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ABSTRACTS

PANEL 1A: CASTE, RELIGION AND BUREAUCRACY IN INDIA, 20TH CENTURY

Panel abstract:

Panel Convenor: **Dr. William Gould**, University of Leeds

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This panel investigates how the languages and customs of colonial government interacted with caste and religious mobilisations and revivalism in north India during the 20th century. The language of the colonial administration revolved around notions of organisation and order (both in terms of public order and administrative rationalisation). Colonial policy worked in various ways towards the regulation and systematisation of India's population. As such, the panel will question the extent to which indigenous religio-cultural life was 'bureaucratised,' assuming a preoccupation with ordering and regulation drawn from the language and style of the colonial administration. It will also examine ways in which access to the state has revolved around appeals to specific kinds of ethnic and religious identities, thereby transforming state-society nexuses at local levels.

The debates over the influence of the colonial state upon everyday life in India have most generally looked at how the differences between linguistic, ethnic and religious communities were solidified by the state at the 'centre.' For instance, questions of the British 'mapping' of India through the classifications of its census, and the entrenchment of political differences between India's communities through the classification of the national population according to religion, have been well-trodden. Instead of concentrating on the influence of colonial rule upon national and political life, this panel will assess the influence of the state upon indigenous religious activities, vernacular cultures, and developments in the localities of India. It will look at how far caste and religious identities affected working of the 'local state' in a historical perspective, thereby reconfiguring the meaning of state power and bureaucratic/political corruption.

North India, where colonial rule was deeply entrenched, will provide the focus of this panel. It will examine how far the styles of colonial government, namely its obsession with notions of organisation and regulation, came to infiltrate the rhetoric of religious revivalist movements, whose efforts towards the awakening of religious communities focused greatly upon the 'organisation' of their disparate memberships. It will also explore the terminology of concepts of organisation and order in vernacular languages, exploring their connection with the language of the state. Finally it will look at how caste, religious and ethnic identities were reconfigured as a strategy for accessing state power at local levels, and how that process of reconfiguration changed over time.

Dr. Ornit Shani, Tel-Aviv University, Israel

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How certain state policies foment ethnic tensions: caste and religion in the making of reservations

From the late 1970s through the early 1990s there was an increase in caste conflicts in India around redistributive policies for the lower and backward caste Hindus, particularly over the reservations of places in government jobs and educational institutions. The purpose of reservation policies was to ensure the participation and access to public resources of groups that had been historically discriminated against on the basis their low caste status. The Constituent Assembly considered reservations for Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, but after partition the proposal was dropped. Reservation provisions, which the constitution stipulated, aimed to eradicate caste, promote equality and secularism. Caste-reservation conflicts between forward and backward castes reached an apex in August 1990, when large-scale anti-reservation riots erupted in large parts of the subcontinent over the V. P. Singh government's decision to implement the Mandal Commission recommendations on reservations for the Other Backward Castes (OBCs) at the national level. At that moment, as the caste-reservation crisis escalated, communal (Hindu-Muslim) violence, which was sparked by the Rath Yatra religious procession that the then BJP party leader L. K. Advani launched with the intention of liberating God Ram's birthplace at Ayodhya, spread throughout the subcontinent. The political discourse changed at this juncture from caste-reservations and benefits for the backward castes to communalism and Hindu nationalism. Scholars explained this shift in 1990 either in terms of political maneuvers sought by the BJP to counter the Mandal policy, to which they objected, or as a competition between two discourses wherein religious nationalism prevailed over the discourse on caste and caste conflicts were seen as a barrier to religious nationalism's growth. This paper examines this shift from an alternate perspective. It analyses how policy makers, various government institutions and the judiciary, in their designation and discourse on the reservations, enabled the conflation of social and economic preferential rights with issues of religious minority rights, thus fomenting ethnic tensions. The paper discusses the implications of reservations for the understanding of caste and for the more recent attempts to introduce reservations for Muslims.

