by polyandrous Tibetans, variation on the basis of attitudes toward illegitimate children and monastic opportunities for women cause unmarried women to experience life in very different ways.
Nuclear Weapons and Regional Security

One of the basic questions raised by the incipient nuclear programs of India and Pakistan is whether the presence of such weapons, whether in a “de facto” or “opaque” or overt form makes war more or less likely in the region. The current effort to get India and Pakistan to sign various international nuclear treaties is morrowed by a debate in those countries over whether such steps would increase or decrease their security. This paper will draw upon recent path-breaking research about South Asia’s two major recent crises, the non-nuclear Brasstacks crisis of 1987, and the 1990 crisis that led to a major American intervention.

Gavin R G Hambly, University of Texas at Dallas

From Bukhara to Delhi: The Transmission of Kingly Pomp and Circumstance

Two such different scholars as Bernard Lewis and Eric Hobsbawm have demonstrated how both history and tradition can be “invented”, and the process of invention was very clearly at work in the legitimization of Muslim rule in the sub-continent. This paper will examine some of the mechanisms whereby an embryonic Indo-Muslim tradition of kingship derived from the Indo-Iranian borderlands, took root at a time (the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries) when the Muslim presence was new, inchoate and, because of its remoteness from the metropolitan centers of the Dar al-Islam, necessarily parochial. The Arabs in Sind had been part of an established tradition of caliphal conquest and government, but the Turkish mamluks who entered India under the Ghaznavids and Ghurids would have known only provincial variants of mulk and sultanan, those of Samanid Bukhara mediated by way of Ghazna. Thus, in the establishment of an organized government, they were forced to draw upon a smorgasbord of ceremony and ritual, titulature and nomenclature, literary and genealogical pretension, to transmit raw power into legitimized authority. Islamic historians have tended to focus on formal “proofs” of authority at the expense of less formal expressions of political ritual such as symbolic ceremonial, modes of reception and greeting, and gift-giving, some of which will be discussed in this paper.
Mary Hancock, University of California-Santa Barbara

Gendering the Modern: Women and Home Science in South India

This paper considers the public culture of urban domesticity in India, focusing on cultural practices by which domesticity has been produced in Madras since the turn of this century. Though elite nationalists envisioned the domestic realm as the interior of a modern public world, it was elite women who enacted domesticity through their relations with men (as wives, mothers, sisters) and with other women (including servants and poor women). The domestic was thereby marked as a site for reinventing elite womanhood and Hindu “tradition” as public virtues. In this light, I consider the formation of home science, a field of women’s education modeled on Western “home economics.” As a self-conscious invention of modernity, it brought the macrostructures of economic development home by transforming domestic spaces into loci of bourgeois class formation (through consumption) in accordance with values of rationality, science and efficiency. At the same time, however, it created bounded spaces of female action, sociality and imagination in which differential and contestatory modernities were fashioned, often through ritually mediated consumption.

Gary J Hausman, Columbia University

Tamil Nationalism and Siddha Alchemy in 1901 an 1975

Iracavaata Cintaamani, edited by Hakim P. Muhammad Abdulla in 1901, was published with the explicit intent of uniting together, in a single Tamil volume, alchemical information drawn from a wide variety of both Unani and Tamil texts. In 1975, this text formed one of several volumes that were republished by the Tamil Nadu Government, as part of a Dravidian Nationalist stress on reviving and encouraging traditional Siddha Tamil lore. Through historical comparison of these two publishing events, one can gain some understanding of the variant forms in which Tamil nationalism has manifested itself. The original publication of the text was an inclusionary attempt to combine approaches from a wide spectrum of sources, with little distinction made between Unani and Tamil texts, as separate medical systems. The republication of the text, in 1975, was part of an attempt to stress Siddha as a distinct Tamil system of medicine, set apart from the parallel, yet separate, systems of Ayurveda and Unani. Through focus on this historically significant text, I shall assess the variant styles of nationalism that have influenced understanding of the ‘traditional’ systems of Indian medicine over the course of the past century.
Alf Hiltebeitel, George Washington University

Conventions of the Naimisa Forest

The Naimisa Forest is the exemplary scene of convocations of bards and sages to recite epic and purānic narratives. Taking "convention" in the sense both of such convocations or meetings, and of poetic convention, as referring to a topos used not only in Sanskrit but Tamil and other vernacular texts, this paper will consider what kinds of meetings take place at the Naimisa Forest, and why this particular forest might have such a long textual history as the site for telling "old stories." It will then aim at considering how Naimisa conventions figure in the Mahābhārata.

Heather Hindman, University of Chicago

The Quest for Shangri-La

This paper explores the visual imagery which frames Western perceptions of Nepal.

It argues that the ‘tourist’—both of the armchair variety and the actual traveler—are given genres through which to construct the experience of Nepal. It demonstrates how this exotic ‘Nepal’ is constructed through the images that adorn travel brochures and coffee table books. It is within this framework that the quest for Shangri-La begins.

Peter Hook and Tahsin Siddiqi, University of Michigan

Diverging Roads: Urdu Since Independence in India and Pakistan

Since 1947 Urdu has been used by two different speech communities which for political reasons have not had the opportunity to interact freely. In our paper we explore some of the consequences that this half century of separation has had for domain of usage as well as for lexicon and syntactic structures. Urdu's use in Pakistan in an increasing number of formal governmental and business settings has led to a proliferation of technical expressions which, while easily understood by Urdu speakers in India, are not part of their active vocabularies. Furthermore, responsibility for coining new terms in the natural sciences has to some extent shifted to the western side of the border. As Urdu is now being taught in Pakistan to millions of members of a younger non-Urdu speaking generation, there are certain features of their speech which are not known to Indian speakers. And other features of Indian Urdu that have not been completely assimilated by the "non-Hindustanis" of Pakistan. At the same time the covert campaign against Urdu in Uttar Pradesh has created a generation of Urdu speakers in India whose speech shows signs of convergence with Hindi.
The Initiation of the Emperor

In five of his 109 poems of the Alvar canon, Kalikanri ("Tirumangai") mentioned his emperor, Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (731-796). This paper focuses on one of them, Periya Tirumoli 2.8, which is placed in the temple of the Eight-Armed-Lord at Attiyur. In the 8th century, Attiyur stood outside Kanchipuram's walls to the south, but is now included inside the city as "Vishnu Kanchi." Throughout the poem, the narrative voice describes various heroic deeds or appearances of the god, and then asks who he is. The answer received is simply that he is the one who dwells there in the house of the Eight-Armed-Lord. What does that conversation mean? Who is the questioner, and who gives the answer? The concluding "signature" stanza tells us that it is about the Pallava sovereign worshiping there at the time (c.745-46) the Rashtrakuta king Dantidurga surrounded Kanchipuram with his forces. Why was Pallavamalla worshiping the Eight-Armed-Lord while Rashtrakuta forces surrounded his capital?

By placing the poem in its reconstructed historical context, and by applying hermeneutics gained from a study of the emperor's own Vishnu-house built c.770, this paper argues that Kalikanri used the poem to record the first part of a two-part ritual sequence that initiated Pallavamalla as a slave of Narayana. Thereafter he believed himself to be the instrument of the Bhagavan's rule in the empire. The question and answer structure of the first nine stanzas record his relationship as initiate to his acharya and the identity of the consecrated acharya as the embodiment of Narayana. The rite probably followed the Pancaratra Agama.

The consecration (diksa) explains the puram theme of the first five stanzas, and the akam theme of the next four. The exterior puram theme is about the acharya's purification of the initiate's body and preliminary instruction, using references to Man-lion, Dwarf, Rama, Krishna, and Narayana's dwelling in the Ocean of Milk. The interior akam theme uses the voices of desiring females to represent the initiate's own inner consciousness that now gazed on the eight-armed icon.

The final stanza records the fact that Pallavamalla's father-in-law, the Jain Rashtrakuta king, had taken over the Pallava capital from Pallavamalla's rival and surrounded it protectively while he was consecrated a Parama Bhagavata. The stanza infers that Narayana as Krishna had used the Jain king as his own instrument to effect the capture of the capital and the ritual enslavement of Pallavamalla. Understood in that manner, the poem is a condensed theological and liturgical statement of the way Narayana as Vasudeva Krishna acts in history according to Bhagavata belief. Kalikanri recorded the completion of the ceremony at Sri Rangam in Periya Tirumoli 5.8., but that is another paper.
John C Huntington, Ohio State University

Buddhist Iconography in Licchavi Sculpture

The Licchavi period (ca. 300-879) of Nepalese Art produced considerable numbers of spectacular Buddhist art. Our archive of Nepalese Buddhist Art in the Huntington Archive contains 245 photographs of approximately 100 individual objects almost all of which are still to be found in the Bahals and at the major religious sites of the Kathmandu Valley (but not necessarily in their original context. A detailed survey of this material reveals a number of significant iconographic considerations from which one may derive the basic nature of Newar Buddhism of the period. There were "cults" of the following methodologies:

1) The Swayambhu Mahācaitya
2) The Buddhas of the past.
3) The future Buddha Maitreya
4) The Jina/Dhyāna Buddhas based on the Vairocana cycle as it is still practiced in Nepal to the present day.
5) Avalokiteśvara in his Padmapani form
6) The standard four Bodhisattvas of Maitreya, Vajrapani, Avalokiteśvara and Mañjuśrī

One may also conclude, based on the presence of Tantric symbols and representations of Tantric ritual paraphernalia, that Tantric practices were present from at least the sixth century on.

In Ayodhya's Wake: Organizing Whom and How?

Mir Ali Hussain and Maya Yagnik, University of Massachusetts-Amherst

In the wake of the destruction of the Babri Masjid in December 1992, multiple secular "South Asian" groups were formed all across North America. Such a response - "South Asian identities as the identity of choice" - in a time of crisis was at that moment an empowering idea. Based on our experiences with two such groups - the Coalition Against Religious Bigotry in Umass, Amherst and Concerned South Asians in NYC, we aim to examine the limits of the discourse of South Asian.

Today these groups, including the two mentioned above stand as hollow edifices that are revived momentarily when a luminary from India visits the city. Where then does the problem lie? In the definition of the group as South Asian in pursuit of a crisis that belonged to a nation, namely India, or in the definition of the problem of Hindutva as a national one when it could perceivably have been framed as a South Asian concern? Are these tensions resolvable and must, therefore, the South Asian commit to an organizational strategy of South Asianness?
Syed B Hussain, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

Promises Kept -- Potentials Denied: An Economic Assessment of SAARC

Because of the reluctance of some members to join SAARC in the very initial stages, it was never expected that the organization will metamorphose into a union of South Asian states any time soon. However given the enormous prospective gains of economic coordination of such a large market, it was argued, albeit cautiously, that the arrangement would lead to substantial enhanced economic relations in the region. While there has been some modicum of economic interaction, the overall results either in the form of increased trade or investment have been rather modest if not entirely meager in the face of the tremendously unfulfilled potential. In this presentation an attempt has been made, as if to go back to the proverbial drawing board, to review the theoretical win-win framework of economics that is employed to argue for economic integration and to develop a critique that points out the specific circumstances in which this model may lead to less than optimal or even outright undesirable outcomes for at least some of the participants. Given this theoretical understanding, a review of individual country circumstances of economic development is undertaken to explain the less than stellar record of economic performance under the aegis of SAARC.

Syed Rifaat Hussain, Embassy of Pakistan

Pakistan’s Role in the Changing International System

The end of the Cold War has not produced the "peace dividend" which many had anticipated. While free of the "strategic imperative" (the motivation among the major states to compete for military power), the world today is hardly a peaceful place. Local conflicts appear to have replaced the Cold War conflicts. This is particularly true in the case of South Asia where unresolved territorial disputes, ethnic and sectarian violence, coupled with an arms race involving missile and nuclear weapon capabilities have created a dangerous and potentially violent situation. This paper assesses the historical record of Pakistan’s foreign policy and explores options in the post-Cold War international system. It argues that "cooperative" security approach is the best option for Pakistan to cope with the myriad of challenges spawned by the end of Soviet-American military competition in South Asia. The main intention here is to critique extant notions of security and to provide a feasible alternative that may offer better prospects for peace.
Gabriela Nik Ilieva, University of Minnesota

**On the Concept of the Ornaments in Indian and European Poetics**

This paper will focus on some typological similarities between Classical Sanskrit Poetics on one hand, and Ancient and Modern European Literary Theory, on the other. These similarities are found in the criteria and methods of decoding the meanings and functions of the stylistically marked elements called 'ornaments' ('alankara' in Sanskrit) in both traditions. Parallels will also be drawn in the classification, definition and analysis of these ornaments. The paper will be based on Dandin's "Kavyadarsha" and Anandavardhana's "Dhvanyaloka" (on the parts which discuss the connection between 'dhvani' and 'alankara') to represent the Indian tradition. Along with the full and systemic description of the types of 'alankara', the theoreticians studied their practical use, functions and meaning, by applying a structural approach - on the level of phoneme, morpheme, lexeme, phrase, sentence, text. Their most valuable idea is that the poetic text has a specific power of creating new hidden meanings, realized on the surface by language factors and at the same time having a deep aesthetic and suggestive nature.

In the field of the European Poetics the paper will concentrate on "The Education of the Orator" by Quintilianus, which is useful because of its complete poetic classifications and systematizations. In addition, Lotman's "Analysis of the Poetic Text" will be examined regarding the semantic aspects of the figures of speech.
Preminda Jacob, University of Maryland-Baltimore County

The Deadly Fuse: Entwining Cinema, History, and Politics in an Urban Public Sphere

This paper argues that the juxtaposition of the signifiers of cinema, politics, and religion in public spaces of Madras city, enables local political leaders to vastly increase their power by obfuscating boundaries between social spheres. Anna Salai, a major thoroughfare of the city is the main site for towering brightly colored advertisements for popular films. Similarly, the entire ten-mile stretch of the street is punctuated with a series of public statues of politicians. Local political parties regularly appropriate this street to stage extravagant spectacles in the form of rallies reminiscent of the celebrations that accompany the premiere screening of a popular film. Finally, a third element, that of religion, joins the visual drama on city streets. Contemporary political rallies closely emulate popular religious processions which in turn are significantly mediated by cinematic renditions of the same. As key performers in these events, local politicians orchestrate elements of cinematic illusion, political reality, and religious practice to create cult images of themselves and thus appeal to a mass audience.

Stephanie Jamison, Harvard & Yale Universities

Convert Structuring Devices in Kalidasa

This paper will examine certain devices employed by Kalidasa to structure larger sections of his works. In particular, motifs -- myths and rituals -- appropriated from earlier, especially Vedic material, and signalled by lexical choice and by the deployment of disguised ritual personae and procedures. After discussion of several such examples, the paper will confront several general questions raised by such instances: 1) to what extent might we have to modify standard doctrine about the unimportance of choice among synonyms in kavya? 2) is the use of Vedic material merely decorative, or is the covert employment of it meant to appropriate and apply its prestige to current times? 3) how far and in what ways may we deviate from or supplement the traditional interpretations of kavya found in the commentators on particular works and in alamkarashastra in general?
The Substitute Guests: Feeding Brahmans for Ancestors

This paper explores the monthly shraddha ritual as described by the Sanskrit law books ascribed to Gautama, Baudhayana, Vasishtha, Apastambha, Manu, etc.

The person who performs the ritual invites brahmans to a meal, and as the brahmans eat, the deceased ancestors of the host are fed. The ancestors are said to stay close to the invited brahmans during the meal, and to sit down with them. According to what the brahmans eat at this meal, the ancestors remain full for certain set periods of time. There are detailed rules for which brahmans can be invited to the shraddha feast. If somebody in the host's own family is fed at this meal, the food will go directly to the demons, and not to the ancestors. The shraddha ritual represents a rather curious form of hospitality where there are two sets of guests being fed: The real guests, who are the ancestors, are being fed through the substitute guests, who are the invited brahmans.
Pradeep Jeganathan, University of Chicago

In the Shadow of Violence: On "Tamilness" in Southern Sri Lanka

This paper is concerned with interrupting master narratives of progress and development by creating a critical counter-space to those narratives from within discourses of violence and decivilization. It will do so by examining a Sri Lankan example.

Sri Lanka was the example that warmed the hearts of liberal scholars everywhere, who argued it was first a "model colony", then a fine new nation. Well on its way to modernity, with its happy combination of democracy, development and re-distribution. The massive anti-Tamil violence of July, 1983, however, put paid to this linear narrative. After the riots, Sri Lanka joined the other new nations that were messed up, at the bottom of the third world. First, the tiny civil conflict in the north intensified, turning into a massive war, second with large numbers of Tamil refugees fleeing abroad, Sri Lanka's conflict became globalized.

Yet the Sri Lankan state would appear to have brought off the impossible, operating as it is in the cusp of these two narratives. Measured in conventional terms of growth rate, per capita-incomes, and investment inflows, things are going well. The war in the north, and bombs in the south have been normalized, they do not interfere with business. That is to say, the old narrative of modernity, development and progress would seem to alive and well.

My paper will interrogate this narrative, and call it into question from spaces of violence and practices de-civilization in urban Sri Lankan communities. Drawing on extensive field research in Colombo, I will examine the social location of Tamils who survived the riots, and continue to live in Colombo. These Tamils live under the shadow of a possible riot.

This essay will examine, under these conditions of possible violence, the production and reproduction of Tamilness in Sinhala majority communities in Colombo. I will examine first the everyday facets of socio-cultural life in such communities, focusing on how Tamilness has been re-negotiated in relation to shifting notions of "ethnicity" and "religiosity," produced by the majority Sinhala community, after the riots. Secondly, I will read extra-ordinary moments crisis, such as major militant bomb attacks in the city, that re-position the relations of Tamilness and Sinhalaness in the face of violence already experienced and anticipated. Thirdly, I will examine how the globalization of the conflict has created a space of profound de-civilization where these identities are circulated transnationally.
Barbara Johnson, Smithsonian Institution

Birth in a Newar Village (video)

During 1978 and 1980, as a filmmaker for the Smithsonian Institution's Human Studies Film Center, Barbara Johnson lived in a Jyapu village in Nepal's Kathmandu valley. The resulting 50 hours of research film are part of the collection of the Human Studies Film Archives. In this edited film of a birth with traditional birth attendant, the Newari dialogue is translated with English subtitles and narrated by the filmmaker. The film shows the social setting of a traditional Newari birth, the role of the traditional birth attendant or midwife, food and religious customs, and discussion of changes being introduced from the West.

Sanjay Joshi, Northern Arizona University

Re-reading the Archive: Vernacular Newspaper Reports and 'Native' Agency

Much of South Asian history depends on a reading of the archives created by the colonial state. It is no surprise therefore that this archive has itself become the subject of scholarly debate. Recent historiographical interventions, particularly those of the "Subaltern" historians, have raised interesting questions about the problems associated with using "colonial" sources to write histories from the point of view of South Asian "natives." This paper seeks to further problematize these notions through a close reading of one set of colonial records: the Vernacular Newspaper Reports for what is today the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Officially, the Vernacular Newspaper Reports served to exercise surveillance on the public sphere activities of educated Indians. However, these reports are constitutive of much more than a monolithic "colonial discourse." Through a close reading of the reports between 1880 and 1930, this paper shows that Indians who read and translated the vernacular newspapers for the colonial state often used their "command of language" to inflect the content of the reports with their own concerns and agenda. The paper points to the pitfall of generalized assumptions about the nature of the colonial archive, to call for a more careful and nuanced consideration of the relationship between "colonial" sources and "native" histories.

Ethnicity is a politically volatile issue in recent years, ranging from the most regressive kinds of religious fundamentalism to the politics of identity. For the Indian diaspora in the U.S., the politics of ethnicity has to be seen not only as a consequence of imperialism and its workings -- within the framework of an all-pervasive Orientalism -- but also in terms of the internal divisions within the community which reflect the political realities in India. Therefore while the Indian diaspora organizes itself in relation to the west, it continues to play out its internal power struggles in arenas deemed internal to the community. One such area, I argue, is Hindi cinema, routinely dismissed as repetitive, fantastic and cheap entertainment for the masses. Popular Hindi cinema gets scant attention from the west as compared to the validation given to realistic portrayals of poverty and oppression. For the Indian diaspora on the other hand, popular Hindi cinema becomes a community event. While the middle class professional may still view its content and technique with disdain, it nevertheless becomes a link with India and a place to debate political realities there. It is in this context that I compare two recent Indian films, the Bandit Queen and Bombay.

