A Quality Worker: IT workers and adapting to new global economics

My paper explores how workers in the Hyderabad’s IT (information technology) industry understand and negotiate their career and job options during the economic down of 2009. How do they imagine their future careers, their place within an international work force, and what this means in terms of creating an image of Hyderabad as an urban, IT hub?

In Hyderabad the development of “HITEC City,” a suburb of Hyderabad where IT companies are concentrated, is part of imagining an urban center where high-rise shopping malls and gated communities accompany the growth of the IT industry. However, as the effects of the 2009 economic downturn are being felt, IT workers are searching for ways to identify themselves. The slowdown has been accompanied by a major corporate fraud case, which could mean the end of one of the top five IT company in the country (and only major IT company started in Hyderabad) employing around 50,000 workers. Image and branding are important concerns for the city, the industry and individual workers as they consider the place of Indian corporations in the global market.

For the IT workers participating in my study their options are not outside of a neo-liberal economic model of international dependency or a return to pre 1991 protectionism. Rather, their aim is to survive the downturn by remaining employed, even if it means salary cuts, demotions, or changing specialization. This is accompanied by a narrative of moving from providing cheap labor in the global market to providing quality products. In many ways these become the exemplary neo-liberal worker, who through specialization carve a niche for themselves in the market by using the available information and expertise to present a specific image of themselves to the market.

Within this view there is little space for those outside of this economic process whether it is those in the informal sector or the college recruits that will not be employed. The only way for those on the outside to succeed in this economic model is to find a way into the system. Using data from interviews and participant observation, I will explore the ways those within the IT industry are creating an identity or image of themselves as neo-liberal workers, and the exclusionary practices that are part of this identity formations.

Dr. Israr and Javed Ghamidi: Religious Discourse in Pakistan and the Debate on the Nature of the State

Dr. Israr Ahmad, born in 1932, came under the influence of Allama Iqbal and Maulana Abul A’la Maududi as a young student. After the creation of Pakistan he worked for the Islami Jamiat-e Taleba and the Jamaat-i Islami but resigned from the latter organization in 1957 because of its involvement in electoral politics. He continued to give lectures on the Quran for which he had gained considerable fame. In 1967 he published his renowned tract, “Islamic Renaissance: The Real Task Ahead”, where he called for an Islamic renaissance by revitalizing the Imam, the “true faith and conviction” especially amongst the intelligentsia. For the last forty years he has also been involved in reforming society in a practical way with the aim of establishing a “true Islamic State or the System of Khilafah”. He headed his organization, the Tanzeem-i Islami, until ill-health forced him to relinquish its leadership in October 2002. Ahmad’s idea that the teachings of the Quran and of the sunna of the Prophet “must be implemented in their totality in the social, cultural, juristic, political, and the economic spheres of life” is contrasted by Javed Ahmad Ghamidi, born in 1951, who is also a well-known Islamic scholar, exegete, and educationist. Like Ahmad he is also a former member of the Jamaat-i Islami but was expelled in 1977. He is labeled a modernist for his insistence on the historical contextualization of the Prophet’s revelation, for his hermeneutics, and for his belief in ijtihad. In this his conclusions are similar to the Islamic
modernists. His conception of the state is that it is based on the law of the land as determined by the majority of the people. The differences between the two on the nature of the state in Pakistan epitomizes the debate in the wider public as to what it exactly means to live in an Islamic state. Both have been and are widely viewed in the media and have a following in the diasporic Pakistani community.

Agha, Sameetah

Stories from the field: Writing the Margins and the Problematic of History

This paper revisits my extensive historical fieldwork on the Pukhtuns in the North-West Frontier of Pakistan in order to contribute to our understanding of how historical knowledge of the region is produced. While this region has become a flash point in International Affairs yet again and the focus of US imperialism under President Obama, it continues to raise relevant historical questions about the constructions and representations of the history of its inhabitants. Through a critical examination of photographs and Pukhtun oral narratives about military encounters, this paper probes the incongruities and multiplicities that comprise historical knowledge when representing military history in Pukhtun tribal areas extending from the colonial period to the present.

Ahluwalia, Sanjam

Transnational Debates on Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children in the early 20th Century and its Impact on the Sexual Landscape of Colonial India

The paper seeks to provide a historical context to debates around prostitution and trafficking, focusing on colonial and princely India in a global context. The paper will examine the articulation and reception of the League of Nation protocols for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children in the early 20th century. It will focus on how different participants – the British colonial state, Indian princely states, and middle class Indian women’s organizations – shaped the terms of the debates around prostitution and trafficking, and sought to navigate the tensions or conflicts between international, national, and regional articulations of these issues. In doing so, the paper reflects on the discursive mechanisms of an emerging interconnected transnational understanding of the subject, with multiple participants in the west and non-west.

Ahmad, Hena

South Asian Feminism and Nationalism: A Twenty-First Century Examination

Towards the end of the 20th century the concept of nation expanded to mean not just the geopolitical entity but a group that supports or advocates a national culture. More particularly, “national” implied those agendas and discursive and cultural practices that were complicit with a patriarchal hegemonic culture. Critical writing concluded that nations and nationalisms have been imagined based on myths with implications that pointed to “woman” as cultural construct. The concept of nation bears reexamination today because the relationship of women to nation is multi-layered, complicated by the political contexts in which it is situated. South Asian women writers, such as Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Kamila Shamsie, Attia Hosain and Kamala Markandaya both resisted and reinscribed, in the latter half of the twentieth-century, the idea of the national. These women writers challenged the national when the national was seen to mirror patriarchal ideologies that defined the traditional cultural taboos on women’s freedoms and supported national identity when confronting the colonial imperial threat. It can be argued that the political and social realities of the decades in which they were writing shaped their framing of women within the confines of a patriarchal matrix. While grappling with existing ideologies of nationalist discourse, these South Asian writers critique what they allow us to see as a “postnational” world. The aim of this paper is to examine specific texts by these writers, permeated by a
consciousness of the general cultural oppression of women. As exemplified in these texts, interventions in the dominant discourses of patriarchal ideologies subvert women’s disempowering self-images and oppose dominant cultural practices that subordinate women to patriarchy. Through juxtaposing oppressed women, resigned to their fate, against those who question and challenge that oppression, this paper examines how these writers carve new images for women, exploring possibilities for them to break away from social prescriptions.

Alamgir, Jalal

Democratic Erosion and Representational Crisis in Bangladesh Politics

This paper argues that a representational crisis—the hope of political representation but its lack in practice—underlies the steady democratic erosion experienced in Bangladesh from 1991 to 2008. The study highlights three aspects of the crisis: electoral representation, as measured by the divergence between voting preferences and electoral outcomes; accountability representation, as assessed by decision-making accountability within democratic institutions and the major political parties; and violent representation, as manifest in contested issues that have spurred terrorist incidents in the country. The study concludes that democratic consolidation in the country will require stronger institutional capabilities to address each aspect of political representation.

Ali, Daud

Inscriptional Prosopographies: Merchant Lineages in Medieval South India

Inspired by the work of James Heitzman on the generational life histories of title holders in the Chola period, this paper seeks to use inscriptions to reconstruct the stories of merchant families in the lower Deccan during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The research problem which will be explored through these prosopographies is the relation between royal assemblies and mercantile organisations in medieval south India. It will use these reconstructions to explore the generational relations that such merchants had with the Hoysala court and the strategies that both royal agents and merchant lineages utilized to pursue their own goals in their interactions with one another. Through an analysis of the individuals of two families of merchants important at the Hoysala court, both associated with important merchant guilds, the paper will argue for the existence of a commonly shared sphere of courtly protocol and mercantile practice through which a variety of ambitious men moved to create political and economic opportunities for themselves through combinations of court service and mercantile activity. It has been recognised for some time that mercantile groups could be appointed to lordly and administrative offices attached to royal courts. This essay seeks to enquire as to how such movement between market and court was possible, and the role of mercantile corporations in facilitating this movement. Ultimately, it seeks to contribute to a clearer understanding of the relation between landed aristocratic values and markets and mercantile ethics in medieval India.

Ali, Kamran

Partition, Progressives and “Perverts”: Cultural Debates in Pakistan’s Early Years.

In Pakistan’s first decade of existence there were clear camps of intellectuals who had competing claims linked to various ideological positions that impressed upon the state and the populace about the legitimacy of one set of ideas over others. One of these fronts was the All Pakistan Progressive Writers Association (APPWA) which was closely affiliated with the newly formed Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP). Other groups were not as organized and consisted of a range of free thinkers, modernist poets and independent minded intellectuals along with those who sought to link the question of Pakistan with Islamic morals and values. The latter group was intellectually eclectic and divided and many had also previously been close to the progressives. This paper will
attempt to discuss some of the writings linked to these specific personalities on various sides of the political spectrum. It will particularly focus on debates surrounding the question of morality (“pure or perverse literature”), religion (Islam’s role in the new country) and national belonging (patriotism) within intellectual circles at the moment of Pakistan’s inception.

The paper will suggest that as much as the new country was formed on an ideological platform of Muslim nationalism in South Asia the shape of its future culture initially remained an open question. I argue there was much apprehension within various literary groups regarding what exactly constituted Pakistani culture and what claims it could make on common pasts. Hence, where during the initial months of Pakistan’s independence issues related to infrastructure development, settlement of refugee populations and national security concerned the new state, there debates on questions related to the literary representation linked to the trauma of partition itself, of Urdu as national language, the history of Muslim nationalism and the pivotal issue of Islam’s role in political life also remained at the forefront of at times unresolved intellectual discussions.

Ali, Aun

Understanding Sectarianism in the Postcolonial Present

From the early years of Pakistan's inception, the conflict over sectarian divisions has invoked progressive narratives that decry the confluence of religion and politics and prescribe liberal-secular ideals to re-shape the state. Such narratives may be criticized for obscuring the role of liberal governmentality and its convoluted interactions with 'religion', both during the colonial and post-colonial eras, in creating the kind of exclusions and violences we see today. In an engagement with the above appraisals and their underlying presumptions, this paper explores the possibility of thinking beyond the available contours of historiographical criticism for understanding sectarianism. In this connection, I present insights from my research on sectarian relations in Karachi in the year 2007.

Ambikar, Rucha

The Lure of Upward Mobility through Hindutva Education

The right wing Sangh Parivar runs numerous schools in India under the umbrella of the Vidya Bharati Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Sansthan. As the largest private network of schools in India, the Vidya Bharati runs over 18,000 schools in all the states in the country, with 98,000 teachers and reaching an estimated 24,00,000 students. Vidya Bharati schools operate mostly in rural areas or areas of urban poverty; offering education to communities that cannot otherwise easily gain access to education. Through its specialized curricula, extra-curricular activities and value education the Vidya Bharat seeks to incorporate the right wing ideals of Hindutva espoused by the Sangh Parivar into its student body.

This paper seeks to examine the reasons behind the enormous popularity of the Vidya Bharati school system in India; to understand why parents and students choose to join this school system. Based on ethnographic work conducted in the western state of Maharashtra; I propose that while Hindutva values form the crux of the curriculum at these schools these values are not what primarily attracts parents and students to these schools. Instead, I argue that the Vidya Bharati schools are often attractive and popular due to the fact that these Hindutva values are couched in terms of upward mobility. The Hindutva curriculum and values are presented to students and parents as a sure path to upward mobility and a better life and it is this fact; rather than the Hindutva values themselves that make the Vidya Bharati schools popular.

In this paper, I present the various mechanisms through which Hindutva values are transmitted to students, parents and surrounding communities. Concentrating on the work of the teachers and trustees of the Vidya Bharati schools, I identify processes through which Hindutva values are presented as ideal and the path to a better life. I examine the mechanism through which school officials undertake value “building” among its
student community as a kind of noblesse oblige; and finally identify the impact of these processes among the students, parents and attendant school communities.

Through this paper, I argue that the xenophobic nature of Hindutva values is obfuscated because they are presented as a means of upward mobility in the schools. At the same time, as the schools foster communities that supports Hindutva values in general, the popular support of Hindutva continues to grow, shrinking democratic and tolerant spaces in the country.

Bachrach, Emilia

Justifying Religious Authority: The Function of Hariray's Bhavprakash Commentary in the Caurasi Vaishnavan ki varta

The seventeenth century Hindi text the Caurasi Vashnavan ki Varta is part of a larger collection of hagiographical works belonging to the Vallabha Sampradaya—a devotional Vaishnava tradition popular in north and northwest India. The Caurasi Vashnavan ki Varta is a prose text comprised of short narrative accounts for eighty-four of the esteemed men and women believed to have been personally initiated into the sect by Vallabha (1479-1531). Today this text, among others, is still central to the daily ritual practice of many members of the Vallabha community who read aloud from the hagiographies and perform oral exegesis. One of the unique features of the text is that it is articulated by an intermixing of 'base-text' and embedded commentary, in which the latter easily manipulates how the reader is able to experience the text and derive meaning. In order to show how this manipulation works, this paper will provide a close reading of several of the narrative strategies at work in the commentary. One of these strategies is the way in which the commentary frames each account of Vallabha's initiates in another realm of reality—each character has his or her double in the eternal lila of Krishna and his companions. While this alternate reality functions in a variety of ways, one of its central purposes is to justify any seemingly transgressive actions performed by the lauded characters in their worldly existence. Whenever religious authority is breached or proper initiation into the sect has not been performed in the mundane world, the commentary will justify these actions by providing a particular contextualization in the transcendent realm. The second narrative strategy addressed in this paper is the actual structure of the commentary—it's physical placement in the text, which interrupts the natural narrative flow, and its conjunctive devices to transition from the 'base-text'. In this way, a close reading of the text reveals the ways in which the commentary necessarily influences the reader's perception of the text and provides a particular lens through which to view the narratives.

Balasundaram, Sasikumar

"First in the Class": Understanding Academic Success as Cultural Resistance among Tamil Estate Schoolchildren in Sri Lanka

This paper is based on research carried out among Tamil school children in a tea-estate area in central Sri Lanka, on the periphery of Kandy town. These children, though they speak Tamil as a first-language, have been forced to attend Sinhala-medium schools outside their own villages, having no other local schools to attend. The children of estate workers, these children have few economic or cultural resources. In their daily lives, they experience ethnic, linguistic, and class discrimination from teachers, peers, and local Sinhala parents. Some of this discrimination directly involves their linguistic performances, such as when they, due to the influence of their first-language, cannot produce what is recognized to be “correct” Sinhala. This paper, based on participant observation, audio recordings of naturally occurring speech, and interviews, looks at how children have learned to cope with this discrimination. I show how Sinhalese teachers, students, and parents see the success of Tamil children as a threat to their own achievement. I argue that these children, in their linguistic and social practices, use the “threat” of their success as a form of cultural resistance, and as a way of overturning their own vulnerability.
Balasundaram, Sasikumar

Operation or Oppression: Sterilization of Women as Cultural Genocide against the Up-country Tamils of Sri Lanka

This paper attempts to answer why the estate sector of Sri Lanka has the highest rate of female sterilization. Based on data collected from four months of field work and an analysis of the last 10 years Sri Lanka’s Demographic Health Survey, I found the Up-country country Tamil women have been sterilized disproportionately compared with other ethnic groups in Sri Lanka. Female sterilization in the estate sector is twice as the other sectors and national average. Members of the communities and human rights groups fear female sterilization is being used in a politically motivated attempt to eliminate the minority population of Sri Lanka. This paper will address this issue using the theories of cultural genocide. This paper also explores the relationship between production and reproduction, poverty, and racism as the structural factors that are mediating the cultural genocide of the minority Up-country Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Ballakrishnen, Swethaa

"Chak De, India" - Legal Process Outsourcing and the rise of the Global Indian Lawyer

Over the last few years, in response to an overbearing international call for legal cost cutting, general counsels and firms alike have begun looking to India for their legal outsourcing solutions. Though somewhat hesitant at first, this reliance has gained increasing momentum and earlier this year, research revealed that all of the top 30 UK law firms used the services of Indian Legal Process Outsourcing units (“LPOs”) (RSG India Report 2008).

This sudden market evolution has transformed not only the amount and nature of work that is being exported to the desi lawyer but also the way these services (and, by extension, the opportunities of the global legal profession) are perceived.

Drawing from comprehensive ground interviews with the actors in India (Winter’09 HLS PLP grant) and in the US, this paper elaborates on the sudden growth of this very recent LPO phenomenon and the effects of such dependence on its Western counterparts with a focus on the following issues: a) the fast-track growth of this industry and the change in sector perception following such growth by industry and prospective career aspirants alike; b) the role of training in these centers as a plug for the country’s largely disparate legal training systems; and c) the efficiency of the clinical, corporate structure of this model (transparent growth tangents, competitive admissions, etc) in contrast to the other forms of legal association and practice in the country and the particular appeal of this industry to the Indian female lawyer.

The attempt is to not only show the signs of and increasingly sustainable dependence but also raise concerns of this relationship in light of the sociology of the Indian legal profession and the translating concerns of professional responsibility and ethics that this reflects on the outsourcing Western legal profession. For, while it is interesting that the industry has quickly evolved from a back-end, technical support service to a substantive global solution (that one Senior Training Executive called the “training of the Indian Global in-house Counsel”), it remains to be evaluated if such evolution, if possible, is symbiotically sustainable.

Balsekar, Ameya

Proscribing Offense: Continuity and Change in Indian Censorship Policy from the “Nehruvian” to the “Hindutva” era
Scholars of Indian politics in general, and of Indian censorship policy in particular, have tended to contrast the predominantly liberal and secular “Nehruvian” era immediately following independence with the contemporary era dominated by the politics of Hindu nationalism and intolerance of difference more broadly. Censorship, particularly of “obscenity” and of expressions of women’s sexuality on screen, has been associated primarily with contemporary Hindu nationalists without paying enough attention to the ways in which contemporary attempts at censorship may be a continuation of established historical practices. Through an analysis of parliamentary debates, judicial decisions and government and civil society actions with respect to the freedom of speech and expression from the 1950s through the 2000s, this paper demonstrates the ways in which contemporary censorship policy and practice intersect with larger historical patterns, highlighting both the changes as well as the important continuities in this policy arena over the decades. More specifically, it argues that India has witnessed the progressive “democratization” and “decentralization” of censorship policy-making since independence as the discourse of early elites has come to be appropriated by new generations of aspiring activists and politicians looking to establish themselves as actors of consequence in Indian politics. The findings suggest that we reconsider the extent of the purported differences between the early years of the Indian republic and the contemporary era of intolerant nationalism and identity politics.

Bandara, Wijitha

Contesting Colonial Culture: Valivitiye Sorata Thera’s Interpretations of Shakespeare

Buddhist monastic scholarship in Sri Lanka marked the transition from the 19th to the 20th century with a variety of innovative texts, many of which were critical responses to British colonial rule and its associated missionary movements. These critiques demonstrate a nuanced response to the colonial encounter on the part of the Buddhist intelligentsia, and reveal a rich indigenous cultural “repertoire” on the island. Many Buddhist intellectuals in the early 20th century produced texts intended to illustrate the inadequacies and deficiencies of western modes of thought and values. This often fractious inter-cultural dialogue was reflected in the writings of scholar-monks in the early 20th century, and sometimes led to surprising hybrid cultural expressions.

This paper attempts to elucidate the character and substance of this inter-cultural discourse, and its particular anti-colonial stance, through a close reading of literary work produced by the prolific scholar, Venerable Valivitiye Sorata (1897-1963). Two of his works written during the colonial period, Kathāmrutaya (1943) and Kathāmadhuva (1946) are regarded as seminal texts of Sinhala literature, in which indigenous cultural values are championed. While they are Buddhist stories, a common feature of the works of scholar monks during this period, their contrast and significance lies in the fact that they are adaptations of famous works of British literature, altered to provide both explicit and implicit criticism of both the colonial masters and those who imitated them.

Bandi, Swati

'Alternative'/Mainstream: The Television Documentary Film in India

An analysis of Oscar-winning documentary films such as Born into Brothels (2004) and Smile Pinki (2008) will reveal two things: one, that the locality of these films pervades the aesthetic and political frameworks that they employ and two, the larger global circuits of ideas and capital that undergird their production and circulation (Both films are set in India and are funded by non-Indian organizations). A deeper enquiry into the Indian documentary film scene reveals the mostly neat coalescing of the particularities of the local and the ambiguities of the global in the contemporary ‘international’ television documentary. Over the past few years international television networks have increasingly commissioned Indian documentary filmmakers to make documentary films for television, ensuring them better funding and expanded circulation and viewership. This paper examines the implications of this convergence and teases out the many interlinked threads that make contemporary Indian documentary film production, with its increasingly transnational aspirations, possible. To
do this, I combine recently conducted fieldwork with a careful analysis of Nishtha Jain’s Lakshmi and Me (2007), a documentary film exploring the social and cultural boundaries that dictate the relationship between the filmmaker and her maidservant Lakshmi. This film was funded by the STEPS-India initiative, which organizes the DOCEDGE program. This program brings together Indian documentary filmmakers with influential commissioning editors from across the world for a five-day workshop that includes tutoring and pitching sessions. Jain, a participant, received monetary and pre and post production aid from various commissioning TV networks, including ITVS International, USA and TV2, Denmark.

I draw from existing scholarship on television and development studies in India and combine it with scholarship on media globalization to properly contextualize these new shifts from ‘alternative’ to ‘mainstream’ modes of production of the documentary. In doing so, I foreground India’s long and varied documentary traditions, which have the nation-state, independent filmmakers, the NGO and more recently, the international commissioning editor as key, enduring actors. I argue that these political assemblages have a stake in the creation of a certain discourse of documentary film emerging from the global South. A discourse that is determined by international markets and local and global institutional policies and is instrumental in the production of knowledge about a particular place and its peoples.

Banerjee, Dwaipayan

Ethics and the Activist Body Contesting the violence of the Bhopal Disaster

For my paper, I want to illustrate a specific ethnographic instance of the body as a site of inscription upon which violence is both performed and contested. In this, I will work with some preliminary engagement with an activist campaign formed around the Bhopal Gas disaster. I want to explore how the activists’ active relationship to their own bodies serves as a means through which a prior violent and toxifying inscription (during the gas disaster) comes to be contested. The question I want to ask is broadly this: if through Foucault we are to understand ethics as the productive possibility in the moment of subjectivation (the establishing of the self’s relationship to itself), what role might we imagine for the body in the ethical interchange between violence and its contestation, between self-making and unmaking?

Specifically, I want to examine the hunger strike as a means through which the body is recognized and activated as a medium and a substance for the political contestation of violence. As is well known, one of the products that the fasting body produces are ketones whose overproduction leads to medical complications diagnosed as ketosis or ketoacidosis. I am interested here in the self-production of toxicity during the hunger strike and the relationship this might have with the toxicity that was produced both environmentally and bodily through the original disaster. While hunger strikes have come to be associated in the popular imaginary with non-violent protest, how may we understand the form of violence that is self-inflicted upon the body of the hunger striker? In what relationship may we imagine the production of a self-subjected toxicity to an earlier violent toxicity formed by industrial disaster? On what terms might we understand the hunger strikers act as an ethical micro-intervention, an act that expresses the activist self’s relationship to a body as both a comment and contestation of prior violent inscriptions upon the bodies of those affected by the disaster?

Finally, I want to examine the materiality of the body in the possible ethical responses to violence. Through ethnographic detail, I want to examine how this materiality might allow for a reconfiguration of how we think of agency and practices of resistance.

Banerjee, Sikata

Teaching with Carol
Banerjee, Sikata

The Exotic, the Victim, and the Spiritual: Indian Womanhood in Modern Travel Writing.

Among the plethora of travel writing published in the last two decades, female authored texts, targeted specifically to an assumed middle class, Western woman who is curious about the world have become increasingly prominent. Postcolonial work following Edward Said’s theoretical legacy has underlined the historical fascination that India has held for the Western imagination. Indian women’s bodies representing the exotic, spiritual, or the victim have been a part of this imagined territory, many examples of modern travel writing tends to draw on this historical context in interesting ways. This paper analyzes three modern travel accounts to reveal the complicated location of Indian women and womanhood under the Western feminine gaze.

Barton, Patricia

War, Medicine and the Colonial Imperative: Conflicts in Indian and British Imperial Policy on Anti-Malarial Drugs, 1914-41

Difficulties in securing adequate quinine supplies for the British armed forces during the Great War concentrated official minds on stocks of the drug within the British Empire. Colonial authorities in London did not want to contemplate repeating the laborious negotiations with the Amsterdam Kina Bureau which had maintained supplies between 1914 and 1918 should future conflict break out. As the major producer of cinchona within the empire, the objectives of the Government of India came under the intense focus of British government officials and diverse organisations such as the Medical Research Council and the Empire Marketing Board. Its policy of attempting to meet the medicinal needs of malaria sufferers in the sub- continent at the expense of an export trade predicated upon the wider imperial imperative was severely criticised in the late 1930s as war threatened once more. With Japan as a potential enemy it became apparent that there would be more military action in malarial regions than during the Great War. Indian supplies of cinchona and quinine once again were regarded as vital for the potential war effort. The critics of the Government of India, however, rarely contemplated the sharply diverging policy changes in inter- war Britain with regard to the provision of anti- malarials. In the mid- 1920s the Medical Research Council rejected earlier proposals to expand cinchona cultivation and quinine manufacture in South Asia arguing that quinine was a dated and inefficient medication which would shortly be overtaken by superior synthetic equivalents. When these proved more difficult to produce than anticipated and thus more costly, the cultivation of cinchona once again became an imperial medical priority. The Government of India was blamed for not anticipating such trends, proving to be an easy scapegoat for the mistakes of metropolitan advisory committees and policy makers. This paper analyses the ways in which the anti- malarial policy of the Government of India became embroiled in imperial politics of war and medicine. It examines the way in which diverging needs of health care acted as a barrier to inter- imperial co-operation and formed another element in the political separation of colony from metropolis. The paper also examines the faith among colonial scientists that science would provide the magic bullets to fight age old health problems where nature had failed in an echo of the metaphors of war and medicine.

Basu, Subho

Imperial Natural Frontier: Himalayas in the Imagination of the Bengali Literati (1857 to 1919)

The idea of a natural frontier informed and influenced British policies of expansion and consolidation of their dominion in India. Historians differed in their analysis of the meaning of natural frontier but the fact that the Himalayas in the north and the Indian Ocean in the South and the Hindu Kush in the north-west and the Arakan forests in the north east constituted cultural and political boundaries of Indian civilization became an accepted fact among Indian political elites. Indo-Islamic writers also came to regard these as marking the borders of al-
Hind before the bitter rivalry over the meaning of Indian identity in geo-political terms erupted. Hindu exclusivist politicians no doubt projected these natural frontiers forming sacrosanct inviolable contours of the Motherland (Bharat Mata). Against this context of a rare unanimity about natural boundaries this paper interrogates how the Bengali middle class literati viewed the Himalayas, the most imposing marker of the imagined natural borders framing Indian civilization.

I submit in this paper that the meaning of the Himalayas underwent a radical transformation in the imagination and perception of Indian culture under the impact of colonial capitalism during the high noon of British imperialism. Drawing upon iconic Bengali travel writing and pilgrim narratives this paper demonstrates how the perception of Himalayas from being the abode of God gradually morphed into a hybrid construction whereby pilgrimage paths tracing the mythical routes supposedly followed by the Pandavas as they ascended to heaven were infused with secular meaning. Thus, the routes crisscrossing the Himalayas were sought out both by pilgrims who emphasized the sacred as well as individuals who came to the mountains in search of good health and physical well-being. The newly imagined Himalayas thus became a synthesis of colonial discursive reconstructions and high caste Hindu notions of religious spaces.

Basu, Sharmadip

Teaching to Play: Harmonium Manuals in late-Nineteenth Century Bengal

It will perhaps not be an exaggeration to state that the harmonium is by far the most popular instrument accompanying everyday musical practice in India. Indeed, it is an instrument which, despite famously strident protestations from the likes of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Rabindranath Tagore, has permeated the musical capillaries of the modern Indian nation. Today, no one doubts the embeddedness of the harmonium in the Indian (musical) landscape, or questions its ‘Indian-ness.’ Yet, the fact is that the harmonium is a relatively recent denizen on the Indian musiccape, brought over from Europe and implanted on the colonized ground only in the latter-nineteenth century. So, how did the harmonium first take root in India and vernacularize itself such that in 1936 Nehru would say, not entirely in jest: “I live in hope that one of the earliest acts of the Swaraj government will be to ban this awful instrument”? It is this question that my paper interrogates.

In pursuing the generative question raised above, I enquire into the early socialization of the harmonium in the literate and respectable—Bhadralok—society of late-nineteenth century Bengal. I access this history through the first three harmonium manuals to appear in Bengali print; namely, Sourindramohan Tagore’s Harmonium Sutra (1874), Upendrakishore Roychowdhry’s Harmonium Shiksha (1888), and Baishnabcharan Basak’s Sahaj Harmonium Shiksha (1896). Theoretically conceiving of the manual as that which, with an individual as its interpellated subject, mediates between the Aristotelian concepts, episteme—formal knowledge—and techne—rationalized craft, my reading of the afore-mentioned texts will focus on two interrelated issues: i) the ideological bases for using the manual-form with its built-in pedagogic charge to propagate the harmonium in Bhadralok society; and (ii) act of translation involved in the presentation of theoretical knowledge of music and practical knowledge of a musical instrument—‘new,’ for all practical purposes, in the given sociocultural context—to a reading public for private and individuated musical use.

On the one hand, then, this paper offers a glimpse into first stages of a naturalization process so thorough that today the harmonium rightfully claims place alongside the sitar and the tabla as instruments that signify the nation musically. On the other, the paper brings into focus a vital literary form produced by the vernacular print industry in the latter-nineteenth century—the manual, and looks at how such texts mediate specialist knowledge to an uninitiated but literate public.
The ‘Encounter’ in Popular Hindi Cinema

This paper discusses the trope of ‘encounter’ that has recurred in popular Hindi cinema roughly for the last two decades. ‘Encounter’, in the legal sense, means a situation in which the police has an exchange of gunfire with certified criminals or suspects. The purpose could be self defense, defense of citizens, or to prevent the escape of detainees. However, Encounter is also a colloquialism used by to describe extra legal killings. Although it can be traced back to the early eighties, the ‘encounter’ was a practice irresistibly systematized by the Mumbai Police Special Branch since the Bombay blasts of 1993. Its perpetrators like Vijay Salaskar, Praful Bhonsle, and Daya Nayak have since become folk heroes and many films have been made on the theme. This paper analyzes cinematic ‘encounter’ as a trope of exception in the workings of political sovereignty. The state addresses the danger posed by the other by announcing the other as endemically pathological in being criminal/terrorist/Muslim. The ‘encounter’ is thus the outcome of a habit of statist thinking that is a theodicy; that is, it closes the ontological gap between human procedures of judgment and the divine ideal of justice. The state can therefore immediately and violently connect the law to the fact, bypassing juridical and legislative institutions that should mediate such passages. In doing so, it displays an executive sovereign power outside the ambit of democratic liberalism or even the Foucauldian idea of governmentality; as Hannah Arendt would have put it, the state practices a ‘secrecy’ in open daylight.

VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MEN: INDIAN MEN’S MOVEMENTS STORM FAMILY LAW AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

As women’s organizations have mobilized the Indian State since the 1980’s to institute a slate of laws on intimate violence, men’s groups have formed in counterpoint to challenge definitions of dowry, violence, economic restitution and punitive criminal apparatuses deployed in cases of family violence. For a few years now, these groups have become substantial transnational vocal presences through Internet sites and campaigns, and most recently, have succeeded in bringing their construction of issues to critical political fora such as the Ministry of Women and Child Development, becoming active players in negotiating emergent legal definitions of family violence. Through ethnographic analyses of family violence prosecutions, and discourse analysis of primary documents produced by several of these groups, this paper tracks their discursive trajectories by way of mapping their successes and limitations. I focus in particular on the groups’ understandings of due process, marriage payments, and wives’ economic entitlements of marriage, delineating ways in which meanings of kinship and violence are contested and instituted in legal, political and cultural arenas.

Envisioning Orality: Representations of “The Man in the Well” from the stupas at Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda

The function and meaning of the visual narratives that adorned the Buddhist stupas of ancient India have perpetually perplexed scholars. How might we understand the relationship between narrative panels and their ancient viewers? Were such sculpted scenes of events from the Buddha’s final and previous lives meant to be “read,” and if so, to what end? The abundant sculptural reliefs from the stupas at Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda (c. second and third centuries CE) similarly elude easy interpretation; however, several representations from these sites of the story of the man in the well—in which a hapless man clings helplessly to a
creeper and thereby briefly postpones his inevitable death—suggest a possible relationship between visual narratives and oral traditions more broadly. Unlike most visual narratives from ancient South Asia, the sculpted reliefs of this tale take the form of a framed narrative, which includes a monastic storyteller, his audience, and the content of his teachings. That is to say, the poor man in the well is represented, as if floating in a cartoon bubble, alongside the preaching monk. Through an examination of this narrative and its intriguing mode of representation, this paper explores the ways in which visual narratives—particularly when they appear within the larger devotional context of a stupa—seem to have been intended to transform their viewers in much the same way that the Buddha’s recitation of his past lives brought about spiritual progress in his rapt audiences.

Bedi, Tarini

Regional Media, Television, and the Female Shiv Sainik in Maharashtra

Focusing on female party-workers of the militant Shiv Sena party in Western India, I explore how women’s mediated experiences are intertwined with their constitution as political and communal subjects. I draw from valuable studies on national media and politics in India; however, I shift the analysis to the role that media in the regional language of Marathi plays in the creation of gendered, political subjects for urban women in a regional political party whose central motif has been the ongoing constitution of linguistic and ethnic difference. I particularly illuminate this constitution of gendered political personhood through the intersections between everyday community life and the larger discourses of vernacular, private media. I explore three main themes. First, that the imaginaries supplied by the vernacular media provide a gendered, cultural canvas against which regional, linguistic, and national identities get individually and collectively shaped at the micro-level of the party worker in India. Second, that the constitution of specific kinds of violent political subjects in Shiv Sena is a complex process that engages performative and narrative dimensions that are historically contingent on the politics of the proliferation of media consumption practices in urban India. Third, I explore the relationship between Shiv Sena women’s mediated experiences and media consumption and the specifically gendered, violent political personas that they inhabit and transform through this consumption. I find that particular forms of media consumption become critical in assertions of religious, linguistic and gendered difference. I suggest that the mediated experiences that Sena women draw on to constitute violent public personas are in continual states of transformation so that they remain culturally legible to the publics that they serve and continue to be narrative sources of both individual and collective political power.

Bednar, Michael

The Rajput Who Wasn’t: Mahimasahi in the Hammira Mahakavya

In his book, Naukar, Rajput & Sepoy, Dirk Kolff writes “This may seem quite a heretical thing to say, but I suggest that, according to the ways of the North Indian military labour market, in the pre-Mughal period, ‘Afghan’ as well as ‘Rajput’ were soldiers’ identities rather than ethnic or genealogical denotations.” This paper follows Kolff’s statement that Rajput may be an open social identity in the pre-Mughal period by examining how Mahimasahi, a Mongol Muslim, becomes Rajput. This paper focuses on passages from the Hammira Mahakavya, a fifteenth-century Sanskrit text that describes the fall of the Ranthambhor Fort to the Delhi Sultanate. Mahimasahi first proves his service to King Hammira through a series of military raids in the beginning of the text. He then remains loyal to Hammira as other Rajputs begin to betray him. As the final battle looms, Hammira nevertheless denies Mahimsahi the right to fight by claiming that the battle is between the Delhi Sultanate and the Rajputs. A rejected Mahimasahi returns home and slays his wife and children in what the text clearly links to a jauhar-like act. Proving his Rajput-ness and acknowledged as such by Hammira, Mahimasahi is now permitted to fight alongside the Rajputs in the final battle. This story line in the Hammira Mahakavya suggests that the Rajput social identity was far more open in the fifteenth century than scholars
generally acknowledge and that a process existed through which one who was not born a Rajput could become a Rajput.

**Behrendt, Kurt**

The Not So Lost 4th Century in Gandhara: Sculptural and Architectural Evidence

The not so lost 4th century in Gandhara: sculptural and architectural evidence
Kurt Behrendt

It would appear, on the basis of coin finds and associated architectural structures that the fourth century was a period of prosperity and active patronage in Gandhara. One can cautiously suggest that patronage increased incrementally starting in the second century and continuing to the mid fifth century when sources of revenue would appear to have suddenly evaporated. Concentrating on the architectural remains a clear relative chronology can be traced. Of course relative chronologies can be deceiving as the economy and related political systems were not stable. Still based on rates of construction it is reasonable to suggest that the most productive period of Gandharan sculptural fabrication occurred in the fourth century.

In the simplest terms the fourth century in Gandharan is characterized by ‘iconic’ images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. By this time the narrative tradition has largely died and we have yet to see the widespread emergence monumental images and sculptures exhibiting complex “Mahayana” iconography. This middle period of Gandharan development in many ways has been the least studied in spite of the fact that more imagery was being produced in Gandhara at this time than any other part of South Asia.

The initial goal of this study will be to chronologically delimit fourth century sculptural production based on available evidence. A broad characterization of the meaning and function of this ‘iconic’ sculpture will be attempted in light of Gandharan developments and, more broadly, how this imagery relates to the wider South Asian Buddhist tradition.

**Berger, Rachel**

Ayurvedic Governmentalities: reconfiguring biopower and indigeneity in the 1930s-1950s

The historiography of medicine in modern India has concentrated mainly on the introduction of biomedicine to the subcontinent, and continues to be framed within the paradigms of encounter, conflict, political dominance and cultural hegemony that characterize explorations of empire and resistance in this period. Subsequently, the position of those medical experiences that fell outside of the purview of the Public Health infrastructure remain relatively unexplored.

This paper seeks to explore these latter themes through a survey of the unlikely career of Ayurveda in post-war North India. Largely ignored by the Public Health machine of the nineteenth century, Ayurveda rose to political prominence after the transfer of responsibility for medical services from the central to the provincial governments under the dyarchic structure of governance introduced in 1919. The newly-expanded provincial government was forced to rely upon pre-existing infrastructure as it could not afford to maintain its biopolitics while still employing biomedicine; while the disciplining of the intimate lives of its subjects was still a central focus of state medicine, the tools were no longer affordable. From the mid-1920s on, Ayurveda and its institutions – namely, Vaidis (practitioners), Dawakhanas (pharmacies), and Vaidacharyas (educational programs) – were employed by the Provincial government as key components of their medical plan.
It is through the adaptation of Ayurveda to fit state purposes – along with a transformation of the regulatory framework of medical legislation to accommodate Ayurveda – that the negotiation of ‘medical services’ transformed into a more profound discussion of the responsibility of the state to its subjects. As the U.P. Medical Board hashed out the boundaries of the Ayurvedic ‘tradition’ – spelling out the limits and conditions of practice, the means by which practitioners would be trained, registered and legislated, and plans to reinforce and invest in Ayurvedic institutions were drawn up – it ultimately engaged in a conversation about the condition of the population of the province, and the role of government in improving its well-being. The idea of ‘health’ thus emerged primarily as a category of governance, and was central, from the 1930s on, to the political and popular discussions of anti-colonial nationalisms, North Indian nation-building, and projects of class and identity-formation. Ultimately the persistence of ‘health’ in official and popular discussions of power allowed for the refashioning of biopolitics to suit new modes of late colonial governance.

**Bhalodia, Aarti**

Princes, Diwans, and Merchants: Education and Social Reform in Princely Gujarat

This paper focuses on education and social reform in the princely states of Gondal, Bhavnagar, and Junagadh in Gujarat. Studies on colonial Gujarat tend to focus on areas which were part of the British Raj. Since most of Gujarat comprised of princely states, more attention needs to be paid to these territories. Scholarship on education and social reform in British India has highlighted the contribution of the middle class and the colonial government. Gujarat with its strong mercantile traditions had business communities which played an influential societal role. Using administrative reports of princely states, autobiographies and memoirs of princes, diwans, and merchants, this paper examines how the involvement of both upper and middle classes affected the field of education and social reform in princely Gujarat. In trying to understand the above, my work also draws attention to the flexible boundaries between princely and British India as money and ideas flowed easily between them. The princely states of Gujarat had an extensive diaspora stretching from Bombay to Africa which contributed towards building of schools, orphanages, homes for widows, and hospitals in their places of birth; thus connecting princely India to British India and the world of the Indian diaspora. The aim of the paper is to focus on the understudied princely states while exploring their linkages to the exterior world.

**Bhatawadekar, Sai**


Since the turn of the millennium mainstream Bollywood cinema is undoubtedly undergoing significant changes in order redefine and establish itself on the global cultural scene. While attracting a wide international audience in general, Bollywood specifically aims to address Indians born or living abroad, who are constantly struggling to negotiate and reconcile their dual cultural identities as well as trying to comprehend the conflicts and changes within Indian society in a global context. In my paper I closely analyze Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra’s film Delhi 6 (2009) as an illustration of how Bollywood tackles such hybrid Indian identities and problematizes the impact of globalization on the self-perception of Indians and their “rediscovery” of India.

I examine Delhi 6’s articulation of hybrid identities on four major levels: 1. the protagonist – Roshan – an Indian New Yorker, who feels and is perceived as an outsider in India trying and failing to apply “Western” values to Indian contexts, but who eventually realizes that he belongs in India; 2. his half Hindu half Muslim identity that drives him to go to great lengths to stop religious riots in his community; 3. Bittu – Roshan’s love interest – who tries to define and search for her identity, independence, and freedom in a confused mix of Indian and “Western” values; 4. the film’s own embodiment of its characters’ hybridity by using metaphors, symbols, and cinematic devices that consciously evoke images from both Bollywood and Hollywood classics.
I maintain that, due to the film’s rather ambitious aim and scope, all these levels are not always coherently and tightly knit together. However, not only the film’s depiction of identity struggles, but its conclusion and resolution of them makes it interesting and problematic: the film eventually seems to suggest that while religious identities can co-exist, it is not possible, and arguably not even desirable, for the characters to reconcile their Eastern-Western, Indian-American identities. Like its characters, the film itself seems to make a choice and prefer a sense of belonging to a distinct Indian identity. The film’s complexities and judgments promise to have tremendous potential to provoke discussions amongst heritage and non-heritage academics and students of South Asian Studies, who constantly walk the line between cultures and traditions.

Bhatia, Varuni

Ritual Knowledge, Secular Concerns: Print, Worship Manuals, and the Quotidian Practices of Religion

The centrality of puja or worship within Hindu religious practice can hardly be denied. This paper will inquire into the manner in which these seemingly ahistorical and essential ritual practices are defined, controlled, contextualized, and their “correct” enactment ensured through the proliferation, in the post-print era, of handbooks, guidebooks, and manuals that impart precise and specific instructions on how to worship. Using Bengali Vaishnava traditions (with their massive existing compendiums of ritual manuals from the pre-modern period) as my illustrative example, I will examine three different ritual manuals that appeared at different times over the previous century: Gauranga Puja Paddhati (Method for the worship of Chaitanya, 1906), Vaishnaviya Sadhan Paddhati (Method of Vaishnava Practice, 1935), and Archan Paddhati (Method of Worship, n.d., 11th edition, 2006).

My intention in this paper will be to interrogate into the manner in which ritual practices are transmitted through the availability of this kind of inexpensive literature that simultaneously claims to be authoritative and is easily accessible. How does the proliferation through print of these instruction booklets transform traditional modes of priestly authority? Moreover, what kind of secular concerns—regarding time and work, bodily practices, and ritual space—can be discerned in these worship manuals? I argue that early printed Vaishnava worship manuals intend to recreate a sense of sacred time, space, and bodily practices of the kind expressed in premodern compendiums. In practice, however, these heavily-summarized manuals make allowances for fundamental transformations within ritual practice. Methodologically, this paper argues for a historically-contextualized approach towards the study of ritual by examining ritual through the lens of the socio-historical conditions of practice. Thematically, this paper extends interrogations into the realm of print and its relationship with modern religious practices.

Bhatt, Amy

Homeward Bound: Emerging Politics of the Returned NRI

In this paper, I look at the phenomenon of reverse migration from the United States to India and the ways in which non-resident Indians (NRIs) are changing the social and political terrain of their ‘re-adopted’ home. Using interview and media data collected for my dissertation, my paper is a contemporary study of emerging politics among a quickly growing subset of Indian migrants. As the global economy shifts downward, the prospect of returning to India rather than staying on to weather the financial storm in the U.S. has become more appealing to many mid-career professionals. After having spent often more than 10 years away from India, particularly their formative school and early work years, these migrants are making the move back to India. As
In this paper, I track three new forms of socio-political engagement emerging from this group of returnees that have implications for shifting national identities, changing political agendas, and re-envisioned notions of service for the expanding middle classes. The first form that I explore is of the ‘NRI as potential politico,’ or the sort of person targeted by the Times of India ‘Lead India’ campaign. The second is the entrepreneurial Indian who returns in order to tap into the burgeoning labor and consumer markets by starting their own business venture on their home soil. Finally, the third is the NRI housewife whose ‘household seva’ becomes integrally linked to her identity as a globalized, yet thoroughly Indian woman. I argue that while all three figures are forged amidst the language and priorities of neo-liberalism, they are rooted in the legacies of Indian socialism, Gandhian moralities, and a revival of technocratic solutions to political and economic problems. Taken together, they provide useful insights into shifting notions of political change.

Bhattacharya, Tithi

Why is Land to Rule: Self and Spatiality in Nineteenth-Century Bengali Travelogues

The prince (raj-putra) with his close friends always set out on a distant voyage at the start of the pre-colonial Bengali folktale. In their journey through strange and unknown lands they encountered many wonders and many dangers. Their travels, however, remained mostly through a terra incognita or a geographical blank. The lands they visited, often remained unnamed and we are told very little about their boundaries or geographic features. Closely related to this reluctant nominalism about journeyed places, are the accounts of voyages in the mediaeval Bengali mangal kavyas. Lands and ports are named but never described in any great detail. Land in pre-modern travel-narratives is thus never available as an object of knowledge, nor travel deployed as a process of subject formation.

Modern travel writing in Bengal which began to appear from the late nineteenth century onwards of course participated fully in the modern technologies of scientifically narrating the geographies of travelled space. The places travelled were catalogued minutely, the people charted and cultural habits either condemned or declared worthy of emulation. The writer’s direct visual observation of lands and places gave him/her a specific authority over that place that could not be replicated by those less travelled. It is the contention of this paper that the intense specificity of modern travel narratives was made possible by a new notion of space and the spatial order. I look at two sets of accounts, one from the sixteenth and one from the nineteenth century to argue that the imbrications of the self in modern spatiality, a phenomena completely absent in pre modernity, was responsible for transforming accounts of geographical space into narratives of possession.

Bhattacharyya, Debjani

Deviant Dwelling: Tiljala Slums and the Limits of the Urban

Sarai Reader’s (2002) introduction to a volume on city theory alerts us to a radical definition of the space we unquestionably call the city: it is “a locus of imaginary engagements, a body of distinct practices, a compendium of different ways of knowing, and as a field of power, strategies of survival and resistance […] and is also one of the key icons of the contemporary cosmopolitan imagination.” Exploring a distinct set of dwelling practices, especially focusing on evening festivities of the predominantly Bihari migrant population of Tiljala, Calcutta, like playing dholak, leather dhampa, dance performances like khemta, or recreating the minstrel songs of the beas and festivities around gajon this paper will show how these engage in a certain production of the city. According to the logic of political economy developmentalist and statist paradigms, these festivities and practices will always be marked as ‘excess’, and ‘waste’. In this process, the space of the slum, with its conglomerate of relations and interactions, becomes mapped as the limit of urban space.
As a result of this delineation, historians encounter what they refer to the “not-yet” spaces of modernity, variously as the “uncanny” or “unintended city,” the spaces whose temporal logic is explained away as a residual of the rural, that cannot be incorporated into the state’s logic of progress. How would a re-thinking of the above-mentioned dwelling practices of the leather-worker (chamar) community of Tiljaja challenge the progressive teleology unquestioningly premising the thinking of the urban?

Disrupting the temporality that is infused into thinking the rural and the urban, this paper will look at these subaltern dwelling practices and see how space is produced in a differential. The Bihari population of Tiljala often revert back to a communal memory of the 1934 earthquake, which forced them to leave behind their dwelling and move to Calcutta. This ‘leaving behind’, I will argue, is constituted in the urban through a re-fashioning of certain dwelling and festive practices and an imaginative reconstitution of a pastoralised home ‘left behind’. The ‘left behind’ space is re-created out of the very materiality of the urban squalor and the threat posed by the state’s desire of rationalising that space through eviction. These ‘fossilised’ practices are not about deriving rural pleasure but are surprisingly adaptive to and generative of the formal logic of the urban.

Bilgrami, Akeel

Gandhi, Newton and the Enlightenment

This paper situates Gandhi’s critique of the Enlightenment in ideas that first surfaced in ‘early modern’ England among a group of dissenters, ranging from the radical sectaries in the mid-seventeenth century to scientific dissenters in the late seventeenth century. By Gandhi’s lights, India stood at a certain cusp, of which --if it was not such an indicator for a teleological outcome-- "early modern" would be a good description. If that is right, the fact that he should have deep affinities with the freethinkers of that much earlier time, who were alarmed at the developments in science, capital, and orthodox religion is hardly surprising. The paper provides detail of how these developments transformed the concept of nature into the concept of natural resources as well as set western society on the path of political governance that was abidingly elitist, and in doing so helped to configure a blueprint for modernity that Gandhi was trying to preempt in India, denying its teleological inevitability, even as his colleagues in the freedom movement asserted it. It is argued that this unconscious genealogy of his ideas in these early dissenters, therefore, is a genuine source for their elaboration and illumination.

Bloomer, Kristin

S-potting the Goddess: South Indian Hindu and Christian Ritual Performances

The _karakam_, or water vessel, is used in many Hindu rituals of goddess devotion. Decorating the brass or stainless steel vessel with a coconut, margosa leaves, and turmeric and/or red kumkum powder, devotees may invoke the presence of a particular local goddess. They may also fill a pot with water and set it out at night to keep _peey_--the hungry, lustful spirits whose heat and thirst need to be cooled and satiated--from possessing an unsuspecting young victim. This paper will investigate the ways in which the _shakti karakam_--locally coded as a symbol of feminine divinity--and other pots ritually coded as Hindu are used by many South Indian Christians. From carrying the _karakam_ as an offering during Eucharistic liturgies, to setting it on a makeshift chariot ride with deities in neighborhood processions, to employing it in Marian possession performances, Christian devotees use it at once as a marker of both feminine divinity and indigenous authenticity. The _karakam_ and other pots may also blur religious boundaries, as they make so-called Christian rituals feel more
accessible to non-Christian audiences. Finally, they offer opportunities for converts to manipulate and transform Christian symbols. By introducing local uses of common vessels into a variety of Christian ritual performances, converts not only exercise symbolic ownership of the religion of their colonizer; they may also translate that colonizer’s ritual language into an opportunity for potential liberation.

Bora, Papori

At the Margins: Reading Gender and the Politics of Sovereignty in India's Northeast

On June 15, 2004, women in the Northeastern state of Manipur staged a protest to oppose the rape and custodial killing of a young Manipuri woman, Thangjam Manorama by the Assam Rifles paramilitary battalion, who suspected her to be a militant. At this protest, several women appeared nude, shouting and holding a banner that read “Indian army rape us.” This paper considers how we might read the nudity and the statement. It begins by articulating three predominant ways in which the protest has been read. The first kind of reading which can be articulated as a nationalist response to the constitution of women as mothers of the nation reads the protest as a sign of desperation of mothers who want to protect their children. In contrast to this nationalist reading of the protest, liberal feminist readings have argued that women used the very object of their oppression, the sexually differentiated body, against the state. The human rights discourse reads the protest as a struggle of mothers for justice. The paper makes the case that these three readings are insufficient as they fail to highlight the radical significance of the protest. In particular, it argues that the failure comes about as a result of not engaging with the epistemic questions that shape the constitution of the gendered and racialized Northeastern subject. To provide a postcolonial feminist reading the paper examines how colonial ways of knowing, nationalist discourses and the discourse of counter insurgency constitutes the gendered and racialized Northeastern subject. This analysis allows for an alternative reading of the protest; viz., as a dramatic attempt to challenge the power relationships that constitute the Northeastern subject. This paper contributes to postcolonial feminist theory. It situates the protest amidst questions of knowledge production by interweaving postcolonial studies and feminist studies to address larger questions of colonialism, democracy, nationalism and militarization.

Bose, Purnima

"Desi Hoosiers: Masculinity and the Transmission of Culture"

This presentation investigates the construction of masculinity in the archives of "Indians in Indiana," a collection of seventy-two interviews by scholars at Indiana University conducted between 1999-2002. A few scholars have remarked on the importance of the "Indians in Indiana" transcripts for understanding the complex and ongoing processes of acculturation and the development of bi-cultural competence among Indian Americans. A preliminary reading of these oral histories disclose immigrants’ attitudes towards family dynamics and inter-generational interactions, community formation, marriage, cultural traditions, and ambivalence regarding assimilation. Most of the interviewees are middle-aged or elderly professionals, living in Bloomington, Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, and South Bend. Many of these interviewees identify the transmission of Indian cultural values and Hinduism to their children as a central concern, expressing their relief at the existence of Indian Associations for providing an institutional structure to expose their children to Hindu rituals and celebrations. While it has become a truism in feminist scholarship to emphasize the role of women as transmitters of culture and tradition, this archive suggests that men participate vigorously in the preservation and creation of culture. A reading of the archive demonstrates "masculinity" to be a contested site, subject to multiple elaborations and pressures. I consider various articulations of masculinity in relation to shifting conceptions of gender in dominant Anglo-American ideology. I see this work contributing to ethnic studies, Asian American studies, and Indian diaspora studies. Many scholars have lamented the polarization of race and ethnic studies into a binary opposition between African
Americans and Anglo Americans. My study helps to expand ethnic studies beyond this dialectic. Within such pioneering works in Asian American studies like Lisa Lowe's Immigrant Acts or Karin Aguilar-San Juan and David Henry Hwang’s The State of Asian America, the dominant focus has been on East Asian immigration, with an emphasis on the experience of Chinese Americans. A focus on Indian immigrants enlarges this field as well. Finally, much of the emergent scholarship on Indian Americans such as Sunaina Maira's Desis in the House and Vijay Prasad's The Karma of Brown Folk focuses on immigrants in large urban centers such as New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. I believe my project will help illuminate regional variations in the Indian immigrant experience.

Bose, Brinda

AMBIGUOUS INTIMACIES: REFLECTIONS ON THE NEW HINDI MALE ‘BUDDY’ FILM

The plasticity of masculinities (and, correspondingly, femininities) in Indian cinema is read variously by the cultural logics of its locational politics, of the individual spectator, as well as of an universal register of masculinities, however notional and shifting that may be. While South Asian/Indian masculinities do generally adhere to certain universal codes of male aggression, taciturnity, and fear of spontaneous intimacy in relationships with females, male-male friendships are not so easily coded or deciphered. They are often, for example, marked by a kind of closeness that would be read as characteristic of homosexual relationships in the West, even when they are not. Concomitantly, it has been possible for visible signs of intimacy between homosexual couples (holding hands in public, for example) to pass as markers of non-erotic friendship, since such gestures/signs have not been encoded in South Asian societies as necessarily homosocial/homoerotic/homosexual. The signifiers of male friendships in cinema of the region, therefore, require both knowledge and understanding of the multiple cultural logics being enacted in the visual narratives of gesture and speech. Readings of these narratives are then further complicated by the spectatorial gaze. Contemporary Hindi cinema has begun to engage in interesting ways with male friendships in urban India, recognizing that such representations constitute liminal spaces that can be fruitfully ambiguous in reading and interrogating new identities/intimacies/sexualities in city cultures. This paper will look at the shifting register of masculinities in recent Hindi cinema through male friendships in a triptych of male “buddy” films - Dil Chahta Hai (2001) Rock On!! (2008) and Dostana (2008).

Bose, Sarmila

Energy Insecurity and Long-Term Conflict: The Political Economy of Baluchistan

At opposite ends of the South Asian subcontinent are two regions which have been in the grip of violent conflict for several decades. They also hold the richest reserves of oil and gas in the area. India’s Northeast has been in a state of “insurgency” since independence, and has seen rebellion and ethnic violence for thirty years. Baluchistan in southwest Pakistan has also experienced waves of rebellion and repression since the establishment of these post-colonial nation-states. Baluchistan is home to half the country’s estimated gas reserves. Both regions have experienced state-led development of energy resources. Long-term conflict has impeded exploration, disrupted production and raised costs. Baluch tribal chief Nawab Akbar Bugti was killed by Pakistani security forces in August 2006. The government had accused him of ordering attacks on gas pipelines and oil installations. Baluchistan is rich in energy resources, but its population is poor. It is a region with tribal traditions, where questions about the diversion of local resources for the enrichment of other parts of the new nation-states, non-locals reaping the benefits of ‘development’, artificial political borders slicing through communities, and the threat of outsiders swamping the indigenous population, have been live issues of serious conflict. It has an insipient separatist movement that brings into question, and opens up the debate about, the nature of the Pakistani state. This paper examines the political economy of energy and conflict in
Baluchistan, to assess in what ways the nature and duration of armed conflict both against the state and between different local peoples connect otherwise vastly different regions of South Asia, and what public policies therefore might offer common solutions to these long-term conflicts. In doing so, it examines the nature of province-center relations in Pakistan and considers the concept of the state in Pakistan. This not only brings up the topic of the economic relations between Baluchistan and the center, but also the extent of the intrusion of federal laws into tribal societies and the role of Islam in the state as an outwardly religious identity and practice increasingly permeates every level of Baluchi society.

**Braun, Elisabeth**

Consustantial with Kings - The Mughal Emperors, their Elephants and Imperial Image-Making

“An elephant mounted by a King is radiant; a King mounted on an elephant is resplendent … elephants are consubstantial with Kings”

The Mughal Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) and his splendid elephants more than lived up to this reputation of consubstantiality in imperial greatness. As numerous illustrations in the Akbarnama and related sources show this was true of all aspects of imperial life: in Mughal statecraft, in war and in peace, and most notably in the imperial conduct of the Mughal ruler. The prominent inclusion of elephants in the illustrations was not only decorative but also served to direct the attention of the viewer to the Mughal emperor's political station and divinely sanctioned rule. It thus became a deliberate vehicle of imperial propaganda and image-making.

Elephants were an integral part of life in India reaching back as far as the 2nd millennium BCE. By contrast, the Mongol ancestors of the Mughal emperors had no elephantine traditions. They were horse people from the vast steppes of Central Asia who followed their herds during seasonal migrations and often conquered the lands in their way in fierce and brutal battles. Their Mughal heirs found the elephant symbolism in India, appropriated it and made elephants a prominent part of their rule.

As this Power Point presentation will demonstrate through over 40 lively illustrations, this is true of

1. Mughal statecraft in war and in peace, since “where there were elephants there was victory;”
2. imperial conduct, where Emperor Akbar was always presented as conscious of his station as political ruler and as Allah’s representative on earth; and
3. Akbar’s personal daredevilry during sport, hunts and other entertainment which was legendary and which, in his own words, more than once challenged his destiny.

With a mandate to record Emperor Akbar’s every deed, thought and aspiration it does not surprise that Abu’l Fazl discussed the elephant in 9 chapters of the Ain i Akbari.

The most talented painters in Emperor Akbar’s studios were instructed to render visual Akbar’s imperial greatness, including his elephants. As a result, these illustrations often brought to life in one or two vividly painted miniature pages what was much more difficult to convey in several pages of convoluted text

Under Abu’l Fazl’s guidance, with the exacting brush of the painters of the imperial studios and the Mughal emperors’ consent the elephant became indeed “consubstantial with kings.”

**Brick, David**
On the Intention of the Gift in Classical Brahminical Thought

Throughout its long history, the Brahminical literary tradition has demonstrated a deep concern with gifting and, thus, provides valuable data on the nature of this important institution in pre-modern South Asia. This tradition of reflection on the gift culminates in a class of Sanskrit texts known as dananibandhas (c. 1100–1700 CE), which draw together, organize, and comment upon a vast array of earlier scriptures on dana (gift/gifting). In this paper, I will explore the Brahminical theory of the gift reflected in these texts. Specifically, I consider a unique tenet of Brahminical hermeneutics, namely, that in order to qualify as dharma—understood here as the behavioral rules through which a person can achieve otherworldly benefit—a prescribed behavior must lack a visible or worldly intention. In other words, any act undertaken towards achieving worldly rewards is viewed as ineligible for otherworldly rewards. While this tenet of the Brahminical gift has received little attention among scholars of South Asian studies, it is one of the very foundations upon which the Brahminical ideology of gifting stands.

First, this paper explores how Brahmins are overwhelmingly portrayed as gift-receivers in the dananibandhas and, subsequently, how our textually attested version of the gift reflects recipients’ values and ideology. Moreover, according to the Brahminical textual tradition, the authorization to receive gifts is the unique prerogative of Brahmins. This condition has two major implications. First, Brahmins are ideally meant to live by means of gifts alone—not by means of trade, wages, etc., which are the prescribed livelihoods of lower social classes. The other is that, of all the social classes in orthodox Hindu society, only Brahmins are permitted to receive lavish gifts, such as the donor’s weight in gold, or any other gift over and above simple gifts of sustenance that directly aid in survival. Hence, there is a clear motivation on the part of Brahminical authors to distinguish gifting from other modes of economic exchange and, by extension, to distinguish Brahmins from all other classes of people.

As I will demonstrate, this hermeneutical tenet, which scholarly discussions of the gift in South Asia have largely ignored, is one of the very foundations upon which the Brahmanical ideology of gifting has been built. It, moreover, reflects the particular sectional interests of Brahmins, who composed the dananibandhas and, according to these sources, are uniquely suited to receive gifts.

Bronner, Yigal

Ambivalence and Alienation in Bilhana’s Vikramankadevacarita

There is something quite deceptive about Bilhana’s Vikramankadevacarita (VDC), one of the most popular and oft-quoted works of the Sanskrit canon. The work conforms perfectly with the stipulations of the mahakavya genre: it is replete with descriptions of bravery in battle and love with beautiful women, as well as depictions of impressive cities and the different seasons; the language is intensified with the entire arsenal of kavya’s speech ornaments (alamkaras); and its main hero, king Vikrama VI of the Western Calukya dynasty (r. 1076-1126), is deemed a perfect monarch, “just like Rama.” At the same time, the poem is entirely unprecedented precisely for subverting these very aspects of Sanskrit literary culture: the equivalence of the hero to Rama is repeatedly undermined; the poetic language is audibly silenced at a series of crucial junctions; and the poet consistently airs his ambivalence towards, if not utter resentment for the cultural milieu of the Deccan, his own patron and subject matter, and the very task of a court poet.

The paper argues that Bilhana’s ambivalent, alienated, and dissenting voice is dominant throughout the work, which begins with a bold challenge to critics and kings in its preface and culminates with a lengthy autobiographical epilogue. I also argue that the defiant, personal tone and the resentment towards kings stand at the basis of Bilhana’s many “after-lives” and prolific posthumous “career” – a corpus of narratives about him and poems attributed to him that indicate that the tradition has correctly identified what is truly novel about Bilhana’s work.

In short, the paper argues that the complex relationship between poetry and history in the VDC has to be appreciated. Previous scholars have mined the VDC for crude facts and criticized Bilhana when he was deemed unfaithful to his assumed role as a chronicler. What they failed to see is that Bilhana constantly and consciously
struggles with and comments on what he sees as the utter incompatibility between poetry and political reality, and how this innovative approach has prolific a subsequent history in later kavya production.

Brown, Robert

Is the Sarnath Style Gupta-Period Buddha Image an Innovation?

By Robert L. Brown

I have argued in several articles and papers that the Sarnath Gupta-Period Buddha images were a radical stylistic and iconographic innovation, one that had reverberations on Buddhist imagery throughout South Asia, and indeed across the rest of Asia. My paper asks if this can be substantiated by looking at Buddha images developing in northern India during the preceding fourth century. What were the artistic sources for the Sarnath Buddha images?

I will look for the sources in three ways. One will be by tracing the stylistic stages of sculpture at Sarnath itself. Is there a consistent development? Are there stages when outside influences can be identified? Is there a clear break in the fourth century, or periods when few images are being produced?

The second approach to the identification of pre-fifth century sources for the Sarnath Buddha image is to explore the extent and nature of regional sculptural development. I will focus on four sites: Mathura, Kausambi, Sanchi, and Sarnath. To what extent can the sculpture of these centers of artistic production be defined with unique styles and iconography? Are they following a similar trajectory? And can Sarnath be characterized as of particular innovation?

And the final approach for identifying sources will be to discuss the possible role that metal sculpture played in the development of fourth century art. The role metal images played is an extremely problematic issue, as they are without provenance as we do not know where any of them were made. The relationship that metal images have to stone images at this period of transition from the third to fifth century may have been crucial to regional differences. Can they serve as sources for Sarnath stone Buddha images?

Brown, Bernardo

Returning Transnationals: Aesthetic Transformations in a Sri Lankan Town

Transnational migration generates large amounts of money that flow to communities of origin, but this money does not travel alone. This paper explores the impact of social remittances in a Sri Lankan town. By focusing on visible transformations in architecture and fashion, characteristics specific to the society where the remittances originate can be identified. While the consequences of transnational remittances have been widely studied, the larger cultural transformations they bring remain significantly unexplored. This paper argues that remittances are not innocuous cash but are accompanied by new values and practices.

However, remittances coming from the West are more likely to be adopted as desirable changes by local communities. The circulation of migrant workers from a town in Sri Lanka to Italy offers a unique example of how the aesthetic notions of a community change over time without shedding its singular identity. The Italian influence in creating new styles and notions of beauty is evident around this Sri Lankan town, but rather than an imposition of foreign views and styles there is an adaptation of foreign aesthetics and values to the local context. These new imported styles that change the local landscape, add to the aesthetic repertoire new possibilities rather than generate a hybrid style.

Brubaker, Robert

Regional Geopolitical Processes and the Creation of Vijayanagara’s Urban Landscape
Encompassing large portions of peninsular India, the 14th-16th century Vijayanagara empire has long been portrayed in traditional histories as having arisen to shield the South from the onslaught of Islamic invaders. Responding to this view, a more recent generation of historians, archaeologists and architectural historians has drawn attention to marked evidence of cultural borrowing, architectural synthesis and the development of a common regional political culture that transcended religious and political divides. In lieu of the discredited notion that the history of medieval South India can be reduced to a simple dynamic of religious difference, a much more complex and fluid picture of competing regional kingdoms has thus emerged. At the same time, however, the partial collapse of the Delhi Sultanate at the beginning of the period in question resulted in the near-simultaneous establishment of a series of competing successor polities whose basic geopolitical configuration and often divergent interests remained fairly stable through time, exercising a marked and continuing structuring effect both on the form of individual polities and the character of interactions between them. In this paper I focus on examining how such durable geopolitical circumstances shaped the character of the Vijayanagara polity and more particularly the landscape of its eponymous urban capital by juxtaposing geographic and historical considerations with archaeological data pertaining to diachronic patterning in the timing, tempo and character of masonry construction at Vijayanagara. More specifically, my analysis of temporal patterning in the construction of military and sacred architecture at Vijayanagara suggests that such patterning was significantly shaped by the course of interpolity interactions as these are known through historical sources.

Brueck, Laura

Marginally Speaking: dialect and dialogue in Dalit narratives

This paper seeks to investigate the ways in which contemporary Hindi Dalit writers manipulate various styles of language in prose narratives. Despite an ever-growing availability of Dalit narratives in original languages and in translation, and attendant institutional and critical frameworks, there has been scant attention paid to the ways in which Dalit writers consciously stylize their language to construct various kinds of social and political meaning. In my paper I seek to return to the elemental literary critical strategy of close reading, focusing particularly on the employment of dialect in contemporary Hindi Dalit prose narratives including autobiographies, novels and short stories. I suggest that the speech of the Dalit characters who do not possess a hegemonically defined “Dalit consciousness” is consistently rendered in non-standard Hindi dialect while the characters who do possess this consciousness speak in a register of Hindi that is seamless with the standard style of the narrative frame. Contemporary Dalit writers thus selectively employ non-standard Hindi dialects to differentiate between these characters and in so doing construct a hierarchical coding that stands at odds with the egalitarian presumptions of Dalit literature. I point instead to the marginalization (dalitization) that is happening within the Dalit narratives themselves through the manipulation of linguistic styles. This paper navigates the politics of such linguistic marking within the Dalit literary community and also finally considers how to render such a subtle marginalization process into English.

