Ashok K. Acharya, University of Toronto

*The grounds for, and limits of, affirmative action policy in India*

This paper interrogates the language of equality that is central to discussions of affirmative action policy. Recent debates on affirmative action in India have brought to sharper focus conceptions of group equality and group-based preferential rights. Since Mandal, academic debate has largely questioned the fairness of caste-based preferential policies with some favoring an extended scheme of job reservations, and others arguing against reservations of any sort. A third line of inquiry disputes Mandal’s criteria for determining caste backwardness. This paper will, instead, chart out an alternative approach and in so doing will normatively engage the implications of the different conceptions of equality articulated, but untested, in the Mandal report. This will be an important exercise to lay down the proper arounds for, and limits of, affirmative action. More specifically, the paper while defending group disadvantage as the proper basis for affirmative action in the Indian context will argue why an enhanced quota conflicts with the ideal of equal opportunity, so central to the thinking of the founders of the constitution but ‘unhinged’ by the Mandal report.

Fawzia Afzal-Khan, Montclair State University

*Community Theatre in Pakistan*

In this presentation, I would like to give a brief overview of the "Street Theatre" or, as it is more commonly known, "Alternative/Parallel" Theatre Movement in Pakistan, active in its contemporary form since the early 1980’s, then move to a discussion of its connections with "community theatre"—which can hardly even be called "theatre" in any commonly understood sense of the term. Yet, community-based volunteers working on such diverse but related issues as women's legal rights in marriage and divorce within the Sharia, educational opportunities for the poor, discrimination against religious minorities, need for basic amenities of life, etc., are increasingly networking with more established theatre groups within the Parallel Theatre Movement to learn/develop techniques such as role-playing in order to raise public consciousness within their communities around these issues so that change may be encouraged. It seems to me that this connection between Parallel Theatre and community-based activism needs to be further explored and enhanced if the original mandate of "street theatre" a la Boal is to be executed. In my presentation I would like to highlight some of these issues and concerns, and show some videotaped segments of visits I made into the heartland of Sind, where I witnessed a Legal Literacy Training workshop conducted by a senior member of Ajoka, the leading Parallel Theatre group of Pakistani Punjab, in his other capacity as a paralegal worker employed by Shirkat Gah, one of the prominent women's NGOs in Lahore. I also will show parts of a video prepared by one of the active community theatre workshops based in a poor Christian community of urban Karachi slums.
Ravina Aggarwal, Smith College
A New Breeze: Questions on Region, Representation and Postcoloniality

I will read a short story by the Ladakhi writer, Abdul Ghani Sheikh, called "The Breeze" which I have translated from Urdu in collaboration with the author. The story unfolds with the escape of a Muslim family from their village after communal riots break out in the district. Translating this narrative raised crucial questions concerning "regional" literatures, pedagogy, anthropological representation and linguistic identity. These debates are central to scholars in Ladakh as they strive to define what legitimately constitutes Ladakhi literature and what social role it must serve in a postcolonial land where religious, linguistic and territorial borders are forever being circumscribed and challenged.

Rafique Ahmed, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
Patterns of the Daily Summer Monsoon Rainfall Events at Three Selected Stations in Bangladesh

Results of a statistical study of the patterns of the daily rainfall events at three selected stations in Bangladesh during the summer monsoon season, and their variability are presented in this paper. These three stations, namely Cox’s Bazar, Sylhet and Rajshahi, represent diverse geographical and climatic characteristics of the country. Cox’s Bazar is located in the southeastern coastal area which is the entry point of the summer monsoon flux; Sylhet is located in the northeastern interior, near the foothills of the Meghalaya Plateau which adds orographic effect to the monsoon rainfall; and Rajshahi is located in the relatively dry interior of the west-central part of the country.

Daily rainfall amounts at the three selected stations during the summer monsoon season for each of the 34-year period from 1958 through 1991 were used in this study. The results reveal the patterns of the (a) mean seasonal rainfall; (b) mean duration and frequency of the episodes of consecutive number of rain-days; (c) the characteristics (duration and frequency) of the consecutive days of rainfall during the three wettest monsoon seasons and during the three driest monsoon seasons at each of the three selected stations; and (d) the patterns of the active and break phases of the summer monsoon in Bangladesh.

Anjum Alden, The University of Wisconsin-Madison
The Embodiment of Female Identity in Khalida Husain’s Short Stories

The Urdu author, Khalida Husain (1938-) began writing short stories in the late 1950s and has, to date, published four collections of them. Most of her stories are
centered around women--girls, young singles, wives and mothers--all of whom face a persistent dichotomy between who they have to be, as dictated by social and cultural norms, and who they want to be. This tension is starkly characterized in the women's experiences by a lack of control over their bodies. Furthermore, the boundaries of the body are often subverted so that protagonists sometimes feel they are literally outside their bodies and in some instances, that their bodies have physically been split into two.

In my paper, I show how, within these subversions, the body becomes the only site where these women can truly encounter themselves. However, their perceptions are inevitably troubled by their inability to determine their own identities independently. By graphically exploring her protagonists' inner struggles to identify the self, Khalida Husain makes a powerful statement about the fragility of women's identities in the constraints of modern South Asian society.

Agha Shahid Ali, University of Massachusetts-Amherst
The Didactic: A Continuous Challenge in Translating from Urdu

Translating a poem that has a fairly direct message but is syntactically and rhythmically beautiful is very difficult, and for a long time I had avoided attempting Faiz Ahmed Faiz's "Subah-e-Azadi" even though I had finished an entire volume of Faiz's translations, THE REBEL'S SILHOUETTE. I had liked no translation of that particular poem, for though the translators had caught the message, they had shown almost no inclination to deal with the relentless beauty of the original. Further, I did not feel I had the talent to render it into a good poem in English. However, I was recently challenged to attempt it, and I agonized over it before I found, in English, a "poetic" take on Urdu. I will read my translation and discuss my strategies for translating it, comparing it to others.

Nigel J.R. Allan, University of California, Davis
Mountain Madness: The 1930s Nazi Expeditions to the Himalaya

During the early Nazi era, Hitler, like so many Germans, was enamoured with mountain climbing, mountain people, and the mountain environment. Much of the discussion about Hitler's legacy, however, has been shrouded by vergangenheitsbewältigung, a failure of Germans to "come to terms with the past." Now, Germans are writing about these eventful years. Included in the Nazi mountain activities were numerous scientific expeditions seeking to measure and document Himalayan people and their environment. Through photographs of the Deutsche Alpin Verein, and captured Nazi files of scientists on these expeditions, we begin to discern the Nazi cultural construction of the Himalaya.

Dr. Clare Anderson, University of Leicester
During the nineteenth century, tens of thousands of Indian convicts were transported to Mauritius, the newly acquired East India Company territories in S.E. Asia and the Andaman Islands. On arrival, they were put to work on various public works projects, including clearing land, building roads and bridges and agricultural cultivation. Effective management was crucial to colonial efforts to effect the transformation of the convicts into an economically productive labor force. The convict system incorporated colonial understandings of the significance of Indian socio-economic structures, particularly race, caste and gender. Equally, using a mixture of punishments (such as flogging and solitary confinement) and positive incentives (particular types of labor and positions of command), convicts were forced to work and integrated into colonial mechanisms of coercion and control. The tensions between convicts which resulted were key to the operation of the system.

Virginia Appell. Mount Allison University

*Embodied Ethnoscapes*

This paper describes a round-trip journey between Ahmedabad, Bombay, Pune and Ahmedabad. The journey, undertaken by a Euro-Canadian ethnographer and a Gujarati social activist, is conceptualised as an aspect of what Appadurai has called ‘global ethnoscapes’ - that is, sites of intersection and interaction between cultures. While ethnoscapes can indeed be conceptualised as ‘global’, the specific elements of an ethnoscope are also local and personal. As this journey demonstrates, ethnoscapes are comprised of embodied cultural knowledges, positions in social hierarchies, degrees of agency, exposure to opportunities of various kinds and experiences with different kinds of power and knowledge. As is the case with many journeys, this one provided a number of opportunities to represent the social self in ways that were different from the ordinary range of possibilities. The journey inevitably exposed the travellers to interactions with histories and colonialisms.

Although the journey initially had a rather prosaic purpose (giving a lecture at a university), its purposive and interpretive complexity grew, as it was extended to include brief pilgrimages to sacred sites and secular ‘tourism’.

Kulvinder Arora

*Historicizing Early 20th Century European and Late 20th Century South Asian Narratives*

In this paper, I discuss immigrant autobiographies as well as assimilation paradigms to particularize and distinguish assimilation processes within specific histories of migration to the U.S. I work against the tendency in writing about ethnic literature in general and U.S. immigrant literatures to take particular texts to be representative
of entire ethnic and group experience. This is also evident in theories on assimilation within various disciplines where the "process" of immigration and assimilation seem generalizable and applicable within various contexts. Mary Antin's The Promised Land has functioned historically as a "representative" text of the immigrant experience so that the tropes that are set up in this text come to stand for the U.S. Immigrant experience in general, i.e. assimilation through education, assimilation through abandoning the cultural markers of religion, assimilation as abandoning Old World epistemes for New World thought, etc.

In this paper, I read the novel for moments in the text that do not perform this reconciliation and I also examine the history of literary reception of this text to claim that these tropes come to serve different purposes at various historical moments given shifts in migration histories and global economies?. That is to say that Mary Antin's "claiming to be American" gets put to different uses in the 1930's than in the 1960's, and yet an even different purpose in the 1990's. I would argue that reading literature and assimilation theory in historically contextualized form produces multiple immigrant narratives that can not be collapsed into a singular "coming to America" experience. I also examine the specificities of reception of Bharati Mukherjee's novels to examine how they selectively rehearse some of the earlier paradigms set up in Antin's text. I argue for a reading of Mukherjee's twentieth-century South Asian immigrant narrative within a historically situated understanding of literature within this genre and against historically nuanced understandings of assimilation with the understanding that reading these literary texts through various assimilation paradigms at particular historical junctures produces very different readings of these texts. It is my intention to explore what aspects of colonial histories are foregrounded or obscured in readings of these assimilation narratives.

Sarmistha Banerjee, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Does a Good Indian Get AIDS?: A Postcolonial-Feminist Analysis of the Gendered AIDS Body in Indian Discourse

This paper employs a postcolonial-feminist framework to analyze the production of a gendered HIV/AIDS subject within the public discourse of India. According to the last International Conference on AIDS, India leads the world in HIV cases, estimated at 2 to 5 million. However, state and media rhetoric have constructed AIDS as a "foreign" disease involving "high-risk" categories of people who are marginal to the nation, such as female sex-workers, male truck-drivers and injecting drug users, and transgendered hijras. This discourse raises significant issues about the imaginary of the Indian nation, and the gendered Indian subject. This paper addresses the following questions: what is the location of the AIDS subject within the Indian nation? How has this subject been gendered and sexualized? What is its significance for the nation? And can postcolonial/third-world feminisms provide resistance to these discursive productions?
Swapna Banerjee, University of Florida, Gainesville

_**Remembering and Writing the Subaltern: Reminiscences of Domestics in Middle-Class Writings of Colonial Calcutta**_

The emphasis of recent scholars (Chatterjee 1990, Chakrabarty 1994) on the centrality of family in the construction of colonial Bengali self-identity is too preoccupied with the middle class and the redefinition of its women. Their works overlook the presence of different class-caste groups within the family and the interpenetration of elite and subordinate domains of culture. As domestic service was an occupation that brought Bengali middle class and members of lower classes in closest proximity, my paper, by salvaging information from personal narratives, seeks to analyze the multi-faceted dynamics of employer-serve relationship in colonial Calcutta. The most active images of servants interacting with their employers emerge from the middle-class employers' autobiographies, memoirs, and reminiscences. By examining these sources, I will demonstrate how the creative memory of the writers reshaped their historic past of growing up by inverting the hierarchical power relationship between employers and servants. By "imagining" and "recreating" childhood experiences with servants, the authors in most cases, relegate themselves to a "junior" position and assign servants to a position of power. I will argue that the employer's act of remembering the domestics was prompted more by their desire to project their own self, than a 'selfless' act of immortalizing the servants. By recognizing that the "childhood" is appearing "through the memory of the adult" (Lejeune 1988) I propose to interpret the autobiographical writings of the middle class in my paper.

Charles Wendell Barlow, University of Aarhus, Denmark

_**Through the Looking Glass**_

Often during the day in Patna, there are more and more protests demonstrating Dalit's new political freedom. Jesse Jackson’s ‘Rainbow coalition’ rhetoric “I am somebody” are turning waves of Dalits into Bihar’s capital streets. Certainly among the teenage youth one can very easily see new vigor and strength in their political activities in how that they have learned and practiced Ambedkar’s political concepts in community awareness.

As I observed in the recent general elections, the old school of electioneers are still building bigger and bigger effigies in the image of past great leaders of India to display and light up on the huge parade grounds of the city. But this is not the real depiction of what is really happening on Bihar’s political scene. Rural India is where the majority of Dalits judged on simple issues such as to whether or not the prices of onions has gone up or down. Successful grass roots movements of the rural Indian population are based on these cause and effect platforms by simple political factors not by complicated ones.
There are many prevailing problems facing Black America and Dalit India today. Both groups have growing underclass and a swelling unskilled class. An epidemic of teenage pregnancies, continuing chronic unemployment, astoundingly high college and high school dropout rates, an increasing number of single-parents families and a disproportionately high infant mortality rate. Both societies has failed to protect the basic affirmative civil rights that it supposedly provides to each and every citizen, i.e. equal access to education, adequate housing, affordable medical care and equal opportunity.

Tessa Bartholomeusz, Florida State University

_Dharma Warriors: Buddhist "Just-War Thinkers" in Sri Lanka_

In the past few decades, scholars have explored just-war thinking in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism. No one as yet has examined justifications for war in Buddhism. This study explores contemporary Buddhist just-war thinking that permeates discourse, both monkish and lay, about Sri Lanka's civil strife between the Sinhala and the Tamils. In this study, I examine the way that the Sinhalas justify war as a "last resort" to protect what many Sinhala Buddhists refer to as their "sacred Buddhist island," despite their religion's demand for non-violence. As some contemporary Buddhists argue, it is the duty of the Sinhalas to maintain the integrity of their island, no matter how much that protection may involve killing. Thus, much of my study will focus on the criteria that must be met in order for Buddhists in Sri Lanka to resort to a "just war," as well as on their ideas about the obligation as Buddhists to practice non-violence. This study, based on my research in Sri Lanka in 1997 and 1998, will explore the textual bases for Buddhist justifications for war as well as contemporary interpretations of these texts.

Sanjib Baruah, Bard College

_The Civic and the Ethnic in National Time and Space: Assam in the Music of Bhupen Hazarika_

National movements are not all "nationalist." The distinction between the civic and the ethnic may still be a good way of distinguishing between two ways of imagining national time and space. National imaginings can be a form of ethnic fundamentalism. But in a world where national time and space are normalized — "the national order of things" — national imaginings are also about constituting and giving agency to groups of people as collective actors on the stage of history.

In an earlier published article I used a genre of Assamese popular music — the songs of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika — reading them as texts that reflect and constitute the Assamese national imagination. I argued that certain images in his songs — e.g.
“mother Assam,” the Assamese as a collectivity that takes stock of its past and plans its future on the day of the Assamese new year — provide important clues to the imagining of Assamese national time and space. But reading his music that way has the danger of falling into “cosmopolitan” stereotypes about the “parochial” concerns of the nationalism of a distant land. For Hazarika’s music is equally popular for other themes such as romantic love, internationalism, tolerance and a radical solidarity with the subaltern.

In this paper I want to look at the tension between civic and ethnic themes in the imagining of Assamese national time and space in Bhupen Hazarika’s music. That Hazarika is popular across the cultural divide between Assam and Bengal and in Assam, West Bengal as well as Bangladesh makes this tension particularly worth exploring.

Pratyusha Basu, University of Iowa

Women's Wor(l)ds in India's Narmada Valley Movement

By successfully bringing together tribals and peasants in order to wage a common struggle against the destruction visited on them by large-scale dam construction, India’s Narmada Valley movement has broken through barriers of tribe, caste and class. This ability to unite divergent groups is especially significant given that communal conflicts are increasingly becoming part of the Indian social fabric. Further, since the government in India seems committed to economic liberalization and the consequent marginalization of the poor, the presence of the Narmada movement provides an arena within which dissenting voices from the grassroots can be powerfully heard. Yet, very few of these grassroots voices in the Valley are raising gender concerns or protesting the oppression of women. There is also a tendency among grassroots communities to present themselves as non-oppressive internally, and to only identify as oppressors external actors, like the state, the World Bank, and multinational companies. Even as the struggle against external oppression is crucial, the absence of an internal critique does little to remove community and household-level inequities between men and women. That this occurs despite women’s leadership and their large-scale participation in the Narmada movement makes this absence of gender concerns all the more striking. This paper explores possible reasons for gender silences in the Narmada movement. It shows how the spaces opened up by the Narmada movement for grassroots voices are primarily meant for men, with women’s voices either being absent or being raised only in carefully constrained positions consistent with the larger male-defined ideology of the movement.

Wendell Charles Beane, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Introducing the VEDAS to a New Generation
This new generation of students finds itself existing in the midst of a chaos of images and values. Thus, when Indologist Jan Gonda says that the orthodox Hindu view is that "the VEDA is held to be omniscient, perfect, infallible . . . [and] the Eternal as word," it is not surprising that such a statement is met with intellectual skepticism by many modern students. This paper will present the view, however, that the VEDAS are characterized by three outstanding qualities that commend them to this new generation. First, the VEDAS already contain a diversity of cosmological perspectives; second, the VEDAS contain ritual patterns that have a ready comparative kinship with some potent Western and Near Eastern religious symbols; and third, the VEDAS contain universal ethical values that should surprise even the most biased non-Hindu observer. This paper, then, will illustrate how these outstanding characteristics can be introduced to students in an effective and stimulating way that may, in turn, suggest some engaging possibilities for academic pedagogy.

William Belcher
*Perishable Trade and Dried Fish During the Third Millennium B.C. in the Greater Indus Valley Region*

Internal trade within the Greater Indus Valley has often been invoked as a major explanation for the cohesion and development of the Indus Valley Civilization. Settlements within this region underwent fundamental economic and social changes between the Regionalization and Integration Eras of the Indus Valley Tradition. These eras represent when urban centers arose and incorporated various villages into a much more regional economic system. Through the examination of fish remains from the sites of marine coastal Balakot and interior riverine Harappa, it is possible to examine changes that occurred within various economic spheres of these sites, particularly in reference to the processing and trade of dried marine fish into the interior ares of the Greater Indus Valley.

Manu Bhagavan, The University of Texas at Austin
*Demystifying the "Ideal Progressive:" Resistance Through Mimicked Modernity in Princely Baroda 1900-1913*

In the early twentieth century, the prevalent terminology of British power vis-à-vis the Indian territories of indirect rule centered around the concept of modernity: the British claimed that they wanted to oversee the modernization of India--"progressive" rulers who could fulfill this agenda were the ideal; failure to be "progressive" was deemed misrule. These terms were necessarily vague and evasive, never pinning down a clear objective. This allowed for wide interpretation and basically deflected attention from the primary British goal—the permanence of the imperial project.

Sayaji Rao Gaekwad, the Maharaja of Baroda, took advantage of the vagaries of British desires to chart a new course in the early twentieth century: he combined
resistance—ranging from subtle opinions to the harboring of prominent nationalists and dissenters—with reform, with the latter protecting his administration from charges of misrule. I argue that the nature of this reform was itself resistance—a repossession of ideas long considered British. The thrust of my argument is that reforms in Baroda—which, like all "princely states," was a semi-autonomous region—helped to define an "Indian modern"—the state, people, and institutions as being modern—a concept at odds with notions of inferiority implicit in the colonial/colonized relationship, and thereby provided a subtle resistance to both the ideology and the practice of colonialism.

Karni Pal Bhati, University of Notre Dame
*Colonial Power and the Representation of Indian Communities*

My paper is an attempt to assess some of the theories put forward to explain the nature of colonial power, especially in the context of the representation of Indian communities in colonial discourse. Nicholas Dirks, for instance, has argued that the exercise of colonial power has to be seen as a "specific, contingent, heterogeneous, circuitous, incomplete, and often contradictory" project. It produced a specific configuration of that "uneasy relationship between knowledge and power" so that the disruption of colonial rule was, in some cases, represented in such a way that "continuity and change seem[-ed] like mirror images of each other." If this is accepted, how do we explain the transformation of collective identities that took place in the long duree of colonial intervention in India? Contrasting Dirks' theory with those of Bernard Cohn, Partha Chatterjee and Sudipta Kaviraj and drawing on the work of Gyan Pandey, my paper seeks to critically evaluate the relationship between colonial representations of communities of the past and their transformation into the postcolonial 'future' we witness in our times today.

Rimli Bhattacharya, M.S. University of Baroda
*Space and Spectacle: Gender and Visual Configuration in the 19th-Century Bengali Public Theatre*

The paper explores representations of the "actress" figure in 19th-century Bengal, with special reference to the public theatre in Calcutta. I argue that despite, and indeed partly as a consequence of, the great attention given to "the woman's question" during this time, woman as spectacle becomes an inevitable component of disparate cultural agendas. This extends well into the next century, feeding into some of the dominant discourses of nationalism. The paper will examine the functioning of the prosenium theatre in relation to the location of Calcutta as the "Second City of the Empire." Representations on stage will therefore be complemented by a survey of the female figure as it was being constructed in various media: photographs in theatre magazines, woodcuts in popular tracts, chromolithographs, Kalighat pats, and the like.
Bronwen Bledsoe, University of Chicago

Non-texts?: words and works of the weak.

The inequitous stratification of traditional South Asian societies has fueled academic discourses of many persuasions. In recent years approaches to the Indic past have aimed at readings sympathetic to people marginalized and largely silenced by the social formations of their time and place. Such readings emphasize resistances, evasions, and subversions of overbearing order. But does the presumption that participation in a non-egalitarian social formation was primarily coerced really do service to either the objects of our sympathy or our own understandings? Is there not a danger that in devaluing explicit statements of subscription to the prevailing social order, scholars may actually strip the lowly of the very dignity they wish to restore?

This paper focuses on the words and works of a humble sector of the Newar society of the KTM Valley, the sweepers-of-temple-compounds known as Jugi (Jogi, <yogi). Between the 17th and the 19th centuries these low-caste Saivas generated a set of stone inscriptions inserting themselves into the permanent and public record of world-ordering, an arena dominated by the elite--theist kings and wealthy Buddhist merchants. Although many leading schools of interpretation would have us reduce inscriptive texts to non-texts—as reflexes of or data for an encompassing contextual milieu—I use the Jugi inscriptions to argue for differential but active participation in both the social world and the encompassing cosmos.

Emily Bloch, University of Chicago

A Feast for the Mind: Food Images in the poetry of Sukumar Ray

Ravindra S. Khare defines gastrosemantics as a “culture’s distinct capacity to signify, experience, systematize, philosophize, and communicate with food and food practices by pressing appropriate linguistic and cultural devices to render food as a central subject of attention.” I suggest that the vocabulary of food and eating are as often used as a device to render linguistic and cultural communication. Gastrosemantics, then, can be applied to the study of language employing food images to communicate seemingly unrelated images.

Sukumar Ray, author of numerous children’s stories and poems, relies heavily on food images in his observations of everyday life. One poem praises the inventor of the Bengali version of the carrot on a stick, a device designed to encourage speed by dangling “food to suit all sorts of tastes / sweets, cakes, chops, cutlets, sweetmeats or luchi.” Another celebrates the sweet taste of the sky after a rain and in “Khicuri,” Sukumar Ray wonders at the dietary options of a half parrot - half chameleon. The poem, “Serving Food” (Poribesan), is a guide to serving a feast and includes reminders such as, “When giving food to your guest, be careful / That none enters your own mouth by accident,” and “Don’t pour chutney on someone’s new clothes.”
Bengali is not unique, of course, in its use of food related idioms and metaphors but it displays an exuberant use of the verb “to eat” (khaoa) in conjunction with other words to produce a seemingly unrelated new verb, such as “eat ginger and salt” to mean “try earnestly.” In his poem entitled “Khai Khai” (I eat I eat or Going Hungry), Sukumar Ray exploits this natural and expected usage by listing all the varied applications. He begins with “Why go hungry, come sit at a meal / I will feed you wondrous foods in a feast.” The feast is a feast of language and images. After the descriptions of what others eat (the Chinese, the French, and the Madrasis for example) and the observation that “There is no limit to what people will eat,” he presents a playful account of other khaoa combinations. This extensive use of the verb “to eat” exemplifies one interpretation of gastrosemantics in the sense that food, or eating, is used to convey connotations unrelated to food or eating thereby both expanding the conception of food and enriching the Bengali lexicon.

Jim Blumenthal, University of Wisconsin-Madison

*Self-Cognizing Cognition (Rang rig) in Tibetan Madhyamaka: A Comparative Analysis*

Many scholars have argued that the division of Indian Madhyamaka into three distinct sub-schools was a uniquely Tibetan phenomena. Central to the divisions which were clearly delineated in Tibet by the time of Atisa (11th c.e.) were the systems of logic to which Indian Madhyamakans adhered and by which they were partially designated nominally in Tibet. In addition to this common distinction between sub-schools of Madhyamaka, the 8th century Indian pandit, Santarakshita introduced the concept of self-cognizing cognition into Madhyamaka discourse and thereby introduced a topic of often heated debate among Tibetan Madhyamakans. Self-cognizing cognition (rang rig) is integral to his interpretation of Madhyamaka thought and plays a vital role not only in Yogacara-svatantrika-madhyaamaka's presentation of the two truths but also in its own particular Madhyamaka epistemology and integration of later Yogacara developments into Madhyamaka thought. The syncretic nature of Santaraksita's presentation of Madhyamaka which incorporated important post-Nagarjuna developments in Indian Buddhist thought including not only Yogacara ideas but also the formally systematized Buddhist logic of Dignaga and Dharmakirti, found both friend and foe among its Tibetan interpreters. Santaraksita was instrumental in the early transmission of Buddhism to Tibet as well as being the author of Ornament of the Middle Way (Madhyamakalamkara) which is commonly considered as the root text of the Yogacara-svatantrika sub-school of Madhyamaka. Thus, for several centuries upon the arrival of Buddhism on the Tibetan plateau, Santaraksita's system was considered as Buddhism's highest philosophical system. During the later transmission this favor began to turn among the newly evolving schools of Tibetan Buddhism and found its apex of criticism in the arguments of Je Tsong-khapa, founder of the Gelug school and fervent defender of Prasangika-madhyamaka and his disciples. Nonetheless, the majority of adherents to the Nyingma tradition, the oldest Buddhist tradition in Tibet still adhere to and defend Santaraksita's positions including the notion of self
cognizing cognition which is so central to his particular presentation of Madhyamaka. Prominent among Nying-ma commentators was Mipam Gyatso, the 19th Century scholar whose work, Explanation of (Santaraksita's) "Ornament of the Middle Way": The Sacred Words of the Smiling Lama Manjusri (dbU ma rgyan gyi rnam bshad 'jam dbyangs bla ma dgyes pa'i zha lung) lays out the primary Nyingma explanation and defence of the Yogacara-svatantrika-madhyamaka view. The purpose of this paper is to examine the two conflicting arguments of the Gelug and Nyingma commentators on Santaraksita concerning the issue of self-cognizing cognition, offering critical analysis of the two major Tibetan approaches to the issues and thereby penetrating into some of the more subtle points of the Madhyamaka controversy in Tibet.

Edwin Bryant: Harvard University

_Astrochronology: Dating the Vedic texts._

Since the proposals of Jacobi, Tilak and Bhler over a century ago, a variety of mostly Indian scholars have persistently insisted that astronomical statements that can be used for dating lie embedded in the Vedic texts. This paper will examine the most salient and noteworthy dating proposals that have utilized this astro-chronological method. It will specifically consider whether there is any substantive evidence in the Brahmana literature to suggest references to the presence of the sun in the constellation of Krittika in circa 2300 BCE. Clearly, since this is over a millennium earlier than the commonly assigned dates for these texts, the implications of such possibilities are extremely significant for our knowledge of the early history of the subcontinent. The paper will explain in a clear and simple fashion accessible to anyone with no prior knowledge of astronomy both the assumptions upon which these claims are based as well as the assumptions underlying the arguments of those who have objected to such proposals.

Christopher Candland, University of California at Berkeley


An acknowledged task of state formation is the development of a sustainable relationship between political representation and taxation. States, such as those based on the rentier economies of the Middle East, which are not obligated to negotiate systems of political representation in exchange for access to revenue through domestic taxation, are not obligated to promote democracy.

This aspect of state formation, characterized by state-society negotiations over taxation and representation, is ill-developed in Pakistan. State Revenues are only weakly based on domestic personal and corporate taxes. Import tariffs and foreign borrowings provide the lion's share of state revenues. Yet Pakistan does not have the resources - other than significant labor exports - to operate a rentier-economy based
political system. Indeed, Pakistan faces a very serious fiscal crisis of the state.

I argue that the very serious external and internal pressures on the Pakistani government has begun to promote democratic deepening. Military expenditure is now widely considered to be out of line with security needs. The most significant threats to Pakistan's security as a unitary and sovereign state are increasingly recognized as internal and exacerbated by insufficient government allocation to "development." Pakistan's social development performance and human capacity enhancement is miserable. Economic adjustment, undergirded by International Monetary Fund agreements since 1988, has added millions of people to those living below the poverty line because people were poorly equipped to manage economic change.