Both films discuss current political events. The first is the life story of Phoolan Devi, a lower caste woman who became a dacoit, and the second is based on the anti-Muslim riots in Bombay following the demolition of the Babri mosque by Hindu fundamentalists in December 1992. My argument is that the Bandit Queen is explicitly made for a western audience and this is reflected not only in the political stance it gives to the story of Phoolan Devi, reading it like a feminist odyssey of revenge, but also in its stylistic choice of realism over the combination of realism, fantasy, and rhetoric that characterizes Bombay. For the Indian diaspora, this film immediately raises questions of Otherising which color our reactions to it. Bombay on the other hand, I argue, is an Indian text, made for an Indian audience, both stylistically and in its political stance. By positioning itself as a popular film, Bombay opens up a space for the Indian diaspora to carry on an internal debate that is safe from the Otherising discourse of Orientalism.
Ketu H Katrak, University of California-Irvine

Boundarylands of Indian National and Diasporic History and Identity

In this essay, I discuss two to three differently situated women writers from India—Anita Desai (who divides her time between India and the U.S.), and diasporic Indo-American writers such as Meena Alexander, Chitra Divakaruni and others. I consider the parameters of historical recuperations for women writers—what I call the otherness of history for women, given the many traditional constraints on female participation (often as marginalized subjects) in national histories, whether colonial, or supposedly postcolonial. What role does the novel, or memoir serve during this historical time that cannot be categorized under any one rubric, such as "postcolonial", or "national", or "cosmopolitan", or "postmodern." Evocations of all these nomenclatures can be traced in the multiply located contemporary women writers of Indian origin.

The essay explores "woman as other" in nationalist and postnationalist discourses. I attempt to take further what Virginia Woolf said so aptly for her historical time: "As a woman I have no country." I locate one novelistic illustration of the otherness of history for women in Anita Desai’s representation (more as a silent backdrop) of Partition events of 1947 in her novel Clear Light of Day. I follow this by a discussion of contemporary relocations and dislocations embodied in Meena Alexander's personal journeys (from India to Sudan to New York where she now lives), and the varying allegiances to nation, identity, language in her memoir Fault Lines.

Charles H Kennedy, Wake Forest University

Democracy and Islamization in Pakistan

This paper offers a balance sheet of Pakistan’s experiment with democracy since 1971, with special emphasis on the relation between the state’s "secular" goals and society’s drive toward a greater role for Islam in public life. Recovering from the shock of secession of its eastern half, Pakistan has sought its raison d’etat in an increasing proclivity toward Islamic symbolism and practice. However, Islamization poses real challenges for democratic development. In vital areas of the country’s economic, political, and cultural life, Islamization tends to draw a wedge between the dictates of a modern polity and social mores. Without a clear consensus in Pakistan over the character and direction of Islamization, a crisis of legitimacy continues to confront the nation. Under Benazir Bhutto, there appears to be a diminution in both the rhetoric and practice of imposing Islamic laws in the country. Yet, the growing role of new Islamic groups, especially in the social sphere, imposes new demands on the state, underscoring the dilemmas of constructing a modern nation in the context of religion, which appears to dominate the political discourse.
Omar Khalidi, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Urdu Literacy in Maharashtra

Schools using Urdu as the language of instruction were widespread in many provinces of British India. The United Provinces or U.P. was considered the heartland of Urdu. Soon after independence Urdu, both as a language of instruction as well as an optional subject of study was abolished in U.P. The abolition of Urdu was achieved through a manipulation of three-language formula, which called for the mandatory teaching of state language (Hindi), English and a third language, Sanskrit or a South Indian language. This left no room for Urdu, the mother tongue of millions. In contrast, the state of Maharashtra permitted teaching of Urdu in state schools as one of the subjects and even Urdu-medium schools such as those established by the Anjuman-i Islam and Muslim schools in Konkan region of the state. Due mainly because of the teaching of Urdu in private schools, literacy in that language is high, so much so that the number of Urdu books and magazines sold are highest in Maharashtra. Compared to Maharashtra, U.P. and other North Indian states are far behind. My paper explores how this has happened and what it tells us about the future of Urdu as medium of print communication.

Abdul W Khan, The Commonwealth of Learning

Technology Imperatives and Educational Development

Distance and Open Learning has become synonymous with educational and communications technologies. The paradigm shift within distance education from correspondence course methodologies to open access methodologies would have been inconceivable without the wide range of interactive educational technological package that has become available. For the very notion of open access combines within itself not merely open access for enrolment but also signifies the wide nature of instructional inputs facilitated by computer aided learning. A veritable cornucopia of wide-open press-of-the-button access now place a distance learner in a 'virtual classroom'.

Indian distance education is no exception to mobilisation of educational technologies, however, limiting and limited may have been the impediments of a developing society in this regard. The multi-media instructional approach, after all, constitutes the basic rational of the system. And yet variations in the theme exist what with different generations of distance learning adopting differential commitments to such incorporation.

This paper seeks to highlight the nature and extent of the incorporation of educational technology into the Indian distance education system. It will highlight the systems in place and the programme of action in implementation. It will assess the infrastructure accessible to India in view of the advances that India has demonstrated in the field of tele-communications, computer technologies and Internet capabilities. The paper will also discuss the limitations that India faces in making use of technology on a scale commensurate with the optimal needs of education and how these limitations could perpetuate and even worsen the technology-gap vis-à-vis the developed world. International collaboration in aiding the capabilities of these nations will be mentioned. In particular, the role of organisations like The Commonwealth of Learning, will be discussed for without such collaboration contemporary technologies, far from being the panacea for educational access, might only create new inequities in the international education order.
Farida C Khan, University of Wisconsin-Parkside

Formal and Informal Trade Between Bangladesh and India

Bangladesh has an increasing trade deficit with India. Legal imports are about ten times the size of legal exports. It is surmised, however, that the illegal trade deficit is much lower. This is reflected by the relative strength of Bangladesh’s taka against the Indian rupee. This paper seeks to examine the extent of and channels for legal and illegal trade between India and Bangladesh. After describing the methods by and regions through which such trade occurs, the effect of trade liberalisation in both Bangladesh and India on such trade is discussed. It is maintained that the proportion of illegal trade has reduced, but the trade routes have been maintained. The paper employs a spatial approach to Bangladesh-India trade by emphasising ease of transport and detection as the basis for the establishment of trade routes.

Mohammed Muqtedar Khan, Georgetown University

The Internal as the External: Geocultural Resentment and the Resistance to Multiculturalism

The process of constructing "new threats" in order to sustain social integration inspite of debilitating inequities and injustices, and the process of constituting the "other" as a threat or as inferior to the "self" are two discursive technologies of power that have by now a history that begins with the first colonial annexation and continues into the neo-liberal global economy. Surely these are technologies no more confined to the West as is indexed by the emergence of the Hindutva discourse both in India and in the USA.

Beginning with a set of observations on liberal multiculturalism in America, this paper aims at examining the political framework within which recent nativist predilections about the proliferation of "non-American" cultures and values in America. It seeks to outline the nature of the ontology that desiresthe domination of the other - a facet, I argue, that undergirds White Euro-American identity. What is crucial about the current conjecture however is the reproduction "inside" of instincts that were manifested in hitherto in "external" relations. But migration has deconstructed the distinction between internal and external and by overlapping the inside/outside spaces it has destabilized notions of "places". It is into this context of a constantly re-articulated equation of self and other that began with the colonial conquest of South Asia and continued with the cold war definition of South Asia as a strategic zone that "progressive" groups attempt to enter under the very same rubric of South Asianness.
Zillur R Khan, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

SAARC and Other Regional Cooperation Movements: Is There a Need for a New Ideology?

Author's own experience with the initiation of the concept of South Asian regional cooperation as a result of his close association with President Ziaur Rahman indicated the desperate need of leaders of small countries to be taken seriously by their big neighbors. On the side of the seriousness-cum-identity-cum-respect spectrum, leaders of bigger countries most often than not perceive the eagerness of their smaller neighbors to form a regional association as a likely conspiracy to undermine the legitimate role of their big neighbors in dealing with regional issues. How Zia managed to allay Indira Gandhi's apprehensions about the regional cooperation will be detailed based on author's personal interviews with President Rahman.

The cooperation among sovereign states within definable geographic boundaries is an experiment for establishing "Unity in Diversity". The answer to the logical question of the likelihood for the regional leaders involvement for the purpose of developing an ideology of cooperation is therefore very well worth exploring.
Daniel Klingensmith, University of Chicago

Transforming India’s Rivers, Transforming India: Meghnad Saha, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Damodar River, 1930-1956

This paper draws on part of my larger dissertation in progress on the political and cultural origins of development. I approach these origins by examining one of the first important models of development, America’s Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)—specifically, I discuss TVA’s “export” from the United States and its enthusiastic adoption in India. Probably no state invested more of its hopes, prestige and capital in the promise of development through dam projects (“secular temples,” as Nehru called them) than independent India. This development practice, despite many contemporary objections that it neither works nor is fair to those it displaces, continues to engage the Indian state, most notably in the Tehri and Narmada projects.

I examine the discourse produced about TVA by a number of Indians and Americans who devoted some part of their career to working for “TVAs for India.” Here, I discuss Meghnad Saha, the Bengali physicist who first publicized TVA in India, and who campaigned to develop the Damodar River in Bihar and Bengal in the TVA image. Saha was the first to propose what later became the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC). Saha’s extensive writings and lectures on TVA and the Damodar provide us important insights into the relationship between modernism, nationalism and development in late colonial and early post-colonial India, complicate contemporary understandings of the class and cultural projects at work in Indian developmentalism. I draw particular attention to the ways in which Saha built on, and selectively appropriated, American discourse about TVA in the service of his own political projects.

Saha’s crusade for development reflected his own low-case, provincial origins, his enthusiastic embrace of “modernity” and suspicion of upper-case, Gandhian “traditionalism,” and his admiration for both the USA and USSR as genuinely modern societies (as opposed to the “flawed modernity” of colonialism). I argue that Saha’s development nationalism, manifested in his campaign for the DVC, constituted an attempt to reconcile his ambivalence about the colonial order of things, to stake out a position between conflicting ideological forces: Saha was, in a sense, a subaltern who “made good” in the world of modern (and colonial) science and technology, but who also participated in Bengali and Indian anti-colonial nationalism. This ambivalence, however, was not unlike that of many other members of the new Indian elite. Hence his crusade for development of India’s rivers, starting with the Damodar, tells us something about the larger issues behind the adoption of new models for development after 1947.
David Knipe, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Goddess Gauri's Heaven: A Case of Andhra Brahman Ritual Acquiescence to Folklore

This slide-illustrated paper is a product of three periods of coastal Andhra fieldwork in the Godavari Delta between September 1991 and March of this year. It centers on the musivayanam, a special funerary ritual for the perantalu, the auspicious wife who dies with her husband still living. In a dramatic ritual common to all castes, the deceased is invoked into the physical presence of a Brahman female ritualist and sent off to Gauriloka by two aggregates of women, her natal kin -- mother, sisters, etc.-- and her affinal kin -- mother-in-law, husband's brothers' wives, etc.. Although a funeral ritual that involves Vedic mantras and peripheral male Brahman purohita performance, the musivayanam is, remarkably, non-textual. It is dominated by female ritualists and participants, the only such instance documented for Hindu funerary traditions. Nevertheless, it is clearly a tradition long accepted by Brahman aparavetta-s (funerary specialists) as a means of rewarding the savasini (auspicious wife) by deifying her and promoting her journey into rebirth.

The focus of the paper concerns the folkloric location and function of Gauriloka in the context of other loka-s of afterlife, including not only Brahmaloka, the celestial residence of a widow, but also the classical Brahmanically orthodox communities of Vasus, Rudras, Adityas, and Visvedevah, and the temporary residences known as Vaikuntha (Visnu's heaven), Krsnaloka, and Rudraloka.

Smitu Kothari, Princeton University

Are Globalization and Ecological Justice Compatible?: What do the Movements for Social Justice Say?

The political space for a debate on ecological alternatives for India seem to be shrinking. This closure has been induced by a wide variety of factors: the euphoria with globalization (with minimal variations across political party lines), the continuing fragmentation in the ranks of the social movements as well as the diffidence among the left to internalize the full implications of an ecological perspective, among others.

Despite this apparent closure, there are a growing number of voices that argue for a comprehensive political-ecological alternative as the only process that can provide sustainable livelihoods as well as nurture India's plural ethos.

Within this backdrop, this paper will address some of the critical issues at the interface of ecology, justice and democracy.
Shanti Kumar, Indiana University

"Gandhi Meet Pepsi": Global/National/Local (Tele)Visions

The Independent (London) in April 1994 welcomed India into the anticipating embrace of global consumer culture with the headline "Gandhi meet Pepsi." In this proposed paper, I will examine the soft-drink multinational corporation (MNC) Pepsico’s ad campaign on television in India from 1992 to 1996 in the context of the rhetoric surrounding the rise of consumer culture in India, as suggested by The Independent headline. I will argue that even as MNCs like Pepsi seek to consolidate their global reach in local markets, and national regimes seek to exploit the rhetoric of nationalism -- such as the name of Mahatma Gandhi -- to counter globalization, they give voice to local forces that seek to resist both global and national hegemony. I will posit that the discourse surrounding the Pepsi campaign in India reveals the liminal moment where capitalist and nationalist rhetoric collude and collide in global consumer culture, and in the process provide provisional sites of local resistance against the excesses of global capitalism as well as postcolonial nationalism.
Prema Kurien, University of Southern California

Gendering Ethnicity: Creating a Hindu Indian Identity in the U.S.

Based on an ethnographic study of a group of South Indian Hindus living in and around a major metropolitan area in California, this paper examines the ways in which the creation of ethnic cultures and communities is a gendered process which involves and affects women and men differently. The members of the group are part of a religiocultural association that I argue, provides the institutional framework and the social space to develop and nurture a Hindu American community and identity. The differential participation of women and men in this process, the ways in which gender relations are reworked during the course of immigration to form central elements of the ethnic culture, and finally, the relationship between a reconstructed Hinduism and reconstructed gender identities will form the central focus of the paper.

Maneesha Lal, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Women and the Occupation of Medicine in Colonial India: The Question of Professionalization

This paper takes up the question of professionalization as it relates to women medical practitioners in colonial India. Arguing for a historically contingent understanding of the division of labor, one which analyzes the nature, position, and functioning of the "medical profession" as arising out of a particular social structural and political context, I examine the place women who were trained in allopathic medicine occupied within the colonial power structure. I argue that forms of occupational stratification, segregation, and subordination which served to limit women healers' unity and autonomy became institutionalized, thus calling into question claims of medical women's professional status. This resulted from the interaction of several factors—the nature of the colonial state, conceptions of gender and indigenous patriarchal norms, and ideologies and practices of 'race,' 'ethnicity,' and 'religion,' among others. In Britain, the strengthening of the (male) medical profession's authority in the latter half of the nineteenth century occurred simultaneously with the consolidation of the British Empire, as well as with the beginnings of a feminist movement which sought access to the traditionally male medical profession as one of its goals. This paper focuses on women practitioners of allopathic medicine in colonial India to examine the confluence of these processes as they were played out in a colonial context.
Radhika Lal, New School for Social Research

Pathways of Multi National Capital: Thinking South Asian in a Neo-Liberal World

The recent emergence of the globalized economy produces contradictory tendencies. On the one hand is the claim of transnational capital that national boundaries are fast becoming meaningless. On the other is the growing pressure from peoples of every country in the South Asian sub-continent over their respective states to protect their sovereignty. What relevance does a concept like South Asia have therefore to meet the neo-liberal challenge?

Especially on the economic front past efforts by the respective states to build alliances have not proved successful - SAARC being only the latest example. At the same time there is a growing set of connections being established within the sub-continent between non-state citizen based formations - the most stellar examples of which lie in the domain of anti-developmental struggles. This paper attempts to examine the scope of such formations within both the subcontinent and within its diasporic population.

Christina Melhorn Landi, American University

Emerging Markets, Emerging Others: Fragmented Images of the South

The recent classifications by the U.S. Department of Commerce of 10 Southern countries (including India, China and Brazil) as "Big Emerging Markets" could be construed as a helpful move away from the image of a monolith South that still contributes to reified North/South relations today. However, a closer examination of this category, which the U.S. Department of Commerce identifies as populous countries experiencing rapid economic growth, suggests that another kind of reductionist understanding of these countries could arise. Rather than an understanding of these countries which includes their changing political and social spheres, the category "big emerging market" reduces the socio-politico-economic contexts of these countries to one aspect - the market. It is not a coincidence that the United States has come to recognize these "emerging markets" at a time when the U.S. is also recognizing the need to expand its own markets. The implications of fragmented knowledge of these countries will be explored, by specifically examining the limitations of such categories for rapidly changing North/South relations, where rich and poor no long mark the only parameters of national intersections.
Jean Langford, University of Washington

Institutional Enframing: Slippages between Form and Function in Ayurvedic Education

Langford, Jean (Anthropology, University of Washington) Institutional Enframing: Slippages between Form and Function in Ayurvedic Education  This paper is an historically accented ethnography of modern Ayurvedic medical education in India. Social scientific and historical understandings of institutions frequently rest in the assumption that an institutional structure is a form which contains, represents, and gives shape to a particular content or function. In the case of Ayurveda, then, one would commonsensically assume that Ayurvedic teaching hospitals are structures which contain, represent and shape Ayurvedic knowledge. This dialectic of form and function is disturbed in contemporary Ayurvedic institutions where the curriculum and degrees granted often misrepresent actual educational practice. The paper addresses the possibility that widespread corruption and other slippages of function in Ayurvedic institutions are partly due to a misalignment between standard institutional models (originally introduced by British colonists) and Ayurvedic cultural practice of the early twentieth century. The analysis draws on observations in contemporary teaching hospitals and conversations with professors and students, as well as on ethnohistorical accounts and published documents pertaining to the development of modern Ayurvedic institutions.

Gerald J Larson, Indiana University

Hindus as a Minority in India

The social critic, Rajni Kothari, has said: “Hindu society itself is internally highly structured and diverse and pluralistic. There are castes and sub-castes and clans and all manner of groupings and sub-groupings ... -- it is all really a set of minorities.” It is thus wrong to think of Hindus as a ‘majority’. According to the social anthropologist, S.C. Dube: “Hinduism, such as it is, is loosely structured federation of faiths rather than a faith .... Birth and minimal cognitive participation are enough to identify one as belonging to the Hindu faith.” This paper argues that Hindus are best thought of in terms of minority groups in India and that, therefore, it is hardly and accident that minority psychology seems to be prevalent among so-called Hindu majority in India. The paper also argues that the notions of Hindutva, Hindu, and Hinduism are, in their present usages, really Neo-Hindu formulations growing out of the nineteenth century and twentieth century reformist ideologies in modern Indian thought.
Todd Lewis, College of the Holy Cross

The Newar Buddhist Samyaka Festival, 1993

In 1993, Samyaka, the greatest Buddhist festival, was held in Kathmandu City. This celebration is likely a descendant from the ancient Pancavarsika, a patronage festival of India and Central Asia. The Newar Samyak has become the occasion for the display of some of the most magnificent Mahayana Buddhist icons produced in the Himalayan region. The film focuses on the major events and the proceedings of one family which brings its Dipamkara image. The film also intercuts interviews to note the changes in Samyaka instituted after the democratic revolution of 1990: the Prime Minister attended, the narration of the royal ceremonies specifically praised King Birendra for supporting multi-party democracy, and at the end the King plunged into the crowd to see the Dipamkara Buddhas, the alms distribution, and other icons.

Mark Liechty, University of California-Santa Barbara

Peripheral Visions: Mediated Modernity in Kathmandu, Nepal

For people on the Third World periphery the meaning of modernity is tied up in tightly interwoven experiences of time and space, change and movement. In Nepal the state's rhetoric of development simultaneously privileges an imagined future modernity (at the expense of an imagined past tradition), and, by accepting the mantle of "undevelopment" for itself, locates modernity in distant, foreign, "developed" places. Commercial mass media are quick to fill the image spaces of a modernity that is constructed as distant in both time and space. Envisioning modernity, people dream of "commodity futures," worlds of goods from the other time/space of the modern world. But this "other world" is not simply "the West." Nepali images of modernity are also "Eastern" arriving via East Asian martial arts films and fashion magazines. In this paper I describe how for many Nepalis modernity is something that radiates from center to periphery--distant modern future to local contemporary past--seeming to arrive pre-imagined, if not literally pre-packaged.
Mother India and India's Mothers: Communalism, Gender and Hinduism

In recent years scholars of religion have begun to express some skepticism about the very existence of any such thing as "Hinduism". Consider, for example, Gerald Larson's conclusion that designations such as Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity "are for the most part little more than conventional labels that have almost no referential or theoretical validity whatever." It is noteworthy that Larson's demurrer is expressed in a book that is in part about the rising popularity of Hindu nationalist politics in India, India's Agony over Religion. The scruples of scholars about the effects of such labeling are apparently not shared by some political activists. This paper is about the role that communal controversy has played in the definition of who is a Hindu – the crucial territory where the lines of battle with other communities have defined the margins of Hinduism. The paper will also be about gender, since the struggle over hinduism has so often been about Mother India and India's mothers.

David N Lorenzen, El Colegio de Mexico

Who is a Hindu?