Burchett, Patton

Kacchwaha Influence on Bhakti Religious Formations in Mughal India: Politics, Patronage, and Literature in Galta, Vrindaban and Beyond, c. 1500-1650

This paper examines the crucial role played by the Rajasthani Rajput lineage of the Kacchwahas in the emergence of the so-called "bhakti movement" in Mughal north India in the 16th and 17th centuries. I argue that their privileged position in the Mughal imperial system allowed the Kacchwahas to make a genuinely formative, and as yet under-appreciated, impact on the rise of bhakti communities and their relations with the state. The story of the Kacchwaha clan, their relationship with the Mughal empire, and their influence on bhakti
religious formations must necessarily be told in parallel with the story of the rise of the new religious communities at Galta and Vrindaban, which served as arguably the two most important institutional locations for the spread of bhakti across north India during the Mughal period. While other scholars (M. Horstmann, W. Pinch, J. Hastings, D. Haberman, A. Entwistle, etc.) have written in detail about critical aspects of this subject matter, this essay ties together and interprets this research in new ways in order to demonstrate how the bhakti movement was shaped in fundamental ways by the political ties, patronage, and personal religious leanings of, specifically, the Kacchwaha clan.

**Burnam, Reed**

A Lesson in Dharma: A Scene from the Sanskrit Mahabharata

In this presentation I propose to look at a scene from the Śalyaparvan of the Mahābhārata that I feel demonstrates both the literary and didactic qualities inherent in the massive conglomeration of scenarios, voices, and lessons found in the Sanskrit narrative. I will use as my grounding point the idea of dharma, as it is arguable that this multi-leveled term is the essential underpinning of the entire narrative of the Mahābhārata text. Some scholars have made the claim that the text as a whole functions as a form of “education” of the main characters meant to display lessons of dharma in action, and to demonstrate the political and ethical dilemmas sometimes encountered in adherence to proper duty and custom. The Mahābhārata is full of such dilemmas. We have to ask whether individual scenes in the Mahābhārata were originally meant to be normative proscriptions or rather simply literary devices meant to highlight the somewhat ambiguous nature of dense philosophical and political ideas such as dharma. While chapters such as the Āppadharmaparvan and Anuṣāsana books of the Mahābhārata preserve outright didactic instruction on dharma and kingship, and portions of the text such as the Bhagavadgītā preserve religious and philosophical teachings on dharma, other scenes such as the breaking of Duryodhana’s thighs in the Śalyaparvan offer a different type of education through the purely fictional machinations of the characters in action. This is a wholly unique type of instruction that takes into account living scenarios and multiple voices, and I argue that it is another type of education that can only be achieved through fictional situations of this type. In this paper, I hope to draw a line of reference between fiction and injunction by focusing mainly on the unique opportunities afforded by narrative, and especially the format of “epic” narrative embodied in the Mahābhārata. I will follow on the previous idea of “education” of the characters in the narrative, but I will focus on the ways in which fiction makes this possible in a unique way by breathing life into characters and situations, offering a sort of “real-life” education, versus the “classroom” type education offered by other types of dharma.

**Busch, Allison**

Multiple Modes of Rajput Self-presentation

This paper uses a Brajbhasha text from Bundi as an entry point into questions of identity and self-representation in Rajput court culture of the Mughal period. The text in question, the Lalitlalam (Finest lover, c. 1660) of Matiram Tripathi, embodies perfectly the courtly aspirations and anxieties of a Rajput mansabdar in seventeenth-century India. From a literary perspective the work is part of a new turn to classicism that is broadly characteristic of the courts of its day as Rajput kings—in this case Rao Bhao Singh Hada (r. 1658-82)—supplemented their vibrant local traditions of martial poetry with new genres that, though written in a vernacular language, drew on age-old royal motifs from Sanskrit kavya. And yet for all the idyllic perspectives of royal perfection afforded by a classicizing approach, real life exigencies of Mughal militarism loom large, as when Ratan Singh Hada (r. 1608-32) is said to have “prospered in the joys of imperial battles” or the patron’s father Satrusal Hada, who died fighting for Dara Shikoh in the war of succession that broke out in 1658, “held his ground on the battlefield knowing it to be a Kshatriya Kashi (city of liberation for warriors).” While it would
be a stretch to view the text as either anti-Mughal or anti-Muslim, the poet Matiram does bring something that we can call Rajput, and perhaps even Hindu, pride into play. At issue in this text, and many others of the period, are highly political modes of self-narration, and narrativizing others.

Cameron, Mary

Women Ayurvedic Doctors and Modernizing Health Care in Nepal

The important diversity of indigenous medical systems around the world suggests that gender issues, well understood for Western science, may differ in significant ways for non-Western science practices, and are an important component in understanding how social dimensions of women’s health care are being transformed by global biomedicine. In this paper I present ethnographic research with formally-trained women Ayurvedic doctors in Nepal within which features of medical knowledge and practice beneficial to women patients are identified; these features are potentially transformed by modernizing health care development.

Campbell, Jennifer

Mughal, Sikh and British; An Entwined History of Space and Place and Meaning

The Caravanserai Networks Project is interested in the combination of historical and archaeological information about travel amenities, networks and nodes, which extended across the whole of South Asia. One aspect of this research has been the intense architectural study of the imperial Mughal Serai Jahanabad, Peshawar, Pakistan. Located 40km from Afghanistan along the route to the Khyber Pass, Peshawar is a gateway city, marking both an entry into and out of South Asia, featuring in stories of conquest, travel, trade and exploration for thousands of years. This paper addresses the use of a Mughal constructed caravanserai within Peshawar as a strategic position of frontier control during Sikh and subsequent British occupations. General Avitable’s administration laid the groundwork for the British takeover of the region offering both an infrastructure and a history of domination and control they could use to their advantage. This paper reconstructs through historical, archaeological, and architectural evidence the Sikh and British occupations of this site discussing how the frontier was/is characterized from the 19th century to the present day.

Carter, Alison

Trade and Exchange Networks between South Asia and Cambodia during the Early Historic Period: Preliminary results from an examination of stone and glass beads.

South Asian stone and glass beads are often the first indicators of contact with South Asia at sites in Southeast Asia. During the Iron Age and Early Historic periods (500 BC- AD 500), the Mekong Delta region of Cambodia and Vietnam was home to a major international trading center known to the Chinese as the civilization of Funan. Unfortunately, due to recent political unrest this region has been omitted from discussions regarding trade, exchange and socio-political development in Southeast Asia. This study seeks to fill these gaps by studying stone and glass beads from several Iron Age and Early Historic period sites in Cambodia. Preliminary results from Laser Ablation Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (LA-ICP-MS) compositional analysis will be presented and the implications this research has for our understanding of trade and interaction networks in Cambodia and between South Asia and Southeast Asia during this period will be discussed.

Chadha, Ashish
Over the last few decades, documentary filmmaking has emerged as an important genre of political intervention in India. It has not only evolved as a medium of cinematic discourse but also as a political strategy of engaging the common public in debates and action on a range of contemporary socio-political events. Until the 1970s, documentary films in India were produced exclusively by a single statist governmental agency - Films Division -, a mouthpiece of the government, churning out propaganda and cultural films. It was with rise of American trained documentary filmmaker - Anand Patwardhan that independent filmmaking took roots in India. Like the rest of the world with the emergence of video technology in the late 1980s and digital technology in the 1990s, there was a radical change in the production of documentaries. A slew of independent filmmakers began using documentary cinema as a means to critique state, society and culture, employing it to organize people around political and social issues. Soon documentary films become a powerful cinematic practice, not only challenging the narrative hegemony of commercial cinema and statist and corporate television, but also producing an alternative narrative of postcolonial modernity. These were political texts and the personal was not yet the domain of the documentary discourse. The ostensible fixation on the political was broken in the late 1990 and early 2000 with a subtle move to the personal. Exemplified by films of Vasudha Joshi (For Maya, 1997), Pankaj Rishikumar (Kumar Talkies, 1999), Supriyo Sen (Way Back Home, 2001), Avijit Mukul Kishore (Snapshots for the Family Album, 2003) personal documentaries emerged slowly in a discursive universe largely populated by political films. In this paper I chart the epistemic move from the cinema of the political to the cinema of the personal in the practice of contemporary Indian documentaries. I demonstrate how the move into the personal occurred in the Indian documentary films and why the personal is political for these filmmakers. I argue that this move from the political to the personal emerges due to number of socio-cultural factors: rapid collapse of the joint family unit and the proliferation of nuclear family and its isolative impact on individual subjectivity; the transformation of urban India into pockets of late capitalism; the disenchantment with the alternative political process which had fueled earlier political documentary work and finally the emergence and the rapid proliferation of the digital filmmaking technology.

Chakraborty, Sarbani

Making the familiar strange: Interrogating the concept of ‘quality' education in the context of India

In this paper, I argue that the concept of ‘quality education’ has assumed a taken-for-granted status, and has become a familiar phrase often used uncritically in the policy arena. What seems to get negotiated and contested is why ‘quality education’ can or cannot be achieved within a given context like India. This approach treats ‘quality education’ as a thing in itself, against which policy practices are then evaluated and assessed. But there is little discussion about the possible incongruities implicit in the concept – incongruities that have implications in the social relations of the teaching – learning world. Here, I pose a critique of the concept of quality education, as discussed in some of the policy/evaluation texts. As a first step the paper delves into the possible meanings of ‘quality’ and raises questions regarding the juxtaposition of the word “quality”, with that of “good” and “excellence” within the Education For All (EFA) document, a mobilizing education policy document of the United Nations. In the second section, I comparatively examine the possible differences in the meaning of the concept of ‘quality education’ between some of the specific UN policy texts on EFA and some of the policy/evaluation texts based on “Sarva Shikhsha Abhiyan” – the ‘Indian(ized)’ version of EFA, to universalize elementary education in India. An interrogation of this kind seems crucial when large-scale efforts to fulfill the UN mandated, time-bound educational goals, like EFA, within seeming policy contradictions of equality, quality and quantity are in operation. A critical inquiry of the extant policy concepts seems to be needed in order to get a sense of the particularities of the complex social worlds within which policies operate and get implemented. I ask whether ‘quality,’ as an explicit mobilizing concept is adequate for our understanding of the processes of formal schooling. I examine this primary question through the three following questions: a) How does ‘quality’ get conceptualized? b) What processes are inscribed in the policy texts for the achievement of ‘quality’? c) What are the assessment mechanisms of quality? What propels this effort at making the now-
familiar concept of school quality strange is the continual attempt by the policy texts to concretize the concept, to bring it within the realm of every-day commonsensical usage with a seeming intention to universalize and measure it.

Chakraborty, Paulomi

The Refugee Woman and (En)Gendering Post-Partition Calcutta as a Modern-Urban Space: A few Montages

My paper is an enquiry into the gendered formation of Calcutta as a site for particular kinds of post-Partition modernity. I conduct this enquiry by examining select shots from Satyajit Ray’s Mahanagar (The Big City, 1963) and Ritwik Ghatak’s Meghe Dhaka Tara (Cloud Capped Star, 1960) and Subarnarekha (The Golden Thread, 1965). I contend that the modernity of post-Partition Calcutta is created through the insertion of the refugee woman as a figure into this space. The visibility and mobility of the refugee woman in the streets of Calcutta, traveling by foot and in public buses, trains, and trams becomes crucially instrumental in constructing the city as a modern space.

The movement of the refugee woman becomes the trope of a particular modernity in Ray’s Mahanagar. The city here is as a site for the romance of new-found citizenship. The modernity becomes visible and available for consumption by appropriating the mobile female body of the refugee woman; it is through her ‘coming out’ into the streets, in her claiming of the city as her own, and the projection of her own emancipatory modernity onto the urban space, that the city becomes utopian and modern.

In contrast to Mahanagar, Ghatak’s films construct Calcutta in predominantly dystopian tones. They juxtapose ‘the good life’ at the heart of the city—the sophisticated bars and grand mansions, next to the peripheral underbelly of the city—the refugee-colony and the prostitute-quarter. In the violent disjuncture between these spaces, the films trace the journey of the Partition refugee, from the village to the city, as an arrival into modernity, but a particularly traumatic one of dislocation. It is through the movement of the figure of the refugee woman in and out of the ‘city’ that this dislocation is mapped.

Therefore, I suggest that despite the distinct difference between the films of Ghatak and Ray, they converge in the way they rely on the refugee-woman’s mobility as a particular trope for constructing the city as a modern space. Finally, this paper will explore whether we can read women’s modernity from the trope of this gendered mobility into (creating) an urban space? If so, the paper will like to assess from a feminist position, what different implications do the two contrasting visualizations of the city, as either dystopian or utopian modern space, for women’s modernity.

Chakravarty, Srijita

Situating the Abducted Indian Woman in the Aftermath of the Partition of India, 1947-50

Shifting Spaces: Displacement and Dereliction in Post-Colonial India

The Independence of India in 1947 was in many ways a pyrrhic victory accompanied by the greatest exodus in history and leaving the Government of India to grapple with the tenacious problem of providing work, shelter, and basic healthcare to the millions of refugees who wanted to settle in the country. In the course of my paper I will try to present how women especially were the most affected by this relocation and their sense of homelessness and loss of identity. The paper will address the problems of all those women who were abducted as well as others who left their homes willingly.

Though it is difficult to find official estimates of the exact number of abducted women one can assume that more than one hundred thousand women were abducted. The Inter Dominion Treaty was signed on 6 December 1947 to repatriate abducted women. About 30,000 women were recovered by the police. However, abduction included women who were forcibly taken away from their kin as well as those who left their families on their
own volition. To resolve the problem ‘The Abducted Persons Recovery and Restoration Ordinance’ was passed and later converted into an Act. By this Act anyone who was married to a man of a different religion after March 1947 was assumed to have been abducted. The rationale was violence had started in the Punjab at about that time, so women who were married to men of a different religion were forced to do so against their will.

One must mention here the role of the policemen who transformed from their roles of protectors to perpetrators of crime with great alacrity. Many of them sexually tortured, maimed murdered and raped women. However, a lot of women after being rescued by a policeman looked to him for succor, a ray of hope amidst helplessness. They willingly married their ‘rescuer’ momentarily forgetting that the same person was perhaps responsible for ruining hundreds of lives. By the time realization dawned these women were married, often with a child knowing that there was no way out of this terror.

Chang, Abdul Haque

The Hurs of Sindh: A Historiography of a Rebellion from a Subaltern Perspective

From late 19th to mid 20th century, the Hurs as a group under a charismatic leadership fought against the British Empire. Available historical literature on the Hurs largely follows a colonial perspective representing them as terrorists and anti-state elements. This perspective dominates Western and Pakistani scholarship, including the work by Sindhi intellectuals, who continue to rely on Colonial British sources to construct Hur history. Most scholars in Pakistan and elsewhere borrow their arguments on the Hurs from British colonial sources. One major archival source is H.T Lambrick’s, the British administrator of the region in the 1940s, papers and surprisingly also his novel on the Hurs, The Terrorist (1972).

Historical renditions privilege British sources over local knowledge (which was methodologically considered as “inferior” as these were based on memory) and have been unable to address the issue of heterogeneity of practice and experience within colonial Sindh. Hence in some ways the development of historiography in Sindh emerged as a subject which dealt with those citizens who followed and maintained state order and disciplined themselves according to rule of modern state. Within this context, Hurs were excluded from normative history not only by colonial historians but surprisingly also by post colonial Sindhi scholars and modern British historians. Keeping in view these concerns, in this paper I am going to provide an alternative and subaltern perspective on the Hurs of Sindh. My work seeks to also further the understanding of a crucial yet under studied aspect of the British colonial presence in South Asia. Furthermore, the paper will critically evaluate the historiographic representation of Sindh in colonial history and its continuity in post colonial nation state of Pakistan.

Chase, Brad

Connecting the dots? Harappan subsistence organization in Gujarat

As Harappa and Mohenjodaro matured into fully developed cities in the Punjab and Sindh, many of the material culture forms and social practices developed in these cauldrons of urbanism came to be widely used in Gujarat, especially at a series of small walled settlements situated along coastal trade networks. Reconstructing the nature of the economic, political, and ideological networks that linked the residents of these small sites with one another and with the distant Indus cities is an important goal of my ongoing research, undertaken in collaboration with archaeologists from the Maharaja Sayajirao University. In this paper, I will present the first findings of a recently initiated study of the pastoral economy at Shikarpur, a small walled settlement located across the narrowest stretch of the Gulf of Kutch that separates it from Gola Dhoro, a major center for the manufacture of shell-bangles. While it is likely that the residents of these two sites engaged in some form of trade, it is not known the extent to which they were inter-dependent upon one another for their subsistence needs. The work that I am presenting on here seeks to determine if there is any evidence for a regular trade in
animal products between these sites or if they were both largely independent in terms of one another in this regard. Investigating the subsistence base of the Indus Civilization will ultimately lead to a more complete understanding of the organization and developmental trajectory of South Asia’s first urban civilization as it expanded into new areas such as Gujarat.

**Chatterjee, Moyukh**

**Narrative and Violence: Debt and Potential in the Gujarat pogrom 2002**

This paper discusses the narrative contexts, institutional practices, and forms of care associated with both survivors and local NGO justice-workers (nyayapathiks) in Ahmedabad, in order to map the present afterlife of the Gujarat pogrom.

This paper looks at the relationship between NGO workers’ own life stories and the sites of rehabilitation they produce and intervene in. The paper examines narratives that arouse ‘victims’ to seek legal justice in the face of imminent backlash and the forms of debts accrued in the face of violence by survivors. What rhetorical and methodological lessons are built into the relationship between narrative and violence, both in the stories of survivors and the stories that NGO workers tell survivors? And if this relationship both grounds and activates specific theological, symbolic and institutional contexts, then the figure of ‘violence’ is itself ethnographically defamiliarized, emerging as potential and along agential lines. These lines of inquiry are possible, this paper argues, by paying close attention to the performative aspect of certain narratives, ones that fashion and insert violence in temporalities that are not always secular or progressive.

Finally, by paying attention to the overlapping areas of ethics and subjectivity in spaces like “relief colonies”, the paper traces the crises, decisions, and actions that present us with emergent forms of marginality and subalternity in the postcolony.

**Chatterji, Angana**

**Nation/Self-Determination in India-administered Kashmir**

Through archaeologies of territory, identity, and religionization, this paper examines processes that engender nation/nationalisms, biopolitical governance, and struggles for self-determination. Kashmir, 1989-2009: Intense and protracted isolation, systemic post/neocolonial violence, and the realpolitik of global governance amid capillaries of history/power that bind New Delhi and Islamabad. Kashmir, 1989-2009: Mass graves, extra-judicial killings, fake-encounter deaths, draconian laws, disappearances, 'half-widows', incalculable sexualized violences. Drawing on the work of the International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in India-administered Kashmir, convened in April 2008, this paper excavates experimentations in subjectivation, gender, justice/peace, human rights, and resistance in shifting registers. It stories Kashmir's disproportionate status in the Indian imaginary as an icon of statist unification, legitimating justificatory mechanisms for stationing 500,000 Indian military and paramilitary forces in domesticating Muslim subjects to Hindu (majoritarian) rule. The Tribunal, as 'truth commission', seeks to witness the nation's grip, temporal and pedagogic, in sign and performance on Kashmir's hyper-militarized body. How does such scrutiny, as feminist commitment to witnessing as intervention, underscore the impact of everyday, regularized, and spasmodic brutality on bodies that live in response to, imitate and resist, its effects? Marking the complexities and politics that frame remembrance, ethics, and action, this paper interrogates feminist advocacy in in-between worlds, where specter and undecidability collide, where the unthinkable that governs the present is contested through the repudiation of 'inheritances'. 
**Chaudhry, Lubna Nazir**

“They had to run without their pagris”: Local patriarchies, Partition violence, and the constitution of masculinist citizen-subjects in Punjab, Pakistan

This presentation will draw on oral histories of Partition memories from one village in Punjab, Pakistan. Before 1947, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, and Hindus lived in relative harmony, even while religious boundaries were quite vigilantly maintained. Caste rather than religion was the hegemonic patriarchal identity, whereby Sikh and Muslim men sharing the same bloodline wielded the landed power in the village. Hindus, Christians, and the women from all religious groups looked to them for protection of their lives, assets, and honor. Interviewees claim that no Muslim or Sikhs hurt any of their kinsfolk, and in fact the Muslims tried to protect their Sikh cousins from jathas, the groups who came to kill, rape, and pillage. Ultimately, however, when a group of young Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu men from the village attacked a nearby Pathan village to abduct a Muslim girl a Muslim boy “wanted,” the heightened insecurity caused the Sikhs to cross over to the other side. The violence escalated when Muslim refugees arrived with their stories of violence perpetrated by Sikhs and Hindus. Also, in the words of one research participant the objective was to “clear off” the non-Muslims, as they could not really be Pakistanis.

While the analysis bears out Jalal’s (1998, p. 13) lament that “Punjab had betrayed its patriarchal bent more decisively than the affective affinities of religious community,” an intensive scrutiny of the contradictions, slippages, silences, evasions, and murmurs in the oral histories indicates that this erosion of local patriarchal systems of power was a prerequisite for the evolution of a nationalist manhood that has been key to the constitution of citizenship and subjectivity within the context of Pakistan. Working with Goswami’s (2008) notion of “heteroimperial masculinity” and Foucault’s discussion on governmentality, especially his contention that since the eighteenth century or so, government can also be defined as “a right manner of disposing things” (1991; p. 95), the presentation will link macro-level processes with micro-level interactions, happenings, and consequences. The reformulation of borders coupled with nation-building imperatives led to the reformulation of identities and subjectivities that were sites of loss and gain: the “others” within and outside, including the women, the religious minorities in the newly born state, and one’s own emotions, were to be disposed of, erased, or subjugated in order to be the right of kind of masculine citizen-subject.

**Chaudhry, Vandana**

Rethinking Development and Globalization from a Marginalized Group Perspective: Case of Disability in India

This paper aims to understand the relationship between disability, development and globalization from the perspective of the majority world, with special reference to India. Through an analysis of disability praxis as adopted by multilateral organizations like World Bank, IMF and so on, I will examine how disability is marginalized within the imperatives of neo-liberalism guiding contemporary development in India. In doing so, I will deconstruct the rhetoric of inclusion; participation and other emancipatory pedagogies that tend to focus on grass-root strategies over structurally equitable long-term development policies. Devolving development responsibility to the grassroots, and shifting onus of change from the system to individuals, these neoliberal pedagogies uncritically privileges local as the sight for change and empowerment (Mohan and Stokke, 2000; Cooke and Khothari, 2001).

Critiquing the dilution of emancipatory principles by global orthodoxy, this paper will examine the way in which multilateral institutions selectively adopt radical alternatives while remaining true to market principles. To elaborate this point, I will present a case study of World Bank funded participatory development project of disabled people in Andhra Pradesh that underscores individual or group level change over institutional change. This exercise will contribute towards re-politicization of critical pedagogies by centering the discussion on
rights, justice and fuller sense of citizenship. The hope is to critically engage social educators, activists, professionals, researchers and policy makers in exploring new frameworks for understanding development from the perspectives of marginal communities, with a focus on people with disabilities.

Works Sighted


Chaudhuri, Tapoja

Being 'Adivasi' in the Forest: The Politics of Ingeneity in the context of Eco-tourism in a South Indian Tiger Reserve

My paper is based on my ethnographic research on the emergence and the articulation of environmental subjecthood amongst indigenous populations engaged in community based eco-tourism projects in the Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Kerala, India. My broader research analyzes the social processes through which the abstract concepts of biodiversity conservation become socially meaningful to the diverse groups of peoples who are involved in nature based tourism in PTR. The Mannans had a history of living inside the forest before their relocation, and had been depended mainly on fishing in the forest till 1997. The current day eco-tourism programs were introduced as a part of the Eco-Development Project in 1997 in order to provide sustainable livelihoods to forest dependent communities and to curtail ‘negative dependence’ on forests. The Mannans were the among the first group to be trained as eco-guides and were given several eco-tourism programs to conduct inside the forest. My research focuses on the question of the emergence of professional self-identities as ecological experts amongst the Mannan eco-guides through a decade long association with ‘protection-oriented tourism’. Through discourse analysis and participant observation, my work illustrates that the Mannans in the eco-tourism programs articulate themselves as ‘protectors’ of the forest by simultaneously framing themselves as scientific experts with mastery over Latin names of forest biota, as well as being the ‘sons-of-soil’ with inherent environmental sensibility. In the paper I argue that such modes of articulation of identity as an ‘adivasi’ expert is to be understood in terms of a combination of what Arun Agarwal calls as an impact of environmentality, as well as a strategic politics of representation in the context of a highly competitive tourism market at PTR. By drawing on ethnographic examples from host-guest encounters, as well as discourses engaged by the environmental award winning Mannan youths, I argue that being an ‘adivasi’ in the forest leads the Mannan to establish their ecological legitimacy in terms of both their primitive and their modern-scientific ties to the forest. Finally, the positioning of the Mannans in terms of politics of expertise is also to be analyzed in the context of ongoing debates regarding the newly introduced Tribal Rights Act of 2007 which ensures land rights in forests to certain forest-dwelling communities. My paper contributes to the field of indigenous studies, environmental anthropology and the question of community rights and biodiversity conservation in India, and in the world.

Chirmuley, Parnal

‘Because You’re Worth It’: The New Woman in post Liberalisation Women’s Magazines in India

Since the liberalisation of the Indian economy in the nineties, India has been recognised as a growing market and a fast expanding economy. This has meant not only the growth and expansion of individual industries; this also meant a greater cooperation between creative industries in sharing of icons, advertising, and resources. This
is a structure within which the media fits snugly, and has since become an effective tool for firmly soldering links already made in the creative industries. Thus fashion, film, lifestyle, hospitality, sports, and news and entertainment media seem part of a seamless whole. In this regard, the magazine publishing segment owned by a range of media houses plays a significant role, and serves as a one starting point in trying to understand how creative industries have cooperated and shared in the gains offered or made within an expanding economy, particularly since liberalisation in India.

This paper will concentrate on the new women’s magazines in English during roughly the past decade, and lay out a map of competing media stables and their cooperation with multinational magazine brands. This paper will also seek to outline the concerns specific to studying this segment of the media with its very specific readership targets: namely, the magazines’ conscious projection of a reader – a well defined age, class, and professional profile - ; the overarching ideological framework that seeks to offer the reader a seemingly active participation in the gains of a rapidly globalising economy, while securing the package with ties of a vocabulary (through campaign articles, advertising, and visual material) derived directly from liberal feminisms.

While focusing on individual trajectories of Femina, Marie Claire, and Good Housekeeping, three leading magazines in the segment, this paper will also outline the magazines’ consistent collaborations with other industries, designed to constitute a reader and harness her aspirations. Placed against the longer lively and ideologically diverse history of women’s magazines in the subcontinent, the constitution of the ‘new woman’ appears to use and suitably modify established regional conventions governing magazines for women to constitute a precisely monochromatic, global woman consumer, unfettered by the local, and actively participating in the cultural space defined by instant recall value of global brands.

Chowdhury, Nusrat

A Nobel laureate’s letters and the politics of transparency in Bangladesh

On February 11, 2007, precisely a month after the declaration of Emergency in Bangladesh, Muhammad Yunus of Grameen Bank fame wrote a letter addressed to the citizens of Bangladesh. In this open letter, the Nobel laureate economist expresses his desire to join politics and seeks public opinion on his decision. His initial letter was followed by two others in which he reveals his enthusiasm and subsequent disillusionment with the idea of founding a new political party. In this paper, I analyze Yunus’s letters to the Bangladeshi public both as a novel genre of political communication that was deemed as democratic at this particular moment and as a deliberately transparent mode of doing politics that tried to bypass, in both form and content, politics as usual. Reading Yunus’s letters as material forms of ideological practices, I argue that by writing directly to the ‘citizens’ of Bangladesh, Yunus interpellates a political subject that has hitherto been absent in the local culture of politics generally known to lean more on backhanded deals and street violence than rational deliberation in the public sphere. At the same time, choosing to write letters to the newspaper in the age-old spirit of democratic participation, Yunus carves out an image of a clean and no-nonsense politician very much in congruence with his internationally-known NGO charisma. Yunus’s effort failed and he decided to withdraw from politics, yet his letters, as my paper will argue, capture a point of conjuncture in Bangladeshi politics in which technocratic governance, with its connotations of transparency, immediacy and honesty, seemed to leave behind, if only provisionally, much-maligned plebeian politics. The letters offer a way to historicize the larger ideological formations that brought in and sustained the state of emergency in the name of effective governance and democracy.
Chua, Jocelyn

Learning to Live: Psychological Education and the Cultivation of Suicidal Immunity in Kerala, South India

Local psychiatrists and psychologists in the state of Kerala have responded to climbing suicide rates with a clarion call for the reform of children’s psycho-social development. Despite the complexities of suicidal behavior and mental ill-health in this context, suicide is often imputed a clear and definitive provenance by mental health experts who identify the urban, middle-class nuclear family as the “social machine” producing poorly adjusted, suicide-prone citizens. For allegedly over-indulging their children with emotional affection and material goods, “bad” middle class parents stand first accused for lowering children’s immunities against hardship and denial, dangerously elevating their consumerist desires, and thus of unwittingly setting them up for disappointment, frustration and self-destruction. Drawing upon ethnographic fieldwork conducted over thirty months in the capital city of Thiruvananthapuram, this paper addresses the development of the psychological education of Malayali children as it converges with efforts to cultivate mentally healthy, well-adjusted and suicide-free citizens. With the rise of life skills curricula in the classroom, “personality development” summer camps, and so-called suicide “inoculation training” in the home, conventional models of education as rote memorization and book-learning have been increasingly displaced by a broadened orientation toward the psycho-social development of the child. This is an orientation which, I argue, is distinctive for the ways it is configured through moralizing anxieties about upward mobility and the expansion of consumerism in the wake of liberalization and the mass migration of Malayalis to the Persian Gulf. Drawing upon the example of the “anti-suicidal” parenting techniques prescribed by psychologists, I utilize a phenomenological approach to suggest that the cultivation of suicidal immunity is predicated on the cultivation of a new affective self, one deemed necessary to and capable of resisting the dangerous excesses of what experts pathologize as the immodest consumption practices and intemperate desires of Kerala’s newly middle class.

Cilano, Cara

A Woman's Place: Gender and Nationalism in Fictions about the 1971 Pakistani Civil War

At two pivotal moments in Pakistani history, a sister and a daughter rose to political prominence. Fatima Jinnah, sister to the Quaid-i-Azam, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, decided to challenge Ayub Khan in the 1964 presidential elections. Ayub prevailed, of course, with the assistance of a charismatic young politician, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Bhutto’s role in Ayub’s defeat of Jinnah provides a link between this sister and the daughter who similarly became involved in Pakistani politics: Benazir Bhutto. Her two terms as Prime Minister, first in the late 1980s after Zia’s sudden death in 1988 and then again from 1993-1996, were crippled by corruption and inefficiency. But, in her third appearance on the Pakistani national political stage in 2007, Bhutto skillfully reframed her image. Against the divisiveness and high-handedness characteristic of then-president Pervez Musharraf’s administration, Bhutto, under the auspices of the Pakistan People’s Party, cast herself as a bastion of democracy. Indeed, Bhutto’s return to Pakistan in the fall of 2007 seemed like an apotheosis, especially from a Western media perspective. Her assassination in late December 2007 made possible the further consolidation of this image. Both Jinnah and Bhutto asserted their political identities at historical junctures characterized by tensions between national integration and disintegration. In their own ways, Jinnah and Bhutto represent alternative visions of the nation that contest those of Ayub and Musharraf. Schematically, then, these moments in Pakistani history share two elements: the extraordinary presence of a woman, publicly identifiable as a sister or a daughter, and Pakistan’s perennial problems with national integration.

In this paper, I use these two elements to shape my discussion of Umm-e-‘Ummara’s Urdu-language short story “The Sin of Innocence” (1973) and Sorayya Y. Khan’s English-language novel Noor (2003/2004/2006). The plot of Umme-e-‘Ummara’s story unfolds in the years preceding the war, positioning the events of 1971 as the story’s culmination, and, despite the daughter/sister figure’s presentation of a progressive model for national integration, the story suggests that the war’s violence signals the inevitability of disintegration. Unlike Umme-e-
'Ummara’s story, Noor, set at some indeterminate point in the 1990s, holds out the possibility of reintegration through a painful reckoning with the past, as the two daughter figures reveal both the tenuous foundation of their family’s, and, by extension, post-1971 Pakistan’s identity.

Clare, Jennifer

Looking Back on the Interior Landscape: the Role of the Sangam Past in Medieval Tamil Poetics

This paper focuses on commentaries on Tamil poetics to understand competing attitudes towards the authority of the Sangam literary tradition during the Chola period. Any scholar who works on medieval Tamil literature must contend at some level with the influence of this “classical” tradition, with its complex system of signifiers which correspond natural elements with emotional states associated primarily with love and war. Despite continued interest in the role of the Sangam tradition in later Tamil literature, few scholars have addressed the relationship between the Sangam tradition and the new texts on poetics produced during the medieval period. What role did the Sangam tradition, as laid out in the ancient grammatical text, the Tolkappiyam, play in this medieval vision of Tamil literature? How did the medieval theorists reconcile their need to on the one hand, stay faithful to the conventions laid out in Tolkappiyam, while also recognizing that the Tamil literary landscape had changed significantly from the Sangam period?

This paper addresses these questions by focusing on two sets of commentaries on poetics from the Chola period, the 10th century Yapparunkalam Virutti Urai, and the three major Tolkappiyam commentaries of Ilampuranar, Peraciriyar and Naccinarkkiniyar, ranging from the 10th - 14th centuries. I will argue that these two commentarial traditions reflect competing attitudes towards the authority of the Sangam past. By looking at how both the Tolkappiyam and the Sangam poems fit into the literary definitions and categorizations discussed by these medieval commentaries, I hope to further understand how medieval Tamil intellectual culture balanced accepting the authority of the older Sangam tradition and incorporating contemporary literary developments, including those influenced by the Sanskritic aesthetic tradition.

Cohen, Benjamin

A Scandalous Life? Nawab Mehdi Hasan and late nineteenth century Hyderabad, Deccan

This paper is a historical analysis of a sex scandal in Hyderabad State at the end of the nineteenth century. The Hyderabad pamphlet scandal involved a middle-class Muslim noble (Mehdi Hasan) who married a poor Anglo-Irish woman (Gertrude Donnelly). They met and married in Lucknow before Sir Salar Jung offered Hasan a job in Hyderabad. Once there, Hasan’s career enjoyed a meteoric rise. In 1892, a small pamphlet defamed the couple by describing a “shocking social scandal.” The pamphlet accused Donnelly of having been a prostitute during her youth in Lucknow and of committing incest with her father; Hasan of having “pimped” his wife to another local noble; and alleged that they had in fact never been legally married. Hasan filed suit, and a year-long court case ensued during which both he and Donnelly testified.

This scandal provides a snapshot of cultural norms (and what constituted a violation of them) in India during the late nineteenth century. As the couple was interracial, the scandal reveals deep-seated feelings about race at a critical moment in imperial history. By the late nineteenth century, Indians and Britons had largely separated along racial lines, and cases of intermarriage were less common than in the years prior to direct rule; cases of Indian men marrying British women, like Hasan and Donnelly, were even more uncommon. As Hasan was from Lucknow, his success in Hyderabad roused the ire of local Hyderabad officials who sought to destroy his career. The scandal illuminates regional and local/non-local (mulki non-mulki) differences that underpinned Hyderabad’s social structure.
This scandal both produced and reflected a clash between the old autocratic system and the new move towards a liberal, more democratic system of governance. In other words, this scandal was a watershed in Hyderabad’s shift towards becoming a more efficient and modern princely state. Further, the scandal reveals broader Indian and imperial trends. That Hasan was from Lucknow and employed in Hyderabad demonstrates linkages between the two cities, and also reveals the existence of a new, modern mobile Indian middle-class who were able to take employment far from their ancestral homes. This paper will thus suggest that what might at first seem to be a local sex scandal in fact had wide-reaching imperial effects, and provides a window into key issues around sex, race, class, and empire at a crucial time in India’s history.

Cohen, Lawrence

Feudal Masculinity

This essay examines the category of feudalism as a ubiquitous feature of contemporary Indian and Pakistani political discourse. The introduction situates the feudal as a simultaneously archaic and imminent form of relationship organized around figures of masculine excess. The middle section examines a series of Hindi and English novels and films that stage a crisis or division of masculine identity in relation to futurity. The final section examines male homosexuality in relation to the modern feudal.

Coleman, Jennifer

The Use and Abuse of History for Life: The Challenge of a Hindu Nationalist Past for India's Secular Future

In his 1983 work 'Nations and Nationalism', Ernest Gellner challenged Max Weber’s famous definition of the ‘state’ by arguing that in the age of nationalism, “The monopoly of legitimate education is now more important, more central than the monopoly of legitimate violence.” The control over what ‘legitimate education’ entails—and specifically the politicization of the discipline of history and academic scholarship—has proven to be one of the pivotal flash points between defenders of Indian secularism and advocates of Hindu nationalism in contemporary Indian politics.

In this paper I examine three cases illustrative of official efforts to ‘saffronize’ history textbooks during the period of Bharatiya Janata Party rule between 1998 and 2004, the reversal of these ‘communalist’ revisions once the Congress regained power at the Center in the 2004 elections, as well as the impact ‘saffronization’ programs have had in the United States. The first case revolves around the BJP’s reconstitution of the National Council of Education Research and Training and the 2002 decision to withdraw and revise Congress-approved history textbooks to reflect the primacy of Hindu cultural values while emphasizing the colonial impulses and inauthentic ‘Indian-ness’ of Indian Muslims. Debates surrounding the NCERT controversy are connected to my second case study, an evaluation of the Aruna Roy decision handed down by the Supreme Court in 2002. This court case addressed whether or not state-funded schools were going against the ‘secular nature’ of Indian education by requiring the ‘study of religion’ within school curricula. Finally, I expand my analysis to examine the influence of Hindu nationalism among the Indian diaspora community in the United States, focusing specifically on the California lawsuit filed in 2005 by America-based Hindu organizations—the Vedic Foundation and the Hindu Education Foundation—to revise California textbooks accused of depicting ‘Hinduism’ in an incorrect, negative, and essentially prejudicial manner. Even while the California court decided against approving most of the proposed ‘recommended changes’ in light of allegations by a number of respected scholars and other America-based Indian groups that the recommendations reflected the Hindu Right’s conservative agenda, the case highlights the influence of Indian communalism abroad.

Thus this paper explores the connection between the state’s monopoly over ‘legitimate education’ and ‘legitimate violence’—and the seeming conflation of the two within state-financed educational institutions—
and the significance of political debates surrounding the meaning and substance of ‘official Indian history’ for Indian secularism in the future.

**Colvard, Robert "Eric"**

Strange Brew: Allies and Adversaries in India’s Temperance Movement, 1880-1951

Anti-alcohol agitation in India is intimately associated with nationalism. These two movements shared much in common but were far from identical. Although temperance featured prominently in nationalist discourse, Indian temperance leaders also dialogued authoritatively with other temperance leaders across the world. My paper will make the case for a separate history of the Indian temperance movement both in its involvements with the nationalist struggle and with foreign and international organizations. In doing so it will demonstrate that old binaries, such as colonizer/colonized or elite/subaltern lose much of their salience when the framework is enlarged to recognize the transnational nature of the opposition to drink.

Temperance in early decades of the 20th-century brought together in India such unlikely allies as Methodist missionaries, Anglo Indians and Arya Samajists, who sat together on local temperance boards and formed unstable coalitions in public forums. Their common message—the underlying injustice of empire demonstrated by the moral failure of India’s foreign rulers to protect the people from demon drink—resounded from the streets of Bombay to the churches of the American Midwest. British failure, they noted, was not just at the level of policy but personal and behavioral; the rulers were too often red-faced imbibers. British temperance advocates themselves faced the inconsistencies of an empire that fostered the drink habit but sanctioned their activism, albeit reluctantly. Abkari, the journal of the Anglo Indian Temperance Association, reveals a gradual transition from discourse marked by confident paternalism to one of resigned disappointment gilded with the hope of a drink-free, independent India.

Temperance could not have achieved its prominence in Indian nationalist discourse but for the influence of local activists whose views were formed in the unique circumstances of hundreds of localities. Attitudes toward alcohol varied from town to town, and even from village to village. These distinct positions were often pushed upward to inform regional and national temperance policies. Similarly, national temperance policies were frequently altered and adapted in myriad ways when they were promulgated at the local level. Temperance thus offers a unique and dynamic means with which to examine the links among local, supra-local and global discourses in nationalist-era India.

**Cook, Geoffrey**

“A Critical Analysis of the Islamic Imagery Project”

The Internet has become a prime means for communication between jihadi groups (“cells”) amongst themselves and to a larger public in South Asia and elsewhere throughout the Islamic world. The Combating Terrorism Center in the Department of Social Sciences at the U.S. Military Academy (West Point, N.Y.) has published (pasted) a book-length study of the visual imagery that Islamic jihadis’ employ to convey message and meaning to their target audiences. The study, copiously illustrated, is available on a web page to which I have access. With this appraisal, done by a committee of military scholars, there is an extensive bibliography that can be drawn on for back up research. This paper will take a critical look at this study utilizing power point technology. The presenter (above) has studied extensively Indian (including the Muslim tradition) Art History
as part of his doctoral work in British Indian History. Although he has worked in University teaching positions in the past, he is now employed mainly as a journalist. This has made him (me) an expert in the latest thinking, etc. on terrorism, Islam and South Asian nuclear proliferation, and he has written and presented, and extensively published on this subject both journalistically and academically.

Cook, Matthew

The Right of Conquest: Imperial Expansion, Law and Sindh’s Annexation

This paper addresses the East India Company’s territorial and political expansion into Sindh. It discusses different colonial modes of expansion and the history of indirect and direct rule in South Asia. I link this discussion to broader historiographic debates about colonialism and maintain that Sindh’s annexation informs these debates by being emblematic of a broader annexationist trend. This trend not only dominates colonial state actions during the 1840s and 1850s but leads to the Company’s collapse in 1857. As a key, albeit historically neglected, mid-nineteenth century colonial reference point, I argue that Sindh’s annexation sets broader stages for the jettisoning of direct rule at a point in time when the British start to extend their rule over areas outside of South Asia.

To better contextualize the historical expansion of British political power—both in Sindh and elsewhere—this paper traces not only the South Asian history of indirect and direct rule, but analyzes the “right of conquest.” I illustrate how this European legal concept frames annexations as chronological end points and argue that it obscures historical “voices,” both Indian and British. I also maintain that events and interactions in the wake of Sindh’s annexation are good analytic handles for grasping the broader history of British colonialism in nineteenth century South Asia. I link my analysis to wider mid-century changes in colonialism and posit that Sindh’s annexation is a historically overlooked event that influences imperial expansion both inside and outside of South Asia.

Cox, Whitney

Sharing a single seat’: the poetics and politics of male intimacy in the Vikramankakavya and beyond.

Throughout the Vikramankadevacarita (VDC), Bilhana takes his royal patron's leading affective or moral relationships as his central subject matter. This poem is unequivocally a celebration of a ruling sovereign's achievements, but within this heroic framework, the great public occurrences of Vikramaditya's life are all cast as fundamentally and deeply personal events by the poet. In this paper, I will explore the ways in which Bilhana’s narrative overcodes some of the major events in Vikrama’s public life as relationships of male intimacy, chiefly filial and fraternal loyalty, both within members of Vikrama’s own family and with a series of surrogates. These relationships, along with their failure and betrayal, provide the substance of the fourth through the sixth sarga of the VDC, and are equally crucial to events late in the poem, in sarga 15.

Here, however, Bilhana’s reader is met with a paradox. Masculine intimacy---between father and son, teacher and pupil, brothers and friends---is one of the great themes of early and classical Indic literature, most notably in the Sanskrit epics and their later adaptations. Yet the theory of rasa---that sophisticated and celebrated theory of literary affect that was reinvented in Bilhana’s native Kashmir in the centuries leading up to his lifetime, and which he explicitly endorses as providing the aesthetic conditions of his work’s reception---takes no direct cognizance of this crucial dimension of emotional life. I intend to use Bilhana’s kavya as a means to explore
this seeming gap in the available emic theory, reviewing several influential positions historically proximate to his literary career. At most, male intimacy is understood under the sign of the esprit de corps of the martial values of the heroic sentiment of virarasa, or (interestingly) as an immature or underdeveloped variety of the heterosexual eroticism of srngararasa. While both of these two sentiments are explicitly invoked in Bilhana’s poem (indeed, they are the most significant rasa-s of classical literature), the particular attention that he devotes to the question of masculine affect is distinctive of the aesthetics of the poem and of its underlying vision of the political. I will also take this reading of the VDC as a starting point to look to several other slightly later political-poetic texts from South India, which looked on the events described in Bilhana’s poem from a markedly different perspective, but which were composed along analogous affective and ideological lines.

Cummings, Cathleen

Approaching Maratha Art: Art and Aesthetics Under the Peshwas of Pune

If, as Malavika Vartak has suggested, revivals and reconstructions of history “introduce a romantic ‘golden age’ where the community is perceived to have thrived in all aspects of human activity,” why has the ongoing remaking of Maratha history in the past two centuries not resulted in the perception of a “golden age” for Maratha art and culture? For, despite an unwavering historical interest in the Maratha polity, especially in anti- and post-colonial discourse that posits Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha empire, as a Hindu freedom fighter and nationalist hero, very little is known about the arts of the Marathas themselves—specifically, art and architecture patronized by Maratha elites. This represents a significant lacuna in art historical scholarship, one that is reflected in the absence of examples of Maratha painting and architecture from almost all art historical texts.

From the time of the Balaji Vishwanath Bhat, who was appointed to the post of Peshwa, or Prime Minister, by the Maratha Chhatrapati Shahu in 1713, the hereditary line of Brahmin Peshwas exercised effective control of the Maratha polity from their capital at Pune. Throughout the eighteenth century, the Peshwai oversaw a period of great cultural fluorescence in Pune that saw the creation of a number of important civic projects, including temples, ghats, chhatris, forts, and bridges. The Peshwas were also responsible for constructing luxurious wadas in old Pune that are characterized by exceptional woodworking and finely-painted murals; and patronized miniature painting that expresses a variety of stylistic influences and represents formats ranging from illustrated manuscripts to paintings on paper used as architectural embellishments. Little of this material has been thoroughly documented, let alone subjected to art historical scrutiny.

In this paper, I survey the arts—including architecture, mural painting, and miniature painting—produced during the Peshwai era between approximately 1715-1800, a time when the Peshwai greatly expanded the Maratha empire and ensured a relatively prosperous, stable, and consistent administration of the Maratha polity. My goal in this paper is to define the role of the Peshwai vis. a vis artistic patronage in Pune during the 18th century, and to draw some conclusions about the aesthetics and artistic approaches that we can define as “typical” of the Maratha Peshwai.

Curley, David

the Adiguru
Towards a Muslim city of tomorrow: debates and contestations over Pakistan’s built environment, c.1947-1965

My paper deals with how successive post-colonial regimes in Pakistan sought to create a hegemonic synthesis of cultural authenticity and technological modernism in the fields of city planning and architecture. Several ambitious projects were put into operation between 1947 and 1965, with a particularly intense period of activity commencing with General Ayub Khan’s military take-over in 1958. Plans for new administrative centres and eventually an entirely new capital city were announced, several of the large cities of the countries received their first comprehensive Master Plans, while new satellite towns and garden city developments created spaces for the administrative professional elite and the urban poor alike. Although often marked by failure in practice, these projects offered arenas of contestation where local planners and architects, international ‘stars’ and development experts, non-expert bureaucrats and the elements of the general public could debate a range of important questions: how was the new Islamic Republic to mark its relationship with both the colonial and pre-colonial Muslim past? What – if anything – was the hallmark of ‘Islamic architecture’ and to what extent was such a project reconcilable with a competing project of international development? What was to be the appropriate relationship between an Islamic architecture and the distinction between public and private spheres? How should religion influence class-specific cultures of habitation? In some cases these debates remained confined to the cabinet meeting room or the newspaper letters-to-the-editor page; in others, they were carried out – literally ‘on the ground’ – in often quixotic battles between planners, consultants and subaltern local residents, who, having been denied a voice in official ‘consultations’, were now organising often highly successful campaigns of ‘everyday resistance’. Drawing on a wide range of hitherto underutilized sources – international company records, Pakistani government documents, interviews, memoirs and newspaper articles – I wish to concentrate on three case studies: Gulberg - a new suburb of Lahore implanted into wasteland in the early 1950s; ‘Islamabad’ – Ayub’s new capital in the North – both as a new venture and as a continuation of older debates about a Pakistan capitol complex; finally Korangi - a mass housing project in Karachi.

(De)Standardizing Language and Curriculum in the Montreal Tamil Diaspora

It is a well-documented fact that processes of language standardization are intrinsically linked to strategies of language curriculum development. In minority language contexts, where the teaching of heritage languages is often decentralized and fragmented, a de-standardized language curriculum points to a sociolinguistic setting of relative heterogeneity and flux. Such is the case in the Montreal diaspora, where Tamil heritage language schools endorse a variety of pedagogical strategies in teaching Tamil to 2nd generation schoolchildren, many of whom belong to different regional, religious, caste, socioeconomic, and migrant groups. In this paper I describe three distinct curriculum styles available for use by Tamil language teachers in public schools, community schools, and private tutoring classes in Montreal. Each of these curriculum styles places greater or lesser value on multilingual or monolingual expertise in classical, literary, or colloquial styles of Tamil. For example, Tamil teachers in Montreal public schools adopt a curriculum which valorizes multilingual knowledge of literary Tamil, French, and/or English, whereas Tamil teachers in Sri Lankan religious schools and community centers adopt a curriculum which valorizes monolingual knowledge of classical or literary Tamil. In contrast, Indian Tamil private tutors endorse a curriculum which valorizes multilingual knowledge of colloquial Tamil, English, and French varieties. I argue that these divergent pedagogical strategies index mutual processes of Tamil linguistic standardization and de-standardization in the Montreal diaspora. On the one hand, Tamil language schools compete for status and prestige by seeking to implement their preferred speech or writing style as the language standard of the entire Montreal Tamil diaspora. On the other hand, these same schools maintain institutionally-segregated sociolinguistic spheres for teaching Tamil to different Montreal sub-groups, thus establishing egalitarian standards for Tamil linguistic variation within the diaspora. Finally, I suggest that the interplay between processes of Tamil language and curriculum standardization and de-standardization is hinged
upon mediated negotiations of minority-majority social relations among and between different sub-groups of Tamils and other Montreal residents. Ultimately, this paper demonstrates that an understanding of both linguistic and cultural aspects of Tamil minoritization is essential for clarifying the relationship between curriculum development and heritage language standardization in a globalizing Tamil diaspora.

Das, Deepa

Changing the Subject

This paper explores liberal attempts at reconstituting widow immolation, or sati, as suicide or murder. Referencing procedural prescriptions codified under colonial rule as well as historical and sociological scholarship of the late twentieth century, politicians, activists, and the news media sought to deny the satihood of widows who had ostensibly chosen to die on their husbands' funeral pyres. Despite legal recognition of and accommodation for sati (as distinct from suicide or murder) within the Indian Penal Code, Indian liberals were at pains to read specific deaths as suicides or murders rather than as satis. Examining five case studies that occurred in India between the years 1999-2006, I show how the self of the sati is, and is seen to be, at odds with the self of democratic subjectivity, and how liberal apprehension regarding the naming of satis stems from the incongruity of these two forms of personhood. However, if liberal conceptions of subjectivity based on the autonomous and idiosyncratic moral agent are in the process revealed as non-universal and non-necessary, popular understandings of the sati as “selfless person” are shown to be equally problematic. The ethical and political purchase of liberal subjectivity is here undamaged by the constructedness of liberal subjectivity as demonstrated by an examination of sati. Therefore, I argue that in the context of sati anthropological and other social science scholarship has been least productive when it has approached the problem of personhood from the perspective of the natural and the constructed.

Davis, Mary

“Using GIS at Harappa”

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) have increasingly become an integral component to conducting archaeological research. The ability of GIS to organize and analyze vast amounts of data allows for the both the investigation of spatial relationships and the identification of patterns in archaeological data that cannot be seen through other analytical techniques. Overall, GIS provides archaeology with a powerful tool for the understanding of site formation and the overall organization of a specific site. This paper discusses both the potential benefits and drawbacks of the application of GIS technology to specific archaeological research questions through the presentation of an initial case study from the Indus Civilization site of Harappa. The excavation of large urban sites, such as Harappa, generates an overwhelming amount of material for analysis. The data sets can grow large enough to make the identification and explanation of patterns extremely difficult. One such dataset from Harappa are the recovered lithic artifacts. Lithic artifacts played an important role in the domestic and craft economic activities at the Harappa. The spatial distribution of these artifacts broadly reflects the spatial distribution of such activities at the site. The use of GIS has enabled this data to be organized, analyzed from multiple perspectives. This ongoing analysis has generated a number of patterns. This paper presents the initial results of this analysis and a preliminary model for the socio-political organization of the city based on the spatial patterns identified in the stone tool assemblage from the site.
Davis, Erik

Fertility, Adoption, Power: Moral and Immoral Practices in Cambodia

Anthropologists have long insisted on, and contested, the distinction between magic and religion in culture. In Cambodia, the contemporary discussion is deeply entwined with histories of colonialism and religious modernism. In bracket these vitally important historical investigations for the purposes of understanding instead how contemporary Cambodians classify practices as either Buddhist or non-Buddhist (‘brahmanical’). I propose that Cambodians tend to distinguish practices as Buddhist or non-Buddhist based not merely on institutional definitions of practices, but on the basis of a logic through which some practices appropriate the values of fertility for individuals in this life (non-Buddhist), and those in which the values of fertility are mediated across death (Buddhist). I examine this distinction through a comparison of Buddhist ordination ritual and the rituals associated with the production of a magical amulet called a koun krak (grilled child).

Davis, Christina

Reconfiguring Difference: Social Transformation and Linguistic Practice among Sri Lankan Minority Adolescents

Schools are settings where individuals are subjected to evaluations based on their linguistic performances. In Sri Lanka, multilingual schools—which bring children and adults from diverse ethnic, religious, class, and caste backgrounds—are sites for the convergence of multiple (and sometimes competing) models of correct or appropriate speech. Principals and teachers, interpreting nationalized policies and curriculum, play a significant role in socializing students into producing the "best" linguistic forms, in both writing and oratory. However, it is also crucial to consider how students, outside of the immediate gaze of teachers (on schools grounds, canteens, or classrooms in the absence of teachers) act to engage with, negotiate, and challenge these norms. This paper is based upon my research on ethnic minority (Tamil and Muslim) adolescents in the grade 10 Tamil-medium class at a multilingual national school in Kandy, Sri Lanka. I explore how these students evaluate one another on their linguistic performances. I specifically look at how they, in their face-to-face interactions, assert authority over one another through interrupting, mocking, or gossiping. I argue that it is through these micro-interactional processes that students negotiate and challenge ideals of correct or appropriate speech, and through this, social inequalities. I also show how students' ideologies of language are intertwined with their desired participation in the Sri Lankan state, which, for over 25 years, has been ravaged by ethnic conflict. My research suggests Tamil and Muslim adolescents at this school are seeking to define themselves, not on the basis of language, ethnicity, or religion, but on the basis of their educational and class status, and through this, their belonging to Kandy as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious urban center.

DeKuiper, Jessica

The Comparative “Emplacement” of South Asian Lesbians in India and the United States

In her work on South Asian American identities, Kirin Narayan has used the term “emplacement” to mean “the orienting of self within multiple frameworks of meaning.”1 Today, in both India and the United States, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer women, are creating spaces of meaning and physical spaces/communities in the process of emplacing themselves. This paper will explore the ways in which these South Asian women are creating individual and collective/organizational spaces of meaning within the frameworks of naming and self-defining, national/ethnic identifications, gendered life-histories and worldviews, and personal/organizational visibility and privacy.
My research will center on the female members of two recently formed LGBTQ South Asian organizations, and two organizations that have evolved/devolved into informal social groups. The newly formed organizations are Trikone-Chicago, founded in August 2008, and the Chennai, India-based Shakti-Center, founded in July of 2007. The Chicago-based organizations Khuli Zaban and Sangat are now informal social groups. This paper will present the results of online and telephone interviews with female members of Shakti Centre in India and in-depth, face-to-face interviews with female members/former members of Trikone, Khuli Zaban, and Sangat in Chicago.

Key questions within the scholarly and organizational literature on the South Asian LGBTQ movement concern the conflicts and correspondences between personal and collective/organizational identities. My research will investigate the interplay between the organizational identities of the aforementioned groups and the personal identities of the group’s female members. For example, how do group members with differing identities negotiate questions such as: what language should be used to describe gender, sexuality, and ethnicity; and how public or private should an organization be?

This paper will answer key questions as to how the personal identities of the women in these organizations play a role in defining the organizations’ collective identities, and how identity conflicts may play a role in the evolution or demise of organizations. I predict that as South Asian lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer women in India and the U.S. work to emplace themselves within meaningful frameworks, South Asian LGBTQ organizations will have to evolve in order to maintain their relevance.


Deo, Aditi

Learning Without Faith: Relationality and The Interplay of Pedagogies in North Indian Classical Music

Institutionally mediated education in North Indian classical music was introduced in early 20th century India as an alternative to the traditional guru-shishya parampara (the master-disciple lineage). It fundamentally transformed what were previously oral and personal music pedagogies by, among other factors, isolating a body of musical knowledge from its practitioners, inscribing it textually, and standardizing pedagogic methods. Over the past century, institutionally mediated practices (such as standardized syllabi, examinations) have emerged as a predominant context for music education—both within and outside of institutional settings. Classical music education straddles a range of pedagogic approaches, surrounded by an idealization of the guru-shishya parampara and intense debates regarding appropriate pedagogic methods in the public domain. In discourse, the guru-shishya parampara is sharply contrasted with institutional frameworks; in practice, however, methods and philosophies from both shape pedagogic experiences for most students. Drawing upon anthropologist Marilyn Strathern's work on relationality, this paper studies teaching and learning practices in the contexts of this partial, yet widespread, relocation, focusing on the interplay between traditional oral pedagogy and standardized institutionally mediated methods. Specifically I examine the manners in which sensibilities associated with the guru-shishya parampara—e.g. the relationship with the guru, shraddha (faith), vinaya (humility)—are articulated as essential pedagogic practices for training in classical music; and (2) how these practices (and their absence) are discursively invoked to illustrate effective and/or ineffective training in a variety of pedagogic settings.

Deomampo, Daisy

The New Global “Division of Labor”: Reproductive Tourism in Mumbai, India
Egg cell in South Africa, womb in India, and crib in Australia: this is what human reproduction has become in today’s globalized world. As the process of reproduction becomes ever-more disaggregated, each aspect of reproduction carries its own legal, medical and logistical problems, leading to a new spatial division of labor as laws in different countries facilitate or impede various parts of the process. This paper examines how India, with lower costs and more lenient laws regarding the use of assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs), has emerged as a global “hub” in reproductive tourism. While would-be parents around the world have begun to view India as a promising destination in their pursuit of parenthood, Indian laws regulating the use of ARTs, adoption and gestational surrogacy have not kept pace, creating concerns about potential immigration and citizenship issues, for example, with babies born to Indian gestational surrogates. Moreover, as ARTs are made available in an ever-expanding range of contexts, they introduce a broader range of forms of parenting, and families now grapple with the implications of having multiple potential “mothers,” including the biological mother who donated her egg, the surrogate mother who loaned her womb, and the intended mother who will raise the child. At issue are the wide-ranging concerns surrounding ideas of kinship and family, in particular at the intersection of globalization and assisted reproduction, as well as questions regarding citizenship and belonging in broader transnational contexts. How do notions of kinship and motherhood change when the procreative process is no longer restricted to private acts and decision making of couples, and becomes a collaboration of international actors occurring in public spaces of the lab, clinic, and courtroom? How should the Indian government deal with issues related to legal parentage, citizenship and nationality? This paper explores these questions by drawing on geographical and anthropological literature, as well as ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Mumbai, India.

Desai, Manan

A Shifting Analogy: Lala Lajpat Rai’s United States as Colony and Empire, 1914-1919

Exiled from India by the British, the Indian nationalist Lala Lajpat Rai stayed in the United States between 1914 and 1919, where he established the India Home Rule League in New York City, published the monthly organ _Young India_ from an office on Broadway, and lectured across the country on the necessity for political independence from the British Raj. Imagining the Indian nation from abroad, Rai’s task in _Young India_ was, as Dohra Ahmad puts it, both “descriptive and prescriptive, describing [India’s] present and past glories, while advocating for the free nation of the future.” In this paper, I examine two more neglected products of Rai’s period in the States: first, the book-length study _The United States of America: A Hindu’s Impressions and a Study_ (1916), a text combining passages on American history, sociology, and personal narrative that documented his cross-country travel between November 1914 and June 1915, where he met such political luminaries as W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, and Agnes Smedley; and second, _Unhappy India_ (1928), published as a rebuttal to _Mother India_ (1927), American journalist Katherine Mayo’s pro-British exposé on the conditions of India. Of intrinsic historical value itself, these writings vividly capture Rai’s impressions of the United States, but more critically, they render the social relations of the modern Indian caste system and the colonial domination of India by Britain into a language attentive to the meanings of race in America. Throughout _The United States of America_ and _Unhappy India_, for instance, Rai highlights the internal subjugation of “colored people” by American segregationist policies and settler colonialism, and the external subjugation of “colored people” through its burgeoning Pacific empire. What emerges from _The United States of America_ and even more so with _Unhappy India_ was a complicated and deeply contradictory reading of the United States: as an object of emulation, insofar as it symbolized the colonial overthrow of the British yoke, and as an object of critique for its racist policies towards “Negros,” “Red Indians,” and the Philippines. In short, this paper looks at the complex ways in which Rai read America as analogous to both the British Empire and India, how his historical narrative of the United States shaped his vision of Indian nationalism, and traces the critical responses to these texts by his contemporaries, most notably the Dalit leader B.R. Ambedkar.
Deshmukh, Madhuri

Women’s Swaraj and Hind Swaraj

This paper seeks to explore the place of women and the question of women’s emancipation in Gandhi’s sweeping critique of modern civilization in Hind Swaraj. Particularly in its first world formations, feminism has whole-heartedly embraced the modernist and modernizing project, seeing in it a promise of emancipation, in particular from the “limitations” imposed on women by nature and by tradition. Hind Swaraj, on the other hand, critiques modern civilization’s disregard for the “limit to our indulgences” set by our ancestors and by nature. This paper seeks to draw on Gandhi’s prescient critiques of modern civilization in Hind Swaraj to question and rethink some of the underlying modernist presuppositions about selfhood, nature, emancipation and “progress” in feminist thought. Drawing on the critiques of post-Enlightenment theories of nature in the work of Carolyn Merchant, Vandana Shiva and Akeel Bilgrami, this paper seeks to explore the connections between women and nature and women and “civilization” in light of Gandhi’s critiques of modernity.

Dhar, Nandini

Re-inscribing the epic : Nation, Gender, Memory and Subjectivity in Amar Chitra Katha and Mahasweta Devi’s Kunti and the Nishadi

In the “Foreword” to the book Questioning Ramayana: A South Asian Tradition, edited by Paula Richman, the noted Indian historian Romila Thapar writes,

In a sense, remapping the location of the katha, or the story, of Ram has been a constant feature of Indian civilization.[...] The Valmiki Ramayana should not necessarily be taken as a fixed text and the others necessarily as variants of this fixed text, for the latter often contextualized the differing worldviews of particular segments of Indian society.

Thapar’s analysis leads us to two important theoretical formulations. First of all, within the Ramayanic tradition, each version should be thought of as equally legitimate and accorded equal status as the other. Secondly, retellings of the Ramayana reveal and represent multiple and often contesting worldviews and ideologies, thus enabling us to think of the interrelationships between the social structures of power and particular epic narratives. But while agreeing with Thapar’s essential theoretical assertions, one cannot ignore the fact that scholarly communities both in India and the West have paid relatively little attention to the multiple traditions of the other Indian epic Mahabharata. It is important to remember Mahabharata, like Ramayana, operates as a complex epic tradition with multiple and often contesting, cultural forms, as A.K. Ramanujan reminds us.

This paper builds upon Ramanujan’s formulation by providing a critical analysis of the Bengali Marxist-Feminist writer Mahasweta Devi’s short story Kunti O Nishadi(Kunti and the Nishadin), placed in concert and often at cross purposes with the representations of the Nishadas and of the episode of the Jatugriha (the Lacquer House) within Amar Chitra Katha, the popular comic book series in India. Simultaneously, in this paper I claim that while Amar Chitra Katha can be described as an example of an “authoritative” telling of the epic, this particular short story can serve as an example of what Paula Richman calls an “oppositional telling”, which examines the intersection of categories such as caste, class gender and nation within Indian public life through a re-telling of the epic Mahabharata.


Dhingra, Pawan

The Post-Colonial Motel: The Indian Diaspora, Colonialism, and the U.S. Roadside Motel
Perhaps no immigrant group in the United States has had a larger impact on small business than Indian Americans, primarily Gujaratis, in the motel industry. They own approximately half the motels in the nation, representing probably the largest ethnic niche in the nation’s history. They are leading the way in building motels in India, a country with relatively few motels or hotels. Yet, surprisingly little information is known about them. This paper uncovers the history of both the beginning of Gujarati immigrants in the industry and its reasons for sustained growth over two generations. This “immigrant success” story actually has depended on the Indian diaspora broadly, not only those arriving from India, and on their post-colonial relationship to the United States. The impressive achievements of these immigrant community does not represent the promise of the United States; instead, it represents the remnants of colonial and continued neo-colonial relationships.

Dodson, Michael

Jamshedpur and Industrial Modernity

Jamshedpur is a ‘company town’, an ‘industrial town’, founded, planned, and administered in the service of the Tata Iron and Steel Company. Since its inception in 1908, Jamshedpur has, moreover, most often been characterised as a ‘model town’, conceived by the Tata family dynasty and its architects to further what were perceived to be the best interests of its workforce-inhabitants, and argueably, the emergent Indian nation. Jamshedpur residents were thus to be provided with plentiful green-space, adequate sanitation, and a plethora of educational, cultural, and religious institutions outside the steel plant’s walls. Yet the first decades of the city’s existence were also wracked by near-continual unrest amongst its immigrant labour force, while rapid population growth and the steel works’ expansion strained the ability of Tata Steel to maintain its vision of Jamshedpur as a ‘progressive’ urban site. This paper will focus upon several of the major planning events in Jamshedpur’s early history, including a comprehensive WW-II era development scheme designed by Mysore State Architect and Town Planner Otto Koenigsberger. These planning events sought principally to define an urban experience in Jamshedpur based in the labour practices associated with industrial production, the utility of technological advancement, and the persistence of Indian cultural norms, even while acknowledging that the realisation of such an experience was still imperfect and in evolution. In short, Jamshedpur’s planners intended the city to embody an urban aesthetic consistent with, and conducive to, idealised norms of an Indian industrial modernity. While this aesthetic was based partly in the promotion of a visually pleasing landscape (including the punctuation of the skyline by smokestacks and skyscrapers), I argue in this paper that Jamshedpur’s urban aesthetic was constructed principally by reference to certain valuations of labour and a faith in the adaptability of industrial design to improve other elements of human experience. This paper also argues that given Jamshedpur’s status as a ‘model town’, elements of its physical character could ultimately also be made to serve as a critique of India’s perceived readiness for self-determination.

Dold, Patricia

Women's Hymns of Kamakhya: Bhakti and Tantra at an Assamese Temple and Pilgrimage Site

This paper is an exploration of women's religion at the Kamakhya temple and pilgrimage site near Guwahati, Assam. Using data gathered at the site in 2008, especially the performance contexts of Kamakhya women's hymns, as well as data from relevant Sanskrit Puranas and Tantras, the paper focuses on women's hymns to the goddess Kamakhya in her manifestations as Kali and the Mahavidyas. These hymns provide a striking case of female religious devotion to goddesses who do not model patriarchal ideals. They also express the religious agency of Kamakhya women, an agency that has generated a distinctive integration of the esoteric tantric tradition within the public, predominantly devotional, religiosity of the Kamakhya site.