With a view to evaluating the hypothesis that a state's revenue requirements drive a polity's democratization, the paper analyzes (1) fiscal management (including budget allocations and government negotiations with international financial institutions), (2) social development performance and (3) emergent forms of more representative politics in Pakistan in the post-Zia period.

Paula Chakravarty, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Market's Subject?: The Identity of the Telecommunications Worker in the Context of Liberalization in India

Telecommunications is an increasingly visible and strategic economic sector and has become fundamental to India's aspirations of becoming a part of the new information economy. In the minds of policy makers, the English language media and business interests, the obstacle to India's rapid transition to an export-oriented, market-friendly economy is singularly pegged to the political clout and retrograde attitude of unions; specifically public sector unions, like those represented in the DoT (Department of Telecommunications) with its half million strong constituency. There also exists a parallel and possibly broader-based critique of the unionized worker in Indian society, who is seen as part of the old labor aristocracy fighting to maintain its privileged position against the interests of other working people within and beyond the formal economy. By looking at union strategies and public perception of labor politics in the volatile period of economic transformation in the telecommunications sector since 1991, this paper examines the changing identity of the worker as industrial relations is reconfigured, as well as the legitimacy of the identity of the worker and workers' rights. I argue that within the new system of economic governance the market subjects of consumer and entrepreneur cannot fully corrode the legitimacy of the worker in the Indian political context. Nevertheless, the challenges for organized labor in telecommunications lie in linking the rights of workers to concerns raised by a variety of citizens groups intervening in policy debates on issues ranging from the right to information to questions of public access to communications services.
Kunkum Chatterjee, Pennsylvania State University
*History, Myth and Time: A Perspective From 18th Century Bengal*

In recent times, a considerable amount of scholarly attention has focussed on the construction of a nationalist history of India in the later colonial period. Considerably less is known about concepts of history and their public uses before the advent of British rule. This paper seeks to examine how ideas about history and historical time were treated in a cluster of texts from zemindari courts in 18th century Bengal. These texts are: the Annadamangal, Shivayana, Maharashtrapurana, and an anonymous work of poetry produced in 18th c. Bishnupur, probably in the court of the Bishnupur rajas. It also compares these regional works with the tradition of Indo-Islamic chronicles produced at the Mughal imperial court and in Mughal successor states in 18th century India by a sub-continental Mughal aristocracy who subscribed to a Persianized court culture. Last, this paper analyzes how regional and local identities were used to mediate between local historical and cultural traditions and sub-continental, Indo-Islamic traditions of writing history.

Pradeep Chhibber, University of Michigan
*Violence and Economic Growth*

The major Indian states have shown remarkably different patterns of economic growth. Some states such as Bihar have had little economic growth whereas others like Maharashtra have grown more rapidly. A common perception, especially among theorists of economic development, would relate these differences to the law and order situation in these states, with more stable states displaying higher growth rates. This paper will examine whether law and order, measured through reported riots, has influenced the growth rates of the 15 major Indian states since 1967.

Growth rates can also be affected by a variety of other factors, notably the expenditure patterns of the states, their prior economic conditions, the nature of party competition, and the extent of cabinet instability in a state. To determine whether riots have an independent impact on growth the paper will estimate a time series model controlling for these alternative explanations. The paper relies on quantitative data collected from a wide variety of sources.

Frank F. Conlon, University of Washington
*Modern Indian History and the History of Modern India*

History as a subject of knowledge and the practice of History as a scholarly discipline long have been engaged in a problematic and imperfect dialogue. This paper is concerned to explore the relationship of the practice of historical study of modern India and the evolution of historical knowledge about modern India. Recent
scholarship has developed stimulating insights which highlight the importance of the history of India in the constitution of Indian nationalism and the Indian "modern." On the other hand, less attention has been paid to the actual emergence of the disciplinary practice of academic historical research concerning India. This paper is concerned to explore and analyze themes of the modern Indian history in the context of changing (or unchanging) patterns of historical research and teaching both in India and abroad.

David L. Curley, Western Washington University
This-Worldly Rituals, Other-Worldly Histories: Past and Present at the Court of Raja Raj'ballabh.

This paper will examine two texts produced at the zamindari court of Raja Raj'ballabh Sen, located near Vikrampur, Bangladesh. The Raja served in several important positions in the pre-British Nawabi government of Bengal, and acquired vast revenue collecting rights in the active delta. The first is a Sanskrit drama, written in 1753, to describe and commemorate his celebration of the 'Sapta-samsthaa'--the seven forms of single-day Vedic soma sacrifices, and his regaining permission to wear the sacred thread for all Bengali Vaidyas. The second is a Bengali mangal'kabya, written in 1772, after Raj'ballabh had been executed by Mir Qasim, and after much of the zamindari had been divided by the British Court of Revenue among several of his Muslim talukdars. It is addressed to Satya-Narayana, whose worship deliberately incorporates features of the worship of Satya-Pir, and of the death anniversary commemorations of Sufi pirs in general in Bengal. Both texts reflect upon and so mediate the understanding of ritual practices, and both stress relations between forms of worship and the 'present time' of each text, the Kali-Yuga in the zamindari of Raj'nagar. (Between the two texts the features of their respective 'present times' have dramatically changed, a fact of which the second text is acutely aware.) By examining them together, this paper will explore time-bound, political and rhetorical dimensions of ritual, and on the contrary, 'other-worldly' dimensions through which history and historical change were to be understood.

Shamita Das Dasgupta, Rutgers University
Blueprint of a Revolution?: Resistance of Male Power by South Asian Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence

This paper will focus on resistance and subversion of individual male power by South Asian victims of domestic violence (DV) who have left or are in the process of leaving their abusers. Although the mode of resistance, indirect and often invisible, may seem insignificant to observers, it generally has the effect of empowering the individual. In fact, such resistance, often confused by mental health professionals as "coping or managing," allows battered women to remain in control
of their environment and not be rendered completely helpless by the abuse they experience. That is, it allows them to maintain a distinct, empowered, and active self.

However, it is important to critically explore what impact these single, private, and small incidents of resistance by individual women do have on themselves and on women in general. Is there any collective effect generated by such acts? Can activists channel these actions towards an end of violence against women in the private and ultimately, the public arenas? The paper will discuss these questions with the help of interviews with South Asian immigrant victims of domestic violence and other sources.

Daniel D’Attilio, Department of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Virashaivism Redefined: The Heroic Folk Tradition of Shiva Devotees in Pre-Modern Telugu Country

The historiography of Virashaivism has focused on the evolution of doctrine and practices pursued by elites of the Virashaiva community. Based on the fact that the bulk of Virashaiva elites, i.e. Lingayats, now reside in Karnataka, most scholars have surmised that the impact of Virashaivism was far greater in Karnataka than in what is now Andhra Pradesh. In an attempt to challenge the notion of Karnataka as the sole birthplace of Virashaivism, this study redefines Telugu Virashaivism by identifying its folk underpinnings. Though Aradhya Shaivism, which forms one path of elite Virashaivism, originated in Telugu country, Telugu Virashaivism evolved around a militant folk tradition based on heroic Shaiva stories and, in particular, on the myth of Virabhadra’s victory over Daksha. If one accepts folk culture as a viable expression of a religious tradition, we must seek to redefine our conception of Virashaivism and reconsider its impact in Telugu country. Such a reconceptualization makes even more sense given that many Balijas’ Shudra warrior-merchants whose dramatic rise to power in early modern Telugu country has recently captured a great deal of scholarly attentionespoused Virashaivism as their primary religious tradition. By reexaming the nature of Virashaivism in Telugu country, this study proposes folklore as a transmitter and maintainer of Virashaiva doctrine and conduct.

Samir Dayal, Bentley College
’Subaltern Envy’ and Ethics in Salman Rushdie’s The Moor’s Last Sigh

Salman Rushdie’s The Moor’s Last Sigh explores the idea of multiculturalism in India, but the context in which it does so itself requires a grid of cross-cultural or bi-cultural assumptions. In particular, my paper considers the question of whether an ethics of pluralism that was developed in the discourse of Western modernity and
is now being exhaustively revisited can be brought to bear in a non-Western cultural context (contemporary India) increasingly dominated by the politics of an exclusivist, non-secularist Hindu majority. After all, as postcolonial critique has argued, that Western modernity is precisely what has come into question in the post-World War II period. I argue that Rushdie's narrative is a lament for the failed ideal of democratic pluralism in India. Yet that narrative is complicated by the personal ethical dimensions of the protagonist's own case, and by the author's own apparent interest in displacing a true subalternity by the failed agency of the ethnically minoritized but still middle class Moraes Zogoiby. Moraes is presented to us as a figure caught between cultures. In India, he straddles several cultural divides and is in a sense an embodiment of biculturalism, a "translated man" just like his creator, Salman Rushdie. Moraes "the Moor" may be a minority figure, technically, and it may be true indeed that his life encapsulates, in a temporal as well as a metaphorical sense, the condition of minority groups in India. My paper, however, troubles this representation of Moraes as a stand-in for the minority. Can he fairly be said to represent the condition of the minorities? Are there some questions of minority agency being subsumed under the rather peculiarly hybrid status of a "Moor" in India who can escape to a fictionalized never-never land of his ancestors in Spain? I argue in brief that Rushie's book raises important questions of not only multiculturalism and hybridity but about individual ethical responsibility--can the "ethnic" trump "ethics"?

Esha Niyogi De, University of California, Los Angeles

On the Margins of Nationalist Autobiography: Real and Imagined Collaborators in Binodini Dasi's Amar Katha (My Story)

This essay reflects on the abuses as well as uses of collaboration in the writing of gendered, disenfranchised lives in a hegemonic nationalist context. As a case in point, I discuss the autobiography of Binodini Dasi (1863-1941), a low class/ caste woman and daughter of a prostitute who rose to be the greatest professional actress on nineteenth century British India's bourgeois-nationalist stage.

Postcolonial theories of life-writing suggest that, in contexts wherein access to authorial voice is determined by rigid structures of political-social-economic authority, autobiographies frequently become "manipulated chronologies" of representative lives. Editors and other collectors of life stories act as collaborators of the storyteller, seeking and enabling only those tales that fit into socially-dominant molds of understanding and classifying lives and experiences. In working within these hegemonized frameworks of constructing memory and expression, the storyteller thus becomes involved in a resistant "process of coming to writing by charting the conditions" of collaboration that "place[d her/ his] identity under erasure" (Carol Boyce Davies).

In this essay, I somewhat modify this line of argument to illustrate that disenfranchised women who narrate their lives under rigidly contedo conditions are
able to re-claim their ability to speak and "re-member" by way not only of resisting oppressive collaborative pacts but also of thinking into shape, and partly imagining, alternative co-operative authors. Binodini Dasi's autobiography—which offers a pastiche of authorial voices oscillating between acquiescent-resistant collaboration in the production of a manipulated chronology and the piecing together from memory and imagination of an other collaborator--supplies the case in point.

Like other professional actresses recruited from Calcutta's red-light district to the bourgeois-nationalist stage, Binodini played in the roles of middle-class, Western-educated Bengali women (whose respectability prohibited performance on the public stage). She was guided into similarly performing a role when she undertook the project of writing her life. Her bilingual mentor, Girish Ghosh (who customarily also directed her stage performances), instructed her to produce a chronicle of how she became the first great actress of the modern Indian stage. Had she completely yielded to the guidance of this hegemonic collaborator, Binodini would have filled in the fabric of nationalist women's autobiography—a genre conceptualized by the liberal male intelligentsia of this period as a means of showcasing the growth of modern Indian womanhood (Partha Chatterjee)—a gap left by purely middle-class narratives of women's life-events.

Paying close attention to the editorial organization and emendations of the centennial edition of Amar Katha (1963)—which uses photographs of Binodini's stage and social postures as respectable Bengali woman as well as quotes and comments both by Girish Ghosh and by the modern editors of the volume—I study at once the attempts made to channelize Binodini's voice into that of yet another nationalist female autobiographer and the disruptions that happen within. While Binodini's memories repeatedly exceed the chronological narrative of stage success—spilling into emotional outpourings about her pain, isolation as a 'fallen woman', and other experiences of caste and class oppression—the real breaks in the chronological life-discourse arise from its meta-discursive margin. Herein, Binodini speaks to her deceased lover in a series of epistles that hold moments of profoundly erotic intimacy. While this dead lover proves to be the enabling collaborator and co-operative author of the memories of her self and body, the relationship with him is only partly remembered and also partly imagined. The man in question was an aristocrat who once kept her and in exchange financed the theatrical troupe for which she performed.

Binodini's polyvocal life-narrative—with its meta-discursive moments of co-operation with an imagined collaborator—raises the question if the telling of gendered and otherwise disenfranchised lives must involve partially utopian understanding and expression.

Rahul Deepankar, The University of Chicago

_Regeneration V.S. Reservation: A Dalit Struggle_
A mass of almost 200 million people in India, who call themselves “Dalits” are actually the untouchables and outcasts based on birth, as historically categorized by Hindu society. Their lots has been marked by their slavery, comprehensive deprivation, ignorance by design and exclusion form all institutions of power and dignity. However, with the arrival of Indian independence form British rule and new constitution with egalitarian intent, came the hope that the Dalits will finally regain their humanity and dignity. Universal franchise and policy of reservation for the people of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes were the means to bring this hope to fruition. However the experiences of Dalits in free India has been mixed at best.

The present paper tries to explore whether limited advances in education and political participation are real roots of continued growth and regeneration, or the success has merely been symbolic and little in substance relative to achievements of caste Hindus. It also addresses the questions of current conditions of Dalits and future challenges faced by them. For instance, how much reservation benefited Dalits? And are there natural and unintended negative side effects to it? The paper also includes the perspective on important changes brought about by liberalization and globalization. How are there phenomena understood by Dalits? Are they prepared to face or take advantages of these new variables introduced to traditional society. It explores the invisible impact on Dalit life brought about by exposure to non traditional values of capitalism and individualism.

It will also be pointed out that reservation has been and remains an important source of relief for ever oppressed Dalits in India, even though the implementation remains poor due to malicious attitude of those who are in positions of power. Nevertheless, the paper raises the questions of self reliance and voluntary withdrawal from reservation by those who can. The debate must advance beyond complete dependence on reservation and more towards growth and regeneration.

Neloufer de Mel, University of Colombo

_Setting the Stage: Gendering the Nation in the Theatre of John de Silva_

Playwright John de Silva was an influential figure in the shaping of nationalist discourse in early 20th-century Ceylon. Active in the anti-British campaigns of the time, he wrote and produced plays which became popular vehicles of a Sinhala Buddhist ideological construction that differentiated the emerging Sri Lankan nation not only from the West, Christianity, and its "profligate" morality, but also the minority communities within Ceylon itself.

My paper will examine the various discourses, at the levels of both ideology and theatrical form, that constituted de Silva's plays. Deeply influenced by the touring Parsi musicals, they were spectacular theatrical events never before seen on the local stage. How did such spectacle contribute to the building of a Sinhala Buddhist consciousness? Equally important is the tradition, adhered to in de Silva's plays, of the male impersonator playing female roles. The paper will examine this tradition
of impersonation from a feminist perspective, and ask how it affected the characterization of the women figures, how these women were gesturally and visually signified on the stage by male actors, and the material circumstances within which, when female actresses did appear in de Silva's plays, they were allowed to perform. The role of women, both in performative practice and ideological portrayal will be read, then, as metonymic of the roles assigned to women by nationalists in a larger discourse of the Sinhala nation.

Rose M. DeNeve, Syracuse University
*Identity, Images, and Icons: British Representations of India*

The visual representations produced by the British in India from the end of the 18th century through the first half of the 19th were not mere artistic expressions produced within European aesthetic conventions, but were "visual texts" that contributed to a growing body of knowledge about the Orient. Their imaginative examination of things Indian, to paraphrase Edward Said, was based more or less exclusively on a sovereign Western consciousness, out of whose assumed centrality an Indian world appeared--first, according to generally accepted ideas about who and what was Indian, and then according to a detailed logic governed not simply by empirical reality but by a host of desires, investments, and projects.

Although England had been trading with the subcontinent since 1600, it wasn't until the late 18th century that professional artists first visited India. These painters observed its land and peoples through the eyes of British tastes and conventions, particularly those of the Picturesque genre. The broad vistas, luminescent skies, and romantic sense of timelessness characteristic of this naturalistic genre found ready acceptance with Britons living in India. But Picturesque artists not only sold their paintings on the subcontinent; they also made sketches and paintings that could be turned into paintings or engravings after they had returned to England. Some of these representations found wide distribution as they were copied, adapted, transformed, and reproduced in histories, travel books, journals, and news weeklies.

Ultimately, these British Picturesque images produced--for painters, photographers, and all who viewed their work--an official and definitive view of India that, despite its imaginative component, was generally regarded as "real." Moreover, their understanding of India as a land of infinite variety, of romantic and picturesque beauty, of quaint peoples and architectural richness, is one that not only persists in the present, but is being used by the Government of India itself to promote ideas of cultural and national identity.

Neil DeVotta, University of Texas at Austin
*Institutional Breakdown, Tamil Secession, and the Plausibility for Conflict Resolution: The Case of Sri Lanka*
In the attempt to explain the raging Sri Lankan ethnic conflict, the proposed paper argues that Tamil ethnic mobilization and the eventual push towards Eelam was a result of institutional breakdown. This theoretical framework was first utilized by Sumit Ganguly (1996; 1997) who argued that the "Kashmiri insurgency arose out of a process of political mobilization that was juxtaposed with steady institutional decay" (1996, 91). The approach is also consistent with the literature on social movements and institutions (Tarrow 1989, 1994; Foweracker 1993) which generally holds that while an open political opportunity structure promotes collaboration, a closed system promotes dissension and a challenge to state authority.

The paper will be divided into three sections: The first part will focus on fifty years of Sinhalese-dominated politics within the context of a "control democracy"--a democracy in which the majority group controls the levers of power--in the attempt to create a Sinhalese ethnocracy. It will also juxtapose the concomitant institutional decay as it applied to the Tamils. The second section will elaborate on the complete breakdown of institutions during the 1983 riots and thereby offer an explanation for both the durability and intractability of Sri Lanka's civil war. The final section will evaluate some typical proposals for conflict resolution--liberal democracy, partition and consociationalism--and argue that unless a drastic attempt is made to reverse the ongoing institutional decay, Sri Lanka's deadly conflict will likely continue. In doing so, the paper will argue in favor of both political devolution and a restructuring of institutions.

Aparna Dharwadker

*Secular Nationhood and the Reflexive Critique of Hinduism: Girish Karnad’s TALEDANDA*

Girish Karnad’s first major play, TUGHLAQ (1964), used the historical narrative of the reign of a fourteenth-century Islamic Sultan of Delhi to provide a long-range perspective on the problem of religious differences on the subcontinent. This paper considers Karnad’s TALE-DANDA (c. 1992) as a complementary text to TUGHLAQ: a play not about majority and minority religions (Hinduism and Islam) turning against each other, but about the majority religion (Hinduism) turning against itself. As in TUGHLAQ, the setting of the play is "medieval," but its application is to the historical present. In his Preface, Karnad comments on the relevance of Basavanna’s movement to the revivalist, fundamentalist, and divisive tendencies evident in the Babri Masjid episode and the Mandal Commission report. TALE-DANDA also serves as a companion text to Vijay Tendulkar’s GHASHIRAM KOTWAL, the contemporary play which offers perhaps the most corrosive critique of brahmanism in contemporary. Beyond these textual-cultural relations, TALE-DANDA addresses the politics of socio-cultural reform, enforcing the ironic distance between intentions and effects in the most brilliant movement of resistance in pre-modern Indian history.
Navroz Dubash, University of California, Berkeley (Part I)
Vinay Gidwani, University of British Columbia (Part II)

Choice or Compulsion, Consent or Conflict, Continuity or Discontinuity? A Thematic Assessment of Marginalist and Marxist approaches to Agrarian Institutions and Agrarian Change, With Special Reference to India

From the mid-1970s, there has been a torrent of academic literature on the nature of agrarian social relations in India. The origins of this deluge can be traced to rising interest among scholars and policymakers in assessing the socio-economic consequences of the Green Revolution. Both scholars of Marxist and neoclassical (or marginalist) persuasion viewed the new package of biochemical technologies as a potential harbinger of a rural - and capitalist - transformation. Early debates centered on the systemic properties of the new technologies, particularly their collective impact on economic productivity and the social distribution and redistribution of wealth. The approach each camp adopted to answering questions of systemic change - or continuity - reflected their ideological doctrines. However, neither the marginalists nor the Marxists were able to arrive at clear conclusions. Sharp regional variations diluted the assertions of each camp, and members of each were left groping to explain forms of social relations that were anomalous to the predictions of their theory.

As a result of such empirical inconsistencies, the attention of both sets of academics has shifted from system- to actor-oriented concerns, and from relations-of-production (relations of effective control over production means) to relations-in-production (forms of work organization). Although both marginalists and Marxists refer interchangeably to these relations-in-production as 'agrarian contracts', 'agrarian institutions', or 'rural organizations', they bring assumptions and presumptions to their analyses that usually diverge (but occasionally converge). Some points of divergence are suggested by the antinomies in the paper title. Should forms of work organization be viewed as voluntary or involuntary contracts between social actors? Should they seen as Pareto-improving strategies by individuals participating in a positive-sum game, or the byproduct of coalition bargaining in a zero-sum game that may make one set of actors worse-off? Are agrarian institutions substitutes for market imperfections, or are they instruments of capital accumulation?

Our two-part presentation will begin by examining such questions from theoretical, methodological, and empirical perspectives, harnessing first- and second-hand evidence from India, particularly Gujarat. We will continue by exploring recent trends that signal convergence of the marginalist and Marxist literatures on the one hand, and divergences in the analysis of dynamic institutional change on the other. We will conclude by suggesting that both the marginalist and the Marxist approaches
to agrarian institutions and agrarian change under-theorize history, power, and culture (particularly, ideology). We will briefly engage regulation theory, post-Marxism, feminist theory, and anthropological practice theory to (a) illustrate the strengths and limitations of our two dominant approaches; and (b) advocate selective retention of facets from both.

Saurabh Dube, El Colegio de Mexico

*Travelling Light: Missionary Musings, Colonial Cultures, and Anthropological Anxieties*

This paper discusses the worlds fashioned by missionary travels in colonial central India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Against the grain of conceptions of a homogeneous colonial discourse with a uniform western mentality, the paper makes a case for exploring the contradictory location of the mission project in the creation of colonial cultures of rule. It is within the space and the simultaneity of these contradictions that the missionaries invested in colonial mythologies of racial supremacy to fabricate paternalist projects, fashioned home-cooked hegemonies articulated through cooks and cutlets and meals and marmalade, and elaborated designs of dominance through arts of civilisation and signs of enlightenment. At the same time, neither meaning nor power should be rendered as reified entities, but rather as processes that are always already subject to negotiation and critique. The paper highlights the subversion of the hegemony of the mission project in the creation of an indigenous Christianity, and foregrounds how arenas defined by Western travels became rather different journeys at the hands (and in the minds) of other peoples. Finally, the paper asks if the missionary spirit -- albeit in rather different guises -- is still not alive today in the academy. What are we to make of academics' persistent desire to find their non-Western people-informants unchanged beneath the changes, simple amongst complexity, and pre-modern amidst the post-modern? Is all this really mitigated by the ironic and reflexive fascination with wondrous incongruity which now marks the field?

Stefanie Dunning, University of California, Riverside

*Exile As Castration in Mississippi Masala*

In Mira Nair's film *Mississippi Masala* several global communities are brought together. The protagonist, Mina, is Indian but was born in Uganda, and at the time of the film, she is living in Mississippi, where she meets and falls in love with African American Demetrius. The complexities of origin and national identity are foregrounded throughout the film and statements like, "Africa is for Africans, black Africans," and "You just like us. We from Africa but we never been there, and you from India and you never been there," insist that we question the constructions of nation and identity.
In this paper, I explore the idea of exile in the film, and how it functions as a castrating device. I focus specifically on Mina’s father, Jay, and his quest to return to Uganda after having been ousted by dictator General Idi Amin. I look at several shot sequences in the film to show the filmic techniques which function as castrating. In relation to this, I consider Demetrius’ character as the diegetic substitute for the phallus, and examine the politics of the interracial relationship outside of the context of ‘whiteness.’ The discussion of castration will work on several levels. First, there is the presence of the castrating African. In this sense, stereotypes of the African and/or black man as ‘brute’ work to enforce another stereotypically coded signifier, this one being the emasculation of Asian men. While lack of a penis (and all things associated with the penis: sexual prowess, the phallus, the libido, etc) is clearly represented through stereotypical depictions of Indian men, and in one case, a Chinese man, castration also is represented by the expulsion of the Indians from Uganda.

The film’s answer to the castration of the Indian community from Africa is an interracial romance. The implication of Demetrius’s and Mina’s involvement and their subsequent elopement is that what was severed has been restored. The phallus (that Africa represents diegetically) which was taken from the Indian community is symbolically replaced with Demetrius.

*Mississippi Masala* is film that brings to bear many issues of nationalism, race, Postcolonialism and miscegenation. My examination takes all of these things into account, and reads the film closely for content and filmic detail.

Anne Feldhaus, Arizona State University  
*Religious Geography and Regional Consciousness in Maharashtra*

My paper is concerned with the relationship among religion, geography, and regional identity in India. It examines some roles of pilgrimage places and religious images of the landscape in conceptualizing the traditional region and modern state of Maharashtra as well as various subregions within it. My discussion of the relationship between religious geography and regional consciousness focuses on a variety of religious phenomena: pilgrimage places that are grouped in numbered sets, religious ideas about and behavior toward rivers, the frequent replication of North Indian religious geography in Maharashtra, and the ways that women’s movement from their parental home to their in-laws’ house provides a model for relationships among pilgrimage goddesses.

Although the term and concept “Maharashtra” has probably existed for the past 1500 years, and although there have been Marathi-speaking kingdoms in Western India since at least the 12th century of the common era, it was not until 1960 that there came into being a unified political entity that corresponds to the area in which the Marathi language is spoken. My final example, the sociologist Iravati Karve’s
experience of the Varkari pilgrimage to Pandharpur, illustrates the potential political power of the kind of religious phenomena this paper investigates.

Shelley Feldman, Cornell University
*Democracy, Governance and Civil Society in Bangladesh: Emergent Contradictions in NGO Practice*

Recent discussions of economic change are marked by a shift from structural adjustment and national policy reform in the 1980s toward international trade, market liberalization, and the emergence of new global institutions in the 1990s. This shift is characterized by the sustained celebration of an ideology of privatization including a discursive movement from self-reliance and efficiency as a national project toward good governance, decentralization, and the promotion of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and initiatives within a global community. These changes recast relations between states, civil society, and politics as well as alter the meaning of these terms for understanding social change nationally. I will explore these changes in Bangladesh to highlight the contradictory processes that constitute relations between democracy, civil society, and state authority, particularly as these help to explain emergent redefinitions of participation and empowerment. In so doing, I seek to better understand, on the one hand, the relations that accompany the rejection of state-centered and state-focused formulations of change, and, on the other hand, the current engagement with popular politics, the grassroots, the bottom up, and the creative agency and imagination of NGO workers and participants in the service of individualism, entrepreneurship, and empowerment. I will argue that the new vision imbricated in the NGOification of aid and development does not represent a radical departure from strategies for change and development as usual, since such changes need not be accompanied by popular representation in civil society.

Michael H. Fisher, Oberlin College
"Inter-Racial" Sexual Relationships in 19th century India and England: Women and Dyce Sombre"

As a product of the complex culture of the Catholic-Islamic court of Sardhana, D.O. Dyce Sombre (1808-51) struggled with his self-identification and with the identities imposed upon him in both India and Europe. His intimate diary reveals how he worked out these identities through his relations with a series of women. His foster-mother, Begum Somru, shaped his youth, including through powerful sexual suggestions. As he came of age, Catholic, Islamic, and Anglican families, embodied in their women, all attracted his energies. His two concubines, Dominga (d. 1838), a Catholic, and Hoosna, a Muslim, vied vainly with each other both sexually and through their children by him for a lasting commitment from him. Conversely, he overtly played each off against the other. His substantial fortune also attracted the attentions of British, Portuguese, and Anglo-Indian families with marriageable daughters. After his immigration to England in 1838, he quickly married Mary Anne
Jervis, a member of the English aristocracy, but he also had extensive relations with British, French, Italian, and Turkish prostitutes. Throughout his life, therefore, Dyce Sombre’s contested and unstable identity in many different cultures played itself out through his multifarious sexual relationships.

Richard Foltz, Columbia University

A Hitchhiker's Guide to Mughal India

This paper introduces a little-known Persian-language travelogue by Mahmud son of Amir Vali, a Central Asian Tajik from the city of Balkh who spent six years in India during the 1620’s. Mahmud, like many travelers before him, was seduced by tales of the fabulous land of India which he had heard in his youth. While in his mid-twenties, he set off to explore that wondrous land for himself. He had little or no money, and no set itinerary, much like many overland travelers to India in the 1970’s. Mahmud traveled widely throughout the subcontinent, mainly it seems in search of the bizarre- and India did not disappoint him. Although a Muslim, Mahmud was fascinated by the rituals, lifestyles, and beliefs of Hindu culture. His account provides a rare on-the-ground view of life in the street during the Mughal period, full of anecdotes and descriptions of the marvels of India; all in all, a very different perspective from that given in the more common court literature of the time. The paper will describe what is known of Mahmud and his other literary works, and place this work in the context of the Persian literature of Central and South Asia in the early 17th century.