Who is a Hindu? The simplest answer is: anyone who claims to be one. A more precise answer will add that other persons, particularly other Hindus, should also accept this claim. Where problems arise is when either other Hindus do not accept the claim of certain groups to be Hindus or when other Hindus insist on including certain groups some or most of whose members prefer to claim a separate religious identity. In percentage terms, up to ten percent of the population of India falls into this ambiguous category. Given the fact that India's population is rapidly nearing one billion, this amounts to about one hundred million people. Who are these people on the margins of Hinduism and why is there no clear agreement about their religious identities? This paper will pay particular attention to the views of modern Sikh, nirguni and academic intellectuals.
Ritty Lukose, University of Chicago

Producing the Consumer Citizen: Struggles Over Higher Education in Contemporary Kerala

This paper discusses the emergence of “consumer citizenship” by examining discourses and political struggles about the reform of higher education in contemporary Kerala. Earlier discourses focused on the state’s responsibility for providing education for all citizens. These discourses emerged from within larger “social reform” projects such as that of Sree Narayana Guru and later “development” discourses of the liberal and left models. Current controversies focus on the demands for privately-funded, non-affiliated colleges. These demands point to the growing influence of a Non-Resident Indian middle class (situated in the Persian Gulf) and their moneys and aspirations. They also point to the changing relationship between the state and educational institutions in an increasingly global and liberalized economy. In this climate, contestations about the state’s responsibility for producing citizens through education begins to articulate with contestatory notions of citizenship as “the right to participate” in a national civil society and the “right to consume” in a globalized economy.

Jennifer Lundal, University of Chicago

Sociopolitical and Economic Systems of the South Indian Iron Age: A Case Study From Bellary and Raichur Districts (Karnataka)

Bellary and Raichur District of Northern Karnataka are renowned archaeologically for the distinctive ash mound sites of the South Indian Neolithic period and for the remains of the historic imperial capital of Vijayanagara. Also found in this area are large numbers of diverse types of Iron Age sites. Previous work on the South Indian Iron Age has focused primarily on individual site categories, such as megalithic cemeteries, large settlement sites, or rock art. While each component in itself provides important evidence for Iron Age life, it is difficult to configure these isolated fragments of knowledge into a more complete understanding of sociopolitical and economic systems. In this paper, I attempt to examine the spatial, temporal, and functional relations among known Iron Age site types of Bellary and Raichur districts in order to begin to develop a more synthetic understanding of Iron Age society and economy.
Philip Lutgendorf, University of Iowa

Dining out at Lake Pampa

During his wanderings in the forest, the hero of the Ramayan epic is entertained by a tribal woman, Shabari, who lovingly offers him refreshment—the wild fruit known as ber, which she has gathered with her own hand (and in some accounts pretasted to insure its sweetness). The precise nature of their interchange has been the subject of diverse interpretations during centuries of oral and written retellings of the epic cycle, interpretations that center around themes of violation of social propriety and of dietary pollution taboos through the overriding influence of bhakti.

This paper retraces the trail of treatments of this episode through a series of influential Ramayan retelling, including textual versions, folk plays, and a television serial, to explore the enduring appeal and evolving meanings of Shabari and her gifts.

Rashmi Luthra, University of Michigan-Dearborn

Immigrant Media as an Alternative Ideological Space

Most of the literature on immigrant media construes them as either facilitating or hindering assimilation. Very few researchers have looked at how immigrant media are situated within the ideological landscape of U.S. society. With the growing concern that increased concentration of media ownership has created the potential for decreased ideological diversity, it has become important to explore spaces that allow for continued diversity in the “marketplace of ideas.” Immigrant media may be one such space. This paper explores the potential of immigrant media as an alternative ideological space by doing a comparative textual analysis of a particular event as covered in both the mainstream U.S. press and the immigrant Indian press.
Hazel A Lutz and Joanne B Eicher, University of Minnesota

Gold Embroidered Velvets: Cultural Aesthetic Connections Between Indian Embroiderer's Frame and West African Dressed Body

Velvets embroidered in India for export to West Africa have been incorporated into the ethnic dress of the Kalabari people for at least 100 years. Cloth produced to an Indian aesthetic expresses Kalabari cultural identity. In this paper the surface embroidery of the velvets is analyzed as text written in India and read in West Africa.

Indian zardozi stretch velvet flat in frames to embroider products used in India in a flat form. Embroidered designs are visible as symmetric, bordered wholes. Embroidered velvets exported to the Kalabari feature popular Indian embroidered motifs as well as others commissioned by Kalabari.

The Kalabari specify dress ensembles by occasion, age, gender and status. As wrapped or sewn velvet ensembles are created, the embroidered elements acquire new significance when the cloth becomes three-dimensional. Embroidered design elements are analyzed vis-a-vis placement on the body, Kalabari dress aesthetics, and specified dress ensembles.

Gold embroidery is written on velvet in India and read in West Africa. Moving through production, trade and incorporation into dress, the cloth changes position vis-a-vis the writer/reader, context of use and the aesthetic concerns with which it is read, all of which change the meaning of the embroidery.
Caitrin Lynch, University of Chicago

The Production of Newly Traditional Sinhala Women in Rural Sri Lankan Garment Factories

Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa's 200 Garment Factories Program brought garment factories into many Sri Lankan villages in 1992 in an attempt to employ and control potentially subversive youth—understood in Sri Lankan terms as a predominantly male category—while at the same time preventing women from leaving their villages to work in the factories of what are understood as corrupting urban centers. Through an analysis of reactions by a number of these village garment factory owners, managers, and workers to a recent Sinhala teledrama about urban Free Trade Zone garment factory workers, I will show how a program which was explicitly designed to eliminate subversive tendencies among youth at a time of national instability, functions instead as a program which produces so-called traditional women. In short, it ensures that the nation is maintained and reproduced by traditional, though newly defined, Sri Lankan women—women who live at home and adhere to the gender roles prescribed by their husbands or parents, but who are wage earners that purchase luxury goods (e.g., gold, clothing, home furnishings) and have friendships which transcend the constraints of family and caste. In this nationalist construction of gender identity, the proper Sinhala Buddhist woman is a rural, working class woman who cannot afford to fit to the ideal of a domestic Sinhala Buddhist woman, but who, despite working in a global industry maintains behavior considered traditional.

Zain Mahmood, Toledo Metal Spinning

Industrial Development of Bangladesh: A Review of the Prospects and Strategies

Bangladesh will soon celebrate its 25th year in existence as a nation-state. During these years, real manufacturing and other industrial growth in Bangladesh has been less than desirable. Democratic changes combined with a change in the global markets have had some impact on Bangladesh's industrial base in the past 5 years. Most of this growth, however, has come in spite of the different plans and strategies formulated by successive governments. This paper will review Bangladesh's current industrial developments in light of the strategies of the past governments. Next, it will compare and contrast Bangladesh's industrial development policies with those of other newly industrialized nations. This comparison will give us an understanding of where the strategic and implementation shortfalls may have occurred in Bangladesh. Finally, we will discuss Bangladesh's current geo-political standing and propose some questions that Bangladesh's policy makers need to ask, which in effect, can help them to plan for accelerated growth rate in industry and manufacturing.
Tayyab Mahmud, Cleveland State University

Culture, Personality and State-Society Dynamics in Pakistan: Prospects of Realignment

The point of departure in this paper is that political, economic and cultural maladies of Pakistan are rooted in the imbalance between a powerful (overdeveloped?) state and a weak (non-existent?) civil society. Historically, this imbalance has been reflected in the character of the country's politics, notably, undemocratic practices and the constitutional crisis. The paper aims at evaluating the prospects of development of attitudes, processes and institutions essential for the existence of a robust civil society in Pakistan. The focus is on three interrelated issues: (i) development of autonomous/responsible personality; (ii) development of secure cultural identity; and (iii) constitutional facilitation of growth of civil society. The questions addressed include: Is it feasible to overcome the barriers of custom, superstition and habit for an autonomous and self-determined personality to emerge? Can determinants of identity be framed with reference to factors not tied with the genesis of the state? Are alternative constitutional designs a prerequisite for an equilibrium between civil society and the state?

Nancy J Malville, University of Colorado-Boulder

Commercial Porterage in the Middle Hills of Eastern Nepal

Because of the mountainous terrain, the Middle Hills region of Nepal is one of the few places in the world where most goods are still transported on the human back. Commercial porters, who conduct their own trade or are hired by hill shopkeepers to transport goods from the roadhead make their own decisions regarding load weight and pace. Adult male commercial porters commonly carry loads in the range of 70 to 80 kilograms, some in excess of 110 kilograms, using a specialized carrying technique unique to this region of Nepal. By contrast, the typical loads carried for domestic purposes are in the range of 40 to 50 kilograms. Trekking porters, who are paid by the day, carry even smaller loads, about 30 to 40 kilograms, but must maintain a faster pace and walk longer distances each day. In recent years competition from mules and Soviet cargo helicopters has deprived porters of loads and has diverted an important source of income away from the local village economy.

This paper examines the porterage of commercial loads along the three major trade routes of eastern Nepal: 1) Jiri-Namche; 2) Katari-Okhaldhunga-Namche; and 3) Hite-Tumlingtar-Namche. We have documented the load-carrying activities of 695 porters along these three routes, interviewing them, and measuring stature, body mass, load weight, and heart rate of some. Individuals travelling together are usually friends or relatives from the same village who employ cooperative strategies to cope with the uncertainties of long-distance travel.
Purnima Mankekar, Stanford University

Mediating Modernity: Feminist Ethnography and Cultural Studies of Television Viewing in India

Modernist discourses on culture have tended to create binaries such as high/low culture, classical/popular culture, tradition/modernity, the alien or foreign/the indigenous or authentic. These dichotomies were at once recreated and scandalized when, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Indian state deployed television in the quintessentially modernist project of actively creating a national culture. "Culture" in general, and "national culture" in particular, became ideologically weighted constructs and became sites for ferocious, often bloody, struggles over belonging, citizenship, and identity. Notions of "Indian Womanhood" were central to the construction of hegemonic discourses of national culture.

When the very notions of culture, nation, and womanhood are so politically fraught, what is the task of feminist cultural studies? Clearly, in this context, the task of feminist ethnography of mass media acquires a compelling urgency. But in what ways is feminist ethnography itself a part of a larger project of "mediating modernity"? Drawing upon ethnographic research with women viewers of television serials in New Delhi, I discuss the ways in which feminist ethnographers in the 1990s might interrogate not just the politics of representation but our own (multiple) locations vis-a-vis cultural struggles in the communities to which we claim allegiances.
Rama Mantena, University of Michigan

Colonial Governance and Racialized Subjectivities

"Does it serve any analytical purpose to make a distinction between the colonial state and the forms of the modern state? Or should we regard the colonial state as simply another specific form in which the modern state has generalized itself across the globe?" The question posed by Partha Chatterjee encapsulates a recurring analytic bind in colonial studies. The way in which the question is often framed tends to sidestep the issue that is at stake in examining the colonial state. What is the modern nation-state that the colonial state stands in opposition to? Is the term modern itself at issue in the delineation of the colonial state? If a certain kind of modernity is implied in the rise of the nation-state, how is that modified in the colonial setting? What Chatterjee does not ask is whether that difference (of the colonial state) is a supplement to the modern state or whether the two distinct formations were mutually constitutive; that is, what we call the modern state was coming into being simultaneously with the colonial state. Therefore what needs to be addressed is how the two state formations diverge in the kinds of relations articulated between the state and its subjects. If the commonalities between the two formations lie in their governmentalization, then what still needs to be addressed is the internal workings of the colonial state. This essay explores a certain elision in colonial studies on the place of racial difference in the apparatuses of the emerging colonial state in India. In attempting an analysis of race and the colonial state, one obvious place to begin is the period in which the colonial state comes into being. In India, the apparatuses of the colonial state are developed in the transition from company rule to governmentalized colonial rule in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. It is in this transition that race becomes inscribed in the colonial state.
Natalie Marsh, Ohio State University

Musya Bahal and Kwa Bahal in Kathmandu

The bahal structures of Nepal are of great significance to the religious life of the Buddhist practitioners of all of Nepal. This is evidenced by the number of bahals of all sizes throughout the country, as well as the elaborate artistic patronage bestowed upon each site. Musya Baha, though a modest structure, provides a unique opportunity to view one of the last remaining examples of the early architecture of the bahal. Musya Baha is a branch of Kwa Baha in Kathmandu and is located down the street from another similar early baha, Chusya Baha. Musya’s architectural elements consist of strut figures, courtyard sculptures, wall paintings, a single caitya, and toranas. Through iconographic, textual and inscriptional analysis the iconographic program of Musya Bahal will reveal the use of the mandala as its basis. The building’s significance as a sacred space is inevitably linked to this physical and conceptual convention, which is in turn based on the concept of Mt. Meru. At this point, evidence suggests the Dharmadhatu Vagisvara Manjugosa mandala is the primary structural guide to Musya, with the possible conflation of this Vairocana cycle mandala and an Aksobhya cycle mandala. In addition, the iconographic elements of Kwa Baha in Kathmandu will be used in this analysis.

Kim Masteller, Ohio State University

Defining the Goddess of the Hills: Sacred Space of Vajrayogini at Sankhu, Nepal

Perched upon the eastern rim of the valley, the Vajrayogini temple complex at Sankhu is one of the oldest and most important centers of Shakta worship in the Kathmandu Valley. Passing a sacrificial shrine and several ancient rock cut monuments, visitors to Sankhu recognize the sacred space of the goddess on as soon as they begin the ascent to the temple. The courtyard itself contains two main religious structures, a three-story Vajrayogini temple and a two-story enshrined stupa.

The goal of this paper is to provide an analysis of the imagery present in the structures and courtyard of Sankhu’s Vajrayogini temple. From this study, it may be possible to address the relationship between the two structures at Sankhu, relationships between Sankhu and other goddess sites throughout the valley, and the importance of the goddess Vajrayogini in Nepalese Tantric traditions.
Deploying History/Subverting Nationalism: Notes on a South Asian Politics in the Metropolis

Biju Mathew, Rider University

Most South Asians in North America arrive in the metropolis not as "South Asians" but rather as Indians, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans, Nepalies or Bangladeshis - products of specific and strong nationalisms - and enter the space of racial politics in this country as "not white" by definition and "unwilling to be black." Being South Asian in the US is therefore an empty signifier - meaningless, except that it conveys a "political" message of solidarity among an ethnic community already defined within a field of race politics. To make it meaningful is therefore a process of "recovering" a history that had been over-written by our nationalisms and simultaneously overcoming the ambiguity of ethnic identity.

Using the experiences of the last five years of organizing within the South Asian community this paper explores the limits of South Asian-ness, unless re-articulated from within a strongly defined politics of class. In other words, the question is: "Is class politics the only mode available for the "South Asian" activist to be meaningfully engaged in American politics?" so as to effectively engage with, on the one hand, the politics of race and, on the other, the deteriorating material conditions of significant sections of the community - both first and second generation.

Lawrence McCrea, University of Chicago

Literary Criticism and Text Criticism in the Sanskrit Commentarial Tradition

The fifteenth century poetic commentator Mallinatha, in his commentaries on the works of Kalidasa, Bharavi, and Magha, responds to the criticisms on particular verses from these poems made by various literary theorists (chiefly Mahimabhatta). He sometimes defends Kalidasa et al. against these criticisms but, in several instances he actually alters the texts of the poems he is commenting on to correct the defects others have found with their verses.

In my paper I plan to investigate this phenomenon, discuss the attitude toward the task of commentary which leads to it (i.e. the perceived need for the commentator to defend, as well as explain, the text on which he comments), and explore the implications for editors of these texts.
Michael Meister, University of Pennsylvania

Cosmos in a Teacup

In many of India's village-squares, people plant a central tree and place an earth platform below for residents to gather under its widely spreading branches. In these villages with their shifting lanes and public spaces and in the cool court-yards of her village houses, is India's real ecology, and the source for many of her ideas about cosmic order and form.

Such interlinking of society, of nature as experienced and contained within society, and of concepts of a cosmological order, moreover, informs the temple in India. Within the context of that specific and limited example lies my case study of an "embedded ecology." I will talk about the temple as it is placed by architects within nature, surrounded by five Elements as defined both by ritual and society. This becomes my "Cosmos in a Tea-Cup." If this is a meditation on the temple and the Elements, its intention is to demonstrate the unity and gravity of an Elemental architecture.

Rekha Menon, Ohio State University

The Indian Kamic

"A man possesses nothing certainly save a brief loan of his own body," wrote James B. Cabell, 1919. And yet the body of man is capable of much curious pleasure. In Indian art, in essence is the universe in all of its abundance and multiplicity of life and form, which finds in and behind the complex whole an omniscient, omnipotent, and transcendental spirit. It permeates forms and which is itself in the last analysis, without form (arupa). The evolutionary pattern in India is traditionally couched in a language of myths and symbols.

This paper will place emphasis on the Mithuna visual vocabulary which explores the impulses -- the excessive impulses of our eroticism in novel ways and in remote places. The craving and longing in eros, the dismembered and the voluptuous eye that seeks it in depths. The erotic-sensuous passion, desperate and desirous, animates every human impulse with the longing for the beyond. This longing transcribes the dialectic of sensuous excess into form and limit. At the same time, the form is overflown by this very sensuality that creates a tension between desire and desperate efforts to limit it. These are made of the very artifices of love, the pure effulgence of the rapturous, as the very essence of unrestricted eros. The paper will analyze the erotica (the Indian kamic) which persists in these works portraying the topographically intimate, paradoxical realm of artistic creations.

What is pertinent to the analyses is the continuous tension between the erotic excesses that intimate desire, and the efforts to close it toward the cosmic, the spiritual one. Yet precisely at this closure, the one is also regarded as formless and hence yields to excess depicted in erotic passion.
John Metz, Northern Kentucky University

The Road to Development? Motor Roads as Vehicles of Capitalist Expansion

A motor road has recently penetrated the mid-Kali Gandaki valley. As Allan has noted, accessibility by road will alter the lives of most inhabitants of the region. My discussion will consider some of these changes, but focus on their impact on the poorer members of society. What is the effect the road will have on porters or on the women who used to operate the "bhatis" of the old trails? Who will benefit most from the decreasing cost of manufactured goods? What changes in agricultural production systems might we expect? How are family labor allocation decisions likely to be changed? Will these roads bring new resources and opportunities into the region or will they carry the wealth and most vital laborers out? What can be done to make road access improve the welfare of the poor?

Vagdevi Meunier, University of Texas at Austin

Reaching Out Without Alienating Someone: Roadblocks in Bridging the FOB/ABCD Divide

While students from South Asia have been a fairly constant presence in most large American universities, second generation South Asian Americans are a relatively new addition. This paper chronicles challenges I experienced as a counselor seeking to provide psychological services to the South Asian student community at a southwestern university. I anticipated (and found) such obstacles as taboos associated with seeking psychological help, fears about "gossip" or marginalization, and patriarchal cultural norms. What I did not anticipate was how the clear split between South Asian international students (the 'FOBs') and South Asian American students (the 'ABCDs') and divisions within each group along national, regional, and religious lines would hamper any efforts to locate and develop a shared sense of community or experience. A strong, visible, and vocal South Asian student community is necessary to draw out individuals likely to benefit from counseling services in handling identity, cultural, relationship, or career issues. To be effective, counseling and outreach programs for South Asian students need to be more creative in finding ways to dismantle the roadblocks created by the fragmentation in the community.
Real Boundaries, Imagined Transcendence: The Indian Elections as an Epistemological Challenge to the Discourse of Globalization

One of the most significant successes of the discourse of globalization in the social sciences has been the separation of the economic and the political sphere of international economic relations. This separation is important, for it is only through such a theoretical schism that the institutions of international capital are able to theorize globalization as an ahistoric, transcendent and culture-free metaphor. Viewed in the context of Gramsci’s formulation of domination, this discourse may be seen as the construction of a hegemonic space, persuasive and immutable. However, what this discourse renders invisible is the coercive role played by the state in creating and sustaining the institutions of globalization. The state, as described by Gramsci, exists as a contingency, a backup means of sustaining domination in case the discourse of globalization loses its hegemonic superiority.

The process of globalization has been theorized in the Indian context in liberatory metaphors such as liberalization and global integration. However, despite the contention of most theorists and economists that liberalization was imperative, inexorable and nationally productive, the results of the 1996 elections may be seen as a verdict against the discourse of globalization as it is manifested in India. Moreover, the election results represent in some measure, the failure of the rhetoric of globalization to theorize a complete separation of the political and economic spheres.

This paper attempts to view the Indian election as a site where the epistemology of globalization has been contested. In particular, it studies the role played by regional parties in decentering the discourse of globalization, through their articulation of a fragmented economic and political space as opposed to the metaphor of India as a nation-state, which is so central to the articulation of theories of globalization.