The oral tradition of hymns forms a major element in the religious lives of many women residents at the Kamakhya site. Transmitted and preserved exclusively by women in a local dialect of Assamese (Kamarupi),
the women's hymns are typically performed in ritual contexts and often as part of women's pujas at the main temple of the goddess Kamakhya and at shrines in the neighborhoods where the women and/or their clients reside. Women also perform their hymns during festivals and notably to open the Debaddhāni festival when gods and goddesses of Kamakhya become present in human males chosen by each deity as their voice (the Deoddha). The women's hymns describe, praise, and supplicate deities as numerous and varied as those enshrined in the many temples of the Kamakhya site. Several hymns, using an identification typically made at the site, identify the goddess Kamakhya with Kali and nine other Mahavidyas. These "Kali hymns" celebrate the goddess as a protective mother and fearsome slayer of worshippers' enemies. I argue that, by their contents and ritual contexts, women's hymns are expressions of bhakti (devotion) that draw upon and/or are framed by tantric elements and structures including mantra as a tool for deification and a guru-disciple transmission lineage.

Dowdy, Sean

Virtually Desirable: Agents of Remediation & Reification in a South Asian Queer Diaspora

Based on ethnographic research conducted in Chicago, IL in 2006, this paper explores how, when, and in what contexts a group of queer South Asians living in the diaspora confront and are confronted by the so-called “global gay” narrative and how the relative value of this discourse is negotiated in everyday life. Throughout this exploration, the stability and legibility of this narrative fails, but it does so without recourse to a valorization of local or dissident sexualities. While the ethnographic description of dissident sexual identities and alternative sexual practices in current literature has been markedly successful in terms of provincializing sexual normativity, it has nevertheless suffered from the conceptual murk tethered to “identity politics.” This paper argues for a re-conceptualization of what counts as “political” in a diasporic South Asian queer community and, concomitantly, problematizes the theoretical and political purchase of the category of ‘identity’. Building on Agamben’s (1998) recommendation for the practical and theoretical transformation of the modern biopolitical body into a “form of life” – a grasping and re-vitalization of bios—I suggest that it would be more useful to envision a coalitional politics based on the banality of commensurate desires and the dialogic apperceptions that accompany everyday practices and relationships.

Dube-Bhatnagar, Rashmi

“Tales of dying Urdu and Hindi in Anita Desai’s In Custody (1984) and Mrinal Pandey’s My Own Witness (2001): Emergent Intellectual formations place
Linguistically rich yet economically destitute states in North India are commonly known as the Hindi heartland: these villages, towns and cities preserve the many Hindis and Hindi-Urdu that are living remnants of an older undivided Hindustani. In globalized India Hindi-speaking states become the setting for an emergent intellectual formation that thrives on a constitutive paradox: literary resources and commercial marketability of global English is redeployed to focus attention on the death of Urdu or the decline of Hindi at the hands of its hegemonic rival English.

My paper examines the novelistic account of the death of Urdu in Anita Desai’s *In Custody* (1984) and the decline of Hindi in Mrinal Pande’s *My Own Witness* (2001). The first feature of this emergent literary trend is that the English language writer situates herself in varying degrees of bilingualism in relation to the narrativized vernacular. Although Desai writes in one language she has gone on record about her facility with German, Bengali, Urdu and Hindi. Desai describes in an interview how her novel mines her own experiences of attending Urdu mushairas (poetry readings) in Delhi. The form assumed by Desai’s novel is staging the Oedipal contest for a share of the rich literary inheritance – who will inherit the vast splendours of the Urdu literary culture? The novel ironizes the contest over inheritance and ownership of the remains of the last great Urdu writer Nur, implying that there is nothing to inherit or retrieve because the vernacular has lived out its historical moment.

Mrinal Pande, widely hailed as the exemplar of the new formation of the bilingual intellectual because she writes in English and Hindi with equal facility, provides a poignant explanation for housing the story of the death of Hindi in English language fiction. In her novel Pande indicts the producers of a newly privatized television industry for the contempt they display towards the Hindi-speaking electorate they represent in election coverage and the Hindi speaking consumers they woo through advertisements. In *My Own Witness* the central protagonist states: “Hindi and other vernaculars, once forced into regional ghettos, had grown uncouth, xenophobic and mean.” In this observation we glimpse the second feature of the bilingual intellectual. She imagines English-Hindi or English-Urdu literary relations as a potentially utopian space for reviving those linguistic-literary energies of older undivided Hindustani that deghettoise the northern vernacular from its cultural life as uncouth, xenophobic and mean.

**Dussubieux, Laure**

Trade patterns in South Asia as revealed by the study of ancient glass bead compositions

In the past, glass beads were only reported in the “miscellaneous” section of archaeological excavation reports. Indeed, these small artifacts used to raise very little interest and therefore had a very minor role in the interpretation of the archaeological site they were taken from. This situation has been rapidly changing over the past ten years with the multiplication of chemical analysis of glass beads and small personal ornaments. Compositions produced by this approach include a wide spectrum of elements and were obtained using analytical instruments able to determine simultaneously major, minor and trace elements. The study of the compositions of South Asian glass beads revealed a real potential to reconstruct commercial exchanges in ancient time in this region. Chemical analysis conducted on more than 300 glass beads from Pakistan, South India and Sri Lanka, dated from the 4th c. B.C. to the 5th c. A.D. showed the existence of at least three trade patterns for these artifacts. A first glass composition obtained by mixing an alumina sand and soda plant ashes was identified in a vast region that encompasses the northwestern part of India, Pakistan, the Xinjiang province in China and Bangladesh. In the Southern part of India and Sri Lanka dominates a different high alumina glass composition that was obtained with soda taken from mineral deposits instead of plant ashes. The site of Arikamedu, despite its location in South India, features totally different glass compositions. As a consequence, this site was attributed to a third trade network, much less developed in South Asia than the two glass trade networks previously described. Persevering in this direction, by studying material dated before the 4th c. B.C. and after the 5th c. A.D. as well as material excavated in regions that have not been investigated yet would
certainly produce a clear picture of the changing interactions between the different regions within South Asia and also between South Asia and the rest of the world.

Dutta, Aniruddha

Between NGOs and unruly subjects: Disciplined activism and sites of resistance in the ‘GLBT’ movement in Eastern India

Through the past two decades or so, India – especially around metro cities like Delhi and Kolkata – has seen the growth of a vibrant, if uneven, movement among those marginalized for their gender-sexual behavior and/or identity. At present, the public face and agenda of the movement is dominated by NGOs that on one hand work through the international language of human rights, sexual health, development etc., and on the other construct fetishized ‘authentic’ or ‘indigenous’ identities as target groups for funded AIDS-prevention programs. While scholars like Lawrence Cohen have critiqued this double-edged discourse strategically deployed by NGOs, this paper argues that the critique needs to be deepened by analyzing the complexity of 'ground' situations where the 'target groups' of sexual minorities enter the fray with their own socio-economic stakes.

The paper draws upon fieldwork in three different sites in West Bengal, Eastern India to examine how different 'local' frameworks of knowledge – drawing from the coded and secretive subculture of the pre-existing transgender group of Hijras – feed into and yet clash with the NGO discourses and structures that seek to assimilate (and discipline) marginalized subjects into respectable citizenship, even as they may be exoticized and fetishized as indigenous underdeveloped communities in need of funded interventions.

The paper shall specifically speak of the coded genderlect Ulti used by Hijra community and appropriated by the so-called Kothis (lower-middle class homosexual males who have adopted the Hijra subculture), and seek to demonstrate how this genderlect is relegated to being a 'vernacular' for the NGO discourse of identity and rights articulated in English/elite Bengali. This 'vernacular' is, however, 'glocal' in the way it is both influenced by, and enables the work of, the NGOs as they 'reach out' from their globally-connected city offices to suburbs and the local countryside.

However, even as it performs this labor of movement-building through translation, the subjectivities and agencies that are imagined through the 'vernacular' are often suppressed in the effort to build a disciplined, intelligible and coherent community. The paper shall interrogate this process to ask how more democratic and enabling conjunctures between multiple knowledges could be envisioned to build movements across locations in the Global South.

Dutta, Manomohini

Disorder within Order : A Study of the Apaddharmaparvan

Laws operate in society at different levels with the assumption that they were made for the welfare of all individuals in that society. I wish to raise the question whether this general assumption was valid, or, was it a strategy on part of the makers of the Law in ancient India. In order to do this, I have selected portions of the Santi Parvan of the Mahabharata, focusing largely on the Apaddharmaparvan. The first part of the paper would explore the concept of the term ‘Dharma’ as seen in the Rajadharmaparvan. Next, the notion of Apaddharma (norms in the times of exigency) would be examined. The philosophy of Apaddharma, which incorporates a number of dilemmas in troubled times stands somewhat in opposition to the notions of ‘Dharma’. The shift
from the regular norm in times of distress is itself an interesting concept, but what is more interesting is how the text makes allowances to incorporate the deviant within the folds of Dharma. We observe that the rules of dealing with the brahmanas are different than the ways of dealing with the non-brahmanas. This leads us to question the notion of Dharma propagated by the Brahmanical texts. Is it for the benefit/welfare of the entire society that the king uses these Laws or merely for the benefit of the ruler and his main support group? Are Apaddharma rules exceptions to the general Law or are they political and strategical devices on part of the Law-makers to broaden the net of Dharma by embracing Apaddharma to suit their needs in distressful times? Apaddharma is discussed in very few Brahmanical texts like the Manusmrti, Yajnavalkyasmrti, Apastamba, Gautama, Baudhayana and few others, but I have selected the Mahabharata for this because it is a descriptive text and deals with Apaddharma more elaborately than other prescriptive texts. The conclusion I expect to reach is that the notion of Apaddharama has not much to do with welfare of all people, but only of a certain class of people in power, and that notions like Dharma and Apaddhara were social constructions and devices employed by people in power for their own needs. I believe the question of whether Dharma or Apaddhara was applicable for the welfare of the ruled has not been raised so far and wish to contribute to the existing literature with this research.

Elison, William

Pots and Hotties: Sex, Nature, and Culture in Hindi Cinema's "Tribal Numbers"

India’s tribals, or _adivasi_, do not, as a rule, figure in commercial Hindi cinema at a narrative level. Given the erection of some of the Bollywood industry’s most prominent film studios on land simultaneously occupied by villages of the Warli _adivasi_ community, this is an absence to be read as an erasure. But representations of generically tribal people, coded visually and aurally according to intertextual conventions long established in Indian public culture, do make appearances in many Hindi films from the 1940s into the 1970s--as dancers confined to musical numbers. Typical “tribal numbers” from this period populate mises-en-scène invoking wilderness spaces with exotically and often scantily costumed female dancers. My paper will focus on this convention of eroticized performance in which a woodland maiden, citing tribal cultural alterity, mediates a matrix of gazes of desire--implicating the film’s hero, perhaps the film’s heroine, the Indian national project, and of course the audience, the ultimate voyeurs--generally while carrying a pot on her head. It could then be said that the movies construct tribal women at once as carriers of earthen pots and as carriers of an earthy, naturalized sexuality. In asking what’s at stake in this linkage, I relate the trope (especially salient in 1950s vehicles for Dev Anand and similar male stars) to antecedents in literature and mythology and citationally to other cinematic figurations of female sexuality in the image of a pot.

Emmrich, Christoph

And Yet the Doors To That Which is Bound to Happen Are Everywhere: The City of Lalitpur as Heaven on Earth

I shall talk about the transfiguration of a densely constructed Kathmandu Valley city during one day and one night in August in which mainly Newar Buddhist youth celebrate Matyā, the Festival of Lights, to take care of their dead by visiting all shrines, from the largest monastery to the reliquary in some family’s courtyard, on an intricate itinerary the path of which is not allowed to cross its own trajectory. The stations of this non-stop power walk include the places which the dead would have visited on their journey to heaven, from the fiery river they have to cross to the submerged vagina from which they will be reborn. The fatigued participants will be able to catch their breath while giving a closer look at painted scrolls, put up in the courtyards of
monasteries, one of them featuring the travelogue of the departed who, if successful, are shown to settle down in a heavenly city which appears as a map of the urban space through which the procession has led us. I will look at the annual re-weaving of Lalitpur as “network city,” in James Heitzman’s sense, in which connections are made and undone through itineraries which change every year, in which the flow of rice and cash between locals and circumambulators is regulated by its trajectories from one monastery and one reliquary to the other and in which the flirtatious encounters of young men and women on the move empower the ever-growing urban and suburban space while for one day keeping its protagonists suspended between their parents’ home and the Land of Bliss.

Etter, Connie

Shakti and Heavenly Characters: Christian Reflections on Unmarried Life

At a Christian hostel in Tamil Nadu that provides housing, food, and clothing to destitute women of all religious backgrounds who have no family support, many sermons and bible studies seek to raise residents’ critical awareness regarding male-dominated society and religion. Yet, by focusing on efforts to return residents to their families, the organization tends to emphasize the value of the patriarchal family. This tension, between preaching female power and divinity on the one hand, and reinforcing the patriarchal family through organizational practice on the other, has not gone unnoticed in the community. During a sermon, the secretary of the organization reflected, “Today in our Christian society, and in other religions, this is a big question mark. How do we treat people who don’t want to marry?”

In this paper, I analyze interviews with Christian staff members to demonstrate how they employ frameworks of shakti to assess their own lives as unmarried Christian women. I also consider the role shakti plays in a debate between staff members and a German volunteer, who critiques the organization’s policies regarding residents’ protection. In these conversations, shakti plays a familiar role – demonstrating the tension between women’s inherent power and their need for patriarchal family structures – but in new contexts of Christianity and feminisms. These unmarried Christian staff members suggest that a framework of shakti can lead to various models of ideal Tamil womanhood, including one which embodies ‘heavenly characters’ of love and patience, and even, if tentatively, one that affirms the single life.

Fair, C. Christine

Pakistanis and the War on Terrorism: What the data say

Drawing from a number of surveys--some of which were fielded by the author--this paper will draw out trends in how Pakistanis view the militant threats confronted by their country and the best means to contend with the emerging threat. This paper also exposits how Pakistanis view militant groups operating in neighboring countries which are based in Pakistan.

Faiz, Asma

Re-Defining the US-Pak Alliance

Pakistan has emerged as the center piece in Obama administration’s efforts in fighting terrorism. There appears to be growing recognition in the US that stabilizing Pakistan and building linkages with the wider sections of state and society is crucial to its goals in the region. Traditionally the US-Pak relations have moved on a narrow
strip with the focus on strategic-security cooperation. But this appears to be changing. The catalyst for this shift is the growing threat posed by the Al-Qaida-Taliban nexus. During the last two years, Pakistan has become home to rapidly growing Islamist insurgency. Originating from the tribal areas it appears to have spread to the heartland. Coupled with this are the growing losses faced by NATO forces in Afghanistan at the hands of the Taliban. Stabilizing Pakistan has emerged as a priority for the US in war against terrorism. During the recent political crisis in Pakistan, the US is presumed to have played a positive role by pressuring the Zardari government to restore Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhary and his fellow justices. This was in marked contrast with previous US policies which alienated the moderate and democratic forces in the country. The Obama administration is diverging from its predecessor in increasing the non-military aid to Pakistan. This paper attempts to understand the shifting patterns of Pak-US cooperation. What are the dynamics of current US-Pak alliance? Beyond the strategic-security domain, what policy measures are being taken to stabilize Pakistan? How will this policy help in winning the war on terrorism in the long run? Will it finally assist the US in “winning the hearts and minds” and stem the tide of anti-Americanism in Pakistan? These are some of the questions that I seek to answer in this paper.

Fischer-Tiné, Harald

The Ethics of Dynamite – Shyamji Krishnavarma and the Building of Indian Revolutionary Networks in Europe, 1897-1922

In the decade immediately preceding the First World War, European metropolises like London, Paris and Berlin became important gathering places for anti-colonial nationalists from Africa, Asia and the Middle East. In the Indian case the name of Pandit Shyamji Krishnavarma (1857-1930) stands out for being the pioneer of this new type of radical diaspora nationalism. Arriving in London in 1897, he soon tried to mobilize the considerable Indian student population resident in the UK. In addition, he established contacts with all sorts of possible sympathizers of the Indian cause, including English socialists, Irish Fenists and radical feminists. When he shifted his headquarters to Paris, in 1907 the spectrum of allies recruited among the discontents of the imperial world order was further broadened through contacts with French and German socialists, Russian Anarchists and pan-Asianist as well as pan-Islamist activists living in (or passing though) the French capital.

Fisher, Elaine

Transregionalizing a Regional Idiom: Nilakantha Diksita's Sivalilarnava and the Politics of Appropriation

Nilakantha Diksita’s Sivalilarnava, a seventeenth-century mahakavya, is a text rarely discussed as an independent work of literature. An epic dealing with the pseudo-canonical sixty-four lilas of Siva, the Sivalilarnava is more commonly understood as a mere adaptation rather than a novel literary creation. In one sense, Nilakantha’s magnum opus undoubtedly is an adaptation, as he borrows a locally celebrated mythic cycle from the thirteenth-century Tiruvilaiyatal Puranam of Nampi, and shares his theme with the better known Tamil masterpiece of his near-contemporary, the Tiruvilaiyatal Puranam of Parancoti. Despite chronological difficulties, Nilakantha’s Sivalilarnava is unproblematically referred to as derivative, little short of a plagiarism of the Tamil tradition and of the Halasya Mahatmya, a Sanskrit puranic fragment of disputed antiquity.
The temptation is strong to read the Sivalilarnava as mere commentary. Does Nilakantha simply rework the language of his Tamil source material, explicating its ideology to a cosmopolitan, Sanskrit-educated audience? A closer reading of the text, and a consideration of its local context, reveals that this is emphatically not the case. Nilakantha’s Sivalilarnava does not merely comment on the received Tamil tradition, but mobilizes that tradition to articulate regionally and temporally specific political ambitions. This paper considers how Nilakantha’s act of commentary or appropriation leaves the confines of the written word and engages actively with the cultural project of Pandyan revivalism in Nayaka-period Madurai.

**Fleming, Rachel**

The Role of Gossip in Shaping Career and Marriage Opportunities for Nursing Students in Bangalore, India

For over three decades, women from South India have trained as nurses in order to obtain work and migrate out of India. They typically travel first to Indian urban centers, then to the Persian Gulf, and finally to Europe, Australia, or North America. Based on preliminary fieldwork with nursing students in Bangalore, this paper will explore how gossip, shared through nursing and family networks, acts as both a source of information and an active element in influencing the path of the students’ careers and personal lives. Gossip among transnational nurse networks includes information about potential jobs from nurses who have already migrated; utilizing this source is the primary means of obtaining work. These “mentor nurses” also talk about life abroad, sharing stories that revolve around the immigration process, social life, and experiences of discrimination that are sometimes exaggerated or based on rumor in order to cast the country as an attractive or frightening place. At the same time, gossip in local Indian communities regarding nurses influences their reputations and their marriage prospects. Nurses are often characterized as “loose women,” especially if they are single and living in a city or abroad, and are seen as undesirable for marriage. Yet nurses are also valued for their earnings and green cards, and many find relief from strict gender roles by living away from their natal communities. This paper suggests that studying gossip can shed light on the complex processes of stigma negotiation, class mobility, changing gender roles, and transnational migration in South India.

**Flowerday, Julie**

Untitled

On the sixtieth anniversary of the transfer of the former British Gilgit Agency and a separate administrative district under the aegis of the Maharaja of Kashmir to Pakistan (1949-2009), FANA remains unresolved in a postcolonial, not a post independent situation. I offer an alternative interpretation of the Kashmir problem produced through colonial papers and practices of an intermediary interlocutor connected to Hunza. In searching these archival materials I opened a Pandora’s box that unleashed the follies of nation building, a situation that continues to this day. Pakistan enjoys a one hundred year Friendship Treaty with China, but it is not clear how closely the Hunza border is linked to that treaty and what the meaning of any treaty might be to territory that is not legally part of any nation-state. Residents of Hunza have no legal representation in the National Assembly, a position confirmed by Pakistan’s Supreme Court (1994). Recent events, such as the bombing at Mumbai in November 2008 and the loss of Swat to non-government forces (2009), belong to activities of nation-state building. Hunza appears as a backwater to such activities and to the violence of war and terrorism most pronounced in Afghanistan to its west and in Azad Kashmir to its south. In spite of this, Hunza may be a virtual flashpoint in a changing, unstable global situation that locates China at its center.

**Flueckiger, Joyce Burkhalter**

Gendered Experience of the Ugram/Shakti of a South Indian Goddess
The village goddess Gangamma, one of the seven sisters who protect the south Indian uru (village/home neighborhood) from illness and guarantee their fertility, is often characterized by Telugu worshippers as an ugram deity who is “too much”, as they say, to sustain in most households throughout the year. Scholars of India have often translated ugram as “anger” or “ferocity”; however, I suggest that a better translation for this context may be “excessive.” An excessive/ugram deity is not inherently malevolent nor does she necessarily direct her power; but she does require excessive service, which most householders cannot provide on a daily basis. However, as summer days heat up and the uru becomes vulnerable to hot season illness and drought, the excess/ugram of the goddess is needed to protect the uru. Gangamma’s annual festival is structured to build up the goddess’s ugram through multiplying her forms and then to calibrate her ugram by ritually satisfying that ugram.

On the last day of the festival, a 4-6 foot clay face of the goddess is built, called ugram mukhi; the face is ritually dismantled by a human male become goddess. The first year I attended Gangamma’s week-long festival, we were told by the men constructing the face that it was too ugram to look at directly (which would result in destruction), which is why it was hidden behind a curtain until the last moment when it was dismantled. However, just at that moment, a young mother standing next to us told her toddler to “look at it, look right at it.” This was my first clue that there may be a gendered difference in experience of the goddess’s ugram. When I asked a sweeper woman at the guesthouse where I was staying whether she was afraid of the ugram of the goddess, as many men seemed to be, she made an explicit association between the goddess’s ugram and her shakti. She answered, “No, we women are not afraid, because she has shakti and we have shakti, so we’re not afraid. But men, they don’t have shakti, so they’re afraid.” This paper examines the gendered experience of the ugram or shakti of the goddess Gangamma, particularly as that ugram is generated and served during her annual festival.

Fogelin, Lars

IGNORING THE PROBLEM: INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP RITUAL IN EARLY BUDDHIST ROCK-CUT CHAITYAS IN SOUTH ASIA

If there is one central advance to the study of culture in the last forty years, it is the rejection of a systemic/organic analogy for culture. Where once cultures were viewed as well-oiled machines, today cultures are understood as dynamic, dysfunctional, and infused with power inequalities. A great deal of recent anthropological research has sought to explain how social fissures and contradictions are resolved, exploited, or synthesized. In this paper I propose another way people accommodate irresolvable cultural contradictions—they ignore them. Through a study of Early Buddhist rock-cut chaitya halls in South Asia, this paper examines spatial and architectural strategies for ignoring intractable social contradictions. The layout of the earliest rock-cut chaitya halls in South Asia emphasized, rather than concealed, theological contradictions between individual and group ritual in Early Buddhism. Subsequent changes in the layout of later rock-cut chaityas did nothing to resolve these contradictions, but rather only allowed Early Buddhists to more effectively ignore cultural contradictions.

Framke, Maria

Untitled

Europe in the interwar period and especially political, economic and social developments in Fascist Italy and National Socialist Germany in the 1930s constituted a focal point in Indian public opinion and did influence Indian nationalism. Indian Nationalists, living outside the subcontinent, linked with the fascist regimes or antifascist movements reported constantly and comprehensive about the phenomenon ‘fascism’ in newspapers.
and journals published in South Asia. They contributed by this, but also by having personal contacts to their fellow countrymen to the perception and responses of fascism and its aspects in India. Inspired by Stein Larsen’s study of ‘Global fascism’ this paper examines the spread of fascist as well as antifascist ideas into the South Asian subcontinent stimulated by various ‘expatriate patriots’, e.g. Taraknath Das, Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Monindra Mohan Moulik or Soumendranath Tagore. The paper focuses on the perception and public discussion of these ideas and finally their influence on Indian Nationalism.

Frantz, Elizabeth

Activism at the Altar? Faith-Based Networks, Vows and Magic Among Sri Lankan Domestic Workers in Jordan

More than 100,000 Sri Lankan women journey to the Middle East each year on temporary contracts to work as housemaids. These women, most of whom are Buddhist, occupy a socially disadvantaged minority with limited room to manoeuvre in predominantly Muslim countries. Despite the constraints, they do not suspend their spiritual commitments during these sojourns. Indeed for some, the need to access the sacred may be heightened as they encounter trials away from home. This paper focuses on women who migrate to Jordan and, drawing on 24 months of ethnographic fieldwork in the Jordanian capital of Amman and a Sinhalese community in Sri Lanka, explores ritual practices and participation in faith-based networks in the wider context of life and work in the Middle East. It discusses women’s collective participation in Catholic and Pentecostal church services as a means of coping with insecurity and uncertainty. It also describes more individualised uses of churches by Roman Catholics and Buddhists as arenas for the making and fulfilling of ritual vows (bara), saint veneration and magic. In its final section, it explores why so many of these activities have emerged in association with Christianity rather than with the dominant religion in Jordan, Islam.

The paper makes three main points. The first is that, despite having a limited supernatural repertoire, migrants create their own sacred spaces and, in so doing, are able to exert control over social relations. Through ritual, they negotiate concerns about ethics, greed, envy, justice, protection, sexuality, shame and respectability. Thus, these activities form part of the religious imaginary, extending beyond instrumentalism. The second point is that, despite the adaptive use of Christian sites of worship, this is not a case of Buddhism transformed. Rather, these activities should be understood as Buddhism by other means, a further instance of a pluralist approach to the divine. The final point is that faith-based networks constitute an important form of collective action and a vital support mechanism. But the extent to which they can be considered activist is questionable. Evidence from Jordan reveals that while they mitigated hardships, they did not diminish the fault-lines of social inequality within the migrant community, nor did they alter migrants’ underprivileged position within the Jordanian labour market.

Freitag, Sandria B.

Narrating Good Rule

Ram’s story has merited myriad and detailed analyses at least in part because the tradition is so rich, the genres and modalities so broad. Each example, however, is historically contingent, enabling certain emphases to dominate at particular historical ‘moments’ and, yet, to change over time. Despite the current concern that Ram-katha feeds inexorably into Hindu nationalism, evidence suggests that its powerful appeal over time has related, rather, to the way it enables its participants/consumers to talk about what matters. First and foremost, this has meant talking about ‘good rule’ – in a way that need not distinguish the content from, or automatically connect to, religion.
In this characteristic, telling Ram’s story can be seen as paralleling processes also found in narrations of the Muharram story, or that of Ambedkar, or the emerging narrative of the nation that emerged in the 20th century. Accordingly, this paper will situate performative narrations of Ram’s story – especially as these are done in public – within these broader processes treating ‘good rule’. We will explore the extent to which such public narrations rely on key qualities associated with public space (and how those qualities can thereafter even be brought ‘home’ into domestic space as well). Sreenivasan has helpfully pointed out other benefits we derive from juxtaposing such case studies: first, we will try to see how these different stories interact, informing each other and allowing us to “start sketching a history of circulation…” (…Rajput Queen…p.11). Second, juxtaposing these narrations of ‘good rule’ in their several modalities (recitations, performances, processions, statuary, posters, texts, etc.) underscores a process of “continuous interpretation” (suggesting certain continuities over time) along with the “simultaneity of modes” (suggesting intertextuality at any given time).

Moving out from Ram’s story to other stories that operate in similar ways and contexts thus enables us to see beyond the current configurations around Ram and Hindutva to much larger processes and a broad range of genres or modalities. This perspective calls on broader forms of evidence and provides rather different understandings of the ways South Asians talk about good rule.

Frenez, Dennys

The “Lothal Revisitation Project”. A multidisciplinary research program designed to reconsider the south-easternmost hub of the Indus Civilization on the Arabian Sea.

The “Lothal Revisitation Project” (LRP) has been recently activated in collaboration between the Department of Archaeology, University of Bologna, and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The paper will show the archaeological background and the multidisciplinary approach used to design it, the first preliminary results of the opening field-seasons and the plans for future field activities. The LRP is a multidisciplinary research program planned to improve our comprehensive understanding of the role played by the coastal site of Lothal, as the south-easternmost hub of the Indus Civilization, within the trade networks operating across the Subcontinent towards the northern Arabian Sea during Bronze Age. The archaeological complex of Lothal is located within a small doab created by the confluence of the Bhogavo river with the Sabarmati, about 25 km before their present debouching into the Gulf of Kambhat. The site compound covers approximately 10 hectares and it is dated from about 2450 to 1900 BCE on the base of the excavations carried out by the ASI from 1955 to 1962. The most impressive discovery was a huge rectangular brick-lined tank (about 220x40x4 m) found immediately east of the site just out of the surrounding wall. The debate about the function of this unique structure as water supply tank or dockyard is still unsolved and it highly influences several other questions. Moreover, the subsequent archaeological research season in Eastern Arabia disclosed new issues regarding Lothal. In particular the excavations carried out in Oman by Maurizio Tosi during the 80s demonstrated the possible presence of direct connections between the coastal site of Ra"s al-Jinz and Lothal. A complete and comprehensive re-study of Lothal appeared thus a priority in the present streamline of the Indian Ocean archaeology. The LRP has been designed on the base of three interconnected research levels planned to investigate in detail the comprehensive archaeological compound considering the urban settlement configuration, its material culture and the surrounding environment. All these aspects are investigated through a close and continue interaction between archaeologists and teams of geologists, geomorphologists, geophysicists and other specialists of environmental sciences, in order to reconstruct the geography of the Saurashtra peninsula during the Late Mid-Holocene (3000-2000 BCE) and to understand the complex hydraulic system developed to control the water drainage within and around the site.

Fujikura, Yasuko
Registering Birth and Marriage: Justice and Community in the Margins of the Nepali State

This paper focuses on the practices of obtaining birth registration and citizenship certificate in the Badi community, historically considered as a “prostitute” caste, in the western region of Nepal. It discusses the ways in which Badi people engage the state through the production of formal documents and negotiate with government officials in their efforts to demand dignified status of their families. The Badi, who are treated as dalit, had served as entertainers for small rajas and landlords in the past, and became increasingly dependent on women’s sex work since the 1960s. In the late 1990s, Badi people began to fight against historical discrimination and demanded legal rights for socially recognized marriage and family life. In particular, they raised voices against the problem that many of their children could not obtain birth registration and citizenship certificate as the registration procedure required father’s identity. They argued that these documents should be issued based on mother’s identity and started a large-scale campaign, which resulted in a Supreme Court case. In their efforts to demand dignified status for their community, Badi people accused the state for depriving their rights as Nepali citizens. At the same time, it was also through the state that they tried to transform particular legislative, administrative, and judicial practices for vindicating their rights. This paper takes the notion of the biopolitical state and its margins to see how different desires, hopes, and fears shape the experience of the state and strategies of citizenship. Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in a Badi settlement in Nepalgunj, an urban town near the India-Nepal border, this research looks at how Badi people encounter the state through documents such as birth and marriage certificates and citizenship cards. These documents signify both the state’s distance and its penetration into the everyday life. This paper examines how these documents become embodied in forms of life through which ideas of subjects and citizens come to circulate.

Gaenszle, Martin

The Satyahangma movement and the formation of Kiranti ethnicity in Nepal

Many Kiranti in the eastern hills of Nepal remember the Limbu ascetic and “Mahaguru” Phalgunanda Lingden (1885-1949) as a spiritual leader and founder of the Satyahangma (‘Goddess of Truth’) movement, but at the same time he is also revered as an important activist who fought for the ethnic and linguistic interests of this “tribal” minority. The paper deals with the extraordinary, but so far little known personality of Phalgunanda and the impact of his movement at a time of political suppression during the autocratic rule of the Ranas. The dissemination of the Kiranti-script as a medium of a newly defined indigenous religiosity is only one aspect of this movement, which aims both at recovering an ancestral heritage as well as adopting educational ideals of a reformed, modern version of Hinduism. The history of Phalgunanda and his followers and successors can be read as a case of the intricate entanglement of religion and politics which is not unusual in the development of resistance movements during the formative period of nation-states. Though Phalgunanda’s Satyahangma movement apparently disappeared after his death, there has been an impressive revival in recent years, not only in “new” Nepal, in the contemporary context of drafting a new constitution, but also in Sikkim and Darjeeling.

Gandotra, Smita

The Authority in Advice: An Examination of the Rhetoric of an Advice Manual in Hindi

Advice literature for women appeared in many languages and in many forms across India in the late colonial period. Written in Hindi, Sannulal Gupta’s ambitious Strisubodhini [A Book Made Easy for Women] (1885) is a work in five volumes. It continued to be published until 1995. It advises women on everything: how to cook, how to sketch and sew, what festivals and rituals to observe, how to teach children. It also presents very specialized knowledge, especially in relation to reproductive health. The book is an appropriate ‘sample’ text in the extent of its engagements and the sheer strength of its publishing history.
Advice manuals were written, primarily by men, in response to debates about domesticity within a context of social reform in late colonial India. They have been of interest only to social historians so far, and their authors are rarely included in conventional literary histories. The consensus has been that advice literature performed the ambitions of a patriarchal elite, invested in reform. The work of Partha Chatterjee, Tanika Sarkar and Judith Walsh in relation to similar works in Bangla is in many respects definitive.

I propose to reconsider the question regarding male authorship by analyzing the rhetorical gestures through which advice is authored and authorized in this work. The sources of this authority, as revealed in the rhetoric of the work, are multiple. The ‘advice manual’ is a deceptively simple rubric for a large number of works that are very hybrid in texture; they use prose and verse, Sanskrit and Brajbhasha, illustrations and long digressive interludes. In their formal inventiveness, they question most generic categories. How can this inventiveness be read with respect to the author function? Who speaks, in what voice, and to what kind of reader? How and why does an author like Gupta need to employ a female narrative voice to communicate with his projected audience?

These are questions that lead to a larger question of methodology. ‘Tradition’ and ‘Reform’ are the two frames within which these books have been placed so far. They are not considered for their formal qualities. They have been read and understood as echoing and mimicking each other across region and language. My aim will be to interrogate Strisubodhini, and also to revisit certain basic assumptions that have been made regarding what can be said about this genre of writing.

Gautam, Bhaskar

Non-Post Colonial Nepal and the Politics of the Marginalized Madhes

Since the 2006 April People’s Movement and the election of Constituent Assembly in 2008 April, Madhesi politics has gained center stage in the Nepali polity. Chatterjee's critique of Anderson and its representation of post-colonial national imagining is itself too modular for Nepal. In Nepal itself, scholarly work and writing about the Madhes (people of the plains area in the southern part of Nepal) has hitherto been confined to areas like discrimination, crisis in their identities, consequences of changing social demography, regionalism and national unity. The construction of the ‘Madhesi’ identity, the second rate citizen status of Madhesis were/among the important concerns that academics and others have failed to adequately examine. In this paper I will examine the post-1950 process to help understand these central issues in the current politics of the Madhes (southern plains area) and Madhesis. In doing so, I will examine how three major issues – a) the second rate status of Madhesis, b) their glaring absence in state institutions, and c) the emergence of regional and ethnic politics and the growing importance of Madhesi issues in national politics – were largely shaped by the construct of “Nepali nationalism” and the politics of the Nepali citizenship certificate. By historically examining such constructions and their deep intertwining with “Nepali nationalism” and “Nepali citizenship,” this paper will also explain why ‘Nepaliness’ was dominated by the pahadi (hill-people) imagination and how the structure and practice of the “citizenship certificate” helped to produce a materially and politically poor class of Madhesis.

Glover, Will

“Rural-Industrial Habitations”: Planned New Towns in Twentieth-Century South Asia

This paper examines the theoretical rationales developed by a multidisciplinary group of planners, sociologists, anthropologists, and development economists in mid-twentieth century South Asia who argued for the relevance of “New Town” development. While earlier examples of this kind of urban construction are not uncommon in
South Asia (Jai Singh II’s eighteenth century development of Jaipur, and Akbar’s sixteenth century construction of Fatehpur Sikri are both examples of this) twentieth century New Town development was a direct outgrowth of industrial modernization and the ill-effects that were perceived to accompany it. The new industrial “worker” was conceptualized as a “villager” in transition, however, someone drawn to the city for financial betterment but also thereby threatened with deracination. The theorists and promoters of New Town schemes argued that constructing entirely new towns, unhindered by the prior mistakes and problems that beset existing cities, held out the best chance for crafting a physical milieu that would enable industrial workers to resist the debilitating effects of their new factory and city lives: including anomie, alcoholism, the destruction of familial bonds, labor unionism, and indeed the very loss of “culture.” This paper traces the institutional sites and theoretical underpinnings through which New Town development acquired considerable intellectual purchase in mid-century South Asia, along with the spatial paradigms and urban aesthetics they enabled.

Goldman, Michael

Financial Speculation as Urban Planning

This paper explores the speculative basis on which many of the mega-“world city” projects in Bangalore are being built, and the processes by which public goods become prime urban real estate. It then asks how the sudden retraction of capital is affecting the fragile character of the city, its bubble economy, and the surrounding rural geography being cleared in anticipation. Are these troubled world-city investments symptomatic of the new speculative capitalism that triggered the latest financial meltdown?

Gordon, Stewart

Ecological Impacts of Foraging and Crop Destruction in the Mughal - Maratha Wars

There is little enough databased history of pre-colonial warfare in India and even less on its ecological impact. This paper, based on Marathi records and memoirs by European mercenaries, is a preliminary consideration of two ecologically important practices in the Mughal- Maratha wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Bargir warfare, as practiced by the Marathas, whether in alliance or opposition to the Mughals featured raids deep into enemy territory, destroying productive villages and towns, as well as attacks on grain and supply caravans. Bargir bands, especially in the pre-1730’s period lived off the land. The core question is whether this style of warfare altered the human population and ecology and if so for how long. The Mughal style of warfare favored large, slow moving armies that included guns and thousands of civilian support personnel. Wherever such an army camped forgers fanned out across the countryside to gather grain, fodder, and firewood. The longer the army stayed, the more denuded the land. Bargir warfare exacerbated the impact by diminishing the grain supplied by caravan. Again, the question is how much a Mughal army actually changed the ecology of a region by, for example, a siege that lasted for years. The areas fought over in the Mughal-Maratha wars were, of course, heavily humanly altered agricultural landscapes. Often, however, they were in close proximity to more forested and less populated areas. We shall see that ecological changes brought on by warfare were primarily interactions between agriculture land and forest.

Govindrajan, Radhika

"A Lost Cause?": Wildlife Conservation in British India During the Second World War
Most shikar memoirs from the twentieth century remember the Second World War as a dismal period in the history of game preservation and protection in British India. With colonial officials joining the war effort in large numbers, an under-staffed administration was no longer able to enforce the game protection laws that, from the late-nineteenth century onwards, had not only declared hunting by native subjects an act of poaching but also restricted access to game to an elite section of the European population in India. Acts of poaching by the cunning native, these memoirs declared gloomily, were now rampant, even more reprehensible at a time when the British were battling to protect the Empire from Japanese invasion. The situation was much worse in those parts, particularly on the eastern front, where army troops were stationed. Tommy Atkins (the nickname for British troops in India) and Johnny Gurkha (the appellation for Gurkha troops), now joined by soldiers from America, Australia, New Zealand and Africa, were engaging in the most unsportsmanlike destruction of game, even employing machine-guns for that purpose. Given this state of affairs, these memoirs concluded, the project of game conservation seemed dim, a lost cause even.

However, an examination of archival records and other writings from this period (particularly wartime journals kept by soldiers) complicate this narrative of loss and destruction. In this paper, I will draw on the former category of sources to suggest that the war and its attendant circumstances had a differential impact on wildlife in British India. While it is true that certain areas behind the lines saw a large-scale destruction of game, other regions, particularly those located in actual zones of combat, actually witnessed a proliferation of game species that were a source of tremendous anxiety to soldiers fighting there. Through this, I hope to suggest that the alarmist tone of shikar memoirs reflect upper-class British unease about the potential breakdown of class and race hierarchies, as embodied in the culture of hunting, during wartime.

Green, Sarah Houston

Questioning Brahmanism Through Poetic Structure: Nirala and the Idea of the Individual

The Hindi literary movement known as Chayavad (“Shadowism”), which was current in the Hindi belt of North India from the early 1920s to the mid-1930s, produced four major poets. Their introspective poems apparently contradict efforts that were underway during that historical period to construct the nation by promoting the concept of a unitary, cohesive Indian society over the idea of the individual. A comprehensive critical analysis of the work of Suryakant Tripathi (“Nirala”), one of the four Chayavad poets, has not yet been written; but his Chayavad poems are generally recognized as being by far the most semantically complex and stylistically interesting of the Chayavad group. This paper asks two questions. First, precisely what characteristics of language and style support the perception that Nirala’s poetry is of the highest order? Next, how is the concept of the individual innovatively redefined and transmitted for use in the nationalist social milieu through Nirala’s poetic language? Applying Riffaterre’s theory of the poem as a coherent system of signification, this paper carries out a close reading of “Daan” (“Giving”), a poem of Nirala’s that sharply criticizes notions of brahmanical purity and piety and puts forward a new idea of the virtuous individual. I argue both that the poem’s success as a literary piece and its potential to influence concepts of society and effect social change are embedded within the language of the poem and that, more generally, the Chayavad idiom’s significance in early twentieth-century nationalist India is related to its capacity to delineate new notions about identity through the unity constructed by poetic language.

Grewal, Harjeet

Art as The Aftermath: Ontical Censure of the Psyche

Violence: how to conceive it, to create and retreat it, and from where in the machine to put it forth? If violence cast(e)s and out-cast(e)s itself, how is this event repeated as a perpetuance or a re-enacting? Furthermore, how
can the onto-theology of political resistance come to be manifested through creative deployment of religious themes and/or motifs — through creative deployment of violence? Taking these as lead questions I would like to pursue the matter of psychological manifestations of violence as resistance through haunted social creativity. These questions can partially resolve through examining violence surrounding the events related to the Sikh demand for greater socio-political freedoms — through what is memorialized collectively as a Sikh separatist demand: Khalistan. After a number of years of escalating violence, on the 3rd June 1984, the Indian military was ordered to attack a group of militants that had been under siege with the Complex around the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Panjab, which is considered by many in the region one of the most sacrosanct religious spaces. On 6th June 1984, after several days of engagement — with a vaguely reported, but efficient, number of deaths on both sides, the government declared the mission a success. These events promulgated a desire to route out ‘militants’ — fundamentalists who have become, in today’s journalistic jingoism: terrorists. This extirpation has been unfolding over the past twenty-five years and seethes, as by ebullion, upon the psyche of people affected by its wake. In the sanguine, yet benign, shadow of nation-state militancy, attempting to disrupt discourse and censor (censure) creativity, we begin look for expressions of resistance renewed anew; dreams of violent resistance to the organized military machine. Gestures will be made through analysis of art as the aftermath of the 1984 clash at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, such as changes to traditional folk music, the emergence of religious rap and hip-hop, painting and sculpture, and re-mapping religious space. Through an analysis of such sources, we can begin to understand how violent repression, violent force, turn into fantasies of violent resistance, creative resistance as a transiting of violence.

Gupta-Casale, Nira

“The Fissured Self and Female Agency in Cracking India and The Inheritance of Loss”

The European bildungsroman is traditionally understood as the “apprenticeship novel,” “the novel of awakening,” or more simply, the “coming of age novel of bourgeois subjectivity.” Its protagonist (typically male) experiences conflict between individual desire and societal expectations, and this society or nation is “imaged” as a stable entity. By contrast, the postcolonial bildungsroman focuses on the emergence of society from colonial state to nationhood, tracing the tensions inherent in the protagonist’s self-formation against the destabilizing forces of nation-formation. I contend that if the traditional European bildungsroman intrinsically thematizes the coherent self-formation of the bourgeois subject and its acculturation into society, then the colonial or postcolonial novel functions subversively to problematize such harmony and coherence, and inscribes instead, themes of fragmentation and fissure. Such themes are further underscored in those postcolonial bildungsromane with female protagonists because of the gendered limitations of “agency” and “access.”

My reading of Bapsi Sidhwa’s Cracking India (1991) and Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss, (2006) explores these aspects of the postcolonial bildungsroman, namely fissure and agency, through an examination of two female bildungshelden, Lenny Sethi and Sai Mistry. These novels narrate the self-formation of their protagonists at two critical historical moments of social and national transformation for the Indian subcontinent. Cracking India concentrates on the transition from colonial state to nation-state, as experienced through the trauma of Partition /the birth of Pakistan. Set some forty years later, The Inheritance of Loss concentrates on the ethnic conflicts endemic to consolidating Indian nationhood and the shift from a national to transnational/global economy. Both novels reflect what Joseph Slaughter has described as “the metonymic condensation of the individual and the nation,” and their mutual themes of fissure/destability/loss are conveyed in the symbolic resonance of their titles with words like “cracking” and “loss,” which get experienced in their narratives at both the personal level as well as at the level of national allegory. In my paper I will I focus on the issue of ‘arrival’ as expressed in the protagonist’s acceptance or rejection of “accomodation to existing society,” — and the idea of betrayal, at the heart of the project of self-formation in a postcolonial bildungsroman.
Hall, Kenneth R.

Urban Networking and Hierarchy in Cola-era South India: The Importance of James Heitzman’s Scholarship on Temple-Centered Urbanism

My paper reflects on James Heitzman’s studies of medieval south India, as he was highly innovative in pairing his study of Tamil epigraphy with cutting-edge urban theory writings, and in his development of new techniques of computer assisted research. James’ scholarship demonstrated how modern standards of urbanization that are based in the size of an urban community are largely inappropriate to pre-modern India: until roughly 1400 India’s early urban centers were little more than large villages if one applies a population standard, but they can be clearly identified as primary and secondary cities on the basis of their urban function as the focal centers of cultural, political, and ritual networking. Heitzman reported the recurring importance of fortified urban centers as the basis of “classical age” Indian urbanism, the disappearance of the fortified center as the agent of urbanization by roughly 600 in favor of ritualized urban centers, first Buddhist monasteries and subsequently substantial Hindu temple complexes from about 800, and then from 1200 the reemergence of urban networking that was centered in new fortified centers, in pairings of their ritual, political, and commercial functions. My paper will report my continuing research on the patterns of Cola-era south Indian urbanism (c. 900-1300) identified by James, as I am reevaluating the urban networking patterns asserted by James that he portrays as no more than horizontal linkages based in negotiated equity. I am finding it useful to address the hierarchical relationships of pre-Vijayanagara era south Indian urbanism as these imply vertical relationships and their consequences, wherein a functional urban center in a hierarchical system was successfully negotiating a resolution of the conflicting networked alternatives.

Haq, Farhat

Pakistan: The Road from Transitional Democracy to a Consolidated Democracy

One of the key questions about Pakistani politics is whether or not Pakistan can move from being a transitional democracy towards becoming a consolidated democracy. In order to become a consolidated democracy Pakistan needs to strengthen democratic institutions and practices and move away from practices such as censoring the media, intimidation and violence by the ruling party against political opponents, active interference of the military in civilian affairs. There are four serious challenges to democratic consolidation in Pakistan: lack of constitutional integrity, weakness of state authority over the security situation, interference of the United States in political affairs of Pakistani state which makes the state, at best, a semi-sovereign state; and continuing inability of parliament to become a working legislative body.

On the other hand the possibility of an independent judiciary, an empowered media and strong public support for elected civilian government and antipathy towards military interference are variables that may make democratic consolidation possible in Pakistan. This paper will argue that internal political dynamics in Pakistan make democratic consolidation possible but external factors, (Kashmir, and the War in Afghanistan) are the most serious impediments in democratic consolidation in Pakistan.

Hardgrove, Anne

The League of Nations and the Traffic in Obscene Publications

Anne Hardgrove's paper considers the impact of the League of Nations legislation upon the Traffic of Obscene Publications to and within India. The paper considers India as a source of obscene literature sent to the outside, and also as a recipient of literature from other nations. By examining some of the cases which arose in the
discussion of this issue, the paper considers the roles of the various actors involved, including writers, publishers, customs agents, shipping, an imaginary reading public, and an emerging sense of global censorship.

Hardy, Kathryn

Violence On and Off-Screen: Cinematic Connections to Anti-Migrant Violence in Mumbai

On February 3, 2008, a political rally and counter-rally in Mumbai, the capital of the Indian state of Maharashtra, devolved into open fighting in the streets after the leaders of opposing local political parties shifted from increasingly bombastic rhetorical clashing to advocating outright violence. The conflict centered around a regional chauvinist party in Mumbai, the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS), led by politician and pro-Maharashtrian agitator Raj Thackeray, and his campaign against largely Bhojpuri-speaking North Indian migrants in Mumbai.

These skirmishes killed one person and damaged property from buildings to vendors’ push carts and taxis, and highlighted a fraught relationship between a city and its newer, poorer inhabitants. Most strikingly, the physical clashes left several Bhojpuri cinema halls in flames, and many Bhojpuri film reels were destroyed. Furthermore, commentators questioned whether Thackeray’s main interest was in consolidating his political base or destabilizing the Bhojpuri film industry – which competes directly with regional Marathi cinema, a main business interest for Thackeray. While the earliest rhetorical scuffling took place in newspapers, a Hindi-Bhojpuri film also quickly appeared that addressed the issue, Desh Drohi. Thus this set of violent acts, political violence, and rhetoric converges on regional film as a site for playing out the politics of urban regional identity.

This paper will examine the convergence of regional chauvinism and language politics with Bhojpuri cinema by examining media reporting on, embellishing, and explaining the ‘problem’ of Bhojpuri-speaking migrants and the 2008 violence as it relates to Bhojpuri cinema. The built space of the cinema hall and the public discourse surrounding film have long been understood as politically charged in South Asia, and films themselves have often dealt with immediately relevant political issues of the day. Here, Bhojpuri film not only works by constructing a lens through which rural-urban migrants from UP and Bihar come to understand their ethnicized, subnational identities but is also extremely visible as a target for chauvinistic attacks. This recent violence shows how both the symbolic and economic aspects of Bhojpuri regional cinema can be used both to construct Bhojpuri identity and also as catalysts for oppositional politics.

Hare, James

Propagating Bhakti: Nabhadas's Bhaktamal and Manuscript Culture

This paper considers the transmission and reception of Nabhadas's Bhaktamal during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This late sixteenth- or early-seventeenth century collection of hagiographies praises the qualities of over 900 saints and thereby sets the boundaries of a devotional community that far exceeds the Ramanandi sectarian context in which its author wrote. Inclusivity is among the most conspicuous features of the Bhaktamal. This text gives central importance to the saints themselves. For Nabhadas, bhakti is the only proper basis for human society. He rejects caste, kingship, and even family in favor of a community joining human society and the divine in bhakti. The first major commentary on the Bhaktamal, Priyadas's Bhaktirasabodhini, interprets the text from a more clearly defined sectarian perspective. Priyadas's work, completed in 1712, presents a conception of the Vaishnava community that differs sharply from Nabhadas's outlook. Priyadas shifts the focus from the devotees to God. He emphasizes the importance of the sect or religious order. He increases the role of royal patrons, and he grants spiritual importance to caste. Through the
Bhaktamal and its most influential commentary, we witness a debate over the boundaries of a religious community. By the eighteenth century, the Bhaktamal had become an extremely popular text. Commentators continued to comment on the Bhaktamal, almost always taking as their text the combined work of Nabhadas and Priyadas. This paper considers these commentaries and other manuscripts in order to trace the Bhaktamal's performance and reception. Where and in what contexts did the Bhaktamal spread? What significant variants of the text emerged during this propagation? Did the Bhaktamal spread in courtly contexts, or did it remain within sectarian settings? What can be determined about the Bhaktamal's performance and reception in these settings? How is the Bhaktamal related to Vaishnava competition for patronage? By the arrival of mass printing in the late nineteenth century, the Bhaktamal tradition had fragmented into several separate communities of interpretation. This paper examines the textual record of this fragmentation.

Harlan, Lindsey

Sultan Singh and Other Sagasjis: Power in Udaipur’s Hero Festival

This paper examines the annual birthday festival for Udaipur’s sagasjis, heroes who died violently, typically by assassination. “Sagasji” is a term popularly derived from the Rajasthani “sagati” (Hindi: shakti), which references the power that the hero manifests while dying and thereafter serving as a deity protecting devotees from maladies such as illnesses, barrenness, and family conflict. Although Sagasjis are typically Rajputs, and are venerated by descendents in their homes, many Sagasjis have attracted large and diverse followings of Hindu and Jain worshippers in shrines scattered throughout the city. All Udaipur’s Sagasjis celebrate their birthdays jointly during the month of Shravan. Although hero worship has sometimes been represented as an obscure byway phenomenon, it has thrived in Udaipur’s urban environment.

The most famous Sagasji is Sultan Singh, executed by order of his father, Maharana Raj Singh. Sultan Singh, who has an elegant temple and many satellite shrines, invites divine companions to his "gods only" birthday gathering, between midnight and twilight on one night of the three-day Sagasji Festival. They are invited to a pilgrimage to the shrines of Money-Lending Ganesh; Sardar Singh (executed with Sultan Singh); Arjun Singh (Sultan Singh’s maternal uncle, also executed); and Trimukhi Bavri Pir Baba, who died fighting in Aurangzeb’s army against Raj Singh after a period of fighting headlessly. The paper analyzes the pilgrimage, which outlines the periphery of Udaipur and so demarcates Sultan Singh’s field of power, then treats the festival, during which deities, including Sultan Singh, Sardar Singh, and Bheruji (with whom Sagasjis and other heroes who died violently are commonly identified) together heal devotees.

The power of these sagasjis to heal is celebrated in songs and other cultural performances throughout the festival. This power is variously understood as shakti and sat (moral fuel), the terms being fungible in some contexts. Manifesting in various forms, including the wind, these divine heroes utilize their power to address the everyday challenges of contemporary urban life in Udaipur.

Hastings, James M

Glory Days: The “Renaissance” of a Digambar Jain Pilgrimage Complex

Many of the historical and anthropological studies of post-nineteenth century Jain traditions have focused on North India. Little critical research has been done on the revival of Digambar Jain traditions in South India during that same period. This study, focused on the Digambar Jain pilgrim center of Shravanabelgola in Karnataka will begin to fill that lacuna in understanding the development of Jain institutions in the twentieth century and beyond.
This paper, based on fieldwork conducted in Shravanabelgola in 2006 and in the summer of 2009, examines the twentieth-century reestablishment of the institution of bhattaraka (a semi-monastic position that has historically been the mediator between monastics and royal courts), its related rituals, and the accompanying reemergence of Shravanabelgola as a place of pilgrimage as aspects of a Digambar Jain revival which has taken place since the early twentieth century.

In earlier discussions with the current bhattaraka, Charukirti Swami, he referred to a “renaissance” that Shravanabelgola had experienced over the previous 60 or 70 years and noted that the position of bhattaraka had been reestablished in the early twentieth century along with the institution of naked monks. It thus appears that this twentieth-century “renaissance” of Shravanabelgola coincided with reestablishment of such Digambar Jain monastic institutions as well as the establishment of lay organizations such as the All India Digambar Jain Conference which first convened in Shravanabelgola in 1910 during the festival celebrating the anointing of the head of the colossal stone image of Bahubali which occurs approximately every twelve years. Indeed, the expansion of that festival, last celebrated in 2006, has been a significant element of the reemergence of the town.

Yet there are apparently more archaic traditions, such as the daily ritual procession which symbolically connects the seat of the bhattaraka with the local temples, and the prominent worship of a female deity.

Based upon interviews, observation and archival research, this paper seeks to examine the details of that renaissance and its relation to earlier traditions. How was the position and authority of the bhattaraka reestablished in the past century? What policies and procedures have affected the revival of Shravanabelgola as a site of pilgrimage? How has the role of bhattaraka been redefined to meet contemporary needs of the Digambar Jain community?

This paper will seek to address these and related issues in order to clarify the extraordinary changes which have occurred in this pilgrimage center over the past century.

Hawkes, Jason

Stupas in the Rural Environment, Exploring the Relationships between Buddhism and Urbanism Outside of the Urban Sphere

Twenty-five years ago, James Heitzman helped change the study of Buddhism and urbanism in early historic South Asia. In his paper ‘Early Buddhism, Trade and Empire’ (1983), he clearly demonstrated something that was becoming increasingly apparent: that there was a close relationship between Buddhism, trade, and the spread of urbanism throughout the subcontinent. This not only contributed to our understanding of the process of urbanization, but also fundamentally altered the perception of ancient Buddhism; proving that it was more engaged with the wider social sphere than previously thought. However, much of the relationship between urbanism and Buddhism still remains unclear. One of the reasons for this is that the study of urbanism has tended to focus, archaeologically, on urban sites themselves. We know little of what took place in the spaces in between them. This paper addresses this problem by discussing evidence from the Buddhist site of Bharhut. Recent research has shown that Bharhut was not located near a city. Using archaeological, art historical, and geographical evidence, the relationships between Buddhism, trade and local socio-economic processes in a rural setting are discussed.

Haynes, Douglas E.

MASCULINITY, ADVERTISING AND THE REPRODUCTION OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILY IN WESTERN INDIA, 1918-1940
Historical scholarship on South Asia has rarely considered consumption practices as a site for the defining of the Indian middle class during the colonial period; it has chosen to focus instead on the importance of new professional occupations, movements of social reform, the reformulation of women’s roles, and national politics. In this essay, I try to correct this imbalance by examining the place of advertising in western India to the forging of a new, middle-class masculinity between 1918 and 1945. During this period, large businesses in India began to formulate more sophisticated advertisements geared toward generating a consumer base in urban India. They directed much of this effort at “middle-class” men, who were commonly believed to be the key decision-makers determining how family resources were allocated. Increasingly, these advertisements drew upon notions of male responsibility within the nuclear family, and evoked uncertainties among men about their ability to fulfill these responsibilities. The essay chooses as case studies analyses of how advertisers for two different kinds of consumer goods—insurance and a malted milk product called Horlicks—redesigned their advertisement campaigns during the 1930s and early 1940s in order to draw upon, and reshape, emerging male sensibilities. Through this examination, I explore the intersection of capitalism, the emergence of new familial ideals, and consumption in urban India during the first half of the twentieth century. This essay departs from most previous work on the colonial period in that it sees “the home” —that is, the domestic context—as a crucial space for the shaping of modern masculinity (and not just as a realm where women’s roles were defined).

Hertel, Bradley

Indian Calendar Art -- Origins and Recent Developments

The considerable attention that Indian calendar art has received in recent times has focused largely on the importance of the gods portrayed in multi-colored lithographs on Gregorian calendars (e.g., Uberoi, 1997, 2003, 2006; Pinney, 2004; Jain, 2007). This emphasis reflects the centrality of the gods on lithographs from the late 1870s onward and especially since 1892 when the Varma brothers established their press in Bombay (Castelli and Aprile, 2005: 29). Despite Ravi Varma’s enormous influence on calendar art in India, this paper disputes the conclusion that he initiated calendar art in India. He did not. In line with M.F. Husain’s and others’ criticisms that the high regard paid to Ravi Varma owes much to his having mastered western oil painting (Pinney, 2004:61), his reputation as the father of Indian calendar art overlooks the fact that the earliest calendar art in India:

first appeared by 1847 — and quite possibly earlier — one year before Ravi Varma’s birth;
were woodblock prints of the gods rather than lithographs;
appeared not in western calendars but in Indian calendars, or “almanacs,” known as panjikas published in Calcutta.

Drawing on library research and interviews with scholars and publishers in Kolkata, this paper traces the development of panjikas and woodblock prints in that city and the interplay between the British and Bengalis which led early on to a switch to portrait-format — better suited for prints — and a break from the still earlier landscape-format that continues to prevail in north Indian panchangs. British influence continues to be evident even to the present day as will be shown in images from early, later 19th century, and current panjikas.

This paper also examines recent market-driven developments in Gregorian calendar art of especially the past 8 years. These few years have been a time of rapid growth in disposable income, in consumerism, and in the public’s yearning for novelty. Sai Baba as Natraj (2008) and two-flute Radha-Krishna (2009) are among the more striking of the new images. In Delhi, but not Kolkata, Bollywood stars are gaining in market shares. Other subjects that are gaining in popularity include: international travel, especially Switzerland; astrology and vastu; adult animals with their young; and motivational ‘words of wisdom.'

Hewage, Thushara
Emergency Rule and the Legacies of Torture in Sri Lanka: Locating the 1971 Insurrection

My paper revisits the 1971 youth insurrection in Sri Lanka to explore the relationship between sovereignty, law and violence in the postcolonial state. Following the insurgency, thousands of rural Sinhala youth were killed, tortured and imprisoned by a state employing emergency powers that have subsequently become normalized as a mode of governmental rule in Sri Lanka. Since the inception of civil war in Sri Lanka, ethnicity, religious nationalism and violence have defined the chief conceptual preoccupations of Sri Lankanist scholarship. The event of 1971 and its legacies have been neglected as having little to tell us about any of these concepts or the subsequent career of the modern Sri Lankan state. This state, due to its militarization and reliance on emergency regulations, has been characterized as “illiberal” and “ethnocratic”.

Reading the event of 1971 through its authoritative narratives and its ethnographic, revolutionary and state archives, my paper suggests that the forms of the judicial and nationalist recuperation of 1971 and their discursive configuration of the issues of torture, state violence and legality, are in significant senses foundational to the sovereign order of the Sri Lankan Republic and its identity as a distinctively liberal regime. My paper focuses on the judicial apparatus, proceedings and judgment of the Criminal Justice Commission, instituted to try and punish the insurgent leaders and ascertain the causes of the insurrection. I contend that the Commission was deemed crucial to Sri Lanka’s continuing viability as a liberal Asian democracy, through its re-establishment of due legal process and its discursive interpretation of state violence during the insurrectionary period as a necessary, temporary expedient of emergency. However, the Commission’s condition of possibility was the admissibility as evidence of insurgent confessions secured by torture, as well as the general state of emergency that constituted it. I investigate this relationship of identity and disavowal between norm and exception through a historical anthropology of the legal and other discourses attendant on the Commission, concerning how to ascertain the “truthfulness” of involuntary confessions, notions of torture, responsibility, and insurgent subjectivity. I argue that these discourses produce a truth of the “torturable” yet virtuous, because national and rural, insurgent subject. I also suggest that the foundational role of emergency in the Sri Lankan and postcolonial sovereign order is revelatory for discussions about the disavowed centrality of violence to liberal legal regimes.

Hewamanne, Sandya

Learning Self-Governance: Global Discourses, Local Practices and Sri Lanka’s Free Trade Zone Factory Workers

Most NGOs working around Sri Lanka’s FTZs are highly concerned about ‘sexual harassment’ against the female FTZ workers on city streets and conduct frequent workshops to educate women workers on how to respond to such ‘uncivilized and cruel’ public acts of harassment. Many women workers (including some of the participants of these workshops), however, were enthusiastic participants of the very same activities that were condemned at these workshops. This paper analyzes the deployment of neo-liberal governmentality through NGO workshops on preventing sexual harassment while also analyzing how women rejected middle class labeling of public performances of sexual banter as harassment at the same time as appropriating the same rhetoric to deal with unsatisfactory moments within such group performances. The overwhelming interest in policing working class activities and educating ‘victimized’ working class women on how to respond to ‘sexual harassment’ from working class men pointed towards certain assumptions of gendered working class behaviors and downplayed the rampant sexual harassment suffered by middle class female professionals in the garment sector. Moreover, neighbors as well as public officials often took discourses against sexual harassment as an affirmation of dominant sexual mores and used the rhetoric to condemn both men and women for engaging in sexual banter.
Women workers’ delight in participating in these exchanges registered a refusal to be governed by technologies of self-appropriate for ‘modern, educated and urban woman’ disseminated through NGO workshops and media. I assert that women’s performances in public spaces conveyed and registered difference from middle class men and women and that it is one manifestation of the many ways working women participated in subaltern politics of citizenship.

Hingorani, Alka

Speaking of Aesthetics in the Face of God

Mohras are flat, bust images that are embodiments of a god or a rishi – physical representations of divinity in the Kullu valley in Himachal Pradesh, India. Made of embossed sheets of gold and silver, they are repositories of a large proportion of the material wealth of the villages in the valley. They appear as masks, but are never worn; they are carried on wooden palanquins as ambulatory representations of deities in processional festivals in the region. As religious objects their creation and dissolution is swathed in strict ritual, and one locus of this paper is an exposition of the making and reception of mohras. It acts as a prelude to one of the more vexing questions regarding criticism in Indian Art History: can religious objects truly also be objects of art? Can and do religious objects of this kind, actively commissioned by a patron population and made by artists-artisans, lend themselves to critique, appreciation and enjoyment by their primary audience, i.e., by those outside the partisan band of artists-artisans, art historians, critics and connoisseurs, in ways that are not inflected by religious ardour? An answer to this conundrum – a resounding affirmative – in the particular aesthetic environment of the hill-villages of the eastern Kullu district, forms the other locus of discussion.

Hoek, Lotte

Flatbeds and Flatscreens: National Aesthetics and the Introduction of Digital Editing Technologies in the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation.

In this paper I will examine the introduction of digital editing technology into the state-controlled filmmaking infrastructure in Bangladesh. Unlike in other countries in South Asia, all Bangladeshi feature films are produced through the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (FDC), a public enterprise under the Ministry of Information. All basic filmmaking infrastructures, from editing tables to studio floors, laboratory to lights, are owned by the Bangladeshi state. Their operators are in the state’s employment. The introduction of new digital technology in 2008 threw into sharp relief the struggle between state imperatives as expressed through editing practices by its engineers and the objectives of freelance editors who necessarily dwell in a state-controlled space to produce commercial cinema. I will argue that the digital editing panels pushed different groups of technical personnel into conflict over the nature of state organized film making and the imagery of national cinema. The controversies generated around the equipment indicate how state infrastructures produce social relations and shape the material and imaginary landscape of commercial cinema.

Hoffman, Brett

The Analysis of a Metal Assemblage: Examples from Harappa
Over the last two decades, archaeology has seen a significant increase in not only the application of laboratory based analytical techniques, but in the number of such analytical tools available to archaeology as well. Within South Asia, much of this type of research has been focused on archaeological minerals, metals, and stones. There has recently been a renewed interest in the production of empirical data from laboratory analysis of metal objects recovered during archaeological excavations. While new techniques have enabled researchers to investigate materials in ways that allow for the generation of fresh lines of evidence; it is critical to integrate these data sets with those derived from more traditional archaeological methods. This paper will focus on what the analysis of metal remains can tell us about the past through the presentation of recent work conducted on archaeological artifacts from the Indus Civilization site of Harappa.

Huffer, Amanda

From the Serampore Mission to the Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago (HTGC): a history of “American Hinduism”

This essay on the place and nature of Hinduism in the United States emerged from my dissertation on Amma (Amritanandamayi Ma) and her communities of devotees in the United States. In each of my interviews with devotees I asked the fundamental question – is this Hinduism? In conclusion, I found that while devotees’ answers to this question vary, Amma’s movement stands within a long tradition of the transmission of a certain brand of Hinduism that has been imported since the early nineteenth century.

Hinduism, a complicated and evasive term at the outset, only becomes more multifaceted when it is dislocated from its Indian heartland and put into motion in distant territories. In this translocative motion, many scholars have noted that something new has emerged. This essay engages these developments by analyzing each of the terms contemporary scholars have created in efforts to define Hinduism in America as a new and different phenomenon from its Indian counterpart.

The Hindusms present in the United States are a result of the rising populations of immigrant Hindus from South Asia and the personal inquiries of Americans, many of whom were influenced by the gurus and religious leaders who emigrated from India in the twentieth century. These swamis brought with them a version of Hinduism that was shaped from within the historical context of colonialism and a burgeoning nationalism in India. Once in the United States, they adapted this selectively chosen version of Hinduism to fit into popular American culture. As a result, the Hinduism that has been imported and continues to flourish in the United States is a particular brand from a particular stock. This modification is of unique importance not only because of its influence on religion in America, but also because Indians living outside of India’s borders are increasingly influential in domestic politics and religion in India.