Geraldine Forbes, State University of New York Oswego

Family Photographs and Feminist Outrage: the Dynamics of Memory

Historians who first employed oral history grappled with the problem of "veracity" but the influence of postmodern critical theory has shifted attention to "memory" as another construction of the past. Between 1980 and 1983, I asked women, living in Calcutta and Bombay and born around the turn of the century, to show me their family photographs and tell me about their lives with these visual markers as guides.

In this paper I will present four photographs shown to me by different women who were prompted by them to tell elaborate stories. In each case a seemingly innocuous photograph elicited a story about gender discrimination. The fact that the information shared was not reflected in biographical and autobiographical accounts leads me to believe that stories told with photographs are a distinctly different genre. There are various ways we can view these stories: evidence of long-standing feminist outrage at gender discrimination, "reading into" photographs understandings arrived at through life experiences, comments on long-standing social problems sparked by visual clues, or the consequence of interactions with the foreign researcher interested in women's history. While all these factors may be present, this experience suggests
that historical memory not limited to reified forms emerges as a cooperative construction between researcher and interviewee.

Mark A. Freeman, Drew University
*Linking Self and Social Structure: A Psychological Perspective on Sinhalese Social Identity*

Social psychological processes govern the construction of social identity, but the social structure constrains the elaboration of these processes. An individual’s location in the social structure ("objective" identity) is linked in systematic ways with his or her perceptions of which "subjective" identities are constructed as most important or salient within the self-concept. I use this interactionist approach as the starting point for an analysis of social identity in Sri Lanka. A sample of 703 Sinhalese working adults provided data for the study in response to a questionnaire. I examine salience ratings for eleven social identities: nation, social class, age, religion, caste, occupation, race, gender, educational level, town, and political party. In addition, I explore the structure of the self-concept through a multidimensional scaling analysis based on a task where respondents sorted the 11 identities in terms of their perceived similarity. Results focus on the role of psychological processes in the construction of Sinhalese social identity, and more specifically on the construction of national, racial, and religious identities in the context of the ethnic conflict.

Marcia J. Frost, Denison University
*Coping with Scarcity: Wild Foods and Common Lands*

In 1824-25 central Gujarat experienced a severe scarcity. The food entitlements of agriculturalists, pastoralists and artisans were all adversely affected as kharif grain and fodder crops failed, and employment opportunities diminished. Coping strategies were adopted to safeguard the ability of households to improve the probability of their own survival and those of their individual members and social affines. These included a wide-range of insurance mechanisms (collection of wild food from common property, migration, expansion of irrigation, and alterations in cropping practices) and asset disposal (sale or mortgage of livestock, tools and land). When coping strategies failed, mortality rose. This paper explores how the coping strategies employed and the demographic impact of the scarcity across the central Gujarat villages of Kheda district varied with the availability of common property pastures, jungle and other "waste" land, and tests the hypothesis that scarcity induced mortality and migration were directly related to the dearth of common property resources.

Michele Ruth Gamburd, Portland State University
*Violence and the Transformation of Masculinity, Motherhood, and National Identity*
Recent anthropological work on violence suggests that violence shapes, challenges, and (trans)forms identity. In this paper, I examine violence and reports of violence surrounding the migration of labor from Sri Lanka to the Middle East, focusing in particular on the Sinhala and Muslim women who go to work as housemaids in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the U.A.E. I see structural violence in rural women’s poverty, and in their economic subordination in the international division of labor, indexed by their low wages in the world capitalist market. I see symbolic violence in the unflattering images of migrant housemaids and their families that circulate in local stories, and in the national and international press. I see physical violence suffered both in their own homes and in the homes of their sponsors, as indexed by the horror stories of hard work and physically and sexually abusive husbands and employers. In 1996, 408,000 Sri Lankan women, nearly 10% of the country’s working-age women, worked abroad. Arguing that all three forms of violence shape many if not most of these women’s sense of self and group identity, I examine the role of violence in transforming images of Sri Lankan masculinity, motherhood, and national identity.

Durba Ghosh, University of California-Berkeley

_Changing Names and Converted Subjects: Her Highness, the Begum Nobilis Zeb-un-nissa Samru of Sardhana_

The Begum Samru (1750?-1836) has been the subject of a dozen biographies and the story of her life is fairly well-known in the history of late eighteenth and early nineteenth north India. She was a dancing girl who became the mistress, and later, the wife of a German mercenary soldier named Walter Reinhardt. He was nicknamed General Samru and as his consort, she became Begam Samru. Upon his death, she became the de facto leader of his troops. She also received the land granted to General Samru by the British. In 1793, she married one of her lieutenants, a French Catholic for whom she converted to Catholicism. For the remaining years of her life, Sardhana became her home. In this paper, I will examine the multiple renaming and religious conversions of the woman who was most famously known as Begam Samru. She began her life as Farzana, a Muslim dancing girl. By the time she was twenty, she had been granted the name Zeb-un-nissa (ornament of the sexes) by Mughal decree. Through her relationship with the General Samru, she was known as Begam Samru and was considered by many to have converted to Christianity. In 1793, when she converted to Catholicism she changed her name to Joanna Nobilis Samru. Upon her death, she left a long list of bequests including a large bequest for a cathedral to be built in her name in Sardhana; in addition she left money for mosques and Hindu temples in Sardhana. Of the people she supplied pensions to, many were nominally Hindu, Muslim as well as Catholic. Although she was a practicing Catholic, there are accounts that she behaved as if she were Muslim, for instance, by observing particular codes of eating and covering her head in public. Through these renaming, the conversions, and her bequests, she associated and interacted with different religious and ethnic communities while constructing what was ultimately a multifaceted and complex identity.
Huma Ahmed Ghosh, San Diego State University
Hand-Outs or Liberation? Status Manipulations and Gender Implications Among Immigrant Muslim Women

This presentation will focus on the status of South Asian Muslim immigrant women in Southern California, specifically the Ahmadiyas, and their attempt to maintain their cultural and religious identity while negotiating adaptation to Western society. Within the confines of their faith, Ahmadiya women project a progressive and assertive image which is distinct from mainstream Islam. In their interpretation of gender, the position of women is explained in terms of her higher mental ability and sense of responsibility which places her at the "head of the household." Modesty in clothing and demeanor and segregation from men in public are perceived as God's way of protecting them from unwanted advances from strangers. But these ideologies perpetuate traditional norms and value systems since the patriarchal structure within the order reinterprets gender roles in a contemporary language to garb traditional roles. The distinctions between genders persist in a hierarchical manner; women are allowed as much freedom as men perceive appropriate. The presentation will delve into the interconnections of religion, patriarchy, Westernization and gender. A discussion of the role of religion in defining culture for immigrant communities will also be explored.

Jayati Ghosh, University of Wisconsin - Whitewater
New Economic Policy and Foreign Direct Investments in India

Since 1991 India has promoted the New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP has focused on elimination of licensing in major industries, promotion of Foreign Direct Investment, simplification of Tax structure, and lower administrative controls. Some of the major sectors that have experienced an increase in Foreign Direct Investment have been the transportation sector, food and agro products, electrical and electronic equipment sector, and others. This paper will focus on the approvals and inflows of Foreign Direct Investments into India. The paper will further discuss the allocation of Foreign Direct Investment in different industrial sectors and sub-sectors over 1991-1996, Foreign Direct Investment approval by countries, and the allocation of Foreign Direct Investment by states within India.

Shohini Ghosh, Jamia Milia Islamia University, Delhi
The Troubled Existence of Sex and Sexuality: Feminists Engage with Censorship

This paper examines Indian feminists' engagement with debates on speech and censorship, from 1992 to 1997. I question whether censorship is an effective means of cultural intervention, and argue that restrictions on speech affect women adversely.
In the context of the "liberalization" of air-waves, which has displaced the state's exclusive monopoly over TV programming, a new urban middle class debate has emerged which articulates anxiety around the question of the negative impact of the media on viewers, especially women. Demands have arisen from several quarters for legislation to censor speech considered offensive.

I argue that this debate is actually about sexuality. Most of the demands for restricting speech have emerged around representations of women's bodies and sexuality, not around hate speech. Examples are controversies around film songs perceived as obscene, nudity or semi-nudity in films such as Bandit Queen, in paintings and advertisements and events such as the Miss World contest of 1996 in Bangalore. in most cases, feminists have taken a pro-censorship, anti-sex stance that has landed them in the same camp as rightwing political parties.

Drawing on contemporary cultural studies, feminist and queer theory, this paper reclaims the reader/spectator as an active agent who negotiates with texts, including visual media texts.

Vinay Gidwani, University of British Columbia (see Dubash, Navroz)

Julie Gifford. University of Chicago.
Verses and Vision in Central Java

As Sheldon Pollock has said of the Sanskrit inscriptions of South and Southeast Asia, "the metaphors of the texts are metaphors people lived by." The poetic Sanskrit inscription from Plaosan in Central Java is replete with metaphors that provide clues to the ways in which Javanese Buddhist lives were lived in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. Building on the work of J. G. de Casparis, I will offer new translations of several key verses that support his hypothesis that the inscription celebrates the future Buddha Maitreya. I will also show that the text alludes to meditational and devotional Buddhist practices which foreground the soteriological importance of vision. Non-textual visual arts, including the Maitreya statue that was probably installed in the Plaosan temple, and relief sculptures that appear on the famous Javanese Buddhist monument of Barabudur, facilitated or even enabled these visual practices. By ordering the poet to compose the inscriptive text, and the sculptors and architects to carve visual non-texts, the Shailendra king presided over the creation of a new, local religio-political context.

Dinesh Kumar Giroh, Jawaharlal Nehru University
Street Children and Liberalization: A Paradox of Inequality in India

India is celebrating its 50 years of independence and entering into the era of liberalizing its economy to infiltrate the international trade market. But contrary to that it hasn't yet overcome form its greatest problem of child labor. Over nineteen
million children work or live on the streets of India, laboring as porters in bus terminals or railway stations, as vendors of food, and as rag pickers, tea, or hand made goods. These street children are routinely subjected to arbitrary and illegal detention, torture, and extortion, and on occasion, murder at the hands of police.

Based on the interviews with more than 200 hundred children during 4 months investigation in India, the research paper details the police abuse and killings of street children in Delhi. The paper also interrogates the inner dynamics and functionality of 3 local factories in Okhla industrial areas in Delhi to focusses that how the owners of these factories employ the children on the lower wages. It has also been pointed out in the paper that how on the one hand, Indian economy is getting a great boost up and on the other hand, lives of the street children are getting worse?

Sally Sutherland Goldman, University of California at Berkeley

Resiting Sita: Gender and Narrative in Valmiki's Sundarakanda

The narrative structure of the fifth book of Valmiki's epic, the Sundarakanda, is carefully crafted to enhance the precariousness of the abducted heroine's situation and to reflect dominant social constructions of Woman. And, in this sense, the kanda can be understood as a gendered narrative. Valmiki constructs the world of Woman through his elaborate and poetic inscription of the feminine onto the site of Sita's confinement, the asokavana. Valmiki's description of this site as one of erotic pleasures contrasts vividly with his depiction of the heroic and her ascetic mien. Later in the kanda, the narrative once again sets in juxtaposition the erotic and ascetic, as Ravana attempts to seduce Sita. At this narrative junction, the reintroduction of the contrast will function, in part, to further intensify the tension. But the confrontation between Sita and Ravana only occurs after the world of Woman is thoroughly constructed.

Peter Gottschalk, Southwestern University

Who Will Write Our History?

Through the stories which they narrate, Chamars of one village in Bihar demonstrate the multiple identities by which they understand themselves. At times "Hindus," "Harijans," or other identities, these residents negotiate their varying social contexts by recrystallizing their personal identity to forefront one, then another group identity. In their everyday lives, these Chamars may understand themselves as "Hindu" in interactions with Muslims, yet as excluded from a "Hindu" identity in relations with caste Hindus. However, the concerns of the Chamars of Naugrah are not limited to the religious, and some of the group identities with which they associate reflect these interests. For instance, in the memories which they relate regarding the past of their community, Chamars often refer to themselves as members of their village while at other times as a group dispossessed of their land by the current landlords. Not only do narratives of the past express the interplay of an individual's multiple identities,
they also perform a crucial role in the formation and communication of these identities. Yet, relative to the groups which surround them, impoverished subaltern groups often seem to lack such "histories." This leads many of them to ask, "Who will write our history?"

Gregory Price Grieve, University of Chicago
*The Social Ramifications of Marrying the God Narayan*

Ihi is the Newa Samskar (life cycle ritual) in which young girls are symbolically married to the god Vishnu Narayan. This ceremony is a ritual marriage to the god Narayan, a form of Vishnu. The first day of the ceremony is devoted to ritual purification of the bodies of the girl and her parents. The ritual is called nisi yaye and it takes place early in the morning at the girl’s house. On the second day, further purification takes place, and then the girl proceeds to a communal area where, with many other girls, she will undertake the Ihi. After being seated, a measurement of the girl is taken with a yellow thread. The third day of the ceremony is called kanyadan khamu, the day of the gift of a daughter. The fathers give the daughters away to the god by carrying them three times around the sacrificial fire in a clockwise direction. This marriage has huge social ramifications for Newa women. The status of Newa women differs from that of other Hindu women in the Valley. Crucially, they can remarry and widowhood does not involve a loss of status.

Arjun Guneratne, Macalester College
*Representing the Other in a Nepali Village: Tourism, Tharus and Village Walks*

Anthropology’s habit of emphasizing the particular over the general has generated finely drawn ethnographies of global processes as they are worked out in particular contexts. One of these has been the village.

For many, the village represents the idea of the local in studies of globalization. While we no longer subscribe to earlier assumptions that the village can be treated in isolation from the wider society, it continues to be a fruitful locus for the examination of those broader questions that in turn interest social scientists.

This paper discusses these themes by considering how international tourism contributes to the formation of ethnic consciousness among both Brahmins and Tharus in a village lying close to the Royal Chitwan National Park in Nepal, and undermines the Nepali state's ideological goal of "national integration" by calling into play the differences between these two ethnic groups: by aligning the former with the world of modernity represented by tourists and by representing the latter as "primitive" or "jungly" people. The specific practice through which this is accomplished is the "village walk," a part of the itinerary for most visitors to the park. High caste Nepali tour guides represent their native Other - the Tharus - to
foreign visitors in certain ways in the course of these tours, while simultaneously distancing themselves from the world the Tharus are held to represent.

Samuel S. Gurupatham, Mott Community College

The parliamentary elections of 1977 swept into power the United National Party, which pledged to restore democratic practices and strengthen democratic institutions in the island. The new conservative regime embarked on a bold policy of integrating the local economy more closely into global economic processes, which it argued was needed to address the serious economic and social problems facing the country. These economic reforms were also very closely tied with important changes effected in the political landscape. The promulgation of a new constitution, establishment of a presidential/executive form of government, among others, were promoted by the regime as being needed to accomplish its economic and social goals. But what ensued as a result of these set of policies, as I argue, were processes which over time seriously weakened the civil society and democratic institutions. The other related outcomes of these developments were the exacerbation of group conflicts, and the militarization of society.

Kim Gutschow, Harvard University
The Politics of Hill Council in a Marginal Place

How does a movement like Hill Council, which claims relative autonomy within India and from Kashmir, emerge from a contested history of social development? The 1995 movement for Hill Council Status in Zanskar indicated the difficulties of development in the Zanskar region since Indian Partition as well as the different notions of belonging to India, Kashmir, Ladakh, and Kargil. Moreover, these identifications both hindered and furthered the local development process, in which local leaders mobilize their own political or socio-economic agendas. The gradual climax and subsequent disbandment of the Hill Council Movement in 1995 reveals the contested nature of regional identities in Himalayan Kashmir.

Charles S. Haines, University of Wisconsin-Madison
From the Silk Route to the Karakoram Highway: Remembering the Future

Since border trade between Pakistan and China first commenced in 1968, the imagery of the days of the Silk Route has been invoked to capture the essence of the barter exchange system initially employed, the remoteness of the region in northern Pakistan through which the trade occurs, and the difficult route along which trade goods flow. The Silk Route imagery has become more pronounced since 1978, when the Karakoram Highway was opened. The allusions to a rich and mystical past,
however, take on contending meanings for different actors. From the local, to the regional, to the level of the nation-state, the Silk Route imagery implies a form of resistance, accommodation, or integration/domination, respectively. One notion all contending meanings hold in common, though, is a rich, independent, and bright future. The Silk Route links Pakistan, the Northern Areas, and various localities in the region not merely to an alluring past, but a realm of possibilities for the future, particularly as an economic, political, cultural, and ideological link to Central Asia.

This paper examines the various meanings implied in the Silk Route imagery; how they are shaping the political and economic landscape of the Northern Areas; how cultural performances are being remolded to fit the imagined past; and the implications of a Central Asian future for the various actors propagating the Silk Route allusions.

Patricia Wong Hall, Northern Arizona University (see Sullivan, Bruce M.)

Amanda Hamilton, University of Chicago

Henry Vivian Louis DerozioFrom Above Caste, to "Half-Caste," to Out Caste

The Eurasian poet and activist, HLV Derozio (1809-31), highlights the extremely ambivalent position of Anglo-Indians in British India. He was the toast of Calcutta and a super-star teacher at Hindoo College until 1831 when he was accused of inciting atheism and incest among his pupils. The bizarre circumstances surrounding his "rise and fall" give fascinating insights into the changing racial politics in early 19th century Bengal. In British accounts, Derozio figures merely as a Eurasian "Byron manque." How do Derozio's creative writings inform the nature of his political activism? Derozio's work was inspired, but not enslaved by European Enlightenment thought, and it is compelling because it exemplifies a surprisingly free and non-racist collaboration between Eurasian elites and their Bengali counterparts. Derozio's English critics downplay his radicalism, as if forgetting the revolutionary agendas of such romantic poets as Byron, whom Derozio acknowledged as a literary forebear. Perhaps contemporary British critics, at best patronizing in their assessment of Derozio's poetry, and at worst dismissive, reacted to an unplumbed fear about what an "Oriental Byron" might incite among an activist colonial intelligensia.

Henry Derozio laid the intellectual ground-work for individuals as various as Michael Madhusudan Dutt and Bankim Chandra Chatterji, and the Anglo-Indian novelist, I. Allan Sealy. Derozio's fame and the extraordinary scandal surrounding his dismissal make him one of Bengal's and Anglo-India's most enigmatic leaders.

Susan I. Hangen, University of Wisconsin-Madison

In political movements based on assertions of difference, people construct identities that are shaped by national and transnational discourses. In this paper, I demonstrate how the Mongol National Organization (MNO), a grassroots based political party in Nepal, forges together a diverse range of peoples in order to create a Mongol identity as a basis for political mobilization. The construction of Mongol identity is shaped by discourses about identity both within the Nepali state and at the international level. First, Mongol identity is asserted largely through negating the state supported national Hindu identity, even while MNO ideology remains staunchly nationalist. Second, choosing the label "Mongol" for this identity is a way for MNO activists to seek legitimacy for their political claims as well as a voice in the global political arena. Finally, I suggest that debates among MNO supporters over how Mongol identity is to be defined, and over who is to be included/excluded from the Mongol group point to flaws in the logic of the politics of difference.

Kathryn Hansen, Columbia University
Sri Bhumi: Female Impersonators and Actresses on the Parsi Stage and in Silent Cinema

Although female impersonation was an established convention in most premodern traditions of theatre and dance in South Asia, it entered a new phase in the urban entertainment economy that emerged in mid-19th century Bombay. Particularly in the Parsi theatre, but also in the closely related Gujarati and Marathi theatres and also in the early films, boys and men played the female roles. Their talent in acting, singing, and dancing determined the success or failure of the companies to which they were attached. This paper analyzes the process by which women were kept out of the acting profession, arguing that performing women were not unavailable, as is generally held, but rather were denied access by company managers and female impersonators themselves. It considers the politics of gender representation on the urban stage, whereby the desirable traits of femininity, particularly "modern" norms of fashion and behavior, were projected by means of the enactments of male bodies. When women did begin to work as actresses, they came from "foreign" groups such as Anglo-Indians and Jews; this was true of the Parsi theatre and the silent cinema. This racial "Othering" of the heroine dovetailed with colonial preoccupations with "whiteness," while it perpetuated the distancing of the stigmatized performer from the legitimate viewer, female as well as male. The paper makes an attempt to discover the modes of spectatorship that informed theatrical practices of gender and race impersonation. It locates several different, possibly overlapping, kinds of pleasure that were derived from these masquerades of femininity. Finally it assesses the contribution of marginal groups of cross-dressed men and fair-skinned women to the creation of a visually identifiable, standardized model, the Indian Woman (bharatiya nari).
Farhat Haq, Monmouth College  
*Imagining the Nation: Gender, Ethnicity, and Nation Formation in Pakistan*

There is much attention paid to the connections between ethnic politics and/or Islamic politics and the failures of nation-making in Pakistan. For both Ayub Khan and Zia-ul-Haq, for example, women became a central symbol in the (re)construction of the nation. The same is true of Benazir Bhutto from another perspective. In this paper I want to explore the influence of the woman question and the variety of ways in which the nation is imagined by various regimes and social groups in Pakistan and explore the several ways in which the resultant ideographs color the class and ethnic debates.

Anne Hardgrove, University of Michigan  
*Philanthropy as Public Culture: Merchants and Temple-Building in India*

This paper explores Haynes' (1987) suggestion that by donating to charitable institutions, merchant communities have made public statements about their social relationships in a changing national, economic, and social order. This paper argues that the development of a sense of religious humanism through religious works in public life is important to how traditions of community and kinship can be re-energized with new symbols and reproduced in changing historical and social circumstances. In particular, I examine practices of temple-building by the Birla family, focusing my analysis on the Birla temples of Jaipur and Calcutta. Each temple reflects an architectural innovation by combining traditional temple structures with a family museum (in Jaipur) and a modern theater complex (in Calcutta). These temples, this paper argues, have the effect of redefining religion to conform to modern ideals of philanthropy and humanitarianism, by combining the worship of a deity with the construction of public institutions which contribute to civil society. At the same time, the history of ambivalent local responses to merchant temple building raise questions as to the efficacy of merchant philanthropy in India's public life.

David Hargreaves, Western Oregon University  
*Linguistic and Cultural Issues in Translating Nepal Bhasa (Newari) Literature*

Although little known outside of Nepal, Nepal Bhasa (Newari) has a long tradition of oral and written literature, only a small fraction of which is available in English translation. The process of translation from Nepal Bhasa into English raises many theoretical, artistic, and practical questions. In this paper, I will provide a brief overview of literary history and examine a sampling of translations of Nepal Bhasa texts in terms of the linguistic and cultural issues raised in translation. In addition to highlighting the untranslatable contrasts between Newa and Anglo-American culture, translation brings into focus the demands of accurately rendering in English the socio-linguistic and rhetorical contrasts between classical and modern written...
styles as well as oral folktale and written literary styles. Finally, the demands of
translation also bring into focus the problems of accurately rendering in English the
reflexes of Himalayan/South Asian cultural contact found in the contrastive literary
functions of Indic and Tibeto-Burman vocabulary.

James M. Hastings, UW-Madison
_Sants, Warriors and Bards: Sectarian Literature as a Source for the Study of
Dadupanthi Nagas_

In an ongoing study of the history and development of the Dadu Panth, a nominally
nirgun community centered in the erstwhile Jaipur State of Rajasthan, the dearth of
non-sectarian sources leaves a void which can be filled by a judicious use of a
plenteous of sectarian literature. Although often exhibiting marked hagiographic
elements, some contain as well a remarkable specificity of detail. Of particular note
are the unpublished manuscripts of the nineteenth-century Dadupanthi Naga Mahant,
Swami Mangaldas, whose poetic style reveals his origins among the Charans, a
traditional community of bards to the Rajputs. His "Vansha Deepika" and
"Sundaroday" are highly crafted poetic works that shed considerable light upon the
mutually beneficial relationships between the Dadupanthi Naga jamaats and various
Maharajas, particularly those of Amer and Jaipur. This paper will examine the ways
in which these two documents chronicle the rise to prominence of the Dadupanthi
Nagas and the Rajput ethos with which the entire Dadupanthi community became
increasingly infused.

Brian A. Hatcher, Illinois Wesleyan University
_Idioms of Benevolence: The Expression of Philanthropy in Colonial Bengal_

Drawing upon Douglas E. Haynes' 1987 essay, "From Tribute to Philanthropy: The
Politics of Gift Giving in a Western Indian City," this paper examines similar issues
surrounding the rise and expression of philanthropic activity in colonial Bengal,
especially in the city of Calcutta. Just as Haynes was able to show that the rise of
philanthropy in colonial Surat did not represent a radical break with preexisting
norms of gifting and prestige, this paper treats philanthropy in Calcutta as a "partial
and selective" realignment of values (to use Haynes' words). What were the processes
of cultural convergence through which precolonial idioms of generosity and service
were accommodated to the ethos and values of British colonial rule? How were
indigenous understandings of dan, seva, and paropakar adjusted through
confrontation with bourgeois notions of improvement, charity, philanthropy, and
benevolence? In attempting to chart the discursive world of philanthropy in
nineteenth-century Calcutta, evidence will be drawn from a variety sources, such as
public monuments and inscriptions, school books and other vernacular literature,
government reports and missionary publications. Such sources allow us to see the
expression of philanthropy in colonial Bengal in terms of the affiliation and mutual
transformation of local and metropolitan norms of conduct.
Steve Heim. University of Chicago.

Genre and exclusion: literary and communal practices in a Jain temple.

Do genre conventions, language choices, and aesthetics function to prescribe a text's content and audience? Through an examination of three texts of different languages and genres which describe the construction of the Lunavasahika Jain temple on Mount Abu by the merchant and imperial minister Tejahpala in 1231, I argue that sensitivity to the genre, language, and aesthetic choices of the author and patron does provide leverage in interpreting why these texts present very different information describing the construction process, the communities of participation, and the very meaning of the temple. Contents of a vernacular Sanskrit prose text are incommensurable with that of the imperial Sanskrit poetic inscription gracing the temple's wall, as are elements of the Old Gujarati song apparently performed in the temple courtyard. In sum, I shall propose that literary convention creates both data and silences, text and non-text, in the production of knowledge marking community and action.

Phyllis Herman, California State University, Northridge

Relocating Ramarajya: Perspectives on Sita's Kitchen in Ayodhya

In this paper, I deal with the fact that calls for the restoration of Rama's Birthplace make no mention of the Sita's Kitchen shrine(s) that stand with it on the Ramkot. This observation brings into focus some of the implications of the revision of Ramarajya fielded by modern communal political parties. After describing many of the ingredients that place Sita in a kitchen shrine in Ayodhya, I explore how Sita's Kitchen articulates Sita's place in Ramarajya. This leads me to the conclusion that Sita's Kitchen and Rama's Birthplace are concrete manifestations of the essentially commutative functions of Sita and Rama in the creation and maintenance of Ramarajya. It follows, then, that the communal retooling of Ramarajya is inherently flawed: the communal Rama who is figured as the heroic font of the exemplary state is not the warrior-king of the age of prosperity but rather only the warrior whose female agent of abundance is either ignored or in the possession of the demonized Other. If instead the set of images, ideas, and values that traditionally accompanied Sita are reactivated and Rama and Sita recoupled, Ramarajya could play a less than strictly communal role in modern Indian politics.

Ronald J. Herring, Cornell University

Logics of State Intervention: The Problem of Social Democracy and Developmental States

No matter how obvious and important the distinction between growth and development, the two are continually conflated. Development is about realizing potential, creating the good society, over which there is political conflict; growth is
about material accumulation. Not all rapid growth is developmental -- the analogy to cancer cells or endocrine malfunction is commonly made. India must be the most dramatic case of a failed developmental state. The historical context, international position and ideas of empowering the state for widely shared developmental aspirations are congruent with the East Asian model: the literature on the "developmental state" claiming to explain East Asian exceptionalism. India's state has remarkable human capacity, and a surplus of world-class economists. And yet the result of state-led development — decades of what came to be called the "license-permit-quota raj [rule]" — has been ultimately rejected by domestic critics and voters, as well as international technical elites. This paper analyzes the constraints of liberal democracy on the configuring of a developmental state in India and the parallel but different constraints of social democracy on the sub-national developmental state of Kerala. It concludes with normative and positive implications for a reformed developmental statism for the subcontinent.