Imagining a Nation on the Web: A Case of India

This paper examines the various ways in which India as a post-colonial nation is represented on the World Wide Web (W3). Examples from the India home Page (s), and other pages where a reference to India can be found are analyzed in a textual/critical way to discover the deeper structures of nationhood and identity that permeate and implicate the production of a national image on the W3. This image is then juxtaposed with the Western popular memory about India as an underdeveloped country. The paper signify the contradictions that are emerging in the Western popular culture about the national image of India, now that new technologies such as the W3 are being mobilized to represent nations and people.
Brian Mooney, University of Michigan

A Race in the Making: The Anti-Racist Utopian Fantasies of Anglo-Indians in Pre-Independence India

This paper examines the writings of Anglo-Indian intellectuals during the 1920's and 1930's. The "Anglo-Indian Community" was, and is, composed of the offspring of marriages between British men and Indian women during the period of British colonial rule. As Indian independence began to loom as a real possibility, the small Anglo-Indian Community became fearful of both the loss of their British patrons and of the new Indian state. This paper examines the writings of various prominent Anglo-Indian educators, scientists and Community leaders with such titles as "Hostages to India," "The Eurasian Problem Constructively Approached," "Half-Caste," and "Hell in the Sunshine." The discourse that emerges from their precarious position is in part an anti-racist one which challenges both the notion of biological "race" and the hypocrisy of race prejudice. In its utopian vision of the future, however, this discourse is an ultimately racial one. They envision a future of humanity in which a "judicious intermixture" of human populations, guided by state policies informed by an anti-racist eugenics, will produce a singular human "race" of mixed-breds. Anglo-Indians and other Eurasians, by recognizing their common interests, are the progenitors of the human future. They proposed self-governing schemes which evince the interests of the liberal state in extending its power into the home, into reproduction and sexuality, into child-rearing, and into education. They write a "nationalist" history of the origins of the Community which underwrites their contemporary claims to respectability and civility. Therefore, although these texts articulate an anti-racist argument, they are also a derivative discourse in which the mechanisms of power of the liberal state are exposed insofar as they are redeployed as the means by which the "uni-racial" future of humanity would be achieved. The racist basis for colonial rule in India produced an ambivalent and ambiguous population which challenged the racism of colonial rule even while redeploying its mechanisms in the utopian vision of the Anglo-Indian future. The Anglo-Indian imagination ultimately collapses into the racist discourse of colonial rule.
Peter Moran, University of Washington

Talking About Monks: Discourses of Tradition and Productivity
Tibetan Buddhist monks and monasticism itself provide fertile ground for comments on - and contestations of - tradition, normative values and productivity. During several years of fieldwork in Kathmandu, Nepal, I heard varied and contradictory opinions from lay and monastic Tibetans, as well as Western Buddhists, concerning the ordained Sangha. This paper examines these comments with an eye to the larger discourses of which they are a part, in particular how they represent the monk’s life and work by reference to varied notions of "productivity" or "productive labor". I also explore the role of western discourses of monasticism and Tibetan Buddhism in shaping Western conceptions of Tibetan monks in Kathmandu. How has the monastic life been (mis)understood? Further, how have contemporary Tibetan perceptions of monasticism been shaped by the intersection of “tradition” and “modernity” in the context of exile? I propose that for many Western Buddhist travellers and Tibetans in Kathmandu, monks are the embodiment of Tibetan “culture” par excellence, precisely due to the unique conditions of exile and the increasingly high visibility of Tibet in the transnational landscape.

Paul Mundschenk, Western Illinois University


This paper proceeds from the notion that the Gita does not proclaim a message of absolute non-violence and thus does not serve as a handbook of extreme pacifism. The question then is, if there are situations in which violence is condoned if not encouraged, what is the nature of such a situation? Three elements of these situations are then explored in turn: 1) when is violent action permissible? 2) where may such violence take place? and finally 3) how, or with what attitude, may a person engage in violent behavior if she or he is attempting to order her/his life according to the Gita’s world view? In the course of these explorations, some brief reference is made to other religious scriptures for comparative purposes.
Shoma Munshi, International Institute for Asian Studies

Tradition/Modernity/Identity: The 'New Woman' in Indian Television Commercials in the 1990's

Early postcolonial constructions of the 'New Woman' in media tended to posit relatively easy classifications between 'tradition' and 'modernity' as seen in the broader context of notions of private and public spaces. In the 1990's, with the increasingly enhanced reach of electronic capitalism, and televised images in particular, advertisements on television now do not merely punctuate programmes, but rather proliferate. A recent count had 192 TV commercials interrupting the screening of an approximately two-hours' long feature film! Of these, a large number of them, especially for consumer products, address the 'New Woman' - read educated, urban and middle class with increasing control in purchase decisions.

This paper will examine how advertisers have appropriated discourses of 'tradition' on the one hand and 'modernity' on the other in their representation of the 'New Woman'. Modernity, as represented by the struggles of feminism, has been co-opted and presented in images that are not (apparently) in opposition with tradition. Rather, in these images are to be found a conflation of 'tradition' and 'modernity', thereby containing and taming the potentially disruptive force of modernity. The construction of this entity must also pay attention to her 'identity'. Television advertising reaches practically an all-India audience today. Visually televised strategies of representation construct a cognate, pan-Indian identity for this 'New Woman'. The paper will also look at how, despite regional and other differences, this 'New Woman' maintains her 'Indian-ness', her 'Indian' identity. And to what extent 'modernity' gets contained within the narratives of family on one level, and at another level the nation-as-family.

B V Muralidhar, S V University

Nuclear Confrontation in South Asia - India, Pakistan and the U.S.

"NUCLEAR CONFRONTATION IN SOUTH ASIA - INDIA, PAKISTAN & U.S"

Dr. B.V. Muralidhar
Dr. C. Venkatasubbaiah

Nuclear proliferation has become one of the principal concerns of the world. Ever since the end of the cold-war, the global arms race which hitherto had been confined to the superpowers had not become a permanent feature in many parts of the globe. South Asia in particular has seen nuclear proliferation on an unprecedented scale. The alarming trend of nuclear proliferation has grave implication on the politico-strategic environment of the region. The situation in South Asia deteriorated particularly after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. One of the main causes of nuclear proliferation in South Asia has been the perceived insecurity of states in the region. India, Pakistan, China are the three major countries with proven nuclear capability. Mutual suspicions and hostility between these countries is one of the major reasons for nuclear proliferation in the region. What concerns many experts is that several factors make the presence of nuclear weapon capabilities on the subcontinent more dangerous than the superpower nuclear rivalry that preceded it. The present paper is an attempt to look into the causes for the competition between India and Pakistan in the field of nuclearisation, the ways to reduce the tensions in the region through a variety of global measures and regional initiatives and the role of U.S. to make the South Asia nuclear free from nuclear confrontation.
Nadeem-ul-Haq, International Monetary Fund

The State, Intellectual Development, and Economic Performance in Pakistan

The role of the state in economic development has been a favorite concern in both development studies and the social science literature. Yet, few works have systematically analyzed the state's complex relation to intellectuals in its pursuit of economic development and nation building. This paper offers a detailed examination of the state's impact on civil society, and the way in which intellectual practices have been impacted by state-sponsored initiatives. The stifling of intellectual creativity may be most pronounced in the economic realm. The contradictory impulses of economic growth and intellectual activity are evident in institution-building. Despite major change in the political sphere, the basic relation between the state and intellectuals remains intact in Pakistan. The material and psychological dependence of intellectuals on the state foments a climate least conducive to creative activity. Intellectual activity is characterized by adherence to the state's ideological imperatives. The paper also identifies alternative spaces for free intellectual deliberation, which may spawn economic development.

Richa Nagar and David Faust, University of Colorado

Educational Institutions and Social Fracturing: English Medium Schools in India

Recent discussions around sustainability have often centered on environmental politics, while questions related to social sustainability have been left largely unaddressed. Both the theoretical critiques of development and people's experiences underscore the need to explore how particular social institutions cause social fracturing through their impact on individuals and societies, even as they help to create and legitimize the power hierarchies and inequalities associated with contemporary models of development. In India, an English speaking national elite controls the levers of economic and political power and shares a pan-India culture that is projected as "cosmopolitan" and "superior." This elite is almost entirely removed from the space of vernacular cultural production which it looks down upon as "traditional" and "backward." Using the example of English medium schools in Indian cities, this paper explores how modern social institutions play a critical role in uneven empowerment and disenfranchisement of social groups, and in perpetuating the hegemonic discourse of development.
Vijaya R Nagarajan, University of California-Berkeley

Ritual Pollution: 'Embedded Ecologies' of Cowdung, Water and Soil in Rice Paintings

This paper will explore the culturally embedded links between a women's ritual art, the kolam, from southern India and latent notions of 'embedded ecologies'. Two particular themes resound in the ethnography of the kolam narratives: 1) the feeding of a thousand souls and 2) the prayer to the soil and earth goddess, Bhu-devi. Both of these themes are at the root of the discourses surrounding women's ritual practice of the kolam. Other ecological beliefs include cowdung and water. Through the closer examination of women's voices referring to ecological frameworks, this paper offers a critical reappraisal of popular gendered ecological theories. From these ethnographic roots, this paper will also focus on the wider theoretical lens of 'embedded' ecologies.

Meera Nanda, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Transnationalization of Indian Agriculture: New Direction for Indian Feminists

India's integration into transnational agro-business has taken place at the expense of a simultaneous weakening of public sector research (at national and international level) and extension services. While India's experience with import substitution, green revolution, followed by TNC-managed peasant production is relatively new, the unfolding of issues in countries which have followed a similar trajectory suggest important lessons. This paper will be concerned with these trends and what the neo-peasantization of the countryside means for women. In this context, the paper will also look at the recommendations of the recent women's conference in Beijing which had some important suggestions for those concerned about the impact of modernization and globalization on women in India.
Nalini Natarajan, University of Puerto Rico

**Woman and Hindu "Non-Violence"**

The paper juxtaposes readings of a contemporary Indian women’s magazine with sections of the *Ramayana* in text and folk versions to expose the role of woman in the semantics of Hindu “tolerance” and “non-violence.” The paper offers insights into contemporary modernity, epic ethics, and the nature of violence. Reading a mythic representation of violence against a journalistic account of the Babri Masjid storming in 1993, the paper looks at the narrative place of women in Hindu disavowal of violence. The paper claims that historiography has played a part in the non-violent construction of the hindu. In history books, accounts of Muslim iconoclasm have helped the historical construction of the Hindu as one whose architecture is violated. To reinstate violence as constitutive of Hindu subjectivity is to problematize extremist notions of Hindu essences. I will read the following for the role of woman in the disavowal of violence:

1. An account of the monkey-God Hanuman’s destruction of the Rakshasa capital Lanka, and how this episode uses woman to accommodate the action within non-violent Hindu subjectivity.

2. An article from the women’s magazine *Savvy* describing a woman IPS officer’s handling of the karsevaks.

The above analyses are read against recent critiques of violence in post-colonial South Asia in the work of Gyan Pandey and Dipesh Chakrabarty.
Balmurli Natrajan, University of Iowa

Development and Recalcitrant Potters in Central India

This paper’s concern is with Foucault’s understanding of ‘modernity’ and ‘modernization’ in post-colonial situations such as India. Foucault characterizes ‘modernity’ as a dual movement of power and knowledge, power moving from its sovereign form to a disciplinary grid form, and knowledge moving from its general form which makes power visible and the subject of power invisible, to its meticulous form which makes power invisible and its subject visible. Based upon such an understanding of ‘modernity’, Foucault speaks about the human body becoming “a useful force only if it is both a productive and a subjected body” (Foucault 1977: 26). I use this insight of Foucault to examine the complex relationship between ‘modernity’ and ‘development’ with respect to the potters in central India, among whom I have conducted my dissertation fieldwork. I argue that Foucault’s ‘modern’ forms of power-knowledge are barely visible in the Indian context. Instead, we encounter a myriad of different formations which resist easy classification as ‘modern’ or ‘traditional’. For example, potters are caught in a field of sovereign power relations at the local level, while at the same time they are constructed as visible subjects of power in the knowledges produced by the Indian state. Their ‘productivity’ is sought to be increased through ‘developmental’ schemes that do not require them to be ‘subjected’ in the sense that Foucault speaks. In fact, knowledge itself is at best haphazardly produced in the Indian context. There are more ‘silences’ than knowledges. Further, even the knowledge produced (of the potters) is not capable of ‘subjecting’ them. In arguing the above points, I use examples of ‘successes’ and ‘failures’ of specific ‘development’ schemes targeting potters, in order to advance the thesis that ‘development’ in post-colonial societies fail or succeed to the extent they are able to harness power to knowledge in the sense Foucault speaks. In other words, the ‘hyphen’ that links power knowledge is yet to be evolved in the Indian context. Such an analysis of ‘failed’ ‘development’ schemes finally allows one to pose the critical question of ‘escape’ or alternatives available to artisans such as potters and ‘escape’ from or alternatives to existing schemes of ‘development’.

Ashakant Nimbark, Dowling College

South Asian TV Programs

In this presentation, the presenter, with the help of some TV clips, will discuss the ideology, coverage and scope of weekend TV programs created for the South Asian diaspora in North America. What are the main features and contents of these programs? How do community leaders, businesses and viewers respond to these programs? What are the current trends and future prospects for the community TV programs for South Asians in North America which represents a relatively affluent ethnic group within a multicultural society.
Usha Nilsson, University of Wisconsin-Madison

"It's a Boy": Transcending Taboos and Food Cravings

Women's lives at all stages and at all occasions are deeply controlled by food in Indian culture. Most of the injunctions are transmitted to them orally and often concealed in popular religious practices. In my paper I argue that these subtexts become sites of resistance. Oral tales and songs reveal how women have created strategies to subvert the power hierarchies during the time when their own longings and desires go uncontested in the form of pregnancy cravings. The oral tales also enhance the notion that the gender determination is based on foods eaten by the pregnant mothers. In my paper I consider two oral tales told from a woman's point of view, bringing out her general anxiety about bearing a girl child and how she uses food to shift the blame on people in authority and power.

William A Noble, University of Missouri-Columbia

The Nilgiris of Tamil Nadu, India, as a Distinctive Upland Island

The disjunct distributions of caecilians, flying lizards, martens, mouse deers, tahrs, and birds such as hawks, fairy bluebirds, laughing thrushes, little spiderhunters, hawks- eagles, and hornbills help us realize how biologically unique the Nilgiris are. Much of this uniqueness is revealed through the use of S. L. Hora's 1949 Satpura Hypothesis. Hora, as an ichthyologist, discovered that some fishes in extreme southern India are totally isolated from closely related fishes found in Northeast India and over 1600 kilometers away. Hora argued for a past Satpura trend of mountains extending from Meghalaya to the Western Ghats as the avenue by which species spread westward, and then southward through the Ghats. His hypothesis was enthusiastically received and supported by leading and diverse scholars, including the ornithologist Salim Ali. M. S. Mani discounts Hora's hypothesis in 1974, and suggests that there are a myriad of geological, climatological, and cultural-historical processes which led to the formation of relict refugia, among which the Nilgiri region is, perhaps, the most outstanding. Now that we know that ancient Precambrian rock lies close beneath the surface of the Gangetic breach, Hora should be honored, but Mani's suggestions also remain helpful.
Veena Oldenburg, Baruch College (CUNY)

Unravelling Female Safety Nets: Punjabi Masculinity and Colonial Responses

In this presentation I argue that colonial reordering of the Punjab administration and land revenue in the second half of the nineteenth century created a far more masculine world than Punjabi society had hitherto been. The rapid changes in the shared nature and control of agrarian holdings, the codification of "customary law," the "martial races" theory and the rewards designed for loyal soldiers put men in exclusive charge of spaces and resources where control had been shared. Wives actually lose power and daughters become an increasing "burden" on the immediate family as the webs of kin and village reciprocities unravel, while debt and credit redefine the nature of family, property, and exchange. The effects on the world of women, and on customary practices like dowry and infanticide, and a deepening preference for sons make the Punjabi countryside a "man's world."

Christine Olgren, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Open and Distance Learning: A Paradigm in Flux

Throughout the years, the practice of open and distance learning has been powered by advances in communications technology. From correspondence study using the print medium to video networks using modern telecommunications systems, open and distance learning agencies have adopted technological innovations as educational delivery tools. Until recently, however, the field's dominant paradigm - the core beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning - has remained relatively unchanged.

Developments along a number of fronts are now converging to challenge the dominant paradigm of distance teaching and learning. The developments include rapid advances in multi-media computer technology, the expansion of global computer networks, the exponential growth of information and knowledge, the increasing diversity of learners, and new cognitive research on learning.

This paper describes the challenges facing open and distance learning, and it discusses the implications of a changing paradigm for educational practices. The discussion focuses particularly on the following paradigmatic transitions and their implications:

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<td>Transmission strategies of teaching</td>
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Developmentalist State, Ethnoecological Movements and Globalization

For the tribal peasants in the Jharkhand region and other parts of middle India, globalization is yet another force to further accelerate the crises of survival, justice, and identity in their lives. Through a notion of "ecological ethnicity", I will describe how several movements have encountered and responded to the extractive regimes of the developmentalist state in the past and recently of globalization. I will then analyze the content and intent of the protest movements against big dams, social forestry and the political movements for regional autonomy, and an emergent movement which seeks "our rule in our villages." The paper shows that today ecological and ethnic concerns are converging and creating new spaces of resistance as well as articulation of discourses.

Radhika Parameswaran, University of Iowa

Recent Studies of Popular Culture in India: An Assessment of the New Climate for Media Studies

Within the United States, over the past two decades, the study of popular culture has witnessed a dramatic explosion. Questioning the elitist attitudes of earlier high culture critics of the fifties, many scholars of popular culture in the United States have challenged established canons in their disciplines to argue for the inclusion of academic studies of comic books, popular music, popular fiction, and other artifacts of everyday life. The impulse to legitimize the study of popular culture has resulted in numerous books, articles, and conferences.

Leaping to the South Asian context, specifically to India, we find that studies of contemporary popular culture are still viewed with suspicion and scorn unless they are carried out within the parameters of "folk art" within anthropology. Recently, however, there has been a rising interest in contemporary popular culture in India; this interest does not emerge from one single discipline but is fueled by interdisciplinary work in anthropology, communication studies, history, women's studies and other hybrid disciplines.

This paper will begin by critically reviewing studies of popular culture in the Indian context and will place these studies within a historical context. Subsequently, the paper will go on to focus on one specific aspect of contemporary culture, the media, to examine recent cultural studies of the media in India. I intend to highlight the nature of the recent work in popular media studies in India, which is very different from the ahistoric and atheoretical work that has been produced so far in the fields of communication studies and development communication. Towards the end, I will discuss my doctoral dissertation work, which examines the reading of Western romances by young middle-class English educated women in urban India. This dissertation is based on the notion of the social construction of gender in everyday practices such as the consumption of popular fiction; I use the romance novel as a medium to understand the socialization of young middle-class Indian women who grow up within particular forms of Hindu patriarchy, caste, and class structures.
Mustapha Kamal Pasha, American University

Pakistan at the Crossroads: Globalization, Civil Society and Identity Construction

After nearly five decades of turbulent existence as an independent nation, a period marked by the creation of Bangladesh, ethnic tensions, and religious and sectarian polarization, a basic change in Pakistan's identity is noticeable. Removed from the memory of the Partition, the well-springs of identity appear more diffused in civil society, no longer limited to the statist project of national construction. Yet, the diffusion of national identity construction is a contradictory process, susceptible to both domestic and international forces. This paper examines how globalizing tendencies, notably global telecommunications, cultural exchange, and finance penetrate parts of Pakistani civil society. The impact of transnational forces on civil society is facilitated by the proliferation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the neo-liberal project of realigning the state to the global political economy. A key aspect of this development is the exacerbation of cultural polarization in Pakistan, with far-reaching implications for national identity. A study of how globalization shapes civil society in Pakistan can offer useful insights into the fragility of the nationalist project in a postcolonial setting.

Sonal Patel, Ohio State University

Chusya Bahal

Located in Kathmandu, Chusya Baha is a relatively small Newar-Buddhist temple that dates to 1649. From its thirty-two strut figures and three toranas, the iconographic program of this baha suggests it is rooted in several texts: Sadhanamala, Dharani Samgraha and Pancaraksa manuscripts for the strut figures, and the Nispannayogavali for the toranas. Moreover, I believe there are probably two mandalas that manifest in Chusya based on the above: The first is the Dharmadhatu Vagisvara Mandala for the strut figures, the main entrance torana on the north-side (that is now missing), and the minor torana on the south shrine wall; the second is the Guhyasamaja Aksobhyavajra Mandala from the Anuttarayarogatantra class for the main torana on the south shrine wall.

Thus defined in the Newar-Buddhist context, I believe Chusya Baha is considered to be a sacred space because it maps the path to enlightenment for the practitioner within its mandala system.
Suzanne M Peters and Jayati Ghosh, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Economic Liberalization Policies and Foreign Direct Investments in India

India is the largest market in South Asia. After nearly four decades of inward-oriented economic policies, the country has been moving into export liberalization. India has adapted policies allowing capital, technology, and investments to move freely, which have resulted in an increase in foreign direct investment (FDI). India's broad domestic market base and the large supply of skilled and unskilled workers have been important pull factors for multinational corporations (MNCs). The various steps taken toward export-oriented growth are expected to promote economic growth and development. The present paper will focus on the foreign direct investment into India from the 1950s to the 1990s. Spatial distribution of FDI and the economic sectors receiving FDI will be analyzed. Finally, the paper will focus on finding and analyzing variations between MNCs from western countries and those originating in other Asian countries.