In order to organize this discussion, I narrate the history of Hinduism in the United States into four time periods divided by historical events that shifted the momentum of the expansion of Hinduism (and Eastern religions in general) in the United States: 1820-1893; 1893-1924; 1924-1965; and 1965 – present. Hinduism in the United States has been and continues to be a multiplicity of voices and movements. This narrative account aims to highlight the cacophony in order to question the efficacy of the extant unifying terms that contemporary scholars have proposed, which I will discuss in conclusion.

Hughes, Julie

Progressive Landscapes and Exceptional Environments: Hunting Grounds in the Princely States of Bikaner and Mewar, 1880s-1940s

This paper will examine the different ways Indian princes used their hunting grounds to challenge, redirect, and co-opt the meaning of ‘progressive’ reforms championed in their states by the British. I will draw on evidence from a supposedly progressive state and a so-called backward one to show that environmental control was a
common strategy for Indian rulers struggling to govern on their own terms in an era when British standards of legitimacy were increasingly influential and the expectations of state subjects, nobles, and of the princes themselves were in flux. While the rulers of ‘progressive’ Bikaner and ‘backward’ Mewar both aimed to mediate their relationship with the British and reassert their position as sovereigns, I argue that the differences in their states’ landscape, status, and history led them to adopt divergent tactics and resulted in disparate outcomes. Ganga Singh of Bikaner transformed his hunting grounds into celebrated exhibits of enlightened rulership through reforms and select public works projects designed to appeal to British and state audiences. Irrigation tanks doubling as wildfowl habitats verified Ganga Singh’s progressive credentials while allowing him to call on tried and true measures of princely legitimacy. Fateh Singh of Mewar on the other hand failed to impress the Government of India and disaffected his subjects and nobles with closed forests and pig-infested grasslands. Nevertheless, he successfully referenced powerful and idealized visions of Mewar’s former environmental condition and political preeminence, thus ensuring his place as a representative scion of the lineage.

This paper will be based on research completed in India for my doctoral dissertation, “More than a Hunter’s Paradise: Landscape, Sportmanship, and Sovereignty in the Indian Princely States, 1880s to the 1930s.” In writing this paper, I will draw on archival records from the Government of India and various departments of the Mewar and Bikaner administrations. I will also use selections from the correspondence, shooting diaries, and memoirs of relevant British officials, Indian rulers, and a former head huntsman of Mewar. Finally, I will reference select miniature paintings from the Mewar court, including a previously undocumented set of wall paintings depicting hunting scenes found in Nar Odi, a small shooting structure near Lake Pichola that was restored by Maharana Fateh Singh in 1888. My sources are in English, Hindi, and Mewari.

Hull, Matthew

The Speech of Change: From World War II America to Post-colonial Delhi

The atomic bomb is the most famous technological achievement of World War II, but American social scientists worked equally hard to develop scientific methods to make democrats of citizens in Axis countries and to shape the wartime attitudes and behavior of Americans in ways compatible with democratic values. There were a variety of such technologies of democracy. This paper sketches the development of speech techniques in the US and their translation into the very different circumstances of post-colonial Delhi master planning and community development projects led by Ford Foundation consultants. Democratic values and social science understandings of democracy did not simply provide a substantive goal and an external check on social change technologies. Rather they shaped theoretical understandings of how people can be made to change. Planners self-consciously attempted to develop democratic technologies both for generating democracy and for what they called “social control.” As deployed in Delhi, these techniques contrast sharply with methods of colonial urban control. I argue that the US wartime ideological opposition to authoritarianism, as much as the post-war Cold War strategic concern with the spread of communism, shaped many development practices in the post-colonial world.

Jaitla, Punnu

Dialectics of Representation and Identity in Panjab

This paper will examine some of the tensions between constraints on representation in the public sphere and the restructuring of forms of self-representation that have emerged from the dialectic between the Sikh community and the state in Panjab since 1984. The events of 1984 led to significant changes in the ways in which Sikhs were able to represent themselves in the public sphere. These new conceptions, images, and changes also had reflexive effects upon their own ideas of self. The source of these new concepts was not an inherent identity
apart from their relations with other communities and the state, but was rather contingent on the conceptual limits and possibilities that arose in dialogue with these putative ‘others’. This dialectic was not teleological in nature, and the resultant eruption into violence were neither a necessary nor inevitable end, but rather one of many possible outcomes to arise within the space created in the exchange of conceptions of representation between Sikhs and other communities. However, this space delimited the chances for recourse and rearticulation and therefore created a field in which the possibility for discontinuity and reestablishment of the conceptual limits of exchange was limited to violent rupture and reframing of the dialectic of representation and recognition.

In the quarter century since 1984 we have seen various possible outcomes of encounters between interpenetrating Sikh and Indian representations of self. As the narratives have expanded to global dimensions, we see yet another space emerging for the mutual articulation of representation. The new dynamics will embrace novel conceptions of affinity, difference, interdependence, and sovereignty within a redefined public sphere. It remains to be seen what the implications of these conceptions will be for Sikhs and their interlocutors.

Jamison, Gregg M.

Contemporary Steatite Carving in Udaipur, Rajasthan

This paper presents the preliminary investigation and results of an ongoing study of contemporary steatite carving in Udaipur, Rajasthan. The long-term goals of these investigations are to develop models of steatite seal carving techniques in the Indus Valley or Harappan Civilization (2600-1900 BC) that can be tested using archaeological data. Udaipur is an important craft production center in modern India, and several of these craft activities are characterized by traditional, non-mechanized forms of production. Steatite carving is among the many contemporary craft activities in Udaipur, executed using locally available raw materials and traditional tools. For these reasons Udaipur is an excellent setting for studying traditional steatite craft production. Local craftspeople were observed and commissioned to produce goods on the basis of their skills. The present study focuses on documenting the chaine operatoire of contemporary steatite production among different groups. Additionally, selected elements of Indus steatite seals were replicated in order to begin developing models that may have characterized ancient forms of production. These studies have focused on tool types, carving techniques, and variation between different groups. Preliminary results suggest that detailed studies of modern steatite carving are powerful tools for developing models of ancient production.

Jetly, Rajshree

Pakistan’s Quest for Democracy: Challenges and Prospects

Pakistan’s democratic journey has seen more setbacks than triumphs. The country’s democratic credentials remain weak as it has been under the influence of direct or indirect military rule for most of its existence. The formation of the PPP-led coalition government following the elections of 18 Feb last year infused new hopes for the revival of democracy in the country. Democracy is touted as the only solution to Pakistan’s success, yet the fragile political infrastructure, the perennial civil-military standoff and the increasing religious-secular tension has caused Pakistan to wallow in an almost perpetual state of emergency, thus making the attainment of democracy through democratic means a difficult task. So has the democratic experiment paid off?

This paper analyses the extent to which the democratic aspirations of the people have been met or found wanting. In doing so, the paper also examines the challenges that confront the present PPP-led government at the following levels. First, and at the most basic level, is the fact that Pakistan is facing a leadership crisis, with the leaders tainted with corruption allegations and mired in personal rivalries. Secondly, at the institutional
level, the two pillars of Pakistani politics namely the political parties, which have yet to put aside party interests and act in the national interests, and the army, which is still lurking in the background need to be reformed. Thirdly, at the national level, there exist three key challenges: ethnic conflicts, especially with respect to Baluch nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. Finally, at the international level Pakistan has serious problems as it has become inextricably connected with the core of international ideological terrorism, causing severe domestic challenges as well as creating strains in Pakistan’s foreign policy calculations.

The paper concludes that democratization is unlikely to be fully realized, if at all, due to two anti-democratic aspects of Pakistan’s socio-political landscape which are too deeply ingrained to be rooted out, namely the army and the fundamentalist politics of religion. The army has routinely launched coups to topple democratically elected governments and rule by way of military dictatorship while the religious extremists are constantly attacking democracy by portraying it as anti-Islam and pro-West. Unless steps are taken to address these issues, Pakistan will continue to be mired in crisis and the greatest irony will be that democratic politics may gradually kill the democratic aspirations of the people.

Jha, Shefali

Fiza: Identity, narrative and the standpoint of the minor

This paper attempts to theorize the category of ‘minority’ through a foray into Indian popular culture, specifically popular Hindi cinema of the last decade of the nineties. Through a reading of Khalid Mohamed’s Fiza (2000), I discuss the ways in which narrative forms such as the melodrama (so favored by popular cinema) simultaneously constrain and enable the articulation of what we might call standpoint of minority. My aim is to look at how the category of the minor disrupts the reified discourse on identity, by locating it at the site of narratives of community and the nation, belonging and estrangement, ‘tolerance’ and violence. ‘Minority’ is not a category itself free of reification; however, it would be productive to pay attention to the ways in which minority as a form of identity is both ‘given’ and taken on; the ways in which it silences and simultaneously enables speech. This also means that it cannot be approached outside of the narrative that it figures in—legal claims, political mobilization, economic demands or cultural specificity, and frequently a combination of all these. It shifts between these registers, its contingency both a source of power and subjection. This paper hopes to map some of these contradictions through its reading of Fiza, a film with a familiar story told by and large conventionally, but that stretches the plot in unexpected directions in the telling. My argument is that we might read in this pressure and strain the difficulties of a minor standpoint.

Jones, Philip E.

Al-Qa’ida and the Globalization of the Indus Frontier: Religion, Sanctuary and Asymmetrical Warfare in the Pakistan-Afghanistan Borderland

The use of the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderland as a protected sanctuary and staging area for political-military operations, by confederated Taliban and Al-Qa’ida groups, reproduces at a global level the historic use of the northwest frontier by Muslim religious-political groups to wage war against non-Muslim powers, whether regional or imperial. Beginning with the jihad of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed (d. 1831), mounted between 1826 and 1831 in the Vales of Peshawar and Hazara against Sikh rule, there is a relatively unbroken tradition within Indic Sunni Islam of radical, often violent, opposition to rule by non-Muslims in what were regarded as Muslim lands. The rugged physical structure of the region and warrior culture of its tribal folk have made the borderland attractive to numerous raiders, military adventurers, empire builders and religious revolutionaries. Bin-Laden
and his Taliban allies are the latest of the latter and have made their mark by adapting a regional sanctuary to support a ‘global jihad’ against, mainly, the US. The key immediate objective of the jihad movement is, minimally, to protect and expend the sanctuary, and having achieved that, to pursue a religious revolution in Pakistan and gain access to all the resources, military, nuclear, and otherwise, of this important state. In essence, at the global level, the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderland has become the main base for an evolving ‘Sunni Revolution’ in the world’s most unstable region, an arc of crisis extending from Kashmir in the east to the Caucasus in the west. This Sunni Revolution has had a profound effect on the state of Pakistan as the nature of the state increasingly comes into question and feeds ideological, separatist, and fundamentalist forces that if they do not challenge the existence of the state offer problems of governance that are only going to be more problematic in the future.

Joseph, May

Cochin: Between Water and Garbage

This paper will draw on James Heitzman’s work on South Asian cities and explore the notion of an Indian Ocean city. Cochin or Kochi, is a city filled with the echoes and dreams of other cities. It is a city at the crossroads of old architecture, new phantasms, changing demographics and future dreams. This paper will explore the junctures between the contradictions and hope that creates this Kochi of the present, the transforming ´smart; city yet to become. The paper will consider in particular Heitzman’s work on the science city/city of technology (in Network City, 2004, for instance) to think through developments shaping Kochi as India’s emerging informational city of security and shipping technologies. Current urban politics in Kochi are foregrounding the deep divides and solidarities between neighborhoods, localities, ethnicities, ecological vulnerabilities, sacred spaces, and environmental priorities. On the one hand, is the claim of Kochi becoming the future ‘smart city’ proclaimed from banners and highway advertisements, flanked by high rise office park images, reproducing a utopic vision of what the city can become. On the other, is the groundswell of peoples movements opposed to technologisation without realization of people’s needs. These tensions have been exacerbated around the material realities of garbage that lies across the city’s public spaces as an indictment of the seamless future of a ‘smart city’ embodied by mounds of public waste along the city’s thoroughfares.

Drawing upon Heitzman’s research, I will undertake an excavation of some of the trajectories and detours that the city of Kochi faces as a ´smart city’ with a provincial past and an insurmountable problem of toxicity.

Kaimal, Padma

What did medieval Kanchipuram look like?

Among the many dimensions in which Jim Heitzman's work has fundamentally shaped my research, one of the most recent is in helping me to imagine the possible shape of this ancient royal capital in northern Tamilnadu. In particular, I have wanted to know the city's 10th-century form since this was when Kanchipuram was home to a goddess temple I have been trying to reconstruct. But to picture that moment depends upon picturing the city's previous forms and changes, its principles of organization and disorder, the cohesions and ruptures in its urban fabric - for all of which I have leaned heavily on Heitzman's detailed, broadly imagined, and lively work. My approach to this subject will be visual, especially groundplans of the current city as they reveal ancient centers, margins, and phases of
reorientation. My interest lies in picturing the city's shapes and, through them, the movement of people and processions through its streets to the structures and spaces that people valued most.

Kamal, Saydia

The Tawaifs (courtesan) and the Communion of Tragedy: Rethinking Colonial Photographic Narratives of ‘Nautch Girls’ through Mahashweta Devi’s Novel Laili Ashmaner Ayna (Laili Ashman’s Mirror)

Literary and visual traces of women from pre-colonial India prove the varieties of roles women occupied and show practices beyond the Victorian realm of womanhood. Laili Ashman, a tawaifs (courtesan) from Mahashweta Devi’s novel Laili Ashmaner Ayna (Laili Ashman’s Mirror), Laili’s literary creations, performing tradition and life tragedies hold a different world of femininity, desire and social relations. Following her life story, through intertextual references (novel and colonial photograph), juxtaposing colonial pictorial narratives of tawaifs (courtseans) with the novel, I would like to interpret contradiction that one encounter from this juxtaposition – tawaifs life as the embodiment of tragic communion in the novel and the tawaifs as the deviant nautch girls in the colonial photography. In this paper, I have examined the colonial production of the native subjects as baijee (nautch girls) and argued that this transformation from tawaif to baijee, is a process of caging woman into bounded categories of daughter-wife-mother or the fallen women by removing the versatilities of gender relations practiced in the region. Methodologically, I am interested to explore the possibility of intertextual referencing as a hermeneutic technique to decipher these pictorial narratives, to rediscover, if possible at all, what is being lost and reinscripted in these colonial photographs.

Kantha, Pramod

Nepal’s Federalism and Madhesis

While Nepal’s constituent Assembly has taken some initial steps to undertake its principal job of writing a new constitution, raging political controversies over myriad of issues dampen hopes for an early agreement among the major political stakeholders on the constitutional structure. Although Nepali leaders have committed to a Federal system, there is very little agreement over principles, distribution of power and the number of regional units that this federal system will entail. The Madhesi population of Nepal will have a major role in determining the form of federalism Nepal eventually adopts. In 2007, the Madhesi staged widespread protests against the hill domination and obtained government commitment to federal system, fairer representation in the government, and greater representation of the Madhesi population in military and bureaucracy. Madhesi demand for a single Madhesh province stretching the entire southern border of the country remains one of the major points of contention between the Hill and Madhesh leaders. My paper will examine Madhesi leaders’ approach on Nepal’s Federalism. The paper will examine whether the Madhesi leaders are likely to remain united or divided over this issue, and identify and analyze the likely factors that could influence their standing.

Kapila, Kriti

Categorical Tensions: The "indigenous tribes" of Meghalaya

While one can dispute whether half a century of government engagements to uplift communities designated as scheduled tribes has made much headways in terms of improving the economic, political and social situation of these people, the ST status has no doubt become a priced asset in India today. A case of point here, for example, is the large number of movements that seek government recognition as scheduled tribes. But obviously, if the
category becomes too inclusive, the practical usefulness of the ST status diminishes. In this paper I will look at such a situation.

In the northeastern state of Meghalaya as much as 85 percent of the population fall under the ST category. There are 17 tribes and 35 sub-tribes listed as scheduled tribes in the state. The majority of people, however, belong to any of the three dominant ST communities; the Khasi, the Jaintia and the Garo. During last years the politics of tribal identity has not so much revolved around the ST list as such - for example, whether some communities ought to be added or deleted from the list - but rather around a newly crafted category, the so-called “indigenous tribes”. Claims to indigenous tribe status have especially been articulated in the context of the contentious issue of land rights, i.e. the question of who should have the right to hold or own land in the state. Several powerful organisations in Meghalaya now assert that this right should be assigned only to the indigenous tribes of the state, namely the Khakis, Jaintias and Garos. In focus is the much debated Land Transfer Act that prohibits transfer of land from a tribal to a non-tribal person. The Land Transfer Act is there to protect the interests of all the STs in the state and make, for example, no specific reference to three communities now claimed to be the indigenous tribes. This is what organisations like the Meghalaya Indigenous Peoples Forum seek to redress.

In this paper, I will address the wider significance of this new claim for “indigenous tribe” status. As I argue, this is an example of how the global discourse on indigenous peoples’ rights intersects with and partly evades the existing state-centric scheduled tribes’ framework.

Kaplan, Martha

Constitutions, Coups and Indo-Fijian Citizenship in Fiji

Since Independence in 1970 Fiji has had a democratically elected government but also multiple military coups. Thus the Indo-Fijians, descendants of Indians who came to Fiji in the 19th century labor diaspora, both do and do not live in a democratic nation-state. This paper asks how democracy and the democratic process can erode national citizenship. Early independence images of a “three-legged stool” envisioned national leadership by chiefly ethnic Fijian elites and interdependence of ethnic Fijian landowners (83% of Fiji’s land is owned by descendants of indigenes) with Indo Fijians (as economic backbone) and the British crown as guarantor of the independence era parliamentary system. But at independence, to participate as citizens, Fiji’s citizens had to identify themselves for voting rolls in colonial categories, as “Fijians,” or “Indians,” or “General Electors”. Thus colonial contradictions pervaded the post-colonial possibilities. Post-coups constitutions have swung between the early 1990s ethnonationalist charters to a 1997 constitution inspired by global standards for multi-ethnic parity and power-sharing, but undermined by coups in 2000 and 2006. Soberly, this paper considers the history of plans for Fiji’s democracy embodied in constitutions, elections and other political rituals since 1970, and the prospects for Indo-Fijian self-determination via democracy.

Katyal, Akhil

THE PANTHI AS VIOLATOR: READING A DOCUMENT OF CONTEMPORARY AIDS ACTIVISM IN INDIA

The last two decades have seen South Asia become an active site for AIDS-prevention activism. The methodological drive of this activism is epidemiological. It has grown by articulating a series of target groups and sub-groups for making successful health and community-related interventions. It has mapped these communities by virus-prevalence ratios and has slotted their sexual habits on bell-curves of risk. This has made possible a new and complex MSM sector which is nonetheless constituted by binarized pairs like penetrator/penetrated, panthi/kothi, masculine/effeminised et. al.. These binaries become the fundamental terms
of its data-collection and ground interventions. An overwhelming framework of violence invariably leads this form of activism to read all these binary pairs as simple cognates of violator/violated. A recent 'Naz Foundation International' publication, focussing on the life-realities (Bondyopadhyay and Shah; 2007: 9) of kothi men, promises to reveal the causes of violence, the manifestations of violence, and the effect that this violence has on the lives of those that it touches and tarnishes (11)

My paper would read in this document a schematic making of the figure of the violator. Bondyopadhyay and Shah’s text uniformly conceptualizes violence in gendered terms. Having designated kothis as not-men (19), as an indigenous feminine homosexual identity (17) that is nonetheless biologically male (35), it makes possible the flat figure of the violator as the real man (17), the masculine impresario, who always penetrates the kothi and is supposedly the unremitting beneficiary of a patriarchal culture. Theoretically always active in sex, this socio-rhetorical figure of the panthi becomes an easy and heterosexually ordered complement to the kothi, who is perceived to be consistently passive and effeminate due to this passivity. A complex model of subjectivity is withheld from both to persuasively articulate a victimhood, the raison d’etre of this activism. The panthi is both invisible, because he is the same as all the men, and decipherable only by this sameness that leaves this dummy figure emotionally arid, abusive and uniformly dominant. This is both a predictable failure to conceptualise powerless masculinities (Chopra, Dasgupta and Janeja; 2000) and an inability to locate masculinity within a relational setup of power, one that is marked by difficult exchanges rather than simple subjugation over all that can be (and is) designated as feminine.

Katz, Max

At the Crossroads of Sitar Performance and Sitar Production in 20th-Century Lucknow

Studies in the field of ethnomusicology have yielded tremendous insights into the cultural world of North Indian classical instrumentalists, but have virtually ignored the parallel world of classical instrument makers. Like musical knowledge, knowledge of instrument building has long been concentrated in the hands of families of craftsmen who pass their accumulated skill from generation to generation. This paper brings one such instrument-building tradition out of the shadows through a focus on a family of sitar makers in the city of Lucknow. Through years of intimate contact with the musicians whose instruments they built and serviced, this family crossed into the realm of professional performance, producing one of the most highly respected sitar artists of the 20th century—Yusuf Ali Khan. The transition from makers to players, however, turned out to be unsustainable, and the present-day descendants of Yusuf Ali Khan have returned to the family trade of instrument manufacture and repair, while simultaneously celebrating their continued—though entirely peripheral—presence in the world of sitar performance. As this paper will discuss, the family today resides in an ambiguous musical borderland, claiming respected ancestors on both sides of the performance/production divide, and maintaining professional ambitions in both worlds.

Kaur, Rajender

Violence in a “forgotten world”: The North-East in Recent Anglophone Fiction in India

Perhaps it is no coincidence that the North East happens to be the favored regional choice of locale in a spate of recent novels: Kalimpong in Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss (2006), Parbatpuri, a small town in Assam in Mitra Phukan’s The Collector’s Wife (2005), Imphal and numerous other small towns of Manipur and Tripura in Siddhartha Deb’s An Outline of the Republic (2006), and the Sunder bans in Amitav Ghosh’s The Hungry Tide (2004). The North East has long been a region in the grip of enduring separatist and ethnic violence, which is only now, courtesy of the new riches endowed by globalization, capturing the national imagination of the bourgeoisie as an exotic tourist destination on the far reaches of the republic. In An Outline of the Republic, Siddhartha Deb, calls the North East, “the forgotten world.” However, the Shangri La image
summoned by the name “the Seven Sisters,” as the North Eastern States are also popularly known as, is a euphemism for underdevelopment and a severe lack of basic infrastructural facilities that would connect them to the national mainstream. In recent years there has been a spurt in the violence by insurgent groups that has finally managed to get media attention alongside the centre stage occupied by terrorism in Kashmir or Communal violence in Gujarat. I mention these diverse novels published between 2004-2006 in one breath, because they focus, to different degrees, and from slightly different perspectives, on the problem of widespread political and civil unrest manifested in various secessionist movements, and ethnic conflicts that are different from the problem of sectarian religious conflict between Hindus and Muslim, or the vicissitudes of extended joint family sagas occasioned by Partition, that has been the fictional fodder of the Indo-Anglian novel for a long time now.

In such a "forlorn land" the issue of social justice and human rights become moot, and violence assumes a circular logic: undertaken to consolidate a sense of identity, and identity produced by extreme acts of violence, as argued by Arjun Appadurai in his Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger (2006). The region seems to be in the grip of despair produced by uncertainty, as violence, the more spectacular, the more effective, becomes a tool of crystallizing borders, identities, and agendas.

Kelly, Gwendoyln O.

Craft Production and Technology during the Iron Age to Early Historic Transition in Tamil Nadu

In this paper I examine several lines of evidence of craft production, including technology and spatial patterns of crafted goods in order to shed light on the social and economic organization during the Iron Age to Early Historic transition (3rd cent B.C.E. – 3rd cent C.E.) at the site of Kodumanal in Erode District, Tamil Nadu. The site is remarkable for its evidence of large scale stone ornament production, and wide variety of raw materials present, some of which appear to have been worked at the site, others which are present only in finished form (Rajan 1994). The questions of social stratification and economic specialization are examined through the lens of craft production and consumption, of ceramics, semi-precious stone, and shell ornaments (Costin 2001; Kenoyer 1998; Sinopoli 2003). I address the question of the degree of social stratification and its change over time through an examination of the elaboration of crafted items, their raw materials and technology, and their spatial distribution throughout the site (Kenoyer 2000; Vidale and Miller 2000). The question of craft specialization, of the scale, intensity, concentration, and contexts of craft production, is examined through the spatial distribution of the various evidences of craft production (Costin 1991, 2001). Aspects of non-hierarchical social differentiation are addressed through a discussion of the styles of technology of various crafts (Lechtman 1977, Lemmonier 1986). Variations in technological styles and choices in the chaîne opératoire of the crafts of Kodumanal are considered using both archaeological and ethnoarchaeological data. The aim of this paper is both to present the results of ongoing research, and to suggest directions for future research in the region.

Kelly, John

Military Governmentality: Reconstituting Citizenship by Martial Rule in Burma and by Coup in Fiji

Democracy as the means by which a nation reaches its telos in a state – the Versailles dream of self-determination – has become the paradigm for constituting law in the United Nations world. The dream of self-determination has been the American-sponsored antidote to the nightmare of colonization. But in the postcolonial world, Burma and even Fiji have found their own nightmares. As Kaplan (this panel) shows, democracy in Fiji did not constitute a national citizenship and could not, in practice, prevent military coups from eroding political and civil rights. The self-destruction of political and civil rights happened much faster in postcolonial Burma, where military rule now completes its fifth decade by sponsoring a macabre parody of constitutional process. Burma’s story is an extreme version of an all too common pattern of takeover by “political army” (Koonings and Kruijt) in a decolonized democratic nation-state. Such takeovers are the
sometimes fate of *most* of the “new states” generated out of the end of European empires. A Cold-War overlay has occluded our understanding of political armies as an unintended consequence of the contradictions in the “new world order” after World War II. Political armies are one of several such unintended consequences (also elite diaspora, NGOs, leveling crowds, new wars, strange wars, and terrorism) and among them, perhaps the most significant and least well understood. Against theorization of military rule and political armies as a right-wing solution to disorderly development and red menace (cf. Huntington et al) I will argue that political armies are an unanticipated alternative solution to the predicament of nation-building by state-building: a quintessential unintended consequence of the intention to redress substantive political inequality by way of a moral formalism, self-determination. Understanding how the exigencies of freedom, security and rights can generate their opposite opens the liberal critique of self-determination that our times might find useful.

Kennedy, Charles H.

Politics and Constitutionalism in Pakistan: Coping with the Dismissal of a Chief Justice

The suspension of Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudury on March 9, 2007 set on course a series of events, which even measured by the standard of Pakistan’s checkered and creative constitutional history were both dramatic and unprecedented. This paper will chronicle relevant events that have transpired since President Musharraf’s ill-fated decision paying particular attention to the role of the superior judiciary and the lawyer’s movement in the drama. The purpose of this descriptive exercise will be to help explain such monumental events in the context of Pakistan’s history and to speculate on the possible effects such events have had or are likely to have on Pakistan’s constitution and civil-military relations within the state.

Kenoyer, Jonathan Mark

Archaeology of the Prehistoric and Early Historic Periods in the Northwest Subcontinent: The Relevance to Contemporary Pakistan and India

The archaeology of the northwestern subcontinent during the Proto-historic Indus Tradition (3300-1300 BC) and Early Historic (600BC-300 AD) Period is a source of information that has been used to support contrasting political or ideological perspectives. This paper will examine the evidence for cultural traditions and long term patterns of interaction that are relevant to the current socio-economic, political and ideological issues facing the modern countries of Pakistan, India and Afghanistan. While some scholars and politicians have argued that the modern nations reflect geographically and culturally bounded regions, the archaeological evidence suggests that cultural boundaries have fluctuated significantly over the past. The factors for these patterns can be attributed to the distribution of multiple resource zones, technological developments, trade mechanisms, river patterns and climatic fluctuations. The role of ideology and politics during the Proto-historic and Early Historic Period will also be examined in relation to the archaeological evidence for cultural interaction. It is clear that cultural boundaries have rarely corresponded with political or even ideological traditions in this part of the subcontinent.

Kent, Daniel

Born in the Stream: Kanimahara Sumangala's Failed Reformation of Buddhism

In 1980, the scholar monk, Kanimahara Sumangala, had a revelation. After years of careful study of the Pāli canon, he decided that Buddhaghosa’s classical presentation of the Buddhist path was wrong. Rather than beginning the Buddhist path with sīla, morality, Sumangala argued that the path begins with pañña, wisdom. Furthermore, Sumangala argued that he was a jāti sowan, a stream enterer by birth,
and that anyone could attain the same state by simply listening to a sermon and generating saddhā, or confidence in the Buddha Dhamma, rather than through the practice of vipassanā or any other kind of meditation. While Sumangala did attract a small community of lay supporters, his monastic fraternity declared him insane and largely ignored him as a nuisance. Today, over 25 years after Sumangala’s death, his teachings have been almost entirely forgotten in Sri Lanka. While a handful of his students continue to teach and develop Sumangala’s teachings, for the time being, his reforms have failed to be recognized by the greater Sri Lankan Buddhist community. Based upon the surviving recordings of Sumangala’s final sermons in the early 1980s, this paper will serve as an initial presentation and analysis of Sumangala’s teachings. What motivated Sumangala’s attempt to reform Sri Lankan Buddhism? Who were the targets of his critique? Why did his attempts at reformation fail to gain a significant following?

Khan, Mosarrap H.

Sabitri Roy’s Badwip (The Delta) and Communalization of Post-Partition Urban Space in Calcutta

Historiographical literature about the experiences of Partition in Bengal predominantly engages with problems of refugee rehabilitation and their struggle for assimilation in the host country, the consequent demographic impact of migration on the host population, the growth and expansion of the city proper as a result of refugee settlement on the outskirts, and social tension between the Hindu refugee population and the ‘bhadralok’ of West Bengal. However, Partition scholarship in Bengal still continues to be marked by its silence towards investigating how the urban spatial imaginary progressively becomes communally marked.

Focusing primarily on Sabitri Roy’s novel, Badwip (The Delta, 1972), this study will explore the spatialization of communal identity in post-Partition Calcutta with the purpose of formulating how such spatialization constructs particular communal identities. Spatialization, or making claim to a particular space, is often a political act and involves rhetoric of Otherization. The historians of ‘communalism’ often interpret the events of partition as a struggle over asserting primordial or constructed communal identities. My contention in this paper is that ethno-religious identities are constructed and reified in the political act of spatial control and communalization of urban space.

Swati Chattopadhaya in her study of Calcutta makes an important distinction between the “literary space of locution and physical space of inhabitation and production” (2005:10). Combining the rhetorical with the everyday lived experiences, I read Badwip (The Delta), which chronicles the setting up of post-Partition squatter-colonies in Calcutta and the anti-Muslim riots of 1964, to explore how the “zone of inter-ethnic intersubjectivity,” which is part of the “permanent poly-ethnicity” of any great city in India, erodes and progressively leads to ghettoization of the Muslims in Calcutta. Access to ritual spaces gradually shrink in post-Partition Calcutta as the Muslim graveyards are taken over by the hostile Hindu communities in collusion with the state as, also, access to physical spaces are “reduced and rearranged.” Following Bede Scott’s use of Anthony Vidler’s concept of “architectural uncanny” in “City of sieges: Literature, communal violence and urban space,” I will further argue how this spatialization of community identity and the communalization of urban space create a sense of “unbelonging” and estrangement among the minority communities.

Khan, Naveeda

The Braid: the Politics of “River Training” in Bangladesh

The Jamuna, one of the three rivers traversing Bangladesh, is a braided river. It consists of a network of channels separated by small, temporary islands called chars. During the monsoons, the channels of this river swell up with water flooding the adjoining lands. Consequently, the Jamuna has been the focus of intense national and international efforts at “river training,” a technique largely comprised of building polders and
embankments along the riverbanks. This technique, involving the transfer of technology and expertise from the Netherlands, was first put into effect in Bangladesh under the direction of the Flood Action Plan of the 1990s. Subsequently, it has been widely criticized for its occlusion of the char lands and the population inhabiting them. In this paper I examine the network of NGOs, governmental bodies, river channels, seasons, and char dwellers brought into relation through the emergence and deployment of “river training.” In particular I suggest that it is this network’s privileging of specific durable temporalities over others that accounts for the occlusion of chars, despite evidence of their continued existence.

Khan, Feisal

The Non-Islamist Roots of Pakistan's Afghan Policy

While commonly viewed as being propelled by Islamist motivations, Pakistan’s support for the Afghani Taliban is the natural culmination of a long standing attempt by the Pakistani state to counter Afghani irredentist claims on large chunks of Pakistani territory (Pashtunistan or Greater Afghanistan). This paper examines the historical antecedents of Afghan claims to Pakistani territory, the nature of the border dispute (the infamous Durand Line) between the two countries, and each country’s historical support of insurgent groups in the other. Pakistan’s Afghan policy culminated in its attempt to install a Pakistani client government, the Taliban, in Kabul. Current Pakistani policy is to support the Taliban against what it perceives to be an irrevocably pro-Indian and anti-Pakistani, Tajik/Dari speakers dominated Afghan government that would allow Pakistan’s arch-rival India to outflank Pakistan and reduce the ‘strategic depth’ that a pro-Pakistani Afghan government would afford Pakistan vis a vis India.

Khan, Iftikhar Ahmad

Towards a Social History of Collective Violence: Urban Religious Riots in 18th century Gujarat

Concerned with the contemporary ascription and violent mobilization of supposedly primordial religious identities, the panel proposes to understand the nature of social groups and collective categories in pre- and early-colonial Gujarat. It will attempt to locate such groups and identities within the existing politico-legal arrangements, and also grapple with their eventual transformation and consolidation into the wider affinities of caste and religion through colonial mediations.

The paper will engage with the theme of the panel in the following ways:

1. It will present empirical evidence on religious riots in 18th century Gujarat (Ahmedabad and Surat) culled from primary sources in Persian, Gujarati, Urdu, and English. Through close textual readings of these, the paper will disclose social categories, frames of reference, and rhetorical devices that were a part of the textual imagination and through which the riots find articulation.

2. With its focus on collective religious violence, the paper will dwell on the motivating symbols, religious doctrines and notions of ‘self and ‘other’ governing the behaviour of crowds and mobs.

3. Drawing upon micro-histories of a couple (or more) riots - whose event-structures appear laden with specific and intrusive temporalities - the paper suggests the workings of performative texts in the behaviour of crowds. These go through extended gestations and defy the frames of traditional periodization.

4. In substance the paper will argue a case for a more far-reaching inquiry into the structures of collective violence in the regions of South Asia – beyond the entrenched discursivities of periodization; in particular, the excessive and even exclusive emphasis on the colonial genesis of large-scale religious conflict in South Asia in much of current historiography.

5. Towards this endeavour, the paper will critique and advance caveats against the totalization of colonialism as explanation in the formation of religious identities and structures of collective violence.
Khullar, Sonal

The Oriental Woman Revisited: K.G. Subramanyan’s paintings on glass

In 1979, K.G. Subramanyan (1924-) executed a series of small-scale paintings on glass, inaugurating a reverse painting technique that would become the basis of his art practice in the 1980s and inspire a generation of artists in India seeking to relate urban experience, social critique, and popular imagery. These paintings featured female figures chewing paan, applying lipstick, or holding a pet; they engaged the viewer directly and provocatively. Subramanyan described the glass paintings as his “bazaar pictures,” signaling not only the informal economy of Indian markets, but also the formal qualities of these image-objects, notably their startling, sensual, and satirical address.

Critical accounts of Subramanyan’s glass paintings have neglected their relationship to the social world from which they arose, focusing instead on the virtuosity and wit of the artist. In doing so, scholars have failed to answer why and to what effect the artist chose to invoke the sumptuous world of the bazaar at this moment? And, perhaps more significantly, why were the female subjects of these paintings so brazen yet also blushing? This paper relates the glass paintings to contemporary developments in literature, cinema, and calendar art of the 1970s. It shows how Subramanyan’s glass paintings gestured towards problems of gender, sexuality, representation, and spectatorship from the colonial period to imagine a postcolonial future.

Kibria, Nazli

“Women should work but remain decent”: Gender Negotiations of Bangladeshi Labor Migrants in Malaysia

Since the 1990s, Malaysia has been an important destination for Bangladeshi labor migrants. Reflecting widespread ideas in Bangladesh, they often enter into the migration experience with the idea of Malaysia as a model of successful modern Islam – a state that has been able to combine economic prosperity and modernity with commitment to Islamic principles. For these largely semi-skilled men workers, the experience of living and working in Malaysia is one that brings them into contact, often for the first time, with the disciplinary rhythms of the industrial workplace. In contrast to Bangladesh, in Malaysia the migrants also experience a society where women’s labor force participation is far higher than in Bangladesh. In this paper I explore their interpretations of these differences as well as their efforts to incorporate the “lessons” of the Malaysia experience into their family lives in Bangladesh. I draw on 24 in-depth interviews, conducted in Bangladesh with labor migrants who were either on leave from their jobs in Malaysia or had returned home permanently from Malaysia. The literature on South Asian Muslim labor migrants (mostly on returnees from the Middle East) emphasizes a rise in their religiosity and orthodoxy. That is, the migrant who returns home is likely to engage in visible acts of piety, seeing them as a means by which to deploy the economic and social capital gained through migration for the achievement of status and mobility. Often intertwined with these acts is the assertion of their own dominance in the family, coupled with affirmations of “traditional” relations between men and women. However, my materials on Bangladeshi labor migrants in Malaysia offer a variegated and uneven picture, whereby modern gender relations as represented by Malaysia are selectively approached, both endorsed and rejected by the migrants.

Kim, Jinah

Unheard voices: Women’s role in early medieval Buddhist artistic productions and religious practices in South Asia
Donor and scribe colophons on illustrated Buddhist manuscripts from early medieval South Asia are very formulaic thus limited in terms of specific historical information they can provide about individuals. Yet, when analyzed as a group, considering demography of scribes and donors, sites of production, and manuscripts’ visual and textual characteristics, colophons can provide enough material to weave a social and cultural history of Buddhism in practice in early medieval South Asia, perhaps more so than any grand narrative available in later chronicles and hagiographic texts. In a way, inscriptions and colophons on religious donations from twelfth century eastern India can stand in for recordings and notes of interviews that are conducted for ethnographic research on today’s artistic productions and religious practices, for they preserve the voices of individuals who are otherwise forgotten. Approaching inscriptions and colophons like ethnographic field notes also allows us to consider specific artistic and religious choices made by individuals involved in each project, which in turn can lead us to a deeper social and cultural understanding of Buddhism in practice in early medieval South Asia.

As a case study of using inscriptions and colophons for writing a social and cultural history, this paper examines representations of women as donors and religious practitioners in illustrated Buddhist manuscripts and Buddhist sculptures from eastern India. By analyzing illustrated manuscripts and sculptures with identifiable female donors in connection with contemporary visual representations of Buddhist narratives involving women, such as the story of Sadaprarudita and the merchant’s daughter from the Prajnaparamitasutra, and that of the acceptance of the first nun, Utpalavara from the Buddha’s life stories, this paper reconsiders the complex role women played as ardent donors and advanced religious practitioners in early medieval South Asian Buddhist context.

Kippen, James

The Rhythmic Revolution: Changing Concepts and Practices of Musical Time in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century India

I believe that rhythm and metre in North Indian (Hindustani) music theory and practice underwent a substantial change at some point during the 18th and 19th centuries. If so, then the current metric frameworks that organize the compositions and dazzling improvisations in this tradition are not very old. That, in turn, would undermine claims made by many musicians and musicologists in India that contemporary music theory enjoys a long, continuous history whose fundamental principles were codified in ancient Sanskrit treatises.

The kind of transformation I think may have happened has both social and musical dimensions. We know that the now ubiquitous tabla drum set dates to the early 18th century; that it quickly spread across northern India because it was associated with the songs and dances of professional female entertainers and their male instrumental accompanists; and that it had become the dominant drum for Hindustani musical performance by the end of the 19th century. Yet, rather than looking at these events for an explanation, Indian scholars have for over 100 years been creating what are arguably revisionist texts that leapfrog over this period to search for the theoretical underpinnings of Hindustani music in ancient Sanskrit treatises.

The contribution of this research lies in a quest for hard evidence that a significant musical shift occurred within the Hindustani tradition. I have found strong indications – both in early reformist texts from the late 19th and early 20th centuries and in what I think are irreconcilable incongruities in modern rhythmic theory – that this shift lay primarily in the music’s metric frameworks. If true, it indicates nothing less than a rhythmic revolution with far-reaching consequences for the history and theory of this remarkable tradition. I hypothesize that there was a transformation from an additive, stress-based system with roots in Sanskrit prosody to a divisive, accentual system with roots in folk dances and rhythms from northwestern India (whence tabla and sarangi emerged). I shall prove this by undertaking translations and transnotations of rare Persian, Urdu, Hindi and Bengali documents from the 1660s to the early 20th century – documents in which rhythm and drumming are described and notated – and by placing this information in a rich socio-historical and musicological context that demonstrates profound socio-musical change.

Knight, Lisa
“Wake Up!” The Transformative Power of Baul Women and Their Songs

Women are celebrated among Bauls, a small religious group in the Bengali-speaking regions of South Asia, as the embodiment of shakti, overflowing with spiritual and creative substances, and symbolic of motherhood. In everyday speech, Baul men criticize societal norms that discriminate against women, stating that women should be respected and valued. Aiming for a more egalitarian society, they state there are only two jats—man and woman—as only these have any basis in biological differences, or only one jat—humans. When Bauls sing in public, they hope that listeners will question societal constructions of gender, caste, and religion and will look instead for the Divine within all humans. Although Baul songs and philosophy articulate an elevated status of women, one perhaps more congruent with the esteemed qualities of shakti shared by deities, Baul women’s lives are often still circumscribed by societal norms that devalue them.

While most Baul songs are composed by men, in the course of my fieldwork, I have collected songs composed by women and their reflections on those songs. In this paper, I focus on the ways in which Baul women seek to share their experiences and ideology with others through songs. I argue that they utilize songs as a transformative medium, whether for themselves or for others. Baul women sing songs that not only resonate with their own interests and experiences, but they also select or compose songs they believe might help contribute to a more meaningful life and a better society. As such, Baul women are not merely embodiments of a shakti that needs to be constrained by society; they are wielders of shakti in pursuit of an improved society.

Koskimaki, Leah

Development and the political imagination: Emergent youth politics in contemporary Uttarakhand.

The paper investigates an emergent youth politics in Uttarakhand post-statehood through a specific focus on the way development is imagined in the region. It will reflect on youthful representations of a “modern Uttarakhand” as specifically demonstrated in two politically divergent groups: the Hindu nationalist Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and the leftist Pragatishil Chhatra Manch (PSF). The paper will reference interviews with youth active in these organizations and provide examples of development aspirations in the Hindi language pamphlets and journals they produced and distributed during my fieldwork in 2005-07. Furthermore, it will discuss the influence of these organizations’ perspectives in the youthful public sphere as development is politicized on local campuses. What are the similarities in the discourse of development in both of these organizations? How do these images of development influence and reconfigure the imagined role of the Uttarakhandi youth in the “progress” of the nation? How are young active members of political organizations using development imaginaries for political gain and networking power? I will propose that these newly asserted representations of development differ in their popular affirmations than so-called traditionalist approaches of previous political and intellectual generations in the hills. These contemporary illustrations reflect on what is an emerging imaginary of development and “regional modernity” as part of a young political subjectivity in Uttarakhand.

Kruijtzer, Gijs

Early Modern Fluidity?
Early modern identities are often seen as something less than modern identities: less intense and less well demarcated, contingent rather than systematic, or merely the products of ideology without practice. But is this true? This paper argues that it is not.

When scholars talk of the fluidity of early-modern identities they tend to be looking at much longer stretches of time than when they look at supposedly rigid modern identities. Worse still, the early modern period is often presented as one undifferentiated whole. By historicizing early modern identity construction with reference to a number of conflicts that occurred in the Deccan, the paper aims to show that through conflict identities could become as rigid as in modern times. More importantly, it aims to show that the relationship between conflict and identity was complex: identities were not invented during conflicts, nor did rigid identity boundaries necessarily lead to conflict. Rather, it is argued here, group conflict in the early modern Deccan resulted from a dialectic between enduring and clearly articulated identities and particular societal dynamics that upset the balance between groups.

Kruse, Michael

Fact and Legend in the Death Story of Kabir

Of all the saints of medieval India, the fierce iconoclast Kabir is one of the most popular today. Songs attributed to him are sung by itinerant wandering sadhus all over North India, and institutions devoted to him have a wide spread. In this paper I analyze the story of the death of Kabir as it is currently constructed by the Kabir Panth. Dealing with four recent biographies, I demonstrate how the stories they contain were shaped by the context and intent of their production. Moreover, I offer a glimpse of the discourse of Kabir’s biography in action – how certain themes and tropes entered the flow of ‘knowledge’ of Kabir and were recycled by later producers in interesting ways.

By discussing the various life stories of Kabir, I emphasize the fact that they are various and that they have always varied. There is no way to recover what actually happened to Kabir, as none of the stories that we have access to today were contemporary with Kabir himself, and none are free of the historical context in which they were produced. So studying the various life stories of Kabir may not tell us much about who he actually was, but they can certainly tell us a great deal about those who produced and consumed those stories. And this is extremely important in understanding the people who today place some level of faith and trust in Kabir’s teachings and the institutions that claim to follow those teachings.

In problematizing the life story of Kabir, I argue that the history of this biography is not just about one man, one sect, or even one country. The life story has been told and retold for various purposes by people all over the world and has been implicated in issues germane to South Asian politics, religion, and society. Though all stories claimed to be true and accurate, they all produced different constructions of Kabir that were employed for various purposes. More often than not, these purposes were tied together with larger socio-religious movements and institutions, political formations, and communal relations. The history of the last five hundred years in South Asia has not unfolded in a simple, linear way. To the extent that the life story of Kabir was and is connected to that history, it shares the same contours in its development.

Kumar, Sunil

The Many Courts and Cities of the Delhi Sultans

The city was not James Heitzman's first subject of research. And yet, as he tracked his inscriptive data base, field-worked with archaeologists and ethnographers, the city came to be a complex organism through which he could carefully historicise socio-economic change. James luxuriated in the rich detail surrounding towns and temples which allowed him the ability to unravel the social and material underpinnings of authority, to generalise but always with precision. One of James’ central concerns over the years was medieval urban south India. In a parallel move, my paper explores the northern Sultanate cities of Delhi, a subject on which there is a
fair amount of textual and archaeological evidence, but surprisingly enough not a single monograph. My paper studies the episodes of construction, reconstruction, and the constant moving of capitals that occurred in Delhi during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Rather than assuming this as a signature of despotic power my paper collates material from Persian chronicles and Sufi literature slightly more carefully to correlate this unusual phenomenon with the politics and culture of the period. In studying courtly culture within the spatial location of the arenas of their enactment, I try to contextualise the politics of the city more generally with the nature of politics and political relationships under the Sultans of Delhi.

Kumarakulasingham, Naren

Difficult memories of 1983: Violence, the production of nationalism and the destruction of the everyday

In Sri Lanka, July 1983 was a moment characterized by unimaginable mass violence. For many it marked the transformation of what had been a conflict between the state and segments of the Tamil Population into a civil war. For others, it represented a serious questioning of the project of constructing a nation state on the island. Yet, neither perspective was or is able to fully apprehend the violence that characterizes and constitutes what we shorthand as "1983", "Black July", or even "genocide". Instead, these perspective are concerned primarily with allocating blame for what happened, and in doing so end up reproducing an understanding of violence simply as the outcome of conflict between already constituted Tamil and Sinhalese indentitites.

This paper argues that violence needs to be also understood as constitution political community. It draws upon Jessica Benjamin's notion of splitting, and extends it to the realm of nationalist conflict in Sri Lanka. Doing so enables us to understand mass civil violence as a process of splitting through which everyday practices, lifestyles and neighborhoods become nationalized.

This paper utalizes the concept of splitting to interpret private, residual memories of 1983 that were collected during field work in Colombo in 2004, which highlight the sudden and inexplicable dimensions of attacks on Tamils as well as feelings of loss, displacement and subordination.

This paper is two fold: First, to argue that we think of as ethnic/nationalist violence is a way of constructing contemporary political selfhood; and second, to think about the possibility that the construction of the national self requires the re-composition of various everyday relationships, spaces and life rythems. The paper concludes with a brief discussion of the implications of these arguments for thinking about the current situaion in Sri Lanka.

Kundu, Ratoola

The Twilight Zone: Urban development of the fringe areas in Kolkata

Planners and developers have treated the peri-urban region as marginal to the processes of urban development. Today however, the urban fringe of cities in developing countries represents deeper global political and economic shifts and social transformations. These fringes of mega-cities are spatially central to the process of global economic integration and rapid urbanization (Roy, Leaf, Kelly,Shatkin). As the gated communities, the fancy malls, the special economic zones begin to dot the landscape one is left wondering about the existing inhabitants of these areas – the urban and rural poor living in informal settlements. Where do they go? How do they cope with the social and economic disruptions in their daily life? Are they absorbed into the new developments? Are they marginalized once more?

This paper is based upon my dissertation fieldwork that examines the contemporary and contested dynamics of the social and spatial production of peri-urban areas in the developing world, using the fringe areas of Kolkata.
as a case study. The study will highlight certain ‘gray areas’ of urban planning theory and practice – the production of interstitial urban spaces through the manifold interactions of informal and formal practices of urban development. The paper, based upon the preliminary findings, argues that our understanding of this emergent process of urbanization in developing countries is incomplete without investigating the connections between urban local politics, local participation and forms of urban informality as they modify, adapt and reinterpret the forces of globalization.

This research draws from several bodies of inter-related urban theory. From looking upon informality as an urbanizing logic (Roy and Al Sayyad, Benjamin) to theories of urban participation and representation in urban local governance that emphasize a host of new institutional spaces and actors (Appadurai, Purcell, Sassen, Chatterjee), particularly the informal relationships, to broader theories of the social production of space (Lefebvre) and importance of everyday practices (de Certeau).

Using the case study of New Town Rajarhat development project in Kolkata, this paper shall illuminate different types of development nexus that are nurtured between the state, the market and the civil society. The paper shall discuss how certain new urban institutional spaces are being carved out through struggles, resistance and opposition and also through incremental acceptance, unsteady negotiations and strategic participation by the urban poor with various other developmental actors who have conflicting stakes in the socio-spatial transformation. The findings have a significant impact on policies for inclusive town planning practices.

LaDousa, Chaise

Languages in and of Schooling in North India

In this presentation, I will explore the notion that ethnographic approaches to the importance of languages in Indian schooling must contend with two scholarly developments that might, if ignored, serve to hide the ways in which people draw on intersections between languages and institutions to reflect on themselves and others. On the one hand, innovations in the study of cultural constructions in an age called “global” run the risk of rendering the school solely a sign of failed modernity that anthropologists might bypass for other ethnographic sites. On the other hand, the rich body of scholarly research on language difference in India has largely ignored ethnographic approaches wherein schools emerge as a key site for people to imagine relationships between locales and to construct places as more or less cosmopolitan. In order to indicate what an ethnographic approach to the intersection of language difference and school difference might illuminate, I reflect on an audio-taped conversation one afternoon in 1997 in Banaras, Uttar Pradesh between a lower-middle class woman and myself. Particularly interesting is that she builds a textbook portrait of the ways that language/school difference and a local/global nexus can be said to construct one another in Hindi-speaking North India, but does so in order to destabilize the language difference out of which her articulation of the local and the global emerges. The presentation argues that ideas about institutions and languages within them have prevented scholars from taking notice of the possibilities of language practices noted herein.

Lahiri, Madhumita

Multilingualism and Mistranslation: Rabindranath Tagore's "Song Offerings"

This paper argues that South Asian literary production cannot always be understood within a world literature paradigm which continues to emphasize translation. I draw upon the famous example of Rabindranath Tagore, whose notorious mistranslation of his 1912 Gitanjali won him great acclaim from European stalwarts of world literature, and the Nobel Prize in 1913. Tagore’s mistranslations are generally understood as something of an embarrassment, usually dismissed as a sell-out to Western values, a willingness to say whatever the West wanted to hear. Tagore, however, had a complicated relationship to nationalism, and to the essentialist demands
of authenticity that nationalist projects frequently articulate. He published his first poetry as that of a medieval Hindu saint, and when he wrote Gora, in 1910, he put an Irishman masquerading as Indian at the center of his story of Hindu nationalism.

Tagore’s playful penchant for falsification starkly demonstrates the limitations of a paradigm of cultural authenticity when reading texts in translation. The appropriate linguistic paradigm for such work, I suggest, is not translation, with its assumption of linguistic boundaries, but interference, which happens in each and every multi-lingual speaker. Interference refers to the ways in which languages are changed by coming into contact with each other. Words, sounds, and syntax are transferred between systems; concepts are traded, refined, and compared; and sometimes a different new idiom results. I focus on Gora to demonstrate how a focus on moments of lexical transfer and syntactic interference can open up a fictional text.

Interference offers not only a sensibility for Tagore’s oeuvre but also an analytic for the increasingly popular category of world literature. Much if not most South Asian literature in English is written by multilingual authors, and the popular metaphor of “cultural translation” strains to accommodate such texts. Colonial multilingualism is a surface of interference and friction, as is the postcolonial multilingualism which succeeds it. Tagore’s grand, and brief, career in world literature provides an instructive example for how South Asian literature should, and should not, be read.

Lakkimsetti, Chaitanya

‘Protecting Passive Women from Perverse Men’: Struggles around Sexuality and Rearticulation of the Nation in Contemporary India

This paper examines the discursive struggles around sexuality and nation in postcolonial India. In the past decade, social movements challenging India’s sodomy and prostitution laws have become increasingly visible, and in the context of the globalization and HIV prevention, these debates over the regulation of sexuality have taken on new urgency. These seemingly distinctive struggles around sexuality converge in two aspects: First, they redefine the appropriate realm of the state in its interventions in ‘private’ consensual sex. Second, they expand liberal notion of rights to include the experiences of the homosexuals and sex workers. These struggles are also about family, kinship and ‘appropriate’ sexuality as warrants for claiming citizenship in the Indian nation-state.

Using interviews and the analysis of policy and legal documents, I argue that in the recent debates around decriminalization of homosexuality and sex work, a new ‘outer’ realm of the nation is constituted as perverse male desire that needs to be controlled in order to protect the nation’s women and children. By simultaneously constructing male perversity and women’s passivity (victims of trafficking, and victims of sexual exploitation) these discourses not only undermine women’s desire and agency, but also rearticulate the centrality of heteronormativity to the modern nation-state. Through delegitimizing (male) desire and rearticulating the nation-state’s main goal as protection of its women, these discourses undermine the claims that the sexual ‘subalterns’ make for rights and recognition. While each case illuminates these constructions of male perversity and women’s passivity the comparative analysis engages with the question of sexuality and modernity and how they constitute and reconstitute each other.

Lambert-Hurley, Siobhan

Biography, Global History and the Muslim Female Subject: The Life and Travels of Atiya Fyzee Rahamin

In contemporary historiography, biography is often dismissed as an indulgence: a lesser form of historical writing in which both writer and reader revel in the intimate details of a ‘Great Life’. The assumption is that an
individual and their achievements are being presented merely as a model for others or as a cause for celebration. Yet, in Islamic societies, biography has long been so central to historical consciousness. Within a hundred years of the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Muslim authors were already gathering material to write his life: the starting point by which written biography, whether of prophets, saints, scholars, poets or other ‘exemplary’ individuals, became a staple of Islamic scholarship. In modern times, Islamic biographies have been taken to task for their ‘externality’, their lack of attention to ‘inner life’ or depictions of individuality – with the effect that the late, great Gustave E. von Grunebaum felt able to write of pre-modern Islamic autobiographies that they are ‘little more than confessional monologues’. Yet, as Judith Tucker has written in the context of the ‘not atypical’ biography of a seventeenth century ‘alim, while there may not be ‘direct analysis of the self’, there are still ways in which the ‘contours of a personality’ are revealed, not least through the ‘interplay and connection with history’. To many Arab practitioners, ‘biography was history’, in the words of Tarif Khalidi.

Western biographers of the last 50 years or so, too, have defended their art-form. Even if a life is less known, they suggest that it can illuminate aspects of the past – the domestic, the sexual, the maternal, to take a few examples from this paper – that might otherwise be lost in glut of ‘high’ politics or ‘low’ culture. Quite recently, Linda Colley has also called for the ‘re-casting and re-evaluating’ of biography as a means of ‘deepening our understanding of the global past’. She thus depicts her recounting of the itinerant life of a rather obscure female subject, Elizabeth Marsh, as means of charting ‘a world in a life and a life in the world’. Bringing these strands together, this paper will consider the lens of biography as a means of recovering the Muslim female subject as an actor in global history. As a focus, I will take the life and travels of Atiya Fyzee Rahamin (1877-1967), a Muslim woman from Bombay who was distinguished in her own time as a writer, reformer and patron of the arts.

**Larocque, Brendan**

**Culture and State-Formation in Early Modern Bundelkhand**

This paper will examine the way in which royal authority was culturally constructed in the central Indian territory of Eastern Bundelkhand in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. As aspiring Rajputs, the Bundelas who were consolidating their power in this region, in the first instance, conventionally employed principles of kinship and developed distinct clan identities in order for rulers to acquire status and legitimacy. At the same time, due to the fact that the caste system and brahman priests had a weak presence in Eastern Bundelkhand, renunciant devotional leaders there were central figures in the provision of political legitimacy for rulers. Yet, far from being carried out in regional isolation, these processes of legitimization were closely intertwined with the political machinations of the Mughal empire. Emperors regularly sought to control Bundela rulers by playing one clan against another and through providing political support simultaneously to rival factions. Historical depictions of these struggles have recognized that in their response individual Bundela rulers were themselves adept in using Mughal support and resources to augment their power and wealth, and in turn to use their success to bolster their claim to behave in accordance with the dominant narrative of Hindu-Rajput dharma. Based on Bundela court histories and religious literature produced by poets receiving royal patronage however, I will argue that this view overlooks the ways in which rulers in Eastern Bundelkhand participated in the creation of a novel vision of the just ruler. For by the late-17th century, eastern Bundelka rulers had incorporated, and transformed, a Mughal-Islamic political idiom as well which was integrated into the legitimating ideology of the state. This represented the effort of Bundela kingdoms to partake in a broad, inter-regional political and economic system in late- and post-Mughal India.

**Law, Randall**

Is it possible to source fired steatite artifacts using INAA?
Artifacts made from fired (heat-treated) steatite – a rock composed primarily of the mineral talc – have been reported from practically every excavated Indus Civilization site. Using instrumental neutron activation analysis (INAA), it has been possible to identify the geologic sources of unfired fragments of steatite production debris from several major Indus cities. In this paper, I present the results of a pilot study that attempts to determine if it is possible to source fired steatite artifacts using INAA. Raw steatite samples from multiple geologic sources were experimentally heated and then analyzed. A small set of fired steatite artifacts from ancient sites in Pakistan, India and Oman were also analyzed and compared to the results.

Lawoti, Mahendra

Political Exclusion, Inclusion, and Democracy: A South Asian Perspective from Nepal, India, Sri Lanka

What is the relationship of political exclusion and inclusion of ethnic groups to democracy? This paper compares political exclusion/inclusion in three south Asian countries –Nepal, India, and Sri Lanka- to decipher its relationship with democracy. Democratization scholarship has pointed out that with the passage of time participation and inclusion of population increases in polities and democracy strengthens while literature on ethnically divided societies warn that electoral politics could exacerbate tensions and threaten democracy. In this background, what are the lessons from the ethnically divided South Asian countries, which have produced failed and successful democracies? The paper will look at political exclusion/inclusion in various spheres (such as citizenship and participation; governance; public policies; culture; socio-economic realm etc.) during democratic regime in the three countries and assess their affect on democracy. India has managed to consolidate its democracy while Sri Lanka faced a protracted violent conflict and democracy was interrupted in Nepal. The paper will argue that India strengthened its democracy because it accommodated multicultural aspirations of diverse groups while continuation or even increase in exclusion of ethnic groups in some spheres in Sri Lanka and Nepal resulted into protracted violent conflict and breakdown of democracy respectively in the two countries. The paper will argue that depending upon whether the polities chose to address or ignore the multicultural cleavages seem to affect life and performance of democracies.

Legg, Stephen

"Sovereign exceptions and international governmentalities: the League of Nations and Trafficking of Women and Children in Colonial India"

Stephen Legg will analyse the activities of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee of the League, as evidenced through the passing of the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Acts and the effects of the travelling Commission of Enquiry in the Traffic of Women and Children in the East. The League of Nations has been roundly condemned as inadequate due to its failure to prevent the outbreak of world war, the primary aim of its establishment at the 1919 Peace Conference. However, a thoroughgoing reconsideration of the League is currently taking place that aims to consider the broader range of its international activities. Manela (2007) has examined the inspiration the Wilsonian concept of "self determination" gave to anti-colonial nationalists worldwide, whilst the impact of the League on its Mandated Territories is increasingly being debated. India is widely commented upon for its exceptional status within the League, due to it being both a founding member (having signed the 1919 Peace Conference) but not being a self-governing state. But there is still a great deal of work to be done on the technical and economic impact of the League, in addition to research into what Verma (1968, 182) addressed as the ‘less spectacular but real successes’ of the social welfare work of the League in India (also see Ram and Sharma 1932), as confirmed more generally by Walters (1952), Smith (1976) and Miller (1992). The social questions section of the League addressed obscene publications and child welfare, but was dominated by its work on the prevention of ‘traffic in women and children’ (TWC). As with the League’s work on epidemiology, the Government of
India obstructed the activities of the TWC Committee in India. This was, in part, because the TWC Committee shared the broader interest of the League in detailed analysis of governmentalities, regarding: territory (resources and economic development); population (health, mortality, hygiene); and government (reform of native political institutions) (Anghie 2004, 189).

Leonard, Karen

Family Firms in Hyderabad: Gujarati, Goswami, and Marwari Patterns of Adoption and Inheritance

The paper explores patterns of adoption and inheritance among leading banking and merchant families in Hyderabad, Deccan, families from Gujarati, Goswami, and Marwari communities. Based on material gathered from interviews (from the 1980s to the present), archival documents (from the Andhra Pradesh State Archives), and publications of many kinds (including Hindi caste/family histories), the paper highlights the common practice of adoption to avoid discontinuity in the major Hindu family firms operating in the Nizam’s dominions. Many of the major Gujarati, Goswami, and Marwari firms crucial to the survival of Hyderabad state independent of British control spanned a century in Hyderabad, diversifying their investments and activities as political and economic conditions changed. Some attention is given to intergenerational patterns of residence as well, showing the firms’ orientation to shifting political power within the state and relating them and the temples they built and patronized to both state and urban history. Finally, changed inheritance law and practices among the Goswamis, theoretically a sanyasi lineage of gurus and chelas, present a particularly striking example of the ways in which religious beliefs and practices, economic activities, and family constitution were correlated and flexibly adapted to new circumstances over time.

Levi, Scott

Trust Me! Family, Caste, and Investment Capital in the Indian Merchant Diaspora

“A man who has a Bania for a friend has no need of an enemy” and “The rogue cheats strangers and the Bania cheats his friends.” These represent only two of many similar sayings that some in India have historically applied to the stereotypically shrewd Bania merchants. Such acerbic adages clearly carry a cautionary message: beware, these people are not to be trusted!

In recent years, it has been established that large numbers of equally shrewd Indian merchants maintained a network of communities that extended from northwestern India across Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asia and beyond. Although evidence demonstrates that their Muslim hosts made a deliberate effort to welcome, protect and encourage these predominantly Hindu merchants in their territory, the Indian merchants abroad were, like their counterparts back home, commonly portrayed as greedy, untrustworthy, and exploitative usurers. Nevertheless, they maintained dozens of communities that varied in size from a few to a few thousand, and as an institution this merchant diaspora continued for nearly four centuries. One factor that contributed to the longevity of the diaspora is that the Indians provided valuable financial services that earned them the protection of their hosts. But one is left to ponder the internal mechanisms that the Indian firms used to advance loans to agents, send them to distant markets beyond the boundaries of the subcontinent, and trust them to return to India and, ultimately, repay the principal that they had originally been advanced – with interest.

This paper will direct attention to the thorny issue of trust in the operation of the Indian merchant diaspora. It will pay special attention to the role of caste in maintaining that trust, and it will contrast the methods that the Indians employed with those of the Armenians, who operated a similar merchant diaspora but one which, recent research suggests, was less flexible and less successful.
Lindstrom, Katie

Harappan Style Ceramics from Gola Dhoro, Gujarat: Defining Inter-site

Over the past several decades archaeologists have undertaken in-depth studies of a diverse array of specialized craft technologies, which show that the style and technology of many valuable trade commodities was shared across the Harappan world. In this paper I present ceramic data from the craft producing community of Gola Dhoro, Gujarat, to examine the extent to which pottery styles were also shared among Harappan communities. Gola Dhoro is located in a culturally diverse region on the southeastern limit of the Indus Civilization, at a nexus of ancient trade routes. The site’s material culture, including ornaments, chert weights and steatite seals, is diagnostically Harappan and a Harappan-style shell bangle workshop was a dominant feature of the settlement. However, the ceramic corpus of pottery and figurines show more diverse stylistic influences. In this paper I present a pottery typology for the settlement in which both local and regional styles co-occur. This typology makes the forms of Harappan pottery present at the site explicit, which facilitates inter-site comparison of pottery assemblages at settlements across the Indus Civilization.

Loan, Nadia

Textual Encounters: Quranic Interpretation and (re)Formation of the Self

This paper examines the manners in which religious beliefs and practices are interwoven in the production of a subjectivity which holds the Quran as its primary reference. Over the last two decades, women in urban centers in Pakistan have begun to approach the Quran with an aim to understanding its (divine) content through the process of translation and interpretation. This marks a radical departure from the more common practice of Quranic learning which emphasized recitation over comprehension. Tied to the larger project of the transformation of the self, this form of engagement with the text, through its comprehension, locates its end in the embodiment of the Quran which exemplifies the formation of an authentic Muslim subject. Drawing upon narratives of women’s ‘encounters’ with the Quran in this milieu, I analyze the ‘ruptures’ women identify in their lives as a consequence of Quranic study. Often cited as ‘transformational’, the experiences of this form of engagement with the Quran produces a discourse of ‘well-being’ which is framed through oppositional binaries such as ‘ignorance’ and ‘truth’, ‘discontentment’ and ‘satisfaction’, and ‘despair’ and ‘elation’ to describe the states of being prior to and after their immersion in Quranic study. I explore the ‘moments of rupture’ more closely in order to understand what constitutes the formation of a subjectivity which is anchored in and crafted through comprehension of the Quran. I suggest that it rests not only upon the discursive paradigm offered by an interpretation of the Quran but must necessarily be achieved through the insertion of its injunctions into the textures of everyday life to engender ethical action. My paper examines how such a pursuit of an ethical life is produced through the synthesis of belief and action that emerges out of a reading of the Quran which, though mediated through modern textual practices and categories of knowledge, submits to Iman (faith) as a necessary pre-requisite of ‘reading’.

Long, Roger

Party and State in Pakistan: Party Ideology and the Failure of Institutionalization

The All-India Muslim League, led by Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), through a relatively short but immense and sustained mobilization campaign, was the single political party responsible for the creation of Pakistan. The campaign had a number of features and a number of facets. One of the facets was the creation of support through ethnogenesis, the sense that Muslims had a separate ethnic identity warranting the creation of a nation-state. Once Pakistan had been created, however, the All-India Muslim League, remodeled into the Pakistan Muslim League, then attempted to suppress all ethnic feelings in order to generate a new loyalty
toward the state. In doing so, it also introduced the concept that government officials should eschew political affiliations. The result was that the Pakistan Muslim League was unable to institutionalize itself as a national party both for ethnic reasons and also for political reasons, and no other party was able to viably establish itself on a national basis. The result has been that Pakistan reverted to its pre-1947 political practices and allegiances which were based on factional loyalty and ethnic identity. This paper will examine the connection between the failure of political parties to institutionalize and the manner in which this contributes to the instability of the political system in Pakistan. This instability, in considerable part, feeds into the ideological debate about the nature of the state in Pakistan.