Linda Hess, University of California at Davis

*Rejecting Sita: Indians Respond to the Ideal Man's Cruel Treatment of his Ideal Wife*

This paper begins with questions about how "normative" texts work, then examines Indian responses to the aspect of the Ramayana narrative that has been most problematic for audiences over time: the treatment of Sita. Focusing on the first agni pariksa (fire ordeal), it demonstrates how literary poets, folk poets, modern writers and critics have grappled with the episode. While the highlighting of women's issues in discussions of the Ramayana is a modern phenomenon, textual traditions going back at least 1,000 years reveal the discomfort that the two fire ordeal episodes and the abandonment of Sita have aroused. Major bhakti Ramayanas drop the abandonment narrative, preferring to close with the joys of Ramrajya. Poets use ingenious ploys to explain away the agni pariksa, which clearly strikes them as aberrant. Adjustments in the harsh words that Ram speaks on this occasion — expressed at length in Valmiki, cut short or barely mentioned elsewhere — are an index of their intolerability for audiences. In the twentieth century, the debate has come out in the open. Feminists and other activists, writers in many languages, artists, dancers, filmmakers, have protested against standard portrayals and evaluations of Sita, reimagining her as speaking with a new voice. The TV Ramayana registers clear sensitivity to problems about portrayals of women in the 1980s, though its solutions are not feminist ones. Ramanand Sagar at first declined to present the abandonment in the serial. Then, when he thought God was sending him a message that he should present the Uttar Ramayan after all, he wrote a startlingly new script for the grim decision that had not been seen in any previous version of the epic. The paper concludes by proposing what is at stake in the ferment about who Sita "really" was.

Alf Hiltebeitel: The George Washington University
Dating the Mahabharata.

An approximately thousand-year-long "epic period" often explains the formation of the Mahabharata as something "encyclopedic" that contains the residues of its allegedly long span of composition. Typically, E. W. Hopkins "imagines" a "circling narration" that "may lie as far back as 700 B.C. or 1700 B.C.," but puts "facts together" into a five-stage development from 400 B.C. to "400 A.D.++" This consensual epic begins as an "oral" and "secular" work sung for the martial classes' "bards," and is then appropriated by Brahmans who then add new heroes (for some, the Pandavas) and "deify" Krishna.

Manuals continue to reproduce this package, but its elements do not stand scrutiny. Its greatest problem lies in a multi-based resistance to considering the Mahabharata as an impressive work of literature. Rather than a byproduct of a vast ahistorical period of synthesis, it serves its authors to ground intertextual projects of a particular period in a historical periodization of their own. I consider it to have been _written_ by Brahmans over a much shorter period than is usually advanced, and believe we must explore possibilities of more limited dating.

Dennis Hudson, Smith College
_Dating the Bhagavata Purana_

This paper argues that the Bhagavata Purana, written in archaic Sanskrit, was redacted in its present version in 9th century Kanchipuram under late Pallava rule, but is composed of different sections that must be dated separately. The archaic nature of its Sanskrit, it is argued, reflects the early origin of its esoteric core (books 9-10). Of those, books 9-10 may derive from the Ganga-Yumuna region in the 4th-3rd centuries BCE by which time the Bhagavata Dharma had spread from Gandhara to Tamilnadu. Book 8 was then added from the royal Bhagavata cults of the Dravida region of the Pandyas, possibly in the early centuries CE. To it was added book 7. That esoteric core later came to be surrounded by exoteric or public books 1-6 and 11-12 in various stages, reaching its present arrangement in the 9th century.

The argument draws on four sources. 1) My analysis of the way the 56 sculpted panels of a royal 8th-century Bhagavata temple in Kanchipuram divide the Bhagavata Purana into an esoteric core surrounded by an exoteric wrapping. 2) The Bhagavata Puranas own identification of its differing sections. 3) The evidence from 3rd-1st century BCE archeological remains that the Bhagavata religion, with its theology of Narayanas formations (vyuha), had spread among non-Aryan rulers from Gandhara to Tamilnadu by means of acharyas. 4) The appearance in early Tamil literature of the Bhagava Dharma and notably of its Pancaratra Agama. The conclusion is that dating the Bhagavata Purana must consider identifiable sections that came together at different times and places around the esoteric account of the
Solar and Lunar Dynasties in book 9 and the story of Krishna in book 10 over a period of 13 centuries or more.

Sameera Iyengar, University of Chicago
On the Side of Draupadi: Teejan Bai's "Dushashana Vadh"

An important part of the work done by feminists in theatre theory is the deconstruction of existing theatre canons, especially with regard to the creation of "Woman" on stage. This "Woman," historically acted by male actors, is understood by feminists to be a patriarchal construction of ideal womanhood, and by no means a reflection of the various experiences of real women. In my paper, I wish to explore the challenges posed to a historically male theatre practice through Teejan Bai's "Dushashana Vadh." Teejan Bai practices Pandwani, which is the Chattisgarhi folk form of telling the stories of the Pandavas, i.e., the story of the Mahabharata. She carries the distinction of being the first woman Pandwani artiste. She is also one of the first in theatre to popularise retellings of the Mahabharata by emphasising Draupadi's point of view. The particular episode of the Mahabharata that I will discuss, deals with the killing of Dushashana, the man who publicly humiliated Draupadi in the great war of Kurukshetra. In my paper, I will explore how Teejan Bai, through her depiction of war and of famous male characters in the Mahabharata, subverts predominantly masculine paradigms and creates new kinds of heroes.

Nalini Iyer, Seattle University
Remembering Indira's India: The Indian Emergency in Rohinton Mistry's Novels

Mistry explores the Emergency and its impact on the middle classes in two novels: Such a Long Journey and A Fine Balance. This paper discusses Mistry's novels in the context of other novels about the Emergency such as Nayantara Sahgal's Rich Like Us and Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children and interrogates how Mistry's diasporic subjectivity produces the Emergency as a grotesque narrative of the nation in A Fine Balance. In this novel, Mistry constructs a diasporic subjectivity through the distinctively North American metaphor of the quilt. As the author imagines India through a history of the Emergency, the narrative constructs that period through the grotesque representations of the bodies of oppressed Indian subjects.

Anupama Jain
Narratives of Diasporic South Asian Feminism

In this paper, my purpose is to analyze the status of literary feminisms in contemporary South Asian women's writing. I will be discussing novels written by Meena Alexander, Bharati Mukherjee, and Bapsi Sidhwa, each of whom has produced at least one novel which is a narrative about coming to America. I consider each of these texts to be a Bildungsroman that combines elements of a feminist
awakening, an interrogation of immigrant assimilation, and an assertion of a
diasporic identification into a new literary form. By juxtaposing novels such as
Manhattan Music, American Brat, and Wife, I will be able to provide a suitably
complex portrait of South Asian women's writing as it is revealed by these writers' choices. While there have been previous studies which address certain aspects of
these texts, there has been insufficient exploration of the feminist projects which are
integral to these literary works. This paper will examine both the narrative structures
and the thematic preoccupations which makes these novels distinct but related
interventions into American, South Asian, and global literary and political forms.

Nalin Jayasena, University of California-Riverside
*Mutations in Migration: Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses*

In this year that commemorates the 10th anniversary of the publication of *Satanic Verses*, this paper will focus on the theme of migration, so central to Rushdie's oeuvre, and analyze the central characters of Saladin Chamcha and Gibreel Farishta as vehicles for Rushdie's complex (and often conflicting) portrayals of migrant identities. In this paper, I will demonstrate how Rushdie's negotiations of the trope of migration is intimately linked to notions of "home," as the novel traverses back and forth between the country of his birth and the country of exile, not to mention Mecca and Jahilia. I will consider the novel's emphasis on mongrelization and mutation not only as a phenomena of diaspora or migration but as something that also informs "home" cultures (such as India or Jahilia).

Furthermore, Rushdie deconstructs and destabilizes the traditional binary between immigrant and resident Indians and interrogates the stereotypes associated with each.

This paper will also consider the controversy surrounding the book in the ten years since its publication and re-examine how the migrant narrative central to the novel becomes marginalized by the diasporic community, especially in England.

Laura Dudley Jenkins, University of Cincinnati
*Hindu Nationalism and the Official Boundaries of Religious and Caste Communities in India*

In a democracy in which various forms of community identities are interwoven with
dizzying complexity, the Indian government is attempting to implement affirmative action policies to uplift certain low caste and disadvantaged citizens. Defining the boundaries of these targeted groups, known as Scheduled Castes or Backward Classes, has become a hotly contested issue in current Indian politics. Many low caste converts to the purportedly "caste-free" religions of Islam and Christianity are, ironically, lobbying to be officially defined as "backward" in order to benefit from affirmative action. This paper will examine the way historical relations with "Muslim" Pakistan and with the "Christian" British Empire have shaped the current debate over the official definitions of lower castes in India. How has this debate been
influenced by public portrayals of certain religions as "foreign" versus others which are seen as "national"? I argue that the gradual extension of the category of "Scheduled Castes" beyond Hindus to include Sikhs and Buddhists is based on an official recognition of these religions as "national" as well as an explicit and legal redefinition of these religions as part of "Hinduism." The political reluctance to include Muslims and Christians as "Scheduled Castes" is based on the fact that, regardless of the length of their Indian residency, Muslims and Christians have been portrayed by certain political parties and members of the media as "foreigners." My conclusions are based on fieldwork I conducted in India as a Fulbright-Hays Scholar in 1996, in particular, historical research, analysis of media coverage, and interviews with political and religious groups lobbying for a broader definition of "Scheduled Castes" and members of Hindu dominated political parties opposed to such a shift. The recent rise to power of the Bharatiya Janata Party makes these questions even more salient. In short I examine the way ideas about the national community and its foreign relations shape definitions of religious and caste communities within the borders of India.

Sonya Jones, Allegheny College

*The Place of Artistic Vision in Postcolonial Times: In Defense of Arundhati Roy*

This paper analyzes some aspects of the attacks levelled against Arundhati Roy and her debut novel The God of Small Things, especially in India. Some Indian feminists have called her "the goddess of big bucks", accusing her of selling out to the capitalist West, the head of the Communist Party in Kerala filed a slander suit against her, and she was also sued for obscenity. This paper argues that Roy has struck a cross-cultural nerve which is closely related to the contemporary academy's tendency to treat the Modernist aesthetic as an oppressive power responsible for laying the ground for racism, sexism, classism, imperialism and heterosexism.

While it is useful to see art as a cultural and sociological product and to be aware of the dangers of unexamined universalism, the paper suggests that some experiences are "universal". Whether we construct ourselves as Indian or American, we must find ways to negotiate the darkness inside families and the impact of memory's wounds. These themes have preoccupied writers from Shakespeare to Woolf and Faulkner. Denying this can lead us to attempt different forms of censorship, more or less overt.

Indira Y. Junghare, University of Minnesota

*Karma Kagyu: American Buddhism in Comparison Buddhism in a Comparative Perspective*

Buddhism took its roots in America in the mid part of the century and has expanded quickly due to a growing population of Asian immigrants and a receptive western audience. The Midwest is the home of a large number of Asian ethnic groups which
espouse Buddhism, such as the Tibetan, Japanese, Laotian, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Chinese and Thai communities. Consequently these groups have established Buddhist organizations, temples, and monasteries in order to provide for their socio-religious needs, representing regional categories of Buddhism. Through the analysis of the philosophy and ritual of the Tibetan Karma Kagyu sect in its setting in Minnesota, we hope to understand the effects of acculturation upon Buddhist tradition. In comparing this Karma Kagyu sect with other regional variants of Buddhism, such as those of the Laotian, Vietnamese and Japanese organizations, we will demonstrate that there is a predominant emphasis on practical rather than the theoretical aspects of tradition in these groups. On this basis we will argue that these regional variants of Buddhism are first and foremost socio-cultural organizations and secondarily philosophical and/or religious systems.

Christine Keating, University of Washington
The 81st Amendment to the Constitution Bill: The Possibilities of Failure

Recently, a bill was introduced to the Indian Parliament that would reserve 33% of the seats in Parliament for women, raising the possibility of the entrance of an unprecedented number of women representatives to the forefront of Indian politics. In this paper, I analyze the debate surrounding this bill to highlight its potentially unsettling effects on discourses concerning the two constituencies women political leaders have been called on to represent: the nation and other women. I will argue that the anxieties produced by the specter of large-scale female participation in legislative institutions can serve to bring to crisis both the figuration of the nation as woman as well as the figuration of women as an undifferentiated representable group. I will suggest that the potential failure of women politicians to represent both these constituencies creates an opening for different imaginings of the nation and for new modes political involvement for groups that have been denied the promises of decolonization.

Christine Keating, University of Washington
The Malleability of the Feminine: Gender and Nationalism in Tamil Nadu

Several scholars (Yuval-Davis, 1997; Ramaswamy, 1997, 1993; Chatterjee, 1994) have criticized the absence of considerations of gender in literature on nationalist identity formation and asserted that ethnic and national identity is established in part through the appropriation of symbols of the feminine. Once this assertion is made, however, it is important to examine the varied and sometimes contradictory uses of these symbols as terms of political consolidation and contestation. In this paper, I will argue that the reconfiguration of Tamil nationalist identity based on a notion of caste critique to an identity based on a notion of a "common culture" in the late 1950s signaled, and indeed partly depended on, a reconfiguration of the nationalists gender rhetoric. I will contend that the contrast between the mobilization of symbols of womanhood as a means of critique by the Self-Respect movement and their
mobilization as a means of electoral consolidation by the DMK and the AIADMK highlights the malleability of images such as "mother" and "wife." I will next turn to contemporary Tamil Nadu politics in order to examine ways in which the controversial leader of the AIADMK party, Jayalalitha Jayaram, has been able to manipulate these symbols of gender identity and, at the same time, has been constrained by them. In doing so, I will point to both the possibility and to the difficulty of maneuvering within and against nationalist images of the feminine by women politicians in South Asia.

Eliza F. Kent, The University of Chicago
To Honor and Obey: Indian Christian Companionship Marriage

In Colonial India "civilization" was measured by, among other things, gender relations within the domestic realm. For Indian Christians, companionship marriage was not only the mark of civilization, but also its instrument, as married couples were supposed to refine and deepen one another's spiritual lives. The idea of a family with an intimate couple at its center was especially important for Christians from high caste backgrounds, since conversion among such groups often entailed the severance of relationships with their natal families (Fleming, 1994). And yet, in situations where one partner was a convert to Christianity and the other was not, this family model suffered considerable strain. A series of legislative acts related to Indian Christian marriage and divorce sought to ameliorate this situation by providing means for the dissolution of marriages contracted before conversion. In this paper, I examine representations of conjugal unity in the writings of three generations of Indian Christian women from a prominent south Indian Protestant family, the Satthianathans. In the context of the legislative debates on Indian Christian marriage, I focus on how these authors addressed the familial tensions wrought by religious conversion by encouraging converts to stay with their non-Christian partners and championing the civilizing effects of companionship marriage.

Jeff Key, Sweet Briar College
NGOs, the State, and Democratization in Bangladesh and Nepal

This paper will explore the relationship between national political capacity as formulated by Robert Jackman (POWER WITHOUT FORCE) and the role played by NGOs in the democratization of Bangladesh and Nepal.

The participatory development, NGO, and civil society literature suggests that the link between such organizations and their political environment is critical. However, this literature fails to make the relationship sufficiently explicit to meaningfully assess such groups' contribution to democratization. Rather, it is assumed a priori that NGOs represent an alternative to other organizational forms (the state, private sector enterprises, and traditional social organizations) in meeting human needs and that their multiplication promotes democracy. Donors support NGO formation
regardless of the political milieu in which they are to operate and local activists organize to exploit these new resources.

Jackman's concept of national political capacity as determined by "institutional capacity" and "legitimacy" suggests an unambiguous means of defining the political environment for NGOs. Bangladesh and Nepal are two South Asian countries with very different political histories. According to Jackman, they have different levels of political capacity. Bangladesh is a very young state ruled in an authoritarian manner for most of its twenty-seven years while Nepal is a very old state with one of the world's few functioning monarchies. Their transition to multi-party democracy in the 1990s has been fitful. Both have suffered from weak governments where parliamentary obstructionism is the norm and violent street demonstrations and hartals (strikes) have been the preferred mechanism for issue advocacy. However, NGOs have played very different roles in the democratization of Bangladesh and Nepal due to the difference in their political capacity.

The essential dilemma for NGOs in these two countries, indeed all democratizing countries, is the same: How far do they go, individually and collectively, in promoting their interests in the political arena? For example, Bangladeshi NGOs are largely pro-Awami League yet the NGO community has split over whether or not to say so publicly. Democratic theory says that such groups should be free to state their preferences but the strong development state in new states like Bangladesh works against this.

Comparing the influence of national political capacity on NGOs' role in the democratization of Bangladesh and Nepal should offer insight into their potential contribution to democracy elsewhere.

Michael J. Khoo, University of Colorado at Boulder

"Searching For Ladakh" offers an analysis of the dominant themes in representations of Ladakh on the Internet, showing their implication in 'traditional' Western imaginings of the Himalayan region and its people. The Internet is commonly said to enhance our knowledge about the world, to promote communication and cross-cultural understanding. While information presented on a computer screen suggests unmediated, 'real-time' authenticity and accuracy - a virtual and multi-indexed continuation of the Enlightenment Encyclopaedist project, the world at one's finger tips - the old computing adage of "Garbage In, Garbage Out" (the GIGO Principle), reminds us that computers are tools, not oracles. A search of "Ladakh" on the World Wide Web reveals thousands of sites, mostly travel agents, on-line travel guides, home pages of tourists, but also sites of ecological, Buddhist, and other NGOs. The dominant metaphors of these sites - Ladakh as a remote, mysterious, and blissful place, its population wise, happy Buddhists (not Muslims)
- reinforce, rather than challenge, Western stereotypes about the Himalayas and its populations, and silence the people who they purport to represent.

Kavita Khory, Mount Holyoke College
Communal Violence in Karachi

In recent years, Karachi has been engulfed by a series of violent, seemingly intractable, conflicts. Pakistani policy makers, as well as scholars and analysts, attribute the continuing violence in the city to a range of issues and actors—including ethnic differences, religious sectarianism, the drug and arms mafias and, of course, the ubiquitous "foreign hand." While one or all of these factors have at one time or another contributed to the city's multiple conflicts, they do not sufficiently explain the frequency of violence, its severity, or the seeming inability of successive governments to address the outstanding political and economic issues that lie at the core of Karachi's turbulent politics. Like many other mega-cities in the so-called developing world, Karachi, too, is beset by a volatile mix of chaotic urbanization, lack of infrastructure, a rapidly growing population, vast numbers of unemployed youths, and severe shortages of basic civic services and amenities. Although the city's conflicts cannot be analyzed separately from the larger, more complex milieu of regional and national politics in Pakistan, this paper will focus on the key sources of conflict in the city, especially as they pertain to the articulation and assertion of distinct communal identities and their culmination in riots and violence. Rather than opting for simplistic communal explanations, however, the paper will examine the socio-economic and political impetus for ethnic mobilization.

Any analysis of Karachi's politics inevitably focuses on the evolution of the Muhajir Quami Mahaz (MQM), initially as a representative of Muhajirs in Karachi and Hyderabad, and later as a key player in provincial and national electoral politics. While recognizing the centrality of the MQM in Karachi's politics, this paper will draw on a broader range of examples and evidence to argue that the core issues have to do with educational opportunities and achievements, employment opportunities in the government and private sectors, both local and national political power, and control of urban space and resources. Karachi's problems, however, are complicated by easy access to sophisticated weapons, the proliferation of armed groups, as well as private security agencies that have emerged in response to the state's inability or unwillingness to provide for the security of its citizens. Physical threats and insecurity for many are compounded in turn by a pervasive sense of political impotence and economic insecurity. Ultimately, Karachi is not unique in its human complexity, and may in fact provide important insights for other cities and societies confronting similar challenges.

Pauline Kolenda, University of Houston
Stayers and Movers, Both Part of Globalization
Scholars like Michael Fischer, Arjun Appadurai and Karen Leonard tell us that the people who are the most exciting to study in the present world arena are the movers. But the study of the stayers continues to be essential. The work of cultural anthropologists and other social scientists using ethnographic field methods in rural areas in various parts of the world during the last twenty-five years has resulted in a trove of experimental data. The stimulus has been the introduction of capitalism, especially national and international capitalism, often multinational capitalism; the responses are the changes that result. These vary under differing cultural and social conditions; the spread of the world capitalistic system does not take place in a uniform or inevitable way; there is resistance, sometimes successful resistance (see works by James Scott, Aihwa Ong, Stephen Gudeman, June Nash, Michael Taussig, Hoyt Alverson, Rhoda Halperin, Arturo Escobar, Steven Johnson, Ivan Karp). As an example, I'll compare the introduction of the cash crop of sugarcane in villages in India with its introduction in other contexts. Population pressure, medical crises, disemployment are rural problems yet to be solved.

Amitava Kumar, University of Florida

*When will Safdar Hashmi come to America?*

The question of cultural organizing for progressive ends is at the heart of this paper. It appeals to the memory of Safdar Hashmi whose vibrant involvement with culture and performance formed a principle zone of engagement for all social change. In the South Asian diaspora, by and large, social get-togethers have served only as occasions for serving what might be called "pickled culture"—the same dances, the same songs, the same, tiring, passive consumption of nostalgia. In recent times, however, a variety of groups have projected new voices. I am thinking of "Peeling the Banana" in NYC or "CHAAT" in California. The best work of such groups is one that links cultural activism with other struggles. That was at the core of Safdar Hashmi's vision and that is what progressive, disporic South Asians must relentlessly foreground as the point of entry into a more combative and successful cultural politics.

Ashwani Kumar

*Unofficial Local Civil Wars in India: A Study of Private Caste Armies and Rural Unrest in Bihar, a North Indian State*

The purpose of my paper is to describe and explain the origins of unofficial local civil wars and proliferation of private caste armies in India, especially in Bihar, a North Indian state. I have chosen private caste armies to construct a broad analytical and comparative framework to explain growing powerlessness of the highly interventionist democratic state and the use of violence for the resolution of power conflicts in India. Unofficial local civil wars represent a major trend in Indian politics: the increasing ineffectiveness of democratic institutions and grass-roots
mobilization of rural poor especially lower caste peasantry outside of the traditional areas of party and government. Emergence and proliferation of private caste armies as a dominant player in the power struggles between landless and landowning Forward and Backward castes focuses on new patterns of caste-class interactions and breakdown of traditional structures of authority in India. More importantly, "the privatization of violence" has led to the retreat of the state and its increasing dependence on locally dominant groups to maintain order. Using state-society model, this paper attempts to draw attention to the assertion of a violent, yet vibrant civil society in India.

Chaise LaDousa, Syracuse University
*Teaching Complexes: Education and Ideologies of Language in Banaras*

The Political Economy of language pervades everyday social life in Banaras, North India in fairly overt ways. That the English-medium, public school industry is flourishing and in search of increased enrollments, for example, is indicated by the ubiquitous presence of advertisements along walls, billboards, and banners overhanging streets. Though the nomenclature of schools includes other types, these "fees-taking" schools are differentiated most commonly with Hindi-medium or government schools. This paper illustrates language ideologies based in elements such as grammar, teachers' training, and consequences of attendance which principals, teachers, parents, and students use outside of the classroom to draw a distinction between the two types of schools. Though both Hindi and English are taught in the two school types, the ways that teachers interact with students indicate varying ideologies of language that do not always reflect ideologies offered outside of the classroom. While culture is often understood to be the coherent patterns within such conscious reflections on institutions, what is ignored by this perspective is the process by which aspects of the aforementioned ideological elements become relevant, and therefore contextualized.

James W. Laine, Macalester College
*Remembering Shivaji*

This paper will begin by an analysis of a modern fourth-standard textbook (in English and Marathi editions) which gives an account of Shivaji, the seventeenth century Maratha hero and king. This textbook's account of his life masquerades as a simple factual account, without arguments, without even an author. It represents a very common modern portrayal of Shivaji which seems to be a Shivaji preserved by tradition, by memory. This is the Shivaji which should be remembered by the culturally literate, patriotic Maharashtrian.

After a brief consideration of how "memory" is understood in current historiographic theory, I will then show the ways components of the Shivaji-narrative are naturalized and become part of a collective "memory."
Anil Lal, Roosevelt University
Lines of Ascent in Indian Criticism

While not having gone unnoticed, it is remarkable nonetheless that the emergence of a vigorous cultural criticism in English in India has coincided with the ascendancy and consolidation of the Neo-classical paradigm in economics such that the fealty to markets, privatization, and global capitalism brooks little opposition. Drawing upon diverse strands of thought in language, anthropology, politics and psychology, this paper aims to provide an outline of a "post-economic" paradigm emerging in India. Such a paradigm builds on traditions of ethical thinking on the economy and it acknowledges the energetic critiques by a host of critics on such things as development. Arguing that scarcity is an invention of modernity, it seeks to offer ways to realize Gandhi's ecology of the sufficiency of resources to needs. In doing so, it also problematizes the function of expert discourses of disciplines and the discourse of the critique of modernity. Finally, while situated in broader strands of cultural conversation, the paper joins in debate such thinkers as Amartya Sen and C.T. Kurien, economists alive to the cultural framing of the economy.

Vinay Lal, University of California-Los Angeles
The Future of Criticism in India

Some of the most engaging scholarly and critical work that has emerged from India in recent years shows the influence of 'cultural studies' as it is encapsulated in such movements or strands of thought as postcolonial studies, post-structuralism, feminism, discourse analysis, and post-modernism. Nonetheless, this work is almost wholly derivative, even when it has richly exploited Indian material. My paper will argue that the most incisive work, whether in literature, sociology, cultural criticism, or environmental studies, has emanated from those Indians -- among them Jit Singh Uheroi, Vandana Shiva, Shiv Viswanathan, A. K. Saran, Mukund Lath, D. R. Nagaraj, Ashis Nandy -- who, without in any manner being nativists or mere traditionalists, have sought a serious engagement with indigenous idioms of knowledge and attempted to put into place a thoroughgoing critique of modern knowledge systems. They embody an essentially pluralist view of Indian civilization and engage in what I have elsewhere called a 'hijra politics of knowledge': consequently, their vision of life has as much space for the non-modern as it does for the post-modern, for the mythic as much as for the historical, and for the puranic as much as for the secular. This paper points to a possible and desirable politics of the future in India, in which criticism will take forms of dissent that cannot be readily conceptualized by those working within the parameters of post-modern or post-structuralist thought.

Ramdas Lamb, University of Hawai'i
The Economics of Ramnam Bhajan
The Ramnami Samaj is a *harijan* religious movement from the Chhattisgarh region of Madhya Pradesh. In the nearly one hundred years of its existence, the sect's influence in the region has diversified, carving an important niche for the Samaj in the social, religious, and political life of Eastern Chhattisgarh. In my paper, however, I will focus more on the sect's influence on the economy of the region, specifically on those villages that seek to and ultimately host the Ramnami's annual festival, called Bhajan Mela, where thousands of people from throughout the M.P. and adjoining states gather to participate in the religious and other activities. The entire process of preparation for and hosting of the mela involves a great deal of goods and capital and has added to the influence of the R-amn-a-M Samaj in the region. Moreover, it has helped sect members to effect and even raise, in some cases, their status in the eyes of other Chhattisgarhi villagers.

*I will use this term, as opposed to "Dalit" since it is the name most often utilized by the Ramnamis in reference to their caste status. Moreover, the term "Dalit" is virtually unused by most members of the sect.

Patricia Lawrence, University of Colorado -- Boulder
Kali in a Landscape of War: Responses to Social and Political Violence at Tamil Goddess Temple

Taking as its starting point baseline ethnographic data from the mid-1970's provided by Dennis McGilvray on the popular Kali cult in eastern Sri Lanka, this paper aims to record changes in devotional practices surrounding Kali during the extreme transformation of the eastern region where people have suffered a decade and a half of war. My own ethnographic data are based on a sequence of four annual festivals (spanning 1991-96) for Pattirakaliyamman (Bhadrakali) in Punnaccolai, a small Washerwoman community outside the main government-held town of Batticaloa. I recorded specific case studies of participants and observed the expansion of expressive forms of devotion both in the religious practices and in the groups drawn to propitiate Kali. I will consider how we might interpret the actions and words of devotees as they seek assistance with terrible personal tragedy as a result of both intergroup and intragroup violence in this historical period of disruption, chaos, and continuing combat.

Scott Levi, University of Wisconsin-Madison
'The 18th-Century Indo-Central Asian Textile Trade' Indian Transregional Commerce in the 18th-Century

Unlike Central Asia, India's climate and natural abundance of river networks facilitated the pre-modern development of large-scale cotton production. This disparity resulted in a historic Central Asian dependency upon outside sources,
primarily India, for regular supplies of cotton and cotton textiles. In the early-modern era Indian merchant-diaspora communities dispersed throughout Central Asia capitalized on this demand by overseeing the regular transportation of raw cotton and a wide variety of Indian textiles to Central Asian markets, some for local consumption and much more to be further exported to such places as western China, Siberia, Russia and Europe. With few exceptions scholarship has underestimated the socio-economic relevance of this trade; many scholars continue to conceptualize an eighteenth-century decline in Indo-Central Asian overland trade brought about by the increased activities of the northwest European maritime powers in the Indian Ocean. This paper will argue that Indo-Central Asian trade remained stable into the 1820s and is even likely to have increased up to that point due to Russia's growing demand for Indian cotton, bringing about a corresponding increase in Russian military and mercantile interests in Central Asia.