Dr. William Gould, University of Leeds

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The dual state: bureaucracy, community and corruption in Uttar Pradesh, 1930–1960s

After India's independence, the structure of the Indian Civil Service (ICS) was largely retained, on the assumption that this steel frame optimised stability, neutrality and a non-partisan tradition. Yet through the last two decades of British power and for several years after freedom, bureaucratic recruitment was still carried out with reference to the particularistic interests of caste and communal groups. In India's secular state ostentatious religious claims and demands for special privileges were replaced by comparable structures of reservation and considerations of 'backwardness'. Alongside the ICS and IAS (Indian Administrative Services) ideals of integrity, reliability and elitism, was an in-built recognition that state power, particularly at local levels, would always be captured by competing particularistic interests. Curiously, the very nature of the bureaucracy's elitism, inherited from traditions of 'ma-bap' governance and a set of socially elitist ideologies, encouraged this process. In order to justify the IAS's role as social and political arbitrator, according to older colonial traditions, a different kind of bureaucratic culture was encouraged at subordinate levels by elitist bureaucrats and state politicians. The relationship between the IAS and subordinate cadres, the latter expected to function according to a very different collection of rules, set the parameters for 1950s debates about bureaucratic 'corruption'.

This paper will explore these processes of bureaucratic change and their relationship to local political pressure groups, through the crucial period of transformation from the 1930s to the 1960s. It will examine bureaucratic ideologies, the actions of communal and caste pressure groups, and the practices of civil service recruitment. Finally, it will draw conclusions about how far this dual feature of

India's bureaucracy, affected the nature of Indian secularism, the working of the local state and discourses of 'corruption'.

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Colonial bureaucracy and religious revivalism: the tanzim movement in Indian Islam

This paper seeks to demonstrate the interaction of the colonial bureaucracy and indigenous religious revivalism, looking at Islamic resurgence in U.P. from the late nineteenth century onwards. Comparable with the revivalist campaigns among other faiths, the language of Islamic resurgence was characterised by a particular preoccupation with *tanzimat*, meaning organisation or regulation. This was particularly explicit in the 1920s and 1930s, which witnessed the so-called *tanzim* movement, yet these themes were equally tangible in previous decades.

This paper seeks to trace the source of this obsession and, in so doing, elucidate the powerful influence of colonial bureaucracy upon indigenous religious reformism. Seemingly equating efficacy with organisation, the *tanzim* campaigns not only appropriated the language of the colonial administration; they adopted a formalised system of governance, carefully regulated funding and a committee style of management. By the 1930s, the bureaucratized character of religious resurgence was so pronounced that it was over-administration, rather than disorganisation, that presented many religious organisations with their biggest problems, hence their descriptions of the need to simplify and streamline their management.

The reasons for the deep penetration of the colonial bureaucratic structure in indigenous religious reformism will be outlined. The explanation, however, lies largely in the entrenchment of the colonial administration in religious institutions and authorities. Having a hand in the formation of many Islamic *maktabs* and *madrasas*, monitoring them according to colonial standards, and securing a say in the provision of religious authority through the handing out of titles, the state bureaucracy of U.P. gradually came to shape the direction taken by Islamic resurgence under its supervision.

PANEL 1B: DOWRY IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA AND THE DIASPORA: TAKING THE 'DOWRY PROJECT' FORWARD

Panel abstract

Panel Convenors:

Dr. Emma Tomalin, University of Leeds

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Dr. Tamsin Bradley, London Metropolitan University

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This panel will consist of papers from scholars who are committed to the production of academic research on issues connected with dowry. Concerns have been raised that the custom of dowry places a disproportionate financial burden upon families, implicitly promotes 'son preference' and frequently leads to the 'dowry death' of women. To date most research and activism has focused on dowry as an issue affecting women in India. This panel seeks to open the door to new research on this issue that examines the ways in which dowry manifests itself in Diasporic communities around the world.

As such the panel will mark the beginning of a new phase of 'The Dowry Project' which was founded by the late Dr Julia Leslie. The project has been successful in holding six international conferences and has attracted the support of academics from around the world. As a result of the last conference, held in New Delhi in January 2003, a committed network emerged consisting of both academics and activists. All those present during the end of conference working party decided that the debates needed to be moved forward into a fresh innovative course of action. In addition, concern was expressed that the research conducted on dowry should translate into practical strategies to end the brutal injustices committed against women in South Asia and the Diaspora. The directorship of this

project has now been passed on to Dr Tamsin Bradley and Dr Emma Tomalin who hope that this panel will encourage new and productive research in this area.