Lothspeich, Pamela

The Radheshyam Ramayan: Text and Performance

This paper, based on ethnographic and textual approaches, concerns a little-known but distinctive Ramlila in Subhashnagar, Bareilly, which dates to 1941 and the Radheshyam Ramayan (RR), circa 1910, of Radheshyam Kathavachak (1890-1963), upon which the former is based. While the Subhashnagar Ramlila acknowledges the hegemonic position of Tulsidas’ Ramcharitmanas with the occasional verse sung by a pandit, it draws all of its dialogues from the RR which only seems fitting given that Kathavachak himself was a native of Bareilly. Best known as a leading playwright of the late Parsi theater, Kathavachak began his writing career composing his own verse Ramayan. Despite the structural and thematic affinity of the RR with the RCM, the former is a populist work well suited to the nationalist ethos of the early twentieth century. It was largely on the strength of Kathavachak’s charisma as a performer and the appeal of his Radheshyam tarz that the RR became so popular in the late colonial period. It also helped that his style was very straightforward and his language, the spoken vernacular of much of north India. Initially, Kathavachak resisted the Sanskritizing impulse so prevalent among Hindi writers of the period. However, an analysis of early and late editions of the RR confirms that over time, Kathavachak purged the text of Urdu vocabulary, and replaced it with shuddh Hindi vocabulary in the service of Hindu/Hindi nationalism.

Even so, senior cast members of the Subhashnagar Ramlila generally prefer the older, more lyrical dialogues with their Urdu flair. While the lila is noteworthy for its use of the RR, the amateur production is in some ways representative of the “neighborhood lila” in that it is as much social event as religious ritual. The production enlists (male) individuals from a variety of caste and class backgrounds, and even a few non-Hindus (Sikhs), suggesting a measure of social inclusiveness and cohesion, though women and Muslims, of course, are not active participants. At the same time, the Subhashnagar Ramlila is not immune from the effects of globalization and the reach of local politics.

Louro, Michele

Internationalizing Nationalism: India and the League against Imperialism, 1927-1936

Although the archival record is rich with instances when leaders of India’s independence struggle collaborated with anti-imperial activists abroad, histories of anti-colonial nationalism mostly concentrate on interactions at the local, provincial, and national levels. Yet, by underscoring the local histories of Indian anti-colonial nationalism, scholars have neglected myriads of international and transnational connections that moved across and through colonial borders, linking the politics of India to other colonies, nations, and diasporas. This paper seeks to fill this gap by bringing a much-needed international perspective to the study of the Indian National Congress (INC) movement- in this case, its relationship with the League against Imperialism (LAI), an organization founded in Brussels in 1927.
Until now, neither the League against Imperialism nor its relationship with Indian nationalism has been studied in any depth. Originally, the League was conceived of by members of the Communist International (Comintern) living in Berlin and inspired by the Comintern’s interest in ‘winning the hearts and minds’ of anti-colonial nationalists. Yet, in its first years, from 1927 to 1929, the Comintern oversaw the League from a distance, and the organization remained an inclusive forum for representatives from the colonies to interact with representatives of labor, trade unionism, civil liberties, pacifism, socialism, and communism. To accommodate such diverse interests, the League members created a platform that situated the struggle in the colonies against imperialism as a vital part of a larger, global struggle for social equality for oppressed classes, races, and nations.

This paper examines the League as a starting point for a set of overlapping anti-imperial connections forged by the INC during the late colonial period. Through the League meetings and correspondence, INC representatives like Jawaharlal Nehru encountered high profile nationalist leaders in from other colonies, as well as sympathetic individuals and organizations from the North and South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Indian nationalist leaders constructed important networks to individuals and organizations loosely affiliated with the League, creating a number of circuits and networks that linked up India to other colonies, nations, and international organizations of the interwar years. The movement of individuals, discourse, and ideas through the League channels offered an opportunity for Indian nationalists to practice anti-imperialism across colonial and national borders and to rethink the geography and content of anti-colonial politics, placing them within a more international framework.

Lynch, Jane

Democratic Consumption: Nationalism, Cloth, and the Capitalist Enterprise

As the role of the Indian state in promoting and sustaining handicraft textile production has given way to private ventures in the wake of economic liberalization, the consumption of handicraft textiles is being re-imagined both by corporate actors as well as by middle-class consumers. However, key aspects of the modes of consumer culture, product sourcing, branding, and retailing that have become characteristic of the handicraft textile industry in the post-liberalization period were set into place during the first decades following 1947. In this paper, I trace the Indian state’s support for the production and consumption of handicraft textiles during the 1950s and 1960s and the important role played by the Ford Foundation in structuring these relationships between government, industry, and consumers. I argue that these relationships were mediated not only by the bureaucratic infrastructure of ministries, boards, and cottage industry emporiums, but also by processes of aestheticization and branding for democratic consumption that were shaped by the grant projects supported by the Ford Foundation during this period.

Mahmud, Tayyab

Pakistan’s Constitutional Crisis & the Global Constitutional Code Red.

A constitutional crisis in Pakistan was triggered by the firing the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in March 2007. This was accentuated by a declaration of emergency and firing of scores of superior court judges in November 2007. Resistance by an unprecedented and sustained lawyers’ movement for rule of law, joined by sections of the civil society, finally prevailed and the judges were restored in March 2009. This paper locates this crisis within ubiquitous contractions of constitutional protections and states of permanent emergency around the world. The escalating crisis of neo-liberal world order presided over by a resurgent Empire is seen as the force animating this turn in modes of political governance. The paper argues that Pakistan’s constitutional crisis brings into sharp relief both the designs of power and strategies of resistance procreated by this conjuncture.
Mallampalli, Chandra

The Framing of the Nawab of Kurnool, 1815-39

In 1839, the East India Company came to suspect that the nawab of Kurnool, Ghulam Rasul Khan, was amassing military stores in the zenana quarters of his fort and was planning a revolt against British rule. The Company’s case against Rasul Khan combined aspects of his own family’s story with the spread of the Wahhabi movement in Hyderabad. Using archival documents from Bellary, Delhi and Hyderabad, this paper documents how local disputes about succession, gift exchange and adjustments to British suzerainty were subsumed by an international discourse about militant Islam and its battle with the British Empire. In the absence of hard evidence on the ground concerning Rasul Khan’s seditious designs, the Company linked him to international developments to warrant their 1839 siege of his fort. The reliance on the international over the local, I argue, reveals limitations in the “information order” of colonialism.

In 1800, the Kurnool was transferred from Hyderabadi to British suzerainty. Since that time, the British had periodically called the loyalty of Kurnool’s nawabs into question. Were their true loyalties with Hyderabad state or the Afghan and Rohilla Pathan warriors who served it? During his tenure as nawab of Kurnool, Aluf Khan (1792-1815) tried to present his youngest son, Ghulam Rasul Khan, as his heir apparent instead of his eldest son, Munawwar Khan. Long before the British drew any links between Kurnool and Wahhabism, they objected to Aluf Khan’s attempted departure from the law of primogeniture.

Rasul Khan, they claimed, was corresponding with Mubaraz ud-Daula, the “fanatical” younger brother of the nizam who had come under the influence of Wahhabism and had instigated anti-British activities. The Company appointed a commission to inquire into the seditious activities of Mubaraz ud-Daula, just as it had done so for Rasul Khan in Kurnool. Both inquiries produced very little concrete evidence that either had been a part of a “conspiracy” to overthrow the British. How then, could the British make a case against either? The paper describes the evolution of the character profile of Ghulam Rasul Khan, paying special attention to local disputes concerning his succession and his eventual “guilt by association” with Mubaraz ud-Daula.

The story of the Kurnool nawabs and their demise illustrates the multiple layers of knowledge production within the colonial state, linking smaller to larger states (i.e., Kurnool to Hyderabad) and larger states to international developments such as Wahhabism. It also reveals the gaps and limitations of this information order, especially as the British contended with their own ignorance about princely regimes, their histories and customs.

Mandair, Arvind-Pal

Mourning Sovereignty: Towards a Post-Secular Sikh Imaginary

Much of the academic discourse on Sikhs and Sikhism has tended to portray Sikh ethno-nationalism as a relatively narrow set of separatist ideologies which became inflated into a major phenomenon in the early 1980s. However, Sikh ethno-nationalism in fact constitutes a prevalent mind-set that emerged and consolidated itself through the Sikh encounter with modernity. This mindset has influenced a majority of Sikhs irrespective of caste or sectarian. At the heart of this Sikh ethno-nationalism is a concept of political sovereignty borrowed and reformulated by various ideologues beginning in the late 19th century. The political theologies underpinning this concept of sovereignty came to be crystallized through a seemingly contradictory procedure of theologizing and historicizing indigenous terms and concepts, and in this process elevating them into the universalizing discourse of modernity. This modernist Sikh ideology made a significant philosophical break with the very sources of Sikh literature that inspired them in the first place, notably the teachings of Sikh Gurus in the Adi Granth (see Mandair 2009). In this respect the modernist concept of Sikh sovereignty did not turn out to be qualitatively different from the political theologies that comprised the Indian nation state’s concept of sovereignty. Yet the fate of these two sovereignties was very different, the very idea of Sikh sovereignty being effectively excluded from the public sphere and national discourse as communal, sectarian etc. In many ways
the results of this exclusion are reflected in the troubled relationship between the State with its self-designation as bastion of (secular) politics, as opposed to the supposedly religious politics of the Sikhs.

In this paper I will briefly trace the political theology behind the kind of Sikh ethno-nationalism that has been shared by left and right, before moving away to explore possibilities for rethinking indigenous Sikh concepts in light of several inter-related events: the demise of Sikh ethno-nationalist insurgency in the mid 1990’s, the recent crisis of secularism in India, and the emergence of post-secular thinking about the modern construct ‘religion’. What might a post-nationalist Sikhism look like? And what would be the political (in terms of community formation) and psychological (spiritual) implications of such a development? Is it possible to rethink the ethico-political foundations of Sikh thought, and thus to consider the relationship between Sikhs and the State, not as a problem, but as an aporia, an irresolvable contradiction?

Mani, Preetha

Gender, Genre, and Nation: The post-Independence Tamil short story, 1950-1970

In the wake of Indian Independence, the short story emerged as the most popular and active Tamil literary genre. Increased publication and circulation of short stories in journals evidence its preeminence in the 1950s-60s. As such, the short story became the primary literary medium through which emergent themes of selfhood and citizenship were expressed in Tamil Nadu in the context of the newly formed Indian nation-state. At this precise moment, the linguistic and cultural politics of Tamil Nadu were incredibly contentious vis-à-vis the nation-state. However, the Tamil short story does not portray even a hint of this fraught post-Independence political atmosphere. In this paper I seek to interrogate why this is the case through an analysis of themes of selfhood and gender arising in these stories. Based on literary analysis of the short story writing of T. Jeyakantan—one of the most popular and well-respected Tamil authors of this period, I argue that themes of selfhood and gender demonstrate Tamil Nadu’s particularly humanist dialogue with the nation. That is to say, rather than looking inwards to engage directly with state politics surrounding language and cultural identity, the Tamil short story turns instead towards a national audience outside state boundaries. This national engagement results from the historical relationship between ideas of “literariness,” “humanism,” and the modern Indian state and is based on tropes of the female and the feminine. Figures such as the sati, the widow, and the middle-class woman, which were important in galvanizing an “Indian” public against colonial dominance from the nineteenth century onwards, are re-figured in the Tamil short story to express a new morally progressive and humanist Indian citizen that both embodies and exceeds regional difference.

Mani, Preetha

Gender, Genre, and Nation: The post-Independence Tamil short story, 1950-1970

In the wake of Indian Independence, the short story emerged as the most popular and active Tamil literary genre. Increased publication and circulation of short stories in journals evidence its preeminence in the 1950s-60s. As such, the short story became the primary literary medium through which emergent themes of selfhood and citizenship were expressed in Tamil Nadu in the context of the newly formed Indian nation-state. At this precise moment, the linguistic and cultural politics of Tamil Nadu were incredibly contentious vis-à-vis the nation-state. However, the Tamil short story does not portray even a hint of this fraught post-Independence political atmosphere. In this paper I seek to interrogate why this is the case through an analysis of themes of selfhood and gender arising in these stories. Based on literary analysis of the short story writing of T. Jeyakantan—one of the most popular and well-respected Tamil authors of this period, I argue that themes of selfhood and gender demonstrate Tamil Nadu’s particularly humanist dialogue with the nation. That is to say, rather than looking inwards to engage directly with state politics surrounding language and cultural identity, the Tamil short story turns instead towards a national audience outside state boundaries. This national engagement results from the historical relationship between ideas of “literariness,” “humanism,” and the modern Indian state and is based on tropes of the female and the feminine. Figures such as the sati, the widow, and the middle-class woman, which were important in galvanizing an “Indian” public against colonial dominance from the nineteenth century onwards, are re-figured in the Tamil short story to express a new morally progressive and humanist Indian citizen that both embodies and exceeds regional difference.
surrounding language and cultural identity, the Tamil short story turns instead towards a national audience outside state boundaries. This national engagement results from the historical relationship between ideas of “literariness,” “humanism,” and the modern Indian state and is based on tropes of the female and the feminine. Figures such as the sati, the widow, and the middle-class woman, which were important in galvanizing an “Indian” public against colonial dominance from the nineteenth century onwards, are re-figured in the Tamil short story to express a new morally progressive and humanist Indian citizen that both embodies and exceeds regional difference.

Manjapra, Kris

Untitled

Indian traveling anti-colonialism in the early decades of the twentieth century created transnational linkages and networks that deserve closure attention. Inspired by Leela Gandhi's study of 'affective communities,' this paper considers the emergence of a communist ecumene in the 1920s in which South Asian praxis-intellectuals played a major role. Instead of envisioning the emergence of Indian communism as a surrogate of European politics in the colonial world, I instead investigate how the communist ecumene developed as a post-WWI fusion of global networks of Indian anti-colonialism in existence since the turn of the century, including the Swadeshi, Ghadr and Khilafat movements. The essay concludes by casting ahead to the 1930s, pointing to the great re-territorializing pressures of geopolitics in the lead-up to the Second World War.

Marcus, Scott

“Now ‘Ladies’ Also Sing”: Bir Ras and Gender Politics in Post-1990 Biraha, A North Indian Folk Music Tradition

Created in the early-20th century, biraha is a folk music genre of the Bhojpuri region of northern India. The region’s most popular entertainment genre throughout the 1960s-80s, song themes range from religious, to historical, topical, educational, and even humorous. Throughout the last many decades, however, biraha audiences and obliging singers have given primary position to songs that relate stories of extreme bravery (songs with bir ras). As soon as one song is finished, it is common for audience members to call out, “Sing a bir ras song.” “That’s all they want,” one singer complained. The prevalence of bir ras has led to a false but widely claimed derivation for the genre name biraha: instead of coming from the Sanskritic viraha ('pangs of separation’ from the beloved), members of the biraha community commonly give the derivation as being from the phrase “biron ka hahakar” (extolling the praises of the brave).

The prominence of bir ras took on a new meaning when women began to perform biraha in c. 1990. An exclusively male genre up till this point, women’s presence has grown in the last 15+ years so that, today, some 25% of performances feature a woman singer. Indeed, a few women presently rank among the genre’s most popular performers. Many in the Bhojpuri region are thrilled that women have entered the genre; many, however, think it inappropriate that women have entered into this male domain: Their chief complaint is that women cannot sing bir ras. My paper examines a number of strategies that women singers have adopted in response to this and other conflicts that have arisen as they have sought careers in a previously all-male performance genre. Confronting traditional patterns of “appropriate gender behavior,” I argue, along lines presented by Judith Butler (1988, 1999), that the women are creating dynamic gender transformations in the present day. Based on fieldwork conducted in 2005, following extended research on biraha in the 1970s and 80s, my paper seeks to investigate the complex actions and interactions that have occurred and continue to
manifest as women in the Bhojpuri region step beyond traditional gender-defined confines, dynamically embodying the male in moments that demand bir ras, as they seek and realize successful careers as biraha singers.

Marecek, Jeanne

Ethical Bras and Guiltless Garments: The Politics of “Sexual Harassment” in the Sri Lankan Garment Industry

In an effort to placate Western consumers, Sri Lanka’s garment manufacturers have rushed to adopt “ethical” policies, programs, and standards. Examples include “Garments without Guilt,” “The Ethical Bra,” “women’s empowerment” programs, and sexual harassment policies. What becomes of such transnational imports when they are refracted through the lens of local gender and sexual ideologies?

This presentation considers sexual harassment, a construct that re-frames many commonplace aspects of gender relations as objectionable and punishable. We analyze competing perspectives on harassment and the workplace dynamics surrounding harassment incidents. We draw on interviews with women managers and line workers; focus groups with male bosses and Human Resource (HR) personnel; and fieldwork in a rural factory.

Corporations that manufacture underwear are highly sexualized work environments. Office walls are plastered with posters of undressed women in sexy underwear. Managers discuss at length minute details of bras, thongs, and panties; women managers may be asked to test such garments. Not surprisingly, what constitutes harassment remains unsettled. For example, women managers reported that some male coworkers engaged in crude talk (and vulgar gestures) about their breasts and buttocks. Although the women were uncomfortable with such experiences of sexualization and objectification, they did not feel entitled to object.

Situations involving unwanted (hetero)sexual attention also led to uncertainty. Respondents’ interpretations of such incidents depended on their gender and social location, as well as the social location of those involved. Many women managers gave accounts of women who had been recipients of unwanted male attention. The situations had not been satisfactorily resolved: victims had been forced to leave their jobs; the perpetrators were unscathed. However, other managers (including several HR personnel) blamed women managers. (“Sexual harassment does not happen to girls from decent families.” “No means no, even in Sri Lanka.”) Men discussed the need to shield men accused of harassment in order to protect their careers and families. In contrast, managers accounted for harassment of village “garment girls” in a wholly different way, envisioning them as innocent victims. Assuming the stance of a benevolent patriarch, they readily invoked the principle of "duty of care" to warrant taking decisive punitive action.

Our analysis of competing accounts of sexual harassment opens larger questions: What are the ideologies of class-specific femininity and masculinity that inflect interpretations of sexual harassment? When such ideologies crosscut and subvert sexual harassment policies, what does it mean to say that garments are “ethically sourced?”

Mathias, John

Second-Best Supporting Actor: Ideology and happenstance in the scripting of Ford as neo-imperial agent

In the wake of the brilliant success of the Marshall Plan and Truman’s 1949 call for the US to use scientific expertise to “help the free peoples of the world, through their own efforts” bring an end to global poverty,
Americans faced awkward questions about agency and empire. Truman insisted that “The old imperialism…has no place in our plans.” But as British administrators left India, and American diplomats and scientists moved in, it was not at all clear how Americans would uplift the Indian masses from poverty and ignorance (and hold back Soviet influence) without slipping into the relational gaps left by the old Empire. By what forms of agency could they help Indians to help themselves? In 1951, the Ford Foundation sought to position itself as a new solution to this problem. The Foundation was not a corporation, but was led by some of America’s most successful businessmen; not a university, but it employed the nation’s best scientific minds; not a state, but ready to integrate itself into Indian bureaucracy in order to build a wealthy, democratic nation. The Foundation sought to parlay its hybrid position (and immense endowment), into a new form of modernizing agency that would engage Indians as collaborators, not pupils, and thereby lift rural Indians out of poverty “through their own efforts.”

This paper will explore the complex intersections of ideology and happenstance that shaped narratives about Ford’s earliest intervention in Indian development—the sponsorship of a pilot phase of Nehru’s Community Development Programme. Taking a March, 1952 article in Time magazine as a point of departure, it will describe how, despite its anti-imperial ideology, the Foundation was relegated to an uncomfortably paternalistic subplot in the more enticing story of a county agent from Tennessee who used simple American common sense to save an Indian village. By untangling the many strands of representation by which this narrative of American agency was produced, this paper seeks to give an account of the Foundation’s own agency in its emergence as a major force in the shaping of the Indian nation. In this way, the paper is offered as another sort of response to the problems of agency and empire arising from American involvement in India. By directing attention to the way narratives of the neo-imperial are produced, it aims to motivate a reconsideration of how we theorize the unity, autonomy, and purpose of neo-imperial agency.

Maunaguru, Sidharthan

Wedding Albums: Traditions, kinships and legalizing marriages through wedding photos

Three decades of prolonged war has devastated the Sri Lankan Tamil community, and many have been forced to flee. Consequently, Sri Lankan Tamils are now scattered across a vast geographical area. In the process of searching for life and stability, the institution of marriage provides an avenue through which Sri Lankan Tamils create opportunities to connect, continue and “re-stitch” their relationships across geographies.

In the official processing procedures of these transnational marriages, photographs have developed and gained the place of “authentic evidences.” That is, ‘appropriate’ marriage photographs are considered by foreign Embassies as a substantial reason to grant or deny a visa to a bride or groom wishing to be reunited with his or her spouse in a foreign country. Embassy officials scrutinize the marriage ceremony photographs as “evidence” or "proof" that the wedding ceremony has been performed in accordance with “Tamil traditions”- i.e. the appropriate duties of kin have been performed at the ceremony, the appropriate number of relatives were present etc.—and is therefore authentic.

This paper will explore the manner in which, in recent history, the photograph has emerged as a “legal” document or “document proof” of marriage among Sri Lankan Tamils. How, through the requirement of ‘photographic documents’ are certain traditions ‘recreated’ /‘(re)invented’ and “ideal family/kinship relationships” imagined and contested? I examine how the illegibility of the States’ written legal documents requires the state/s to call for “visual documents” and incorporate them into a legal document regime.
McCrea, Laurence

Poetry Beyond Good and Evil: Bilhana and the Tradition of Patron-centered Court Epic

The early centuries of the second millennium witnessed a marked upsurge in the production of court-epics or mahakavyas devoted to celebrating the acts and the virtues of the poets' own patrons. Before the eleventh century, such works had been comparatively rare, but they thereafter come to be produced quite frequently. Bilhana's magnum opus, the Vikramankadevacarita, written in praise of his patron the Calukya king Vikramaditya VI, stands within a well defined tradition, stretching back most notably to Parimala's Navasahasankacarita (c. 1000 AD), which Bilhana seems to regard in some measure as a model, and forward to works such as Someshvara's (13th century) Kirtikaumudi, which explicitly names Bilhana as an inspiration.

Yet, within this tradition, Bilhana's mahakavya stands out as peculiar in several respects, most notably in the double-edged, almost cynically self-undermining quality of his praise for his patron. This is reflected not only in Bilhana's own comments on the relations between kings and poets but, more subtly, in his dramatization of Vikramaditya's climb to power which, despite the great pains it takes to excuse his usurpation of his older brother's throne, seems frequently almost to go out of its way to dwell on the most unsavory aspects of its nominal hero's career.

The paper will examine the ways in which Bilhana's great poem both epitomizes and deconstructs the genre of patron-centered mahakavya, celebrating it as a demonstration of the poet's supreme, indeed exclusive, power to generate kingly fame, but thereby at the same time declaring, more or less openly, that all such fame is a sham, something any skilled poet can create for a king, irrespective of any real merit. By calling attention to this severance of royal reputation from worth, precisely through the medium of poetry, Bilhana proclaims the value and the power of poetry, but in doing so he totally undermines the moral self-understanding which had long held sway among poets themselves.

McHugh, James

Making a Book in Medieval South Asia

This paper will explore the material culture of writing materials in medieval South Asia. In particular, the paper will highlight certain underexplored aspects of manuscript production that may have affected the later development of writing and printing technologies in South Asia—an important topic that deserves revisiting. The twelfth-century Sanskrit text entitled The Ocean of Giving (Danasagara) of Ballalasena is a large compendium concerning religious gifts. As such it has been recently studied by Maria Heim for what it can tell us about the understanding of such gifts. The text also contains a quite detailed, idealized account of the copying of a book (pustakam). This unique description covers such important matters as the actual procedure and materials for writing; the principles of textual correction; the donation and performance of the text; and, of course, the merits of this gift, a “gift” not of a book but “of knowledge” (vidyadanam). I will initially discuss
certain technical difficulties encountered in translating this text, but, more importantly, I wish to read this account of manuscript-production in order to consider what aspects of the process are presented as particularly valued and important. I will then relate this material to some previous discussions on the development of writing and printing technology in South Asia. To give an example, considerable attention is paid in this text to the auspicious timing of the commencement and writing of the manuscript-copy: a factor that would surely be somewhat disturbed if texts were to be printed in large numbers. This paper will thus highlight a source of great importance to the “history of the book” in South Asia, and additionally the paper will present some new hypotheses on this complex history.

McKnight Sethi, Cristin

The Village in the City: Dilli Haat, Crafts, and the Re-Mapping of Delhi

This paper examines the popular outdoor commercial site Dilli Haat—a highly orchestrated construction of a village market in an urban space—and explores the ways in which it affects the imagination of Delhi. Created in collaboration between the Delhi-based NGO Dastkari Haat Samiti and the Central Government of India, Dilli Haat provides an urban venue for rural-based artists and entrepreneurs to sell a range of artistic objects, “crafts,” while at the same time contributes to the spectacularization of rural spaces by urban consumers. Looking closely at a “craft map” produced for the opening of Dilli Haat in 1994 and examples of actual objects sold at Dilli Haat, this paper seeks to understand the physical and ontological space that Dilli Haat creates and the kind of modernity that it narrates. How does Dilli Haat alter the experience of the city, and where does gender enter into the overlay of “urban” and “village” spaces of Dilli Haat? Furthermore, what does creating a village, in the form of an urban haat, mean for the city at this moment in time?

Considering these questions, this paper seeks to situate Dilli Haat within the historical context of early scholarship on Indian villages and rural craftspeople developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It also looks at more recent critiques of the fetishization of rural artists, what Saloni Mathur calls the “cult of the craftsman,” as seen in early international exhibitions and displays of artists in commercial and cultural spaces in both India and abroad. Using discussions on local productions of modernity or “public culture” alongside notions of the simulacrum, this paper argues that Dilli Haat actively engages in the articulation of Indian craft “heritage” and the construction of rural, urban and national identities.

McLain, Karline

Shirdi Sai Baba in the City: Countering Communalism in Mumbai through Devotion

In “The City in South Asia”, James Heitzman writes that Bombay/Mumbai became the ‘quintessential expression of a new urbanization; in South Asia under British colonial rule (2008: 118). In his study of this South Asian ‘urbs prima’ (153) in its colonial and postcolonial contexts, Heitzman details the forces behind the rapid urbanization of Mumbai while also paying careful attention to what he calls the subtext of urban development: the many and often competing visions of ‘what the city could or should be and what it might become’ (170). Building upon Heitzman’s study, this paper examines the rising prominence of Shirdi Sai Baba devotion in Mumbai in light of both the history of this city and differing visions among Shirdi Sai Baba devotees of the city’s future. The fantasy of Mumbai as it is projected in public culture is split: it is both a cosmopolitan city full of glitterati from all faiths who have made it big on the Bombay Stock Market and in Bollywood film; and an overpopulated city teeming with slums, beggars, gangs, corruption, and communal violence. Drawing upon my interviews with residents of Mumbai, photo-documentation of Shirdi Sai Baba posters and shrines, and analysis of textual devotional materials, this paper examines Shirdi Sai Baba devotion
in the effort to understand the surging afterlife appeal of this god-man in Mumbai. Sai Baba (1835-1918) lived and died in the village of Shirdi, Maharashtra. In his lifetime, he was regarded as a sadguru, an enlightened teacher, by a small circle of devotees from Hindu and Muslim backgrounds. In the past two decades, Sai Baba’s popularity has skyrocketed in Mumbai. Scholarship on recent Hindu movements in urban India has focused on the rise of Hindu nationalism and the increase in Hindu-Muslim strife since the 1990s. In tandem, scholars of Hindu imagery have written of the connections between the ubiquitous god posters and Hindu nationalist sentiments. Focusing on the downtown Fort business district and the Dharavi slum area, I argue that one significant reason behind this god-man’s growing popularity in Mumbai is the ecumenical vision of his devotees, who come from various backgrounds and have divergent visions of the city’s future, but who similarly construe their devotion as a needed corrective to ongoing Hindu-Muslim strife.

McNamara, Karen

Manual as Manifesto: Bongo Poribar and the Acupressure Movement in Bangladesh

Manuals are books that are used for practical instruction on various subjects. The word manual comes from the Latin, manus, meaning, hands, reflecting the instructions in manual labor, how to do something. Manuals are often written by official institutions of power to indoctrinate and institutionalize knowledge. However, other manuals, like self-help health manuals, are written to empower the individual so that they are not dependent on medical establishments. Although the category of self-help health guides might not be generally thought of as manuals, they are manuals that are geared towards the empowering of the individual in how to care for the self, the individual body.

In this paper I will be focusing on an acupressure manual called, Apnar Shastho, Apnar Haate (Your Health is in Your Hands). This book is a hands-on guide for using acupressure to heal and care for the body. It was written by Debendro Bhora in 1980 and later translated into Bengali. He claims that the world can be in good health within 10 years by following the guidelines in the manual in everyday practice. I will not be focusing on the content of the manual itself as much how this particular manual is being used as a manifesto for a health movement in Bangladesh called Bongo Poribar (the Bengali Family). The Bongo Poribar is a health movement that was started five years ago to promote self-treatment of disease in Bangladesh through service and training camps on acupressure. I am arguing that the success of a manual is related to its entrepreneurial value and has to be current and address contemporary needs. I will use this case study to underscore the importance of examining the practices of consumption of manuals. In this case, a practical self-help manual on acupressure is being reinscribed as a manifesto for healing the spiritual and bodily nation. In this process the self-healing movement takes on a spiritual and communitarian view of the nature of disease and how to heal it.

In this paper I will explore ideas of health and the nation as expressed by the Bongo Poribar and how they use the manual in their training sessions. I will ask what is the relationship between medical knowledge and the ethical category of the nation? What is the relationship between the individual and collective as mediated through medical knowledge?

Meegama, Sujatha

The “Heretic” King and His Kovil: The Patronage and Plunder of the Berendi Kovil in Sitavaka, Sri Lanka

Even though devales (temples dedicated to local, Mahayana, or Hindu deities) had already been established as integral religious monuments in Sri Lanka by the 14th century, the patronage of kovils (temples to Hindu deities) by monarchs did not completely disappear. In the kingdom of Sitavaka in the 1500s, King Mayadunne and his son Rajasimha I (known for his fearless battles against the Portuguese) built a small stone kovil.
dedicated to Bhairava (a form of Siva), called the Berendi Kovil, on the banks of the Sitavaka River. The construction of this kovil gave tangible shape to the widespread belief that Rajasimha had abandoned Buddhism in favor of Saivism. Traditional and colonial historiography, as well as local legends, paint Rajasimha not only as a heretic but also a parricide. A center of colonial resistance in its heyday, the Sitavaka kingdom (1521-1593)—generally depicted as a dark age in Sri Lankan history—has received scant scholarly attention. However, a re-examination of written, oral, ritualistic, and art historical sources reveals a more complex narrative behind the construction and plunder of this kovil and the memory of its patron.

Against this standard narrative of destruction and degeneration, in this paper I explore the politics behind the warrior-king Rajasimha’s patronage of the Berendi Kovil, later plundered by the Portuguese. By examining narratives of plunder—both colonial and local—I seek to untangle the web of meaning behind the aggression towards sacred sites during the Portuguese Encounter and the subsequent rebirth of such religious spaces. Finally, by addressing the deification of kings at devales I explore how Rajasimha is remembered and worshipped at local temples and invoked in present-day politics.

Mehdi, Mohamed

The Critique of Modernity in Hind Swaraj: Nature as Guide

In Hind Swaraj, Gandhi calls into question the ethical and practical value of many of modern civilisation’s most cherished developments, including railways, medicine, legal systems, and even the printing press. Many of Gandhi’s readers have dismissed these critiques as embarrassing youthful excess that should not be taken seriously, or as indications of a dangerous dogmatism that should be omitted from a fruitful understanding of Gandhian political philosophy. In this paper, I propose, first, that Gandhi’s rejection of these modern technologies is an important and necessary aspect of his critique of modern civilisation understood as an ethical ideology. Secondly, I explain the way in which the critique of modern civilisation is essential to Gandhi’s defence of a non-violent, and non-conventional, method of political action. Having established the importance of Gandhi’s critique of modern technologies to his political philosophy, I attempt, third, to analyse the ethical reasoning that underlies this rejection. I focus, in particular, on the appeal that Gandhi makes to limits inherent in nature that should serve as ethical guides to technological development. Nature is, for Gandhi, embedded with value and to ignore this is not only wrong in itself, but will inevitably lead to negative practical consequences since nature serves as a guide for humans to follow for their own well-being. To ignore this guide is to follow a self-destructive policy. The paper thus draws out and traces explicitly the “enchanted” view of nature in Gandhi’s thought that Bilgrami has, in “Gandhi, Newton, and the Enlightenment”, related to early modern critiques of science and industrialism by radical dissenters in Europe.

Mehrotra, Nilika

Between Social and Medical: Disability, State and NGO Interface in North India

Disability studies clearly takes attention away from medical to social model in highlighting exclusion and invisibility of people with disabilities. In Indian context emergence of complex discourses on disability reveal efforts to take cognizance of western debates while remaining firmly rooted in medical model with regard to practice. Recent state policies direct the state governments to identify and empower people with disabilities and make provision for them. In this paper I show a local situation in which disability was largely conceptualized in cultural terms but is being implicated through state definitions and state and non state actors. The growing influence of Western biomedicine in the developing world, particularly in its urban conclaves, is leading to the salience of categories like learning disorders and intellectual disabilities and has important consequences for traditional communities.
Earlier Indian context tended to absorb the intellectually disabled within the circle of family and social networks creating spaces for them to function according to their capacities. With the help of study of two institutions namely Arpan School at Haryana and Action for Autism in Delhi, North India, I demonstrate how intellectual disabilities are increasingly being seen as medical and psychological conditions that need external intervention. I also draw attention to the complex interplay between adult identity, and intellectual disability and personhood in the lives of the disabled, their families, and the organizations set up to support them. With traditional family and community support structures withering away and no social security net provided by the state, NGOs are becoming significant by creating new social spaces for the intellectually disabled.

Mehta, Mona

From Gandhi to Gurus: Talking and Making Politics in Gujarat

I examine how we might understand the public discourses of gurus in contemporary Gujarat and Gandhi in colonial India as types of political deliberation that reflect and shape the politics of their times. I compare the deliberative style of gurus with an earlier historical mode of deliberation used by Gandhi, to elucidate two distinct exemplars of deliberation, both of which use religious idioms in political talk. I argue that the discursive activities of Gandhi and the gurus produce two divergent conceptions of the Hindu subject and Indian polity that do important political work for authorizing radically different political projects. Using ethnographic accounts of live public discourses, content analysis of CDs, TV discourses, interviews with gurus and audiences, Gandhian texts, and television viewership data, my comparison between Gandhi and the gurus leads me to raise larger theoretical questions about the possibilities and limits of deliberative politics and its contradictory relationship with democracy. Ultimately, I show the ways in which notions of citizenship and polity are powerfully articulated and experienced within everyday public arenas beyond the state.

Mehta, Uday

Gandhi and the Logic of Political Violence

This paper argues that violence has been a constitutive and essential feature of the modern western tradition of political thinking. There is in this tradition of thought no normative argument proscribing violence or killing per se. Violence and killing are to be regulated, but they are not in any fundamental sense deemed to be wrong. In contrast, Gandhi makes a fundamental moral claim against violence and the taking of life. In doing so he also, equally fundamentally, reconstitutes our traditional conception of politics. This paper in focusing on Gandhi’s Hind Swaraj contends that notwithstanding his enormous effect on the political landscape, Gandhi was in an important sense a deeply anti-political thinker.

Mehta, Mona

Making "Truth" Transparent in Gujarat

This paper explores how a politics of transparency operates when the “truth” to be revealed is widely known and exclusion is the dominant register of politics. Specifically, it examines two divergent spectacles of transparency that purported to reveal the “truth” about the religious violence in Gujarat in 2002: The state appointed Nanavati-Shah Inquiry Commission consisting of public hearings and “Operation Kalank”, a private media (Tehelka magazine) sting operation carried out with spy cameras. Whereas the commission worked to conceal the state’s complicity in the violence, the sting operation sought to expose the participation of state and non-state agents in the violence. Through an exploration of these two phenomena, this paper analyzes the
operation of transparency at three related levels. At the first level, it shows how the commission symbolizes the limits of procedural accountability as it turns into a political device of state legitimization. At the second level, it compares the private sting operation as a counter strategy of transparency to the commission. Despite its attempt to expose the opacity and distortions of the state appointed commission, the “seductive immediacy” of the sting operation also marginalizes the productive potential of mediation, as William Mazzarella has argued. But, at the final level, the paper goes beyond simply calling the bluff of currently ascendant discourses of transparency and pointing out the opacities of power they conceal. By considering the responses to the sting operation in Gujarat, it raises a more disturbing question of whether efforts to make “truth” transparent, irrespective of their entanglements with the dialectic of concealment and revelation, can ever lead to democratic accountability in certain conditions. In the context of Gujarat’s divisive public opinion and politics, the paper suggests that procedures of transparency may reveal the “truth” already known, but this pseudo-revelation itself may, ironically, subvert substantive democracy and justice. The evidence for this argument is based on ethnographic accounts of the public hearings of the Nanavati-Shah commission, interviews and newspaper and magazine reports between 2003 and 2009.

Mehta, Deepak

WORDS THAT WOUND: ARCHIVING HATE IN THE MAKING OF HINDU AND MUSLIM PUBLICS IN BOMBAY

If hate is understood as an operative function that extends outwards, how can it be recognized in its most simple form? This paper is a preliminary attempt to describe some of the contours of hate literature by focusing on the discursive relations between Hindus and Muslims in Mumbai (Bombay until 1994). My argument is that the plots, actions and narrative situations described in this literature do not remain fixed within the discursive boundaries of a particular text. Rather, there is a multiplication effect as stories about these books are carried into conversations, become subjects of political speeches, and are transformed into political actions of protest and sectarian slogans. This multiplication forms the bedrock of riot speech and is the linguistic counterpart of practices of violence between Hindus and Muslims. It is not uncommon to see that even after the events around the publication of a particular book, exhibition or cartoon have lost their immediate salience, they can reappear in new contexts. This dispersion and multiplicity, both spatial and temporal, is characteristic of the hate literature that I examine. What is marked in this literature is the conflation of the identities of Muslim and Pakistani and the simultaneous expression of anxieties about nationalism and masculinity.

Menon, Kalyani Devaki

Children of Bharat Mata: Hindu Nationalism & Violence

Hindu nationalists in contemporary India have engaged in extreme violence against religious minorities with the purpose of making India a Hindu nation. They assert that Hindus are primordially linked to the territory of India by blood, culture, and religion. Based on fieldwork with Hindu nationalist women in New Delhi, I examine the everyday constructions of religion, identity, and nation they circulate, to mobilize Hindus towards engaging in and/or supporting violence against religious minorities. Constructing India as the body of the goddess Bharat Mata, they claim a genealogical and sacred connection between Hindus and the political cartography of the nation. In prayers to the goddess, they not only assert that India belongs to Hindus, but also suggest that both this sacred landscape and those who worship it are imbued with the goddess’s shakti and inspired to “give life to the nation.” In conversations, women argued that Hindu identity is a primordial one that ideally manifests in an affective attachment to a land that is sacred. I argue that such discourses of primordial belonging that intersect with the sacred and position Hindus as the privileged inheritors of the nation, are mobilized to justify violence against religious “others” in contemporary India.
Miller, Jody

Why ‘Beach Boys’ and not ‘Beach Girls’? Gender Organization and Gendered Sexual Subjectivity in Sri Lanka’s Tourist Sex Industry

In this paper, I address two interrelated issues: gendered labor market segmentation in the sex industry in tourist beach communities on Sri Lanka’s south and southwest coasts; and the gendered sexual subjectivities articulated by young Sri Lankan men (and, to a lesser extent, women) who engage in sexual exchanges with Western tourists for economic or material gain. Sri Lanka is one of several sites in which the majority of local participants in sex tourism are male rather than female. I examine why this is the case and its impact on women and men. Drawing on in-depth interviews with 58 individuals who work in beach tourist communities along Sri Lanka’s southwestern coastal belt, I focus specific attention on the income-generating strategies and networks of those involved in sexual exchanges with tourists, and how they make sense of their gender and sexual identities in the process. In particular, most young men who engage in sexual exchanges with tourists construct a heterosexual identity by emphasizing their sexual encounters with white women and downplaying their encounters with white men. Yet, they also articulate ambivalence about these sexual exchanges, because white women’s sexual agency (as compared to the men’s perceptions of local women’s sexual passivity)—coupled with uneven economic resources—can pose a challenge to their constructions of heterosexual masculinity. I discuss the strategies young men use to overcome and resolve such tensions.

Milligan, Matthew

Towards a Grammar of Representation: Buddhist Stupa Architecture in the Sanchi Reliefs

One puzzling aspect of the Buddhist Sanchi gateway reliefs is the ease in which scholars “read” the iconographical representations of stupas (reliquary mounds). Two primary interpretations—which are not at odds with one another—continue to persist in scholarly literature. The first perspective is that stupas are aniconic symbols of the Buddha after his death (parinirvana). This is a common feature of Buddhist art in the last few centuries BCE, before the widespread creation of the anthropomorphic Buddha image. In the second perspective, reliefs with stupas depict famous scenes from the Buddha’s biography. Neither perspective takes into account the iconography of the stupas themselves, neglecting to find similarities and differences or to locate the individuality the artists deliberately infuse within their artistic creations. In this vein, both of these perspectives reduce the agency of the artist and the uniqueness of each relief. Instead, these perspectives lead to a highly problematic favoring of an easily interpretable picture, which fits too conveniently into what is presently known or suspected about ancient Indian Buddhism.

The focus of this paper is two-fold. In the first portion of the paper I catalogue three types of stupa depictions found on the gateways reliefs of stupa 1 at Sanchi, which, according to one inscription, were likely built around 25 CE. By thoroughly sifting through which features are and are not present in the reliefs, I establish a framework for which to interpret activity within the relief scenes. Next, I interpret a variety of devotional relief scenes. In my interpretation I extrapolate the unique characteristics of each iconographic representation and begin to think of them not only as representing scenes taken directly from textual sources but as scenes that are constantly negotiating their identity in a much larger and detailed ideological landscape that includes yakshas (semi-divine guardians), previous Buddhas, powerful saintly Buddhists, and the everyday devotee. I also shift the emphasis away from Shakymuni Buddha and re-direct it towards the aforementioned actors who are actively present within the scenes. Not every relief with a stupa is referencing the parinirvana of
the Buddha. A thorough deconstruction of the stupa iconography is a sorely needed piece of the ancient Buddhist historical puzzle.

Miner, Allyn

Notes from a forgotten source: early music instructional books of the Hindi-Urdu region

Recent research on Hindustani music in the 19th and early 20th centuries has explored how music figured in the social and religious reform agendas of the time. Educators from Calcutta and Mumbai indeed emphasized the themes that present-day music was but a shadow of a glorious past; that it lacked system and theory; and that lineage professionals represented a morally corrupt culture. But many of the books published in Hindi and Urdu coming out of Lahore, Delhi, Lucknow and Bihar in the last decades of the nineteenth century do not dwell on these themes. These books rather celebrate contemporary music and the professionals who carry it. The books do not present arguments about theory, system, or notation; rather they offer an astounding body of music in notation for the consumption of an obviously eager reading public.

The early lithographed Hindi and Urdu-language books on music have long been out of print and have been mostly forgotten; there are perhaps a dozen available. These books represent several decades of urban readers' access to raga music. Both the messages about music and the notated material contained here must have been formative to public attitudes toward music in the cities of the Urdu-Hindi belt.

The music notated in these books has also been forgotten. In the early and mid 20th century, a relatively few performers came to dominate instrumental music through recordings and public concerts. The authors of the nineteenth-century books studied with ustads and teachers who for the most part did not make it in the new media. One therefore can look to the music here for constructing a more layered history of Hindustani performance practices.

The early books on music are not just simple how-to-play books, but compendia of contemporary information. Some contain hundreds of ragas, compositions, variations, song genres, and lyrics, in notations designed and explained by the authors. This material is meant to be read and played, and it is in most cases easily decipherable. The sounds of this music can be produced just as they were intended to be.

Miyamoto, Mari

Self-Portrait of a Nation in Contemporary Bhutan: Citizenship figured by Cultural Heritage and Environmentalism

In Bhutan, “nationality” was legally granted to the people for the first time in 1958. This Nationality Law has changed its name to Citizenship Act in 1977 and continues till today. Here, citizenship is treated as equal to nationality. In other words, being a Bhutan citizen means that he/she is expected to embody the Bhutan national characteristics. The corollary has been that Bhutanese citizenship was granted only to those who were able to represent “authentic” Bhutanese culture. In my presentation, I will attempt to describe the process of defining the “boundary” and “attribute” of a Bhutan-Nation or Bhutan-Citizen and reconsider the process of transformation of the self-portrait of Bhutanese nation in the context of changing politico-economic circumstances. I will also attempt to consider the meaning of “Citizenship” in Bhutan, in comparison with the Modern West.&#12288;
The first part of my presentation describes the transformation of self-portrait or the ideal figure of Bhutan-Nation through discussing changes in Citizenship Act, Marriage Act as well as Five Year Development Plans, last of which increasingly emphasized Buddhism and environment-friendliness as defining attributes of the Bhutanese people. The second part of the presentation discusses modes of political participation in Bhutan. Royal Government of Bhutan established National Assembly in 1953 as a way to involve residents in decision making process. In this system, people’s representatives called as Chimi were elected through the process of consultations between householders and village heads in each district. In 2008, Royal Government decided to introduce universal suffrage to their citizen and to involve them in elections of new constitutional government. According to Bhutan Government, the form of government shall be democratic constitutional monarchy. I will discuss whether this constitutes a fundamental break in the Bhutanese polity or a formal change that preserves the nature of its citizenship essentially unaltered.

Modi, Sonal Mithal

Intonations of the Silent Mani Walls in Leh, Ladakh

The goal of this paper is to interpret the sacred landscape of Leh Valley in the Ladakh Region, which is dotted with thousands and thousands of little stone stacks or cairns – huge or small, crude or elaborate, clayey grey or painted. No matter how high one climbs, some villager would have gone higher and left stone cairns bearing prayer flags or stacks of horns.

The stone stacks, sometimes bearing some strange inscriptions, often form walls, called Mani walls, running through several meters. These cairn walls, fundamentally prayer walls, are a medium through which people in this region connect to divinity and other people in the form of meaningful messages and codes. They were earlier built for circumambulations around. Typologically speaking, some are a series of Chortens; the more high-design ones usually end in Chorten while some are just a simple stacking-up of stones. The gesture of making these Mani walls has its roots in Buddhism but it seems to be contagious and everybody – a casual traveler, a serious scholar, a monk, a shepherd, an army-man, a farmer – all participate in the act; making it a local as well as a universal gesture.

What is striking is that they beckon us by their simplicity, they guide us through lonely roads and up difficult mountains, and they eventually comfort us that someone already has been up here in this desolate place ages before us; all the time re-assuring us of a divine presence nearby. These gestures have their roots in the basic matter-of-fact necessity that every human being has of seeks emotional security. The paper seeks to explore these subtle ways of seeking reassurance that create a unique cultural landscape.

The paper is based upon the concept of cognition in vernacular landscapes that results in community shaping the physical environment in a particular manner by following a set of codes. Each member of that community acts in a way conforming to those codes. The paper will inquire into the philosophy, typologies and construction of Mani walls, their placement in the landscapes and their relation to religious institutions such as monasteries.

Moin, A. Azfar

Should the Crown have Twelve Points or Seven? The Safavid Origins of the Mughal Royal Cult

The Mughal and the Safavid empires took shape at the same time and from the same cultural milieu. Yet they are rarely studied together. Divided by area studies that place Safavid Iran in Middle East and Mughal India in
South Asia, our understanding of early sixteenth century imperial formation in these interconnected regions remains fragmented. Few have paid attention to the fact that Babur, the “founder” of the Timurid (Mughal) dynastic realm in India, had in his early years served as a vassal to the Safavid Shah Ismail, the Sufi king who claimed to be the promised mahdi (messiah). In fact, Babur had to put on the Twelve-gored “taj” of the Safavid devotees, the Qizilbash (Red Heads) named after the color of their headgear. This signified among other things Babur’s accepting Shah Ismail as his pir (spiritual guide). Babur’s period of Safavid discipleship is conveniently missing from his famous memoirs due to a gap in the manuscript. This paper examines the effects of Babur’s discipleship on the development of Mughal rituals of kingship. Was Humayun’s invention of a “taj” for his inner circle, featuring the sacred number seven, a mimicry of Safavid practice and a way to break away from the shame of Safavid discipleship? Was the later creation of an Akbari royal cult a repeat of this ritual process? These are the unexplored questions I take up in this paper. Using a variety of sources such as poetry, painting and royal letters from the Safavid realm as well as memoirs, courtly panegyrics and texts on magic from the Mughal domains, I argue that processes of imperial formation in India and Iran were tightly interconnected in this period as each dynastic realm competed for territory, material wealth and human resources. In this competition, the two nascent empires learned from each other. Specifically, contact with early Safavid politics was critical to shaping later Mughal religious and political policies in India. Thus, a rethinking of early Mughal-Safavid interaction should lead to a better understanding of the classical Mughal period in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.

Mokkil-Mathur, Navaneetha

Shadows of Progress: The Kerala Woman as a Figure in Crisis

The regional identity of Kerala as a model state in India is grounded on an idealized image of a ‘Kerala woman’, who is posited as educated, agential and the anchoring figure of a nuclear family. In this presentation I will map the fractures within the figure of the Kerala woman made visible in the post-liberalization moment. I examine the current rhetoric around the break down of the Kerala woman as an emblem of gender based progress in India. My paper argues that the visibility given to the Kerala woman in the model Kerala discourse comes along within an intense scrutiny and regulation of her sexual practices. The agency of this figure is tied to her strict abidance to the status of a ‘family woman’. The disciplining of the sexuality of the dominant caste, dominant class woman is an ongoing and anxiety ridden project. In this presentation I will focus on significant public events and cultural texts from the post nineteen nineties context that construct and disrupt the Kerala woman.

One of the anchoring events in this paper is the controversy around a night strike organized by activist groups in the capital of Kerala on March 7, 2008 in support of a land rights struggle. A regional television channel recorded the night vigil using hidden cameras and aired it to vilify women activists who stray from the proper codes of sexual behavior. On March 8 members of the state unit of AIDWA (All India Democratic Women’s Association), the women’s wing of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), went with brooms and water and enacted a ritual cleansing of the site of the strike. This debate around this event raised questions about women’s claims to public spaces and the expected norms of gendered behavior. It showed the manner in which women’s bodies function as the site of sexual anxiety within the ‘progressive’, public sphere of Kerala. I juxtapose my analysis of this debate with readings of recent Malayalam films which embodies the panic around women’s sexuality. By foregrounding the instabilities within the figure of the Kerala woman, I unpack the complexities of gendered agency and its links to the construction of collective identities.

Moodie, Megan

The location of tribal "backwardness": Reflections on the Gujjar agitations in Rajasthan and their aftermath
The summers of 2007 and 2008 have seen highly visible demonstrations by the Gujjar community of Rajasthan demanding that their legal status be moved from OBC to ST and special provisions made for their uplift within the ST category. These incidents have been viewed with an almost predictable cynicism: Rajasthan is a caste cauldron always ready to explode and Gujjar claims have a dubious basis, but are a ploy to garner more benefits for the “creamy layer.” Yet, beyond these now-standard interpretations, the Gujjar agitations in Rajasthan raise important questions about those tribals and other groups who do not capture political and media attention, Rajasthan’s “forgotten tribes.” This paper examines the findings of the Chopra Committee Report, convened in response to the Gujjar agitations of 2007, for what it might tell us about the broader meaning of the claim to ST status. I argue that the subsequent violence directed towards the Gujjars, as well as the national outcry on the issue of reservations more generally, speaks to a contemporary crisis not only about the specific issue of inclusion/exclusion under the current reservation scheme, but also to the profound contradictions of “backwardness” in Indian politics. I show that while the Report’s summary findings, are quite impressive for their critical engagement with the (colonial) history of tribal definition, the Report’s effort to posit a causal relationship between geographical isolation and a backwards, “archaic existence,” at the same time refuses the possibility of tribal history and the kinds of internal complexities that may characterize tribal groups, which often involve of urban-rural connections. Further, it assumes that the benefits of reservations are permanent and lasting – that members of a tribal creamy layer are, in fact, welcomed members of the community of Indian citizens. Using examples from ethnographic research conducted with one of the state’s smallest tribal groups, the Dhanka, I argue that the effort to define backwardness in terms of geographical isolation undermines the strength of urban-rural coalition that may well serve such forgotten tribes and that the benefits of reservations – such as they are – even for urban tribal groups are tenuous at best.

Morrissey, Nicholas

Out with the Old, in with the New: Gupta Hegemony and the Transformation of Buddhism in Early Medieval India

Tentative Title: “Out with the Old, in with the New: Gupta Hegemony and the Transformation of Buddhism in Early Medieval India”

There can be little doubt that the period between the late third and late fifth centuries CE was a time of tremendous change in the history of Buddhism in India. During the first three centuries of the Common Era, for example, there are large numbers of inscriptions which testify to the enormous success of Buddhist mainstream monastic orders. These inscriptions record the often lavish transference of property and wealth to Buddhist communities belonging to these orders and clearly illustrate their evolution during this period into powerful and influential social, religious and economic institutions. This same period also witnessed an impressive proliferation of Buddhist art and architecture patronized by and for these mainstream monastic communities. During the fourth century however, references to mainstream monastic orders in Indian inscriptions dramatically receded, and with very few exceptions had completely disappeared by the fifth century. Concurrent with the disappearance of inscriptive references to mainstream Buddhist groups is a striking dearth of extant Buddhist art and architecture which can be dated to the fourth and even early fifth centuries. This apparent abrupt disappearance of long established, successful Buddhist monastic institutions in India thus corresponds almost directly with the rise of Gupta Imperial hegemony in North India. Is it possible that these are related developments? Beginning in the late fifth century, Buddhist groups re-emerge in the extant
material record in areas throughout North, East and West India. As far as it is possible to discern, many of these groups appeared in areas where Gupta imperial administration was either weak or defeated and replaced outright. Furthermore, the Buddhist groups which are accessible through the extant art historical, archaeological and epigraphic source material of this period seem to have been the beneficiaries of politically ambitious royal patrons, such as the Hu#7751; a monarch Toram#257;#7751;a, the Maitrika Kings of Valabh#299; V#257;k#257;#7789;aka monarch Hari#7779;ena. In addition to being the fortuitous recipients of resurgent royal patronage during the fifth and early sixth centuries, the nature of these Buddhist communities all have one significant element in common – the influence, in however varying degrees and forms, of Mah#257;y#257;na Buddhism. This paper will explore a series of questions in order to try to understand the transformation of Buddhism in India between the late third and fifth centuries. Was the apparent dramatic reversal of fortune experienced by mainstream Buddhist orders in the fourth century a result of Gupta Imperial policy? Did the downfall of the old Buddhist orders allow for the development and perhaps success of ‘new’ Buddhist groups influenced by Mah#257;y#257;na Buddhism? Was the royal patronage of such new Buddhist groups by ambitious successors to the Guptas a conscious and intentional rejection of Gupta support for orthodox Hindu institutions?

Mufti, Mariam

"The Influence of Candidate-Selection Methods on Legislative Performance in Pakistan".

Pakistan’s long and circuitous route to democracy has been explained repeatedly as the result of an intrusive military-bureaucratic state; the failure to develop a constitution until 1958, almost nine years after independence; and weak political institutions. However, few attempts have been made to explain the difficulties of democratic transition by studying key political institutions that in the West have been critical to the process of democratization such as the political parties and legislature. This paper attempts to understand the role played by political parties in Pakistan’s political system by examining methods of candidate selection for legislative office of the 5 main parliamentary parties- a process that differs from party to party, depends on the nature of the constituency and is influenced by the electoral system. I will reflect on the significance of candidate selection for the process by which a party is reproduced in public office and the implications of this process on the legislative performance and the nature of democracy in Pakistan. I argue that the method of candidate-selecion is an intervening variable that explains the relationship between electoral candidates and the political party leadership manifested by high levels of party discipline in parliament but low levels of party cohesion in extra-parliamentary arenas.

Murty, Madhavi

Textures of Representation: Stories of the Modern Political Subject in Postcolonial India

In this paper, I will trace the stories that give form and shape and bring life to the modern, political subject of the Indian nation state, where neoliberalism is increasingly working as a suture for the social formation. This paper is a part of my larger dissertation project which is interested in examining the stories that give shape to neoliberalism in India. My dissertation suggests that stories negotiated within popular culture are imperative to an understanding of the particularities of neoliberalism. In this paper, I will examine the construction of the
political subject at a time when economic liberalization policies have attained legitimacy, when the consolidation of a “new” middle class and its consumptive patterns is being observed combined with the rise of the regional political party as a representative of lower caste, dalit and the rural poor’s aspirations. I will do so by examining a diverse range of sources, including representations within the English language print news media of Uttar Pradesh’s first dalit female chief minister (and prime ministerial hopeful) Mayawati, as well as on “economic reforms” and “reservations” (or affirmative action policies) between 2000 and 2007 and mainstream Hindi cinema including films such as Yuva, Rang de Basanti and A Wednesday that focus on the middle class, youth and politics. I will argue that these divergent narratives nevertheless construct the figure of an ‘ideal’ political subject and it is through this figure that concepts such as modernity, cosmopolitanism and developmentalism are expressly given form even as implicit arguments about gender, subalternity, caste, religion and ethnicity are made. I will bring this figure of the ‘ideal’ political subject into relief by juxtaposing it to the stories that construct Mayawati as a dalit politician.

Nagra, Ranjanpreet

Speaking of Home: Linguistic Nuances and Constructions of Belonging in Punjabi Diasporic Films

Beginning with "Jee Aayan Nu" (2003) to the recently released "Mera Pind - My Home" (2008), a series of Punjabi films about the Punjabi Diaspora in the United States and Canada have grown exceptionally popular in India and the West. Produced by filmmakers in the Punjabi Diaspora community and set in both the West and the Punjab, these films address issues of home and homeland, the new country, family values, and romance. The protagonist of in several of these films is Harbhajan Mann, a Canadian of Punjabi descent who immigrated to Canada as a child and who has established himself as a renowned Punjabi singer. In this paper, I analyze the use of Punjabi and English, and code switching between the two, in order to examine the synthesis of Punjabi and local cultures. An analysis of language in these films shows that language is used as a marker for the representation and interaction of different generations. By analyzing the language used in dialogues and songs, I will explain how the appropriation of English and Punjabi in certain contexts is used to evoke ideals of homeland and to portray an image of the adopted foreign countries of the Diaspora. Through an analysis of the use of language in these films, I attempt to elicit the manner in which the Punjabi Diaspora community compromises with western culture and seeks to maintain their native traditions and ideals of homeland in new homelands.

Nair, Sridevi

Anonymity, Genre, and the Politics of Visibility: the Lesbian (Con)Texts of Fire and Facing the Mirror

In late November 1998, both English and Hindi versions of Deepa Mehta’s Fire were screened at movie theaters in various urban cities across India. Its first few days of screening went by without incident until December 1, when the Shiv Sena, a militant right-wing Hindu political party from Maharashtra attacked theaters screening the film in Bombay. Following the attacks, many progressive groups and movements carried out protest marches on the streets condemning the Sena’s actions. Importantly, groups that identified themselves as ‘lesbian’ conducted open marches and protests, using the vocabulary of queer and lesbian rights, pride and belonging, familiar in the West.

Sometime in March 1999, a few months after the attacks and amidst the waning tide of protests and newspapers and television commentary, a book called Facing the Mirror: Lesbian Writing from India was published by Penguin India. The book is a collection of ninety-nine pieces by everyday women that engages differently the term lesbian, lesbian desire, and lesbian politics. Interestingly, where Fire found immediate and devastating retaliation, Facing was largely a missed event in the public imaginary. For the most part, the anthology simply
disappeared—or perhaps never appeared—on the national scene. This despite the fact that Facing uses the word ‘lesbian’ more directly than Fire did.

This essay is concerned with the implication of the different kinds of visibility the two texts produce, particularly how genre shapes representation and radically alters audience perceptions of political premise. It argues that as writing—literary and non-literary—Facing holds a particular kind of power to cloak what is public. As the purported memoir of ‘real’ lesbians, Facing deploys this cloaking power to the fullest in its quest to counter the violence that met lesbian visibility. Central to this deployment is the structuring device of anonymity. This stands in contrast to Fire—a film—in which lesbianism, no matter how mediated, is inevitably there for assailment. I use Fire as a touchstone to read Facing’s hermeneutic of lesbian subjectivity. I show how Facing’s formal and ideological positioning carves out a politics of sexuality that de-globalizes desire, thereby contesting the notion that there is something inherently ‘western’ about lesbianism and adequately dismantles right-wing nationalist efforts to criminalize women’s non-heternormative desires and fictionalize lesbian life.

Nair, Sumitra

Making Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) work for health care: choices and challenges

The grammar of information and communication technologies (ICTs) are is yet to come to terms with the diversity of contexts within which they are immersed, and the larger rhetoric in which these discrete formations are placed. When placed within the ‘development’ rhetoric in arenas like health services, The ICTs are cast as agents of development that are almost self-fulfilling, Thus models like telemedicine promise to deliver critical care from the expert core to the hinterland. However, this structure is one of some serious negotiations. Within the Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D) discourse, there is a realization that this linear use model needs recasting. An alternative lens is the shifting of the terms of reference from ‘developing country’ to ‘emerging market’: India, then becomes a singularly exciting site - contrary to norms, the user’s introduction to the electronic universe was not a phased, linear one but a chaotic, collateral deluge. Internet access is being sought to be generalized almost simultaneously with one of the fastest rate of mobile-phone acceptance in the world. Attendant has been the conception of the end-user of these technologies. Thus, the welfare recipient of state programs is also the very successful, and sought-after consumer of commodities. The challenge for ICTs for health is then one of identifying what constitutes effective models for enabling greater access. Delivery through designated spaces and practices like a ‘health kiosk’ appear to be too rigid. And yet, the state-run public health centers, that could be harnessed, already occupy the space of familiar single-point provider for health needs. On the other hand is the issue of the unique, hybrid, messy, personal technological configuration of ICTs themselves that seem to operate more effectively when immersed into the everyday practices of the user, such that separating and fixing their access to an isolated space seems to invalidate their strengths. I locate my analysis within in this paradox.

Nair, Manjusha

We did it, not the state: striking contract workers in central India

Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha (Chhattisgarh Liberation Front, CMM henceforth) emerged as a union of manually employed mine workers in the state-owned iron-ore mines in Dalli-Rajhara township in 1977, and expanded to the steel city of Bhilai in 1989 organizing contract workers employed in the privately-owned industries. I argue
that the union has replaced the state in the everyday life of the contract workers. Union participation, not the state, provided the workers their identity as citizen-workers. Union participation, not the state’s ability to deliver, made the workers use constructive tactics of resistance. The union was reluctantly radicalizing its politics, with the increasing inroads of capital, and the perceived collaboration of the state. My paper, thus contends that informal workers, 90% of the labor force in many parts of the world, while recognizing their entitlements, do not necessarily trust that the state can distribute those entitlements. Some of them are looking for alternatives to the state.

The case of the CMM participants is an excellent window to examine the relation between citizenship, state and agency in post-colonial India. The Indian state, post-independence, started the Bhilai steel project as part of its efforts to modernize and catch up with the “currents of human progress”1. While the state deployed skilled citizen-workers to produce for the nation in its steel plant and mines, the unskilled local population was deployed as non-recognizable contract workers in the manually operated section of the mines and in the privately-owned industries in Bhilai. CMM emerged as a union of contract workers in the mines and the privately-owned industries. These workers were informal, without normal work and pay; however, they worked in the formal economy. Their movement directly engaged with the state and non-state employers and rival mainstream unions, and also the wider politics in the region, bringing into sharp relief the paradoxes in the post-colonial nation-building and associated grant of citizenship. I find that citizenship, either as entitlements to benefits or social inclusion, is an illusory commodity. Regardless of the pursuit of citizenship, the CMM workers derived meaning out of participation in the labor movement.

1 J Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister, stated so in the Annual Session of the Indian National Congress in 1955. Encyclopaedia of the INC, Edited by A.M.Zaidi, Volume 15, Year 1981, page 155.

Nakamura, Sae

Ageing, Care and Civic Engagement: Case Study of an Elderly Home in a Southwest Coastal Urban Community of Sri Lanka

This presentation deals with the issue of ageing and elderly care in Sri Lanka, not in terms of welfare provision for the individual or group vis-à-vis the State, nor of ‘traditional’ care-giving of the family based on intergenerational reciprocity, but in terms of civic engagement of local community. Its aim is to reconsider conventional, rather dualistic notion on the issue of elderly care, which assumes either the State or Family as the main source of elderly care, and to seek the possibility as well as limitation of institutional care, or more broadly, of the ‘social sphere’.

The discussion is based on a case study of an elderly home located in an area where Sinhala-Buddhist and Sinhala-Catholics comprise the majority. While old age home was introduced to Sri Lanka by the colonial administrators and evangelicals under the British rule, the institution under study was the first to be established by Sri Lankan elites in the early twentieth century, a time of increasing tension between Buddhists and Catholics. Unlike majority of the homes, which limited the service according to the faith of the founder or organization, this home, together with the neighboring supporters, has served both Buddhist and Christian elders from the early years of its establishment. On the bases of ethnographic research, I will first
describe the resource mobilization network of the organization. In Sri Lanka, most of the elderly homes are supported by vicinity community in its daily provision of free meals conceptualized as ‘dana (alms-giving)’ to which elders carry out ritual to transfer pin (merit) to the givers and their departed kins. By looking at the nature of this dana network, I seek to illuminate the religious/civic attitude of the staffs and neighboring supporters. At the same time, critical inquiry of the activity of the organization will be made by asking how each elderly person supported by such a network is living through time and space within the premises. Through these discussion, the presentation aims to illuminate a distinct practice of civility and religious tolerance in the sphere of elderly care, which was rarely seen in most of the Church based homes, or Buddhist social service that flourished with the nationalist movement in the mid 20th century.

Naqvi, Tahir

Untitled

This paper offers an important counter-point to the panel's theme of "vernacular history" by examining the making and unmaking of Muhajir nationality. Provided is an account of how supporters and activists acknowledge the fictional and provisional nature of Muhajir nationality. This process, I suggest, points to Muhajir ethno-nationalism’s distinctive practice of questioning the historical construction of Muhajirs throughout the post-independence era as “unmarked universals”, closely aligned with the dominant extra-territorial political and cultural ideals of Muslim nationalism.

Narasimhan, Haripriya

Being ‘patient’ for ‘responsible’ sons: Notions of Tamil womanhood in a slum in Chennai, South India

‘Porumai’ (patience) was extolled as one of the virtues of the ideal Tamil woman in Wadley’s work three decades ago. This paper examines the relevance of such notions today, in Chennai, with specific reference to women’s health care decision-making. Ethnographic research in an urban slum amongst lower caste Tamil women suggests that ‘patience’, enduring pain, and doing sacrifice for welfare of children are viewed as vital attributes that enhance a woman’s ‘power’ (cacti) or ‘respect’ (madippu). Widespread male alcoholism, however, makes it a challenge for these women, mostly working as domestic servants in nearby middle class homes, to rely on their husbands’ income. This paper is concerned with the ways in which women living in a physically and verbally violent neighbourhood negotiate with their more ‘responsible’ sons and daughters-in-law for access to resources, including health care.