Acknowledgement: Research was supported by the College of Letters and Sciences Grant # 008 and Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Grant # 1088, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

Shantanu Phukan, University of Chicago

Sati Eulogized: Forging Literary Identities in Mughal India

The principal issue I plan to explore in this paper is that of the formation of a specifically Indian literary identity by medieval Indian Muslim poets. Educated Mughals mostly wrote in Persian using conventions derived from Sufi imagery. A number of Indian-born Muslim poets, however, were interested in creating a specifically Indian narrative style defined by a female narrative voice and dramatic scenarios borrowed from the tradition of Hindi riti poetry. These poets identified certain scenarios as quintessentially Indian and used them as the scaffolding for their elaborate romances. The poets Nauï (fl. 1619), and Razi (d. 1696) identified sati as one such 'Indian' scenario and interpreted it within the framework of poetic conventions derived from Sufi conceptions of the lover and the beloved. Other poets, like Muhammad Afzal (fl. 1630) created a specifically Indian style by writing a Hindi-Persian hybrid verse in which the speaker is unmistakably a woman, thus departing from the conventional gender ambiguity of the lover and the beloved in Persian poetry. By examining the works of Razi, Nauï and Afzal I will try to delineate the process by which Indian Muslim poets attempted to carve out a literary identity quite distinct from that which they had inherited from the predominant Persian culture.
David Pinault, Loyola University

Muharram Rituals and Communal Identity among the Shi'a Population of Leh Township, Ladakh

This paper will examine the ways in which the annual Muharram rituals celebrated in Leh Township, Ladakh (Jammu and Kashmir) have functioned in recent years to mediate communal relations among the Shi’a, Sunni, and Buddhist populations of the region. I will draw on my personal observations from fieldwork done in Leh during the 1995 and 1996 Muharram seasons, recording what I myself witnessed and describing the interviews I had with Leh’s residents from among both the Muslim and non-Muslim populations. Relatively little has been published to date on the Shi’a communities of eastern Ladakh or on Shi’a-Buddhist relations there; but I will sketch the political background to present-day communal relations in Leh, making use of the very recent analyses undertaken by van Beek, Bertelsen, and Crossette with regard to the controversial “social boycott” that gripped Leh from 1989 to 1992.

The origin of Leh’s communal problems can be traced back to the 1830s, when the independent Buddhist kingdom of Ladakh was conquered by the Dogra forces of the Raja of Jammu. Subsequently, during the paramountcy of the British Raj, Ladakh was made part of the “native state” of Jammu and Kashmir. As Crossette pointed out in a recent publication, this has meant that since Indian Independence, Ladakhi Buddhists have come to be a “minority within a minority,” ruled from Muslim-majority Srinagar, which in turn is administered by Hindu-majority Delhi. Van Beek and Bertelsen have described how Ladakhi aspirations for autonomy from Jammu and Kashmir came to be communalized, with the implicit equation: Ladakhi equals Buddhist, thereby leaving out of consideration long-term Muslim residents of Ladakh. Communal tensions rose during the 1970s and 1980s as Ladakh was gradually opened to tourism and increasing numbers of Kashmiri Muslim entrepreneurs arrived to develop Leh Township’s hotel business and other tourist-related trades. Matters came to a head in 1989, when communal riots broke out in Leh; thereafter the Ladakh Buddhist Association declared a “social boycott” against Muslims resident in Leh; Buddhists were to avoid both business and social contacts with Leh’s Muslims.

My paper will investigate how communal tensions have affected Leh’s annual Muharram observances. According to my informants in Leh, until 1989 very few Sunnis participated in the ‘Ashura jalus (the public procession held in honor of the Karbala Martyrs); but with the imposition of the “social boycott” Sunnis joined the jalus in vastly increased numbers. Nevertheless, in part because of a history of Sunni-Shi’a tension within the local Muslim population, Leh’s Sunnis have insisted on participating in Muharram in a way that distinguishes them from their Shi’a neighbors (the differences in ritual performance are concerned partly with matam, i.e., gestures of mourning and self-mortification). Since the end of the social boycott in 1992, Sunni-Shi’a collaboration in Muharram has continued; but I was impressed to see, during my fieldwork in 1995, that Leh’s Shi’as have begun inviting members of the Ladakh Buddhist Association to their Muharram majalis (lamentation-assemblies). My paper, then, will discuss the various ways in which Leh’s Muharram rituals function: as a means of self-definition and reconciliation both within the Muslim population and across the boundaries of Muslim-Buddhist communitarianism. I will conclude with some comparative notes, drawing on my earlier Muharram fieldwork in Hyderabad and Darjeeling to discuss the fluidity of religious ritual as a marker and definer of communal identity.
W Dennis Pontius, University of Michigan

The Social Consequences of Political Organization in a Satellite Community of Kathmandu, Nepal During the Rana Period

In this paper I will consider the political organization of a village located in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, as it existed during the Rana period between 1850 and 1951. I will outline how local political authority backed by the state was controlled, utilized and maintained by certain villagers through forms of micro-management not seen in other parts of Nepal and how this supported social relations between villagers. Here, I will detail the experience of a village located on the outskirts of Kathmandu controlled by Tamangs, a particularly exploited minority living in close proximity to the national capital. Rules outlining regular and periodic labor service as well as many religious practices originated with the central government and were organized by leaders in each section of the village. The authority of these leaders was backed by the central government and enforced through control over access to certain lands vested in these political leaders. In some cases the power of these local political leaders was further reinforced by their activities as ritual practitioners within the village. During the period under consideration here the village had several leaders, each of whom was responsible for the organization of one of four section of the village containing between 10 and 25 households. This paper examines the consequences of this management system for villagers and how it differed from political systems described in other parts of Nepal.

Leela Prasad, University of Pennsylvania

Stories about Gurus: Narrative as Hospitality in Sringeri

Drawing on fieldwork I conducted in Sringeri, southwestern Karnataka, I discuss how the spontaneous sharing of narratives constitutes the performance of hospitality in Sringeri. A pilgrimage town, Sringeri is famous for its 1200-year old Sankara matha. At the same time, Sringeri shares in the region’s reputation for upacara (translated roughly from Kannada as “hospitality”) by which visitors are lavishly looked after. However, of late, Sringeri’s claim to this regional fame has come to be criticized as ironic: visitors complain that Sringeri upacara consists in “passing off guests” to the Sankara matha which offers inexpensive lodging and free food. This view “from the outside” is contested passionately by local residents, who feel caught between tourist reductions of “Sringeri’s culture”, the matha’s institutionalization of hospitality, and the pressures of economic change. My paper explores Sringeri’s articulations of upacara, which of course, does continue to be performed in vibrant ways. Contrary to previous theoretical positions and popular perceptions which locate the performance of hospitality in the extension of food and shelter, I analyse contextually two stories about sanyasi, discussing how the sharing of such narrative constitutes profound gestures of hospitality.
From Aryan to Caucasian: The Transnational Emergence of an European Myth

Vijay Prashad, Trinity College

In the 18th century, German philologists and Orientalists developed a myth which has enduring effects. Drawn by the linguistic similarities between Greek, Latin and Sanskrit, the scholars imputed a common ancestry for the Northern Europeans and the South Asians. Keshab Chunder Sen exemplified the elite South Asian response to the myth when he welcomed his 'cousins' in the guise of the British Empire.

This paper will draw its critical strength from a brief genealogy of the myth before moving into an extended discussion of the way in which the Myth is deployed in the US by migrant South Asians. From 1942 to 1977, the South Asians were considered 'Caucasian' as a result of the spurious myth. In 1977, the aggressive migrants fought to reconvert themselves to Asian in order to gain some 'racial' leverage in America.

America is uneasy with the claim to 'whiteness.' In 1923, Bhagat Singh Thind was refused citizenship on the grounds that he was a Brown Caucasian. In 1994, a South Asian American youth was beaten up in Providence, RI for being, as his assailant yelled, a 'Brown ar--hole.' The fact of Brownness disturbs the imputation of Aryan. This paper will offer a structural critique of the deployment of the spurious myth as well as offer a map to the confusions over 'racial identity' in South Asian America.

John F Price, Maharishi University of Management

Applied Geometry of the Sulba Sutras

The Sulba Sutras, part of the Vedic literature of India, describe many geometrical properties and constructions such as the classical relationship $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ between the sides of a right-angle triangle and arithmetical formulas such as calculating the square root of two accurate to five decimal places. Although this paper presents some of these constructions, its main purpose is to show how to consider each of the main Sulba Sutras as a finely crafted, integrated manual for the construction of citis or ceremonial platforms. The paper will focus on three outstanding features of the Sulba Sutras: the wholeness and consistency of their geometrical results and constructions, the elegance and beauty of the citis, and the indication from certain key words that they have a much deeper purpose. Careful drawings will be shown of the citis.
Lynn Rainville, University of Michigan

Dynasties and Domiciles: An Analysis of Domestic Architecture at Taxila
This paper examines the changing organization of domestic space at Taxila from the period of Persian rule to the destruction of the site in circa A.D. 250. The relationship between domestic architecture, domestic material culture, and intra-settlement distribution provides valuable information on the structure and organization of society, where a house plan represents more than simply the occurrence of work spaces, sleeping areas, courtyards and an adaptation to environmental conditions. The goals of this analysis are to correlate the status of the owner to the house size and form in order to understand the relationship between social classes/occupation and neighborhoods at Taxila. Three major occupation areas at Taxila—Bhir, Sirkap and Sirsukh—will be analyzed to discover the patterning of social classes within the cities and the organization of urban activities. Useful evidence for interpreting domestic architecture, aside from the archaeological structures themselves, include ancient texts on city planning, ethnographic analogy, and the association between artifacts and architecture. An analysis of domestic architecture provides an understanding of the response (either voluntary or involuntary) of the individual and family to political, economic, and social changes in ancient cities.

Swarna Rajagopalan, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

A Traveller's Collection of Tales
How do Indians, Pakistanis and Sri Lankans narrate their histories? What do they add and what do they leave out? Who adds one event, and who leaves out another? What are the events or people or moments that remain in their consciousness and that animate their discussions about contemporary events?

This paper is based on answers to the question, "Would you tell me the story of your country in your own words?", which was posed to several individuals during the period of the author's dissertation field research in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It summarizes the three stories that emerge from the interviews and then offers ideas as to the relationship between the stories and the way contemporary events are viewed.

It forms part of a larger research project in which history is viewed as a tool of national integration strategising by the state.
Katharine N Rankin, Cornell University

Investments in People: Financial Regulation at State & Local Levels in Nepal

This paper investigates the articulation of local cultural forms with global economic processes through a study of financial market regulation in Nepal. Specifically, the paper considers how cultural values that regulate investments in Nepalese communities are both framed by and shape possibilities for state-level economic restructuring. Nepal initiated economic reforms in the mid-1980s to meet conditionalities on borrowing from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. My research analyzes efforts on the part of Nepalese planners to maintain elements of regulated equity in the finance sector -- such as preferential credit schemes -- in spite of these macroeconomic changes. In evaluating the capacity of the Nepalese state to develop national economic policies in the face of global economic integration, I consider the political strategies state planners have pursued vis-à-vis donors imposing conditionalities. The paper then evaluates the ways in which the local capacity of communities to regulate their own economies outside the purview of market rules can inform planners in regulating social investments through financial market rules. Focusing on a Newar town in the Kathmandu Valley, my research considers a particularly Newar view of capital, in which material wealth acquires value only upon investment in social relationships, and the strategies that women and others in subordinate positions pursue to accumulate capital through social investments. The paper ultimately considers how Newar valuations of commerce that link economic pursuits with responsibility to kin and community might guide planners in developing ethical principles and long-term approaches for a national path to economic adjustment.

Brinda Rao, Oberlin College

Colonialism, Gender, and Science: Dr. Anandi Joshi and Narratives of Identity in Victorian America

This paper offers an historical perspective into the social construction identity of women in 19th century India by examining the intersections of gender, science, colonialism and religion in the life of Dr. Anandibai Joshi, India’s pioneer woman doctor. While the general ethos of colonial science in the late nineteenth century afforded little space for the inclusion of the gendered colonial subject, Dr. Anandibai’s frequent dislocations both within and outside her country, and the parameetres of Brahmin identity provided her with a creative marginality with which she could subvert colonial and indigenous patriarchal views about gender in colonial India, and in Victorian America. Using these two sites as contexts of Dr. Joshi’s repeated articulation and restructuing of her identity, this paper examines the socio-historical and political contradictions under which Dr. Joshi’s identity was constructed, subverted or co-opted by missionaries, American Victorian feminists and national reformers in India. Finally, the paper shows the crucial links between the construction of Dr. Joshi as a scientist and her own attempts to situate herself within contesting, yet compatible notions of womanhood, both western and indigenous.
B Taramanohar Rao, Ferris State University

Social-Psychological Implications of Open Learning: Coping with Rising Expectations

Some of the major features and goals of open university education in India are: 1. Providing educational opportunities to those who are previously deprived of such opportunities; 2. Flexibility in the curriculum and the content of learning material; 3. Systematic design of study materials for independent study and provisions of feedback from students; 4. Flexibility in teaching methods; 5. Use of variety of media and other resources in imparting education; 6. Centralised mass production of standardised learning material; and 7. Scope for the lower recurrent cost per student than what obtains in the conventional system. Achieving some of these goals and objectives, even modestly, will mean for the thousands of students enrolled in the open university learning programs a fulfilment of their life-long dreams and aspirations. An examination of personal consequences in terms of growth of self-esteem and a sense of self-efficacy will be presented from a social-psychological perspective leading to an understanding of the behaviours of people in a rapidly developing and changing India.

K V Rao, Bowling Green State University

Fertility Transition in India -- A Myth or Reality?

Recent National Family Health Survey data (1993) from India will be used to examine the fertility trends at all India level, and in two others states, viz., Uttar Pradesh and Kerala. The National Survey is the first scientific survey of women in prime reproductive ages conducted by the International Institute for Population Sciences and Macro International, USA with assistance from USAID. In this paper, life time achievement of fertility of women of various age groups are examined to study the fertility decline in India (if any). Background characteristics such as religion, education, place of residence, employment, age at marriage, and others are considered in a multivariate model to explain the differences in fertility goal achievements. Two states besides India will be considered as they represent two extreme cases of India. Urban and rural areas are examined separately as wide differences exist between these two areas of residence. We hope the analysis will conclusively demonstrate the fertility decline in India from older to the younger generation of women.
R V R Chandrasekhara Rao, The Commonwealth of Learning

Open Learning - Human Resource Development - Open Learning Interface in India
The paper proposes to discuss the extent to which the strategies of Distance and Open Learning in India have come to be influenced by the adoption of the concept of Human Resources Development (HRD). For HRD, which by now has come to be equated with Education, transforms the nature and scope of open learning in India. While the first phase of the Distance Education paradigm, which itself was incorporated into the educational system during the 1960s, was driven by the compulsions of extending education (understood in the conventional sense of the word), the concept of human resource development has since given distance education a value-added significance. HRD encompasses the entire notion of life-long learning qualitatively altering the criteria of what is educable and who are to be educated. The need for the acquisition of skills by the vast numbers of people engaged in factories and farms and the corresponding imperative to impart continuous vocational education to segments of society not hitherto included in education’s catchment area have now created a new and vastly expansive space for educational delivery. Providing access to this sector is a challenge that open learning will have to meet, substantially if not wholly. Compulsions of the technology driven society and need to be in step with the global technological pace largely account for this phenomenon. What then are the nature of inputs necessary to accomplish this transformation and what shape will the education system assume? These mainly are the concerns of this paper.

The paper would briefly trace the parameters of India’s Education Policy in terms of the reception of distance education as a major component of the educational system and relate it to the implications of HRD concerns of the country.

The paper would also focus on some of the philosophical issues arising out of the equation between Education and Human Resource Development as also the future shape that the educational system would assume with open learning acquiring silence in the overall system.

Josna Rege, Dartmouth College

Strategic Allegiances of Asian Women in Britain: Negotiating Between Community, Homeland, and Home
This paper will discuss the work of two generations of women of South Asian origin in Britain, women of varying national, class and educational backgrounds, writing in a range of genres. I am interested in the ways in which these multiply-located women position themselves, and how their literary and cultural production engages with their places of residence and of origin. Women’s troubled relationship to nationalist discourse in the postcolonial period has suggested that many writers of the 1980s and 1990s are turning away from Nation to seek new allegiances. I ask what group affiliations these diasporic women find most productive, and in what ways their ongoing relationship to their country or community of origin continues to inform their identity. What strategies allow them to move between and among their different worlds with the most ease, and give them the greatest sense of agency? I look at the work of published novelists and screenwriters like Farhana Sheikh and Meera Syal, groups like the London-based Asian Women Writers’ Workshop, and community-based resource centers such as the Southall Black Sisters.
Tamar Reich, University of Chicago

Ritual and Narrative Splitting in the *Aṣvamedhika Parvan*

In an ongoing study of the *Aṣvamedhika Parvan*, I argue that an agonistic-sacrificial ideology underlies the apparently disparate materials of the Parvan. Here, I focus on three textual units: the expedition to the Himālayas to retrieve Marutta's buried treasure, the stillbirth and revival of Parīkṣit, and the description of the horse sacrifice. I contend that a dynamic tension within the agonistic concept of sacrifice itself explains the way in which these three units are juxtaposed in the Parvan. Violence (sacrificial and political) is conceived as necessary for the sustenance of life, yet the center of the society, represented by the yajamāna king, must be clear of it. In the Aṣvamedha rite, this tension results in a symbolic splitting. While the yajamāna reverts to an embryonic state, his alter ego, the leader of the horse's retinue, just like the leader of the Vṛātya bands of an earlier period, incurs the inevitable sin of killing. I will show how this logic of splitting, in order to shift the evil of killing, is pressed even farther in the *Aṣvamedhika Parvan*'s narrative structure.

Paula Richman, Oberlin College

Two Ways the Rama Story Migrated to the United Kingdom

A feminist coalition of South Asian and Afro-Caribbean immigrants in Southall (an area right beyond the end of the London tube line) mounted a Ramleela production in 1979; it retold the story of Rama as a critique of police brutality and British immigration laws. Women in a group called "Southall Black Sisters" mounted the play to help defray legal fees for Southall residents arrested during a clash between police and those who protested against the National Front party. The play included English and Punjabi topical commentary about racism in Britain and sexism within the South Asia community. The Ramleela culminated with the burning of Ravana, whose ten heads included images of National Front leaders, local politicians, and riot police. My paper, based on archival materials and interviews with members of the original Southall Black Sisters, examines key historical factors that shaped the way the Ramleela was produced. Particular attention is given to (1) the incidents in the story of Rama that were highlighted, (2) the commentary to two clown figures who periodically interrupt the narration of events to draw attention to similarities between the play and the lives of members of the audience, and (3) the reception of the performance.
Hasan-Askari Rizvi, Columbia University

The Military after Withdrawal from Power

This examines the pattern of civil-military relations in Pakistan since 1988 and focuses on how far and why the military has changed its strategy of direct assumption of power. Military rule was withdrawn in Pakistan in December 1985. After Zia’s death in August 1988, the senior commanders allowed the elections to be held and power transferred to the elected representatives. Since then the military has stayed in the background without abandoning interest in politics. The Army Chief interacts with the President and the Prime Minister in order to make significant input in decision making on foreign policy and security affairs as well as for making his views known to them on political affairs. The present-day pattern is that of power-sharing from the background. If the professional and corporate interests of the military can be protected under this arrangement, there appears to be no compulsion to step in directly. The civilian leaders have generally been sensitive to the interests and concerns of the military. The military played a key role in the dismissal of the civilian governments in 1988, 1990, and 1993, extending support to the President who enjoyed over-riding powers under the Eighth Amendment—an arrangement which facilitates military intervention in politics. The paper draws implications of the power-sharing formula for democratic development in Pakistan.

Paul Robbins, Clark University

In Western Rajasthan Contested Landscapes: Beyond the Common Property Narrative

The rules governing village community lands in western Rajasthan have been contested between a wide range of authorities throughout the region’s history. Local producers and central state authorities have enforced differing management regimes for the region’s forests and grasslands. In the process, landscapes have been transformed through exclusion, plantation, and extraction of species; some have declined while others have flourished. The loss of key lands and plants often cripples household production, weighing most heavily on marginal producers.

Up to now, the common property narrative has been the dominant paradigm for the examination of these kinds of problems in rural India. This approach has proven to be politically and analytically useful, galvanizing support for local control of resources. Yet the analysis of the “commons” may have reached its limits. Wedded to binary notions of local and central state, organic notions of community, and “before and after” notions of land degradation, the common property approach has led to an impasse in understanding ongoing struggles over land.