David E. Ludden, University of Pennsylvania
The Expansion of Agriculture and Agrarian Politics in South Asia

The pace of agricultural expansion accelerated dramatically in the second half of this millennium. Having reviewed the evidence which locates the rapid expansion of agriculture in the nineteenth century in a longer term context from Mughal times to the present. I argue that a rapid filling up of the lowlands with farms and a steady expansion of farms into the hills united agrarian political histories in all regions over the centuries after 1600. Historian's fixation on the impact of British rule as the primary explanation for changing agrarian power relations during the nineteenth has obscured the importance of deeper forces of agrarian change and particularly the importance of increasing land scarcity. In 1300 South Asia was a vast, open agrarian frontier; but in 1900 the landscape was covered with farms and frontiers had all but disappeared. This changed everything in the politics of everyday life on the land. How it was done helps to explain the rising rates of revenue extraction the increasing incidence and mortality of famine, the transformation of the natural environment, and the rise of modern forms of rebellion and resistance. Politically, it explains the emergence of a modern agrarian hegemony based on individual private property ownership which precluded revolution on a wide scale in South Asia.

Philip Lutgendorf, University of Iowa
Like Mother, Like Son: Sita and Hanuman

This paper explores the special relationship between the heroine of the epic Ramayana and its popular monkey-messenger-warrior, Hanuman. Folklore studies point to the worldwide ubiquity of the motif of the "animal helper" -- a clever supernatural sidekick of the hero of tales. Generally, however, the treatment of this motif assumes a male point of view, and the diminutive assistant typically facilitates the hero's material attainment of the goal of his quest -- fame,
fortune, and a princess bride. The materials that I will be considering, however -- a late Vedic hymn, various version of the Ramayana's Sundarakanda, and contemporary folk practices and songs -- give us pause to consider that a woman's "animal helper," especially if he is a man-like monkey, may assume a assume a differently nuanced and indeed wider range of roles, not excluding the provision of protection, emotional support, and various kinds of intimacy.

Owen M. Lynch, New York University
"Our culture is being destroyed:" Dalit Buddhist Nationalism Dalits as agents for social and cultural change

In June of 1992 Indian Buddhist Dalits initiated an all-India movement to free the Mahabodhi temple in Bodh Gaya, from control of a managing committee of Buddhist monks and Hindus. This paper analyzes that movement's meaning, motivation and practices from the perspective of Dalit Buddhists from Agra city.

Contemporary Buddhists are followers of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, considered the father of India's empowering constitution. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism which he interpreted as embodying freedom, equality and brotherhood. For Ambedkar Buddhists, rather than Aryans, were the original Indians.

The Liberate Bodh Gaya movement's motivation is threefold. First is a discourse about liberation of the Temple as a regaining of rightful patrimony, culture and values being destroyed by the managing committee's tolerating Hindu practices and icons in the temple. The second discourse is of inclusive, emancipative nationalism and identity as the original Indians for which the Bodh Gaya and the Mahabodhi Temple stand metonymically. The final discourse concerns the right of Buddhists to control their own houses of worship as do followers of other religions in India.

Ken MacDonald, University of Toronto
Shifting Loads: Re-positioning Narratives of Travel

To a degree, the act of travel is played out on a stage - it is constituted by a performative geography of display - with roles defined by a history of cultural encounter and interaction. These roles assume hierarchical labels based on the intersections of specific criteria (eg., class, wealth, status, race, ethnicity, political allegiance) which act as markers of difference and underpin specific processes of exclusion through which certain bodies in motion are ascribed (and accept) the status of 'traveller' while others are consigned to a functional status in relation to that role.
In this paper, I identify and interrogate the disciplinary mechanisms of exclusion whereby trekking porters in the Baltistan region of northern Pakistan are made into subjected bodies and situated differentially within a field of power. In it, I contextualize their labour as travel through their own stories and an examination of their agency in shaping the terms under which others travel. This does not negate the degree to which the business of travel creates a regime of dependent, disciplined labour within which mobility is organized and coerced. Rather it contributes to a transformation of the ideology of a dominant group by exposing a narrative of travel which extends beyond the familiar ground of leisure experience to include elements of discipline, exploitation, accommodation, resistance, containment and displacement.

Alexandra Mack, Arizona State University
Pilgrimage and Power: Temple Towns of the Vijayanagara Period

The economic aspects of pilgrimage are often overshadowed by the ritual and ideological aspects of the journey. Although often thought of as primarily a religious institution, pilgrimage is also important as means by which people, goods, and information travel long distances. Studies conducted on the temple district of Vitthalapuram at Vijayanagara show that the physical layout and distribution of activities, while undeniably aimed at ideological and emotional impact, were also directed and focused on the service and provisioning of pilgrims. This combination of economic and ideological focus in town planning contributed to the overall sense awe received by visitors to the temple. Temple districts and independent temple towns were the primary loci for the ideological and economic transactions that are engendered by pilgrimage. By taking advantage of this process, the ideology and economy of pilgrimage can be utilized to legitimize the ruling authority. In this way, temple towns of the Vijayanagara era can be seen as an important element in maintaining a geographically dispersed empire.

Punam Madhok, East Carolina University
Kalighat Painting: The 'Bazaar Art' of the Black Town

In my paper I wish to discuss how the Kalighat patuas, standing at the crossroad of change, adapted their traditional conventions and iconography to triumphantly meet their new demands without becoming slaves of European art. This school of painting (ca.1800-1930) flourished around the Kali temple in Calcutta. The need to work fast proved crucial and character-making. The painters jettisoned their earlier caution and resorted to improvisation, eliminating all inessential details. Besides painting religious and mythological themes, they began recording their
impressions of the anglicized society of Calcutta. The outcome was an expressiveness imbued with an original wit and charm quite new to Indian art. The influence of the Goddess Kali seems to have penetrated their paintings dealing with secular subjects as well, for it was the power of women that is emphasized in them. Inspired by Kali’s opposing qualities of violence and love, the Kalighat patuas represented women as symbols of destruction on one hand and of fierce attraction on another. Westernized 'babus' and corrupt brahmins were ridiculed by them. Kalighat paintings inspired several artists of the following generation in India, such as Gaganendranath Tagore and Jamini Roy.

Biju Mathew, Rider University
*The Coming of Age of South Asian Working Class Politics? Lessons from the Taxi Strike in NYC*

On May 13th 1998, taxi-drivers in New York City organized a work stoppage to draw attention to their working conditions and to protest against the worker-unfriendly measures being proposed by the city officials. This remarkable strike of over 24,000 taxi-drivers, one of the largest worker actions in recent years in the US, was planned and organized by the Taxi Workers Alliance (TWA), a South Asian group with a several-years long history of grass-roots organizing in NYC. The strike represents a significant moment in the history of South Asian immigration to the US and perhaps signals the coming of age of working-class movements among the South Asian diaspora.

Drawing upon an intimate involvement with the organizing efforts that led to the NYC strike, this paper challenges the cliched image of South Asians in the US. It historicizes the working-class immigration from the sub-continent to the West, challenges the racist model-minority myth, unsettles the easy characterizations surrounding South Asian immigration, and addresses the increasingly important issue of organizing South Asians in the United States.

Saloni Mathur, New School for Social Research
*To Visit the Queen: Transnational Journeys and Imperial Display*

The Colonial and Indian Exhibition, which ran for six months in London during 1886, was a spectacular staging of imperial culture for European consumption that corresponded with the celebration of the Queen's jubilee. Among other things, the event helped to define the very concept of travel as a bourgeois and cosmopolitan experience, even turning Thomas Cooke, one of its official sponsors, into an icon of the modern travel industry. And yet this dominant narrative regarding travel did not extend to the group of villagers brought from the colonies for a "living display of Indian artisans" at the exhibition. I show how the recruitment of "natives" for the display produced a clash of local anxieties and imperial concerns, competing colonial and
nationalist hierarchies and elite and subaltern Indian interests. By reconstructing the journeys of several marginal men inducted into the living display (prison inmates and homeless Indian peasants in London), I argue that the movement of native bodies through the metropolis created determinate crises for the organization of space and identities through which the relations of rulers to ruled was regulated. The paper thus traces the itineraries of specific subaltern subjects in the imperial city as well as the complexities of their "visibility" in transnational space.

Suchitra Mathur, University of Wisconsin - Whitewater


The politics of third-world women's transition to first-world locations has been a central concern of postcolonial feminism. This journey, the negotiations it requires, and the roles adopted by these traveling women in the west are the subject of texts as varied as Bharati Mukherjee's Jasmine and Mary John's Discrepant Dislocations. But what happens to these women when they return to their places of departure? Is the journey home an uncomplicated return, an easy slipping into a familiar garb? Or does the garment rip as the women struggle to fit in, requiring adjustments or even re-fashionings to accommodate the journeys between east and west? In this paper I will explore the different subject positions created by these re-turning women in post-independence India. Focusing on the negotiations between past and present, tradition and modernity, community and nation, I will examine these women's attempts to re-define their identity in the context of a return that de-familiarizes the familiar. At the same time, by putting literary representations of such returns (Nayantara Sahgal's >From Fear Set Free, Bharati Mukherjee's Tiger's Daughter, and Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things) in conversation with theoretical formulations of travelling feminists (Mary John's Discrepant Dislocations and Kamala Visveswaran's Fictions of Feminist Ethnography), I will investigate the problematics of formulating an international feminism in the context of resurgent nationalisms and growing western hegemony, both of which are inscribed on the body of the native woman.

Christi Merrill, University of Iowa

Transexualizing Translation: Performing the Voice of the (Male as Female) Narrator in Vijai Dan Detha's short story, "Two Faced"

"Two Faced" is a translation of contemporary Rajasthani writer Vijai Dan Detha's short story, "Dohari Zindagi," which is itself a literary translation from the popular folktale. The folktale tells the story of a girl raised as a boy so that her family may receive, instead of pay, a huge dowry for her/his wedding. In most versions of the folktale the trick is discovered only after the two girls are married, and tragedy is averted when some benificent being (god, saint or otherwise)
bestows a blessing which changes the she into a bonified he. In Detha's version--and therefore in my translation--the implied criticisms of the patriarchy become much more explicit, both through exposition and plot (the bride realizes she was much happier married to a girl and makes a wish to reverse the gender-switch.) Surprisingly, in the denouement the narrator genders the prose, revealing that until now he has rendered word-for-word the story as told to him by the (consistently female) bride of the pair. How seriously are we to believe our narrator's claim of replicating a female, oral voice? How seriously are we to believe our (female) translator's claim of replicating a male, written voice? How do the stylistic identities of the narrator (as storyteller, author, translator) influence our reading of the story?

Robert N. Minor, The University of Kansas

_Dating the Bhagavadgita: What is the Evidence for Such an Enterprise?_

As a popular text, translations of the Bhagavad-gita continue to appear which assert a date of authorship without discussing the assumptions behind or the evidence for such dating, often repeating a scholarly tradition which has its origins in no data. It is asserted that the text comes from many authors, though attempts at dividing the text have met with opposing scholarly arguments. My Bhagavadgita: An Exegetical Commentary (1982) discussed the meager evidence and concluded that the most probable, though elusive, conclusion is composition about 150 B.C.E. by an unknown "author" who intended it addition to the extant Mahabharata. This paper re-examines the data and state of dating the text, with due recognition to the fragility of conclusions. It must be written when the Upanisads are considered authoritative in the author's community and may contain allusions to the tradition preserved in the Pali Canon. Most important, portions of the Mahabharata are unfamiliar with it, while others emulate the it as an authority. Hence, portions of the Epic were composed when the Bhagavadgita itself was considered authoritative, but the Bhagavadgita could not have been composed before other passages of the Epic which know nothing it. The paper re-examines these issues.

Ali Mir

_Gandhi ho ke Ghalib ho: Urdu Poetry at National Crossroads_

In 1969, the Indian nation, reeling under the onslaught of unprecedented communal riots in Gujarat, announced that it would celebrate Ghalib's death centenary with pomp, in the same year as Gandhiji's birth centenary. At the same time, the state of Uttar Pradesh was busy revoking Urdu's status as a possible second language for school children. The irony of the moment was not lost on many poets. Sahir remarked:

Jis ahd-e-siasat ne yeh zinda zabaan kuchli,
Us ahd-e-siasat ko marhoomon ka gham kyon hai?
"Ghalib" jise kehte hain, Urdu hi ka shaayar thha
Urdu pe sitam dhha kar Ghalib pe karam kyon hai?
[The political will that suppresses this living language
Why is it mourning dead poets?
The man you call "Ghalib" was an Urdu poet
Does it behoove you to celebrate him while torturing his tongue?]

Such bitterness from traditionally nationalist and socialist poets reveals a lot about
the political struggles that Urdu language has been mired in. On the other hand,
Urdu poets have been at the forefront of creating a nationalist identity, especially
at moments when the country was going to war. Thus, Urdu poetry seems to be a
ground where nationalism was both furthered and contested. I would like to
examine this ambiguous relationship between Urdu poetry and Indian nationalism
through an analysis of some important works of poetry that have addressed the
issue of independent India.

Raza Mir
*Willed losses of memory: Urdu novel and the decline of socialist values*

In his article on Urdu literature, Aijaz Ahmed argues that for a while, the
Progressive Writers Association, and the Urdu novelists who comprised it, were
briefly able to sustain an explicit left-of-center ambiance in their writings, and in a
sense reflected the ability of the national movement at large to do so? How was
such a shift possible? What caused it to decline? How did traumatic issues such
as partition, war and the loss of communication between a generation of writers
across the national divide mediate these shifts? I will try and examine some of
these issues through a study of Urdu prose since 1947, both in the form of the
short story and the novel. I argue that while Urdu poetry retained a cosmopolitan
character because of greater patronage from the broader Indian community, Urdu
prose tended to get more swiftly alienated from the national mainstream, and was
mired in bourgeois considerations rather than a focus on social change.

Pramod Mishra, Duke University
*Nepali Nation-State in the Era of "Tribalism"

How can one both champion the rights of the various nationalities in Nepal to find
their due place in the post-1990 Nepal and advocate the sovereignty of the
georpolitically pressured Nepal in its transition from authoritarianism to
democracy? By using my personal experience of growing up in a Rajbanshi tribe
in eastern Nepali lowlands, I'll highlight and explore this Nepali national dilemma
and situate my discussion in the context of the theories of representation,
nationalism, and globalization.
I'll argue that Nepali state as a political unit that represents certain democratically oriented political institutions is unproblematic and deserves safeguarding. But to do that one doesn't have to endorse either the ruling high caste Hindu ideology or the uncritical mobilization of ethnic passions. We still think of nationalism vis-a-vis nation-state in terms of nineteenth-century epistemology and politics—European enlightenment, national unifications, and colonization. With the advent of the era of globalization, we need to reconceptualize Nepali nationalism, nation-state, and their relation both at the micro and macro levels—a project that both strengthens and diffuses the Nepali nation-state, that both addresses the issues of dispossession of the various nationalities within Nepal, thus positively mobilizing their cultural bases in order to empower them while at the same time critiquing the tendency of all culture, language, ethnicity, race and religion-based nationalisms to go out of bounds.

Lisa Mitchell, Columbia University

*The Making of a Telugu Reading Public: Kandukuri Viresalingam's Rajasekhara Charitramu*

This paper maps the contours of a new reading public as it is imagined in and through Kandukuri Viresalingam's Telugu novel, Rajasekhara Charitramu (The Story of Rajasekhara). The novel was heralded at the time of its publication in 1880 (following its serialization in 1878) as the first Telugu novel, and in 1887 an English translation was presented to a British reading public as "the 'open sesame' before which the door of the Hindu abode flies open, revealing the complete inner life of a representative Hindu family." Though its translation may have symbolized the entrance into the long forbidden and coveted space of Indian domestic life for British readers, this paper will demonstrate that Viresalingam envisioned through it a much different project, a project which resulted by the end of his professional career in the creation of a reading public which did not previously exist, but through which both a national identity (in opposition to the British) and a regional linguistic identity (in opposition to other regional and linguistic identities) could later be imagined. This paper will demonstrate that in writing Rajasekhara Charitramu, Viresalingam (1) was conscious of the relationship between a written language and its potential audience and made adjustments in his language in order to reach a broader and more popular group of readers; (2) imagined a model individual (though he didn't yet have a term for it) and wrote descriptively and extensively in order to popularize a new mode of conduct which prefigured that of a modern 'citizen' in several important respects; and (3) advocated a wide range of social reforms, including the education of women, the re-marriage of widows, the abolition of child marriages, and new attitudes toward the expenditure and saving of money, which placed his newly imagined model individual firmly within a (perhaps not yet recognized) modern public sphere.
Travel as an activity is discursively constructed from perspectives beyond motion which define proper travellers and exclude others in motion from the role of traveller. A look at any adventure travel catalog reveals that travel is about inventing exotic destinations and collecting them as a commodity. The worth of the product is determined by the wealth and power of the collecting culture in what James Clifford has called "the discourse of connoisseurship". This mode of discourse emphasizes content, accomplishment, phenomenon as products, and is associated with writing and literacy.

Against this stands a concept of travel focusing on context - of travel as a process rather than a goal to be accomplished. Such journeys are undertaken for the sake of the experience itself rather than for reaching a particular destination. This mode of discourse emphasizes context, involvement, process, and is associated with speaking and the shared communicative world.

These two modes of discourse are, as Deborah Tannen has indicated, points along a continuum of discourse. The dominance of one, and of its concept of travel, emerges through discourse. This paper discusses the emergence of cultural hierarchy through discourse, as exemplified in the discourse of travel.

Debali Mookerjea, University of Chicago
Of Unwanted Women's Bodies: Jyotirmoyee Devi's writings and the crisis in the nationalist construction of femininity

The Bengali feminist writer Jyotirmoyee Devi (1894-1988) is known for diversity both in her literary work and her social concerns. This paper explores her problematization of the construction of a new national community at the critical moment of Indian independence. It is a community from which the bodies of raped women, victims of pre-Partition communal riots of 1946, have to be expunged in order to ensure its sacred continuity. A critical reading of Devi's fictional narratives raises significant questions: Who gets included in this exclusive community and why? Why is honor of the community, and by extension of the nation, predicated on female chastity? Is the choice of the female body as a space for subtending the discourse of communal violence overdetermined by the fetishization of chastity in the nationalist imagination?

Jyotirmoyee Devi also makes the writing of history a political act. Written at a time when independence has not lost its golden glow, her narratives point out the deficiency in traditional male authored official historiography's constant elision of the oppressed female subject. I will look into how she reinserts the effaced subject into the discourse and provides the analytical tools for a feminist reading of history.
Mohammad Rafique Mughal, Department of Archaeology, Pakistan

*The Indus Civilization: Strategies for the 21st Century*

Towards the close of the present century a phenomenal increase in our knowledge of the Indus Civilization has occurred due to new discoveries and fresh approaches to important issues of settlement patterns, and hierarchies, craft production and distribution, ancient environment, food, trade network, origins and decline. Taking stock of existing state of research would bring into relief important questions yet to be answered and right directions towards which further research should be done.

Mithi Mukherjee, The University of Chicago

*The Discursive Practice of 'Freedom' in Colonial India: A Genealogy*

This paper is an attempt to pursue the genealogy of the discursive practice of 'freedom' as it came to be articulated in its specificity in course of the nationalist movement in India. The early nationalist movement in its discourse in India was modelled on the practices and principles of the British law court where the concepts of justice and equity played an overdetermining role. However, with the political ascendancy of Gandhi, a new discourse of 'freedom' came to supersede the paradigm of justice. My aim is to show that this discursive practice of 'freedom' was not founded on the liberal political theory of individual rights, etc., but rather drew upon the traditional discourses of transcendental freedom variously known as 'sannyasa', 'mukti', 'moksha', 'nirvana', etc.

I study the later nationalist movement as the convergence of the discursive practices of transcendental freedom and the historical project of national independence. While, with Gandhi, this imperative to combine the transcendental with the historical came to occupy an overdetermining role, it first surfaced in the novels of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and later also in the writings of Tagore and Annie Besant. I study the genealogy of this imperative as it worked itself out in the writings of these four authors.

Rahul Mukherji, Columbia University

*Paper Title: The Political Economy of Trade and Financial Liberalization in India*

Why did India liberalize its trade and financial regimes in 1991, when it could have made a tactical retreat into liberalization as it did in 1966? This paper argues that trade and financial liberalization is likely to occur when a pro-liberalization executive is faced with a severe balance of payments crisis. To begin with, the
pro-liberalization executive is faced with insurmountable domestic opposition. The IMF too cannot force sustained liberalization if the executive is unwilling. However, when a pro-liberalization executive is faced with a severe balance of payments problem, the executive can use this window of opportunity to overcome domestic opposition and push for liberalization. Capital in the import substituting sector is heavily dependent on international finance for imports, and so is organized labor, which is heavily dependent on the import substituting sector. Faced with a severe foreign exchange crisis, they will therefore acquiesce to liberalization in the short run. This constitutes a two level game phenomenon of synergy, where an international agreement with the IMF can change the nature of domestic interest. It is especially fruitful to study India, being populous and well endowed, it was relatively easy for her to pursue the autarkic path. In making the above argument, the paper will examine the political economy of four economic crises in India, namely, 1966, 1973, 1980 and 1991.

Paul Mundschenk, Western Illinois University

*Krishna in the Classroom: The Real Battle of the BHAGAVAD GITA*

This paper examines one method for exploring the BHAGAVAD GITA in order to render the Hindu world view accessible to American students. The key is to create a framework of exploration that allows students to connect with the material and to understand that its message is directed toward them. One such framework is to take the spiritual journey approach. The paper describes this approach and shows how it functions in the study of the BHAGAVAD GITA. The tough first hurdle is the battlefield setting, and the participation of Krishna, the Hindu voice of the Divine. Surmounting this hurdle through an understanding of analogy, metaphor, and literary license, we move to the heart of the GITA's message, directed toward Arjuna who represents US. We receive advice to act with the attitude of non-attachment, and exploring what non-attachment means, and how it looks and feels in a variety of settings in our own situation in our own day, is at the core of our exploration of the GITA's message.

Anne Murphy and Shana Sippy, Columbia University

*Curating Sita*

This paper presents material gathered for an exhibition entitled "Sita in the City: The Ramayana's Heroine in New York," displayed in Columbia University's Low Library Rotunda in the Spring of 1998. "Curating Sita" documents the research and curatorial process which shaped the exhibition, and presents preliminary findings about Sita's place in New York's South Asian diaspora communities. Sita is often referred to as the "ideal" woman and wife. Yet, just as there are many different versions of the Ramayana, so too there are many Sitas. "Sita in the City" was designed to represent this diversity by exploring, through text and image, the different ways in which Sita is imagined in New York. Images of Sita included
those worshipped in Hindu temples and homes; works by contemporary South Asian artists in New York; children's art; books, comics, posters and other popular media which can be acquired in New York. The text for the exhibit was drawn from interviews conducted by the curators with members of various New York communities, including domestic violence survivors and volunteer advocates, community activists, artists, children, devotees at local Hindu temples, and community leaders.

Dennis McGilvray, University of Colorado - Boulder
*Kali before the Eelam War: Celebration of a Sri Lankan Tamil Goddess Festival in the 1970s*

This paper documents the annual festival to the goddess Pattirakali (Bhadrakali) as I observed it celebrated by Hindu Tamils in the multi-ethnic eastern Sri Lankan town of Akkaraipattu in the mid-1970s. Set against the more recent research of Pat Lawrence at the popular Punnaccolai Kali shrine near Batticaloa Town in the early 1990s, the data suggest that participation in the Kali cult in the Batticaloa region has expanded dramatically since the outbreak of ethnic fighting in 1983. The Kali temple in Akkaraipattu belongs to the Blacksmiths and Goldsmiths, and the temple near Batticaloa is run by the Washermen. Although they are forty miles apart, these two shrines participate in a common east coast tradition of non-Brahman ritual and devotional practice, and they both attract a wide spectrum of worshippers. The purpose of this paper, and the paper by Pat Lawrence to which it is closely linked, is to explore the changes in Hindu religious ritual, healing practices, and vow-making which have occurred within the Kali cult in the Batticaloa region over the past two decades as a result of inter-ethnic violence, militarization, suffering, and displacement. A sign of this disruption is that the temple itself was demolished in 1990 during an outbreak of communal violence between Tamils, Muslims, and Sinhalese in Akkaraipattu.

Ernestine McHugh, University of Rochester
*A Heart Like a Man: Feminine Power and Patriarchal Constraints in a Nepali Community*

This paper will involve examination of the limits of resistance in a patriarchal context. In current discussions of "agency" and "negotiation," we see the development of a discourse in which individual assertiveness and imagination and their effectiveness as tools for empowerment are celebrated. In this discussion, the case of a woman who for most of her life seems to have exemplified the truth of such a discourse will be analyzed. She had high status through both birth and marriage, and given her strong personality had developed a great deal of authority within the village, speaking forcefully at village council meetings, being widely sought for advice, and supervising communal building projects. However, her position, though it seemed firmly established, proved quite fragile. In middle age,
when she was at the height of her powers, she was subjected by her brother to a devastating public humiliation that involved the loss of both wealth and status. Her case reveals the risks for women of forging positions that are in tension with patriarchal ideologies and institutional structures, demonstrating the importance of political and economic entitlements for even the most exceptional women.

John R. McLane, Northwestern University
*Competing Empathies, Competing Charities in 19th C. India*

In the course of the nineteenth century, colonial power and indigenous reform movements slowly but substantially reshaped South Asian patterns of tribute and philanthropy, to use Douglas Haynes’ terms. Alongside older patterns of tribute-gifts to Brahmins and zamindars, gifts to educational institutions, hospitals, and famine victims grew. Charity-gifts were not new; charitable giving expanded as the cash-strapped colonial state recognized philanthropic generosity with awards and patronage and as indigenous leaders sought to resist Christian mission inroads. Patriotic competition with and resistance to the agents of colonialism stimulated both patterns of giving and rethinking of the bonds between affluent and poor people.

Rammohan Roy occupies a revealing position at the intersection of these shifts in thinking about empathy for strangers and in patterns of gift-exchange. By attacking Brahman priests as receivers of non-Brahmanical donations and exploiters of superstition, he aligned himself with European critics of Hindu practices. But his startling attacks on Brahmins and his calling attention to Christian ethics helped to delegitimize priestly authority, substitute new forms of merit-making and fellow-feeling, and increase donations to western education by reformers and anti-reformers alike.

Harini Narayanan, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
*Rhetoric and Restructuring: Legitimating Industrial Change in South-Central Mumbai, India*

Today, the old industrial core of Mumbai (Bombay), India, is undergoing widespread spatial change of a magnitude that has not occurred in the city in 150 years. This current restructuring is part of a broader attempt to transform Mumbai from an “industrial” to a “corporate” city, and thereby effect a fundamental change in the region’s political economy. The ongoing changes are focused on the same morphologically distinct square mile of land around Parel, in south-central Mumbai, where nearly all the city’s 60 textile mills and workers’ tenements were built between 1854 and 1925. As land values in the neighborhood soar higher than the profits that may be made by running the mills, the mill-owners are eager to pull down their plants and sell their vast lots to developers of modern service-sector industries and expensive condominium complexes.
The local state is facilitating this restructuring by effecting a sweeping set of changes in the complex web of laws and policies that affect land-use and the economy in Mumbai today.

The dominant discourse on the subject would suggest that the mill-owners are valiant and long-suffering stewards of a “sunset” industry who have earned the right to extract the maximum value possible from their properties. Meantime, the 75,000 workers who are still on the rolls of these mills, and the labor unions that represent them, are perceived as unwelcome deterrents to economic and spatial growth. In this paper, I will isolate the narratives that have coded popular understanding about the “mill-owners” and the “workers” — the two key elements of this discourse — by examining industry reports, legislation and policy documents produced since 1875 (when the Mill-Owners Association of Bombay was formed) and local media reports generated between 1991 and 1997, which is when the major policy changes that have facilitated the current restructuring have all occurred. Further, I will argue that a formidable body of rhetoric crafted over time has served to facilitate and legitimate the current restructuring within the context of a discourse in which the workers are consistently set up as disturbing and lawless obstacles to the legitimate path of progress.

Robert Nichols, University of Pennsylvania

*History as Myth in the Postcolonial State*

Nationalists leading post-1947 South Asian governments consolidated authority and legitimacy by patronizing core supporters and developing Anderson's "sense of nationality - the personal and cultural feeling of belonging to a nation." In Pakistan, political leaders of the state-building process identified symbols they hoped would differentiate Pakistan from its neighbors and engage the imagination of its citizens. State leaders argued that a Muslim homeland, the Urdu language, Islamic traditions, and representative political structures were founding, common bonds able to unify disparate populations divided by distance, economic potential, and culture. My paper examines how these and other national claims were grounded in power relations and historical assumptions that proved initially problematic, then increasingly detrimental to the cause of a genuinely representative government, a unified society, of normalized relations with neighbors. The Pakistani history written into official textbooks used in primary and secondary schools were "national" narratives constructed to assert central control over provincial autonomy and perpetuate the dominance of ruling parties, state institutions, and elite social groups. By the early 1990s, decades of state control over educational policies, institutions, and textbooks had produced distorted scholarship and historiography, and a public unable to criticize processes shaping their lives.

Harini Narayanan, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
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Veena Naregal, School of Oriental and African Studies

Colonic Bilingualism, Publicity and Emerging Cultural and Political Hierarchies in Western India

The introduction of English as the 'high' language against which the 'native vernaculars' were to be re-shaped and the making of a bilingual educational policy signified the colonial administration's intentions to define arenas that would structure access and marginality vis-a-vis its ideological project. These measures altered the universe of communicative and cultural practices on the sub-continent, and also introduced crucial hierarchical and ideological divisions
between the newly-educated and 'illiterate', 'English-knowing' and
'vernacular-speaking' sections of native society. The paper will argue that the
making of a bilingual relation between English and the native vernaculars
through print was crucial both to the construction of colonial ideology and the
emerging cultural and political practices hierarchies within colonial society.
Although the principles of publicity and the idea of general access underlying the
use of print were subject to the rule of colonial difference, yet the nominal
possibility of a laicised literate order radically altered the means and modes of
social contestation.