Narendra K. Gurung, Savitree Thapa Gurung

Identity Politics in Nepal

This paper will examine different kinds of identity issues and politics in Nepal, where many identity movements have emerged in recent years. Nepal is a mixture of cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic diversity country
but the hill high caste have dominated since King Prithivi Narayan Shah unified the country in 1768. Nepal is facing different forms of identity crisis and it can establish long term peace only if it can settle them. The communal and ethnic conflicts, federal tendencies, inter-region and caste fear are recent challenges in Nepal. Rivalries between dominant caste group, mainly Brahmin/Chhetri/Thakuri, and other excluded group did not come to forefront in the past because assertions were suppressed without due consideration. Recently, the Madhesi movement, Tharuhat movement, the demand of federal states on the basis of ethnicity (mainly from indigenous nationalities), Dalit voices against discrimination from other caste and ethnic groups and proportional representation shows the rise of identity politics. The organizations coming to forefront demanding proportional representation, federal system of government, the demands of right to land and natural resources have established caste/ethnic based and regional parties. These demands and tendencies are the product of historical practices of exclusion in Nepal. So it is worth here to provide how the Nepali state excluded different groups and why it excluded them. The most crucial cause of the exclusion lies on the history. The history of modern Nepal, which dates back to 240 years, emphasized on one religion (Hindu) and one language (Nepali) and excluded most of the socio-cultural groups. Identity is one of the dominant agendas in the present dialogue of restructuring Nepali state. The central thrust of identity movement is to get included from the long exclusion in political and economic power structure of the country.

Nasir, ABM

Explaining the Divergence: High performances in Social Indicators with Low Per Capita Income Growth

Bangladesh is one of the rare realities with high achievement in social development at a very low per capita income level. By 2006, Bangladesh succeeded in lifting millions out of poverty, cutting fertility rate by more than half, lowering infant mortality rate by 75% and mortality of children under the age of 5 by 46%. All of these were achieved only in 26 years. During the same period, the country achieved gender parity in enrolment in the primary and secondary education with overall primary enrollment reaching to an impressive 92% and completion rate standing at 72%. In the economic front, real GDP growth increased to high 6.5% rate in 2007 with inflation rate remaining at low single digit during the entire 1990s, rising domestic investment, growing export throughout 1990s and 2000, all achieved with remarkable macroeconomic stability. Not only does the recent success reject the initial pessimism that dubbed Bangladesh as an “international basket case” and the “test case of development,” but could simply present the country as the basket of hope except with one reservation. The reservation is that despite such remarkable gains in social and economic areas, the per capita income grew only at 4.4% during 2000-07, a rate much lower than those in India (15.9%) and Pakistan (11.1%). This paper addresses this paradox. It analyzes the social and economic development of the country in the regional context and answers to the following questions: how did India and Pakistan manage to grow at such high rates in spite of making slow progress in many aspects of social development? What does explain such divergence in performance between social sector and macroeconomic indicators and growth in per capita income? The paper argues that slow growth in per capita income has been the result of lack of entrepreneurial activities in the high-risk high-return modern sector. The paper further argues that the reasons for such low incentive in the risk-taking ventures in the modern sector have been the absence of an efficient and effective contract enforcement mechanism, weak bureaucracy and regulatory system, high rates of corruption, and underdeveloped infrastructures. High risk of expropriation of profits and costs of conducting business with consequent low inflow of FDI and rate of technology adoption have also been major contributing factors behind lack of entrepreneurial activities in the modern sector. The combined effect of all these has been the low growth in per capita income.

Nasuti, Peter

Recalling an Emergency: How South Asian Leaders End Extraordinary Rule
Whether through a coup or a declaration of emergency rule, South Asian leaders have frequently attempted to subvert democratic institutions. This process, however, can result in several divergent outcomes. In some cases, such as Indira Gandhi’s state of emergency in India, the ruler voluntary chose to end extraordinary rule and return the country to democracy. In others, such as the aftermath of Ayub Khan’s coup in Pakistan, the executive eventually lifted the formal declaration of emergency measures while introducing institutional modifications designed to maintain his privileged position. In still others, such as the emergency of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Bangladesh, the period of abnormal rule only ended with the death or deposition of the ruler.

This paper examines what has determined the various outcomes of extraordinary rule in South Asia. To do so, it looks at how each period of suspension of democracy ended in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh since their independence. These countries provide an ideal basis for comparison due to their regional proximity, institutional similarities, and common colonial legacy. In addition, together they have experienced a large number of periods of interrupted democracy. For this reason, this comparison will serve to identify the relevant mechanisms that influence the manner of ending extraordinary rule. It can even help to explain what causes certain unexpected outcomes, such as political leaders voluntarily accepting restrictions on their power.

Neuman, Dard
From Commodity to Celebrity: Technology, Nation and the Hindustani Musician

This paper examines the process through which the denigrated Hindustani musician became celebrated in the postcolonial world of Indian nationalism. I will trace this process through commodity-effect of the gramophone and the celebrity effect of its intersection with the concert-stage after Independence in 1947. Figured now as “classical,” Hindustani music has become an emblem of Indian tradition and spirituality. As such, the tradition has been projected, since Independence in 1947, as an ideal cultural artifact. At the turn of the twentieth century, however, Hindustani music was largely ignored or manifestly dismissed by the new national elite. This paper traces the process through which the denigrated status of Hindustani musicians in the early part of the last century became transformed into a celebrated status in the postcolonial period of Indian nationalism.

How did the maligned musician come so centrally to represent an Indian tradition? Many answers turn to the revival efforts of early modern musicology, led by estimable figures such as V.N. Bhatkhande and V.N. Paluskar, who worked at the turn of the twentieth century to codify, notate and theorize the music tradition. Yet, their efforts were not concerned with elevating the status of the hereditary musician (the male ustad and female tawaif) so much as they were concerned with making the tradition publicly available for learning and listening, as well as to create a new, respectable, class of musicians. To understand how musicians gained a new reputation, I turn here to the ways in which the new public encountered their music through mass media. What is unique about the musician after Independence is that they appeared before the public in multiple sites, all of which converged after 1947. They were still heard over the gramophone and radio. But now they appeared in-person on stage with the public concert, which was a post-Independence phenomenon. Moreover, their names and biographies were beginning to appear in newspapers, journals and books. Thus, the presence of the musician, for half a century mediated through the disembodied channels of modern technologies, was finally appearing in embodied form. I argue that the celebrity-effect is marked in the Hindustani context by this deferred encounter and its peculiar consequences.

Neuman, Daniel
Technology, Music Makers, Patronage and the Historical Future of Hindustani Music Culture
There are numerous indices that major, not to say revolutionary changes occurred after the middle 19th Century in Hindustani music culture. While others will examine the ramifications of the rise of nationalism in the context of colonial governance in the development of Hindustani music culture, I intend to focus on the introduction of new technologies, not only those of the 19th Century revolution in transportation and communications, but the 20th Century revolution in broadcasting and recording, all with a view to projecting a possible future history with the emergence of cheap globalizing technologies.

Nijhawan, Michael

Dhadi, Vir Rasa, and the Malaise in Aesthetics

In reviewing my work on the Punjabi dhadi song performance, which in the folkloristic register is identified as “heroic song performance” heavily invested in a masculinist idiom of producing vir rasa, I want to think through some of the theoretical premises that define the relationship between aesthetics and politics, and by doing so, unhinge the logics of a politics of identification that normalizes the relationship between aesthetic registers and their supporting ideologies/discourses in terms of a linear, successive series of significations (e.g. “the folk genre used as a vessel to express the narrative of Sikh martyrdom and suffering, thus leading to an exhilarating state of mind in the listener”). Theoretical premises that are key to my discussion involve first and foremost a review of anthropological conceptualizations of ‘rasa’ as aesthetic category grounded in everyday understandings of particular sensual regimes that – and this has wide implications for understanding popular practices and understandings of the acting body – presuppose a matter/mind permeability that is ontologically different from Cartesian mind-body categories. My attempt though is not to add yet another critique of body-mind dualisms. Instead, the paper will engage with two contemporary critiques of Western aesthetic theory to which a non-Cartesian perspective is integral: Charles Hirschkind’s idea of honing the senses through alternative regimes of listening as well as Jacques Rancière’s notion of aesthetics as a radical politics and paradoxical mode of knowing. Engaging with both ideas, I will chart out possible avenues for rethinking how the discursive re-signification of particular performance practices (e.g. “Dhadi song is/was the voice of Sikh militancy”) is related to the material aspects of recruitment, training, practicing, singing, traveling and circulating sounds orally (and increasingly also by electronic means.) And I shall ask how significant social transformations at the performers’ ends (specifically the rise of female singers in a traditionally male-dominated genre) is to be conceptualized in regards to the dominant patronizing discourses and identity logics that consciously aims at identifying dhadi song content (martyrdom and violence) as key to its legitimacy in the public domain. In short: is there something to be captured in the gendered practices of vir rasa that unhinges the turn towards a strong normative prerogative and what does this unhinging imply for a politics of the aesthetics?

Nilsson, Usha Saxena

Response

This paper will present Dr. Nilsson's response to the two panelists, with her own review and analysis of the corpus of her life work and with a description of her future writing projects.

Obrock, Luther

Creating the Kiratarjuniya: Commentarial Interpretation and the Imagining of Bharavi's Epic

In his essay "Metacommentary," Fredric Jameson writes "the starting place for any genuinely profitable discussion of interpretation... must not be the nature of interpretation, but the need for it in the first place." This
paper examines the "need" for interpretation in medieval Sanskrit literary culture by examining how Sanskrit commentary defines the commentarial project in which it is engaged. In particular, I will look at commentarial introductions to the courtly epic Kiratarjuniya which serve not only to underscore the importance of the text as subject of commentary, but also to frame the epic as a discourse carefully circumscribed by commentator's conception of what Sanskrit literature should be.

As a celebrated courtly epic, the Kiratarjuniya accrued a vast body of commentarial literature throughout the ages, starting with the earliest known literary commentary in Sanskrit, the Laghutika of Prakashavarsha. In order to examine the trajectory of the often conflicting imaginations of the Kiratarjuniya, I examine a selection of introductions from various authors between the 10th and 14th centuries, including the Kashmiris Prakashavarsha and Jonaraja, the Keralan Citrabhanu, the Bengali Vidagdhamadhava and the famous Mallinatha from Andhra. Through a close reading of these commentarial introductions, I explore the ways in which the interpretive strategies employed by the commentators intersect with aesthetic and philosophical discourses and reflect anxieties regarding the place and purpose of Sanskrit literature in the post-classical world.

Olsen, Keri

The Power of the Burqa

Based on fieldwork conducted in 1999 and in 2009, this paper considers the ways that working-class Muslim women residing in the city of Ajmer (Rajasthan) use the full black burqa. On one level, the burqa is a “practice of everyday life” (both taken for granted and embedding room for maneuver). On another level, the burqa is a necessarily public display that forms part of what Fregoso refers to as “contested semiotic terrains within the public sphere” (1999:75). Given Hindu nationalist assertions that Muslim women are oppressed, sexually promiscuous, and/or dangerous, wearing the burqa is not an apolitical act. Yet, in a social environment that places heavy emphasis on women’s modesty, to what extent can we (or do they) understand use of the burqa as an assertion of a particular form of politics or of religiosity? Women inhabit, embody and imbue the burqa with a variety of meanings and uses that are at once personal, social and political. They also resist. By conceding to the burqa in some contexts and evading it in others, they accrue certain benefits, such as the ability to mark and transcend social boundaries, and bridge lifeworld spheres that would otherwise remain closed to them. Thus, is it a manifestation of various inequalities -- as women, Muslims, and the “poor”-- or a tool for obtaining greater power?

Olsen, Marsha

God is in the Details: The Flora and Fauna of Goan Ivory Statuettes

Small and great works of Indian art and architecture are often filled with vegetation and animal life, images that while at times are stylized, reflect the actual flora and fauna of India. The sculpted cliff relief at Mamallapuram and the conversion of the Kasyapa Brothers panel on the railing of the Great Stupa at Sanchi are just two well-known examples. The artisans of India have long been known for their skill of reproducing natural imagery in recognizable detail. This attention to detail is also found on the Indo-Portuguese ivory statuettes of seventeenth and eighteenth century Goa. The Virgin Mary and various saints stand on acanthus leaf pedestals. The Child Jesus sits on a tiered mountain full of life. Blackbuck, lions, sheep, wild boar, and hare are found in the niches or frolicking on the tiers of the rockery. This imagery of nature is simply that on one level. However, it also serves to illustrate in more subtle ways the divine messages of the rockery for the devotee. In this paper, I will take a closer look at the foliage and the animals that inhabit the niches and tiers of the Indo-Portuguese rockeries. Through this study, I will show that these details, while adding interest to the works and filling the mountain with life, also provide visual clues to understanding the image as a whole, to see God in the details.
Omar, Irfan

"Gandhi on Jihad: An Interreligious perspective"

This paper seeks to discuss and analyse some important observations made by Mahatma Gandhi on the Islamic notion of Jihad. Gandhi's understanding will be located within the broader context of his knowledge of world religions, especially focusing on Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism. Jihad as a quranic notion has been interpreted in multiple ways both by Muslims and non-Muslims. The objective of this paper is to identify critical intersections in meanings as found in different religions, albeit from a Gandhian perspective.

Pai, Gita V.

The Power to Gift: Kingship in an Nāyaka State

James Heitzman’s Gifts of Power: Lordship in an Early Indian State (1997) explores the nature of medieval polity in India through hundreds of C&la-period stone inscriptions that record the dedication of temples. Some inscriptions open with eulogies to the king and his forefathers before turning to the temple’s establishment and endowment. But how are historians to understand Nāyaka polity without such rich epigraphic materials? David Ludden (1993) writes: “Ironically, though more complex than the Pandya system, the Nayaka state remains more unknown because of the relative dearth of inscriptions” (70). Leslie Orr (2000) says that the rise of warrior kings or Nāyakas to greater pre-eminence in the seventeenth century changed the political climate in Tamilnadu that diminished inscriptive evidence (176). Two texts held in the custody of the M&n&ksi-Sundare&vara temple in Madurai offer recourse: Maduraittala Varal&r;ru (the history of the Madurai temple) and Tiruv&y;yai&r;iyai&r;i (garland of sacred renovations to the Madurai temple) provide architectural dating and names of patrons (kings, nobles, and merchants) of all temple works. These new Nāyaka-period genres laud in verse the patron’s devoted service to the temple god and celebrate the financing of temple construction, additions, renovations, or repairs. The purpose of this paper is to explore these literary innovations and the listed donations (largesse transformed into priceless, sacralized objects) alongside the extant (but meager) epigraphic evidence in order to understand the Madurai Nāyakas as kings with power to gift the Madurai temple.

Pal, Joyojeet

Computer as Hero: Keyboard Sharing Among Children in Rural Indian Schools

As the technology and development discourse becomes more mainstream in India, with political parties including public technology access as part of their electoral rhetoric, few studies look at the actual use and conception of computers in rural parts of the country. The setting of this study is in rural Karnataka, in schools allotted Computer Aided Learning centers by the state governments. In each location, these were the first computers in the village. We examine here how children seat themselves in front of and share input resources on a computer. We find a relationship between socio-economic class and classroom standing with children's propensity to dominate computer input during shared-use sessions. Interviews with children and their parents showed that even for people who had no first-hand experience with computers before, a pervasive discourse of technology impacted their perceptions and aspirations from technology. We propose here that a discussion of this discourse and its manifestation in rural India is critical in understanding attitudes towards technology, both in children's use and sharing of machines, as well as their parents' endorsement of the use of computers.
Pande, Rajeshwari Pandhari

Bhaya Kabir Udaas: A Journey Within

This paper will review and analyze Professor Nilsson's corpus of translations of Hindu devotional literature, including the bhakti poetry of Kabir. It will describe choices Professor Nilsson made regarding what devotional literature to translate and for what audiences.

Pandey, Anshuman

"International liṭṭī chokhā": Fashioning a Transnational Bihari Identity through Bhojpuri Film Songs

Traditionally, Bhojpuri songs were rarely vehicles for social or political expression. Generally considered bawdy and uncouth, Bhojpuri songs were concerned with romance and similar motifs. In "Samne wali" ("The girl across the way"), a man sings of how he has fallen in love with the girl across the street after things went sour with the girl next door. In the song "Uparwali ke chakkar mein" ("All messed up about the girl upstairs") the narrator sings of how the neighbor’s son invited trouble from the police when he tried to court the daughter of another neighbor. Certainly, themes of love and relationships pervade Bhojpuri songs, many of which are intentionally facetious. But, since the 1990s, Bhojpuri film songs have addressed problems that affect its target audience. Behind the tongue-in-cheek lyrics of newer Bhojpuri songs reside serious themes regarding Bhojpuri and Bihari identity. These songs evoke the social and political conditions not only of Bihar, but of regions where Biharis have migrated. Despite its candid title, "International Litti Chokha" ("International gram flour savories ") speaks of the Bhojpuri diaspora community and promotes a transnational Bihari identity based upon traditional Bihari cuisine. These songs not only assert Bihari pride, they offer a defense of Bihar. In "Kahida na biharom par najariya" ("Don't cast aspersions on Biharis"), the singer admonishes a well-heeled lady in Benares for castigating Bihar without getting to know its people and culture. Similarly, in "Purab ka Beta" ("Son of the East"), the singer challenges bullies who call him Bihari, asking them coyly if they are insulting or a complimenting him. Through an analysis of Bhojpuri songs, I argue that the introduction of somber messages in Bhojpuri film songs reflects the emergence of a new modernity as Biharis and Bhojpuri speakers attempt not only to break away from the historical discrimination of their community, but also to reform traditional characterizations of Bihar as ‘backward’ and ‘uncultured’. These songs also situate Bihari identity within an international context by reaching out to Bhojpuri speakers in Suriname and Mauritius and linking them to their brethren in Bihar. Indeed, as shown in the attacks against Bihari laborers and students in Mumbai in October 2008, discrimination against Biharis is a major component of political and ethnic strife in present-day India. This essay seeks to provide a better understanding of how Biharis themselves respond to their circumstances in India and abroad.

Parson, Rahul

Past and Present Tensions: Calcutta’s Marwaris and Metropolitan Memories in Alka Saraogi’s Kali-Katha: Via Bypass

Contemporary Hindi writing in Kolkata, and outside the Hindi Bh&#257;sh&#257; Bh&#257;sh&#299; Kshetra (Hindi language field), is circumscribed by the language, literature, and socio-political climate of West Bengal. Hindi literature in Kolkata demonstrates a quality of belonging simultaneously to the city while maintaining some elements of diasporic or outsider writing. Hindi is the polarized language of migrant labor and affluent capitalist classes in Kolkata; it is a de-territorialized national language, gaining from a literary and aesthetic genealogy of Bengali, and polylingualism of markets and empires. The recent spate of writing by
Marwari women in Kolkata interrogates regional identities and legitimizing (or de-legitimizing) myths and histories of belonging. Their writing negotiates a constellation of socio-political forces peculiar to Kolkata vis-à-vis its colonial centrality and post-colonial marginality, the Bengali elite, plurality, language, Marxist state governments, and the predicament of being Marwari in Bengal. Kali-Katha: Via Bypass, the novel for which Alka Saraogi received the prestigious Sahitya Akademi award for Hindi literature in 2001, centers on Kolkata’s Marwaris and their historical and cultural life in the city. The novel addresses various Kolkata publics (as it has been translated into Bengali and English) regarding the intense heterogeneity of language, community, origins, and belonging. As its title indicates, the novel gives access to Calcutta and Kolkata through a series of ‘bypasses’ of temporality, of consciousness, and of identity. This paper examines how this novel unmasks dominant histories of a city and community through formal and narratological innovations revealing minor subjects and histories within a temporal frame which oscillates between the 1940s and 1990s. The disjuncture among ideologies and trajectories between the 1940s and 1990s indicates the limitations of historiography to locate and include social formations and ideologies which fall below history’s gaze or are forced to advance covertly. This paper lastly endeavors to situate this work within collective and radical literary formations in the contemporary Hindi sphere of Kolkata.

Patel, Alka

Built to Last: Architectural Patronage in the Diasporas of Delhi and Hyderabad, 18th-20th Centuries

This paper will present and analyze the architectural documentation and fieldwork completed in 2008 and 2009 toward a collaborative project (with social historian Karen Leonard), titled Building New Identities in the Diaspora: the Banking and Mercantile Communities of Hyderabad, India, ca. 1730-1940. The analysis will focus on the architectural patronage of Gujaratis, Marwaris and Goswamys in both Delhi and Hyderabad. This comparative approach will closely examine these immigrants’ negotiations with their surroundings. More specifically, this analysis will elucidate the differing strategies of reating new homes, required in the late Mughal culture of these two major cities of South Asia. Ultimately, the comparison of diasporic architectural patronage in Delhi and Hyderabad will shed light on the very different identities of these cities – one, the supposed center of a waning Mughal power, and the other, an inheritor and keeper of Mughlai elegance and achievement. Particularly the buildings erected by the immigrant communities of Gujaratis and Marwaris in Hyderabad and Delhi serve as indices of their interactions with their varying surroundings, and the extent of their accommodation or isolation in these cities that were themselves confronting the rise of colonialism.

Patnaik, Soumendra Mohan

Revisiting ‘Tribe’, ‘State’ and ‘Development’: Reflections from Chattisgarh in India

Academic discourses and empirical practices on 'tribal development' require revisiting in the changing world order. Till 1980s, the state played a major role in tribal development. But the rise of NGO movements and civil society institutions coupled with the forces of "Globalization" in 1990s has fast changed the scenario. This paper explores the new strategies of tribal development taking few villages of Bastar district of newly created state of Chattisgarh as a case. This study unravels the theory and practice of the concept of participatory development and its implications for understanding the interface between State, Tribe and Development in the contemporary times. It is argued here that the administrative categories used for the marginalised tribals are still carrying the colonial hangover with out taking cognizance of changing complexity of local situation rooted in the specific history, politics of identity and culture. The new development practices in its effort to be
participatory with a tilt towards Right based approach in accessing and managing resources are unleashing significant consequences for creation of new contours of identity formation among the local tribal communities.

Phillips, Robert

Telling Ram's Story in Urdu: The Ramayans of Khushtar and Ufuq

In Urdu, examples of Ram-katha, as well as other Hindu religious/literary works, were produced from the late eighteenth century until well into the twentieth century—mostly by Hindu Kayasth authors for whom Urdu was a preferred language of literary (as well as devotional) expression. A large number of these Ramayan works were “original re-workings” rather than translations of normative texts, like those of Valmiki or Tulsidas, indicating the relevance and vitality of such endeavors for these affinitive communities as a means to express and achieve their various literary, performative, devotional, reformative and/or didactic purposes. These works most frequently emerged from the prominent Urdu literary-cultural centers of Lucknow, Delhi and Lahore, yet others were produced in smaller towns (qasbas) as well, the qasbas also proving to be important consumers of this literature.

The focus of this paper will be on two of the more well-known literary Urdu works on Ram’s story, the Khushtar Ramayan (1852) composed by Munshi Jagannath Lal Khushtar and the Single-Qafiya Ramayan (1888) of Dwarka Parshad Ufuq. Both men were from Kayasth literary/service-gentry families residing in Lucknow. Khushtar’s Ramayan, completed in 1852, was dedicated to Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. Ten years later it was published by Nawal Kishore Press (NKP), and for the next several decades it remained the most popular Urdu version of the story. Dwarka Parshad Ufuq (1864-1913) engaged in a wide range of literary, journalistic, religious, and social reform activities in the post-Nawabi, colonial milieu. In his literary work, Ufuq composed—among other things—traditional, devotional, and nationalist poetry in Persian, Urdu, and Awadhi. His Single-Qafiya Ramayan not only embodies an interanimation of these languages and literary styles, it claims Urdu as a legitimate devotional language for Hindu bhakts. This paper seeks to elucidate the strategies of adaptation, representation, and devotion enacted in these two Urdu works of Ram-katha with consideration given to the larger contexts of their production and reception.

Pinkney, Andrea Marion

Interested, Yet True: What Kind of Gift is Prasada?

Whether as a mood, energy, mode of speech, or ritual object, prasada (grace, favor, gift)—is characterized by beneficent, abundant generosity. Using examples from Shaiva, Shakta, and Vaishnava Puranas, this paper considers prasada both as a “pure” or “true” gift given without expectation of return and as an “interested” gift that links giver and receiver.

From the perspective of the giver, prasada is frequently given in order to be given away, and does not incur a bond of reciprocity or indebtedness between giver and receiver. In numerous instances in the Puranas, prasada is exuded—intentionally and unintentionally, spontaneously and upon request—by deities, sages, sovereigns, and extraordinary beings of all kinds. Like sunlight, the infinitely generous “field” of prasada is not only the common property of all, it automatically envelops all those who fall within its broadly defined field of influence. Analysis of these types of exchanges in the Puranas suggests that prasada given by deities and other extraordinary beings transcends the dynamic of reciprocity; it is given freely and naturally, and the given substance is never depleted in its abundance. The resulting domain of benevolence is both universally available and potentially limitless in scope. As such, prasada appears to eclipse the logic of reciprocity and indebtedness associated with giving and receiving.
Yet, prasada, freely given, does enjoin certain requirements upon the recipient: to receive with respect and ensure that the gift reaches a terminal point in the chain of exchange. These requirements apply especially when prasada takes material form, in which case it must be properly honored through consumption or redistribution, or through condoned methods of disposal. As this paper argues, even after prasada has been accepted with honor, it remains as the metonymic instantiation of divine substance when it takes material forms.

When prasada is honorably received, the extraordinary otherness of the giver is affirmed. Neither honorable receipt of prasada, nor subsequent devotional gifting, is an attempt to repay the giver of prasada—a task which would be both impossible and unnecessary. Instead, these responses simply underline what Puranic sources didactically indicate as the appropriate attitude to adopt upon receiving the gift of prasada—that of honor, gratitude, and esteem. Finally, the impossibility of the “true” gift and the seeming inevitability of the “interested” gift are questioned based on prasāda’s ability to occupy both roles.

Plumridge Bedi, Heather

Konkan region perspectives on social movement engagement/disengagement with political parties

This piece questions what leads some social movements to actively engage with political parties, while others claim to be ‘apolitical’? The example of protest in Western India elucidates the complexities and choices associated with political party involvement in two social movements. The distinct movements are active in a geographically contiguous region which historically has shared language and cultural linkages, but is divided by state boundaries. In mobilizing opposition against Special Economic Zones, one movement has actively engaged with sympathetic political parties, while the other has continually refused any political party representation or involvement. The paper will examine why social movements determine that political party engagement is necessary, and benefits gained through these associations. In particular, how social movements perceive political party involvement as a means to bolster an agitation with solidarity and numbers will be reviewed.

In contrast, disengagement from political parties by a social movement will be examined. The paper will address the following questions: why would a social movement choose not to seek or allow political party affiliation?; what are social movement concerns about political parties?; and do perception and identity affect the movement’s decision to be ‘apolitical’? The paper will further interrogate the concept of ‘apolitical’ by questioning if any social movement operating in response to a political issue may be ‘apolitical’? These contrasting examples of social movements, political parties and special economic zones will also provide a narrow picture of the changing face of activism in a country that continues to pursue market liberalization.

Prange, Sebastian

Legends of the Convert King: Cheraman Perumal in South Indian Histories

The figure of Cheraman Perumal figures prominently in South Indian historical traditions. It is encountered in sources of diverse provenance, including Arabic texts, narratives of local Brahmans, and Tamil hagiographical literature. Most of the elaborations of this tradition centre upon the conversion of a powerful Malayali king, Cheraman Perumal, to Islam. While epigraphy confirms that rulers of Kerala’s Chera dynasty were referred to by this name, it is a generic title rather than the name of an identifiable king. Empirical studies have refuted most of the specific claims found in the tradition, highlighting its essentially ahistorical nature. Although the tradition is conceivably rooted in historical events, it is clear that various communities elaborated on it by drawing on common South Indian tropes. This paper argues that the Cheraman Perumal legends are best
understood as memes that served to legitimize present conditions – be they political pre-eminence, economic status, or communal privileges – by invoking a mythical past.

Part of a collaborative project that also studies the Cheraman Perumal legends in the contexts of Malayali Muslim communities (Abhilash Malayil, JNU, New Delhi) and Tamil historical imagination (Daud Ali, SOAS, London), this paper focuses specifically on the functions of this legend for Muslims in Kerala who were of Middle Eastern descent. It discusses a little-known Arabic manuscript that contains the legend as propagated by Arab Muslims in Kerala and constitutes its fullest, and perhaps original, rendering. It is argued that this version of the Cheraman Perumal legend formed during the twelfth century and was designed to legitimize the economic, political, and especially religious superiority that Muslims of Arab and Persian origins exercised over local Muslims. Moreover, it is shown that these legends were not only functional in the Muslim communities themselves but became integrated into the Hindu understanding of the past. This is evident from the defining text for the historical consciousness of Kerala’s Brahman elite and a chronicle of the region’s most puissant temporal dynasty, both of which subscribe to the notion of a cross-communal past inaugurated by the legendary convert king.

Prasad, Vivek

Exploring the potential and challenges of practices and strategies of adaptation to climate change in Jharkhand, India

Jharkhand (Land of Forest) state has recently (in 2000) received Indian statehood presenting a unique case of transition in the socio-political and environmental realm. Formation of the state happened after a prolonged history of tribal movement, centered on ethnic identity and participation in decision making, especially in environmental issues. Jharkhand represents a dichotomy of development, producing huge volumes of mineral and forest resources, but with the lowest poverty index in the country. Through the ages, this region has been considered a cornucopia of resources and has been subjected to ruthless exploitation by outsiders. Poverty, food insecurity, and alienation from local resources are central issues. In the context of this critical phase of transition, Jharkhand’s people are also challenged by the local effects of Global Climate Change, which work to intensify already existing problems including severe degradation of livelihoods, food and water insecurity, increased out-migration, and related socio-economic problems. Globally, adaptation to the impact of climate change is emerging as a viable approach to coping with climate change. But this newly created state in India is still preoccupied with pre-existing problems and state’s polices and plans that are inclined towards mainstream development. This paper is based on an ongoing research to assess impacts of climate change in the livelihood of local people. Methodologies used in this research are primarily Participatory Rural Appraisal, Focus Group Discussion and Semi-Structured Interviews. Sources of secondary information are literatures, reports and archives.

This paper documents people’s perception of climate change and their effort to adapt to the climatic variability. In addition, this paper explores efforts and strategies being adopted by different non-governmental organizations to deal with the negative impacts of climate change. There are many government supported development projects and program which principally focus on development and can be used to deal with the negative impacts of climate change. This paper explores and assesses these governmental efforts and suggests approaches to streamline as a comprehensive adaptation plan for the state. Finally, this paper proposes a policy recommendation and future research direction of adaptation to the climate change for the state. These recommendation and research directions will help other regions of South Asia facing similar situation like Jharkhand.

Proctor, Lavanya Murali
The Differences between Schools: Schoolchildren on Schooling, Class, and Language

Many studies have been conducted that look into the differences between private and public schools, especially with regard to quality of education, facilities, and infrastructure. While some work has been devoted to exploring parents’ and teachers’ perspectives on schooling, there has been less focus on the perspectives of children. This paper examines schoolchildren’s discourses about the differences between government and private schools. This seemingly simple dichotomy is actually a complex discursive interrelationship between class, gender, language of education, quality of education, and social behavior. This research was conducted in three schools in Delhi, referred to as Government Hindi, Government English, and English Convent. Students from all three schools consider themselves middle class, despite considerable differences in parental incomes and socioeconomic backgrounds, suggesting that the middle class is perceived as judgmentally neutral. Students from the government schools present contradictory views on their own education and aspire to better schooling, as defined by private schools. However, they rationalize their perceived lower social positions in terms of possessing certain privileged “middle class values”, which they believe children in private schools lack. Children in the private school also consider themselves to be middle class, but they are less conflicted about their schooling and social positions and hold a different set of social values to be important. Another important facet of perceived difference is in teachers’ attitudes toward students and schooling. Government school teachers are universally held to be less dedicated to their jobs than private school teachers, and less likely to contribute to their students’ success. Undercutting all these themes is the importance given to English, and the privilege accorded to a successful and authentic English-medium education, which is, ultimately, held to be the primary marker of difference between schools, and between classes.

Pue, A. Sean

"Where is Hasan the Potter Now?" A Literary Representation of Failed Artistic Personhood

“Hasan the potter today is a heap of dust in which / There is not even a trace of moisture”

In "Hasan Kuzahgar," a series of poems by the modernist and resolutely iconoclastic Urdu poet N. M. Rashed (1910-1975), a love-struck potter serves as an expression of failed artistic personhood. Set in Baghdad and addressed to the mesmerizing Jahanzad from her doorstep, the potter tells how love has sapped his creative energies. Among Rashed’s most well-known poems, they raise the questions of artistic selfhood and cultural locality with which he is most readily associated. The potter is an icon of artistic creativity, but he is not necessarily a sign of indigenous culture. In the place of cultural authenticity, Rashed’s poems use pottery as a metaphor for human life. They draw on a different set of associations for pots and other vessels present in Urdu poetry. This paper will situate the poems within Urdu belles-lettres and also examine their cultural afterlife, in retellings of the story of Hasan and Jahanzad by later and contemporary writers, including feminist poets and critics.

Puri, Jyoti

“I say what I have seen”: Hetero-racial-normativities, Police and “Unnatural Sex” in India

Concerted mobilization against Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, the “unnatural sex” law, is underway. Precipitated by a public interest litigation filed in Delhi High Court by Naz Foundation Trust (India) in 2001,
Section 377 has become a lightning rod of struggles for the political and social enfranchisement of same-sex sexualities and non-normative genders. A ruling from the Delhi High Court on the challenge brought forward by Naz (India) is imminent. Naz (India) petitioned the court to exclude same-sex adult consensual sexual practices and the anticipated ruling may very well have the effect of decriminalizing same-sex sexualities in contemporary India. At stake in this struggle is a battle over the nation and citizenship on a terrain primarily defined by biopolitical regulation. The legal challenge to Section 377 foregrounds the nexus of state, sexuality, and gender. This presentation draws on the fieldwork conducted over the past several years to scrutinize the state and the ways in which sexuality serves as a biopolitical tool in the production of subjects and populations.

The presentation brings an “internal” focus on the state and critically analyzes the reproduction of what may be described as hetero-racial-normativity. Making the case that the state is not monolithic or coherent, the presentation delves into one of its key institutions, namely the police. Based on fieldwork among police in the New Delhi-area, it shows how constables’ pejorative representations of queerness rely closely on racialized representations of non-Hindu minorities. Arguing that hetero-racial-normativity more usefully captures the conjunctions of sex, gender, heterosexuality and race, the presentation also notes the fractures and fissures in its reproductions by state agents.

Quintanilla, Sonya

Phantom Kings, Dynastic Heroes, and Innovations in Iconography in Jain and Brahmanical Sculpture of the Fourth Century

Despite the founding of the Gupta Empire in 317 CE, the year 401 CE marks the beginning of the history of what can be termed Gupta art in India. In that year the rock-cut sculptures and caves at Udayagiri in Madhya Pradesh were completed; and thereafter, a large number of monuments and sculptures are known from sites across India that can be dated throughout the fifth century and later with iconographic and stylistic consistency and continuities. This situation stands in contrast to the preceding period of the fourth century, to which time very few works can be attributed.

Among the sculptures that can be dated to the fourth century, a disproportionate number of them have inscription, and almost all are extraordinary or exceptional in the history of Indian art. For example, a colossal image of Krishna lifting Mount Govardhana was found in Varanasi, providing the sole surviving indication of a major Brahmanical devotional center at Kasi, the celebrated city near the Buddhist site of Sarnath. The three Jinas from a village near Vidisa have inscriptions that provide the only material evidence for the existence of Ramagupta, a king of the Gupta dynasty who would otherwise be considered apocryphal. The unique multi-headed depictions of Saiva figures from the central Indian site of Mandhal reveal the existence of otherwise unknown cults.

I confine my examinations in this paper to the Jain and Brahmanical sculptures of the fourth century, following the model of Udayagiri itself, which comprises cave temples made for followers of Vishnu, Siva, and the Jinas. A study of these works datable to the fourth century, which has not been undertaken before, will reveal that it was a period of some of the most extreme innovations and experimentation that paved the way for the developments of the medieval period in artistic style, iconography, donor relations, and religious movements.
Collaborative Ethnographic Archaeology: Combining Oral History and Archaeology in Rajasthan.

Ethnographic archaeology combines ethnographic research with the analysis of ancient remains. When performed collaboratively, ethnographic archaeology has the potential to create a rich perspective on the past. This paper will consider the benefits and challenges posed by this extremely useful method when it is practiced at the site of Chatrikhera, located in southeastern Rajasthan. Chatrikhera consists of six related cultural deposits, with the main deposit being a massive habitation mound nestled in the heart of the modern village (c. 3000-200 BC). Over the years, the residents have dug into the mound to make space for their courtyards. In the process, they have removed building stones and artifacts and re-used them or incorporated them into mudbrick walls. They have transformed the mound into a series of vertical walls that exhibit 3,000 years of stratigraphy. The residents are proud of their mound and the history that it represents, and they have incorporated their knowledge of the archaeological remains into their historical narratives about the village. The paper will present the finds of the initial season of the Chatrikhera Archaeological Research Project (Summer 2009). The first phase of the project has three main goals: to create collaborative research relationships between American and Indian researchers and the residents of Chatrikhera; to collect oral histories about the ancient mound of Chatrikhera,
which is located in the heart of the modern village; and to begin archaeological documentation of the ancient habitation mound.

Radhakrishnan, Ratheesh

Claims of Victimhood: Masculinity, the Public and Self Narratives

The paper attempts to present two contending events from late 1990s Kerala (South India) in an attempt to think through the modes by which ‘identity’ is mobilized as a viable or at times the only recognizable political trope in contemporary times. The events under consideration are a much-publicized sexual harassment incident of a woman by a man and the attempt by a set of ‘harassed men’ to mobilize themselves. The paper will argue that the foregrounding of political subjectivity is possible for the protagonists in these instances only through an act of narrativisation of oneself as an identity category.

If for the woman (in the first instance) the claim to identity politics is a negotiation between the universal model of the individual and the gendered particularity, for the men (in the second case) the all too available abstract universalist notion of the individual is to be shunned for the sake of a collective identity. Texts like newspaper articles, legal documents and campaign material will be analyzed to read the first event while letters written to the office of the Purusha Peedana Parihara Vedhi by various men claiming redressal from violence by women will be looked at for the latter. What is interesting then is the fact that for these men ‘being a man’ (as the phrase goes in masculinity narratives) is significantly different from ‘being men’. The different impulses of negotiating with the public and the private – a distinction is that called into being by both the events – will be of interest. The choice of form, the newspaper article and the law by the woman and personal letter by men brings to action newly fashioned notions of the public and the private, radically different from that which gets constituted in the nationalist period.

The role played by ‘self narration’ – at once as an individual act and as a collective one – will be of central to the way these moments will be analyzed. How is identity arrested and reified within highly contradictory impulses that mark these narratives?

Rahaim, Matt

The Harmonium in the Margins of India and the West

The harmonium, a portable reed-organ, is one of the most widely-used instruments in India, and perhaps the most controversial. It was introduced to India in the 1870s, and soon was integrated into every major vocal genre. Beginning in the 1910s, however, the harmonium came under attack from both Indian nationalists and British romantics for embodying a foreign musical sensibility. These attacks culminated in its ban from All-India Radio in 1940. Why did the harmonium attract such controversy? I argue that debates over the harmonium hinge upon debates about the sonic boundaries between India and the West that became especially important in the years leading up to independence. Although the harmonium's melodic features--its intonation(s) and its inability to glide between notes--are cited as inappropriate for Indian music, discussions about the characteristics of harmonium-articulated melody in Indian music always include claims about the essential differences in intonation between Indian and Western music. The terms of this debate were fixed not by Indian musicians in traditional lineages but by a group of relative outsiders to classical music. This group included composers and scholars such as Rabindranath Tagore, Arthur Fox-Strangways, Raosaheb Deval, and John Foulds, all of whom were positioned in the interstices of India and the West. This paper offers a brief history of the discursive streams, still alive today, that mark the sound of the commonest instrument in India as un-Indian.
Textualization of the Bhakti tradition: The Dadupanth in the 17th century

This paper attempts to trace the tradition of compiling anthologies within the Dadupanthi community of Rajasthan and the significance of the Dadupanth within the larger bhakti movement. I will try to present a critical study of the anthology tradition of compiling the sayings of poet saints thematically called the Sarvangi. In particular I will look at the Sarvangi of Dadu’s first-generation disciple Rajjabdas, the debate about its time of compilation (c.1595- c.1604?) and its content in comparison with the Sarvangi of Dadu’s third-generation disciple Gopaldas (c.1627) and a newly found manuscript of a third Sarvangi of Haridas- c.1696 (V.1753) . Through this comparison we can study the process of inclusion and exclusion of poet saints in the time span of one hundred years.

The Dadupanth became a big center of literary activity during the last decade of the 16th century and at the beginning of the 17th century. What were the causes behind this? What significance does Rajjabdas’s Sarvangi have at the time of its compilation in the contemporary bhakti ‘community’? In addition to his Sarvangi, Rajjabdas also compiled Dadu’s verses thematically as Angbandhu (c.1595) which is, in the words of Hajari Prasad Dvivedi, a 20th century historian of Hindi literature, an ideal of the art of compiling anthologies. The Gunganjnama of Jagannathdas (Dadu’s first generation disciple c. 1595 CE) is also said to have been compiled during this period. These sources show us that theme (ang) -based compilations gained importance in the Dadupanth at this time. Thus on one hand, the Dadupanth shares textual traditions with the bhaktmaal and parchai literature of other bhakti communities, and on the other hand it initiated new traditions of theme-based anthologies like the Sarvangi and Panchvani.

Why did Rajjabdas and other Dadupanthi saint-poets start to compile the sayings of the saints thematically? How is the Sarvangi understood in the Dadupanth? What importance does the whole Sarvangi tradition have for present bhakti research and our common sense about the bhakti ‘movement’? I will try to address these questions in my paper through a study of the history of the structural development in the Dadupanth and its relation with this anthology tradition.

Beyond the Politics of Conquest: Brahmanical Iconography and the Cultural Landscape in Polonaruva, Sri Lanka

Histories of Sri Lanka have traditionally glossed over the period of Chola expansion in the region during the 10th and 11th centuries. One reason for this is the branding of this period as the ‘dark ages’ in conventional historiography, and readings of the resurgence of ‘Sinhala’ power after “a long war of liberation”. Secondly, since the Buddhist tradition is considered from contemporary political and cultural reasons as marking Sinhala identity, the Tamil period of dynastic rule is, in fact, seen as contributing to a temporary decline in the development of Buddhism in the island country. A third reason has been the dependence of scholars on the Buddhist chronicles, the Mahâvamsa and Dîpavamsa, as the primary authentic source for reconstructing the history of the island.

In the paper, I seek to study the material remains at Polonaruva that may be traced to the Chola period and thereafter, that indicate the nature of cultural transactions, beyond the politics of conquest. This is because, here in the heartland of the Sinhala country, brahmanical temples appear to have been built not merely during the period of Chola occupation of the region, but even after the ‘restoration’ of Sinhala rule by Vijayabahu I in c. 1070 AD. There are many questions that need to be addressed: first and foremost, who had built these temples and what was the nature of patronage provided? Who were the social groups to whom the temple was meant to cater? Who were the artisans and craftspersons involved in constructing these edifices? And very significantly,
who conducted the rituals and other services in the temples? My focus will be on the fourteen archaeological sites that have been excavated in the ancient political center of Polonaruva, with particular emphasis on the iconographic finds at these monuments. In Polonaruva, I wish to examine whether the placement of images reflected deliberate attempts to project world-views rooted in brahmanical sectarian traditions and/or whether these indicate the nature of patronage of these shrines, as appears to be the case on the Tamil mainland. Further, I seek to argue that the appearance of brahmanical iconography in the Buddhist shrines at Polonaruva that were built in the same time frame, between the 10th and the 14th centuries AD, reflects the cultural landscape of religious interactions and assimilation.

Ramamurthy, Priti

“Till there’s shakti in these arms”: Interminable Labor and Transformations in Women’s Relations with “Family” Women in Andhra Pradesh

“Till there’s shakti in these arms,” Sanjamma said to me, bearing her arms, “my daughters-in-law will feed me.” In the new agrarian landscape in Andhra Pradesh, smallholder families like hers are taking up cottonseed farming which is astonishingly demanding of women’s labor. Family relations—especially relations between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, daughters-in-laws with each other, and with daughters— are being transformed in multiple and contradictory ways. While in Sanjamma’s view it is the brute demand for her labor that will ensure her relationship with her daughters-in-law, up to a point, other mothers-in-law are cultivating more caring relationships with theirs to ensure that the family stays together as a labor and cultural unit. As extended families grow, new criteria for daughters-in-law as “modern” workers are being articulated, and yet they are also blamed for not “adjusting” when families split. Even as some families do not want to marry their daughters into cottonseed families, others are overturning patrilocality to welcome in sons-in-law and keep their laboring daughters. The aspirational possibilities of cottonseed farming inspire hope for women like Sanjamma, a strong widow, but at the unbearable cost of “not seeing my sisters except at their funerals.”

Raman, Srilata

The Righteous King in Chola Historiography and its Reflection in Medieval Tamil Bhakti

In June 1854 Ramalinga Adigal, the Shaivite poet-saint of 19th century Tamil Nadu, published his first piece of prose writing while he was still in his thirties, called Manumuraikanta Vai Thiruvacakam or the The Tale of how King Manu observed righteous conduct. Ostensibly, this, his earliest work is a prose rendition of a well-known tale, told in verse, from the classic 12th century Shaivite hagiography, the Periyapuranam. Yet, The Tale of King Manu was not so much a prose rendition as a re-telling, for in it he ventured beyond the parameters of traditional learning even while adhering to its boundaries in most ways. That is, he also took certain liberties with the Periyapuranam version, which resulted in a very different theological focus. In this paper I am going to argue for an analysis of this story of King Manu which unearths different layers of it, much as one would in an archaeological dig. The paper shows how the story is based upon typologies of the righteous king which lie at the heart of early Chola historiography and which is to be found in the narratives of the mythical lineage of the Cholas. With the consolidation of Chola power in medieval South India, reflected religiously in the composition of the Periyapuranam, the righteous king becomes part of the bhakti narrative of the ideal devotee, whose own story precedes the telling of the stories of the exemplary poet-saints in the medieval hagiography. The historical framework which underlies this development is to be best understood in terms of the pioneering work of James Heitzman on the medieval Tamil region and the vast expansion of the temple economy during this period, when the political use of the temple and the “gifts of power” made by the Chola rulers provided a model for temple patronage across the region.
Acharya and Barakatullah: An Ethical Dialogue

During the first few decades of the twentieth century, the most radical elements of the Indian independence struggle were located well beyond the boundaries of the emergent nation, both geographically and conceptually. What contemporary intelligence documents referred to as the “Revolutionary Movement Abroad” was dispersed through London, Paris, Berlin San Francisco, Moscow, Kabul, Shanghai, et.al., linking Punjabi Sikh laborers with veterans of the Bengali Swadeshi movement, and interweaving with the transnational activities of anarchists, socialists, communists, pan-Islamists, Egyptian and Irish republicans in patterns that shifted decisively across the watershed of the First World War. At each node of this tapestry of encounters and alliances, collaborations were based in instrumental and/or ideological compatibilities. But what were the parameters of solidarity, mutual recognition and shared interest in each case? And what were the limits of translatability amongst the ideological idioms with which each sector framed its opposition to the British imperial project?

In order to approach these questions I will here trace the political biographies of two key participants in this complex movement: M.P. Tirumal Acharya, and Muhammed Barakatullah. Both were active on multiple continents as writers and revolutionists, and repeatedly crossed paths from wartime Berlin to the interwar turbulence of newly Soviet Muslim Central Asia. Both were Indian patriots who embraced a form of socialism, the former’s libertarian and the latter’s Islamic. But their varied identifications and allegiances offer glimpses of alternate visions of liberation that started but did not end with the elimination of colonial rule in British India.

Moreover these visions, while framed in varying idioms, were to a certain degree mutually translatable in terms of an extra-nationalist focus of allegiance and identity that can serve as a vehicle of emancipation based in an internationalist logic of social ethics and moral economy. To me the relevance here is twofold: first in rejecting the simple equation, in a globally interconnecte world, of nationalism and anti-colonial resistance; and second, in exploring the potential for communication between differing manifestations of such resistance.

My materials include archival documents such as police reports, court transcripts and contemporay journalism, as well as biographies, memoirs, and other writings of the subjects.

At the Margins of the Nation: The Case of the Kirti Kisan Sabha

As a region, Punjab has garnered a fair share of attention by historians relative to other geographical spaces in the Indian subcontinent. Despite this close scrutiny however, Punjabi historiography for the most part remains closely wedded to the broader narratives of Empire, Nation and Community. This tendency is all the more pronounced by the province’s rather unique position as the epicentre of rival communitarian narratives – not least since it was populated by three dominant religious communities – as well as being one of the two fault lines on which two independent nation states were created.

And yet, Punjab was also an arena where a whole host of contested identities, multiple notions of sovereignty and viable socio-political alternatives were articulated and played out. Moreover, such visions also included associational allegiances that went beyond the ostensibly rigid socio-political affiliations to the tribe, community, caste, or indeed, the Nation. In this regard, adequate examples of this mode of politics come from
the Punjabi Left, which thrived in the province despite its status as the ‘sword arm of the Empire,’ until it was subsumed in the cataclysmic events leading up to Partition.

Within the spectrum of leftist politics in the Punjab, this paper will then examine the case of the Kirti Kisan Sabha. Inspired by the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, the Sabha was formed in 1926 by the launch of its flagship journal, the Kirti, as a party endeavouring to bring about a workers and peasants revolution in British India. More significantly, the party was founded by activists of the Ghadar Party, originally based in San Francisco, who infiltrated British Punjab after sojourns in Russia and Central Asia where they were trained in revolutionary activism. Funded by Ghadar activists in the United States, the party continued operating in various shapes and forms till the late forties, despite severe state persecution and vociferous nationalist criticism.

The Kirti Kisan Sabha then offers a refreshing case study of a form of politics that transcended the confines of nationalist discourse and espoused an internationalism founded on the basis of class rather than on ethnic or religious identities. In this sense, it provides a useful narrative to counter the hegemony of nationalist narratives as well as an opportunity to reassess our commonly (mis)understood categories of social and political affiliations that preclude the possibilities of bold and imaginative socio-political alternatives.

Reddy, Sujani

"Woman's Work for Woman": US-Based Medical Missionaries and the Roots of Indian Nursing Labor

This paper describes the central role played by US-based single, female medical missionaries in establishing biomedical nursing in colonial India. Their movement highlights how processes of US racial formation and the formation of a pool of Indian nursing labor marked by gender, caste, class and religion were linked through the global frame of Euro-American imperialism. In the late nineteenth century, missionaries were the primary means for spreading biomedicine among Indians. In particular, missionaries aimed to save privileged caste and/or class Indian women, who they saw gatekeepers for accessing elite men/sons. At the same time, mission work was itself feminizing. Women’s missionary societies argued the necessity of “woman’s work for woman”: the role that white American women had in saving their “heathen” sisters. Their call was buttressed by the rise of women’s medical colleges. Hemmed in by a white male dominated profession, female physicians found unprecedented upward mobility in India. There they built careers and founded the institutions that were among the earliest to train Indian nurses. The Indians that they came into contact with served as candidates for their racialized matriarchal benevolence. The latter was an especially important construction in a field where the threat women’s waged work had to be contained through reference to the “civilizing” norms of heteropatriarchy.

The prominence of US based institutions and individuals in establishing nursing in colonial India is critical for understanding the mid-twentieth century emergence of Indian nurse migration to the US. It highlights how mission institutions and ideologies intersected with Indian social and political hierarchies to associate nursing with overwhelming Christian and primarily oppressed caste and class Indian women. These were the women who were the subjects if not the objects, of “woman’s work for woman.” They were also relegated to the lowest ranks of biomedicine in an occupation that remained under the leadership of colonial nurses into the post-independence period. When Indian nurses finally did gain access to the international labor market, they did so through grants either from, or modeled on those offered by the Rockefeller Foundation (RF). Significantly, the RF rewrote the map of global medical migration through a public health program built on the institutional and ideological groundwork first laid by global Protestantism; thereby linking social formation, imperial ideologies and US capital penetration at the dawn of postcolonial India.
Relis, Dr. Tamara

Education and Victims’ Visions of Justice in India within the Landscape of International Human Rights

Comparing visions of justice in local contexts with those on global levels, this paper explores the discontinuities in desires of female victims of violence when approaching formal courts and informal justice mediations/arbitrations (lok adalats/panchayats) as compared with the normative language enshrined in international human rights documents such as CEDAW and the ICCPR. I draw on data deriving from new empirical research covering 8 regions of India, (400 interviews/questionnaires/observations of victims/accused/lawyers/judges/mediators/arbitrators in 193 cases). Victims’ discourse on their aims in approaching legal and quasi-legal regimes offers thickly contextual perspectives of law, needs and rights bound up within social and cultural structures. The focus on victims’ perspectives complicates existing debates on universalism versus cultural relativism and feminist critiques of mainstream human rights paradigms. It also informs the norm diffusion (Risse et al, 1999) and law and anthropology literatures (Merry, 2006). I argue that victims’ desires in the Indian landscape are intricately linked to networks of family, kin and community, with their knowledge and aspirations being closely interconnected with issues of poverty, illiteracy, and development. As such, the findings speak to the issue of the indivisibility of all human rights, as well as the nexus between human rights, women’s rights and development.

Riaz, Ali

Bangladesh Election 2008: The Results and the Implications

After being ruled by a military-backed technocratic caretaker regime for two years Bangladesh returned to the democratic path in January 2009. The election held on 29 December 2008 is described by media and the election observers as “the most free” election since the independence. The high turnout of voters and the ‘unprecedented’ results have made the election a milestone in Bangladesh history. More than 86 percent of 81.05 million voters cast their ballots in the election. The turnout was historic as it surpassed all previous records. As for the results, the Awami League (AL) secured a landslide victory, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) recorded its worst ever electoral defeat, the Jatiya Party (JP) headed by General H M Ershad regained its position and the Islamists, particularly the Bangladesh Jamaat-i-Islami, experienced a serious setback in terms of the parliamentary seats. This paper examines three aspects of the election and the post-election situation in Bangladesh: key features of the elections and results; the significance of the results for the country’s political landscape and the major parties; and the challenges the new government will face. While the election process and the results have many positive aspects, I argue that they are not as dramatic as it appears in the first sight. Many analysts are surprised by the landslide victory of the AL, but I argue that it is not inconsistent with the earlier three elections held in 1991, 1996 and 2001. Additionally, I argue that despite the widespread expectation and the promise of the caretaker government of a “cleaner politics,” the election has not delivered a cleaner slate as many controversial politicians have been elected. Contrary to the public euphoria that the election marks the demise of the JI, drawing on the data gathered from Bangladesh Election Commission the paper argues that, the Islamists have succeeded to maintain their support-base. Notwithstanding the short-term challenges of new government such as the economic crisis, the new government faces the daunting tasks of bringing change in the political culture and building democratic institutions, absence of both engendered the political crisis in late-2006.

Riaz, Sanaa
Transforming Religious Education in South Asia: The Case of Private Islamic Schools in Pakistan

In this paper, I will draw from my long-term fieldwork in Karachi to discuss the recent educational phenomenon, that of private Islamic schooling, in Pakistan. Private Islamic schools (PIS) combine the religious education of madrasas (religious schools) with the secular education of private secular schools, while offering the prestigious British O-Level system. I will examine the kinds of ideological, political, economic and prestige interests that promote this educational blend. I will further relate the PIS’ phenomenon to the Pakistani state’s changing discourse on Islamic practice and education.

Islamic education in South Asia in general and in Pakistan in particular, is usually associated with madrasa education and religious extremism. In contrast, this paper will highlight how, in the post-9/11 political environment, urban Pakistanis are promoting PIS as an alternate means to seek religious education and in a manner that does not evoke fundamentalism. Weaving anthropological theorizations of modernity and tradition, I will argue that, unlike the Western notion that assumes modernity only through the marginalization of religion, Pakistani citizens experience modernity by maintaining continuity with their religious traditions. The paper will further discuss how PIS’ pedagogies variously interpret Islamic tradition, modernity and class, and contribute to understanding how different kinds of religious schooling create different kinds of subjectivities.

I will conclude the paper by exploring the prospects of private Islamic schooling in Pakistan and its future role in transforming Islamic education in other South Asian countries. Considering examples of this educational trend in south India, Southeast Asia and Egypt, I will investigate the dynamics in which private Islamic education may be utilized by South Asian Muslim communities as a means to project their modernity, status, and religious traditions as well as to adapt to their respective government’s policy on religious education.

Richardson, John

A Political Solution in Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict? Lessons from a more tranquil time

Will there be a political solution to the ethnic conflict in the aftermath of the government military success over secession? This question posed by Professor Jayadeva Uyangoda in a recent paper titled 'a letter from South Asia' in Economic and Political Weekly of India will engage the Sri Lankan political leaders in the coming months.

In seeking answers to the question posed by Professor Uyangoda we may ask the question: What lessons can be drawn from Sri Lanka's post-independence history that might help those seeking answers? The search for historical lessons must begin by understanding how Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict experienced a qualitative change, becoming protracted in the 1980s.

However, examining post 1985 negotiations that attempted to reach the accommodation between Sri Lanka's government and the LTTE, while of historic interest will offer relatively little in determining what comes next now. Rather it will be useful to focus attention on the period before Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict became protracted. Drawing parallels between present circumstances and regimes lead by the MEP, the United Front and, in its first term J.R Jayawardena, may seen contrived, but I believe there are similarities from which useful lessons may be drawn. In each regime there were lost opportunities to move down a path toward ethnic reconciliation. In each, the path chosen lead, rather to intensified confrontation.

While circumstances differ, Sri Lanka's government and community leaders once again face circumstances where the Tamil community's aspirations are if not irrevocably (if unwillingly) tied to the LTTE agenda. In a landmark UN address, President Mahinda Rajapksa stated the commitment of his government to 'effectively
implement political and constitutinal solutions to meet the aspirations of all communities'. This is an opportunity to learn from history rather than repeat it.

Rind, Sidra

Female Citizenship Education in Pakistani schools

Like other less developed countries, educating girls is a more challenge for Pakistan. Girls’ enrollment at primary level has increased during the last decade due to efforts put-together by forces within Pakistan as well from the international community. However, these forces have not decreased the gender gap at the primary and secondary levels, which is prominent in both urban (68 % to boys and to 54 % girls) and rural areas (53% compared with 38%). There are many significant factors behind the prevailing gender gap, including household responsibilities, child labor, higher opportunity cost to the family, long distances to schools from girls’ homes, early marriages, the threat of sexual harassment and violence in and outside of schools, long distances to schools, lack of girl-friendly facilities (no latrines, no running water, and no boundary walls), gender discriminatory teaching and learning methods, lack of female teachers, and above all parents and communities who are not aware of the value of education for girls and are reluctant to send them to secondary school. Balochistan, one of Pakistan’s four provinces and the proposed site for my research, represents a particularly bleak picture on almost all the social development indicators, especially girls’ education where the gender gap is much wider than any other province of the country. In this paper, I will examine the impact of socio-cultural factors on girls’ learning in Pakistani classrooms. I will provide evidences in understanding the experiences of children enrolled in the primary classes (children of 5 to 10 years of age in classes I to V) of Pakistani government schools in the province of Balochistan. By critically analyzing the link between educational policy, curricular planning, textbooks and classroom teaching, I will assess if Pakistani classrooms contribute meaningfully towards their role of developing democratic citizens, as visualized in our constitution. Specifically, I want to focus on girls as I am particularly interested in studying if the educational experiences of girls in my province lead to the development of democratic citizenship ideals in girl students. If it does, what does such a model of citizenship entail, given prevailing cultural norms in Balochistan? If it does not, what types of alternative messages do girls learn in school about female citizenship in Pakistan? This paper will present results and analysis of the aforementioned research that I am going to execute in Pakistan during summer 09.

Rizvi, Mubbashir

"Jangal Vichch Mangal- Joy in the Wilderness" -Millenial Irrigation and the Colonial Sublime.

This paper examines the moral nexus between the Christian missionaries and the canal irrigation schemes of early 20th century Punjab. The paper will examine how the technological projects of irrigation were seen as a means of moral uplift for the lower caste ‘Kammi’ communities in rural Punjab. Secondly, the paper will try to outline iconic sacred idioms that were used to represent the colonial projects of irrigation in central Punjab.

Rohlman, Elizabeth

When Does a Purana Cease to be a Purana? The Fluid Boundaries of Sanskrit Texts and Genres

The puranas elude definition, unless, of course, one defines the genre by its own eclecticists. One reason for this difficulty in defining the puranic genre lies in its malleability. Not only is the form of the genre flexible, with
little of extant puranic literature conforming to the traditional definition of a purana carrying the pancalaksana, but even a single purana can be remarkably malleable in form and content. In considering this facet of the puranic genre, Greg Bailey argues that this malleability does not undermine the function of a purana as a coherent textual unit:

The same purana might have ten thousand verses less in one manuscript than in another, but it will still be able to function effectively as that purana, primarily because the puranic tradition does not require the text to be restricted to a given verse size. Rather it implicitly stipulates that it fulfill certain requirements pertaining to content which allow it to function as an effective vehicle for didactic instruction (Bailey 1995, 14).

The implications of this observation are two fold: that it is possible to read a purana exhibiting such variants as a coherent composition, and that the text itself is able to retain its singular identity within its literary and cultural milieu.

In this paper I will investigate the applicability of the second notion to a Sanskrit sthala-purana from medieval Gujarat. The text at hand—the Sarasvati Purana—survives in the manuscript record in two distinct recensions. While the outer boundaries of the recensions do indicate their shared literary identity, the internal variants convey theological views in direct conflict with one another. The text thus confronts the modern reader with a number of questions. Does the narrative, and narrative strategy, of the text remain the same under the influence of differing polemical goals? Can manuscripts that do not vary in their content so much as conflict in direct polemical opposition still effectively function as the same purana? Are the narrative alterations relevant to the purana’s ability to function as an “effective vehicle of didactic instruction?” And, if the purana itself maintains a singular entity, then why, and for whom, would such changes have been made? Taking the Sarasvati Purana as a case study, this paper will explore the challenges in defining a genre—that is, the puranic genre—in which even the boundaries of individual texts are fluid.

Romain, Julie

Visualizing heroic narrative in contemporary Indian comics

This paper discusses the visual representation of Indian epic narrative and heroic imagery in contemporary Indian comic books through a survey of drawings from the Liquid Comics animation studio in Bangalore, formerly known as Virgin Comics. Indian superheroes and their arch enemies are visualized from ancient archetypes that have long been depicted in traditional painting and sculpture, and are deeply ingrained in India’s historical imagination. In the twenty first century new incarnations of ancient Indian gods and goddesses are made manifest as modern superheroes brought to Earth to vanquish the evil forces. Demons take the form of modern villains, and raise havoc in today’s troubled times. Today comic book production takes place in a global cultural context and within a multi-media framework that combines traditional hand-drawn illustrations with computer design and animation technology. What has been the impact of television and film (both Hollywood and Bollywood) on the production on contemporary heroic narrative in Indian comic books, and how have the representational strategies evolved in the years since India’s independence? How do comic books produced in the last decade reflect the impact of globalization on Indian visual culture, and how do they differ from comic books created in the twentieth century such as Anant Pai’s classic Amar Chitra Katha? These issues will be explored through a survey of the Liquid Comics series Ramayan 3392 and Devi.

Rouse, Shahnaz

Militarization, Violence, and the Masculination of Space in Pakistan
The correlation between the emergence and stabilization of patriarchal forms of social dominance and the routinization of violence through militarization has been exhaustively documented historically and anthropologically. Less analytical attention has been given to the processes by which recurrent escalation in militancy, and the concomitant state-sanctioned increase in militarization, effectively reconfigures social space and social identities toward privileging masculinity, in the process obliterating those egalitarian correctives of patriarchal abuses of women's rights that have been slowly and painstakingly obtained through the establishment of democratic governance structures.

This paper will address this issue in the context of Pakistan's recent history and the debate over the nature of its state. In particular, the social and spatial dimensions of militarization will be analyzed in reference to the "gendering" of the nation-state on the one hand, and the collusion of Islamization, militancy, and state governance on the other. Emphasis will be placed on the representational practices and processes by which social "space" is created, contested, and revisioned as a gendered and ideological commodity, and on how violence can serve as a boundary-marker, defining the context within which identity is constructed and performed. Through such an analysis, a spatial typology of violence can be delineated, as it is reflected in a parallel typology of militarization, itself continuous with the conflictual dynamics of "normal" socio political structures.

By highlighting the local matrices of violence it becomes possible to identify the factors creating the so-called "predicament of secularism" among Pakistan's Muslims, resulting in the fragility of its democracy. The emergence of the militant madrassa as a breeding ground of violence epitomizes the growing nexus between militarism, masculinism and fundamentalism and the rapid shrinking of democratic spaces in Pakistan. As Pakistan's national identity has been historically constructed through the binary opposition of Muslims vs Others, and as such opposition problematizes the establishment of a secular state, highlighting the further binary opposition--male vs female--implied by militarization, may justify proposing the necessity for stabilizing state governance through inclusive practices of nation-building, rather than dichotomizing ideological radicalism.

Roy, Divya

Gender, Nationalism, and Women’s Health in Postcolonial South India

This paper seeks to analyze the history of women’s and children’s health programs in postcolonial Madras State/Tamil Nadu. Many state sponsored social welfare programs and health services were directed towards making poor Tamil women model citizens of the new nation state. These included maternal and infant welfare centers, the deployment of various health personnel to “reform” childbirth, family planning programs, and “development” programs geared towards transforming domestic and village life. Many departments of government were involved in the larger project of inculcating the ideals of domesticity, hygiene, monogamy, and a small family. These “reforms” and services often reinforced certain class distinctions and forms of patriarchy while offering avenues for social mobility to some women. The State and other social groups promoted certain social and cultural norms that envisioned transforming poor women into model wives and mothers and economically productive citizens. In this vision Tamil women, especially poor women, were primarily seen in terms of being part of a family instead of as individuals with rights to certain services. But the state did provide opportunities for certain groups of women. Many women used these opportunities to become health and social service workers, and teachers while others took advantage of the training and education offered by the women’s welfare branches.

The national and state governments also started to focus relentlessly on population control and family planning programs as part of their development and public health agenda. The Madras/Tamil Nadu government was arguably more enthusiastic than the national government in carrying out its family planning agenda by being the first state to promote sterilization and by quickly building up its educational and surgical infrastructure.

Perceptions and ideas about women’s roles in society influenced the structure and nature of the programs from the beginning. For example, although vasectomies outnumbered tubectomies until after the Emergency, women were targeted in specific ways in hospitals, clinics, and education programs. Women were also the targets of different kinds of contraceptive devices and services such as IUDs and oral pills. Researchers and scientists also
continually minimized the side effects of various contraceptives in their studies and reports. But, in general evidence suggests that many women had a much broader vision of their role in society and the agendas of departments often did not coincide with their own perceptions of themselves and their needs and desires.

Roy, Mantra

He is born with a silver spoon in his mouth:” non-elitist youth engage with the political in “Hazaron Khwaismein Aisi” and “Rang De Basanti.”

“Hazaron” (released in 2005) and “Rang De Basanti”(2006) are two recent Hindi films that engage with the dynamics between political forces and the masses, the non-elite. “Hazaron” is temporally located in the 1970s when India was in the throes of the Emergency and Naxalite uprising, and it demonstrates how the dreams of the Indian youth of the 1970s clashed against state policies and ended in disillusionment. Telling a similar tale of disillusionment in more recent history is “Rang De Basanti”. Interestingly, neither film propagates the myth of a successful youth-led revolution against politicians; instead, the visceral truth of the powerlessness of mass aggression that forms the thesis of both films makes them memorable and closer to reality. While “Hazaron”’s narrative trajectory entails violent encounters with political agents, “Rang De Basanti” captures how a peaceful protest gathering, when routed by police, escalates into a political assassination that culminates with the death of the youth. The films thus showcase two slightly different narratives of aggression against the diktat of political power. Moreover, “Hazaron” demonstrates how Siddharth, a member of the elite group, gains political protection from his well-connected father in the end and leaves for England while his lady-love, Geeta, and long-time friend, Vikram Malhotra, members of the political non-elite, are brutalized by the political machine. In “Rang De Basanti,” Karan kills his politically well-connected father when he comes to know his selfish role in the acquisition of defective MiGs. In this film, all the protagonists, DJ, Sonia, Karan, Aslam, and Sukhi, are members of the non-elite who resist political indifference and suffer the consequences.