By moving beyond this approach, an image emerges of the Marwari village as a patchwork of authority. Women and men, central and local state authorities, farmers and herders, large holders and marginal producers all contest and remake the rules, putting selective pressure on key species. The result is a unique biotic signature for each negotiated environment. Struggles over local institutions carve the regional environment and demonstrate the way in which power is inscribed in the landscape.
From "Composite" to "Pure" Nationalism in Hyderabad: 1880-1948

Prior to the 1920s, the predominant conception of Indian nationalism was as an amalgamation of two distinct and separate communities within a 'composite' Indian nation. This form of nationalism, with its allowance for parallel political organizing towards a common objective (as seen, for instance, in the combined Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movements), was gradually rejected over the 1920s to 1930s and replaced by a 'pure' Indian nationalism that would not tolerate separate and parallel political organizing for Hindus and Muslims. Scholars, dissatisfied with both secularism and Hindu nationalism's attempts to homogenize different communities into a national or Hindu-national community, have looked back nostalgically to the earlier composite nationalist paradigm, without, however, closely examining it nor the reasons why later nationalists rejected it. This paper examines the transition within a region that had always been problematic for Indian nationalism as a princely state and as a 'Muslim' state. Based mainly on the Urdu pamphlets and newspapers of Hyderabad, it argues that the transition in Hyderabad was never fully achieved prior to independence and that the meaning of Indian nationalism, in terms of the status of Hindu and Muslim communities, remained ambiguous and unresolved.
The Street as Public Commons
The street, lanes, and by-ways are a commons throughout much of the world, a part of the environment not owned by any one individual, family, lineage, nor corporation, but belonging to the community at large. Our study extends beyond the identification and nature of such defined spaces themselves to the flows and interactions of matter, energy, people, and their messages and meanings in time through that space. Any unit in that space must be consider in terms of the temporality or duration of its occupancy. Furthermore, such units are linked, ever so ephemerally, by the trajectory of the objects that pass through them. Traffic flows through the street. We are interested in these flows and their immediate and long term consequences. Furthermore, we are interested in the evolution of this dynamic four-dimensional system, so defined and acted upon by its human occupants, and impacted by natural forces.

At issue are the nature of a people's conceptions of public order and the meanings ascribed to states or qualities of this public sector. What are the rules and conventions they respect, the foundation for their compliance, and the nature of their actual practice?

While the constituent units of observation are the actions and expectations of the street's occupants, studied within the institutional and physical constraints that contain them, the focus of analysis is the aggregate consequences of their interactions. As a conduit through which a high density of mass, energy, and messages pass, the street is the major locus for ordering, interminglings, impacts, markings, and transformations. These comparative reflections have a direct relevance to the particular configuration of meanings associated with waste and traffic on the streets in India and to the level of self organization emerging in traffic flows.
Parama Roy, University of California-Riverside

Publicizing Violence: Bengal, Ireland, and the Gendered Politics of Terrorism

This paper uses the figure of Sister Nivedita (Margaret E. Noble) as a point of entry into the gendered and raced politics of violence in turn-of-the-century Bengal and Ireland. Nivedita, who came to India as the disciple of Swami Vivekananda, was to inhabit a highly fraught gendered position as the white female disciple of the apostle of "muscular Hinduism"; after the guru's death, the agonistic violence of the discipleship was displaced onto a nationalist public sphere, as Nivedita aligned herself with Aurobindo Ghose (himself a guru in the making) and his National Revolutionary Council. Elsewhere I have examined the functionality of the subordinate white woman-turned-Indian within a (masculine) Hindu nationalism in pursuit of hegemony; here I broach, through the Irish-Indian public figure of Nivedita, some of the following questions: how does an incipient pre-national (or nationalist) public sphere imagine its own gendered history and its own production in national and transnational space? What place can be assigned to revolutionary violence in the conception of this public sphere? What intimacies, however uneasy, does such terrorism share with the violence of the guru-disciple relationship on the one hand and Irish radicalism on the other?

Janet A Rubinoff, York University

Marketing the Catch: Female Entrepreneurs in Goa's Fishing Community

Fisherwomen play a key economic as well as social role in their communities since they manage the preparation and selling of fish caught by the men, often control domestic funds and household spending, maintain important marketing and informal credit networks, have considerable freedom to travel by themselves to markets and jetties, and hold significant decision making powers within their family units. My recent research among Goan fisherwomen, funded by a Women-in-Development grant from the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, examined social and economic changes influenced by the process of development within the mechanized fishing industry in Goa. My paper focuses specifically on the impact of this development on the economic and domestic lives and social status of female fish vendors from both Hindu and Catholic Goan communities. It examines the redefinition fisherwomen's roles and decision-making powers, the degree of marginalization of these women with increased competition in lucrative fish markets, female migration and contract labor in fish processing industries, and the emergence of female entrepreneurs.
Gita Rajan, University of Michigan

When "Europe" Must Appear...

In the early eighteenth century, one of the ways in which the "heathen" Orient emerges as a justifiable, necessary, and appropriate object of study is through missionary accounts on the question of why religious conversion of the "blind heathens" must transpire. At the same time, "Europe," far from being the silent referent of this knowledge, had to be put on display as a unity, as a "known" and "knowing" entity. Narratives about the Orient are embedded in, and indeed draw their authority from, representations and reiterations of European superiority and oriental backwardness. This paper draws upon the writings--letters, official diaries, published reports--of the German Pietist missionaries from the Danish colony of Tranquebar in southeast India at the advent of the eighteenth century.

This paper attempts to address two issues: 1) What constructions of "Europe" had to chaperon historical knowledge about the Orient? 2) Beyond the realm of the written, what were the epiphanic manifestations of "Europe" in the colonies in order to legitimize "European" presence in everyday life? "Europe" appears in missionary writings, as "real" mainly through discourses on the Bible, the quintessential European Book which contains the historical evidence of the moral/spiritual supremacy and priority of Europe. However, historical evidence of cultural predominance must be supplemented by representations of concrete symbols of contemporary "Europe." The next section of the paper concentrates on the discourse around anxious anticipation, dejection, and panic at the prospect that the signs of Europe--trading ships, money, supplies, letters--would fail to appear. Such a discourse on making "Europe" present, on justifying the validity of belief in its reality, draws its authority from and represents an interesting juxtaposition to constant reproductions of the historical/biblical "fact" that the Word, the only legitimate manifestation of God, was first received in Europe.

This paper discusses the missionary narratives as sites of collaborative production of the hegemonic signs of "Europe" that needed intermittent re-presenting as a unified entity and that had to stand for the verity of knowledge about the Orient.
S Ravi Rajan, Cornell University

Toxic Politics: A Political Ecology of Occupational Hazards and Urban-Industrial Risk: The Case of the Chemical Industry

Eleven years ago, in the space of a few brutally unforgiving hours, a gas leak in a chemical plant in Bhopal, forced the world's attention on one of India's worst environmental problems: industrial risk. It soon became apparent that Bhopal was no aberration; that there were acute and chronic Bhopals across the country; and that these other Bhopals had explicit class and social distributions. It also became evident that this issue cuts across many traditional sectors, e.g., Cottage/Large; Private/Public; Urban/Rural; and that there are obvious connections with wider contemporary urban crises - e.g., those of public health (e.g., Surat) and class/ethnic tensions in urban, semi-urban and increasingly, rural areas.

This paper, a forerunner for a book project on the subject of urban industrial risk in the Indian chemical industry, focuses on two fundamental questions: "Why are state institutions ineffective; how can they be made effective?"; and "In what way do situations such as those in India necessitate a re-conceptualization of theoretical approaches to risk, especially in industrializing countries in the age of globalization?" Using two case-studies of post-Bhopal sites of risk production, the paper examines a range of political ecologic factors that have bearing on these two questions, including the inadequacy of technical competence and experience at all levels (from social work and basic data gathering to prevention and response regimes) in the state; in the "dissenting academy" and in the wider "civil society".
Barbara Ramusack, University of Cincinnati

Motherhood and Medical Intervention: Women's Bodies and Professionalism in India after World War I

During World War I states and private organizations in both the metropole and the colonies accelerated their intervention in the process of childbirth to reduce maternal and infant mortality and to maintain stable populations in the face of wartime casualties and influenza epidemics. In India professional medical intervention at the time of childbirth by either "professional" or "scientific" midwives or obstetricians expanded to include ante-natal and post-natal care for mothers and infants. During the 1910s the Viceroy founded the Lady Chelmsford Maternity and Infant Welfare League to deliver medical care to Indian women before and after childbirth. This effort had two major components. First, it involved sending medical and social workers into Indian homes thereby extending the activity of either the state or private organization within the Indian household in the crucial activity of its reproduction. Second, Baby Weeks were inaugurated where Indian mothers and babies were exhibited in public spaces, scrutinized by professional caregivers, subjected to medical discipline based on western knowledge systems, and constituted as targets for the advertisement and consumption of "modern" products which allegedly improved maternal and infant health.

This paper will examine state and public interventions in the process of motherhood in Madras presidency and in the princely state of Mysore during the 1920s. It will analyze the classes of women who were targeted as the appropriate constituency for ante and post-natal health workers and for Baby Weeks, the groups who organized such services, the ideologies which informed their efforts and goals, and the impact of similar phenomena in the British metropole on the development of professional maternal health care in colonial India. In the conclusion there will be a comparison of the programs and their constituencies in directly and indirectly ruled areas.
Anna M Ranero, Harvard University

Kalidasa's Meghadūta and the Rāmāyana

The Meghadūta has traditionally been regarded as Kālidāsa's most original work. Some commentators, like Mallinātha, support the view that Kālidāsa composed the Meghadūta on the analogy of Rāma's message to Sītā through Hanumān in the Sundarakānda of the Rāmāyana. However, despite some obvious references to the epic, the general opinion seems to be that the Meghadūta is entirely a creation of the classical poet.

The purpose of this paper is to show the pervasive presence in the Meghadūta of allusions and motifs that the poet has drawn from the Valmiki Rāmāyana. Moreover, these allusions are not randomly scattered throughout the poem, but rather provide a basis for the structure and the development of the poem. In this paper I will explore the various ways in which Kālidāsa makes use of his source. I will suggest that the yakṣa and his beloved are parallel characters to Rāma and Sītā. A close examination of the epic motifs in the Meghadūta will reveal how Kālidāsa appropriates a traditional theme and how he succeeds at the same time in creating an original work.
Anindya Saha, Cornell University

Local, Regional, National: The Articulation of Levels of Governance for Environmental Sustainability: The Case of Forestry in India

The emphasis on local level management as the best method of solving common-pool renewable resource problems is on the way to becoming a new orthodoxy. Taking the case of forest policy in India as an example, this paper will examine the limits of this consensus. Changes in patterns of local resource use will be linked to differentiation processes which reflect much larger economy-wide changes. From this, it will be argued that the right level to which decentralization may be successfully carried through is not a tranhistorical feature, as the abstract critique of ‘statism’ would have it, but rather itself depends crucially on the type of larger processes underway. Theoretical pointers will be drawn from the literature on optimal jurisdiction in public economics, as well as from alternative frameworks that stress specifically political institutions and the incentives they produce. Conclusions will be drawn about the appropriate re-allocation of responsibility between local, state and national levels for sustainable forest use, and the necessary creation of new (non-local) institutions for such a reallocation.

Whitney Sanford, University of Richmond

A Snake in the Lila: Balarama’s Naga Heritage in Braj Bhakti

This paper investigates the cultic themes within the poetic corpus of Paramānand (a sixteenth century poet-singer traditionally considered one to be of the astachāp) which are expressed by Balarāma, known also as Halayudha, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Baladeva. Significantly I explore the (continued) relationship between Balarāma and his cultic origins and the poetic structures which maintain and mediate these origins. Balarāma’s function within the Braj tradition suggests a pattern in which local traditions continually reassert and express themselves from within a larger tradition. Krishna and Balarāma evolved from a complex multiplicity of threads and influences which blended over time into contemporary Braj bhakti. An investigation into Balarāma’s role within Braj bhakti lyrics provides an opportunity to examine those pre-and non-Aryan cultic aspects of the tradition which remain alive within the Braj tradition. Balarāma’s nāga ancestry is particularly interesting regarding the serpent Śeṣa/Ananta.
"After What?" - Vyāsātṛtha's Arguments Regarding Eligibility and Theological Inquiry

In this paper I examine several arguments made by Vyāsātṛtha, the 15th-century scholar of the Mādhva school of Vedānta, against the Advaita school of Vedānta. These arguments regard the correct interpretation of the first pāda of the first sūtra of the Brahma Sūtras of Bādarāyana: athato brahma-ajñātā. Atha is typically interpreted as "afterwards." Vedānta scholars agree on this one aspect of the term—that it places the brahma-ajñātā, inquiry into Brahman, within temporal parameters; inquiry occurs after some set of dictated events / behaviors. A major point of disputation between schools of Vedānta, however, centers around the answers to the simple question koḍhikāraḥ, "After what?" Vyāsātṛtha thus investigates this question in his Tātparya-candrika, a commentary on the Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya of Madhvācārya. He links these arguments regarding eligibility and theological inquiry to fundamental conflicts in Mādhva and Advaita ontology, epistemology, eschatology, as well as to relevant debates in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā. This paper, then, is an attempt to illuminate both the intricacies of the debate between the Vedānta schools as well as the complexity of Mādhva dialectics.

V S Satyapriya, Institute for Social and Economic Change

Black Books for a Fair History: Towards a Reinterpretation of Agrarian Structure in a Princely State of South India (1806-1868)

Colonial administrators and the historians of the time as well as the contemporary students of colonial history have all interpreted the pre-colonial agrarian system as something that needed corrective interventions for radical changes. A general perception of the agrarian system was one of unequal access and control of land. Any data suggesting a different perception of the agrarian system was often summarily rejected as being spurious. Local records were dismissed as attempts to defraud the government of land revenue that was due to it. Such perceptions guided the course of Land Survey and Revenue settlement throughout the sub-continent.

This paper takes a close look at the recently made available land revenue records, indigenously referred to as Kadaṭhas (Black Books), which form a unique source of information on the land revenue system and the agrarian structure in a princely state of South India. By making use of the Kadaṭhas and comparing with the period's economic and political history, the paper traces the social character of the agrarian system and the patterns of land distribution across the different social groups. A second concern of the paper is to reinterpret the land revenue system and indicate the basis of assessing land revenue during the pre-colonial regime. This is later compared with that of the colonial land administration.

The paper demonstrates that access to land and its control was not entirely influenced by the social groups dominant in the society and that the revenue system was based on certain principles of equity without sacrificing the revenue. Thus the paper questions some of the fundamental tenets of the agrarian history as has been hitherto professed by economic historians.
Mathew N Schmalz, University of Chicago

A Slave for Jesus: Portrait of an Indian Charismatic Healer

Within the last decade, the charismatic movement has come to dominate North Indian Catholicism. With their access to the spiritual gifts of healing and prophecy, charismatic healers not only claim a central place within the lives of North Indian Catholics but have also been accepted by members of the surrounding Hindu community. Central to members of the charismatic movement is the construction of a new life narrative and personal identity as a follower of Christ. The charismatic healer plays a crucial role in the development of such a narrative through the process of charismatic counseling in which the healer divines an individual's sins and reveals messages from God about the past and future course of a person's life.

This paper examines the life and work of one such charismatic healer who claims a large following in the city of Varanasi. I diagram how his narrative of his own conversion from a life of alcoholism and sexual transgression shapes his interaction with his Hindu clients. For this Indian charismatic, an individual's redemption lies not only in the confession of sins, sins which he himself reveals to his clients as messages from God, but in rejecting the superstitions of Hinduism. For his Hindu followers, however, such exhortations to exclusiveness have little meaning, because the charismatic healer remains but one holy man in a city with many saints and opportunities for redemption.

Carolyln Woodford Schmidt, Ohio State University

Buddhist Art of Greater Gandhara: Reconstruction through Stylistic Analysis

As scholars attempt to give precise definition to the history of ancient, greater Gandhara and to its artistic heritage, there remain many troubling issues related to the Buddhist tradition of circa the last several centuries B.C. through the first several centuries A.D. With the hope of reconstructing the decorations of stupas and chapels, and reassembling the long-separated Buddha triads and sequences, new, site-specific studies have been undertaken in recent years by prominent researchers such as Francine Tissot, Elizabeth Errington, and Shabbaz Khan. It is not surprising, however, that the problems encountered have proven even more difficult than anticipated given the limitations of early surveys, reports and photographic records.

Among the approaches that offer possibilities for supplementing these site-specific efforts is a stylistic, analytical approach focused on some thirty, small-scale stone panels and stelae. In addition to diminutive relief images that replicate the characteristics of large, individually sculpted images, these reliefs and stelae offer information related to patterns of stylistic development and modifications in iconographic programming. This contribution will provide models for the reconstruction of Buddha triads through detailed stylistic and iconographic analyses. Additionally, two Bodhisattvas that bear the characteristics of a long-separated pair will be presented together with information as to the scale and appearance of the Buddha figure they would have attended.
Susan Seizer, University of Chicago

Scripts for Off-Stage Living: Acting the Ideal Tamil Woman

This paper concerns the everyday lives of Tamil popular theater actresses, and particularly their daily attempts to fit in with the norms that define what is a 'good Tamil woman'. Stage actresses, as working class women who regularly make public spectacles of themselves, are quintessential "bad women" in a culture where womanly virtue sticks close to the home. Though at night they mount stages in towns and villages all across the state, in their daily lives these actresses often try to pass -- to adhere to the dominant cultural script for good women, and meet its norms for women's behavior -- in the towns and cities where they live. In this paper I trace one actress's daily attempts to mitigate the stigma of the identity of public woman, and show how concerns for her reputation inform her practices and discourses in the domestic as well as the public sphere.
Parna Sengupta, University of Michigan

Of Conversion and Contract: Mennonites and Converts in Dhamtari, CP

This paper attempts to 'unpack' the complex relationship between Mennonite missionaries and native converts. The Mennonite mission was first established in Dhamtari, Central Provinces at the turn of the century. The impetus for Mennonite involvement in India had been the great famines of the 1890's. Subsequently, India became the first foreign field entered by the Mennonite Church of America. I would like to suggest that foreign missionizing inhabited a very contradictory space in the colonial situation, typified by constant missionary anxiety about the 'truthfulness' of native conversions. Their anxiety stems less from any ambivalence about just and unjust rule, instead revolving around the suspicion of instrumentality—the problem of 'rice Christians.' Christian conversion, posited as the ultimate expression of authenticity, was strongly linked to charitable institutions in most colonial situations and the largest number of conversions are through such institutions. Even as the missionaries celebrated the conversion of the poorest and most disenfranchised Indians, they constantly suspected their motives; charity seemed to necessarily preclude 'authentic' conversion. What becomes increasingly clear in the letters and to the native converts is that foreign evangelizing itself is founded on an inherent instrumentality. The only way for the missionaries to raise money for their projects is to advertise their conversions in as dramatic a way as possible. Converts thus become precious commodities—chips which can be cashed in for funds to build schools, hospitals, and in the case of Mennonites, leper colonies. I hope to examine these anxieties and contradictions through a series of letters (from 1932-1939) between the principal of the Dhamtari Christian Academy, Ernest E. Miller, and a group of native Christian students. The students had all obtained loans or scholarships from the mission to pursue their education at various colleges, though all were expected to eventually return to teach at the school in Dhamtari. What is striking about the series of letters between the mission and the young converts is the centrality of money. Money becomes both the material, ideological and theological means for missionaries to control and test their former pupils. Though Mennonite theology constantly emphasized the importance of personal volition and inner baptism, the relationship between the Dhamtari mission and the scholarship boys and girls becomes a contractual one—even as that contract is being disavowed by both the mission and the converts. The result is an often awkward juxtaposition of confession, threats and surveillance.
Anne Sheeran, University of Washington

Graveyard Culture: The Semiotics of Musical Nationalism and the Semiotics of (Sinhala) Conscience

During the late 1980s, journalists and scholars in Sri Lanka engaged in a debate concerning the merits and demerits of popular culture in general, and popular music in particular. "Graveyard Culture" emerged from that debate as a metaphor for popular music and as a negative commentary upon modernity's allegedly corrosive impact upon "traditional" Sinhala Buddhist culture. In this paper I examine the confrontation of "traditional" Sinhala Buddhist culture with "Graveyard Culture" as one instantiation of the disruptive energies of modernities in postcolonial contexts.

Scholars of mass culture acknowledge that the relationships between "mass" and "popular" culture involve "the interplay of persuasion, capital, and ideology" (Ivy 1995:195). My examination of this interplay foregrounds the preference among (primarily Sinhala) music fans for songs that the Sri Lankan state has celebrated as "really Sinhalese" but which fans embrace because of their ineffable sadness and melancholy. In my exploration of this juncture, I suggest that the tragedies of Sri Lanka's other "Graveyard Culture" -- thirteen years of war, economic dislocation, and racial violence -- have begun to transform the popular music industry in ways that do not so much dismiss "traditional" Sinhala Buddhist culture as much as they struggle with the tragedies that have occurred in its name.

Atsi Sheth, Northwestern University

Politics in the Time of Liberalization: GATT and the Indian Pharmaceutical Industry

This paper uses the debate in India over the country's participation in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade to describe the political economy of liberalization. I focus on the arguments made by domestic pharmaceutical producers against GATT in order to understand how the structure and politics of this sector influence policy changes towards it. Furthermore, I argue that the role played by indigenous manufacturers in the process of liberalization is an important, if ambiguous one.

The strength of the domestic pharmaceutical manufacturers in India, relative to their counterparts in similarly situated economies, is often attributed to state regulatory policies that benefited domestic industrialists at the expense of multinationals. The country's Patent Law (1970) was one such measure that helped indigenous industrialists dislodge established multinationals by eliminating provisions for the protection of certain intellectual property rights.

In 1993, this privilege of domestic manufacturers was threatened when the draft of the GATT treaty included measures that would protect intellectual property rights. While the treaty was an essential aspect of the country's program of increased participation in the global economy, domestic pharmaceutical manufacturers contested it on the grounds that it would have a detrimental effect on indigenous production and consequently on the availability of medicines in the country.