The panel will be interdisciplinary, approaching dowry through a number of interlocking perspectives which will build on the work already begun by The Dowry Project. Key themes which could be addressed in the panel include:

1. Bridging the gap between theory and practice;
2. The impact of religion and culture upon dowry and associated violence against women;
3. Dowry practices in diasporic communities.

Dr. Tamsin Bradley, London Metropolitan University
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The dowry project: past, present and future

The dowry project was founded by the late Dr Julia Leslie in 1995. In this paper I will present an historic overview of the dowry project tracing its origins through to its present achievements and future ventures. I will begin by outlining the founder's vision for the project, namely an international network of scholars committed to both generating research on dowry and acting to end its associated brutal injustices against women.

The project's primary objective is the bridging between research and practice with a firm focus on the need to produce rigorous research that helps extend and deepen our understanding of how and why dowry exists in Hindu communities. The project has conducted research looking at dowry through the following themes: *the economics of marriage, dowry and property, collective action on dowry, legal changes and domestic violence, the women's movement and dowry, caste and dowry, dowry and Indian literature, dowry and Hindu scriptures, dowry, domestic violence and son-preference, dowry and reproductive health, inheritance rights.*

The paper will emphasise the project's concern to stay rooted in its feminist approach in highlighting the underlying link between dowry and associated practices of bride burning, son preference and female infanticide all of which represent obvious abuses against women. The post colonial discourse has made the bridging of the project's political aims with research challenging. However the project stresses the centrality of South Asian women's own experiences of dowry as the start and end point for all action. The project aims to widen awareness on dowry and related issues by recording and drawing attention to women's own opinions and concerns.

The paper will end by looking forward to the launch of a new phase of the project. To date the focus and research produced has largely centred within India. The latest stage will focus on looking at the impact of dowry within Diaspora communities in Britain. It is hoped that this new stage will act to extend and strengthen the growing network of scholars committed to achieving Julia's original vision.

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Legacies of the Dowry Prohibition Act in India: marriage practices and feminist discourses

How have discourses of addressing dowry violence changed in the Indian women's movement over the decades? The legislative history of dowry reflects the strong influence of the women's movement in the very delineation of dowry, alongside political negotiations which led to a weak legal tool at odds with both feminist definitions and cultural practices of dowry. In the ensuing decades, while the women's movement has targeted loopholes in the prosecution and proliferation of dowry, and the linkage of dowry to other forms of violence (infanticide, sex-selection, domestic violence), cultural practices have also adapted to these loopholes, transforming the scope and form of dowry. In this paper, I examine recent feminist discourses of anti-dowry mobilization and other marriage and violence related campaigns, alongside fieldwork data on dowry that emerged in the course of studying the workings of family law, to foreground the evolution of dowry demands, and the ways in which women's organizations manage these emergent forms. The analysis reveals that simultaneous

attention to fundamental issues of marriage, access to resources and entitlement to uses of property help illuminate ever-changing forms of dowry practices.

PANEL 2A: CENSORSHIP IN COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL INDIA AND THE DIASPORA

Panel abstract

Panel Convenor: **Dr. Deana Heath**, Trinity College, Dublin

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Drawing upon postmodernism and post-structuralism, scholars of censorship have largely abandoned the focus on the legal constraints upon speech to focus on power itself as an object of study—of how it is constituted, of the intersections of resistance and domination through which it is exercised, and of how discursive and disciplinary practices are enacted. Censorship has thus become viewed as a technique through which discursive and disciplinary practices are enacted. While such approaches to understanding censorship have offered important insights into its productive nature, its omnipresence poses a problem. Seeing censorship as everywhere makes it impossible to distinguish between different types, means, and degrees of censorship; between, for example, the suppression of speech caused by state legal action, market forces, or dominant discourses, or between what we might refer to as ‘soft’ forms of censorship (such as literary criticism or the ways in which pornography serves to ‘silence’ women) and ‘hard’ forms (such as imprisonment or death). These represent different mechanisms of silencing and different kinds of power, as well as different methods of constructing subjects.