I argue that directors like Sudhir Mishra and Rakesh Omprakash Mehra are narrating subtle tales of political aggression and involvement of the masses without being idealistic about the outcomes. The message seems to be that the effort and commitment are more important than the achievement. Thus, the non-elites claim their agency, no matter how futile, against political forces. While Mishra’s project demonstrates how the youth movement of the 1970s ended with state suppression, Mehra creates a plausible scenario in contemporary India that will perhaps face a similar end.

Roy, Franziska

Youth, paramilitary organisation and national discipline in South Asia in the first half of the 20th Century

The paper will seek to outline the possibilities for a comparative social history of the mobilisation of youth in different political or 'social' movements in India and Pakistan, c. 1915-1950. By drawing on case studies ranging from the Congress Seva Dal to the Muslim League’s National Guards, the Khaksars to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, social and structural similarities will be highlighted. I seek to overcome the focus on the 'manliness' of such organisations by looking at youth of either sex. Youth here is viewed as a socially constructed category that was highly dependent on context and the links between ‘youth’, ‘volunteer’ but also terms such as ‘goonda’ will be explored.
In the early twentieth century, mass political movements took distinctive shape in South Asia. The energy of youth, both feared and desired, was sought to be harnessed for the benefit of these movements. I intend to focus not merely on this top-down mobilisation, but also on the background and motivation of those who got involved. There is as yet no study on youth movements in South Asia for the period, though the importance of youth and volunteer organisations has been noted. This is a surprising gap since the profile of different youth organisations was often similar and in various ways interconnected. Despite their ideological diversity, they shared rigid notions of discipline, typically including a paramilitary outfit. Movements sometimes used the same physical spaces, shared personnel, or had personnel who moved between youth movements in unexpected trajectories. The ‘uplift’ and protection of the ‘community’ was typically one of their responsibilities and volunteer bodies of other ‘communities’ would be set up to keep up with the existing ones. A mutual game of deterrence furthered the vicious circle of communal anxieties. At the same time, youth movements close to the Congress started various international cooperations often with a pacifist outlook. What permeated all the movements was a sense of necessary self-purification or 'awakening' achieved by selfless service, the ultimate object of which was almost invariably the 'nation'. Even 'apolitical' groups were informed by the need to make the power of youth available for the organic national body, a phenomenon linked to the interwar Zeitgeist. The study thus can shed new light on 'national discipline' within the process of 'nation-building'.

Roy Chowdhury, Sima

Society in Transition and the early Buddhist narrative sculptures of Amaravati

The early Buddhist site of Amaravati is situated in south India. The paper studies the narrative bas-reliefs dated between c.200 BC and AD 300/400 and the associated votive records to ascertain the reasons for pre-eminence given to certain themes and to identify the donors responsible for their creation. The methodology undertaken seeks to explain an object of art by interpretive deconstruction. It is an attempt to establish 'representation' as a key to understanding the ideological thrust of the specific themes that the object of art was designed to address and the circumstances leading to it. Thus the aim of the study is to co-relate the artistic production with the social formation and to explore the specific circumstances that made it possible.

In ascertaining the circumstances behind the creation of these bas-reliefs the religious factors appear as dominant. This is but natural as they appear primarily on religious structures. What is often ignored is that art inspired by religion, the religious texts and eventually religion itself are all products of society itself subject to and also reacting to various economic, political, aesthetic and other forces. These impulses sometimes determined the prominence of some themes to the expense of others in a particular site. Exploring these circumstances at Amaravati reveal the transition from a tribal clan-based society with collective ownership of the economic apparatus to the appearance of pre-state/monarchical polities where the individual landowner or gahapati acquires socio-economic and political power. There was a transformation in the material base of the society with large-scale introduction of plough-based agriculture, long distance trade, craft-specialisation and the growth of urban centres. This radical change in the material base of the society necessitated also changes in the ideological formations that the earlier social structure was incapable of sustaining. The capacity of Buddhism as a social order to accommodate the aspirations of these new elements introduced into the society led to its popularity.

By correlating the visual narrative with the moral and political imperatives of the associated donors and the latter to the changing circumstances confronting the society, the present enquiry reveals not only the aspirations of the emerging political powers of the society, but also the power Buddhism to provide an alternate social structure. Thus the visual narratives have been treated as social documents of time when the written and oral literature were open to considerable interpolation.
Roychaudhury, Shrimoy

Translating Prescriptions: Medical Manuals in latter-Nineteenth Century Bengal

In this paper, I shall discuss one English and two Bengali medical manuals to explore how signs of medical authority were transferred to the indigenous medical subordinates in the context of growing anxiety around the creation of indigenous intermediaries in this period. I explore the problems of translating authority of medical knowledge into a language of command through the lens of Bengali medical manuals. The Latin word Recipe, meaning ‘to take,’ iconized the medical practitioner’s legal immunity to convey the command to the patient subject. Broadly my questions are: what institutional limits and conditions were posed by the British state while constituting the indigenous subordinate medical establishment’s right to convey this command? How did manuals on Daktari, or vernacular texts on medical doctoring encounter the limits of translating this authorial voice in Bengali?

Existing historiography has rightly suggested that medicine was the ideological and material tool of the empire. However, it has restricted the use of ‘tool’ to simply a facilitator of imperialist interests. In that, it has not addressed the aspirations of medicine to become the very corporal law of regulating health, by registering in medical casuistry all that was pathological in the bodies of the indigenous subjects. Gyan Prakash, who has argued that the translation of this aspiration in scientific terms by the indigenous literati produced linguistic register for ‘another reason,’ does not, however, touch upon the embeddedness of this symptom in representations of medical agency in colonial or vernacular archives of mid 19th century Bengal.

The first text that my paper considers is the third edition of Norman Chevers’ Manual of Medical Jurisprudence (1870) was informed by the Indian Penal Code and was aimed at medical practitioners as well as legislators, jurists and sociologists. I shall examine it in relation to two vernacular manuals titled Bhoisajya Bichar by S.C Sengupta, Demonstrator of Anatomy at Medical School in Dacca and Ayurbed Byabohar (1895) by Debendronath Roy, Teacher of Medical Jurisprudence in Campbell Medical School in Calcutta to understand how the alignment of medical and legal taxonomic lore was translated for the indigenous medical practitioners. Given that students of government vernacular medical schools were exempt from studying medical jurisprudence and chemistry till late 19th century, these manuals, meant for subordinate medical staff in the frontiers of the British Empire in India could well bear the fractured histories of the constitution of medicine as a modern profession in Bengal.

Rudmann, Dan

How To Disguise A Hero: The Epic Genre and Manimekhalai

The intention of this presentation will be to locate and fully represent an understanding of the term epic through the Tamil Manimekhalai and Sanskrit Mahabharata. In addition, I will attempt to recognize the possibilities present in a generic analysis of literature. By employing Tzvetan Todorov’s work on genre theory, I will ask if the Manimekhalai can be placed in concert with a text that is often referred to as The Great Epic. The process of genre exploration will illustrate the necessary relationship between the general and specific aspects of a work. The structure, form, and content of a story become sites of contact between a text and tradition.

I will consider definitions of epic that are both universal and specific to South Asia, and move between these two frames of reference in order to arrive at a text that stands in relation to a literary canon that exists both contingent to and outside of time and space. Is the Manimekhalai an epic, an Indian epic, or a Tamil epic? This presentation will demonstrate that divergences within the constitutive properties of the epics do not disassociate the two narratives. Furthermore, I will show that an alignment through generic qualities is apparent and intentional between these works. The concept of genre will be revealed as an important consideration for these
authors. By looking closely at the hero’s journey within the Manimekhalai and Mahabharata, this presentation will uncover interacting communicative goals and the Manimekhalai’s reconstitution of elemental qualities in the epic.

**Rudrappa, Sharmila**

The meaning of place for Indian H-1B workers

Place is central to sociological perspectives on migration right from the early push/pull theories, to 1990s network theories on migration, to the 1980s-present anxieties on assimilation. However, my interviews with Indian H-1B workers reveals otherwise. For these migrants, moving to the U.S. was simply a matter of following good jobs. If these jobs were to be found in India, then they’d follow them back. Permanent residency or citizenship, for many of my interviewees, was not about staying on in the U.S. Instead, they sought permanent residency because greater legal rights allowed them access to workers’ rights. Permanent residency, many individuals explained, allowed them to switch to better jobs, seek promotions in places of work, and broader economic opportunity. In other words, legal rights to stay allowed them to access their workers’ rights more effectively. Contrary to the idea that increased legal rights to residency hold people down in place permanent residency and citizenship allows these guest workers greater mobility. That is, they seek permanent residency in the United States to cut the ties that bind them to place.

**Saeed, Sadia**

Law-in-Action in Judicial Debates on the “Ahmadi Question” in Pakistan

The military regime of General Zia-ul-Haq (1977-88) constitutes one of the most significant moments in the genealogy of the Islamization of the Pakistani state, in particular, that of its judiciary. In addition to the formation of new religious, or Shariat, courts that led to the bifurcation of law into ‘religious’ and ‘secular’ spheres, the character of the secular courts underwent a transformation, with judges invoking novel and historically unprecedented arguments, usually appropriating political rhetoric about “Islam” and “Islamic law”. While in some spheres of law, this change had the effect of widening the scope of the imparting of social justice, in others, such as those dealing with land reforms and rights of women and minorities, it had the effect of curtailing the rights of already marginalized Pakistani citizens.

I examine this judicial transformation in Pakistan through an empirical focus on the judiciary’s treatment of the Ahmadiyya community (in short, Ahmadis). A self-identified minority sect of Islam with roughly 4 million adherents in Pakistan, Ahmadis was constitutionally but forcibly declared a ‘non-Muslim minority’ in 1974 on grounds of its controversial claims about the prophethood of Ghulam Mirza Ali (1835-1908), the founder of the sect. This moment of nationalist exclusion set the grounds for a subsequent ordinance passed in 1984 under the Zia regime that made it a criminal offence for Ahmadis to refer to themselves as Muslims and practice their version of Islam.

Drawing on newspaper accounts and commentaries, court case files, and interviews conducted with senior Ministers in Zia’s regime and judges and lawyers involved in the cases, I explore how the courts responded to claims and challenges by the Ahmadis in both religious and secular courts that the 1984 Ordinance was against the injunctions of Islam and that they violated the fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution. I argue that the courts invoked and constructed novel discourses about Islamic laws and codes to argue that the question of defining ‘Muslim citizenship’ was central to the creation of an Islamic state, thereby upholding the Ordinance. Furthermore, these legal debates provide a unique source for studying how the courts participated in the
symbolic construction of the Ahmadiyya community as ‘heretics’. Finally, I argue that the response of the courts to challenges by the Ahmadiyya community can only be put into perspective by looking at the political-institutional contexts within which anti-Ahmadi laws were passed and legally debated.

Saif, Mashal

The Nadwat al-‘Ulama and Historiography

In this paper I examine the Indian poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal’s appropriation by three ‘ulama: Sayyid Sulayman Nadwi (d. 1953), Abu’l-Hasan Ali Nadwi (d. 1999) and ‘Abd al-Salam Nadwi (d. 1956). I argue that the manner in which these scholars perceive and appropriate Iqbal is inextricably tied to their social imaginaries (to borrow a term from the philosopher Charles Taylor). These social imaginaries inform the outlook and writing of these ‘ulama resulting in the production of subjective accounts.

The three ‘ulama I examine are affiliated with the Nadwat al-‘Ulama. Founded in Lucknow in 1894, the Nadwa was initially defined by theological liberalism but gradually became conservative and legal-minded. I argue that the particular depictions of Iqbal by the Nadwa ‘ulama can be mapped onto this larger evolutions within the institute. The early Nadwa alim, Sulayman Nadwi, imagines the poet-philosopher as a Muslim leader par excellence who spent his entire life serving Islam. For Sulayman, the peculiarities of Iqbal’s religious ideas and actions were not problematic given that Sulayman shared the early Nadwa imaginary wherein a variety of interpretations of Islamic beliefs and practices were considered acceptable.

A more conservative understanding of Islam emerged with the later Nadwa ‘ulama. They emphasize traditional theological ideas and the practice of particular modes of piety and ritualistic actions. I argue that all the later Nadwa ‘ulama’s writings on Iqbal are reflective of this particular understanding of Islam and morality, although there are two distinct responses to the poet. On the one hand, ‘Ali Nadwi critiques Iqbal’s thoughts and actions and deems him as lying outside of the fold of correct Muslim belief and practices. On the other hand, ‘Abu al-Salam attempts to salvage Iqbal by reclaiming and refashioning the poet and reading him in a very different light. Sharing ‘Ali Nadwi’s understanding of morality, ‘Abu al-Salam emphasizes Iqbal’s adherence to traditional theological positions and details the poet’s performance of ritual acts of worship and piety and hence attempts to fit Iqbal into the mold of a traditional, practicing Muslim.

Consequently, this paper argues that all three works by the Nadwa ‘ulama are subjective portrayals since they are informed by the social imaginaries of their authors. In fact, in a broader sense, all works of narrative historiography are subjective accounts. This realization problematizes the boundaries between the categories of historiography and hagiography and I use my research to call for a rethinking of these terms.

Saikia, Yasmin

“Keepers of Order”: Military and the Fragmentation of Pakistan, 1971

For most of Pakistan’s existence as a nation-state, the military has played the most dominant role. The military has cultivated a public image of being the “keepers of order” and the “invincible” men--heirs of the legendary Muslim generals Muhammad bin Qasim and Mahmud of Ghori. Yet, time and again, the actions of the military within Pakistan have been that of terrorizing and denying citizens’ their privileges. How does the military negotiate between its public image as defenders of the nation and its brutal actions? How do Pakistani military
men see their role within the institution and what in their terms constitute “duty”? What happens when “duty” turns into violence? What are these memories of violence? Can we understand the project of violent nationalism by evaluating the military and how these “abnormal” memories get told in “normal” times? By focusing my lens on the 1971 war, I engage these and other questions about the Pakistani military. I pay particular attention to the memories of the war told three decades later in the privacy of the inner domain of home that are not part of the official narrative of the war. I shift the study from “memos” and “orders” to focus on oral narratives opening a space to probe and interrogate the “unarchived/dispersed” memories of the men of arms.

Samarasinghe, Vidyamali

" Are women silent/silenced?" Gender, class, ethnicity and politics and the civil war in Sri Lanka

The Ethnic conflict between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils, resulting in the protracted civil war has dominated every aspect of Sri Lankan society for the past twenty five years. In this paper I ask the question: What impact does the ethnic conflict have on the women of the majority Sinhala community and what role do Sinhala women play in ethnic politics in Sri Lanka?

The back drop for this paper is the recent resurgence of Sinhala Buddhist nationalism spearheaded by the political party 'Jatika Hela Urumaya' (National Heritage party or JHU), which is lead by Sinhala Buddhist monks. The JHU argues that Sri Lanka is a Sinhala Buddhist nation and it opposes any devolution of power to minority Tamils in the North and the East of the country and urges the government to continue with the military offensive in order to eliminate the LTTE. While the JHU lost some of their parliamentary and provincial council seats in recent elections, it joined the government as one of its coalition partners and the ruling party has also co-opted the Sinhala Buddhist nationalistic ideology, which hitherto was clearly associated with the JHU.

The public commentaries of the JHU demonstrate that urban Sinhala Buddhist middle class women form a significant segment of the JHU following. They are also highlighted as opinion makers, who as professionals such as teachers are known to influence others.

Based on a preliminary field survey on a sample of urban Sinhala Buddhist women in Colombo and Kandy (the capital city an the capital of the Central province in Sri Lanka), in the summer of 2008, I demonstrate how the ethnic conflict has shaped and sharpened the perspectives of middle class Sinhala Buddhist women of their own nationalistic political identity. I draw comparisons between the emergence of religious based politics among the urban Shiva Sen women in Mumbai slums and the educated Urban Sinhala women in Sri Lanka. I analyse the methods and strategies used by Sinhala Buddhist women to influence the current political make up the nation.

Samarasinghe, Stanley

Economics of Sri Lanka's ethnic war and post conflict challenges and prospects

Usually poor countries that have protracted internal wars face economic collapse. That the Sri Lankan ethnic war was a drag on the economy is not a question. But what is remarkable that it grew steadily and the country succeeded in moving up in 1997 from the ranks of the "low income" to "lower middle income". This paper argues that it was the combination of two factors that helped Sri Lanka escape the worst ravages of war. The first was the economic liberalization initiated in 1977 that immunized the economy from the war. It reduced the role of the state in the economy, allowed the government to focus on the war and made the private sector the engine of growth. The second was the strengthening of the export orientation of the economy. The private sector increasingly produced for the global economy. Employment abroad also connected to globalization relieved the pressure on labor markets and boosted foreign exchange earnings and the family incomes of the rural and urban
poor and the middle class. Rural incomes were also boosted by war spending. Government tax revenue also remained reasonably buoyant.

However, assuming that at least the conventional form of war ends soon, this paper argues that prospects for post-conflict growth remains uncertain at best. The reduction in military spending and the improvement in the business confidence will help the economy. But the negatives may overwhelm this positives. The crisis in the global economy will impose a major constraint. The signals that are coming from the donor community are not encouraging. The overwhelming focus of the present Sri Lankan administration is on achieving a military victory. Thus, as of now, its capacity to craft a successful growth strategy is yet to be tested.

Samuels, Jeffrey

The Sinhalese Sangha in Malaysia: Shifting Monastic Patronage and the Limits of Rationalization

During the 1940s-1960s, Sri Lankan Buddhist temples in Sri Lanka experienced a substantial shift in patronage. While many of them were first established to serve the religious and social needs of Sri Lankans living in Malaysia, the temples’ focus began to change as the number of Chinese patrons grew from several families to over 95% of total supporters. Part of this change in patronage was simply the result of demographics, particularly decreasing numbers of Sri Lankan Buddhist families in Malaysia; another, much more central, component to this shift pertains to the activities of Sri Lankan monastic leaders in Malaysia.

Focusing on sermons, publications, and temple activities of Sri Lankan monastics in Penang and Kuala Lumpur, this paper examines the transformations and adaptations that these monastic leaders made in order to create meaning for Chinese, Mahayana Buddhist, Malaysians. Along with turning to various ecumenical societies and associations that Sri Lankan monastics established or with which they were associated, this paper considers how the monastic leaders’ focus on the Buddha’s teachings and their packaging of Buddhism as a non-superstitious religion that is compatible with modern science enabled them to draw ever increasing numbers of non-Sri Lankans to their temples. Finally, by looking at a range of ritual activities that took place and continue to occur at two major Sri Lankan temples—Mahindarama in Penang and Buddhist Maha Vihara in Kuala Lumpur—this paper highlights the limitations concerning the role that rationalization and demythologization played in the temples’ growing popularity among Chinese Malaysians.

Sarkar, Sreela

New Technology and Affirmative Action Programs: The Private Sector and Good Citizenship

Following the Millennium Development Goals outlined by the United Nations (UN) that emphasized access to Information and Communication technologies (ICTs) as a basic socio-economic need, India has emerged as the site of several experiments. Since 2004, India has seen a number of public-private partnerships between the Indian state and the IT industry in broader development concerns such as health, literacy, empowerment for women and subaltern groups. Although there is a growing body of literature on technology and development in India and the global south, this literature has largely focused on questions of access and efficiency. There has been comparatively less critical and ethnographic research on the complex socio-economic context and questions of power related to the producers and “subjects” who are involved in technology and development interventions. Through ethnographic fieldwork and interviews, this paper studies “affirmative action” programs initiated by prominent private-sector IT companies that are targeted at low-income, minority groups in urban slum and resettlement areas in Delhi. Prominent IT firms have strongly opposed caste-based reservation but have initiated computer literacy and “soft skill” courses that are designed to train young men and women to be part of the new global economy and India’s middle-class. Development practitioners advocate reading newspapers, speaking English, wearing appropriate clothes and sanitation as part of coursework along with
learning computers and accessing the internet. The paper seeks to understand the rhetoric and practices of “good” citizens and workers as part of corporate ICT and development programs which train urban poor communities to enter “pink-collar” jobs in the service and retail industry in India. These experiments can be located in wider debates about modernity, corporate governance and labor practices in the context of tensions and struggles for inclusion in India’s global “information economy.”

Sathaye, Adheesh

The Spectre of Fiction: The Negotiation of Genre in the Frame Story of the Sanskrit Vetala-pancavimsati

For nearly a century, scholars have noted the elaborate and sophisticated use of frame stories in Sanskrit narrative genres, and particularly in epic and puranic texts. Some have even argued for deep continuities of these literary frames with Vedic ritual culture (Witzel 1987, Minkowski 1989), suggesting that the embedded structure of Sanskrit narrative literature bears strong affinities to the embedding of Vedic sacrificial rites. On the other hand, this theoretical model has tended to ignore over a century of cross-cultural scholarship on the emergence of frame structures within nearly every human cultural endeavor, from rites of passage (van Gennep, Turner), to verbal art and performance (Hymes, Bauman), to basic social discourse (Goffman). Adopting a folkloristic approach to frame narratives in Sanskrit literature, and particularly Stuart Blackburn’s emphasis on the interpretive role of frames as the “narrative context” for widely transmitted folktales (Blackburn 1996), this essay will investigate the performative role of frames within Sanskrit narrative texts in organizing and making sense of the free-floating and presumably oral narrative material embedded within them.

More specifically, I will examine the frame story of the medieval Sanskrit versions of the Vetalapancavimsati, or the “25 Tales of the Spectre,” in which the legendary king Vikramaditya is presented with a barrage of riddle-tales by a vetala he is carrying on his back. By comparing this frame story with epic and puranic frames – and particularly the frame of the Mahabharata – I will argue that the Vetalapancavimsati exploits the phantasmic nature of its undead narrator to produce a ‘fictive’ interpretive discourse, in contrast to the ‘factive’ storytelling of the epic and puranic bard (suta). This frame analysis, it is hoped, will shed new light on why Sanskrit story literature as a genre came into prominence in the early medieval period, precisely at a time when Sheldon Pollock has argued for a ‘death’ of Sanskrit—of the millennium-long dominance of Sanskrit poetic expression as the basic mode of courtly culture in the Indian subcontinent.

Scarimbolo, Justin

Singing Between the Head and the Heart: Ambivalent Stereotypes of Muslims in the Musical Play, Katyar Kaljat Ghusli

The celebrated Marathi-language musical play, Katyar Kaljat Ghusli (A Dagger Thrust in the Heart) (1967), is set within the context of an Indian princely court during the period of British colonial rule. The story enacts the troubled relationship between two classical musicians—a venerable Muslim court singer and a young Hindu devotional singer who seeks to become his disciple. The path of this relationship traverses a bifurcated social terrain in which Muslims and Hindus speak different languages (Hindi-Urdu and Marathi respectively), wear different clothes, and perform in different musical styles. These musical styles are referred to metaphorically in the play as singing from the head (Muslim) and from the heart (Hindu). While the moral sympathies of the play are arguably weighted toward the heart (Hindu), a closer look reveals an ambivalent borderland of representation where sympathy and antipathy, desire and disdain, respect and contempt surround the Muslim singing subject. Drawing on Homi Bhabha's critique of Orientalism, this paper shows how the ambivalence of Muslim stereotypes in Katyar function less as an opportunity for transgressive social affiliations between Muslims and Hindus, and more as a strategy of discriminatory power. Like all stereotypes, the Muslim
Stereotypes used in Katyar were first formed in relation to specific historic conditions—here, the modern struggle to define classical music as religious, and to define religious identity through classical music. This paper analyzes Katyar as a popular cultural site that contributes to our understanding of this historical struggle to define social and musical identity.

Schlossberg, Scott

Nirala's village: Redeeming the promise of a national language

While Suryakant Tripathi Nirala’s (1896-1961) Chayavad, or romantic, poetry remains an integral part of the modern Hindi canon, his enormous and highly varied output of prose work has gone generally overlooked. This oversight is unfortunate, since Nirala’s prose is not only formally innovative, it is also the forum in which he grapples most vigorously with contemporary problems of nationalism, community, language, and the like. In this regard, Nirala’s novels, short stories and essays represent a hugely valuable and largely untapped resource: the very subtle thought of one of Hindi’s most iconoclastic authors on issues that continue to trouble Indian social life up to today. They well deserve to be read afresh, freed from the preconceptions of the Chayavad brand, and from the canonical status that makes monumental what is less easily understood. The current paper explores how Nirala’s writing works to forge new relationships between Hindi representational forms and rural North Indian notions of self, all through a play of genre and literary convention. In the first chapter of his novella Kulli Bhat (1939), Nirala notes that most biographical literature in Hindi tends to function better as works of formal prose than as actual representations of life. In the two stories examined here - the short story ‘Chaturi Chamar’ (1926) and the novella Kulli Bhaat - Nirala attempts to resolve this disconnect between local community life and its literary abstractions through a skewering of generic boundaries. Kulli Bhaat and 'Chaturi Chamar' not only blur lines between fact and fiction, but between genres of biography, memoir and folk tale as well. This paper examines how the narrative strategies employed by Nirala allow for a new kind of fidelity to a developing Hindi public - transforming inherited notions of the 'national language' so that it may become one in which subject, author and addressee are joined in a uniquely wrought form of print community.

Schultz, Anna

Re-gendering vir rasa in Marathi nationalist performance

For the past century, male performers of Marathi rashtriya kirtan have been combining nationalist storytelling, Hindu religious discourse, and songs in the vir rasa (heroic aesthetic) to generate regionally inflected national sentiment. While women are avid performers of other types of Marathi kirtan, only a small handful of women engage in the masculine nationalist discourse of rashtriya kirtan. I am intrigued by these women, whose bodies and performance practice transform—and are transformed by—vir rasa. Drawing on performances by kirtankars and interviews with performers and audience members, I address the apparent contradictions of women performing within a masculine aesthetic. Though newcomers to rashtriya kirtan, female rashtriya kirtankars invoke an existing repertoire of physical and sonic performance gestures that I argue are marked as both feminine and heroic. Moreover, since rasa is an aesthetics of shared emotion, audience members are active participants in the creation of female heroism, a process with profound political implications. I introduce two female rashtriya kirtankars—one a Muslim Gandhian who sings both Hindu and Muslim genres, and the other a non-party Hindu nationalist—and argue that they perform a nationalist gender politics of exceptionality. These women have transgressed traditional gender roles in the service of nationalism and both sing of the political potency of women in Marathi history, but the explicitly didactic components of their fiery discourses bolster a patriarchal order and enjoin female listeners to serve their patidev (husband as god). In dialogue with feminist and historical scholarship on the gendering of the Indian nation, this paper explores how female rashtriya
kirtankars use vir rasa to mold the sentiments of audience members in ways that are less jarring than one might expect given the novelty of women’s participation in rashtriya kirtan.

Searle, Llerena

Constructing Legibility: Transparency claims and the internationalization of Indian real estate

Using Indian real estate as a case study, this paper investigates the role of transparency claims in the reproduction of global financial practices. It argues that international real estate investors, consultants, and others use transparency claims as tools in their bid to transform Indian real estate into a globally legible set of practices and an international route of capital accumulation. “Transparency” here is not a means of making power visible or accountable, but of making Indian real estate practices conform to international norms. International investors – along with the Indian government, Indian developers, consultants, and others – are working to create in India the trappings of real estate markets found elsewhere in the world: a system of clear land titles, saleable “modern” buildings, well-developed and securitized mortgage markets, and real estate mutual funds. Examining interview data, industry reports, and observations from real estate conferences, I show that foreign investors and consultants use tropes of visuality (legibility, clarity, transparency, etc.) to discuss the risks of operating in a system that does not yet meet these criteria. By labeling traditional modes of real estate practice non-transparent and illegible, they establish a normative base for insisting upon changes in accounting practices, valuation methods, firm organization, and even interactive style. Many Indian real estate developers use the same language of transparency to weave a narrative of the industry’s transformation and reinvent themselves as eligible business partners. Central to the dramatic performance of conjuring and moving capital, transparency claims are thus instrumental in the reproduction of international real estate practices in India.

Seely, Clinton

A Tribute

Seeta Menon (co-authors), Rajiv Menon (co-authors)

Regionalism Outside of the Region: Postcolonial Nationalism and Diasporic Indian Tamil Identity

Our paper examines the correlation between twentieth century Indian Tamil nationalism and the construction of a diasporic Tamil identity in the United States. 1965 is both the year of the legalization of Asian immigration to the United States and a year of impassioned Tamil Nationalism in India, a fact that undeniably shapes the factors of Tamil migration. Through an examination of the relationship between recent writing on Postcolonial nationalism in India and diasporic Indian identity in the United States, we will argue that linguistic and regional affiliation is rearticulated and emphasized in the Indian Tamil diaspora in the United States as a primary marker of ethnic identity, in contrast to trends among the Indian Americans to emphasize religious or national identity. Though emphases on certain aspects of Tamil identity have shifted, the extent to which Tamil identity is expressed over national identity among diasporic Indian Tamils is more representative of attitudes developed through twentieth century Tamil nationalism than modern Tamil identity in India.

Through original fieldwork with first and second-generation Indian Tamil Americans in the Washington, DC area and examination of Indian and diasporic cultural production, we will demonstrate how Tamil identity is reshaped and prioritized among Tamils who have migrated from India. Numerous scholars have pointed out that fundamentalist ideologies like Hindutva have flourished in diasporic settings, due to diasporic detachment and insecurities over cultural identity. These studies, have not, however, examined the way that regional and
linguistic affiliations challenge these forms of identity that are characterized as dominant. While organizations associated with the Hindu Right are making inroads into modern Tamil Nadu, the Indian Tamil diaspora has retained a resistance to such ideologies. Though the large Brahmin population amongst the Tamil Diaspora has shifted Tamil identity away from caste politics for obvious reasons, language and regional culture are still powerful markers of identity for this diasporic community. To discuss this, we will draw upon our fieldwork, secondary texts concerning Tamil nationalism and the South Asian diaspora, and recent cultural production concerning Tamil identity, such as Padma Viswanathan’s A Toss of a Lemon and S. Shankar’s Sivaji. Ultimately, we seek to demonstrate the ways in which the remnants of postcolonial nationalisms are preserved through migration and settlement.

Seshia Galvin, Shaila

Exhibiting Organic Uttarakhand: Brand Equity, Regional Identity and Post-reform Narratives of Agricultural Development

On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the newest state of the Indian Union. Shortly after its formation, the state government actively strategized to develop commercially-oriented organic agriculture as a key component of rural development. To this end, it created an Organic Commodity Board in 2003 to administer and implement organic programs, to build market linkages for smallholder organic farmers, and to craft Uttarakhand’s “brand-equity as a region ‘pure’ and ‘pristine’”. Through these efforts, the promotion of organic agriculture in Uttarakhand expresses an agrarian utopianism that appears counter-intuitive in relation to the modernist projects of India’s Green and ‘gene’ revolutions. Based on 15 months of doctoral fieldwork for a wider dissertation project, this paper investigates the effort to build brand-equity and regional identity through an ethnography of melas and exhibitions in which the Commodity Board participated in 2007 and 2008. These are: the Virasat folklife festival in Dehradun; the India International Trade Fair in New Delhi; and the ‘Spirit of Uttarakhand’ Festival held at Dilli Haat in New Delhi. As it seeks both to facilitate marketing of agricultural produce and to consolidate Uttarakhand’s organic brand-equity, public messages promoted by the Board in these venues emphasize the region’s ‘pristine ecosystem’ and traditional farming practices that are ‘organic by default’. Demonstrating how particular ideas of Uttarakhand as a ‘preferred organic destination’ are forged within such spaces, this research suggests that the Board’s public messages about organic agriculture must also be set within wider post-liberalization narratives about agricultural development in India. In this regard, the 2007 India International Trade Fair on ‘Processed Food and Agro Industries’ provided novel ground in which to explore how promises of agri-export zones, food parks, and food processing and packaging facilities are juxtaposed with a nostalgic renderings of rural life and tradition. The paper thus advances a further argument that melas and exhibitions are important sites in themselves, through which visions of rural life and agrarian futures in India’s post-reform period are constructed for urban publics. More broadly, analysis of the tensions and disjunctures produced within these spaces suggests that they fruitfully illuminate vigorous contemporary debates about the industrialization, agrarian and otherwise, of the Indian countryside.

Shaikh, Juned

Poetic Fervor: Literary Rebels and Urban Radicals in Mumbai

This paper traces the tangled political subjectivities of poets who were at the forefront of the dalit literary movement and who were instrumental in creating a radical socio-political movement in the 1970s. The paper studies the works of Namdeo Dhasal, J.V. Pawar, Raja Dhale, Arun Kamble, and Arjun Dangle; scrutinizes the manifestos that inspired the movement and scholarly accounts of dalit literature that took stock of the ‘new
wave’ in literature published in the late 1960s and 70s; looks at newspaper reports, magazine articles, and inquiry reports in the wake of the Worli riots, and draws from personal interviews with these authors to situate the Dalit Panther movement at a specific historical moment - where Herbert Marcuse, Frantz Fanon, and Karl Marx were read and discussed by dalit intellectuals, the black panther movement was inspirational, where the Shiv Sena, a violent urban movement was emulated and abhorred, where Ambedkar’s ideas were a source of inspiration and leftist leaders were friends and interlocutors of these poets, and where violence against dalits in rural Maharashtra roused urban activists. The question that the paper seeks to answer is: Why and how did poets become subjects of urban violence? What was the implication of the split in the Dalit Panther movement for the politics of dalits in Mumbai and for the Dalit literary movement? The paper also argues that scholarly accounts that see the split in the Dalit Panthers on the lines of Ambedkarism Vs Marxism or Buddhism Vs Communism simplify the complex political subjectivities of these authors.

Shankar, Subramanian

Reading in the Vernacular: R. K. Narayan’s The Guide and Its Adaptation into Film

The Guide, R. K. Narayan’s 1957 English-language novel set in Tamil India, was made in 1965 into a big budget Hindi-language film set in Rajasthan (Guide), illustrating thereby a triple translation—from novel to film, from English to Hindi, from a location in South India to one in North India. Within this multifaceted process can be discerned the transformation of what I call “vernacular postcolonialism.” This paper examines how to introduce the notion of a vernacular postcolonialism into a course on Anglophone literature by using film.

What is at stake in reading Narayan as a postcolonial writer or an Indian writer as opposed to a Tamil writer? What is the significance, if any, of the Tamil-ness of a novel like The Guide? What is the relationship of Hindi to the “imagined community” of India? How does Bollywood, understood strictly as Bombay commercial cinema, articulate or disarticulate folk or local or, of special interest to my argument, vernacular identities and knowledges? What is at stake for postcolonial criticism in this specific Bollywood example of film adaptation? These and similar questions emerge in the classroom when the novel is taught in conjunction with the film.

In the classroom, I argue that it is not sufficient to understand Narayan as a postcolonial writer in English or an Indian writer in English—he is also a vernacular writer in English. I demonstrate this part of my thesis by placing his novel The Guide in the context of debates around the epic the Ramayana within Tamil literature. And then I shift my argument to the Bollywood film version of the novel, focusing on its complex mode of address with regard to the vernacular. I suggest that the film, unlike the novel, “museumizes” the vernacular, raiding particular vernacular identities—Tamil or Gujarati or Assamese, for example—for selective representation that abets a particular self-imagination of the nation.

While sharing specific classroom experiences of teaching The Guide and Guide, my larger argument concerns successful ways to bring the notion of a “vernacular postcolonialism” (a postcolonialism not circumscribed by critical terminology drawn from the transnational dimension) into the classroom. Accordingly, my paper will end by reflecting on this topic.

Sharma, Shital

Inheriting Authority? Bahujis and Betijis in Pustimarga Vaisnavism

The hereditary leaders of Pustimarga Vaisnavism are householder Brahmin males, known as Maharajas or Gosvamis, a majority of whom are direct descendents of the founding figure of the sect, Vallabhacarya (ca.
1479-1531). As living representatives of Vallabha, Maharajas are granted the authority of performing Pustimarga ritual (seva) and initiating individuals into the tradition. They ground themselves in Brahmanic authority, moreover, by commenting on Sanskrit treatises written by Vallabha and later Pustimarga theologians. Due to their prominent positions within the sect, scholarship on Pustimarga has understandably placed emphasis on the ritual roles and activities of Gosvamis, glossing over and even neglecting the female figures within the Maharaja household, namely, their wives (bahujis) and daughters (betijis). This paper explores the ways in which bahujis and betijis negotiate and even appropriate authority for themselves in relation to traditional Pustimarga (Brahmanic/male) authority. In the nineteenth century, negotiations of this authority have occurred from within the domicile. Bahujis and betijis composed devotional poems (kiratans/dhol-padas) in the vernacular languages of Gujarati, Hindi, and Brajbhasa; performed seva in their own Pustimargi temples (havelis); and even assumed the role of “Maji Maharaja” once their husbands passed away. Contemporary bahujis and betijis, on the other hand, see themselves as appropriating religious authority by “stepping outside” of the Maharaja household. Indiraji Gosvami (b. 1940), a prominent betiji, maintains her own haveli in Baroda, and to the disapproval of male Gosvamis, initiates individuals into the sect. She is also at the centre of an ever-expanding global community of Pustimargi Vaisnavas, and is a guru figure for hundreds of female disciples. In this paper I argue that bahujis and betijis are able to wield and negotiate certain types of authority by claiming hereditary legitimacy as the descendents of Vallabha. From the nineteenth century to the present, these female figures have circumvented male religious authority by appealing to the historical and “originary” sources of Pustimarga.

Sharma, Miriam

Whose India? What do we learn when we use films as a teaching device?

The number of film courses on India and use of its popular cinema to learn about that country has increased exponentially in the past decade, while the number of critical film studies on the subject has fostered a veritable cottage industry. As the study of popular culture became a legitimate field of scholarly study, it was only a matter of time before this most popular aspect of India’s popular culture came under its gaze. Filmic representation of India in most courses relies heavily, if not exclusively, on the “Bollywood” Hindi cinema. However, there is much debate over the audience for which this cinema is intended and what it demands. Equally debated is what sort of India it represents—reality or fantasy—whether it is an agent of a conservative (even retrogressive) status quo, a positive agent for social change, or indeed, something else. These issues are important to consider as we teach about India through its film.

This paper looks at the problems and prospects of utilizing feature films as a way for students to gain entry into and understand Indian society, culture, and its past. It addresses the implications of the overwhelming use of “Bollywood” films as a signifier of how the nation is defined as well as the marginalization of minorities and regional cinemas in this construction. It looks at the complexities of teaching students how to “read” films as texts with multiple and even subversive meanings so that they come to understand what a form of commercial popular entertainment can tell about a society and its culture.

Sharma, Shalini

Yeh Azaadi Jhooti Hai (This independence is a lie): An analysis of the official Communist Party of India line from 1947 to 1950.

In August 1947, India was proclaimed a free nation. However, within months her interim government used sedition laws established by her former colonial rulers to imprison thousands of Indian citizens. Those
imprisoned were deemed to be insurgents, accused of attempting to destabilise the newly independent nation state. One of the groups of people rounded up by the state was the Communist Party of India. Its members were vilified as agents of Moscow, opportunistic and, because of their atheism, immoral. As a result of their participation in insurgencies across the new nation, from Telengana to Kerala to Bengal and Manipur, thousands of communists spent the first year of independent India in jail.

Literature on the communists during this period, from all sides of the political spectrum, has roundly condemned the communist line as mistaken and, in the language of the party itself, ‘left adventurist.’ However only a few commentators have investigated the nature and extent of the communist threat to the Indian nation in 1947. This paper will present an analysis of communist party literature and activity of this period in order to understand how leading theoreticians of the party view Indian independence, why they took the ‘left adventurist’ line and what they hoped to achieve during 1948-50. It will argue that the communists participated in insurgency because they were embedded in local pockets of protest throughout the subcontinent, and that the Indian state, like the colonial state before it, systematically excluded communists from the political centre, and in doing so, made the ‘left adventurist’ line more attractive to its members. This challenges both nationalist, and the Communist Party’s official, historiography, which focuses on the fact that communists denounced independence as a lie and that this line was mistaken. Conversely, the argument of the paper not only illuminates the position of the CPI in the 1940s but also explains why communist parties in India have survived and endured long after their so-called puppet masters in Moscow.

The paper is part of a larger study of democracy and its impact on groups that were marginal to the political centre. Through an analysis of the institution of political representation and sedition in independent India, I ask how far did the Indian state construct the political playing field so that political groups flourished or diminished and how far were subsequent political outcomes such as communist electoralism intended or unintended consequences of such state action?

Sheikh, Samira

Names and their consequences for South Asian Ismailis, c. 1680-1840

The Shia Imami Ismailis and their spiritual leaders, the Aga Khans, are familiar to historians of colonial India from the writings of Jim Masselos, Amrita Shodhan and others. Some of their literature, especially the ginans, has also been studied by scholars of religion. What is less well-known is the history of the Ismailis in the decades prior to their appearance in colonial records from the 1820s. The word ‘Ismaili’ does not appear in South Asian sources before the nineteenth century: ‘Khoja’ or ‘Satpanthi’ are the two best known cognates. Further, the Ismailis’ allegiance to their imams, then in Persia, does not appear to have been noticed by pre-colonial governments. It is largely from the Ismailis’ own literature that we can begin to discern networks of allegiance - both spiritual and financial – that spread over western and northern India in the eighteenth century and channelled tithes and pilgrims to the Imams’ changing seats in Persia. Some of these Ismaili groups passed as Hindus and others as followers of local charismatic leaders in order to avoid persecution. Certain groups were noticed by Mughal writers, as when the Matiya peasant community rose in revolt against the Mughal administration of Aurangzeb in the late seventeenth century. The intermittent mention of Ismaili groups in Mughal-period sources, without however using the name or mentioning their extra-territorial allegiance to the Persian imams, illuminate some of the criteria used by the Mughals to identify and label religious communities in Gujarat. On the other hand, the texts of Ismaili groups show considerable variation in how they represented their own religious practices and allegiances, as well as the characteristics of ‘others’ such as the ruling Mughals and their government. This paper will discuss the politics of naming in the history of the South Asian Ismailis, with a view to opening up questions of representation and affiliation in early modern Gujarat.

Sheoran, Nayantara (Tara)
From Kama Sutra to i-pill: Contraceptive advertising in India

Post-liberalization, advertising in India has taken on the dual project of informing and modernizing the nation. One prominent set of advertisements that have partaken of this project, as emissaries of the companies producing the product, have been advertisements for contraceptive products. From the steamy images of the Kama Sutra (a self proclaimed luxury condom) advertising campaign in the early 1990’s to the sanitized and sanctified advertisements for the i-pill (the emergency contraceptive pill) in the late 1990’s, contraceptives have surfaced as markers of India’s quest for its project of modernity. This paper looks at the advertising campaigns in how they employ imagery and discourse (both textually and extra-textually) to articulate their claims to a nationalistic agenda and citizenry awareness campaigns. As Foucault asserts, while dominant discourse shapes reality in particular ways it also marginalizes other discourses. Drawing on cultural studies, semiotics, and ethnographic work with women and their understanding of contraceptive advertisements, I propose that these images make available a particular kind of discourse that is inclusionary just at it shapes the conversation about women's role in the nation building project in a particularly limiting manner. At the exact moment when the advertisements appear as emancipatory vehicles, in that they allow more awareness and freedom in terms of contraceptive choices available to women, they also simultaneously circumscribe those same potentialities.

Sherpa, Pasang

Indigenous Movements: Identification of Indigenous Concerns in Nepal

This paper aims to identify the concerns of indigenous nationalities in Nepal and to analyze them from an anthropological perspective in the national political context. It describes the situation of indigenous nationalities in Nepal. The discriminatory governmental practices and social exclusion experienced by the indigenous nationalities are examined. The paper highlights the major concerns of indigenous nationalities along with the general perception of the indigenous movement based on the questionnaires and focus groups conducted as a part of the M.A. research in Kathmandu, Nepal in the summer of 2008. Recommendations are presented for public policy to heed indigenous concerns and issues to create a ‘fully democratic’ Nepal. The findings of the research reveal that the position of indigenous leaders may not always be supported by the people they represent.

Shetty, Malavika

Repositioning gender hierarchies through narratives on a Tulu call-in TV show

Tulu speakers in the South Kannara region of the South Indian state of Karnataka have a rich oral tradition of paddanas or ritual narratives that are performed during the worship of local bhutas or spirit deities. This study looks at interactions on Pattanga, a Tulu call-in TV show on Namma TV, a local television channel in the region. On the show, Tulu speakers often call in with their versions of the stories of the paddanas. Based on recorded episodes of the show during fieldwork in the region from 2005 to 2007, and through a linguistic analysis of the interactions on the show, I look at how narratives on the show are used by female callers to not only construct gender identities, but also to de-construct and de-center those identities. More specifically, I demonstrate how, by closely examining particular interactions and narratives, we can understand the nature and constitution of larger social constructs such as gender and, how also, these interactions and narratives can be zones where these constructs are challenged and confronted.

Goffman (1981) distinguishes between different aspects of the self in discourse production: the author, the principal, and the figure. Narrators can use these positions to express evaluations of and to convey their position on a variety of social issues such as gender, social class, and caste without openly asserting their views. They use the voices of their characters to project their own evaluations and stances. Abu-Lughod (1986[1999]), for example, describes how individuals reciting the ghinnawas, a traditional culturally valued form of Bedouin
poetry, are able to express through poetry, sentiments that would otherwise be condemned as immodest and defiant by Bedouin society. Tulu women use the traditional linguistic form of the Tulu paddana, on the non-traditional format of the call-in show, to not only communicate their interpretations of traditional stories, but to also to tell their stories from a female-centric point of view and to, thereby, bring into focus local social hierarchies and inequalities. Women callers to the show, through their narratives, tell stories of strong women who try to question local ideologies and expectations related to gender, caste, and class. The analysis of the narratives in this study reveals how narratives can be used as significant tools in the construction and negotiation of identity, and, also, how they can be used as forms of social action to draw attention to and to deconstruct local ideologies and hierarchies.

Shodhan, Amrita

Social groups, their customs and the colonial Provincial Court in Gujarat - 1800-1860

Both Hindu and Muslim textual law, dharmashastra and shariat, were ignored in the settling of legal disputes in the colonial Provincial Civil court (Sadar Adalat) in Bombay Presidency from 1800 to 1860. Instead the judges discovered and enforced local custom, through evidence collected during the case. Sometimes the whole group was collected in court, at other times only a few elders of the group were consulted. However, the regulations under which this practice evolved underwent several transformations during the period, crucially in the formation of the 1827 regulations. While the legal policy for Hindu and Muslim groups was different, the judges rejected the differences in actual practice, applying custom in both cases. The paper will examine these differences in the legal regimes and their evolution. It will analyse the patterns of enforcement, for example, in what types of cases were local customs preferred, when did these practices change, and how the court determined whether a particular group (called jnati or jamat, irrespective of religion) followed a particular textual law or ‘their own’ custom. The precedents established at the time enabled groups to be governed by the state and retained for them some modes of public discussion of internal dissensions. However, the space for recognising social custom was shrinking with the more extensive application of religious criteria and definitions for the governance of social groups. This paper will contribute to the history of the colonial governance of Indian caste and religious groups. It demonstrates the contingencies in the gradual identification of social groups with "religion" as a result of the retreat of the state from using collective power structures as elements of governance.

Shope, Bradley

The Bombay Jazz Cabaret and Early Hindi Film Songs: Re-thinking Hollywood’s Influence, 1940s-1950s.

Popular discourse often assumes that much of the foreign content of early Hindi film songs came from a fixed gaze directed towards Hollywood. Less pervasive but equally as accepted is the notion that a pre-existing monolithic “Indian” aesthetic sensibility was altered in the face of a new Western musical hegemony. This paper problematizes such notions by situating the foreign content of early Hindi films in the domestic public sphere. I claim that local Bombay cabarets were mobilized by film composers and directors as a key source of foreign sounds. The popularity of cabaret-influenced film songs suggests that access to Western popular music was not necessarily only a matter of exposure to its distant sounds and images, but also an adaptation of many of the characteristics of live performance practices found in the public sector in Bombay. By situating the consumption of Western popular music in the domestic live dance hall and cabaret, I suggest that film music in India was a force that reduced foreign music to an inseparable component of a complex powerful whole. Western music stood marginalized and co-opted which, as it turns out, was essential in its practical and successful use in film songs. I seek to reformulate relations of musical dominance between the Bombay metropolis and the monolithic West.
Sijapati, Megan Adamson

Urdu as Nepal’s Islamic Language: Poetry and Political Discourse in the Struggle for Religious Identity

This paper examines the role and function of Urdu as a religious, cultural and political linguistic medium in Nepal. Though it is not usually the first language of Nepali Muslims, Urdu in Nepal functions as a pan-Nepali ‘Islamic’ language, spoken and read by Muslims across regional, ethnic, and other linguistic divides. This paper will discuss the multiple genres in which written Urdu is employed, giving attention to two in particular: poetry and religio-political discourse. Through an exploration of Nepali Urdu poetry and Urdu pamphlets published by Muslim religious organizations, this paper asks how and why Urdu becomes the language of choice for Nepal’s Muslims in these genres, and what the significance of this choice is. As in other South Asian settings, Urdu in Nepal is a central component of Islamic identity. Today, in the newly secular setting of Nepal, the country’s Muslims are dedicating increasing focus to the cultivation of a discursively-oriented reformist religious identity, and Urdu plays an important role in this. As many Muslims are politicizing their religious identities, Urdu functions as a marker of a unified religious identity across a diverse national religious demographic, and, by extension, serves as a marker of difference between Muslims and non-Muslims. But Urdu is also the language of the few, and not the many, as a significant number of Nepali Muslims remain unable to read it at all. In this way, Urdu functions also as a marker of elite religious, cultural and educational status within the community. This paper will discuss these multiple dimensions of Urdu language use among contemporary Nepali Muslims in these two genres and in conclusion will consider the symbolic, functional, and religious implications of its use, and particularly how the use (or non-use) of the language among Muslims shapes contemporary Muslim identity.

Simpkins, Robert

The Mysterious Milestones of Andhra Pradesh

The milestones, or kos minar, of Andhra Pradesh have attracted relatively little scholarly attention despite their uniqueness in South India. Although some scholars assumed they were associated with the Qutb Shahi Dynasty (AD 1518-1687), the only scholar to devote serious attention to them, Jean Deloche, suspected that they were later because they were not mentioned by the famous 17th century accounts of Tavernier and Thevenot. They are, however, clearly discussed by VOC employee Daniel Havart, who was present in the kingdom during the reign of Abul Hasan Qutb Shah (AD 1672-1687), clearly establishing their terminus ante quem. Beyond this, however, it is not clear more precisely when they were erected, by whom, and why. Havart's account implies that the markers lead to the gates of Hyderabad from the east side, starting roughly 45 kilometers east of the city center, and he does not report other examples. A pair of kos minar in the Guddi Malkapur area of Hyderabad west of the city center, however, complicates this interpretation. It suggests either a former row of milestones approaching Hyderabad from the West, or that it is a continuation of the milestones past the city, but strangely not along the main road in the 17th century linking Golconda Fort to the west with old Hyderabad, which passes through the Karwan neighborhood. Stylistic components of better-preserved kos minar in Nalgonda District, combined with the odd location of the Guddi Malkapur kos minar suggest an alternative hypothesis - the road markers reflect a pre-Hyderabad (i.e. pre-AD 1591) road leading to Golconda Fort itself. This hypothesis suggests a 16th century origin for the milestones, an idea supported by my identification of other 16th century structures along this path which have not figured in existing archaeological reports of the city. This analysis hopes to demonstrate the importance of seemingly minor and overlooked structures in understanding the development of a cultural landscape. Given that many of the kos minar noted by Jean Deloche have been destroyed or have otherwise fallen, the protection of and education about these unique monuments of the 16th century should be a priority for cultural heritage efforts in Hyderabad and Andhra Pradesh.
Simpson, Edward

The Gurnard's perversion: Articulating sovereignty and the transformation of power in western India during the nineteenth century

This paper is about a dispute between two ‘Princely States’ (Kutch and Morvi) and the colonial government over sovereignty and material rights in the Gulf of Kutch in western India. The dispute can be read as a universal experiment in which the intangible was presented in tangible form, as the conditions of sovereignty were explained, refined, and debated using both words and things: the words were many (very many), but the things were never more than small pieces of worm-riddled wood, floating beds, stray buffaloes, dubious accounts, and the peculiar feeding habits of certain fish. These seemingly insignificant objects animated a tremendous dispute that prompted seven commissions of inquiry, and ran almost uninterrupted from the 1820s to the time of India's independence. In the early years of the dispute, the rulers of Kutch and Morvi put forth arguments about their collective identities and corresponding rights and privileges as a way of articulating their respective claims on the disputed territories. At times, they presented themselves as independent sovereigns, at others as part of an encompassing Jadeja Rajput bhayad (or brotherhood), which had its own mechanisms for inheritance, patrimony, and justice. The colonial government determined the case to be an exception to the general rules of sovereignty, a right often seen as one of the prerogatives of the sovereign. However, the colonial government, despite its claims, never had the efficacy to bring an end to the state of exception, commonly seen to be another right of the sovereign, because its power was curtailed by its own laws and precedents to which the states made constant and effective reference. However, in the process, the rulers of Kutch and Morvi arguably contributed directly to undermining the efficacy and legitimacy of their own systems of justice, traditional hierarchy, and power relations, as the collective bhayad gradually became a series of semi-independent states governed by the laws of the Bombay Presidency.

Singh, Anant

A Comparative Analysis of the Dynamic Consequences of Hindu and Islamic Inheritance Laws on Capital Accumulation in South Asian Family Firms

"A Comparative Analysis of the Dynamic Consequences of Hindu and Islamic Inheritance Laws on Capital Accumulation in South Asian Family Firms"

This work will examine the effects of the application of Hindu and Islamic inheritance laws on South Asian family firms. Hindu inheritance laws tended to encourage capital accumulation. This allowed business families to retain and augment their capital over the course of many generations. Islamic inheritance laws had the opposite effect: capital accumulation was discouraged and Muslim business families faced difficulties in retaining their wealth over the course of many generations.

Hindu inheritance laws had four characteristics that encouraged capital accumulation: First, they allowed joint families to hold property collectively for an indefinite period. Second, they encouraged individually held property to become property held collectively by the joint family. Third, they allowed the joint family to expand itself indefinitely via marriages, births, and
adoptions. Fourth, they possessed mechanisms which limited fragmentation of estates during partitions of family property.

Islamic inheritance laws discouraged capital accumulation for the following reasons: First, they held that estates must be fragmented with every passing generation. Second, they greatly increased the number of potential heirs by including distant kin. Muslim families did have recourse to various mechanisms for circumventing Islamic inheritance laws, but often the efficacy of these mechanisms was limited.

The differences in Hindu and Islamic inheritance laws acquired great significance in South Asia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During this period, the capital market was underdeveloped in South Asia, and entrepreneurs had to turn to the family or caste networks in order to raise capital for industrial ventures. Hindu entrepreneurs seeking to enter industry were at an advantage vis-a-vis their Muslim counterparts because the former's inheritance laws often allowed their families to preserve sufficient stocks of capital while the latter's inheritance laws prevented their families accumulating sufficient capital.

This work will provide detailed discussion of how the abovementioned characteristics of Hindu and Islamic inheritance laws affected capital accumulation. A quantitative model that illustrates the dynamic consequences of the application of Hindu and Islamic inheritance laws on hypothetical Hindu and Muslim families will also be provided. The findings of this model will be buttressed by case studies of prominent business families.

Singh, Shivani

Indian Feminist Movements 1947 - Today The Trajectory of Female Activism

Indian Feminist Movements
1947 - Today
The Trajectory of Female Activism

The aim of this paper is to understand the current feminist culture in India today, and how it encompasses women within all levels of society. Due to feminism arising from Gandhian philosophy of embracing traditional norms as part of the female struggle for equality, India has a history of strong grassroots based organizations. However, with the cultural shift towards the West occurring in the 1990’s, there has been a rise in liberal feminism and the creation of different types of female activist organizations.

In order to understand the current feminist culture of India today, the complex intersection of factors which affect women must be taken into consideration. This includes geographic location and local norms, socio-economic status, caste, sexuality, and education. These can be seen as the micro level factors which affect individuals; however there are also the overarching changes in the political and social landscape of the state itself which have influenced policies regarding women.
This paper includes a theoretical section on the influence of post-colonial feminism and liberal feminism on female activism in India. This provides the contextual framework necessary to understand female political activism. It will also serve to show the transition occurring within certain groups towards a more western based ideology.

Through the use of case studies which look at active grassroots organizations, collectives and new incarnations of activism such as the ‘Pink Chaddi Campaign’ the diversity of female activism will be explored. With the rise of a new wave of feminism in India with unique ideologies, there is the potential for disconnect between activist groups. Consolidation of activist groups from across the spectrum will be discussed, and what effect this could have in addressing issues of inequality faced by Indian women across the country.

Singh, Prabhsharanbir

Sikhs as Homo Sacer: Politics of the Body and Sovereign Power

This paper argues that the myth of modern political sovereignty is founded on a theft of bodies and their subsequent assimilation into the order of power. Using Agamben’s concept of Homo Sacer, I have tried to understand some turning points of Sikh history and politics. I have contended that such an understanding is capable of illuminating the relationship between power and subjectivity in a new light. What made Sikhs targets of terrible atrocities was their potential for creating a new political order which was inscribed into their very bodies. So the body became that contested space where sovereign power and life are struggling with each other. On the one hand, political potential contained within the body of community is urging it for radical political action and on the other hand, the orders of power feel threatened by this potential and try to neutralize it with violence.

Sinha, Amita

Jamshedpur: Planning an Ideal Steel City in India

The steel city of Jamshedpur celebrated its 100 years of existence in 2008 having won the UN Global Compact City Award two years ago. It is considered to be a remarkable success story in the face of the decline of company towns elsewhere in the world. Its establishment predated the great experiments--New Delhi, Islamabad and Chandigarh-- of the twentieth century in city planning in the Indian subcontinent. The vision of the House of TATA, founder of the city proved to be enduring one in ensuring a high quality of life to its residents and other benefits of welfare capitalism. As a company town, Jamshedpur continues to provide amenities—low rent housing, free municipal services, parks and sports facilities, schools and job training programs—unmatched by either private or public enterprise in India. A mélange of building and open space types, it presents an image of order and efficient management with few chaos of the typical Indian city. It thus represents the fulfillment of Nehru’s dream for a modern, industrial India as well as the triumph of private capitalism over state socialism.

My paper will examine the many plans (Kennedy Plan, 1911, Temple Plan, 1920, Stokes Plan, 1936, Koenisberger Plan, 1943) prepared by experts as well as those by the Town Planning Department to evaluate their impact on the actual growth of the city. Each plan reflected the planning concerns of its own period—industrial village, garden city, neighborhood concept—and was the product of the disciplinary background of its makers—sanitary engineers, architects and planners. The sensitivity of each plan to the existing landscape and its role in reshaping it will be studied. The formative role of the natural landscape of ridges and gullies in the planning of the urban infrastructure—transportation and sanitary systems—will be examined. I will conclude by speculating on the contribution of physical planning to the city’s high quality of life and the part it played historically in ushering in modernity in a largely undeveloped region of eastern India.

Bibliography
Sinha, Sunny

Women in Non Brothel-Based Sex Work in Kolkata, India: Using “Cultural biography” to Understand Risk Perceptions

Specific Aims: The proposed study will examine the risk perceptions of women in non brothel-based sex work in Kolkata, India, from their own point of view. The specific aims driving this study are: a) what do women in non brothel-based sex work perceive as being risks to their physical, social and economic well-being, and b) how salient is the risk of HIV in comparison to other occupational risks that they experience in their lives.

Research Problem: The risk of HIV looms large among women in sex work. Recent epidemiological studies report women in non brothel-based work to be a group with a high risk of HIV infection due to their high rates of inconsistent use of condoms with clients or regular partners (Dandona & Dandona et.al. 2005). Several individual-cognitive, socio-cultural and environmental factors have been examined and shown to play a significant role in enhancing women’s risk of HIV by restricting their freedom and power to negotiate the use of condoms with their clients or partners. Extant studies report substantial differences in sex work environments, sexual practices, socio-demographic characteristics, and risk behaviors across diverse groups of sex worker populations (Blanchard & O’ Neil, 2005). However, very little empirical data exists about the way of life, socio-cultural contexts, sexual practices and risk perceptions of a sizeable group of women in non brothel-based sex work in Kolkata, India.

Method: This study uses “cultural biography” (Frank, 2000), a method that combines the use of life history interviews and participant observation methods to gain direct experiential access to insiders’ viewpoints. Participant observation is used to provide an inventory of the current occupational risks in the sex work environment and how women respond to those risks, life history interviews using open ended question will inquire into important dimensions of women’s lives: a) childhood; b) sex work; c) marriage; d) family; e) education; f) relationships to examine their risk perceptions.

Significance: Understanding risk from the point of view of women will provide insights about the dynamics of local HIV transmission. It will also shed light on the social processes and factors hindering the ability of women in non brothel-based sex work to engage in health-seeking practices. The study findings can be used to design programs tailored specifically to the needs of this population and to inform local policies conducive to the health of women in non brothel-based sex work.

Smith, Monica

Geographies of constraint and dilemmas of desire: Migrant women from Sri Lanka to Lebanon

Humans have a desire to be sane in the world, which is a desire that one’s self be connected to the world in a certain way. This connection in many regards is a social one and has to do with human relatedness. Yet for migrants on the move, such connections can be a challenge to attain and maintain. Geographies of social constraint, for example, physical separation, state laws and political practices, and economic restrictions affect
what types of relationships are readily possible. Many migrants have to innovate to create social connections in
the worlds they occupy. This paper takes a look at a specific cohort of Sri Lankan domestic migrant women
who live outside of their employers’ homes in one of the largest migrant neighborhoods in Beirut, Lebanon. It
assesses migrant women’s family ties in Sri Lanka and the intimate relationships that transgress those ties in
Lebanon. It goes on to highlight the manner in which women aptly use systematic deception to maintain human
connections in both locales in response to the constraints they face. Like all humans, Sri Lankan female
migrants utilize deception in their lives. However, the degree of deception they are required to undertake in
relation to the constraints they are required to manage is profound.

Sri Lankan women move from a relatively socially restricted environment in Sri Lanka where they are expected
to be the monogamous, heterosexual, dutiful wife, mother and daughter. In Lebanon, the laws and constraints
change along with women’s intimate relationships. Although many Sri Lankan migrant women report that they
originally leave to go abroad as the dutiful family member to support kin left behind, after a few months of
living abroad, the ties to family weaken especially as they become involved with new intimate relations. Away
from the social constraints of family and community, women report a sense of freedom and a peace of mind
never experienced before. Living on their own, many women choose to cohabitate with male migrants and
Lebanese nationals to share expenses and for the fulfillment of love and sexual desires. Yet, in the end, they
manage their kinship ties in Sri Lanka and their transgressive lives and intimacies in Beirut through systematic
decception. Innovatively, they never let it be known in Lebanon that they have family in Sri Lanka and back in
Sri Lanka that they have intimate relations abroad.

Smith, Travis

Suta and the Anxiety of Puranic Authority

This paper re-evaluates the figure of the Suta, the bardic narrator of ancient lore nearly ubiquitous
in the classical Puranas. Scholars have struggled to reconcile this figure to the suta familiar to
Dharmasastra literature, a so-called “mixed-caste” community imagined to have resulted from the
transgressive (pratiloma) union of a Brahmin female and Ksatriya male.
Rather than making a case for a hard-historical linkage between these two Sutas, I evaluate the
Purnas as a literary strategy, finding that its deployment is linked to central concerns of
Purana as a genre. The most crucial of these is the ambiguous sociological register of Purara, being a
literature asserting a monolithic brahmanical orthopraxis coded as “Veda,” and yet at the same time
supposedly tailored toward “women and Sudras.” Given its straddling of these conflicting registers,
Purana must repeatedly reaffirm its own ever-tenuous authority as canon.
I show how several Puranic narratives mediate this tension through the figure of the Suta, and in
doing so simultaneously highlight, retain and submerge the sociological ambiguity of Purana itself.

Snell, Rupert

The rhetorical energy of Old Hindi verse structures

Much of the articulacy of Braj Bhasha and Awadhi poetry derives from structural features in the poetic line.
Traditional Hindi-medium criticism regards prosody as a constrictive and normative system: a metre is a tennis
court, in which all activity must be contained within precisely marked boundaries. But poets know that far from
merely constricting, these structures are actually instrumental in the game: a metre is a squash court whose
walls define and energize the trajectory of meaning. This paper looks at some of the ways in which poets
harness the kinetic energy inherent in different types of meter; and more broadly it argues that a sympathetic
stylistics for pre-modern verse must engage with the genius of its vernacular quality, not simply depending on
conventions inherited from Sanskritic forebears. Two further issues are considered briefly: the use of stylistic
diagnostics to help determine authorship of a given text, and the question of ‘what is lost?’ when metrical
structures are dismantled during the process of translation into prose or free verse.

Sohoni, Pushkar

Gardens and Pavilions: Palaces of the Nizam Shahs

Of the Deccan sultans, the Nizam Shahs (1490-1636) were unique as they almost never resided in the urban
areas of the city of Ahmadnagar, preferring instead the fort of Ahmadnagar, which is at a small distance from
the city. The fort, with its (now demolished) palaces, or alternately, various palaces and pavilions around the
area, served as their primary residence. In times of distress, their fortified palace complexes at Daulatabad and
Junnar served as retreats. Many of their suburban palaces, such as Farah Bagh, Hasht Bihisht Bagh,
Manjarsumba and Kalawantinicha Mahal were designed as pleasure retreats. These sites were very useful in
impressing embassies and visitors with the spectacle of controlled water, vegetation and architecture. There are
historical accounts of visitors being received at some of these places, but the archaeologically recovered
grandeur leaves no doubt regarding the use of these palaces as settings for royal display.

Somani, Alia R.

Getting Together in Cyberspace: Negotiating Orthodoxy and Modernity in South Asian Matrimonial Sites

In post 9/11 studies on the relationship between terrorism and cyberspace, a crucial theoretical question has
emerged: does the new media technology reaffirm orthodoxy (eg. are fundamentalist groups able to use such
media as the internet to increase their numbers and consolidate their ideology?) or does it help to disperse and
transform it (eg. do the very impersonality and speed of the internet undermine fundamentalism?)? In this
paper, I want to suggest that a similar question may be usefully asked of a different discourse, that of romance
and internet dating. Do cyber technologies replicate the older forms of romantic negotiation (ie. newspaper
advertisements) or do they enable alternative forms of romantic and sexual fantasy? To put it differently, what
are the tensions between an inherited orthodoxy and the conceptual promiscuity generated by the new media; a
media that is both indebted to and stimulates what Arjun Appadurai refers to as “global flows and counter-
flows”?