Examining how the relationship between the state, multinationals and domestic manufacturers influenced nature of the debate and its outcome provides an insight into the political economy of the pharmaceutical industry. Moreover, it highlights the ambivalence of domestic capital towards the process of liberalization, as reflected in the demands for deregulation on the one hand, and a state-created "level playing field" vis-à-vis foreign capital, on the other.
Ann Shinkovich-Simoni, Ohio State University

A Preliminary Comparison of Zoroastrian Fire Practices and Buddhist Homa Rituals

The objective of this study is to create a historical evaluation between Zoroastrianism and Buddhism during the earliest stages of its development. Specific focus will be on the relevant historical periods of the Zoroastrian religion, and the proposed movements of Indo-Iranian religious philosophies and cosmologies to early Buddhism. Comparative analysis will examine similarities in rituals, specifically regarding the fire ritual in Zoroastrianism and the homa ceremony in Buddhism. In addition, certain aspects of Zoroastrian and Buddhist philosophies, cosmologies, eschatologies, and deities will be compared to assess the influence they may have exerted on each other. The result of this comparison will hopefully encourage a new dialectic into the overlying philosophical similarities between early Zoroastrianism and Buddhism.

Mohan N Shrestha, Bowling Green State University

Employment Structure of Urban Population in Nepal

With an increase in population size and density, an urban settlement becomes not only a center of commercial and industrial development, but also a hearth of innovation, and political and cultural changes in the country. The number of urban centers and the percentage of urban population in Nepal have increased significantly within the last four decades. However, many of these urban centers still have rural characteristics. The majority of the people in these cities are engaged in primary activities and personal services. These cities have not yet played any significant role in bringing about expected changes in the country's physical, social, economic and political structures.

The main purpose of this paper is to analyze the employment structure of urban population in all the urban centers designated as municipal areas in the 1991 census. These urban centers will, then, be classified into various categories according to their employment structures, and their location and distribution will be examined.
Nanda R Shrestha, Florida A & M University

In Search of Paradise in Hell: A Saga of New Lahures from Nepal

"Lahure" is a generic Nepali term that is commonly used to characterize somebody who serves in the foreign army. It is also used to describe those who go to foreign countries in search of jobs, both menial and non-menial. Historically, India has been the most common destination for Nepalese lahures. But, in the past 15 years or so, Nepalese youths have been, in increasing numbers, going to other countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, the Persian Gulf countries, Brunei, European countries, and others. The increasing capitalist influence has intensified this trend. What is notable about this new trend or about these new lahures is that most are relatively educated and generally come from well-to-do families. Furthermore, while they would not even pick a broom to clean their rooms back in Nepal, they are willing to work under the most humiliating and degraded conditions and be treated like stray dogs in their destination countries. This paper will discuss some of these issues in the context of capitalist influence that seems to have penetrated virtually every corner of Nepal.

Beheroze F Shroff, Amherst College

Documenting Diasporic Identities: Indian and Indo-American Documentary Films

This essay explores the gender representations by women film-makers located in India and in the U.S. The documentary as a genre and its particular uses within a contemporary world dominated by mass media and other forms of electronic media will be discussed. I probe the interstices of forming gender identity amid the dominating clamor of mainstream media representations of Indian women (not only in the commercial Hindi cinema but even, at times, in the so-called alternate art cinema). I analyze films such as Nilita Vachani's Eyes of Stone (located in an Indian rural setting), and Indu Krishnan's Knowing Her Place (located in a U.S. urban area). I also discuss a new documentary film (in the final stages of post-production) on the "jogini" (temple-prostitution) system in Hyderabad, India in terms of how women subvert and challenge victimizations; how women's agency is represented in community work and in bridging the boundaries between the domestic and public spheres.
Arun Singh, Rockefeller Visiting Scholar

The India-China-Pakistan Strategic Balance: A Net Assessment Approach

This paper will discuss the results of research being conducted now on the methodology as well as the substance of the military balance in South Asia, broadly conceived. It will survey the existing "military balance" literature, and discuss its relevance to South Asia, where there is considerable uncertainty over the quality and readiness of military equipment, as well as the decision-making processes that shape strategic policy.

Prabhjot Paul Singh, Freelance Social Scientist

Terrorism and Media: Dilemmas for Democracies

When terrorist organisations asked mass media in general and print media in particular to bend, it crawled, is how the role of newspapers during turbulent years in Punjab have been described by sociologists and other social scientists. Punjab, the food bowl of India, lost more than 20,000 lives during a decade-long phase of terrorism. Terrorism, fuelled by a demand for separate Sikh state, left media handicapped. Media lost its credibility as it were either terrorist outfits or the powerful state which issued diktats to both electronic and print media. Unfortunately, the media, spineless as it turned out to be under terrorist threats, both from terrorist organisations and the state, suffered a great deal on account of its credibility. Certain newspapers were reduced to mere propaganda sheets. Punjab is not an isolated case of its type. Similar situation prevails in Jammu and Kashmir, North East, and also in parts of Pakistan and Sri Lanka. An advanced country like Great Britain, too, has been the sufferer. Threats posed by I.R.A. have hit media industry hard. At one stage former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher wanted that terrorist organisations should be denied "oxygen" of publicity to tackle this problem. But the issue, threat to independence and credibility of media in a terrorist-infested state is being debated upon the world over. In this paper, I have tried to analyse the situation in Punjab which has just passed through a decade-long phase of terrorism. Incidentally, I worked in Punjab as a correspondent of leading English news daily and was assigned the Punjab beat.
Aseema Sinha, Cornell University

Regional Shifts and Power Balances: Liberalization at the State Level in India

Many observers feel that, simultaneous with the economic reforms measures, the economic and political balance between the center and the States is shifting in direction of greater autonomy for the states. This paper explores this postulated change and argues that political change associated with reforms is far from coherent but that economic reforms are having a spatially mediated and regionally differentiated political impact in India. I will analyze the sources of this change and try to assess (a) why has this happened? i.e. what brought this about? If India has been a highly centralized federation, what led to this seeming sudden shift in autonomy. What are the institutional changes, policy changes that brought this change? (B) the nature of this change i.e. what is the change about? (C) whether it is sustainable or centralizing tendencies will revert themselves. What are the emerging trends and future possibilities (D) what may be the political consequences of this shift (E) economic consequences.

Mrinalini Sinha, Boston College

This Sex Which Has Not Won: Reflections on Masculinity and Gender Studies in Colonial India

The optimism that Lisa Cody expresses in the review essay “This Sex Which Seems to have Won: The Emergence of Masculinity as a Category of Historical Analysis” is belied by the scholarship on colonial India. For although ‘masculinity’ has long interested scholars of the British empire, this interest has been manifest by and large in purely descriptive accounts of the cult of manliness in the British Raj. It was not until the emergence of feminist scholarship that gender and gender ideologies have begun to attract any serious attention in the study of historical formations. Yet much of the scholarship on gender in colonial India has tended to focus almost exclusively on the study of femininity. Hence while sophisticated studies on women and femininity abound, gender is still not being studied as a truly relational category: how notions of femininity and masculinity are necessarily constructed in relation to one another. This paper, therefore, discusses the relative absence of masculinity as a category of historical analysis in the scholarship on colonial India as well as explores the implications of this absence for the development of gender studies. Through a review of the existing scholarship on colonial India, moreover, this paper will also propose a new model for the study of masculinity and of gender.
Subir Sinha, University of Vermont

Accumulation, Legitimation, and the Question of the Commons: Rethinking Van Panchayats in the U.P. Himalayas

Over the last ten years, a new comparative political economy of resource use has been generated by those who identify their theoretical approach as 'new institutionalism'. Originally a critique of Garrett Hardin's 'tragedy of the commons' framework, these theorists now argue that common property is a cornerstone of a policy of 'sustainable resource use', and that local users are capable, by themselves, of innovating resource use institutions based upon cooperation and restraint.

In a paradoxical way, this attribution of near complete power and capacity to local users does not consider the wider political economy within which local users and local resources are located. Local capacity is limited because local factors do not always cause the depletion of the commons. Within the larger projects of capital accumulation from all 'sectors of the economy' to achieve national development, and then to legitimate that development through administrative measures through redistributive programs, local communities are placed in asymmetrical relations with the state and market forces, among others. Local level institutional innovation, such as the creation of van panchayats, must address the issue of asymmetry.

I will make the argument, with reference to the Garhwal region of the U.P. Himalayas, that closer articulation between village forests and national capital accumulation led to the depletion of the commons; likewise, the 'community' as a pre-constituted springboard for collective action was ruptured by a number of challenges to its authority emanating from the spread of the developmentalist state. I will show that social movements such as Chipko posed specific challenges to processes of accumulation and legitimation, and played the key role in reconstituting van panchayats (forest councils).
"South Asians in America" Oral History Project
Sponsored by the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies in Philadelphia, PA, this project is a pilot for documenting the life stories of South Asian Americans in the Philadelphia region, New York boroughs, and adjacent cities in New Jersey. First-generation immigrants of South Asian descent from any nation who settled in the United States as adults before 1975 were the focus of the summer 1996 project. The objective was to reach the greatest socioeconomic/cultural diversity of individuals possible in a relatively small number of detailed interviews during a span of ten weeks. Topics of discussion include memories as a British colonial subject, daily patterns of life before and after immigration, acculturation outside one’s home country, and one’s changing sense of expectations, identity, etc. Tapes and transcripts of the interviews, including English translations, will be held at the Balch Institute Library and available to the public. A collection of photographs taken by members of these communities of their own lives will accompany the transcripts. Future projects will examine the lives and concerns of post-1975 immigrants, as well as those whose formative years (before age 18) were spent in the United States.

K Sivaramakrishnan, Yale University

Agrarian Change and the Shifting Locus of Governance in the Forest-Field Mosaic of Southwest Bengal, 1880s-1920s

Histories of forest degradation in India have generally argued that deforestation followed colonial destruction of existing local institutions through which village communities had traditionally managed forests in their vicinity as common property resources. Making forests state property had thus converted them into open access resources in the absence of effective state control of forests. The history of forest management in southwest Bengal does not lend itself easily to this explanation. During the last hundred years, the dry deciduous sal Shorea robusta forests of southwest Bengal have witnessed a complex transformation of layered property and access rights, currently being redefined under a scheme called Joint Forest Management (JFM). This paper will examine one period of rapid change in forest rights, at the turn of the century. It will argue that understanding these changes and the conflicts they sparked requires a nested analysis of agrarian and forest transformations because at the heart of the contested redefinition of rights in land was a re-imagining of landscapes, resulting in the creation of separate domains of agriculture and forestry in southwest Bengal by the early twentieth century.
Monica L Smith, University of Michigan

Early Historic and Early Modern: Reconstructing Ancient Economic Landscapes from 19th-Century Documents

The reconstruction of ancient economic landscapes typically relies on archaeology, paleobotany, numismatics and contemporary political texts, where available. A judicious examination of modern records, especially those written prior to large-scale changes in transportation and communication, can provide much-needed specifics for individual research areas and permit modeling of a broader range of potential exchange goods. This case study models the exchange activities at the Early Historic site of Kaundinyapura (eastern Maharashtra), where archaeological evidence suggests widespread importation of nonlocal durable domestic goods. Early modern documents illustrate the use of forest resources as well as providing agricultural yield figures; in the Early Historic period, these perishables may have provided the purchasing power needed by the site’s inhabitants. In addition to providing a catalog of resources, nineteenth-century writers also documented the exchange practices utilized before widespread improvements in transportation, where flexibility in routes and timing enabled traders and travelers to move about the landscape even during times of political uncertainty.

Walter Smith, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Site-Specificity and Sacred Space: The Visual and Literary Evidence for Ellora

This paper will consider site-specificity in relation to the tradition of rock-cut architecture in Western India, using the Dhumar Lena at Ellora as a test case. Usually written off as derivative and inferior, the Dhumar Lena stands as a powerful architectural/sculptural presence, precisely because of the way it interacts with its site. Typically considered a poor imitation of the Siva temple at Elephanta, the Dhumar Lena, upon analysis, is extremely site-specific, subtly integrated with the surrounding hillside and with the waterfall and small lake directly south of it. This integration of landscape and excavated architecture becomes clear when various “views” framed by doorways and defined and intensified by rock-cut stairways leading to them (both inside and outside the temple), are fully considered. That all of this was consciously organized on the part of the Dhumar Lena’s builders can be concluded from visual analysis of the site, from the temple’s place within the chronological sequence of Ellora’s Hindu structures, and from a consideration of various texts. These include the Saiva Puranas, poetic texts, and oral texts relating to contemporary rituals performed in Maharashtra. It will be shown that the symbolic inter-relations between caves and water (particularly the sacred lake Sivalaya as a manifestation of the supreme Siva) have ramifications for the sacred landscape of which the Dhumar Lena is a part.
Julie P Solometo, University of Michigan

Predicting Patterns of Interaction Between Forest Hunter-Gathers and the State

This paper examines how archaeological and historic information can be used to predict patterns of interaction between early historic states and forest hunter-gatherers when detailed information on these relationships is lacking. Four potential patterns of interaction - mutualism, competition, parasitism, and avoidance - are identified and illustrated with examples from historic and ethnographic sources from southern Andhra Pradesh. Next, some of the parameters which may influence or produce these four patterns of interaction are distinguished. R.G. Fox's (1969) concept of the "internal frontier," a circumscribed area inhabited by a less-complexly organized group, is used to organize these parameters. The size, permeability, and political status of the internal frontier, or the area inhabited by forest groups, are argued to significantly affect the character of interaction and the relative degree of "symmetry" or equality of the partners of mutualistic relationships, the most commonly described pattern of interaction. Some archaeological indicators and kinds of documentary evidence useful for determining the characteristics of the internal frontier and the state's interest in the forest are identified.

Selma K Sonntag, Humboldt State University

Language and the Politics of Change in Post-Colonial North India

Upon independence, India's new leaders, although Western-educated and versed in English, doubted the legitimacy of the former colonial language while recognizing its practicality in a poor, multilingual country. The solution adopted was to retain English as an associate official language for fifteen years while a transition was made to Hindi as the sole official language. Language riots in southern India at the end of the transition period led to a postponement of the policy, with English continuing indefinitely in its associate status. While deliberative official language planning was essentially put on hold, the political scenario changed significantly over the half century. The Nehruvian English-speaking elite has been increasingly challenged, and at the state level replaced, by emerging lower-caste politicians with rural constituencies. In this paper, I argue that despite divergent overt policies on the use of English espoused by recent state governments in north India, there is a more fundamental convergence of re-appropriating vernaculars as part of a anti-elite project. This project is critical to the electoral success of these new politicians forging a Backward Caste-Dalit-Muslim alliance.
Jenny Springer, University of Chicago

(Un)Yielding Policies, Developing Alternatives: The Conscription of "Choice" in Tamil Nadu
This paper will examine varying constructions of the relationship of the post-colonial Indian state to its citizens in the context of agricultural development programs in Tamil Nadu. Since the 1960s, the state government of Tamil Nadu has pursued strategies for the increase of rice production which rely on the use of high-yielding rice varieties, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and other new technologies. In the design of these programs and in the discourse of district officers charged with implementing them, there exists a tension between an insistence that the state must “compel” farmers to change for their own good, and a view that the state simply offers farmers an expanded choice of products and services. Aspects of both of these conceptions are contested by agriculturists in their interactions with representatives of the state and in their efforts to accept, reject or rework the new technologies in practice.

Robert H Stoddard, University of Nebraska

Sovereignty of a Small State: The Case of Bhutan
Major goals of governmental policies in Bhutan are the preservation of the natural environment and the retention of Bhutanese cultural traditions. The first is illustrated by the designation of natural preserves, restrictions on logging, and limits placed on the annual number of tourists permitted into the country.

Attempts to preserve the Bhutanese way of life include requirements for wearing the national dress, building codes that maintain traditional architecture, prohibition against television, limitations on tourists, and policies aimed at assimilating ethnic minorities, especially Nepalis.

The degree to which these policies aimed at the preservation of Bhutanese culture are, and will be, successful is more difficult to assess than policies relating to the natural environment. Can a small country effectively exercise complete control over its territory and inhabitants? Considerable uncertainty concerns relations between the Bhutanese government and Nepalis, many of whom have fled as refugees. Uncertainty also arises about the extent that traditional Bhutanese beliefs and behavior will survive worldwide intrusions by global media and marketing firms.
Valerie Stoker, University of Pennsylvania

A Sectarian Approach to the Rgvedic Mantras - An Analysis of Dwaitin Exegetical Technique

This essay analyzes the Dwaita school of Vedanta's sectarian interpretation of the Rgvedic hymns. Using examples from the commentaries of Jayatirtha and Raghavendra on Madhva's original bhasya on the first 40 hymns of the Rgveda, I chart the development of a unique theory of Vedic exegesis, a theory which asserted that each word of the mantras could be read as "Vishnu."

The Dwaitin approach to the Rgvedic mantras raised important philosophical questions regarding the relationship between a word and its meaning, questions which I will explore in this paper. Dwaitin exegesis is also significant because it appealed to (and thereby demarcated) the norms of Vedic interpretation shared by rival South Indian Brahminical sects while at the same time, it provoked intense sectarian debate due to its exploitation of open issues in the Veda's canonical status. By delineating the specific nature and historical development of the Dwaita school's exegetical technique, my paper contributes to our understanding of Brahminical canon construction and sectarian polemic around the time of the Vijayanagara empire.
Radhika Subramaniam, New York University

Children of Shivaji, Children of Aurangzeb: Riots and Other Stories of Crowds in Bombay

"The city, however, does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lightning rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls."

Invisible Cities, Italo Calvino

On December 7, 1992, Bombay, the island megalopolis on the western coast of India erupted in an orgy of violence, the immediate catalyst for which was the demolition of the Babri Masjid, a 16th century mosque in northern India built on the exact site of what fundamentalist Hindus stated was the birthplace of the mythic god-king Rama. A second spate of violence followed in January 1993. These riots follow a narrative about communal violence in India -- Hindu against Muslim, Muslim against Hindu -- dating to the colonial period and in rawer memory, to the riots following the Partition of India and Pakistan. That Bombay, a teeming, commercial, cosmopolitan, port city could, in terms of the ubiquitous metaphor of contamination, 'be infected with the communal virus' unseated the confidence of those long familiar with the city.

This paper enlists the conversations and recollections of people who lived through the riots, both those cast as 'victims' and others, to evoke images that illuminate, in a fleeting flash, alternative histories. Memories, in many ways, have already been harnessed to the yoke of history-writing but there is an instant, in remembering, at certain moment of rupture, when sites and places confront one with uncanny insight, proffering another imaginative map of the city's history. This essay will also read these stories against the grain of the rhetoric of secularism and tolerance commonly embedded in most discussions of sectarian violence in the diverse cultural milieu of India.

The questions animating this paper are: How does the city enter the imaginings of people and inflect their sense of identity, personal and community, in relation to the place? How can one speak of the memories of places? How does the telling of stories, the crafting of experiences of horror, suspicion and violence through narrative, ricochet against the actual spaces of such terror -- imbue them with sacred power, allow healing? What are the traces of these experiences that remain in the streets and building of Bombay long after the shards of glass from a rampage of looting have been crushed to dust underfoot?
Sally J Sutherland Goldman, University of California-Berkeley

Soul Food: Eating, Conception, and Gender in the Literature of Premodern India

Insemination and pregnancy/childbearing are theoretically a function, or even a definition, of biological gender. Yet exploration of the mythic literature of the traditional Sanskrit corpus demonstrates that even this seemingly uncontested realm of gender identity is frequently denied women.[1] Men, too, are not unscathed in this respect. For the male subject is not uncommonly denied his biological gender defining function of insemination. Instead, the traditional Sanskrit corpus uses a variety of substitutes for insemination, these substitutes are commonly popular food substances. The paper will examine the types and symbolic structure of myths of insemination which use food as seminal substitutes and how such symbolic structures help reinforce patriarchal power and gender constructs of gender relations.

Cynthia M Talbot, University of Texas-Austin

Local Lordship in Sixteen-Century Andhra: The Epigraphic Perspective on Amara-Nayamkara

Although the term nayamkara appears in inscriptions from the Andhra region as early as 1269 A.D., the bulk of inscriptive references to nayamkara and amara fall within the period from 1510 to 1565. In this paper I will scrutinize the activities of the 116 men known to have held amara and nayamkara rights in Vijayanagara Andhra during these decades. The view is partial, for the roughly 350 relevant inscriptions do not tell us how amara-nayakas obtained their positions nor what kinds of services they rendered to the king. But inscriptions do reveal the existence of hierarchical relationships between superiors and subordinates within the amara-nayaka category, expressed in the language of granting and receiving nayamkara rights. Inscriptions also give us some idea of the resources extracted by amara-nayakas from their allotted lands — by recording what they were able to alienate as charitable endowments, for instance. Since similar powers were exercised by men said to be ruling various territories in Andhra, it is possible that the possession of nayamkara rights was synonymous with the control of a locality. The main focus of the paper will hence be on understanding amara-nayamkara as a form of lordship in the sixteenth-century Vijayanagara polity.
Seira Tamang, American University

Dynamics of Political Space in Nepal

Since 1990, democracy has been heralded as the promise of reason, equality and representation in Nepal. Governments have been voted in and out, and Nepal has even been in the anomalous position of having a communist government at the helm of the "only Hindu kingdom in the world." But how is the political society of Nepal being constituted? This paper seeks to explore how political space is negotiated in Nepal in the late 20th century and the nature of civil society evolving in the space between formal political institutions and the private realm of the economy and the household of a heterogenous population. It is argued that the enticing nature of the label 'democracy' obscures the social tensions and the socially institutionalized practices which serve to structure emerging societal duties and obligations in a manner which leaves intact the very class, ethnic and gender inequalities that the democratic movement sought to dismantle. The continued hegemony of pre-1990 norms and values has meant that under the guise of real and progressive 'democratic' innovations, only nominal changes have been and continue to be possible.