Despite the centrality of discourse in framing postcolonial approaches to the study of South Asian history, the study of censorship in colonial and post-colonial India has received surprisingly little attention. This panel aims to explore the various means through which censorship was and is enacted in India, to examine, for example, what particular criteria renders certain works in need of censorship; of how terms such as “blasphemy” or “obscenity” are constituted over time and by different social and political groups; and of how such ideas are disseminated and transformed to become part of different regulatory projects. In the process it hopes to broaden our historical understanding not only of the hierarchies of production, power and knowledge that constituted colonial regimes, but of the role of censorship in the construction of colonial and post-colonial subjects.

Dr. John Zavos, University of Manchester

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Stamp it out! Disciplining the image of Hinduism in multicultural Britain

The Royal Mail’s Christmas stamp set for 2005 celebrated Christian diversity with images of the Madonna and child drawn from ‘all corners of the world’. Among the images used was a detail from a 17th century painting from western India, in which the baby Jesus is depicted with a pair of adults with Vaishnava markings on their foreheads. The use of this image was vigorously opposed by a range of organisations projected as representative of Hindus in the UK, and within a week the Royal Mail had agreed, at least partially, to withdraw this particular stamp from sale. The ‘Hindu stamp’ affair highlighted the speed with which appropriate institutional resources can now be mobilised to discipline the image of Hinduism as a religion in the name of a British Hindu community. It is the latest in a succession of such campaigns over the past few years, all directed towards regulating the representation of Hindu-ness in commercial, media and state institutions. This paper will examine the development of organisations capable of sustaining such campaigns, and explore their implications in relation to both conceptions of ‘Hinduism’ in the context of multicultural discourse, and their role as a means of establishing leadership and control. The paper will argue that disciplining the image of Hinduism in this way is indicative of the developing political significance of religion as a key marker of minority identities in Britain. This in turn has opened up possibilities for the kind of ‘disciplined religion’ examined here as a key factor in the development of global diasporic identities.

Dr. Rajinder Dudrah, University of Manchester
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Censorship and sensuality in Bollywood cinema

This paper will seek to offer understandings of the history of Indian state censorship in Bollywood cinema. In particular it will look at the oft-cited area of popular Hindi cinema where state censorship has been interestingly applied as well as overlooked and worked through by filmmakers - i.e. in and through the filmic song and dance sequences. Rather than simply argue that the song and dance sequences are the diegetic spaces where censorship is averted or reworked, this presentation will argue that by looking at specific film song and dance sequences in specific time periods enables a reading of the uses of gender and sexuality and their attendant notions of sensual pleasures to be telling of a more complex cultural history that will be offered for further inspection.

Dr. Deana Heath, Trinity College Dublin
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Genealogizing modernity: imperial hygiene, obscenity, and moral regulation in colonial India

By the late nineteenth century India was in the process of fashioning a nationalist modernity that, while derivative, represented a distinct and decidedly anticolonial political rationality—including in its conceptions of, and attitudes towards, the obscene. British rule altered Indian conceptions of obscenity through introducing both Western conceptions of obscenity and new forms and types of “obscene” literature into India which, coupled with changes in the indigenous publishing industry and the rise of new socio-religious reform and nationalist movements, fed debates over obscenity and an emergent discourse on degeneracy, racial purity, and moral reform. Like their counterparts in other colonial contexts such as Australia, Indian reformers initiated a project to governmentalize the obscene that sought not only to construct British culture as a source of moral corruption and degeneracy, but to construct India as more pure, moral, and modern than its imperial metropole. This paper aims to analyze the nature of this project and to compare it to a similar project in Australia to examine some of the ways in which empire was constructed not as a path to modernity, but as its chief obstacle, as well as how India constructed its own modernity as both distinct and superior.

PANEL 2B: COLONIALISM AND IDENTITY FORMATION IN SOUTH ASIA

Dr. Mark Brown, University of Melbourne, Australia
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Before citizenship: liberalism and the making of colonial subjects

In this paper I will argue that nineteenth century liberalism’s accommodation of a key political problem – British colonial rule of other societies – created a space within liberal thought for a whole set of exclusionary ideas and tactics. I will then propose a particular understanding of the structure of political citizenship – one based on rights and obligations – and show how British colonialism’s construction of its colonial subjects as first of all agents of obligation stood in contradistinction to a metropolitan model of citizenship in which political subjects were established first of all as recipients of rights. Current exclusionary governmental practices can be understood as attempts to shift certain individuals or groups from a sphere of citizenship based upon rights into one in which civic participation becomes contingent upon the meeting of certain obligations, most notably obligations to display certain traits of individual character and virtue. This analysis will be sustained using contemporary examples of penal practices and responses to refugees.