The paper will propose an argument about the links between the nature of the
colonial bilingual relation and the strategies of the native intelligentsia in
Western India to realise their hegemonic aspirations within the sphere of
colonial literate politics. Most studies of colonial culture in India have focused
exclusively on the making of a 'high' literary culture. However, colonial
intellectuals first tried to explore their 'middling' position within the emerging
social structure through their initiatives to establish a newspaper press. The
initiatives to establish the first native newspaper, Bombay Durpan, a bilingual
weekly in 1832, signified the beginning of the intelligentsia's efforts to
disseminate the new discourses among wider audiences and establish a sphere of
critical exchange through the vernacular. Later attempts, from the 1860s
onwards, to aestheticise vernacular discourse by creating 'high' 'modern' literary
forms were undoubtedly important in enhancing the intelligentsia's hegemonic
claims, but they also corresponded with crucial shifts in their self-perception
and their ideological orientation. My paper will show how the making of 'high'
literary discourse in Marathi coincided with the renunciation of even the minimal
scope that had existed for the colonial intelligentsia to act as agents for a more
egalitarian cultural and social order.

Nalini Natarajan, University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras
Gender, Caste And Modernity in "Samskara"

"Samskara" is a significant representation of the dilemmas of caste practice and
modernity. This paper considers Samskara's representation of gender through a
reading of the upper caste women and the prostitute Chandri. The reading is then
placed in the context of two modern disciplines - ethnography and psychoanalysis.
With reference to selected texts - the work of ethnographer Dumont and
ethnopsychoanalysts Maisson and Goldman, the paper reads gender in
"Samskara" in an interdisciplinary context. I argue that both disciplines
significantly recast Brahmanism in terms intelligible to the Western and
Westernizing modern. However the resultant position of women oftentimes
duplicates some of the attitudes evident in the text.
Jason Neelis, University of Washington

*Comparative Graffitology of Buddhist Inscriptions*

This paper compares graffiti inscriptions from Northern Pakistan with epigraphs on pillars and railings of stupas throughout India, donations to cave monasteries in the Western Ghats, Tocharian graffiti from archaeological complexes in Xinjiang, and Sinhalese verses at Sigiri in Sri Lanka. These brief epigraphic records are written in various languages and are distributed across a broad geographic region. The chronological range of these inscriptions from approximately the second century BCE to about the tenth century CE corresponds to a period when writing gained increased importance in South Asia. Graffiti record actual proper names, religious and secular titles, and sometimes dates and formulae of donation and arrival. Formal donations to Buddhist establishments for acquiring merit and informal records of visits by pilgrims and merchants often display similar patterns of patronage and devotion, yet illustrate different stages in the transmission of Buddhism. Though often overlooked due to an overemphasis on textual sources, Buddhist epigraphic graffiti supply valuable information which aids in understanding important aspects of history, religion and culture.

Nalini Lamba Nieves, University of Wisconsin-Madison

*Questioning Community: First and Second Generation South Asian Women Write Identity*

This paper will examine the experiences of the first generation and second generation South Asian American women in their writing. Focusing on the second generation and its issues of defining identity, it will look at their combined experiences, where they differ and where they converge. First generation South Asian American writers will be limited to Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni, Meena Alexander and Bharati Mukherjee. By emigrating as adults to the U.S., these women faced issues of acculturation, learning the customs of their new culture while trying to incorporate it into their cultural heritage. The second generation of South Asian American women, born and bred in the United States, face issues of assimilation, defining their identities as both South Asian and American. In their writing, most of these women point to the difficulties of identity formation in the midst of a dominant culture that defines them as "other" and a predominantly rigid minority culture desperately trying to recreate South Asia. The questions I will address include: to what extent are the writers of the first generation representatives of that rigid community? Are they the voices of the second generation's parents? Where do both generations see themselves within the South Asian community and within the American community?

William A. Noble, University of Missouri

*Architectural Variation in the Ranked Dairies of the Toda Inhabiting the Nilgiris of Southern India*
Accompanying a shift from an economy dependant upon buffalo herding to one dominated by farming, the daily ritual in all dairies (the temples) of the Toda has declined to there now being only one dairy that is operated all year. Because dairies are so sacred, no outsiders should ever touch them. Dairy abandonment has thus enabled, through archaeological survey, the establishment of architectural variants in a spectrum of dairies ranging from the least to the most sacred grades (each with its corresponding grade of sacred buffaloes). The revised hierarchy of Toda dairies presented in this contribution is accompanied by plans revealing the architectural variations that occur among the related dairies.

Sree Padma, Bowdoin College

*The Cult of Hariti*

There is a general consensus among historians that Buddhism incorporated several regional cults during its spread among different cultural areas of India. In Mahayana Buddhist texts especially, we often encounter stories about the conversions of various deities. One of these deities is the goddess Hariti, a deity of great pan-Buddhist popularity whose images are still seen in the remains of Buddhist cave and monastic complexes throughout India, especially in the south and west, but also in other parts of East and South Asia. Visual representations of Hariti in places like Ajanta in Maharashtra and Nagarjunakonda and Salihundam in Andhra Pradesh conform closely to the ancient Sanskrit textual accounts of Hariti preserved in the classical Chinese of the Taisho catalogue. According to these texts (which I have recently had translated), Hariti, in her former pre-converted state, was a flesh-eating ogress who preyed on missing children. Only when she encounters the Buddha is she morally transformed into a benevolent being capable of responding to the pleas of laity seeking offspring and material well-being. In my paper, I will take a fresh look at these Buddhist texts to determine the various qualities that Hariti possessed in her former pre-converted form. I will reexamine the ogress nature of Hariti in comparison to contemporary village goddesses of the south who share similar qualities. My aim in this study is not only to identify the actual nature of common people’s beliefs before the spread of Buddhism, but also to show how Buddhism was successful in popularizing these changed cults throughout India and elsewhere.

Anand Pandian, University of California, Berkeley

*Power, Property and Waste: Towards a Historical Ethnography of Fallow Dryland Development in South India*

Peasants in contemporary Tamil Nadu attempting to resist the appropriation of fallow drylands by agro-corporations employ two alternative means of making claims: 1. to point out that they legally own the lands in question; or 2. to argue
that they need these resources for their livelihood. In this paper, I will suggest that the restriction of claims to fallow drylands to questions of property and utility is rooted in the social and cultural history of these lands as 'waste'. Fallow drylands were constituted as unproductive 'waste' by the 'improving' gaze of colonial administrators intent on establishing a regime of productive, private property in India. However, this attribution entailed a misrecognition of the political import of uncultivated drylands in precolonial Tamil Nadu as a means of exercising control over peripheral subjects. The meaning of these lands was transformed from the 'lordless' periphery of settled areas to the least productive margin of market-oriented cultivation. The disembedding of land as a factor of economic production from such social and political relations provides a partial explanation of the case with which contemporary agro-corporations have been able to acquire 'useless' fallow drylands from local peasants.

Sunita Parikh, Washington University, St. Louis
*Quantitative indicators of Indian violence, 1971-1995*

In this paper I use data on five major Indian states from the Census of India, the 1971-1991 Lok Sabha elections, and the Crime in India reports to test theories of political and ethnic conflict. I examine whether political violence in India can be explained best by affective theories of ethnic conflict, instrumental theories, or political/economic theories of violence. I find that statistical analysis of quantitative data provides support for each theory in part, but no theory alone. Therefore, I argue that we need a more inclusive theory of political violence, one that incorporates both affective and instrumental approaches to provide a more nuanced explanation of the conditions under which different factors are more likely to dominate.

Mustapha Kamal Pasha, American University
*In The Shadow of Globalization: State and Civil Society in South Asia.*

Extant analyses of the impact of globalization on South Asia have focused primarily on transnational cultural processes to the general neglect of changing political structures and practice. The emphasis on changing cultural forms under conditions of hyper- or late modernity may yield fruitful insights into questions of identity and difference, but they also conceal the significant issue of state decline, with crucial implications for constructing alternative social orders in the shadow of globalization. This paper offers a critique of "identity politics" in the South Asian context. Substantively, it examines the question of shifting boundaries between the state and civil society under the impact of globalization. Lastly, it provides a provisional sketch for a possible synthesis of "culturalist" and "structuralist" sentiments in recent scholarship on globalization, with relevance for South Asia.
This paper will discuss the use of text as talismans in Bhutan, Mustang, and Ladakh. Text plays an important role in consecration rituals in Tibetan Buddhist traditions practiced in these areas. A crucial component of the consecration of objects includes writing a syllable or mantra on the object, which invests it with divine powers. The inscriptions may be written in more than one script and more than one language. Tibetan, Sanskrit, Chinese, and Mongolian inscriptions can occur side by side or in isolation. These inscriptions are found on architectural structures, paintings, sculptures, textiles, and medicinal pills. Taking its cue from the religious importance of text, folk traditions have adopted certain inscriptions into secular material culture. Both sacred and secular uses of text are meant to empower and protect objects, individuals, and communities. The talismanic properties of these inscriptions will be compared to iconographic symbols that are used in a similar manner, and the relationship between the content of the inscription and how it is used in the material culture, in addition to the significance of the language chosen will be explored.

Brian K. Pennington, Maryville College

*Idolatry and Indology: The Asiatick Researches and India, 1789-1839*

As a source for the creation and dissemination of European images of India, the *Asiatick Researches* was unrivalled in popularity and reputation at the turn of the nineteenth century. Although a journal of the highest academic standards, its reprints and pirated editions were distributed to large audiences across Europe through most of the century. Established and guided by Sir William Jones, its pages reported many of early Indology’s most important discoveries. The journal’s primary contribution to Western impressions of India was to identify Hinduism as the quintessential religion of India and to associate India generally with the purported materialism of that religion. As a land, a people, and a literary culture, the *Asiatick Researches* presented India as infused with the same drives to excess, multiplication, and over-production that characterized Hindu ritual and belief. The *Asiatick Researches*’s scientific articles pictured a lush land, profuse with wonderful and bizarre creatures, and flowering forth with exotic natural goods. Scholars decried Indian histories as heavily burdened with layers myth, just as the iconic objects of their worship remained invisible under heaps of offerings. Like Hinduism, India, in nature and culture, seemed to obey the irrational and multiplicitous logic of idolatry, giving rise to both the marvelous and the abhorrent.
Nihal Perera, Ball State University
*Decolonizing Colombo: The Survival of the Colonial Landscape*

“Independence” has been an immense transformation and an enthusiastic moment for the colonized. In most newly independent states, however, the colonial administrative landscape, and the built form in which it was contained, hardly changed for another generation after this revolutionary event. Sri Lanka not only retained its colonial name, Ceylon, for 25 years after independence, that is, until 1972, but the colonial landscape of the capital, Colombo, remained largely the same for three decades after independence in 1948. It largely comprised of legislative, military, and state department buildings, mostly concentrated in the old European fort area, known simply as Fort. It represented, in short, many features of the classic colonial city.

My paper will examine the principal causes for the lack of reaction to this landscape by the Ceylonese, particularly their modern leaders. This will be compared to built form transformations instigated in other parts of the state. I want to suggest a three-fold explanation of the survival of this landscape, particularly of the old Fort area, for three decades. First, for eight years, the new governing elite of Ceylon was largely content with the political, administrative, and economic organization they inherited from the British, and there seemed to be no apparent reason for them to change the colonial built environment. Second, the changes of the next decade, carried out by nationalist governments, did not focus on the political and administrative structure. Third, the center-socialist government of 1970 finally did remove the remaining vestiges of colonial authority over Ceylon. Under this government, the survival of Colombo’s colonial landscape was due to economic constraints, especially after the oil price hike in 1972. The real changes to the old colonial landscape in the Fort area, however, began after 1977. That is quite another story and awaits another paper.

This paper is based on my research for the recently published book, *Society and Space: Colonialism, Nationalism, and Postcolonial Identity in Sri Lanka* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998). The presentation will be illustrated with slides.

David Pinault, Santa Clara University

Since the 1980s and the rise of Muslim-Buddhist tensions in Leh Township, Ladakh, the annual Muharram procession sponsored by the town's Shia community has acquired new significance. In order to show Muslim solidarity, local Sunnis now join Shias in the procession; but many Shia participants, mindful of old sectarian conflicts, insist on performing matam (gestures of lamentation for the Karbala Martyrs, ranging from chest-beating to
self-flagellation with daggers and chains), an action frowned on by local Sunnis, as a way of differentiating themselves from their co-religionists. In recent years the Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust, based in the Ladakhi town of Kargil, has attempted to educate local Shias concerning the 1994 decree by Seyyed Ali Khamenei banning the public performance of "bloody" matam. In this paper I review four seasons of fieldwork in Ladakh (1995-1998) and describe my interviews with Shia religious authorities in Kargil, describing the stages in the dissemination of Iranian religious propaganda in Ladakh, from the Iranian seminaries of Qom to Kargil, Leh, and the villages surrounding Leh Township. I describe Ladakhi reactions to these attempts to influence the shape of religious practice, and I note how the persistence of "bloody" matam comprises an assertion of local identity in the ongoing dialectic of Muslim-Buddhist and Sunni-Shia relations.

Leela Prasad, University of Pennsylvania.
*Localities of Festival, Identities of the "Local": Shifting Loci of "Belonging" in Sringeri, Karnataka*

Drawing on fieldwork in Sringeri, a pilgrimage town in South India, famous for its 1200-year old Shankara matha, I explore, first, how the different senses of "community identity" expressed in the celebrations of Navaratri and Ramanavami festivals are embedded in the political and cultural histories of the Sringeri area, an area that acquired its religious and cultural status especially between the 14th and 16th centuries. Second, I look at the construction of a particular kind of "Sringeri identity" in the redefined cultural practice of upacara ("appropriate conduct" or "hospitality") for which the wider geographic region of the Malnad has been historically famous. This redefinition has much to do with recent large-scale changes in the socio-political landscape of Sringeri, particularly the 1960s abolition of its jagirdari status, and its growth as a tourist center. My paper examines how the dynamics of self-representation are contextually worked out in an area situated at the shifting crossroads of so-called local, regional, and pan-regional strands of identification, and critiques time-heavy etic constructs such as "folk" and "classical" that for long have bifurcated simplistically the plural, politically-sensitized, and contestable nature of cultural identity.

Vijay Prashad, Trinity College
*The Progressives Fight Back: The Rising Challenge to South Asian Conservatism*

There has been a dramatic rise of conservative South Asian politics in the US during the last decade. Forces representing Hindutva or fundamentalist Hindu nationalism, groups supporting neo-liberalization and global-capital imperialism, and organizations pushing for military hawkishness and the nuclearization of the Indian and Pakistani armed forces are all well-funded and well-organized.
Protests against this conservatism have traditionally been isolated and confined to student organizations in US campuses. The last few years have however seen significant attempts by progressive South Asian groups to organize nationally in meaningful ways and mount a broad-based challenge to the reactionary South Asian forces in the United States.

This paper draws upon a personal involvement with many such organizations. It traces the history and trajectory of South Asian conservatism and the progressive response of organizations such as proXsa, SAMAR, FOIL, Worker's Awaaz, and the Progressive For um of India. In doing so, it raises questions and issues that confront individuals and groups which are attempting to organize among the South Asian diaspora along the lines of gender, race and class.

Megan Reif, Wake Forest University
State Identity and Civil Society in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan

"Civil society", a term subject to heated debate in countries at all levels of political development, is particularly problematic when applied to Afghanistan. Furthermore, Afghan civil society has changed dramatically since the concept was last discussed in an academic context, with many village Islamists previously located within civil society now essentially in control of, or allied with, the state. Without focusing on normative issues, this paper attempts to redefine Afghan civil society and its function in relation to the state and to identify factors that have transformed it in recent years.

I examine the varying patterns of interaction between the Taliban and different autonomous groups, including the media, local community groups, informal networks, and indigenous and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with emphasis on the latter.

I argue that while Taliban have not demonstrated consistent policy with respect to civil society, it is clear that they view their relationship with autonomous organizations as critical to perceptions of the legitimacy of their claim to the state. I suggest that Taliban policies toward civil society groups are a strategic aspect of the movement's effort to define an Islamist agenda and identity distinct from former governments. While the Taliban government attempts to derive legitimacy by attempting to exert control over civil society, its dependence on civil society for the provision of basic human services pressures the Taliban to accommodate civil society activities and demands.

This strategy has created a contentious and often unpredictable relationship between state and society, but also represents opportunities for civil society to influence the state, provoking a number of questions. First, has dependence on non-governmental groups for the provision of basic human services created a "parallel state" that competes with government authority in Kabul? Second, what
strategies have civil society groups used to influence Taliban policy formation and have they been successful? Third, how have Taliban strategies affected the ability of civil society groups to pursue common goals? Finally, what do interactions between the Taliban government and civil society groups reveal about the elusive decision-making structure and organization of the Taliban movement and what is the impact of the Taliban system of administration on the state apparatus?

My analysis attempts to answer these questions, drawing primarily from interviews with prominent leaders of the Taliban government, opposition groups, and autonomous organizations; Taliban statements and published propaganda; and unpublished correspondence and field reports documenting protocol negotiations, meetings, and security incidents between the staff of non-governmental organizations and Taliban leaders.

Roby Rajan, University of Wisconsin-Parkside
*Economies of Remembrance*

Contemporary criticism in India has broadly split along a traditionalist/modern fault line characterized by their contrasting attitudes to history. While the modernist schools (Marxists, feminists, subalterns, postcolonials) have instituted little histories in place of a Universal History, the traditionalists reject the idea of history itself defending myth as a more plural and open construction of the past. While the modernist criticisms are focused on the problematic of justice, the fear of an impending nihilism grips the traditionalists who continue to see in tradition a source of meaning. This paper argues that the antinomies of history/myth are too restrictive; neither a history purged of myth nor a myth cleansed of history offer up the past as a readily serviceable vector for the present. Instead, it defends the past as a form of remembrance that -- unlike myth -- is disenchanted, but -- unlike history -- is neither tethered to a brute facticity nor merely a matter of hermeneutic choice.

Shankar Ramaswami, University of Chicago
*Toward a Politics Beyond Ressentiment*

Zarathustra's "pale criminal", according to Nietzsche, was given to a continual brooding over a past, the significance of which one takes as a given. Such brooding is responsible for "ressentiment" which, directed not only at others but also at oneself, accounts for present unhappiness by locating it "in some guilt, in a piece of the past". This paper seeks to unpack the Nietzschean idea of "ressentiment" in the context of political engagement, and takes up the issue of the transformation of Nietzschean "slaves" into "masters". It argues that Gandhi grappled with many of the same issues in his praxis, but cleared a path out of ressentiment that was neither vengeful (the Fascist’s solution) nor Christian "forgiveness" but based on a radical concept of "transformative love".
Barbara N. Ramusack, University of Cincinnati

*Patrons of Indian Arts and Humanities: Indian Princes as Cultural Nationalists*

In the classic analyses of nationalism as a phenomenon of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the arts and humanities have been seen as formative influences and boundary markers in the construction of nationalist ideologies and nation-states. Scholars focusing on British India have analyzed the roles of history, language, literature, music, and the visual arts in shaping and reflecting regional and national identities in India. In this paper I will argue that assorted Indian princes were active participants in this enterprise. They supported the writing of local and regional histories; helped to create icons such as Shivaji for an Indian nation; collected Sanskrit manuscripts and supported scholars to collate, edit, publish, and analyze these texts; sponsored archaeological explorations which revealed ancient roots of Indian culture; built museums to house exhibits which displayed past glories and commitments to modernity; and patronized both traditional Indian dance and instrumental music as well as contemporary Indian visual artists during decades when other sources of support were limited. Since the princes had diverse objectives, their activities had varying impacts, creating challenges to nationalist identity as well as a sense of belonging to a larger entity. One example is the patronage of the rulers of Mysore for the study of Sanskrit which revealed sharp class divisions within the state when lower caste groups began to demand admission to state-financed Sanskrit colleges. Although the independent Government of India established many public institutions which assumed the patronage of these activities, the role of the princes during the preceding colonial period has not been adequately acknowledged since the princes were generally viewed as retrograde lackeys of British colonialism.

Anupama Rao, University of Michigan

*On Bigamy, Divorce, and Inter-caste Marriage: Some Questions Regarding the Place of 'Law'*

Recent debates on the modes of governance within community, and the central place occupied by the control of women (as economic actors, and sexual beings, most importantly) in that schema, have begun to look to caste (along with religion) as a significant site of community governance, as well as an important place for the constitution of women's subjectivities.

In this paper I want to suggest that these concerns resonate strangely with colonial (and national) concerns with establishing caste boundaries in the interest of intervening in the regulation of marriage, the rights to divorce and remarriage, the division of property, etc. The place of law and its interaction with custom and customary practices is revealed in these instances as being contradictory, and ambivalent: shuttling between the demands of homogeneity in legislation and the
crucial place of community as a marker of 'difference' for the actual practice of law.

My paper seeks to understand the relationship between caste, custom, and the law by looking closely at cases which exhibit the dilemmas of arguing for community as a critical place in the making of women's identities, and a crucial means of control and governance.

Krishnendu Ray, Culinary Institute of America
A Gastro-economy of Indian Regions

This paper uses the window of cuisine to raise two historical questions and proposes certain directions of inquiry for them: 1) why did Bengal never develop a highly elaborated courtly or street cuisine? and 2) why did Gujarat, which has a cultural location comparable to Bengal, develop a highly elaborated street cuisine?

In answering these questions this paper engage with issues of regionalization and social stratification in Indian history. The argument takes the following form: within any society there are three sites where cuisine - that is the rule-determined combination of comestibles - develops. The three sites are the courts, the marketplaces and domestic households. Each of these social institutions put food to different uses. For instance, the whole point of court cuisine is the display of power through the consumption of expensive ingredients such as sugar, ice, spices, meats and formally trained male labor. Feasts and banquets are an important part of this system of power. Power is often displayed literally as foods acquire height and verticality. It is also a cuisine of rich curries, ghee, cardamom, clove, saffron and tandoori chicken. It is typically the cuisine of Delhi in northern India or Hyderabad in the Deccan.

The next site of culinary creativity is the marketplace which feeds itinerant pilgrims, travelers, shopkeepers, migratory workers and the bourgeoisie. The market for street foods was, until recently, relatively underdeveloped in India because of the Brahmin taboo against buying cooked food. Eventually things changed. To the somewhat austere Brahmanic dinning ambiance the Muslims, since the thirteenth century, brought a refined and courtly etiquette. A new cuisine developed in the marketplace, largely fried, pickled, highly salted and sweetened foods that have relatively long shelf-life. If courtly cuisine was a contribution of the Delhi-centered regimes, then market cuisine was marked by three regional variations - savory samosas in the north, sweet and salty fried lentils in western India, and sour and savory crepes, rice cakes and lentil doughnuts in southern India. In India today foods from these three regions dominate street eating.

Beyond the court and the marketplace, the final site of culinary creativity is the peasant hearth. This is where the food exhibits the least flamboyance, and the
pace of change is slow, in tune with agricultural rhythms. This is also where spices, salt and sugar are used much more sparingly, partly due to poverty and partly because there is no need either to impress vassals or to extend shelf-life. In addition women are usually responsible for the family budget which enforces a more restrained logic on their cooking. Eastern India, which has neither been the center of Indian politics as Delhi has been nor highly urbanized as the region around Mumbai has been, is almost exclusively the realm of domestic cooking.

Josna E. Rege, Dartmouth College

Making Life Possible: The Principles and Pragmatics of Women's Locations

I suggest that as contemporary transnational theories have proliferated, they have generally been as blind to women's complex and multiple positioning as have nationalist discourses before them. Furthermore, even critiques of these theories have not tended to problematize them with reference to their usability in women's lives. Through readings of South Asian women's fiction in the 1980s and 1990s, writing by women located in India and in Britain, I propose to work toward a usable cosmopolitanism conceptualized out of their lived realities. Recent regional writing by women in India (Shanta Gokhale, Jai Nimkar) and metropolitan writing by Asian women in Britain (Rukhsana Ahmad, Meera Syal) defies easy classification as either provincial, national, or cosmopolitan. It demands a more nuanced analysis that pays close attention to both the ethical and practical bases upon which women make their difficult daily choices. Focusing on women's negotiations among personal, family, and community commitments, I ask what sources of support they are able to tap in their efforts to open up space for themselves, space to act, and space simply to breathe. While advocates and critics of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism are in danger of reproducing the very polarized dichotomies they critique in colonial and nationalist discourse, I would argue that women have plunged ahead with the project of "making life possible" (a phrase I take from Shashi Deshpande's 1988 novel That Long Silence). This principled and pragmatic project is one that offers us workable approaches to the complex politics of location.

Paula Richman, Oberlin College

From Durvasapura to Oberlin: The Reception of SASKARA in a Small Midwestern Liberal Arts College

For more than a decade, students in my "Religion in Modern India" class have read and written a short paper on U. R. Anandamurthy's novel, SAMSKARA. Students have responded to the novel with an avidness and identification that surprised me, since they have not responded with the same enthusiasm to other Indian novels of the same period which dealt with some of the same issues. In this presentation, I analyze a set of twenty of the most original papers written by my students in answer to the following questions: (1) What is the greatest threat
to religious authority, as portrayed in the novel? (2) What is the most satisfying religious experience, as depicted in the novel? The range of answers to both questions suggests that SAMSKARA combines a dramatic specificity with some more general questions of identity and autonomy that prove of great relevance to my students. They found many threats to religious authority in Durvasapura -- some the result of individual human failings we all share, some present in any religious tradition that becomes institutionalized, and some connected to specific historical events of the time, and others growing out of the specific conflict between the two antagonists. Identification of the most satisfying religious experience in the novel included freeing oneself from an ascetic regime, sexual union in the forest, abandoning responsibility for others, watching a cockfight at a fair and confronting one's own misconceptions.

Laura A. Ring, University of Chicago  
*Heretical Body, National Space: On Being “Sindhi” in Karachi*

In June of 1997, a group of Sindhi Muslim students at Karachi’s Dow Medical College celebrated their exam results with a kind of Hindu “Holi” ceremony, festively throwing paint on one another and their fellow students. Student members of the Islami Jamiat-e-Taliba (IJT) angrily intervened, and fighting broke out. This marks the start of a month-long skirmish between Sindhi students and IJT workers which left over a dozen injured, and one dead - and, escalated ethnic tensions throughout the province.

Taking this event as a focal point, I will address the cultural dimensions of ethnonationalist conflict in Karachi, highlighting: a) the compelling association of the nation with Islam, and Muhajir (partition-era Urdu-speaking immigrant) experience; b) the vexed relationship between the provincial Sindhi interior, and its Urdu-dominated capital, Karachi; and c) the ambivalent place of Hinduism - as past, custom, heritage and heresy - in a Sindhi and Pakistani national imaginary. Moving beyond the spectacular realm of overt violence, this paper considers the more routine, everyday practices whereby ethnic and national identity gets produced and transformed - where ethnicity itself becomes a kind of “heresy,” and where, in turn, heretical bodies come forth to challenge the dominant narrative of the nation.

Hasan-Askri Rizvi, Columbia University  
*Ethnicity, Islam and the Army in Pakistan*

The Army is a formidable political actor in Pakistan which maintains its centrality to the political process even when it is no longer in power. Two important features of army organization are: ethnic imbalances in its manpower, and position of Islam in military ideology.
The paper addresses these two issues. First, the nature of ethnic imbalances and what are their implications for the Army's political role and the political process. Have there been significant changes in the recruitment pattern over the years or the traditional martial races continue to dominate the Pakistan Army?

Second, role of Islam in military ideology and the impact of the wave of Islamic revivalism in the backdrop of the Iranian revolution and the Afghanistan insurgency against the Soviets are examined. The paper identifies links between Islamic reassertion and new recruitment in the Army and explores how far the current resurgence of Islam is different from the role and place of Islam in the Army in the past?

The paper concludes with the evaluation of the impact of these two factors on the Army's professional character and its political disposition.

Daisy Rockwell, The University of Chicago
*Pehelvan in a China Shop: Upendranath Ashk (1910-1996) does combat with the Hindi Literary Tradition*

The Hindi novelist Upendranath Ashk (1910-1996) was born in Jalandhar, Punjab, and began his career writing in Urdu, switching to Hindi in the mid-thirties. His prolific oeuvre, which includes novels, short stories, memoirs, plays and literary criticism, was greeted with harsh criticism in reviews, and all but silence in histories of Modern Standard Hindi (MSH) literature, yet scholars of Hindi literature from outside the tradition have lauded his work. How can we account for this discrepancy in critical reception to Ashk's writing?

In this paper, I argue that Ashk, as a Punjabi who initially wrote only in Urdu, and as an outsider who moved in 1948 to the 'Hindi Heartland' (Allahabad), came to embody in both his writing and in his writerly persona, a dangerous and destabilizing force in what has been a narrowly defined tradition. In canonical writings of the MSH tradition, a seriousness of social, political or religious purpose is prized and demanded of both texts and their authors. Ashk, though a dedicated Progressivist writer in his own way, not only refused to conform to expectations of him as a Hindi author or a Progressivist, but aggressively manipulated and played with notions of what was 'sacred' in the MSH literary tradition.