Ashwini Tambe, American University

Whose "India Today"? – An Analysis of the Magazine's Projection of Urban India to its International Readers

'India Today' is a newsmagazine commonly consulted by Indians abroad for its coverage of trends in Indian politics and lifestyle. In this paper, a rhetorical analysis of some recent articles covering lifestyle issues of urban Indians is presented. Specifically, the relationship between national urban elites and non-resident ones is examined within the context of a constructed climate of Indians 'looking outward'. Articles on issues relating to lifestyle are given special attention, but also considered are articles and columns on NRI investing in India. The way in which a 'global' frame of comparison is constituted is questioned; specifically, it is asked which countries comprise the realm of the 'global' for urban Indians. The means by which rural concerns are erased is highlighted, and its implications for whose India it is that is projected abroad are discussed.
Clare L. Tanner, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Strategy and Structure of Indian Business Houses and the Opening of the Indian Economy

This paper is based on research conducted in Bombay during 1995-96. The goal is to understand how Indian Business houses are reorganizing their constituent firms in an attempt to deploy their resources for survival and control in the more competitive and open environment.

Most of the data come from a case study of the development of a large group from WWII to the present. I analyze changing relationships between individual firms in the group as well as the overall governing structure of the business house. These are examined in the also changing contexts of state planned development and technological dependence. I support the generalizations made from this case history with secondary data and interviews with prominent business observers.

Tentatively my findings are as follows. Whereas the received organizational literature on business structure tends to point out the liabilities of diversified business structures for adapting to competition in a market oriented economy; my research indicates that in fact many aspects of 'traditional' business houses are being consciously strengthened. Firms are drawn more tightly into webs of interlocking stock ownership. Logos and trademarks are being deployed to advertise the 'family' identity of firms. Where possible job ladders are being created across firm boundaries to broaden identification and loyalty of managers to encompass the whole group.

At the same, to the extent that intra-group trade in products previously took place between firms, it now appears to be decreasing. In other words, although some kinds economic interaction of firms in business houses are decreasing, governing bodies of managers are consciously attempting to centralize and fortify control. My paper will present a more fine grained analysis of intra-group firm interaction to understand this apparent contradiction. I will conclude by speculating about implications of changing group structures for resource mobilization of business groups in the attempt to survive the onslaught of foreign and domestic competition.

Gautama V. Vajracharya, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Amalasara Versus Varsasthali

This is a further study on Stella Kramrisch's explanation of amalasāra and John Irwin's work on Asokan pillars. My study indicates that the so-called lotiform bell of Asokan pillars is actually an inverted vase representing the celestial ocean (rain-cloud). In the process of stylistic development the vase began to look like the seed of the emblic myrobalan; hence it received the new name amalasāra. This element was, however, known to Buddhist authors as varṣasthali, the rain-vase, a significant word revealing its original association with the inverted vase of the Asokan pillars. In order to prove this view literary and visual evidence will be presented throughout the discussion.
Martijn Van Beek, Aarnus University

True Patriots - Justifying Autonomy for Ladakh

Writings on Indian nationalism have tended to silence the voices of people on the margins of the Indian state. While contemporary efforts to recognize and represent 'subaltern' groups have perhaps been successful in complementing the narrative of nationalism, they tend to do so firmly from within an unproblematized discursive frame of 'Indianness'; in other words, the nation may be fragmented, but they are Indian fragments.

In this paper, an effort is made to show how Indian independence, Indian citizenship, and Indian discourses of nationalism and development were read, interpreted, and negotiated in Ladakh. The paper will show how official, academic and popular imaginings of Ladakh were constitutive of the very 'backwardness' of Ladakh that in turn could be and was used by Ladakhi political leaders to make and justify demands for regional autonomy.

Ladakh's Autonomous Hill District Development Council could be granted in 1995, and indeed celebrated by 'India', precisely because Ladakhi leaders presented and justified their demands for autonomy within the normative, indeed hegemonic, discursive frames of (Indian) patriotism, citizenship, and development. As such, the Indianization of 'other' (fragmented) fragments is an important constituent of the possibility to imagine an Indian nation.

Cecilia Van Hollen, University of California-Berkeley

Moving Targets: The Institutionalization of Childbirth and Control Over Women's Bodies in Tamilnadu, South India

This paper will explore the relationship between the institutionalization of childbirth and state control over women's reproductive bodies in contemporary Tamilnadu, South India. Family Planning policies have impacted all other aspects of the state's maternal health services, including obstetrics, by constructing lower class women as "targets." Though the policies of quotas are being reformed in Tamilnadu due to the "success" of the Family Planning campaigns, it will take a long time before attitudes about women as targets will disappear. Controlling processes which I will examine include such things as verbal and physical abuse and threats thereof, routine insertions of IUDs without consent, and elaborate systems of bribery for performing "polluting" tasks.

In this paper I will suggest that the extent to which the staff of a state medical institution feel the need and ability to control women's bodies within the hospital itself varies greatly depending on the institution's sense of connection and responsibility to the community it is serving. Therefore, there is variation between large "Government Hospitals" and smaller "Corporation" hospitals within Madras, as well as variation between public hospitals in Madras and those in smaller towns and villages. Variation also exists among the different medical workers within one institution based on professional status. Finally, I will discuss the ways in which such variations influence women's choices about where to have their deliveries.
Herman Van Olphen, University of Texas-Austin

Hindi-Urdu Interaction in Contemporary India

In the interaction of Hindi and Urdu, we do not find the normal situation of language contact found in South Asia or in other parts of the world. Various forces, especially religious nationalism, made these two variants of *khari boli* speech into two separate linguistic forms, which have become identified as two different languages, even though they share the same grammar, basic lexicon and phonology. We will discuss to what extent this differentiation between Hindi and Urdu, which was accentuated as a result of the political, religious and social forces of the century preceding Independence, has persisted in India since that time.

Although the choice of writing system most clearly distinguishes the two forms, written language is only a small portion of the linguistic repertoire. Since it is mainly the lexicon which distinguishes Hindi from Urdu in the spoken form, the focus will be on the various registers of the spoken language: for official purposes, on television, in the movies, and in daily life. Through the analysis of these materials and the contexts in which they are used, we will see to what extent the last half century of contact in India has affected the degree of differentiation between these two variants.

Sylvia Vatuk, University of Illinios at Chicago

"Good Daughters, Good Wives, Good Mothers": Imagining Nineteenth Century Muslim Women Through Family Biographies

This paper will use a set of 20 Urdu manuscript biographies of 19th century Muslim women in order to explore some issues of representation, on the one hand, and of shared versus individual identity in a society practicing strict female seclusion, on the other. In recent years there has been much criticism of the widespread tendency for scholars to represent Muslim women in ways that give little scope for appreciating their actual heterogeneity, their unique individualities, and the variety of life experiences available even to women whose lives are lived enclosed within the walls of their own homes. While anthropologists have begun to respond to this kind of critique by providing the opportunity for the subjects of their ethnographic studies to speak directly, in all their variety, on the printed page, there is no such easy solution for those trying to imagine women long dead and gone who have left no direct traces of the life stories they might once have told in their own words. Biographies provide only a partial aid to such endeavors, and in so doing they also present further complications of the issue of representation.

The authors of the unpublished life stories I will discuss were mostly male. They invariably wrote about deceased kinswomen for a limited audience of family members. They were constrained by cultural conventions of literary representation as well as by conceptions of ideal womanhood that, while very different from those of modern Western scholars, had no less of a homogenizing effect upon the way they chose to portray the lives and personalities of the actual women they wrote about. Notwithstanding the limitations of these accounts, however, the individuality of these women—"good daughters, good wives, and good mothers" all—shines through them clearly, making it possible to say something meaningful about shared and individual gender identity for Muslim women in this historical time and place.
Anu Vedagiri, Ohio State University

Minnath and the Cult of Avalokiteśvara

The temple of Minnath in Patan, Nepal, with its complex iconography portrays the interaction between Tantric Buddhism and Hinduism, principally Saivism. Although commonly known as Minnath (a variation of Matsyendranath), the principal deity of the temple, Lokeśvara is a term that denotes both Siva as the Lord of the World and Avalokiteśvara. In the many forms of Avalokiteśvara worshipped in Nepal, the Saivite borrowings are quite obvious. According to John K. Locke the deity Matsyendranath is worshipped as Siva, Vishnu, Śakti etc., in agreement to the devotion of each devotee.

The intricate sculptural program at the temple, Minnath poses a variety of problems that are difficult to comprehend, largely due to the earthquake in 1934. However, a close study of the figures indicate an obvious juxtapositioning of both Hindu and Buddhist faiths. The focus of this paper is to discuss the ways in which the sacred and the ritual space is defined by the structure and its translation as understood by the followers of each faith.
Jyotika Virdi, University of Oregon

The Postcolonial Women's Movement and the Predicament of the Popular: Revisiting the Success of the Rape Film Genre

The autonomous women's movement in India signalled its arrival as an independent force in 1980 when for the first time nation wide protests were held against the infamous Mathura rape trial. (This sensational law suit became a rallying point for the women's movement in India). As representatives of a modernist ideal, feminists spoke up on behalf of their silenced disenfranchised sisters. The women's movement drew "rape laws" (as they were called) into public discourse to force attention on institutionalized discrimination against women. B.R. Chopra's popular film Insaaf ka Taraazu (Scales of Justice, 1981) released on the heels of this debate is cognizant of, tempered by, and reflective of contemporary social and political discourses. It too uses rape as a trope to draw attention to women's oppression. Yet ironically, the women's movement distanced itself from popular culture, particularly popular Hindi cinema. Insaaf was roundly condemned by feminists for its explicit depiction of rape. I revisit the film to foreground tensions between the feminist critique produced by a modernist imagination (with traces of a distinct colonial/Victorian sensibility) and the film's genuine yet confused attempt to depart from woman as victim narratives and to reconcile it with women as subjects fighting victimization. I compare the film to the recent controversial film Bandit Queen (1995) based on a book by the same name that centers the life of a low caste woman, Phoolan Devi, driven to banditry after she was repeatedly gang raped. This film is mired in litigation, in part because Phoolan Devi filed a law suit against the film producers. I read both the films' discourse, the public metadiscourse, and extra textual information surrounding these films to raise questions about modernist assumptions of voice/silence and representation. Who is speaking, on whose behalf and with what effect? What pointers do these films give us about the present postcolonial moment while dealing with tangled questions of power, representation, the silenced and speaking subject?
Kamala Visweswaran, University of Texas-Austin

Homely Acts: Women's Participation in the Public Sphere of Late Colonial India

This paper challenges the idea that the equation of women with the domestic sphere translated directly into apolitical forms of action in late colonial India. Using interview and archival materials from Tamil Nadu, I argue instead, that it was precisely the reordering of the domestic realm that contributed in large part to the emergence of the public sphere under British colonialism. Taking Gandhi's (1920) formulation of satyagraha as the “extension of the rule of domestic life into the political” as my starting point, I explore the contradictory axes of women’s agency in the inscription of the domestic into the political realm. For when Gandhi characterizes the political as domestic, he is also arguing that what women now do is political. This formulation allows us to see how women can now participate in the public sphere without raising hostility, because in some sense, they take the ‘home’ with them. Thus Gandhian notions of agency both allowed women to leave the home, and set into play a strategy of containment to continually identify women with the home.

Phillip B Wagoner, Wesleyan University

Iqta and Nayamkara: Military Service Tenures and Political Theory from Saljuq Iran to Vijayanagara, South India

In this paper, I begin by discussing a key passage in the Rāyavācakamu, a sixteenth-century historiographic text in Telugu, which appears to constitute the most detailed, indigenous textual evidence for the “nayaka system” in sixteenth-century South India. The evidence of this text corroborates the observations of contemporary Portuguese authors on the formal and systematic nature of nayaka relations in the Vijayanagara state, and thus brings into question the arguments of Burton Stein which characterized the “nayaka system” as a “conception derived from the attempts of outsiders to understand the Vijayanagara polity.” I then discuss the similarities between the nayaka system and the Islamicate system of administration through iqta assignments, and suggest that the specific form manifested by the “nayaka system” in its classic sixteenth-century phase is best understood as resulting from sustained interaction between indigenous Indic and immigrant Turkic/Islamicate military-political elites. On the basis of consideration of several specific cases, I suggest that this interaction occurred at the levels both of practice—through individuals taking up military-political service across cultural boundaries—and of theory—through translation and adaptation of Persian texts dealing with political theory, giving rise to the Telugu niti genre.
Joseph Walser, Hofstra University

Logical and Dialogical Interplay in Nagarjuna's MMK

While most studies of Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (hereafter, MMK) have focused on the logical aspects of this work, few works have paid any attention to its relationship to the Buddhist scriptural tradition. The MMK produces its meanings not only by means of sustained logical argument, but also by the numerous references to Buddhist scripture. While these references are not quotations, the intertextuality of some verses of the MMK is often unmistakable. These points of intertextuality function to augment the logical argument by providing a context through which to understand the specific meaning of each term of the argument. The interplay of logical and intertextual elements in the MMK makes the text a "productivity" in which elements from diverse strands of the Buddhist tradition are interwoven with one another and interpreted against the logical argument. The result may indicate not just a new "thesis" but a new practice of reading scripture.

Anne B Waters, Columbia University

Criminals and Victims, Judges and Officials: The Place of Fact in Judicial Records of the Deccan Commission

My paper is based upon records of the Deccan Commission, 1819-1827, specifically, judicial reports, criminal confessions, transcripts of trials, and sentencing decisions described in the letters and reports of District Collectors, the Deccan Commissioner William Chaplin, and the Bombay Governor Mountstuart Elphinstone. My interest is in the contextual determination of rights and responsibilities, how circumstance and setting influence what is considered "fact" and "truth." Ultimately, I am interested in how such considerations construct both a colonial interpretation of law and the development of a political order.

The cases concern family violence (beatings, murder, infanticide, poisoning), disputes involving domestic slaves, and even a village riot over land records. In these materials colonial officials present differing accounts of the actions and the motivations of those accused, specific details as to the nature of the crime (e.g. the size of the stick with which the woman was beaten, the type of the food which was poisoned, etc.), and include their opinions as to the validity of evidence. Frequently, statements regarding the interpretation of traditional law were attached to the judicial decision. Decisions were reviewed by Chaplin and, in capital cases, by Governor Elphinstone. Thus these cases were, from their moment of production, exercises in exposition, argument, and interpretation, composed of "real" details, embedded in a hierarchical order, and based on "fact."

My paper discusses how the colonial imaginary produced a judicial order out of local officials' accumulation of facts, indeed, from their experience of the "real."
Liz Wilson, Miami University

Dead Men Walking: The Anomalous Undead in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal

In a tale of told by the sixteenth-century Tibetan historian Taranatha, the tongue of a zombie (Tibetan, ro-langs; Sanskrit, vetAla) or reanimated corpse turns into a magical sword when grasped by the teeth of a fearless sorcerer's apprentice. As a creature who is dead and yet alive, a being who belongs to the world of the departed and yet rises up to interact with the living, the vetAla is a highly anomalous being. Such ambivalence is not unusual in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal, where the dead live on in the social practices of the living through particularly vivid forms of ritual identification and substitution and the undead serve as cognitive "thresholds" hold apart what social practice has joined together. Often encountered in cremation grounds where the world of the living meets that of the dead, such ghoulish beings may be recognized by certain uncanny or anomalous features. One must be particularly on guard at moments of juncture and conjunction, when antipodal realities merge together, when day and night are glimpsed together as at twilight. Thus travelers are warned to be particularly alert at dawn and dusk, for those creatures that prey on the living tend to come out at the junctures between day and night. Among the supernatural beings who haunt the Kathmandu valley, most are said to frequent places of passage -- corners, crossroads, and places where paths lead off in several different directions. The ghoulish creatures that bridge the gap between the living and the dead in Nepal thrive in such zones of conjunction and transition, preying on travelers who are in transit from one location to another. But these denizens of the postmortem demi-monde also stand guard over places of passage in ways that benefit the living and it is this thresholding function. The power of these ambivalent beings is frequently invoked and exploited for the sake of the living in domestic and temple settings in the Kathmandu valley, where Buddhists and Hindus share a symbolic and ritual repertoire that includes the veneration and propitiation of the undead. Newari Buddhists drive specially consecrated iron nails through the threshold of their homes each year in an attempt to keep the undead being who guards the domestic threshold fixed in its (literally) liminal place -- the border-zone between inside and outside, private and public, domestic and civic. Like their Buddhist neighbors, Hindus in Nepal also utilize the powers of the undead for protective purposes. Those who worship Shiva venerate a golden corpse-icon that lays prone and still just outside the entrance of several Shaiva temples in the Kathmandu valley, a corpse that is ready to rise up against the bhutas, pretas, and other liminal beings whose presence within Shiva's temples would constitute a sacralige -- even for this death-dealing god of destruction who has among his attendants many such undead beings. Such beings are not only useful as guardians of the threshold that separates the sacred from the profane at the place of their conjunction; they also serve a useful cognitive function: underscoring the categorical differences between the living and the dead, they keep these two realms cognitively separate by incarnating their conjunction (through their freakish conflagrations of aliveness and deadness). Thus the undead perform a valuable classificatory service: they serve to underscore the categorical differences between the living and the dead by constituting freakish exceptions to the rule that the dead do not rise again.
Usha Zacharias, Ohio University

The World of Love Songs: A Study of Malayalam Film Music

This paper focusses on the expression of emotion and eroticism in romantic Malayalam film songs of the 1960s and 70s in Kerala, south India. The affective, lyrical logic of the songs suggest notions of eros which subvert patriarchal and Oedipal centered views of sexuality. The circulation and reception of songs is relatively independent of films, they gather a life of their own among audiences who are not limited to film viewers. Romantic, lyrical expression is a mood, a creative moment which stands apart from the diegetic logic of the film texts. As autonomous texts, the songs can be considered as imaginative expressions of eros in popular culture.

The love songs constitute a genre of their own, tracing an intimate cosmology of lived meaning, through the five vital elements, the six mood-laden seasons and emotional contours interwoven with the terrain, which is poetically articulated through the sensuous variations of the Kerala landscape. The majority of love songs are of viraha, sung to the absent or separated lover, who appears in every inflection and nuance of the world around the singer. The affective inner world of the lovers finds its rhythm in and through the outer world, the imagery thus being neither anthropocentric nor objectivist. The expressive tradition which the songs belong to is not literal or bodily, but figurative, ornamental and suggestive. Relying on A.K. Ramanujan's explication of Dravidian poetics, I describe the sense of play which is evoked through the songs as non-climactic in principle, clothing itself in rich allusions, innuendo and resonance which remain implicit and enfolded.

Darren C Zook, University of California-Berkeley

Famine in the Landscape: Imagining Hunger in South Indian History, 1860-1947

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, famine became a site through which a number of different parties came to imagine south India's past, present and future. Famine and hunger, both as ideas and events, came to be inextricably linked with the mental and geographical landscapes of south India. They were placed in the landscapes through a variety of media, ranging from nationalist and colonial narratives to local idioms and travelogues - even photography. Famine and hunger meant many things to different people: to some, it was evidence of the damage wrought by colonialism, and a defining moment in national history; to others, it was a call for social reform, agrarian development and the conquest of nature. By 1947, the importance of famine and hunger, and by extension poverty and malnutrition, had become established as generative points for the imagination of south Indian history and its inscription in the mental and physical landscapes of the region.
Robert Zydenbos, Independent Scholar

Is Krishna Seen or Not? Madhva's View on a Passage in the Bhagavadgītā

After Krishna has shown his universal form to Arjuna in the Bhagavadgītā, there follows a chapter in which Arjuna asks who is the best worshipper of Vishnu: the one who worships the vyakta or the avyakta, the "manifest" or the "non-manifest".

By far most modern translations of the Bhagavadgītā interpret this as a question of whether the worshipper of the Lord as a personal being possessing a form, or the worshipper of the attributeless Absolute, is the superior worshipper. In other words, it is as a rule taken for granted that the interpretation given by the Advaitin Sankara (eighth century CE) is correct. Alone among the major Vedāntins, Madhva (twelfth century CE), the founder of the Dvaita school, interpreted the terms vyakta and avyakta in the light of what the Bhagavadgītā itself, in other passages, tells us about these terms. As this issue deals with one of the key passages in India's most popular scripture, it is of major significance in the debate between Hindu realism and illusionism, questioning the legitimacy of the Advaitin notion of nirguna-bhakti and giving a direction to further issues in Mādhva theology.