In order to address these questions, I will look specifically at one well-known South Asian dating/marriage site
– Shaadi.com – while also assuming that the logic that governs the workings of this particular website applies to
various other forms of new media. Shaadi.com is designed to replicate many of the features of traditional
newspaper advertisements. For example, a typical “profile” on the site will specify what are called “partner
preferences” or features that the potential partner must possess. These features include caste, income, height,
complexion, mother tongue, and diet (veg or non-veg). The site, which is significantly called Shaadi, or
marriage.com, reinforces its status a matrimonial site, thus distinguishing itself from internet dating sites in the
West like Match.com, which openly allow rather than prohibit casual romantic relationships. While Shaadi.com
tries to enforce compulsory heteronormativity by barring any expression of same-sex desire, its attempts at
policing gender norms are not always successful. In practice, people use the site for a range of activities, which
would have been frowned upon by the earlier, more orthodox, modes of negotiation (eg. On this site, people
may pointedly reject the idea of a dowry or even caste affiliations). I will argue that the tensions between
orthodoxy and resistant practices regularly produce radically new forms of romantic negotiation. These are
neither recognizably orthodox nor characterized by the shallowness and ephemerality that are often attributed to
cyber romances.
Soneji, Davesh

Concubines, Copper Plates and Colonial Authority: Temple Inscriptions by Women in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Tanjore

Between c. 1824 and 1845, Serfoji II (r. 1798-1832) and his son Sivaji II (r. 1832-1855), the last Maratha rulers of Tanjore, built large seraglios called Kalyana Mahal and Mangala Vilas that housed dozens of concubines who bore the titles bai or ammal ("respected lady"). The concubines, whose relationships with the kings were solemnized through a "sword marriage" (katti kalyanam), came from a range of caste and regional backgrounds, and included Tamil Christian women, Tamil Brahmin Ayyankar women, and various groups of Maharashtrian women. From roughly 1860 to 1895, after Tanjore had been completely annexed to the British, the concubines of Sivaji’s Mangala Vilas contributed small and large-scale donations to temples in and around Tanjore, many of which had been built or re-consecrated under the patronage of Serfoji. Their donations are recorded in the form of stone and copper-plate inscriptions that in many ways emulate the style of medieval Tamil inscriptions. Written in Tamil, Marathi, and occasionally English, these distinctly "modern" inscriptions furnish the names, dates and other details about the women that can be corroborated with similar data found in the Marathi palace records in Modi script. In this paper I argue that the eleemosynary activities of Sivaji’s concubines must be understood in light of another struggle for power over the redistribution of resources that was played out by the Tanjore Maharani. In 1857, Kamakshi Bai Saheba, the senior rani and widow of Sivaji II, sued the British Government for declaring the title of "Raja of Tanjore" extinct, and for usurping ownership of the private estates and temples that were traditionally under the legal and economic purview of the royal family. In 1863, the temples and their endowments were restored to Kamakshi Bai and her successors until 1912.

On the one hand, these inscriptions clearly represent a concern for the concubines’ social legitimacy in the context of the shifting political and moral economies of colonial Tanjore. On the other, Tanjore temples represented tremendous cultural capital for both the colonial Government and the defunct kingdom. The "gifts of power" represented by the donative activities of women in colonial Tanjore, I argue, are pathways for the redistribution of wealth to palace-owned temples at a time when the temples were critically in need, and concubines, like the ranis, participated in the reclaiming of civic and sacred space in the city.

Spess, Laura


The urban landscapes of the cities of South Asia are dominated by persistent and dynamic informal settlements. As the majority of the urban population, slum dwellers' investments in the (self) built environment and social structures of the urban landscape literally make the city, and yet the history of the slum population in South Asian cities is frequently one of dislocation from and dispossession of the landscapes they have built. Employing Lefebvrian notions of inhabitance, my proposed paper develops the idea that primitive accumulation of slum properties is a unique form of dispossession, namely displacement, that serves to separate the primary producers of urban space from the means of production of urban space through the curtailment of slum dwellers' appropriation of and participation in the urban landscape. In this paper I will explore how this theory of urbanization and population displacement manifests in the patterns and politics of slum settlements in two cities, Karachi and Mumbai.

In several important ways Karachi and Mumbai are converging with regard to governance structures. Specifically, a common set of financial reforms including market liberalization, trade liberalization and privatization is opening land and housing markets to competitive forces. In the case of Mumbai, decentralization of industry has also led to the devalorization of the industrial infrastructure, setting the stage
for the gentrification of significant portions of the landscape. Broadly conceived, these changes describe a shift from policies driven by redistribution to policies driven by competition. These changes should have significant impacts on the ability of the urban poor to appropriate the urban landscape.

Next, both cities are undergoing a significant devolution of governance functions, both from the national to the local and municipal and from government to civil society. The clearest expression of this devolution is the changing role and relationships of non-governmental and slum dwellers' residential organizations. In Karachi the residents' associations in katchi abadis were originally structured around manipulating the structures of patronage. Increasingly, these organizations are working in concert with NGOs to self-provision infrastructure services. Likewise in Mumbai, where slum dwellers' organizations were previously focused on direct action, they are now engaging with an expanding population of NGOs. These changes should have significant impacts on the ability of the urban poor to participate in the political processes of the city.

**Srinivas, Smriti**

Mapping Suburbanization and Spirituality in Bangalore

My paper begins with the scale of contemporary urbanization in India. In 1950, the number of people living in its cities was 60 million; by 2008, it had increased to about 350 million, one of the most important demographic transitions in recent history. While older religious collectives and religious sites retain their salience in metropolitan areas, the ‘middle classes’ are developing a fast-growing interest in techniques of the body such as yoga, healing traditions such as the Buddhist Reiki energy practice, martial arts, or meditation taught by spiritual teachers from a variety of traditions. Against this background, my paper explores the recent waves of suburbanization and spirituality in Bangalore, a metropolitan area with a population of about 7 million. I connect my paper to the conceptual terrain opened by James in his recent writings on the contemporary city in South Asia: for e.g. in Network City (2004), where he traces the emergence of Bangalore as India’s technopole and links information technology, social organization, and spatial change. My paper is an exploration of various “languages of space” (The City in South Asia, 2008) in Bangalore as I link regimes of the body with high-tech driven spatial/social transformation. Through an examination of several sites in the city, I will try and explore why and how the body becomes central to individual and social power, healing, and transformation. How can we understand the Indian middle-class movement toward novel forms of urban spiritual sensibility and practice that cannot be located solely within indigenous religious traditions? How do we “map” or situate spatially this somatic turn against recent urbanization/suburbanization processes?

**Stasik, Danuta**

Indian Diaspora in Usha Priyamvada's Fiction

This paper will review and analyze Professor Nilsson's creative writing, especially her writings dealing with India's diaspora. It will show how Professor Nilsson's depiction of Indians' lives and relationships in the diaspora have been seen as models to imitate by subsequent writers dealing with the diaspora.

**Strange, Stuart**

Talking about Race and Ritual in Suriname

Suriname is unique in the Caribbean South Asian indenture diaspora for the degree to which the Indo-Surinamese population has maintained Indic languages as the language of everyday life. In this paper I examine
how Sarnami (a koine of Bhojpuri and other eastern Hindi dialects) is used to refer and negotiate ritual consultations carried out by Afro-Surinamese shamans for predominately South Asian clienteles. Such rituals, while conducted in the national lingua franca Sranan Tongo, mediate distinct worlds of knowledge for which Indic, predominately Hindu, ritual terms predominate to describe the experience and expectations of ritual practice and the forces it represents. By analyzing the ways in which practices are translated in a specific social context, I aim to capture some of the complexity at stake in cultural translation more broadly, and to expose the ways in which colonial ethno-racial discourses about Indianness and Blackness continue to circulate in the personal political construction and mediation of difference and power in Surinamese society. Further, by examining the ways Bhojpuri speakers themselves select ritual terms and descriptions in relationship to Hindi, the privileged idiom of pure Indian identity, the paper will further attempt to deal with the complex processes of diasporic phenomenology, engaging with how language is used to index how certain broad ideologies of identity and its practice are experienced and produced through the specific historical referents of indenture and India, which continue to define socio-political possibility for Surinamese South Asians.

Sugandhi, Namita

Connecting Early Rajasthan: Network perspectives and the Chatrikhera Research Project

This paper presents some of the research results and plans for the site of Chatrikhera in southeastern Rajasthan. Chatrikhera has deposits which date from the 3rd millennia BCE onwards, representing cultural complexes from the Ahar Banas period through Early Historic. One of the long term research goals of the Chatrikhera Research Project is to examine the way in which this site may have been integrated into existing networks of political and economic interaction across the Mewar Plain and beyond. Comparisons may be made to the contemporaneous site of Gilund, which lies 2.6 kilometers away and is primarily known from excavations targeting the Ahar Banas period occupation. The site may also be contrasted with known Early Historic settlements such as Nagari, Iswal and Bairat. This will provide us with a broader understanding of how regional patterns of political and economic life may have changed over time, and will also allow us to investigate continuities that extend beyond variously defined cultural periods.

Sunder Rajan, Rajeswari

Contemporary Indian Writing in English: Non-fiction Prose and its Futures

There is general consensus about the extent and excellence of the writing produced in English in India today, particularly in the form of non-fictional prose. It would appear that English writing is becoming less merely ‘literary’ in this milieu, at the same time that prosaic writing is gaining in ‘literariness’. And as English percolates to a more general level of writerly usage, it makes itself more at home in India. It is from this comfort level that its future achievements in the literary field are likely to flow.

The question I address in this paper is whether non-fiction prose is a supplement to or is radically disjunct from the conditions that have produced Anglophone prose fiction in India, and in what ways. I read contemporary non-fiction prose in English in terms of a break rather than a change from both fiction and earlier prose writing, primarily because of the changed conditions that have spawned it. These conditions, I argue, have dynamically altered the significance of English in India. Anglophone Indian fiction has a colonial genealogy it cannot disavow, but the new non-fiction is the product of a different formation, loosely called globalization, in which English has a more demotic dimension. Among other things, the sheer quantity and heterogeneity of such writing transforms the mode.

As a preliminary ground clearing therefore I offer a rough-and-ready classification of non-fiction genres. Focussing on English language journalism, I suggest that it has inaugurated a new realism in Indian writing in English. Drawing on experience, observation, research, involvement and investigation, and given the medium’s...
voracious appetite for the sensational, journalistic writing has opened up a field of endless possibilities, some of it with no equivalent in fiction in English.

Swami, Vandana

Railway Landscape and Genealogies of Colonial Dispossession in India

Railways first ran on Indian soil on 18th April, 1853. The Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company (hereinafter GIPR) laid a 21 mile track between Bombay and Thana in western India. Its opening and first run became a cause celebre, a vital moment to reaffirm faith in the ability of colonialism to ensure India’s ‘Moral and Material Progress’. Taking the history and route expansion of the GIPR as its empirical universe, this paper uses hitherto unexplored archival materials from Indian archives to cast a critical look at aspects of formation of ‘railway landscape’ in colonial India. It presents a reading of legal and institutional mechanisms that led to the creation of ‘railway land’ specifically for purposes of railway construction in colonial India around mid to late 19th century. The paper documents human dispossession that was caused by this – for instance, through enforcement of several Railway Acts to aid the colonial state in expropriation of native subjects from their land and when necessitated by demands of railway construction, or, on other occasions, the use of these acts to identify common property as a ‘wasteland’ and subsequently cordon it off as government owned ‘railway land’.

This paper also makes a case for viewing colonial construction of railways as suggestive of a perceptible shift in imperial ways of envisioning and seeing India as a new geographical frontier that subsequently becomes conjoined with world historical structures of British hegemony and argues that this shift in the imperial vision leads to a new way of reordering space in India. This process involves a massive government takeover of land for railway building. By highlighting some of the social impacts of this state takeover of lands upon native populations the paper thus tries to bring out what Ranajit Guha calls the ‘small voice of history’ in the process of railway construction in colonial India.

Through this entire discussion, the paper seeks to provide an alternative and little-discussed history of railway landscape – one that charts genealogies of human dispossession and displacement caused by railways. Far too often, the impact of railway construction on Indian society has not been adequately theorized or critically analyzed and the supremacy of railways as agents of modernization and progress remains unquestioned.

Syed, Aurangzeb

Jihad in Punjab

How the different interpretations of Jihad al-Akbar and Jihad-al Asghar have affected the Muslim liberation movement, and later radicalization of politics in the Northwest areas.

Taber, Patricia

Refiguring place, space, and identity: Class, Gender, and the Public Sphere in South India

In India and elsewhere, pinning down a precise definition of 'middle class' has proven elusive. Definitions vary considerably not only in published reports, but ‘on the ground’ among those who self-identify as such. Everyone has a sense of elements that constitute a middle-class lifestyle, and of their relative position in this category, but parameters are broad, fuzzy at the edges, and seem to constantly shift. Exacerbating this
uncertainty are transformations brought about with globalization. When one throws gender into the mix, the picture becomes even more complicated. From its very outset as part of colonial and nationalist projects in India, women have been central to middle class distinctions that balance precariously between locally-conceived concepts of ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity.’ India’s opening to global economic forces, and increased access to higher education, development programs, and information have provided material incentives and conceptual tools for exploring new avenues for self-actualization. Negotiating this evolving combination of old and new ideas and prospects is especially problematic for women of the middle classes because, while they are uniquely positioned to take advantage of these opportunities, they are also regarded as the keepers of tradition, and role models for proper female behavior. While girls today are encouraged to pursue post-secondary educations and even careers, this was not true for their mothers’ generation. Especially in smaller urban and rural areas, conceptions of middle-class respectability defined in part by female domesticity, dependence on men, and an “etiquette of public invisibility” has hindered or precluded even highly-educated women’s participation in “outside” employment. Despite resistance, however, a few intrepid women have taken the “bold step,” as they refer to it, into small-scale entrepreneurship. Based upon life story narratives and inter-generational conversations recorded in Mysore during 1998-99, just as the impact of liberalization was being felt, this paper explores what it means to be a middle-class woman at this critical historical juncture. Because middle-class identity has been grounded in the domesticity of its women, their increasing participation in the public domain is more noticeable, and arguably more significant, than that of women ‘above’ and ‘below’ who are not as bound by these same expectations. Focusing on entrepreneurial women and using ‘indigenous’ understandings of middle class, the paper argues that through expansion of their roles into economic activities, women are destabilizing definitions of what constitutes ‘middle-class woman’ and thus in the process, ‘middle-class family’ and ‘middle-class culture.’

**Talbot, Cynthia**

Advocating Allegiance in Early Modern India: The Proto-Patriotism of Svami Dharma

I wish to examine how the rhetoric of svami-dharma or loyalty to the overlord is deployed in a particular Rajput text, Prithviraj Raso, in order to explore its importance for the consolidation of royal authority in early modern India and also as a precursor to the nationalist sentiments of the late nineteenth century. The long recension of Prithviraj Raso, its most widely known form, was largely produced at the Sisodiya court of Udaipur during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This vernacular epic about the twelfth-century king Prithviraj Cauhan and his valiant samanta warriors presented a paradigm for the relationship between ruler and subordinate chiefs that the Sisodiyas wanted to establish in their own kingdom. The episode of Kanha, for instance, instilled the message that a warrior should never take independent action, no matter how heroic, without authorization from his lord. Because Kanha impetuously killed some visiting princes who had insultingly twirled their moustaches at him, Prithviraj Cauhan forced him to wear a blindfold from then on, except when actually on the battlefield. The unwavering allegiance to the overlord that Prithviraj Raso upholds as the warrior's primary duty would require the suppression of personal desires, family loyalties, and clan interests -- an attitude that the Sisodia kings, who were constantly contesting power with their feudatory chiefs, would surely have liked to encourage. I will conclude by suggesting that the discourse on svami dharma in Rajput texts like Prithviraj Raso was a significant reason why retellings of the Rajput past became so popular among early Indian nationalists. Svami dharma asked individuals to put aside their narrow self interest for a cause that lay beyond family or sect and thus constituted the closest precolonial parallel to the modern notion of patriotism.

**Tamang, Seira**

The Fragile Yam: Nepali “Stateness” and the Renegotiation of Gendered Citizenship
“Adequate stateness” and the “sovereignty” of Nepal has been of much concern for Nepali state elites throughout history. The proverbial “Nepal is a yam between two boulders” reflects these concerns as does the continuing stress on Nepal’s non-colonialized, bir (brave) history. The easy discourse of masculinized independence has always been threatened by the country’s geo-political situation, reliance on foreign aid for survival and the periodic labelling of “Nepal in crisis.” The latter has recently become highlighted again in the juncture of the 10 year Maoist war, international concerns of Nepal’s potential to be a “failed state” and Nepal’s current portrayal as a “fragile state.”

This paper seeks to understand the manner in which state elites negotiated the new labels, with special attention to the period in which the triangular conflict between the then active monarchy, the then mainstream political parties and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists), was at its heights. This includes an analysis of the manner in which gendered discourses were employed as the relationship of state/subject/citizenship and the new labeling of state inadequacy, was simultaneously negotiated nationally and internationally. The paper argues that the complex contradictions and ambiguities of these discourses and positionings need to be historically situated and understood as intended and unintended consequences of attempts to adhere to models of ‘modern statehood’ imposed on Nepal and the developing world in general.

Tamot, Raju

“THICKENING” THE MEMBERSHIP: IDENTITY, TRANSNATIONALISM, AND THE LEGACY OF HOME AMONG THE PROFESSIONAL NEPALESE IN THE UNITED STATES

Despite the vast research by scholars on transnationalism, little is known about how highly-skilled immigrants from failed or near-failed states construct their identities and continue to participate in the affairs of the nation-state they had ostensibly left behind. The existing literature hardly distinguishes between the transnational processes occurring at the low and high skill ends of the migration spectrum, and the overall image that emerges from the literature is that contemporary immigrants behave in significantly different ways than their predecessors. Much of the focus has been on how immigrant communities take actions, make decisions, develop subjectivities, and forge collective identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states. This paper analyzes the identity construction processes of US based professional Nepalese immigrant community vis-à-vis Nepalese ruling elites and their attempts to influence outcomes and political processes in Nepal despite the Nepalese state’s intention to limit such involvements. Using the anthropological concepts of “Self” and “Other,” and “Identity,” I argue that the identity construction processes and transnational activities of contemporary immigrant groups who hail from failed or near-failed states are shaped by the contexts of their particular and specific histories. Fieldwork was conducted in the United States and both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from research subjects, many of whom were members of the professional Nepalese cadre in the past. An analysis of the interviews and survey data revealed that the professional Nepalese immigrants had a strong legacy of home, constructed an identity of the “Self” in direct opposition to the negative Nepalese elite “Other,” and attempted to “thicken” their membership in the Nepali nation-state by engaging themselves with democratizing tendencies and charitable works in Nepal. Studies of the Self and Other, and Identity discard the conventional approach of locating cultures in time, and reflect a shift within anthropology. Theoretically, this paper argues for the utility of rethinking these anthropological concepts in studying the contestations and discourses taking place in transnational public spaces between different competing groups.

Taneja, Leena

Expecting the Unexpected: The Secret of the Gift in Gaudiya Vaishnavism

This paper considers mythological material on the gift drawn from the bhakti school of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Three interrelated concepts pertaining to the Gaudiya view of the gift are considered: prasada, prema and
prapatti—respectively translated as “grace”, “love” and “surrender”. The paper argues that the central theological principles of difference and otherness in the Gaudiya school shape its view of the perfect gift.

Though there are plenty of gift-stories to choose from in Vaishnava literature that highlight these concepts, this paper begins by recalling a tale from the Bhagavad-Purana that describes how Sudama, a poor Brahmin friend of Krishna, offers the lord some meager chipped rice during a visit to Krishna’s opulent city of Dwarka. Though unable to feed his own wife and children, out of love the Brahmin gives what he does not have, asking nothing in return. However, once he returns home, Sudama finds his fortune has unexpectedly changed due to Krishna’s limitless grace.

The ideas of prasada and prema in this myth are explored as ‘excessive’ gifts that challenge the logic of reciprocity and expectation. Sudama’s simple gift was accompanied by prema or unconditional love, which cannot be reciprocated. In this Vaishnava school, a devotee’s gift can exceed the deity’s expectations. What Sudama gave was not ‘big’ in value—but ‘big’ in sentiment or bhava. The emotion attached to his gift far exceeded anything that Krishna could give him in return. A devotee’s gift can thus overwhelm the deity with its abundance and lack of calculation, making the deity indebted to his bhakta (devotee).

The paper concludes by considering how prapatti complements this model of Vaishnava gifting. Prapatti describes an act of surrender that is sufficient to secure the deity’s grace, yet it is done without hope for reward or the certainty of reciprocation. A noteworthy example of prapatti appears in the Mahabharata when Queen Draupadi surrenders to Krishna as she is disrobed by the evil Duryodana. She holds on to her sari, but in an act of utter self-surrender she finally lets go and gives herself completely to Krishna. Not expecting or hoping to be rescued, Draupadi’s moment of surrender is an act of pure prema that is reciprocated by Krishna’s grace. The gift of surrender is chiefly devoted to asymmetrical and disinterested giving, which imparts a potent element of indeterminacy and implies an undeniable leap of faith on the part of the donor.

Tareen, SherAli

Intra-Muslim Polemics on the Doctrine of Prophetic Intercession (Shafa'at) in 19th Century India

In this paper, I attempt to theorize the categories of ‘agency’ and ‘sovereignty’ in the study of South Asian Islam by analyzing intra-Muslim polemics over the legitimacy of saintly and prophetic intercession (shafa’at). More specifically, this paper is based on an analysis of a critical polemical encounter on this subject between two prominent South Asian Muslim thinkers in the 19th century Shah Ismai’l Shahid (d.1831) and Mawlana Fazl-i Haqq Khayrabadi (d.1861).

By using theorist Carl Schmitt's meditations on the category of sovereignty as my primary conceptual apparatus, I argue that the polemical warfare between Khayrabadi and Shahid over the legitimacy of Prophetic intercession is reflective of a much larger and more consequential tussle over competing sociologies of the concept of sovereignty at a critical juncture in the political history of South Asian Islam, that of the ascendancy of the British and the waning of the Mughal Empire (the early 19th century).

In his famous Persian text Taqviyat al-Iman (Energizing the Faith), Shah Ismai’l Shahid articulates a theory of intercession that resists hierarchies of human authority in the realm of salvation and that attempts to establish a direct and unfiltered channel of communication between God and his subjects. His intercession model is grounded on a markedly democratic politics of salvation which rests on a broader critique of monarchical authority. Shahid argues that God is not an elitist like temporal kings who dispense their mercy in a bureaucratic fashion. Access to God’s court does not require any petitions or endorsements from viziers, princes or people of nobility.
In contrast, Fazl-i Haqq Khayrabadi, Shahid's intellectual nemesis and a scholar closely attached to the Mughal court, argues in his refutation of Taqviyat al-Iman that since God has established the Prophet as his most beloved subject, he will always accept the latter’s petitions on behalf of sinful people. While the populist thrust in Shahid’s thinking is driven by an egalitarian politics of salvation grounded on the eradication of all hierarchies between divine sovereignty and the human subject, Khayrabadi’s populism feeds on a defensive psychology of redemption that empowers her through the reassurance of the prophet's infinite magnanimity. The central question that animates this paper is the following: how does this supposedly theological debate between Khayrabadi and Shahid over the legitimacy of prophetic intercession relate to a broader political question to do with competing imaginations of prophetic authority and human agency in Muslim colonial India?

Thachil, Tariq

The Saffron Wave Meets the Silent Revolution: Understanding Subaltern Hindu Nationalism

My paper seeks to understand how religious nationalist parties with historically elite support bases can win the mass support required to succeed in democratic politics. These parties, and the movements which generate them, often begin with small pockets of elite leadership and support, and then face the difficult task of negotiating the need to win over low-income electorates without alienating their elite core constituencies. To address this question, my project examines the variable success of the upper-caste, Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has succeeded in wooing poor Hindu populations in some parts of India, but not in others. Scholars of India have been surprised by the sudden and unprecedented support among poor marginalized Hindu electorates for the BJP at the polls. Subaltern communities, specifically those of former ‘untouchables’ (Dalits), and indigenous ‘tribal’ populations (Adivasis) have been historically alienated from Hindu nationalism, seeing it as an upper-caste movement representing elite interests. What made Hinduism’s oppressed join hands with those who persecuted them?

My paper begins by outlining how during the 1990s, the BJP turned to an innovative strategy dependent on work performed by its grassroots civil society affiliates in the wider Hindu nationalist movement. These organizations began rapidly expanding their provision of social services to overcome the distrust of Dalit and Adivasi communities. I argue that this ‘service’ strategy is responsible for the success the BJP has had with marginalized voters, and was uniquely well-suited to help reconcile the tensions inherent between the twin goals of upper caste interests and subaltern recruitment.

I test this hypothesis by examining subaltern political behavior at several levels, and in doing so offers the first systematic, multi-level, mixed-methods analysis of subaltern voter behavior in India. Using the largest available survey sample of Dalit and Adivasi voters, I analyze the impact of Sangh social services on BJP support patterns at both the state and individual level. Using both statistical and qualitative techniques, I examine whether the extensiveness of Sangh social service organizations in a state is associated with the BJP’s electoral fortunes at both the state and individual level. Drawing on extensive interviews with Hindu nationalist activists, I also outline the mechanisms through which seva [service] is deployed as a rhetorical frame for effective political recruitment for the BJP. I conclude by analyzing the significance of these findings in emphasizing our need to complicate our understanding of religious nationalism’s appeal with the poor in India.

Thangaraj, Miriam

Non-governmentalization of the school feeding program in India: Remarkable growth, unremarked growth

This paper is a qualitative inquiry into the non-governmentalization of the state’s provision of educational services that increasingly typifies ‘development’ efforts in the ‘Third World’, and finds frequent mention in national education policy. Traceable to ‘development organizations’ like the World Bank or UNICEF, non-
governmentalization is framed in terms of a variety of normative discourses, from humanistic conceptions of ‘rights’ or ‘participation’, to market-driven formulations of ‘accountability’ and ‘efficiency’. These constructions, I argue, bear closer investigation, to explicate how their universalizing claims interact with the more situated priorities of state systems and local norms. Given the persistent inequalities that characterize the societies targeted by development organizations, are the emancipatory claims of non-governmentalization in education policy borne out by the lived experiences of local communities? This question takes on particular urgency in the neoliberal context of a scaled-back state that has carved out a growing space, seemingly uninterrupted by national borders, in which such developmental organizations operate.

My own investigation inquires into the remarkable – and unremarked – growth of non-governmental presence within the state-sponsored school feeding program in India, the largest of its kind in the world. It does so by means of a case-study of one of the largest meal preparation centers in the country, run by a non-profit organization, in the Southern Indian state of Karnataka. What began as a charitable practice of serving food to poor students has, in the short span of eight years, grown over a thousand-fold, into an organization, with substantial physical and social capital, and one that is increasingly seen as a model for the expansion of the school feeding program.

Driving this extraordinary growth were transnational development networks, taken-for-granted policy ideals informed by the development discourse – transparency and participation – as well as market-based ideas of efficiency and quality. Yet, I found little ‘on the ground’ evidence in support of these claims for non-governmentalization; in fact, the development discourse often obscured how policy-in-practice reinforced the marginalization of the very populations – rural students and disadvantaged women – that it sought to undo. Moreover, while non-governmental organizations participated in school feeding programs with resources derived in part from the state, their growth was predicated on de-legitimating the role of the state in controlling the program.

**Thapa, Dikshya**

**Competing Citizenship Regimes in a Maoist Democracy**

Nepal, an otherwise standard, traditionally weak, aid dependent state, has emerged as an extremely interesting site for the study of rapidly transforming state-society relations. A successful peasant revolution in the 21st century was followed by one of the most radical, yet peaceful, political transitions the world has seen. The emergence of the erstwhile rebels as a legitimate political force led to rapid dismantling of the established order: the age old feudal Monarchy was abolished, the state secularised and a Constituent Assembly with an unprecedented representation of women, ethnic minorities, and civil society activists instituted to write a new constitution.

In my paper I situate this transformation within a broader framework of the nature of citizenship. Using the case of Nepal, I argue that in a majority of third world countries, citizenship needs to be conceived not as a status conferred upon people by the state, but as a negotiated process of achieving rights and recognition that increasingly involves non state actors. States and citizens cannot be located in a familiar vertical division as traditionally theorized in Western liberal scholarship. This is not only because a large section of the population does not have access to the state but also because non state actors are increasingly determining the structure and content of political, social and civil rights. In Nepal, a growing body of non-governmental organizations exist horizontally with the state. NGOs have proliferated from 330 in 1990 to a staggering 33,000 in 2005. By providing welfare and social protection, these non-state actors play a significant role in determining the experience of citizenship. This paper analyzes tensions between a neoliberal ‘citizenship’ conceived by donors and NGO activities on the one hand, and the citizenship advanced by Maoist ideology on the other. It argues that the current struggles over redistribution and recognition in the form of a plethora of claims on the state manifest this tension, demonstrating in effect, the conflict inherent in high modernist attempts at social transformation.
Thiranagama, Sharika

The Railway to the Moon: The Post-History of the Sri Lankan Northern Line

This paper takes the 1905 opening and 1990 closure of the Northern Line, the railway line running the breadth of Sri Lanka, south to north. The paper argues that institutions of public transport, particularly railways, are never divorced from, but mutually constituted by, and give form and life to, the spatial organization of state power, and, historically and politically constructed notions of ‘the public’. The building of transportation in British Ceylon, mapped a particular spatial and administrative imagination of the island which created a new central metropolis, Colombo, and also saw and administered land as fundamentally ethnically and linguistically differentiated. Railway lines thus were, from the first, constituted as traversing different ethnic areas. Moreover, trains and people are similarly vulnerable, I suggest, being both ethnically constituted and yet constantly on the move; re-entrenching ideas of people being from certain places but undermining it by the sheer necessity of Tamil movement and residence across the island. This vulnerability was never made more clear than when the LTTE attempted to constitute itself as a state through the control of movement in 1990 and the destruction of the Northern railway.

The premise of this paper is that the re-opening of the train line and the possibility of a peaceful Sri Lanka are questions of the same order. The running of railways to the north comes to represent the possibility of an ordinary everyday post-war life to generations born after the 1980s who have never ridden the Northern railway. Railways are sites where the future is claimed, by state and extra-state actors, and those known as the ‘public’, ‘the people’ etc. Any possible opening of the Northern railway is a vital site for understanding not only visions of ‘state-ness’ but also the desire of ordinary people in the north of Sri Lanka to regain control over their own movement and rebuild their lives. Thus I show how different kind of states - colonial, post colonial, and rebel - made claims to sovereignty through the construction and destruction of infrastructure, as well as showing that trains, like people, violate boundaries continually.

Thomas, Sonja

“Mathamillatha Jeevan”: Minority Rights, Ritualized Female Sexuality and the 2008 7th Standard Textbook Controversy in Kerala, India

Education in Kerala, India, has been touted as the state’s finest achievement. Kerala is often referenced for its high literacy rates. Encouraging education has reportedly resulted in an average later marriage age for women, smaller family sizes, a proclivity to seek health care and social services, and migration for jobs outside the state. In short, education is embedded into the very fabric of Kerala society. Yet as Christians run the majority of private schools, the right to impart a moral education to students has continually clashed with the educational aims of the secular state. This paper examines the Syrian Christian agitation against the 2008 7th standard social studies textbook and gender/sexual morals that undercut larger debates on educating children. Analysis of the protest will reveal how the state champions a distinct view of secularism that is many times at odds with the state’s aim to protect minority rights. Further, I examine how contemporary understandings of religion are related to past gender codes that effectively work to control women’s sexuality.

Syrian Christians are an upper-caste and affluent community in Kerala. In 2008, they protested a fictional story in the 7th standard social studies textbook entitled “Mathamillatha Jeevan” (religion-less Jeevan). Jeevan, a child of an inter-faith marriage, is asked by the headmaster to identify his religion and caste. His father
answers: no religion, no caste, and that Jeevan can choose his religion as he wishes later in life. Fierce protests against the alleged anti-God sentiments in the textbook disrupted public life from June-August, 2008.

The first part of this paper examines the rallying cry to protect minority rights that united thousands of Syrian Christians. Christian managements argued that Christian run institutions have a constitutional right to impart moral education to students. Thus I examine the contention between the secular state’s aim to protect minority religions and the state’s simultaneous promise to protect the right to choose religious faith/no faith.

Underlying the communal protest of the textbook is a larger uneasiness around inter-faith/inter-caste marriages. The second part of this paper is an analysis of how sexual norms define conceptions of morality and moral education in South Asia. Using Uma Chakravorty’s notion of ritualized female sexuality through endogamous marriages, I will discuss ways in which the protest’s invocation of minority rights masked a historical trajectory of Syrian Christian political discourse aimed to preserve their upper caste ideals through the control of women’s sexuality.

Tokita-Tanabe, Yumiko

Negotiating New Cultural Spaces: Defining and Enacting Civility among Urban Middle-class Women in Orissa, India

This paper argues that urban middle-class women in Orissa, India, are negotiating new cultural spaces as a means for defining themselves as belonging to the public sphere and civil society. Evidence will be given from fieldwork and interviews among urban middle-class women in Bhubaneswar, the state capital of Orissa. These women draw distinctions between themselves and their images of hyper-modern metropolitan women and rustic rural women. They regard the former type of women as egoistic westernized individuals, and the latter type as backward, uneducated, bound by tradition and unable to take part in the public sphere and civil society. By differentiating themselves from these two extreme types, urban middle-class women in Bhubaneswar try to creatively enact a new aesthetics of the self that is in tune with the prevalent notions of civility in their society. This involves the construction and embodiment of practices that enable women to adjust freely to situations which involve interaction with new people and different contexts, and at the same time to conduct themselves in such a way that they are not criticized by the people around them. It is important to note that they do not consider themselves as “individuals” whose own thinking and desires matter most. Rather, they view themselves always in relation to their social surroundings and internalize the gaze of others as their own. This, however, does not mean to say that they are merely parts of a whole whose presence is determined in the social structure. Women in the present study value their own thinking and appearance, and place importance on the capacity to do business alone, without failing to satisfy cultural aesthetics and ethics as proper and smart women. They exercise agency in creating a new kind of aesthetic standard for urban middle-class women. However, it should be pointed out that there are workings of gender politics and commercialism which tend to submerge the new space of embodied aesthetics. Urban middle-class women in Bhubaneswar are very conscious about going outside the home, doing their work and coming back promptly, as public space is still not safe for women. Also, spending time on the streets or in shopping areas gives the impression of being “loose” women. This paper concludes that although the women under study are successfully developing a new embodied aesthetics, their significant participation in civil society will be difficult to achieve unless they can feel secure in public space.

Topdar, Sudipa

‘Disciplining the Child’s Body: Physical Culture and Imagining the Nation in Bengal, (1880-1925)
Inculcating the spirit of physical culture became an important means of developing masculinity and morality among the youth in the nineteenth century. In England, for instance, the spirit of “Muscular Christianity” promoted games such as rugby, cricket and rowing in schools which not only infused team spirit that was so crucial for serving the Empire, but also encouraged athleticism and a cult of robust masculinity (Mangan 1981). During the same period, in the context of India however, the objectives of physical education in colonial schools were only outwardly similar to that in Britain. The introduction of physical education in Indian school curriculum was largely driven by notorious stereotypes such as the ‘effeminate Bengali’. The rhetoric of bodily traits of the Bengali (more so the bhadralok male) as being ‘undisciplined’, ‘lazy’ and ‘lacking order and punctuality’ became a means to critique the disorder of the larger social fabric of Indian society and of Indian bodies that needed transformation.

This paper is based on scholarship that focuses on the body as a means of understanding colonial encounters. Drawing from Kathleen Canning, I study bodies both as sites of colonial inscription/reinscription as well as allegorical emblems that promise new understandings of nation and social formations (Canning, 1999). This paper investigates two inter-related themes, first, the processes of disciplining the Indian child’s body within colonial schools through the introduction of physical education as part of the curriculum. Second, positing the Bengali children’s magazine as a parallel form of learning—a nationalist pedagogy and informal schooling as it were-- the paper investigates the discourses on physical culture and anxieties surrounding masculinity as manifested in this literature between 1880 and 1925. These magazines acted as an active catalyst for imagining the democratic nation of the future, retelling its history, as well as conceptualizing the metaphor of middle-class Bengali childhood.

Trivedi, Mudit

Revisiting Kausambi: Archaeological Perspectives on Identity, Complexity and Process in the Formative Ganga Basin

The site of Kausambi is famous in the historical and archaeological study of ancient India. The massive 200 Hectare 'fortified urban settlement' has been subject to extensive engagements from those who study ancient literature, art history and archaeologists. The University of Allahabad conducted extensive excavations at the site in the 1950's, the interpretations of which, especially on matters of chronology and culture-historical 'authorship' became part of an epochal debate which laid out the parameters under which the ‘Early Historical’ period came to be framed. These discourses, in their emphases upon ethnic identification and particular measures of social complexity are crucial to the manner in which the Indian archaeological record continues to be read. In the aftermath of the debate George Erdosy's regional survey in the 1980’s produced new information for the region and Kausambi thus came to serve again as the archetypal case study in the consideration of the ‘second urbanisation’.

This paper provides in the first instance a discussion and unpacking of this debate. This exercise provides a unique opportunity to index and compare different evaluations of the status of material evidence in historical interpretation. The second part of the paper describes the results of a systematic surface survey which was conducted at the site in the summer of 2008 and covered a 9 square kilometer region centred upon the core fortified area. Based upon these results the paper presents an alternative history of the site and the region, one which stresses local and regional processes and cultural complexes in its formative period rather than explanations premised upon migration or diffusion. Further, still tentative assessments of the changing morphology of the site over its chronology, in conjunction with a wider re-assessment of settlement archaeology over the region suggest that new dimensions of the Urban process may be understood from Kausambi; specifically that at three different points of time in its history it served in very different forms as a recognizable urban centre in the regional landscape. Finally, the survey results allow for the first time of the documentation of a succession of medieval occupations of the site; which may serve as a site for a discussion about how these massive tell-like sites have been understood and emplotted within ‘received-wisdoms’ and text-based
metanarratives about Ancient Indian history. Revisiting Kausambi thus provides for an envisioning of a more pluralist and multi-sited history of the formative period in the Ganga Basin.

**Tucker, Richard**

Environmental Impacts of Military Operations in the Western Himalayas

The 1963 border war between India and China was brief, but it showed that India was not well prepared to defend its northern frontiers militarily. In following years the Indian Army constructed many miles of mountain roads and other facilities to remedy that weakness. The environmental costs vary from one ecological zone to another, and understanding of them can be enriched by the history of military operations in that region.

Local wars between mountain kingdoms have not been reviewed for their localized environmental impacts, such as deforestation and disruption of soil and water resources. The last instance of mass conflict before the advent of industrialized British forces was the Gurkha invasion of Kumaon in the late eighteenth century. Early British records indicate that the cutting of hardwood timber for tribute damaged the deodar forests of middle elevations. Moreover, many villagers fled their homes, leaving terraces untended and crumbling for long periods, with serious loss of soil. We can hypothesize that long-term decline of vegetation occurred in the agricultural zone.

Farther northwest, the British conquest of Punjab in the late 1840s opened a new era in military operations, with major environmental impacts. Military cantonments required massive amounts of Himalayan hardwood timber, and the new railways of the 1850s (built for both military and civilian purposes) used vast numbers of deodar trees from the middle forest zone to the north. Floating the trees down mountain rivers caused serious disruption of the riverbed ecology.

By 1914, as Europe plunged into the “Great War,” the colonial forest service was in a position to accelerate timber harvests for warfare far beyond India’s borders. Emergency wartime timber production had long-term consequences for peacetime, as many forest roads were built for the new motor vehicles. World War II intensified these processes, for by then the technology and managerial regime were capable of timber harvesting on a larger scale.

The aftermath of global war was even more significant for the western Himalayan region. The mass violence of Partition was another and more chaotic form of warfare, similar in ways to civil wars elsewhere. Relocation of refugees on both sides of the border disrupted ecosystems. In India, Punjabi refugees settled wide stretches of the Tarai foothills, clearing forests to create new croplands. As these events indicate, it is often difficult to define the ecological boundaries between warfare and peacetime.

**V., Vishnupad**

Reconfiguring Risk: Rethinking Life Insurance in Contemporary India

This paper considers the place of life insurance as a technology of risk in the Indian context following the liberalization of economy in the early 1990’s. Through over four decades, and prompted by the postcolonial, socialist Indian state, life insurance functioned more as a tax saving device than as a financial instrument engaging risk and uncertainty. Using my ethnographic research at an insurance firm (and at an advertising firm working on an insurance campaign) nonetheless I show that following the opening of the insurance market to the private firms in late 2000, the language has begun to shift towards implicating insurance as an efficient risk technology and more than adequate for engaging conditions of social indeterminacy and uncertainty engendered by the neo-liberal market processes. However, notwithstanding such endeavors of the private insurance firms, the social conceptualization of life insurance as a mode of negotiating risk and uncertainty, especially for a public used to treating it as tax saving instrument, I argue in this paper, is neither obvious nor natural. What it
has consequently required of the insurance firms and their advertising agencies is the relentless dissemination through media technologies and other means of this new language of risk and the appropriateness of insurance as a mode of addressing it.

The paper contributes towards the emerging body of ethnographic work on processes of globalization and neoliberalism in general and the effects of these phenomena in South Asia in particular. The significance of my project as will be elicited through this paper is the grounding of the ethnographic research within market institutions and in foregrounding its understanding of and perspective on the Indian social. This paper forms a part of my dissertation project, which is an ethnography of the market conditions in contemporary India.

Vadde, Aarthi

Modernity and Internationalism in the Writing of Rabindranath Tagore

This paper reflects on Rabindranath Tagore’s political marginalization circa 1915 until his death in 1941, and argues that Tagore’s internationalism during this period is important to rethinking the relationship between national belonging and cosmopolitanism in postcolonial studies today. Tagore’s politics frustrates the vocabulary we use to talk about political ideologies, affiliations, dispositions, and oppositions. He was anticolonial without being a nationalist; he was simultaneously cosmopolitan and nativist, open to the ideals of Western civilization but closed to its modern forms of political community (i.e. the nation). In opposing the nation as a Western invention, Tagore sought to imagine India as “society” and developed a theory of collectivity rooted in Brahmo humanism and reform. By examining a cross-section of his political writings (e.g. Creative Unity and Nationalism), novels (Ghare Baire or The Home and the World) and pedagogical writing (The Visva-Bharati Ideal), I explain the legacy of the Brahmo Samaj’s principles on Tagore’s theories of Indian modernity and his desire to imagine Indian collectivity on a different epistemological grid than that of the Western nation.

In a time when the majority of Indians could not imagine an anticolonial program that did not espouse divisively nationalist principles, Tagore, vis-à-vis his novels and the creation of his international university Visva-Bharati, offered a model of national belonging predicated on a critical and multicultural rethinking of Hindu tradition rather than a purified patriotism. For Tagore – an elite Brahman and ultimate insider within Indian society – to choose the outside of Swadeshi bears a lesson for postcolonial discourses of the nation. Before Tagore could imagine “India as home” he needed to imagine “India in the world.” His vision of national consolidation depended on India achieving an empowered but pacifist international presence in a time when aggressive nationalisms dominated the world scene. Such an achievement, a nation built for peace, would be the ultimate testament to the postcolonial nation’s strength and ethical difference from its European counterpart.

Vajracharya, Gautama

Sri/Laksmi, A Textual Study of Visual Works

The interaction between Vedic concepts and the aboriginal culture of India is perhaps most clearly visible in the merging process of Sri and Laksmi. The word sri as a noun is found both in the Avesta and the Vedas. In Indo-Iranian literature this word sri signifies luminosity, beauty and fertility. Such significance is based on the natural phenomena of spring when the radiant sunlight melts the ice and snow and makes the surface of earth fertile and beautiful. On the contrary, laksmi literally means auspicious signs and marks. We cannot expect to find her mentioned in the Avesta, because the word as a name of a goddess symbolizes the phenomena of monsoon such as rain, mud and lotus, denoting fertility and agrarian prosperity. Only after the interaction between the Indo-
Iranian and pre-Vedic monsoon culture of South Asia did the words sri and laksmi become synonymous and female deities presiding over the concepts associated with the words blended into each other and lost their original significances after many centuries. This is one of the few examples where we can see the development in some detail both in literature and art.

**VanderKaaij, Sanne**

Privatization and Desecularization of Education in urban India. Muslim Schools in Mumbai and Lucknow

Absent or deteriorating state provision, increased demand for quality education, and neo-liberal reforms have led in many countries, over the past two decades, to a rapid increase in private education. India is one of those countries. The number of private schools in India is mushrooming.

Private education comes in many forms. One of these is the faith-based school. Faith-based schools can be defined as schools that have been founded, are managed and/or funded by religious or cultural organizations or individuals. Apart from covering a regular curriculum of reading, writing, math, science etc., they reserve time to teach children on religious and cultural matters.

Newspaper reports regularly paint a grim picture of the teaching done in faith-based schools, whether it be Muslim madrasas, Christian missionary schools or the schools of a Hindu organization like Vidya Bharati. Apart from that, some policymakers, commentators, and academicians have argued that further privatization and “de-secularization” of the education sector is a bad idea. They fear it will lead to, among other vices, increases in social and economic inequality, and inter-community tensions.

The actual increase in faith-based schools, the promotion of this increase by various actors, and the parental demand for these schools, however, indicate that there are also people who feel that the phenomenon of privatization and “de-secularization” of education is actually a good thing.

The fieldwork for my PhD, conducted in some fifteen Muslim and Hindu schools from January 2008 to January 2009 in Mumbai and Lucknow, have led me to classify Muslim faith-based schools in India in identity schools on the one hand and philanthropic schools on the other. In my paper for the UW 38th Annual Conference on South Asia, this classification will be explained and defended. It can be used as a tool to gain a better insight into the “why and how” of Muslim education in urban India: Why are these schools set up, and how do they operate?

By focusing on Muslim schools as examples of faith-based education as well as examples of private education, my paper will at the same time bring together and contribute to discussions so far conducted on adjacent planes, and thereby bring new insights into the opportunities and challenges that (new) private Muslim schools present for achieving the goals of universal access to quality education and maintaining communal harmony in India.

**Venkat, Bharat**

Ethical Deception: Taking Account of Violence in the Indian AIDS Epidemic

For the last six years, AIDS-related prevention, care and surveillance programs in India have received unprecedented amounts of funding from both state and non-state sources. The AIDS epidemic and the seemingly benevolent funds given in response have crafted radically new terrains of violence that put into question the very possibility of ethics. Under these conditions of widespread disease that simultaneously seems
to strike, for the most part, only particularly vulnerable populations, what ethical options are opened for the accounting of at-risk or infected lives?

To begin to think about this question, I will draw upon ethnographic work conducted at two different sites in South India. First, I will examine HIV-prevention work geared towards sex workers in the state of Karnataka. In the wake of brutal violence against sex workers by police officers, human rights groups published reports condemning not only the state, but also funders who require extremely specific information about sex workers who are targeted by HIV-prevention programs. The requisite accounts include information about where sex workers conduct business, where they live, and the make-up of their clientele. NGO workers proudly submitted forms that they revealed to me were entirely fabricated. Refusing to collect such information that would make sex workers easily locatable and therefore vulnerable to police violence, these NGO workers proclaimed their lies as the only ethical possibility given the threat of potential future violence.

Similarly, in Tamil Nadu, hospitals that care for HIV-positive patients take funds which strictly delineate the course that treatment should take. Medical staff, situated between funders and patients, explained to me that their accounts to funders were manufactured in order to maintain the flow of funding, as such standardized treatment protocols, including informed consent, were not feasible in an Indian context. By refusing to give information to patients about their conditions, doctors asserted that they were protecting patients from unnecessary and incomprehensible data that might not only upset them, but more importantly, worsen their conditions. Truth, then, becomes tantamount to violence, removing funds from those desperately in need of care while simultaneously giving sorrow, pain and possible death to patients who are seen as incapable of coping with the full extent of their disease. I argue that these situations demonstrate how subjects can constitute themselves as ethical actors through self-avowed deception in order to avoid present and future possibilities of violence.

Vora, Neha

Indian Merchant Networks and the Rise and Fall of Brand Dubai

The global media blitz surrounding Dubai in the past few years has focused on its over-the-top development projects, and more recently, the impacts of the global economic downturn on this city-state. However, little to no attention has been paid to the enduring role of Indian merchant networks in Dubai’s economy, or to the financial entanglements between India and Dubai that have helped make both sites prosperous. This paper is based on field research among Indian gold merchants in 2006, when Dubai’s economy was supposedly at its peak. I explore the historical and contemporary role of Indian merchants in producing Dubai as a profitable Indian Ocean trade hub, and the impacts of economic and political changes in India and in the Gulf on my informants. I also consider how supposedly new neoliberal development strategies in Dubai have at their root a centuries-old tradition of mercantilism in the region. Using data collected during follow-up research in 2009, in the midst of Dubai’s supposed bust, I revisit the role of Indian merchants in Dubai and their feelings about the economic future of the city. What strategies are they employing in dealing with reduced sales and higher costs of living? Is this financial moment decidedly different than others they have experienced? And, how has their relationship to India changed in light of India’s economic downturn? I argue that the hype surrounding the boom and bust of mega-development projects in Dubai ignores the trade networks through which a large percentage of the settled migrant population has found livelihood and even wealth. The recent media focus on Dubai’s financial crisis is part of a larger trend of eliding the presence of long-standing Indian migrants in the emirate.

Walder, Heather
Assessing Stone Carving Technology and Community Involvement in the Production of the Ashokan Rock Edicts

Inscriptions carved on rock during the reign of Ashoka (272-232 BC) are a source of archaeological and technological data which previous studies conducted using epigraphic and historical methods have not addressed. Experimental archaeology uses traditional materials and techniques in an attempt to replicate an artifact or feature. This methodology makes it possible to address the technologies and skills that ancient stone carvers would have needed to complete the monumental project of carving the Ashokan rock edicts. The sites of these edicts need to be examined as in situ craft workshops where administrators and local government officials, scribes, stone carvers, metal smiths, and perhaps many other members of the community interacted. By examining and comparing the carving process for individual edicts, the level of imperial control over the authorization, content, and actual carving of the edicts can be addressed. This paper demonstrates the utility of an experimental approach and presents data from the first phase of rock edict replication. The initial replication project indicates that fashioning or at the very least resharpennig of iron chisels in high-temperature forges would have been a regular activity near the inscription sites. Furthermore, building a comparative metric database of the unique epigraphic and technological “fingerprints” left by individual chisels could show a pattern in the usage of distinct tools or tool types at different edict sites over time. Archaeological surveys for carving debitage and evidence of ironworking will complement metric studies. These combined approaches address specialist and community involvement in the production of the Ashokan edicts.

Webb, Martin

Disciplining the Everyday State in India: Transparency and the Right to Information movement

Ethnographic studies that examine the ‘everyday state’ in India have shown how bureaucratic offices are often personalised and politicised, and boundaries between public and private roles blurred. Taking this literature as a starting point this paper will use recent field research in New Delhi to show how transparency activists attempt to discipline the everyday state by using Right to Information legislation as a tool to unearth bureaucratic procedure and processes in the lower levels of government; particularly in regard to welfare programmes aimed at low income groups. Although these activities are taking place in the context of post liberalisation India they do not flow from a reductive neo-liberal critique of the state but rather from a left leaning and rights based moral discourse about the abuse of bureaucratic office. By focussing on bureaucratic mechanisms and insisting on transparent adherence to correct procedures the activists hope to depersonalise the bureaucratic encounter, secure citizens their rights vis a vis the state and rebalance the power relationship between citizen and public servant. The paper will go on to discuss how activists’ access to the legislative process has been facilitated – at least in part – by connections at the elite level in government and society. Attempts to inculcate moral and systematic discipline through a mechanism of transparency at the lower levels of the state are thus to some extent facilitated by a pragmatic engagement with a relatively opaque ‘everyday state’ at the elite level.

Williams, Tyler
Nirguna and Saguna in Manuscript Anthologies: Canon Formation and Sectarian Identity in the Bhakti Movement

This paper examines the relationship of canon, sectarian identity, and competition among devotional communities in North India from 1570 to 1900 CE. Since the early twentieth century, histories of the devotional movement known as bhakti in North India have almost universally divided the movement into two distinct branches: nirguna (which conceptualizes the Divine as without form and unknowable) and saguna (which imagines the Divine as with form, and intimately accessible). The criteria for this distinction include not only conceptions of the Divine, but also modes and forms of literary composition and styles of devotional practice. Thus the nirguna-saguna distinction is simultaneously a division of ontologies, literary genres, communities of poets, and communities of devotees. This division is generally understood to have existed since the beginning of the movement in North India around 1400 CE.

Yet a close study of the textual record of the bhakti movement in North India suggests that this distinction was constructed gradually over time, and in a context of sectarian competition—both for resources like devotees, royal patronage, and land, and for ‘ownership’ of popular bhakti poet-saints like Kabir, Ravidas, Surdas, Mirabai, Tulsidas, and Guru Nanak. By studying more than two hundred anthologies of devotional poetry and over one hundred other manuscripts created by various devotional communities during the period from 1570 to 1900 CE, I have been able to track which poets and texts were grouped together and canonized by different communities at different times. This original research into the process of canonization in various sects or sampradayas—including the Dadupanth, Ramsnehi Sampraday, Pushtimarg, Ramanandi Sampraday, Niranjani Sampraday, and Sikh Khalsa—reveals surprising changes in the ways these communities used the works of various poet-saints to construct their identity over time. In particular, a study of these anthologies allow us to 1) see which poets, texts, and ideas were seen as forming an organic theological whole by different communities at different times; 2) how the primarily poetic compositions of poet-saints were re-structured and re-deployed in these manuscripts as organized theology; 3) how over time, in the context of sectarian competition, communities gradually refined their canons in order to construct a more distinct identity vis-à-vis other communities. I argue that it is this process of self-differentiation among communities, articulated through canon, that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries began to take on the form of the nirguna-saguna distinction that we are familiar with today.

Wilson, Brian

Colonial Foundations: Culture and Ethnicity in the Interpretation of Roman Trade at Arikamedu

Currently there is not a consensus amongst scholars concerning the Roman influence at the site of Arikamedu. At its core, the debate surrounding the site is one concerned with the ethnic and cultural affinity of its residents, and in particular, the presence of a Roman trading station or colony. Regardless of the position argued by various authors, what seems to be lacking from the majority of these studies is an assessment of the categories employed to describe the groups of people involved in maritime activity, exchange, and production in the area. This paper will attempt to analyze the evidence from the excavations and the way that scholars have used this evidence to construct the identities of the site’s residents in order to reveal what, if anything, scholars can really know about the nature and origins of these people. It is imperative that the theoretical underpinnings of these categories—whether ‘Roman,’ ‘Tamil,’ or ‘Megalithic’—be thoroughly (re)examined to reveal the preconceived notions of identity that have greatly influenced the interpretation of the archaeological material. This assessment has ramifications for the current debate surrounding Roman influence as well as the potential to impact future research design in the region. In the end, this paper probably represents a partial retreat from the assumed ethnic/cultural categories utilized thus far. Yet, such a ‘retreat’ should not be seen as a step backwards in our knowledge of the site; rather it is an attempt to move beyond the legacy of archaeological and anthropological paradigms created under the influence of colonial epistemologies. The subtle persistence of
these paradigms, such as those encompassed by the method of ‘culture history’ in archaeology and the Hellenization/Romanization models in historical and classical studies, continues to influence archaeological, anthropological, and historical theory and method—albeit in a somewhat mitigated fashion.

Wink, Andre

Early Modern South Asia and the Closing of the Nomadic Frontier

Scholars of Central Asia have long recognized the early modern period (16th to 18th centuries) as a time in which nomadism declined and its relationship with the sedentary world underwent a profound transformation. This paper investigates some of the implications of this 'closing of the nomadic frontier' for South Asia. It does so by focusing on four parallel developments within the subcontinent: 1. The transformation of Afghan tribal society; 2. The creation by Akbar of a territorial Mughal state out of the transnational and transregional Turko-Mongol imperial heritage of medieval times; 3. Developments of post-nomadic territorialization in South India and the Deccan under the sixteenth-century Vijayanagara empire; 4. The simultaneous closing of the maritime frontier.

Woolford, Ian

Vidyapati in North Indian Fiction and Performance

This paper focuses on performance traditions in a village in the state of Bihar in north India. The village is named “Renu Village” after its most famous resident, the Hindi author Phanishwarnath Renu (1921-1977). He is most famous for his novel Maila Anchal, credited as the first “regional” novel in Hindi. Renu was the founder of that regional genre—taken to mean fiction that focuses on India's rural areas, that features the songs, the language, the problems of India's villages. In this paper I investigate Renu’s relation to the folklore of northeastern Bihar state, drawing on my fieldwork in his village community and on my analysis of his writing. I focus on a single performance genre, named Bidapat nach—a dramatic reinterpretation of the texts of the 15th-century Bihari poet Vidyapati. I argue that this village genre is so intertwined with Renu’s work that there is a degree of interchangeability between the two. That is, I am arguing that Bidapat would not exist as it does in the village today were it not for Renu—were it not for his direct intervention and interaction with the genre. I also suggest that the Bidapat tradition, as Renu constructed it, encompasses its own decline: death of the tradition may be part of its very definition. Renu's characters move from the earthy Bidapat to more sublime devotional traditions, and I have evidence that Renu ordered some performers in his village to take a similar path. Lastly, I show how Renu himself has become a character in Bidapat. Some of today's performers regard him as partner to the deities they sing about. He is a companion to Ram and Krishna, the lords of Hinduism's mythic past. Through a ritual process, Bidapat performers place Renu's identity on display. They rewrite him back into his literary work. Renu becomes the drummers, the cross-dressing dancers, and especially the clowns of which he wrote. And the performers become Renu. Here is a specific reason for Bidapat decline. Those in charge of maintaining the tradition—Renu's heirs—have difficulty confronting this version of their father in performance.

Wright, Theodore

"Jihad among contemporary Indian Muslims: apologetics vs. practice?"

Hamilton Gibb, a British orientalist, decades ago suggested that South Asian Muslims can be analyzed in terms of four different reactions to the British conquest and the conflict of Islam with modernization: orthodox, revivalist, modernist and secularist. Historically, during the 20th century the principal exemplar of the revivalist
or fundamentalist response has been the Jama’at-i-Islami, founded by Maulana Abul-Ala Maudoodi in 1941 before Partition. Maudoodi and some other North Indian leaders migrated to Pakistan eventually and set up a political party, largely recruited from among the Muhajirin in Karachi which has contested elections, but rather unsuccessfully. The Indian segment of the organization faced a completely different situation in a country in which Muslims constituted only a minority, albeit sizable, of the population and therefore could not hope to win elections, although eventually its leaders decided to participate in politics as a member of coalitions. The alternative, conversion of enough non-Muslims, chiefly Hindus, to Islam to create a Muslim state, is a remote possibility, especially with the rise of militant Hinduism in the 1980s and 1990s. In this situation the meaning of Jihad became a key issue for the organization. I propose to see what debates, if any, have taken place in the pages of Radiance, the organization's main English-language weekly newspaper, published in New Delhi since the mid 1960s. Has its interpretation differed from that of the Jama’at-i-Islami-i-Pakistan in a Muslim majority country? Is this a hopeful case of deradicalization of Islamic fundamentalism?

Yadav, Vikash

Relational Control: India’s Grand Strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan

Coauthor: Conrad Barwa
Research Scholar, School of Oriental and African Studies
UK. cbarwa@aol.com

India’s grand strategy in South Asia can be characterized as one of “Relational Control.” The strategy can be used to encourage co-operation or increase competition and conflict between state and sub-national actors, with a view to increasing the principal’s power in relation to the subjects concerned. India has sought, at various times, to control the process of fragmentation and integration in South Asia, with the aim of preserving its internal stability and external security. While India has not been able to achieve its strategic objective in all instances, it has preferred neighboring regimes to be secular, non-authoritarian, and free from the influence of Great Powers wherever possible.

India’s maximal point of relational control over Pakistan was achieved in 1972 during the Shimla agreement after the creation of Bangladesh. However, the rise of ethno-nationalist movements in its periphery, particularly Kashmir, gave Pakistan the opportunity to readdress the strategic balance in South Asia. Through the Pakistani Army’s doctrine of strategic depth, which uses cross-border insurgency in Kashmir and Afghanistan, Pakistan is able to offset its conventional disadvantage vis-à-vis the Indian Army. Afghanistan is a key component in India’s policy of relational control with Pakistan. Indian influence in Afghanistan was eroded with the Soviet invasion of 1979 and the re-emergence of Pakistan as an important US ally during the 1980s. Achieving dominance in Afghanistan by ensuring the installation of a stable and friendly regime is the main route by which India can counter the Pakistani doctrine of strategic depth, and together with an effective stabilization of a semi-autonomous Kashmir, it is the path to reassertion of its successful relational control with regard to Pakistan.

Young, Jonathan

Claiming Buddhist Space: Walisinha Hariscandra and the Reclamation of Anuradhapura

At the turn of the twentieth-century, British archaeologists, Sinhala Buddhist pilgrims, monastic entrepreneurs, merchants and others commingled in the city of Anuradhapura, Ceylon (present day Sri Lanka). Although little more than a colonial outpost at the time, the ancient capital, renowned in Buddhist literature and folk lore and filled with material ruins from its long past as a center of Buddhist civilization, became a site of controversy. In
1903, a riot broke out involving a group of Buddhists activists concerned with preserving and reinvigorating the ancient remains of the city. The ring-leader was believed to be Walisinha Harischandra, a chief member of the Mahabodhi Society.

In this paper, I investigate the role of Harischandra in constructing an active, Sinhala Buddhist resistance to the uncontrolled growth of colonial Anuradhapura over the remains of ancient Anuradhapura. I also seek to explain the ways in which Harischandra’s desire to reinvigorate a Buddhist past both coincided and conflicted with the activities of British colonial officials regarding the city and its incipient growth at the turn of the twentieth century. In doing so, I draw attention to the importance of conceptions of the power of place within the activities of the larger Mahabodhi Society, as well as the unique, micro-scale problems associated with the particular instantiation of Buddhist reclamation activities at Anuradhapura.

Yusuf, Moeed

Pakistan’s Failure at Democratic Consolidation: Explaining the Cyclical Pattern of Civilian and Military Rule

The paper addresses the failure of democratic consolidation in Pakistan. The aim is to provide a causal explanation for the recurring ‘cycle’ of democratic and military rule in the country. Pakistan’s case is peculiar in that it has experienced four democratic transitions, all successful, but each has been reversed just when the democratic form of government seemed to be consolidating. The removal of Pakistan’s military rulers is just as puzzling; each military regime lasted for approximately a decade and was ousted after a period of relative regime stability.

Moving away from the civil-versus-military power imbalance that has preoccupied most existing analyses, this research recasts the framework along a centralization-versus-decentralization axis. Using a combination of secondary sources, interviews with political and military elite and the civilian bureaucracy, and a news index generated to gauge anti-incumbent resentment in public sentiment, I argue that the cyclical pattern is explained by a persistent failure, both of military and civilian rulers, to decentralize political and economic power to the ‘appropriate’ levels of governance. Pakistan’s deep, cross-cutting societal fault lines are central to the argument. They play a paradoxical role: on the one hand, they make it virtually impossible to devise a decentralized formulation which is acceptable across the multiple hubs of power within the polity while on the other hand, these very cleavages lead the society to detest centralization and to resent the incumbent. In regressive transitions, the military, pathologically paranoid about the possibility of excessive domestic instability leading to sub-nationalist tendencies and external adversaries taking advantage to orchestrate the state’s collapse, intervenes as the arbitrator of national interest. This move satisfies the anti-incumbent sentiment momentarily. However, the virtually identical performance of the military at the helm of affairs also generates resentment in due course, thus leading to fresh political mobilization and the military’s subsequent withdrawal for the same reason, i.e. fear of domestic instability.

The proposed research is critical for three reasons: (i) it examines a fundamental weakness in a country whose political stability is intrinsically important to the world today; (ii) the case study presents a hitherto unsolved academic puzzle; it will thus contribute to theory building on democratic consolidation; and (iii) the findings are relevant to countries like Thailand, Bangladesh, and Turkey which have had similar problems with intermittent regression into military rule, as well as to a number of newly democratized countries like post-communist regimes, Nepal, Bhutan, and Mauritania.

Zachariah, Benjamin
Indian exiles in Germany c.1914-1946

The project seeks to study the activities, milieu and social and intellectual engagements of Indian exiles in Germany in the first half of the twentieth century, and in particular in Berlin. In so doing, it seeks to study the transnational historical dimensions of a social and intellectual history of South Asia, and specifically the ideological movements of communism, fascism and nationalism, thereby contributing to histories that demonstrate the tendency of ideas to travel across contexts and state boundaries.

Berlin was the hub of various international connections and events, as an eminently international metropolis. There could be found a group of persons whose contacts and connections, engagements, politics and personal relationships ranged across the world at a time of tumultuous change and potential revolution. Men like the communist MN Roy spent many formative years in Berlin, continually returning to it. The future Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, regarded Berlin when he visited it in 1926 as the hub of all that was exciting in the political and intellectual life of Europe; he met many of his enduring political connections there.

Another side to this engagement with Germany has so far evaded serious study: some Indians were interested in the potential of fascism in general, and with its increasing successes with Nazism in particular, as a potential model for Indian politics. However, the polarities of communism and fascism should not be the only concerns of research in this area. Given that the cluster of ideas and influences that were available to intellectuals in the interwar period were not, at the outset, clearly separated into ideological camps there is much ambiguous space that requires exploration.

Zamindar, Vazira

Buddhas, Pathans and Indian Civilization

This paper examines the 1909 discovery of Buddha's relics in the Peshawar Valley and the contestations that followed at the local, national and international level over who the Buddha's remains belonged to. These contestations reveal the various tensions in the remaking of the category of Indian civilization and the place of Pathans within it.

Zitzewitz, Karin

Should We Call It "Haptic Culture" Now? Vessels in the Art of Subodh Gupta

At the core of the extraordinarily successful art of Subodh Gupta is a fairly simple premise: the materials of everyday life are richly significant, and their arrangement in surprising new ways can produce desirable aesthetic effects. His largest body of work has focused on stainless steel and brass vessels, including the small brass pots used to collect and transport ritually purifying water. Gupta combines those objects into large sculptures—a shiny stainless skull, a tower of enormous buckets, or a pile of small pots growing out of a rickshaw. In his deceptively simple work, much rests on Gupta’s choice of objects. In vessels, this paper argues, Gupta has found a densely significant medium, one that signifies more through sense memories of touch or use—the _haptic_—than as a visual symbol. In so doing, Gupta’s work represents a shift away from the predominance of references to popular visual cultural forms in Indian contemporary art. As such, and considering the central place afforded to Gupta’s work in the Indian art world, his work challenges those engaged in the field of visual-cultural studies to reconsider the privileged place afforded to vision within Indian culture.
While upholding native language skills are a primary way for diasporic communities to sustain ties with their homeland countries (Cohen 1997; Braziel and Mannur 2003), few empirical studies have considered how homeland languages are reanalyzed cross-generationally in immigrant contexts (cf. Das 2007). Examining conversations of Sinhalese immigrant youths, which target a register of Sinhala linked to the Sri Lankan state's historic stance of ethnolinguistic nationalism, this study pinpoints acts of parody and mocking as key sites for shifting traditional correlations among language, stereotypical speaker attributes, and the sociopolitical ideologies they represent (Agha 2007).

Though Sinhala is the native language of the majority Sri Lankan Sinhalese population, English maintains a strong presence in Sri Lanka, competing with two related but contrastively defined registers, Colloquial and Formal Sinhala (akin to a “diglossic” language situation: Ferguson 1959; Paolillo 1992, 1997). With Sri Lanka’s post-colonial independence, Sinhalese nationalists rejected English and Colloquial Sinhala, valorizing Formal Sinhala as the language of a unified nation-state. Endorsing its proliferation in youth educational settings, they promoted it as a tool indispensable to the recovery of pre-colonial, traditional culture (Dharmadasa 1993). Contrastively, Colloquial Sinhala became an inconsequential, vernacular language and English represented a conquered, hegemonic authority (Manogaran 1987; Blundell 1994).

Immigrant youth parodies of specific features of Formal Sinhala, however, indicate a valence shift between sociohistorical valorization of Formal Sinhala and denigration of Colloquial Sinhala and English. These speech acts characterize Formal Sinhala speakers as backward participants in the global-economy, juxtaposed with Colloquial Sinhala speakers who symbolize upward international mobility, specifically due to associations with advanced competence in English. I analyze such acts of reanalysis in light of the state’s long-standing, but recently changing stance towards Formal Sinhala, where state policies are re-embracing English education in a push for greater country-wide participation in international markets.

This project builds on recent linguistic and anthropological work on language ideology, particularly work that examines how speakers orient toward competing languages and language varieties in diasporic environments (Hill 2001, 2007). It enhances work on register formation and change (Agha 2003, 2007) currently limited to analyses of circulating public discourses by looking at specific instances of discursive interaction. Data collection for this project has taken place in the greater Washington D.C. metropolitan area and includes recorded interactions (between young adults, adolescents, parents, and peers), interviews with subjects, ethnographic observations of participants’ homes, and collected artifacts from youth activities.