John D. Rogers, Tufts University
*History Writing on South Asia from a Sri Lankan Perspective*

Distinct colonial and post-independence political cultures have produced distinct historiographical traditions for Sri Lanka and the mainland, even for studies of periods before 1800. This paper discusses various institutional and substantive
peculiarities of history writing in and on Sri Lanka, and compares them to analogous processes in and on mainland South Asia. It argues that this comparison reveals not only shortcomings and parochialisms in work on Sri Lanka, a conclusion which is predictable, but that it is also useful for demonstrating the insularity of much history writing on mainland South Asia.

Mark Rohe, University of Chicago  
*With and against the flow: The varied attractions of pilgrimage to Trikuta, Jammu.*

The Jammu region of Jammu & Kashmir State is a relatively peripheral region in the country's economy and culture. Its neighbors, Pakistan, Kashmir, Leh-Ladakh, and Panjab, give Jammu some political importance. Since Indian Independence, one bit of geography in Jammu has become famous to Hindus from all of India, the pilgrimage to the mountain cave of goddess Vaishno Devi. Varied motivations bring people to the mountain, and different institutions, such as religion, government, and business, promote her for their own ends. The pilgrimage appears to be a unitary phenomena, but on closer inspection of the people actually involved—the laborers, government workers, pilgrims, sadhus, businessmen, local residents, and deities—it becomes multifaceted. The act of travel alone does not make the pilgrimage.

Alan Roland  
*National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis*  
*The Spiritual Self and Psychopathology: Psychoanalysis in South Asia*

The relationship of the spiritual self to psychopathology has had a long and problematic history in psychoanalysis beginning with the correspondence of Freud with Romain Rolland on Ramakrishna's "oceanic feeling." Those who have labored in the field of applied psychoanalysis have continued to follow in the same furrows of classic psychoanalytic reductionism in viewing spiritual experiences and/or motivations as regressive or psychopathological. This is essentially true of the more recent work of Sudhir Kakar and Jeffrey Kripal on major Indian spiritual figures, however much each decries the reductionistic psychoanalytic agenda. Their contributions are discussed in detail. New work is emerging on the relationship of the spiritual self to psychopathology from psychoanalysts involved in Buddhist or Hindu spiritual practices, and who work with patients who are in the long-term practice of one or another South Asian spiritual discipline. The author observes that the spiritual self and psychopathology are on two different continua that can interact with each other in complex ways which he delineates and illustrates with case examples. He further relates how culture impacts on the spiritual self and psychopathology, and how spiritual practices and psychopathology affect each other in individual cases.
John Roosa, University of Wisconsin at Madison

**Democratic Discourse and its Discontents: Indian Nationalism in Hyderabad State**

The prospect of a post-independence democratic government in the late 1930s and early 1940s created two important types of problems: the problem of minority rights and the problem of the prioritization of a political or an economic conception of democracy. Both of these problems found full expression in the most populous princely state of India: Hyderabad. An organization of Muslims in the state, the Majlis-e Ittehad ul-Muslimin, steadfastly opposed the idea of democracy as a pretense for Hindu majoritarian rule. The communists of Hyderabad, emphasizing economic democracy, proposed that the nationalist movement represent the economic demands of "peasants and workers" over those of other classes. Both the Majlis and the communists were engaged in a dialogue with the supporters of the Indian National Congress in Hyderabad from the late 1930s to the mid-1940s. Their dialogues proved fruitless. All three political tendencies in the state -- the Majlis, the Communist Party of India, and the Hyderabad State Congress -- became irreconcilably antagonistic to one another by the time of independence in 1947 and settled their differences by bloodshed in 1948. The extremity of the anti-democratic positions which the Majlis and the CPI adopted in 1948 ('Muslim supremacy' and 'the dictatorship of the proletariat,' respectively) has obscured the validity of their earlier critiques of the Congress. Similarly, the success of the Congress party in dominating the nationalist movement and the post-independence government has often led historians to write as if the Congress always had the right answers to such problems as minority rights and economic democracy. But the widespread sectarian and class violence that occurred in Hyderabad in the year after independence should indicate that there were profound social problems for which there were no easy answers.

Parama Roy, University of California, Riverside

**Reading and Devouring: The Gastropoetics of Madhur Jaffrey**

"Expatriates," says Sara Suleri in *Meatless Days*, "are adamant, entirely passionate about such matters as the eating habits of the motherland." Suleri's novel articulates the precise and haunting ways in which (gendered) national/regional identities are, as it were, tested (sometimes disturbingly) upon the tongue.

This essay examines the evocation and management of gendered memory and "Indian" identities in conditions of migration and diaspora; in particular, it investigates the ways in which food and cooking have become, in several filmic and published texts, the favored optic to broach questions of national-diasporic filiation and their economies of taste and consumption. It does this through a focus on the publishing and filmic career of Madhur Jaffrey, conceivably the most
popular authority on Indian culinary arts in the United States and England; and in doing this, it seeks - among other things - to render fuzzy the generic boundaries between recipes and autobiography, so that even if it is not quite possible to read *Meatless Days* as a cookbook we might learn to classify *A Taste of India* as an autobiographical fiction. It elaborates the intimacy among practices of reading, eating, cooking, and being eaten that the cookbooks enact. Finally, it stresses the intertextuality of culinary and the filmic imagination for any consideration of Jaffrey's gastropoetics, examining *Shakespeare Wallah* for its investment in the semiotic pliancy and range of the gastronomic image.

David Rudner, Tufts University
*Terukkutu Goes Green*

This paper examines and draws parallels between the history of bharatanatyam and one of the newest performing arts to emerge in Tamil regional consciousness: terukkutu, a form of village "street theater." Until recently, performance of terukkutu was confined to ritual occasions (typically as part of annual temple celebrations or life cycle ceremonies). During the last few years, however, it has been drawn into metropolitan venues such as school auditoriums or the concert stage. Its base of support has grown from commission by village "big men" (still a primary source of funding) to grants from local, national and transnational NGOs. Although retaining many conventions that (as with bharatanatyam) can be traced to the eighteenth century, terukkutu is being harnessed to provide new messages for its new audience.

Agha Saeed, California State University, Hayward
*Bhuttos Ethnic Strategy: Conceptualizing Nation-Building and State-Formation*

This paper deals with Bhuttos ethnic strategies in the context of: 1) the post-East Pakistan nation-building frameworks available to him; 2) his struggle for acquisition and maintenance of power; 3) his compliance with and manipulation of the imperatives of the State; and 4) his assumptions about ethnicity in relation to nation-building and state-formation.

Governing necessitates building and liquidating coalitions. During the framing of the 1973 Constitution the NAP - a Pathan-Baluch coalition successfully kept Bhutto from fashioning an utterly centralized polity. The power struggle with the NAP led to a complex mixing of ethnic regional, class and organizational factors to articulate a PPP-led ethnic coalition but to disarticulate the NAP-led ethnic coalition.

Bhutto was able to break up, first, the alliance between the nationalist and the socialist and then between the two major nationalist groups: the Pathans and the Baluchs. One of his tactics was to use ideological groups, such as the Muzdoor
Kissan Party, to disrupt ethnic coalitions in NWFP, Baluchistan, and Sind. He, however, nuanced his interventions by emphasising class in NWFP, ethnicity in Baluchistan, and economic opportunities in Sind.

Bhutto, in my view, had a separate strategy for each province and each major ethnic group; he had even sub-regional and sub-ethnic strategies. I want to look at his overall conceptual framework which enabled him to tie all his strategies into a coherent master plan and to devise a policy matrix based on differentiated combinations of ethnicity, region, class, ideology and party.

Corey Saft, University of Oregon
Palaces, Politics & the Contemporary Urban Fabric in the Kathmandu Valley

My paper examines the palace structures within the Kathmandu valley as a tool to understand larger cultural attitudes during the major political regimes of the Malla, Rana and Shah. Palace buildings demonstrate a special relationship in the built world of the Kathmandu Valley. Because they are at once a special case of construction and part of the larger fabric of the city, that is, because they are both similar and different to the buildings around them, they lend themselves to a comparative analysis. My paper compares the spatial structure of palaces from each regime in order to understand the relationship between each and the urban fabric; ultimately, the project locates the contemporary building culture of Nepal within a historical context.

The paper identifies major periods of the building culture in Kathmandu, correlates these periods with spatial characteristics and associates these characteristics with general social and political developments. In addition to chronicling the building patterns, this paper also attempts to establish general guidelines for comparisons within the built environment and to ground the morphological differences of each regime within a shared historical context.

The transformation of Nepal’s built environment throughout the twentieth century is a physical example of the political reconciliations the country has undergone as it has tried to change its role away from being an isolationist nation and toward a more interactive one. The urban fabric is a visual history that reveals Nepal’s evolving political attitude and self-definition. The royal palaces of Nepal are a special class of evidence that allow for synchronic as well as diachronic comparisons to be made in a specific and pointed manner. The palaces are interesting because they chronicle the development of Nepal’s building culture and express the most active building ideologies throughout the valley’s history; the palaces are uniquely informative because they communicate what Kathmandu is and not just what it says it is.

Yasmin Saikia, Carleton College
"We Forgot to Remember": Memories of the Chinese Invasion and Identity Politics in Assam

The November 1962 Chinese invasion of Assam is a disturbing story in the history of the Indian nation. Soon after the disastrous incident, the government of India induced a process of wilful forgetting by re-organizing Assam into several ethnic linguistic states. On one hand, it was expected that by keeping the people busy with matters of new government and administration there will be general forgetting of the incident, on the other hand, it provided the government at New Delhi a better and more specific involvement with the region. But the policy ultimately did not work. Nearly three decades after the invasion, Assam and northeast India, continue to be poor, neglected, backward -- educationally, industrially and technologically. In the climate of neglect and underdevelopment, a new kind of remembrance of 1962 is once again surfacing. The desertion of the Indian army, Nehru's speech relinquishing Assam to the Chinese invaders, and the general apathy of the Indian people are actively remembered in various circles today. This paper is an attempt to collate the stories of 1962 as re-told in Assam today and what it means for the emergence of several new identity movements that use the icon of 1962 to remember what they forgot then.

Yamuna Sangarasivam, Syracuse University.
Transforming the Feminine Body through the Violence of War: Conversations with Tamil Women in Jaffna

The violence of civil war has brought about changes in the position of women in Sri Lanka's Tamil society. Particular experiences of violence - such as verbal and physical abuse, rape, disappearance and death - intersect with radical transformations in female identity. As a means of coping with the violence of war, women in the Jaffna peninsula (also in other parts of Eastern Sri Lanka) are exercising the choice to participate in the Tamil nationalist movement and train for armed struggle. Others, who choose not to join the armed struggle, resist the landscape of violence by redefining the 'traditional' place and space of feminine identity in Jaffna Tamil society. Based on conversations with Tamil women across caste, class and age categories, this paper examines the effects of violence on the changing identities of women, their attitudes towards the feminine body and their construction of self.

Stuart Ray Sarbacker, University of Wisconsin
The Bodhisattva's Samadhi : Meditation and Tradition Buddhism in a Comparative Perspective

As one of the members of the eightfold path and six paramitas, the establishment of meditative enstasis, samadhi, plays a crucial role in the Buddhist soteriological path as outlined in the Theravada and Mahayana Buddhist literature. Developed
out of the religious currents of ancient Indian asceticism, the practice of shamatha (lit. "calming") meditation which culminates in samadhi is acknowledged by nearly all Buddhist sources as being common to both Buddhist and non-Buddhist religious traditions.

The flowering of Buddhism that occurred in the earlier centuries of the common era led to a variety of expositions, interpretations, and re-interpretations of the meaning and significance of shamatha meditation. In the Mahayana tradition, shamatha meditation became strongly associated with the Bodhisattva image and was a means of demonstrating its character in contrast to the "Hinayanist" Arhat ideal. In the modern practice of Buddhism, we find that the place of shamatha meditation varies greatly among the surviving Buddhist sects of the Mahayana and Theravada traditions. Through looking at ancient and modern examples in comparison, we hope to elucidate some of the static and dynamic aspects of these traditions.

Laxman D. Satya, Lock Haven University

The Impact of Agriculture on Environment: The Case of Late Nineteenth Century Berar

This paper looks at the impact of colonialism and agricultural expansion on the and the human condition and environment of Berar in central India. The sudden rise in demand for cotton in the world market during the American Civil War had long term repercussions on Berar's environment as the land under cotton cultivation extended dramatically. The introduction of colonial technology further added to the ecological aggravation. The impact of railways, telegraph, steam cotton gins and presses, metalled roads and the building of the entire colonial infrastructure left its mark on the prime teak and bamboo forests. The story of Korku forest dwellers and women is deeply entrenched with the colonial encroachment on hills and plains. Pressure on land availability, soil conditions and water use in the region altered rainfall patterns and temperature. The rise of epidemic diseases like cholera, malaria, smallpox and bowel complaints with periodic cycles of drought, scarcity and famines in the late nineteenth century not only affected the human population but also the flora and fauna of the region.

Mathew N. Schmalz, The College of the Holy Cross

The Death of Comrade Moti: A Dalit Christian Memory

Based upon interviews conducted during ethnographic research, this paper examines the role of Dalit identity and religious imagery in a Christian recollection of a Naxalite annihilation campaign in Eastern Uttar Pradesh in the early 1970's. The story, as told by a Christian social activist, centers around a Naxalite leader "Comrade Moti" and his efforts to incite a violent uprising of landless laborers. The narrative describes Comrade Moti's first efforts to promote a revolutionary consciousness and then the acts of resistance and violence that
followed, culminating in a series of murders of wealthy landowners. In this conflict, Moti was betrayed by a member of his own Naxalite cell and was then killed by the landowners. The narrative has a distinctly Christian structure, for not only does the story have a strongly messianic tone but the figure of Comrade Moti bears a strong similarity to Jesus, especially in the tale of his betrayal and death. Yet equally important is the way in which the narrative of Comrade Moti’s death portrays key themes in Dalit life and imagines a revolutionary Dalit identity. The paper concludes by reflecting upon the relationship between narrative and memory in the reshaping of Dalit consciousness.

Henry Schwarz, Georgetown University
_Is There a Literary History of Modern Bengal?_

The obvious answer to this question could begin by citing the hundreds of literary histories that have been written about the literature produced during the "Bengal Renaissance" of the nineteenth century. But a negative answer is more productive of further research. This paper explores the material conditions of both "modernity" and "literature" during the nineteenth century, focussing on the shifts in the practices and apparatus of literary production throughout the century. Beginning with the introduction of print technology by the Serampore missionaries and the codification of grammar by British orientalist scholars, the paper goes on to explore the definitions of literariness and modernity constructed through the English press, turning finally to the actual numbers of printed books produced in the Bengali language and British colonial practices of regulating printed texts. The paper concludes with several voices of Bengali modernity articulating their bewilderment over the categories "literature" and "modern" in the context of British concerns over censorship and national security. The paper argues for a materialist approach to further research in this field to counteract the dominant ideologies produced thus far by nationalist, revivalist, subaltern, and postmodernist literary historians of Bengal.

Satadru Sen, University of Washington, Seattle
_Food Fights: Prison Diets and the Modernization of Punishment in Colonial India_

As the Indian prison modernized in the second half of the nineteenth century, the prison diet became central to the process of regimentalization by which jail authorities attempted to instill ‘order’ in the convict population. The idea that all prisoners must eat food cooked by the jail’s own kitchen was calculated to reduce the autonomy that convicts had previously enjoyed in the preparation of their meals. Prison diets also ensured that different ‘classes’ of prisoners ate different varieties of food, reinforcing the British vision of ethnic order and racial
hierarchy in colonial India. Finally, prison food was intended to function as a precisely calibrated instrument of punishment for disorderly and disobedient convicts. Monitored by physicians and linked to cellular confinement, the penal diet was seen as painful and deterrent without being deadly or crude. Thus loaded with coercive political calculations, food became an area of contest between jailors determined to exercise their power, and convicts determined to protect their autonomy or press their independent agenda. My paper examines this struggle as it unfolded in the Andaman Islands penal colony, and in some of the jails of mainland India.

H.L. Seneviratne, University of Virginia – Charlotte.

Art and Identity

The search for a national art in colonial Sri Lanka was embedded in the nationalist resurgence and search for a national identity, and took two forms. First, going back to the turn of the century, there was an undifferentiated view of national art shared by the elites of both the Sinhala and Tamil communities, the opposition constructed being between indigenous and western art. Second, as the century progressed, understanding and definition of "national art" was bifurcated along ethnic lines, each community self-consciously seeking its own "national art". This placed the Sinhala ethnic group in the position of having to look nowhere but inward, to the only indigenous culture it possessed, the folk culture, with an implicit or explicit hostility to India, in stark contrast to the imagination of the visionaries of the first group. The late colonial period and the era of independence saw the involvement of the state and the university in the search for a national art, giving rise to creativity and mediocrity, consensus and contestation. "National Art" came into being politically but not aesthetically. Where it did emerge with some success, namely in the theater, the inspiration was far from national.

Shalini Shankar

Popular Culture, Media and Migration: The Emergence of South Asian Teenagers in America

How does the category of teenager, so prevalent, pervasive, and mass-marketed in the United States become incorporated into a South Asian immigrant community's fashioning of generation? In American consumer-oriented society, teen years are popularly understood to be a time of public and private exploration, rebellion, and popular cultural consumption as an identity making process. Yet, this category is virtually absent in the lives of young people in South Asia, where teen years are characterized by a different set of cultural markers, and identity-making practices through media and consumption are only beginning to become visible for an urban, upper-middle class elite. These differences become
especially salient when understanding the formation of South Asian youth identity in the US.

This paper will explore the processes by which South Asian immigrant communities life-cycle categories are redefined through popular cultural consumption and engagements with media. Based on existing literature and preliminary fieldwork, I will discuss how South Asian youth engage in the consumption of films, television and music, as well as the Internet, to create fluid identities and social networks that shift across domains of school, family, and peer groups. In so doing, this paper will examine how a new social category of teenager emerges out of international migration and media consumption in a local place, as well as how this culturally specific category of teenager is revealing of local identity-making practices of immigrant youth along lines of race, gender, and language.

Devendra Sharma, Jawaharlal Nehru University

*The Position of Women in Afghanistan*

The issue of the position of women in twentieth-century Afghanistan has been an experience of hope and despair. Advancements could not be sustained, while regressions were neither understood nor corrected. As a result, the condition of Afghan women has remained deplorable over the years. Violations of women's social, political, and economic rights have not been raised politically or discussed academically, as seemingly more urgent issues have faced Afghanistan during much of the modern period. However, recent events in this landlocked country and the atrocities committed against women have drawn the world's attention to the issue in recent years. It has brought to the fore the very basic question: what is the place of women in Afghan society?

While the rest of the world enters the twenty-first century, the Afghan woman's slow march toward emancipation seems to have come to a halt. What women achieved in the social and economic sphere during the modernization efforts of Amanullah, Daud, and the Communist regimes has been nullified in the post-1992 era of ethno-sectarian conflict. Since then, successive mujahidin regimes in Kabul have unleashed a number of discriminatory measures against women while the Taliban government has further restricted women's rights in the name of "Islamization". As a result, Afghan women find themselves in circumstances akin to the medieval period.

This paper examines the dilemmas confronting Afghan women in their search for identity within the context of Afghan society and analyzes it in a socio-historical perspective. Placing Taliban policies in an historical context, this paper analyzes the position of women under twentieth-century Afghan governments with reference to state policies on education and employment and political and legal rights.
Rajeev Sharma, Jawaharlal Nehru University

*Child Labor among the SC/ST and others in India*

The Indian society since the ancient time is stratified into various groups. The earlier stratification was based on the division of labor while at present its based on the caste system. It has perpetuated socio-economic inequalities in the Indian society.

The issue of child labor in India is also one of the manifestations of such inequalities. The country has the dubious distinction of having the largest child labor force in the world. Though there have been numerous studies in the last decade on the issues of child labor, but the caste factor vis-a-vis child labor has been somehow ignored. The evil of child labor is more wide spread among backward castes. The socio-economic backwardness of these marginalized groups appear to be a major reason for a high proportion of child labor originating in these caste groups.

The present paper attempts to analyze the variations in the child work participation rates among SC/ST and others in India by using the primary as well as secondary information. The secondary information covers 16 major states of India. The primary information pertains to households supplying child labor in the glass bangle industry of Firozabad. The required secondary data for the study was gathered during the month of November and December, 1994 and January 1995. This study covered 150 households supplying child labor and 200 child workers involved in the manufacturing of glass bangles.

Raj Kumar Sharma, Jawaharlal Nehru University

*Heating Glass on the Owen: A Pliight of Child labor in Shikohabad*

Indian children are active in almost every key sector of economy, with the exception of large factories. They herd cattle, pick tea, cut synthetic jewels, labor for up to 18 hours a day in small huts knotting carpets, weave silk saries, make glass bangles and ornaments, shining shoes, begging, prostitute or porters on the bus and railway stations etc.

The present paper examines the gravity of the problem of child labor in the glass factories in Shikohabad of Uttar Pradesh State in India. During the field work, the researchers manages to talk to many child laborers privately. They live in local small area of Shikohabad where most of the people are untouchables or landless labors. This ethnographic study brings out several points including the plights and problems of child labors. 8 year old Bina, for instance, has worked 13 hours a day in a glass factory heating glass and pumping air in the Owen since her father died three years ago. Her mother, a stone cutter, accepted a Rs. 3000 advanced to
pay for the cremation of her husband and food. Her employers beat her, she says, when she asks about her wages.

This ethnographic study covers about fifty children’s life and their socio-economic problems. It also examines the argument going on around the country on the issues of development and child labor and evaluate them into a theoretical framework.

Shailja Sharma
The Politics of Arrival: Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Divakaruni

Bharati Mukherjee’s paean to the myth of racial and gendered assimilation in the United States in Jasmine and the novel’s success as a representative text about the porousness of borders, both national and those of class, raises troublesome issues of aesthetics and politics. The text’s lack of irony within a historical context of anti-immigrant legislation and rhetoric makes its optimistic ending sound not just utopian but absurd. Even as the book’s popularity as a narrative of arrival, immigration, and assimilation ignores issues of class, history and difference, Mukherjee’s choice of a first-person female narrator forecloses any attempt to read the story from any perspective’s but Jasmine’s. Chitra Divakaruni short stories, on the other hand, while playing with many of the same themes, often in rather trite ways, allow for more than a singular perspective on the experience of immigration to the New World. I would argue that while Mukherjee’s style is motivated by her politics of assimilating her writing to the mythical canon of American literature, Divakaruni stories take their task of representing experience more faithfully. The overwhelming question, of course, is the kinds of politics these aesthetic choices lead the writers into.

The troublesome issue for the reader in that context then, is the realism of the narratives; Jasmine, for example, represents the story of the heroine as a classic text of immigration to the New World. This can be seen in many instances, from the representation of the political violence in India which forces the protagonist to flee to the trajectory of her upward mobility within American society. In Divakaruni, the fidelity to a social realist mode is equally, if differently, troublesome in Arranged Marriage.

The question that my paper asks is does the socio-political context of a work’s production and reception demand fidelity to an aesthetic choice? Or do mythologies of different countries overdetermine the aesthetic choices that writers make? Finally, how are we to perform readings of Jasmine and Arranged Marriage that resist their easy mythologisation as texts about the melting pot?

Amita Shastri, San Francisco State University
Economic Liberalization in Sri Lanka: Growth vs. Welfare?
Liberalization policies have been conceptualized as involving a shift in the boundary away from an authoritative allocation of resources by the state towards allocations by the market. A speedy implementation of economic reforms is commonly advocated as necessary to usher in the desired outcomes of enhanced efficiency, growth and long-term welfare. In practice, it is now recognized that the precise components of policy packages, the pace, and sequence in which they are introduced and implemented are highly dependent on the context and inevitably affect the outcome of the policies. Politics remains the least understood and predictable element of this context.

Sri Lanka launched on a process of economic liberalization earlier and more whole-heartedly than any of its South Asian neighbors, in perhaps the most favorable circumstances conceivable. Yet, within a decade the state was riddled with indebtedness and fighting two youth insurgencies. This paper examines the reform process introduced and implemented by the center-right United National Party regime in power between 1977-1994. It explores the WHERE IS THE REST???

Vanita Shastri, Harvard University

*Liberalizing India’s Economy: Context and Constraints*

The paper discusses a model of policy reform in India that can be sifted out of the continued process of liberalizing India’s economy. The model has three components, one the policy reform change agent, second, the building of a consensus or group dynamic that pushes the agenda of reform forward and third, the political window of opportunity that actually makes possible the passing and implementation of the reform.

The change agent, in most cases, acts as a result of an infusion of new ideas, either through conversion or as an exponent of the new belief system. As ideas by themselves do not convert systems of existing beliefs but require carriers, the role of these change agents or “change team” becomes crucial. The politics around opening windows of opportunity for reform, either in crisis or in politically managed contexts is examined in the paper. Given the democratic context and the post-independence history of a socialist basis for economic policy, the liberalization program in India has proceeded in an intermittent manner as consensus on reform has been forged by policy makers.

This paper discusses the three episodes of industrial policy liberalization pursued in India: the mid-1980s when the Congress Party led by Rajiv Gandhi began the process of liberalization, the Narasimha Rao government during 1991-96 when liberalization got more fully underway, and the record of the coalition governments since 1996. In all three instances, changes in economic policy were initiated by policy entrepreneurs who occupied offices within the state apparatus.
It discusses the bureaucratic opportunities and constraints involved in the process of economic reform being undertaken in India. Moreover, as the focus of a large number of reforms has been moving to the state governments, the paper looks at the new competitive spirit that is emerging in the states as they get engaged in reforming crucial sectors that need change.

Uma Shrestha, Western Oregon University
*Nepal Bhasa (the Language of Newars): Possibilities and Limitations*

The use of Nepal Bhasa, which was once a rival of Sanskrit during its glorious days, goes back as late as 1207 AD. In this paper, I will give a historical overview of the development of Nepal Bhasa, including its social and political prestige during the Malla period and the gradual loss of that status during the Shah regime. Secondly, I will also provide a brief glimpse of the language policy of the Nepal Government, over time, with an emphasis on the overall situation of Nepal Bhasa in that policy context. Third, after the political upheaval in 1990 and the introduction of a democratic system thereafter, the Nepali public has seemingly received a great deal of freedom, including freedom of speech and language. Consequently, there have been efforts to encourage the use of Nepal Bhasa in wider public affairs, such as the media, government, and education. Such efforts have also manifested in the publication of newspapers, journals, and magazines written in Nepal Bhasa, and centers geared toward improving its status and maintaining its use. In this paper I will examine these movements, together with the political and social concerns that they raise, in an attempt to offer an assessment of the changing status of Nepal Bhasa at present.

Jael Silliman, University of Iowa
*Interrogating the Standard NGO Narrative: The Case of Women's NGOs in South Asia*

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are expanding considerably in size and scope and are becoming significant players in the "development project" and an integral part of civil society. With increasing globalization, the scaling up of NGOs and the scaling down of government efforts to provide safety nets and social needs place NGOs at a dangerous crossroads. Many NGOs must make strategic decisions regarding the roles being assigned them by donor agencies and the international development community. This paper examines the evolving relationships between the State, the development project, social and cultural movements and the corporate sector which together determine the parameters and character of NGO engagement. It focuses on how cultural and political forces, such as international aid agencies and other donors, fundamentalist movements, as well as corporate hegemony impinges upon NGO efforts to secure social change. Women's rights NGOs in South Asia are the lens through which these issues are explored.
This paper will examine the use of and significance of the book as an iconographic element in South Asian painting and sculpture. Examples for this discussion will come from Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Islamic art. Although considerable research has been devoted to the content of books and other sources of writing, less attention has been given to the evolution and role of the book as an object in South Asian history and culture. The presence of books in art is not a simple reflection of their place in society, but rather reflects changes in the perception of books as objects symbolizing and containing wisdom or knowledge. The adoption of this symbol by different communities (as represented in their artistic traditions) reflects the growing significance of books in each community. By comparing what has been documented regarding the evolution of literate practices with their representation in art, changes in the perception of books can be seen. Placing in historical and social contexts these changes in perception will show the diversity and evolution of South Asia's literate traditions, and create a needed contrast to simplistic dichotomies of "oral" vs. "literate" cultures.

Amardeep Singh, Duke University

*Khuswant Singh: Sex/Politics*

In addition to the novels and short stories for which he is well-known in the Anglo-American academy, Khuswant Singh is very well-known in India for his journalistic and political involvements. This paper will attempt to coordinate Singh's different writings in the context of an emergent postcolonial Indian public sphere, by delving into his two great enthusiasms: sex and politics. I argue that the two themes actually function in one logic throughout Singh's work, an eroticized politics or a politically-charged eroticism: a sex/politics.

Sex/politics is a major part of Khushwant Singh's short stories and novels. Here, I focus on two of the novels, Train to Pakistan and Delhi, and draw liberally from relevant short stories. Rather than attempting to explicate the discourse of female desire Singh often problematically represents, I focus on the articulation of male desire in Singh's fiction, with a particular attention to the articulation of Sikh male identity. Singh's various Sikh men exist along a continuum, from 'lusty,' masculine peasants, to exotic, 'effeminate,' sometimes Anglicized city-slickers. Each deviation from the peasant-masculine carries with it a certain politics, which I attempt to map.

I also examine Singh's editorship of The Illustrated Weekly of India. He was a controversial but highly successful editor, partially because of a tendency to use material some readers considered indecent. I attempt to map the specifics of Singh's editorial influence over the Weekly, and try to develop a sense in which
the success of the magazine was due to the use of political and sexual material in an integrated structure. I am looking at the last editorials Singh wrote for the magazine in his capacity as editor, as well as the first editorials of the editor who replaced Singh after his being sacked. Singh's sacking, I argue, had more to do with the politics of the Emergency (which he supported) than with the sexual content of his magazine. How might the politics and erotics of this moment relate to Singh's later alienation from the Gandhi government in 1984, over Operation Blue Star? Finally, how do the Sikh men of Singh's literature fit into his sense of identity as a flagrantly non-religious Sikh, all of this in an age of renewed Sikh fundamentalism?

K.P. Singh, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Globalization V.S. Dalits: A Cultural Interpretation

The process of Globalization has brought Indian society into an epoch of transition. The process of Globalization and transition of Indian society has created a potential threat to the existence of Dalits. On the one hand, the non-Dalits are very hopeful that they will be able to improve their life. On the other hand, Dalits are being jeopardized by new development in the globalization of the Indian Market economy. With the commencement of the globalized market economy, the whole of India has been divided by unparalleled consumerism by the middle classes, and this has began to devastate the very existential basis of the poverty-ridden masses.

The present paper will critically examine the impact of globalization on the lives of Dalits in the short as well as the long run. The cultural critique of the problems of Dalits and the process of Globalization will attempt to analyze the issues as they pertain to modern Indian society. The paper will also focus on the impact of this process on the socio-economic, political, and cultural life of the Dalits and non-Dalits. It is critical that we discover early on who will be winner and the loser in this process of globalization. It might serve to uplift those who are already up on the main stream of the country and dampen those who are already suppressed.

Ascema Sinha, Cornell University
The Role of Political Institutions in Economic Governance: Federalism and Center-State Relations in India

The question of how federalism or the vertical balance of power affects the politics and political economy of a nation-state has become a serious analytical and political issue in recent times. A crucial question regarding the interaction of politics and economics in India is to identify and analyze how the politics of national-level regulation interacts with the functioning of the federal political
system to affect the country's capacity to attain developmental objectives. This paper will outline the elements of a theory of federal political economy drawing upon the experience of the operation of the Indian federal form from 1955 to 1991. Specifically, this paper is concerned with two questions: (1) How does the federal structure of the Indian nation-state shape the politico-economic relations between its constituent units in two different policy environments, one marked by a dirigiste national policy regime (1950-91), and the other the stage of liberalization/deregulation (1991 to today)? I examine the divergent strategies pursued by five Indian States—Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu—towards the regulatory license-quotas raj (1950 to 1991) to draw attention to the contrasting ways in which the Indian states/provinces dealt with national policies and national institutional regulatory structures. (2) The second question relates to the internal contradictions at work in the federal structure transforming its structural logic. I will argue that the processes unleashed by the interaction of economic regulation and federal democracy in India provided the conditions for its own undermining so that by 1991, in conjunction with external pressure, the basis of the federal-national compact of the 1950's came under severe challenge. I will also show how in the post-1991 period federal arrangements have played a role in helping India's economic reforms in becoming self-sustaining.

Shana Sippy, Columbia University (see Murphy, Anne)

Frederick M. Smith, University of Iowa


The first ever Vedic Soma sacrifice outside India was performed on Willesden Green in London in July 20-26, 1996. The performance was part of an annual summer festival sponsored by the Indian communities of London. The sacrificer (yajamana) was Goswami Gokulotsavji Maharaj of Indore, a hereditary acarya of the Pustimarga, and the officiants were gathered together by Agnihotram Ramanuja Tachchariar of Madras, one of India's best known and most experienced and learned Vedic ritualists. This presentation will discuss five topics: (1) the preparations and sponsorship of the sacrifice, (2) the performance itself (and certain unique problems encountered therein), (3) its significance as a Vedic event, (4) its significance as a diaspora event, and (5) its significance as a Pustimargiya event.

Selma K. Sonntag, Humboldt State University

Liberal Narratives in the Himalayas
In Multicultural Citizenship, the Canadian political theorist Will Kymlicka claims that in liberal, democratic, multinational states, there is a principled and practical imperative for the protection and promotion of minority rights. He argues that liberalism dictates self-government rights for national minorities and "polyethnic" rights (e.g., language rights, preferential treatment) for ethnic groups. I will explore the applicability of Kymlicka's alleged universal liberalism to minorities in two Himalayan areas of India: Darjeeling in West Bengal and Uttarakhand in Uttar Pradesh. These offer challenging case studies for Kymlicka's theory because in each the categories Kymlicka uses (national minorities versus ethnic groups; self-government versus polyethnic rights) are confused, yet frequently referenced. For example, it is not clear whether the Gorkhalis in Darjeeling are tribals and indigenous (a national minority in Kymlicka's terms) or an immigrant population (an "ethnic group" for Kymlicka). Demands made by the Uttarakhandis span Kymlicka's categories of self-government and polyethnic rights (e.g., demands for statehood and reservations).

I will contend in the paper that while both the minority group's demands and the state's responses employ the discourse of liberalism, the Himalayan cases reveal tensions in liberalism (e.g., between inclusion and exclusion) rather than confirming liberalism as a transnational narrative.

Christopher Soper

*Harappan Eschatology and the Organization of the Harappan State*

This paper critically examines hypotheses concerning the nature and meaning of Harappan burial practices during the 3rd millennium BC in the Indus Valley. Examining multidisciplinary sources of information provides a convergence of current biological and archaeological data to yield new insights about the Bronze age Harappans. The skeletal and artifactual data are placed in a regional and temporal perspective to provide a broader context of understanding. Harappan eschatology, as it is currently understood, is viewed from the perspective of diachronic changes in Harappan civilization to address questions about the social and political organization of the Harappan state.

Todd Stradfords, University of Wisconsin, Platteville

*Geographic Patterns of Japanese Investments in South Asia*

This paper examines the areas the Japanese for infrastructure investments (factories) as well as the amount of investments made with regard to specific places. Japanese investments are increasing in India. Japan is fourth in terms of investment in India after the U.S. Britain, and European Union. Although the approved amounts for foreign investment has increased, the actual flow of money into the India remains low. Incentives to bring more investments in have included
reducing corporate taxes for foreign firms from 55% to 48%. India has a rapidly expanding middle class estimated to be between 200 and 250 million, becoming one of the largest emerging consumer markets in the world. Further liberalization of trade and investment are creating opportunities for energy, telecommunications, transportation, and environment industries. Recent domestic economic failures in Japan may have recently slowed the start of already approved projects.

Dave Stuligross, University of California at Berkeley

Shopping for Legitimacy: Environment, Indigenousness, and the Hill People of Uttar Pradesh

Supporters of Uttarakhand movement seek statehood for the politically unacceptable rationale of economic security, notably from lower caste migrants from the plains of Uttar Pradesh. Success would require a majority vote of parliament, and this would require a broad, principled appeal. Two international epistemic communities were quickly and willingly drafted for this purpose: the international environmental movement and the international indigenous peoples' movements. Both came to limited loggerheads both with local groups whose interests were challenged by these groups and, interestingly, with one another. The result of this international-domestic-subregional ideological interplay will likely not influence whether or not an Uttarakhand state is created, but it has had a tremendous effect on the nature of mobilization in the region and would shape the policy debates in the new state.

Bruce M. Sullivan (co-authored with Patricia Wong Hall), Northern Arizona University

The Whale Avatar of the Hindoos in Melville's Moby Dick

Herman Melville's novel *Moby Dick* is famous for its depiction of a whaling crew composed of many races and for its plot in which the nature of good and evil are explored. In the course of his work, Melville makes numerous references to India, including comments on the "Hindoos" and the Parsees, the smell of a burning funeral pyre by the Ganges, and a visit to Elephanta caves near Bombay. A character in the story refers to the Trinity of Hindoo gods, Brahma, Vishnou, and Seeva. Most relevant for the plot are several references to the first avatar of Vishnoo, the "whale avatar" called Matse. While Melville may have heard a version of the myth of the fish avatar that is different from classical versions, or himself conflated it with accounts of the boar avatar, his inclusion of this motif seems intended to show a divine and benevolent quality to the whale, in contrast to the flawed human character of Captain Ahab. Despite the many generations of readers this work has enjoyed, few have written on the images of India in the work, and apparently no one has commented in print on the "whale avatar" motif.
Sivamohan Sumathy, Washington State University

Traveling Theory and Migrant Women: The Middle Passage of Sri Lankan Tamil Women of the Diaspora

The primary aim of my paper is to locate the different productions of a postcolonial feminist consciousness among the Sri Lankan Tamil of the Diaspora. I look at the migration of Sri Lankan Tamil women to western countries from the 80's to the present, in the context of the discursive and material structures of Tamil nationalism, the national liberation war in Sri Lanka, and the ensuing displacement of people from their "homelands." I approach the movement as signifying both migration toward and displacement from an imagined and constructed and yet social (socio-political) space of nation and homeland. Specifically, I look at cultural expressions of these women, communal organizations, pamphlets, entertainment, and overt political engagement, in order to seek out the production of a consciousness engaging in a dialogue with postcolonial feminism. This postcolonial space I call the 'The Middle Passage,' drawing upon the arduous and tenuous journey of Africans captured as slaves to the Americas. Using this metaphor to chart the new routes to the 'New' and 'Old' World by postcolonial migrant women, I hope to formulate a theory of feminist practice that questions both celebrations of postmodernism and those theories that dismiss any sense of agency of marginalized postcolonials.

Cynthia Talbot, University of Texas

Kings as Sites of Historical Memory: The Case of Kakatiya Prataparudra

The historical traditions of pre-colonial India are sometimes dismissed as mere histories of kings, with no relevance for the society at large. Yet the persistence and volume of traditions revolving around specific kings suggest otherwise. In this paper, I propose that kings played a prominent part in the historical memories of pre-colonial India precisely because they could serve as focal points in the formation of community identities. I will do so by examining the case of Prataparudra (ruled 1289-1323), the last king of the Andhra dynasty of the Kakatiyas. He was a site of historical memory in that he repeatedly surfaces in later narratives of the past, among them the early-sixteenth century Prataparudra Caritramu. I will also look at traditions pertaining to Prataparudra extending from the late sixteenth into the early nineteenth centuries, which range in their social spread from the political elites to the village level and are found both in Andhra and among Telugu migrants elsewhere. The paper will end with a brief comparison to a more well-known medieval king, Prithviraja of the Cahamana dynasty, who was central to the conceptions of community of an ever larger group of people over time--from the Cauhan clan, to the Rajputs as a whole, and finally to the Hindu nation.
Clare Talwalker, Duke University  
*Masking Contradictions of Modernity: Colonial Textbook Narratives*

This paper will explore the writing and contestation of school texts in the colonial period. The first set of modern graded Marathi primary readers were compiled by education official Thomas Candy between 1857 and 1860 for the elementary Marathi schools of the Bombay Presidency. The British saw primary education as a vehicle for the spread of a particular moral and scientific way of knowing nature and society. I approach these school books as important cultural artifacts of colonial modernity that served to negotiate the social transformation of colonial society through their narratives. These readers sought to normalize a European worldview by naming, containing, and then displacing an Indian worldview; yet, at the same time, the colonial state was concerned with partially preserving the existing social structure and certain aspects of the caste hierarchy. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, activists and intellectuals wrote alternative private textbooks for elementary schools; in these, we see the first articulations of a shared linguistic regional identity. I will show how these articulations mystify deep social and cultural transformations, such as the changing social division of labor. As such, the textbooks written in response to the government series were also, though differently, invested in resolving social contradictions through narrative.

Anupama Taranath, University of California, San Diego  
*Nautch Girls and Colonial Vice: Kipling's Fiction and Sexual Indian Women*

This interdisciplinary paper investigates two of Ruyard Kipling's short stories, "On the City Wall" and "City of Dreadful Night." These stories are articulations of Kipling's most elaborate and detailed representations of the Indian prostitute, the tawaif, and nautch girl. Kipling's texts detail various classes of sexual Indian women and narrate them on erotic, exotic display for the reader. The ideological function of colonialist fiction such as Kipling's, I argue, must be read not simply in relation to its putative or "real" effects on the natives, but on the exigencies of British politics, laws, and Indian material culture. The fiction of racial and sexual difference mapped out in these two colonialist short stories must be harnessed to these political and administrative considerations; such is my project in this paper. Examining the symbolic construction and management of Indian women's sexuality by both British colonial officials and high-caste Indians in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries grounds Kipling's literary narratives in the historical moment of high imperialism and early nationalist movements. I juxtapose the Contagious Disease Acts (1886) and the Anti-Nautch Campaign (1912) with the two Kipling texts to illustrate the complicated task of ruling unruly Indian women, framed by colonial discourse as racially and sexually suspect subjects of empire.
Gary Michael Tartakov, Iowa State University
*Untouchables as an internal colony*

The 1960's saw a developed theriozation of subaltern minority populations as internal colonies by sociologists such as Robert Blauner. This paper explores the significance of India's untouchable communities in the light of this conceptualization, with the twin goals of seeing what such a definition has to tell us about the social and economic situation of untouchables in recent Indian history and at the same time of reflecting upon the value of such a definition.

S. P. Udayakumar, University of Minnesota
*BJP Government Watch: A Report Card*

The BJP Government Watch (BGW) is a small group of concerned South Asian scholars who are looking closely at the functioning of the BJP government and its behind-the-screen benefactors in the clear interests of the Indian civil society. This is a professional group of scholars who engage in a political analysis of the government’s policies, programs, initiatives, reversals, key appointments and other such moves. The BGW does not claim any unique political wisdom that is beyond the reach of any sections of the Indian civil society, and the group is simply dealing with the ideal of knowledge for knowledge’s sake with an eye on its public policy translations such as analysis and recommendations. As politicians debate, presspersons describe, and justices pass rulings, the BGW attempts to do, what Johan Galtung calls, the 'Diagnosis-Prognosis-Therapy' analysis of the major malady that afflicts the Indian polity. Defining the concept of ‘watching’ a government, and discussing the various aspects of this unique exercise, the paper presents a critique of the performance of the BJP Government in the first six months of its existence.

Katherine Eirene Ulrich, University of Chicago
*Food Fights: Polemical Literature and Culinary Injunctions*

During the sixth and the seventh centuries CE, the Tamil-speaking area of South India was the site of a tremendous literary output. Much of this output was notably polemical; many of the polemics, in turn, were marked by a concern - even obsession - with food. Of vital importance was what other groups were eating (or not eating), what one’s own group was eating (or not eating, or shouldn’t have been eating).

In my paper, I consider three examples of these polemics: the Tamil Buddhist epic Manimekalai; Tamil Saiva devotional hymns by Appar and Campantar; and Mattavilasaprahasanam, a Sanskrit farce by the Pallava king Mahendravarman I. This survey reveals that both dietary concerns and polemical literature transcend genre and linguistic boundaries, while helping to build boundaries between rival
religious communities. Although my focus will be on these materials from Saivas and Buddhists during the sixth and seventh centuries in the Tamil-speaking communities, this tradition of polemics about food continues.

The epic Manimekalai contains a number of ‘comparison stories’ which criticize members of other religious groups. In one such story, that of the merchant Aputtiran (“the son of a cow”), Brahmans are attacked because they plan to sacrifice a cow due to their greed for meat. In the hymns of Appar and Campantar, on the other hand, it is Buddhists and Jains who are vilified: they eat in funny ways (at night, in silence, with both hands) and refuse to sacrifice. Finally, the Sanskrit farce Mattavilasaprahasana lampoons a Buddhist monk’s greed for meat. Using these examples, and drawing upon the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Mary Douglas, I argue that polemics about diet played an important part in inter-religious conflicts. ‘Food fights’ were a convenient way to lessen the credibility of one’s opponents. They were also a way to bolster one’s credibility, and a way to maintain the insularity and exclusivity of one’s own religious group. Since Mary Douglas, it has become almost axiomatic that living bodies serve as handy analogies for social bodies. In other words, a large part of community identity is founded upon the construction of a particular bodily identity. By disciplining the bodies of its adherents, and seeking to shape those of other sects, authors of the polemical works construct the boundaries of their own communities. Bourdieu made a similar point with his comment that an entire cosmology can be evoked with the simplest of culinary injunctions.

It is the substances that people consume, most of all, that defines who they are. To eat meat, for example, or not to eat meat, is much more than a “litmus-test” for membership in a religious group. It is, in and of itself, constitutive of the identity of that group. You are not only what you eat, but also how you eat. You are not only what you eat, but what you do not eat as well.

Gautama Vajracharya, University of Wisconsin-Madison

*Vasudhara, the Buddhist Goddess of Wealth*

Vasudhara is a prominent goddess of Monsoon culture. She is worshipped in the middle of autumn when rice paddy is ready for harvest. According to Buddhist Newas she represents a heap of rice. She is also worshipped by Jains in Gujrat. The earliest reference to her is found in Vedic literature not as an Indo-European divinity but as a goddess of Indian autumn. But in Tibet she is regarded as an incarnation of Tara. A detailed study about her reveals a main difference between Tibetan and Newa Buddhism.

Vamsi Vakulabharanam

*Breaking the sectarian mold: Urdu and Telugu in Hyderabad*
It has been an abiding sight in Hyderabad to see socially conscious slogans being plastered on the walls of all colleges in the city. However, of late, one has seen a major difference; while until recently, these slogans would be seen both in Urdu and Telugu, it is in Telugu alone that the current cries for social justice are being articulated.

Has Urdu lost its status as a worthwhile vehicle for progressive and secular politics in Hyderabad? What is the root of this separation between Urdu and Telugu? How can this situation be remedied? I will address these concerns through a historical analysis of conflict and coexistence of Urdu and Telugu in Hyderabad city, from the Nizam government, through the “police action” that incorporated Hyderabad in the Indian Union, the Telangana agitation, recent communal riots in the city, and the role played by various secular and socialist forces in effecting an inter-language discussion. I contend that despite anecdotal evidence to the contrary, the two languages in Hyderabad still live under a regime of coexistence rather than conflict.

Martijn van Beek, Aarhus University

*A Uniquely Marginal Place: Relocating Ladakh*

Ladakh is a marginal, derivative place. Official texts, travel guides and some ethnographic texts represent Ladakh as an essentially Buddhist place located on the fringe of Tibetan civilization, not quite authentic or pure. Muslims are either ignored or treated as an alien influence. Its marginality is also attributed to its location on the borders of the nation-state, beyond the Himalayas. Its backwardness is stressed in developmentalist discourse. These visions of Ladakh can be traced partly to colonial imaginings, but still dominate official and popular perceptions. Ladakh is attributed a lack of 'substance', and diagnosed as lacking, insufficient, inauthentic, backward.

The paper briefly traces the marginalization of Ladakh historically -- identifying continuities between colonial and postcolonial imaginings of the region. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in Ladakh (1985-1998), I examine the ways in which local actors—both individuals and organisations—strategically adopt and foster the discourse of marginality to create a new centrality for Ladakh as a *uniquely* marginal place. These discussions and initiatives, e.g. in education, arts, and ‘development’, seek to redefine Ladakh’s ‘identity’. Giving space to local discourse about Ladakhi society and culture, the paper seeks to move beyond the mere deconstruction of received imaginings of Ladakhi ‘identity’ and to re-embed analysis in local social practice.
Virginia Van Dyke, University of Washington  
*Religious Mobilization in North India During the Twelfth General Elections: Perceptions of the Janus-faced Policies of the BJP*

During the 1998 general elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party strategically projected several conflicting images of itself: that of a moderate party seeking to occupy the middle ground abdicating by Congress; and that of a Hindu-nationalist-party-in-waiting eager to implement a Hindutva agenda soon as it could achieve a majority in the Lok Sabha. While the first image was the one portrayed at the national and international levels, the campaign strategy in some districts was an aggressively Hindu nationalist one, particularly where Vishwa Hindu Parishad sadhu-sants were the BJP candidates. This strategy was successful for the BJP in that it was supported by educated, urban voters wanting to see India move forward economically as well as by those attracted to the message of the most obscurantist sadhu-sant. Yet, clearly, it was the popular A.B. Vajpayee's message of moderation, and the emphasis on development by some religious leaders turned candidate, which appealed most to voters. The margin of victory for strident Hindu nationalism has continued to narrow.

Cecilia Van Hollen, University of California-Berkeley  
*Criminal Mothers and Superstitious Fathers: the Modernization of Maternal and Child Health Care in Tamil Nadu, South India*

The biomedicalization of maternal and child health (MCH) care has been integral to the modernizing project in India since the mid-19th century. In the post WWII era, modernity has come to be equated with "development," and the provision and use of biomedical MCH services have come to be viewed as key "indicators" of development. The modernizing project has involved the construction of non-biomedical MCH practices as not only backward, but also as dangerous and criminal or, at the very least, obsolete. And it has involved attempts to replace non-biomedical MCH practices with biomedical practices through both coercive and discursive means. Based on ethnographic research in Tamil Nadu in 1995, this paper examines the ways in which the care of newborn babies is implicated in this process. I argue that the degree of criminalization and use of coercion to reform non-biomedical practices varies depending on the institutional context within which the process of the biomedicalization of MCH care is taking place. The three contexts compared are: state medical institutions, NGO medical institutions, and patriarchal family institutions.
Ruth Vanita, University of Montana

*Pleasure as Perverse, Procreation as Pure: Twentieth-Century Indian Approaches to the Kamasutra*

This paper analyzes twentieth-century Indian scholarly approaches to the Kamasutra, from the standard Hindi translation and commentary by the nationalist Pandit Madhavacharya, first published 1911, to the Marxist scholar N.N. Bhattacharya's summary in his 1975 book on Indian erotic texts. These two scholars appear to be at extreme ends of the political spectrum. But their attitude to sexuality consists of a similar mix of anxiety regarding pleasure and desire to reconstruct the past as one of normative purity which they define as sex directed to procreation. For Madhavacharya, the Kamasutra is a warning text designed to show that all non-vaginal forms of sex are wrong. In his commentary, homosexual activity, especially between men emerges as the epitome of all society's ills, including colonization. Bhattacharya, who claims to take a feminist position and has been followed by many Indian feminists, dismisses the Kamasutra and almost all ancient sexual and temple depictions of erotic love as catering to the perverted tastes of rich upper caste men, which he contrasts with the pure tastes of the masses whose sex life was directed only to procreation. The paper uses these two texts to discuss homophobia in the modern Indian academy.

George Varughe, University of Indiana

*Coping with Changes in Population and in Forest Resources: Institutional Mediation in the Middle Hills of Nepal*

This study examines the relationship between the governance of forest resources and population in 18 locations in the middle hills of Nepal. Specifically, it investigates the significance of local institutions in forest resource management to gain a better understanding of how such institutions shape the actions of individuals at the community level. By focusing on local institutions, the study becomes less concerned with what or who is the agent of environmental degradation than with what has helped forest users to cope with environmental and population change.

This study suggests that development policy aimed at preserving the environment must recognize the significance of institutional arrangements at the local level to resource conditions at that level. Ultimately, the benefits and costs associated with resource conditions at the local level have considerable bearing on larger environmental issues. Furthermore, the study suggests that government policy on participatory resource management will be more successful if it is facilitative of institutional innovation and adaptation at the village level.
Lynn Vincentnathan, Northeastern Illinois University  
S. George Vincentnathan, Aurora University  
*Learning to Labor in India: The Subculture of Women Construction Workers*

The house construction site in India replicates the gender, caste, and class hierarchies of Indian society. The heavy work of carrying bricks and other materials is done primarily by women, most of whom are dalits. This is a dead-end job for women, while for men and boys it can lead to advancement. Skilled and semi-skilled work is done only by men, most of whom are from backward castes. Using ideas and comparisons from cultural studies, most notably Willis's *Learning to Labour*, this paper analyzes the social construction of gender, caste, and class at a house-building site in Tamilnadu within the context of informal labor processes. It presents men and women workers' views of gendered work roles and their concepts of masculinity and femininity as they relate to the various tasks and wages. These are analyzed in terms of caste and class differences in gender relations. A subtle resistance is found within women construction workers' subculture. Case histories of six women workers are then presented, with a focus on how they became construction workers, their views of their work, and their construction of gender.

Kamala Visweswaran, University of Texas-Austin  
*The Story that Comes After*

This paper locates translation at the vanishing point of modernity; between the longing for language and its loss. It highlights the attempt to translate across genres (ethnography, short story, drama) and languages (English/Tamil; "non-Brahmin" Tamil/Brahmin Tamil). It describes the confrontation of an ethnographic subject with a story about herself, which is then transformed into a performance piece by two of her translator-friend/traitors. In short, it picks up where my article, "Betrayal," left off.

Jonathan Walters. Whitman College.  
*Carving out an imperial Anuradhapura.*

The slab inscriptions of Mahinda IV (r. 956-972, A.D.) and his father Kassapa V (r. 914-23) were among the finest premodern Sri Lankan epigraphs. Moving beyond my own and other scholars' earlier work on the texts of these inscriptions and the contexts of their production, I try here to flesh out some of their "non-texts," namely the meanings and resonances conveyed by their physical form as distinct from the meanings and resonances conveyed by their literary content. Through a consideration of their geographical locations, physical relationships to other epigraphs of this and previous Anuradhapuran dynasties, paleographic peculiarities, and the roles played by epigraphs in the wider Indian imperial situation, I argue that erecting such things at all conveyed a range of
important political and religious messages to clerics and courtiers who read or heard them, and thereby directed their readings. Perhaps more important, in these non-textual ways the slabs were also able to convey these messages to the entirety of Anuradhapurans, even those who could not and/or did not read the inscriptions on their own.

Jonathan S. Walters, Whitman College.

*Stamp Acts: Philatelic Self-Representation in Ceylon and Sri Lanka*

This paper is an illustrated reflection upon the history of postage stamps in Sri Lanka, from their origins in the heyday of British Ceylon to the present. By treating stamps as serious, though fleeting, self-representations of the nation, I reconstruct a philatelic discourse about the authority and vision of colonial and post-colonial governments. The paper focuses on changes and constants in nationalist authority and vision in the Independence and post-Independence periods. Similarities and differences in the style and content of more recent stamps are then treated, against this backdrop, as indices and even as catalysts of change in national and international social, cultural, economic and political outlooks.

Mark P. Whitaker, University of South Carolina - Aiken

*Tamil Intellectuals and Tamil Nationalism*

Intellectuals have long played an important role in Sri Lankan Tamil life and politics. This paper compares three forms and "sites" of intellectual activity: first, the temple-centered, localized intellectual scene on the Sri Lanka's east coast prior to the war; second, the Eelam-centered, Marxist and DMK influenced intellectual scene that began to loom larger, even on the rural east coast, in the seventies; and, finally, the Western-style academic intellectuality that constitutes "respectable" discourse in Sri Lanka's capital (and on this panel). I will show how the current Tamil intellectual preoccupation with the violent construction of national identity has interacted with both temple-centered and academic forms of intellectuality in complex ways that challenge, sometimes fatally, all three forms of thought -- and all three kinds of thinkers.

Boyd H. Wilson, Hope College

*Understanding the UPANISHADS: Creating a Comparative Context*

The UPANISHADS are the so-called "mystical" texts of Hinduism, texts which emerged out of the time-honored tradition of seeking spiritual experience through practices of meditation and asceticism in ancient Indian forest retreats. As such, these scriptures present an especially difficult problem when attempts are made to introduce them to modern students, especially Western students who are more
familiar with religious convictions and world views which are based on dogmatic theology. Nonetheless, there are significant parallels between the concepts found in the UPANISHADS and the ideas which are typically found in Western religious convictions to make a comparative study feasible, and, hence, to make the UPANISHADS themselves approachable and understandable to Westerners. First, the UPANISHADS are seen on one level to be commentaries on the VEDAS which are themselves seen as REVEALED texts much as Western theology is commentary on REVEALED biblical scripture. Second, there is a mystical tradition within Judaism and Christendom which provides yet another avenue of comparison. The paper explores these and other approaches which serve as aids to understanding the UPANISHADS.

Mike Woost, Hartwick College

*Development and "Village" Identity on Sri Lanka's Southeastern Frontier*

With growing recognition of the deterritorialization of cultural identity that accompanies the condition of postmodernity, "the village" has become a less than obvious focal point for field research. In spite of these critical developments in theory, "the village" remains an important trope at many levels in the struggle over identity. Drawing on research and experiences in a "spontaneous" rural settlement in southeastern Sri Lanka, this paper illustrates some of the ways in which ideas of "the village" inform the struggles over identity (local, national and transnational). The settlement in question, like many others in the region, was formed by migrants from very different places and backgrounds, many of whom made their decision to move in the wake of transnational transformations of economy, society and culture. In this new context, the settlers have had to continually renegotiate identities in a sometimes chaotic crisscross of local, state and global processes of cultural/political economy. Focusing particularly on the cultural terrain of development, I examine this multifaceted process noting some of the ways that people confront, use, and react to, a diverse array of discourses on "the village."