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Power, subalternity and identity: making and remaking of Lambadas Community in Hyderabad State

The advent of the British in India heralded a new phase, based on Western technologies of power, in which primordial economy, polity and social practices and loyalties were either restructured or destroyed violently in order to fit them into the modern set up for its economic and political ends. The society and economy of India were as a result revolutionised. Among other things, the introduction of political rationality and science and technology, creation of new forms of property relations in land, introduction of more extractive and exploitative taxation methods, the import of machine-made goods, introduction of new modes of transport resulted in millions being displaced from their land and deprived of their customary rights and means of livelihood.

The colonial state failed to provide alternative employment in many cases. Lambadas, traditional transporters of salt and food-grains, were one of those communities that suffered at that time. From medieval times, the Lambadas were transporters of grain and salt and semi-merchants. Their livelihood was taken away with the introduction of colonial political rationality, market economy and modern means of transportation in the late nineteenth century, and they were compelled to depend on various other livelihoods, such as cattle breeding, semi-agriculture and agriculture labour, and dacoity. However they were harshly dealt with by colonial establishment as their existence was considered to be hostile to the modern state power. Their largely nomadic lives were feared, a fear of moving people acquired from their experience with the European gypsies. Lambadas were branded with a number of social stigmas; nomadic, martial race, primitive tribe, criminal tribe and uncivilised. A range of devices were deployed to civilize and settle them as agriculturists. One apparent object of the state was to create a productive peasantry class to revolutionise agriculture in the colony as the metropolis industries were largely sourcing their raw materials from colony. But the revenue and agricultural policies introduced by the colonial state gradually reduced the Lambadas into coolies in the dominant peasants' fields. The colonial regime thus sedentarised and subalternised their hitherto autonomous lives. The process of subalternisation did not go smoothly and went through a great deal of serious adversity. The colonial polices and practices were opposed and challenged either directly by serious revolts and insurgencies or indirectly by breaching law. Interestingly, the Lambada community adapted and reinvented its traditions and spiritual culture in order to strengthen its community bonds to face the challenges, posed by the new establishment of the state, which produced a distinct community consciousness and identity.

The cardinal theme of the paper is to examine how the modern state power subalternised Lambadas' autonomous lives, and from this subalternity how a new form of consciousness emerged and played a crucial role in shaping or making their community identity that has come to stay as a legitimate political force in the postcolonial Indian democracy.

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A paradigmatic shift? Tracing the role of Gujarat's state during Hindu-Muslim violence from 1969 to 2002

Gujarat province in western India came into widespread prominence in 2002 when its state, led by a Hindu nationalist government, supported and participated in mass violence against the province's Muslims. This paper reflects on the role of the constitutionally secular state in the communal massacre that left 2000 dead. It also compares and contrasts this episode with previous spells of Hindu-Muslim violence. It comes to the conclusion that the extent of the state's participation in the rioting against Muslims in 2002 was unprecedented. Yet, the state did not suddenly shift from an impartial and secular stand towards the state's religious groups. Archival sources, judicial reports, commentaries of the press and interviews with citizens, bureaucrats, policemen and politicians reveal the partisan nature of the state in episodes of Hindu-Muslim violence from 1969 to 1999. These events contextualise Gujarat 2002, and challenge the prevalent notion that Gujarat's hitherto secular state has only recently undergone a paradigmatic shift.

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Sri Lankan conflicts: a literary representation

Conflict, a very broad term has many dimensions to it. Therefore, this paper would be confined to the socio-political conflicts in Sri Lanka, which have tormented the country and its people for the last 35 years. Sri Lanka, consisting of a multi-ethnic society counts a majority ethnic group of 74%, called the Sinhalese and minority ethnic groups for the rest, in which the Tamils figure at 16%. The three important conflicts experienced by these people are the Sinhala youth uprising in 1971, the inter-ethnic conflict caused by separatist factions of the Tamil community in the North and East of Sri Lanka, which came to a climax in 1983 and the almost 'anarchic' period between 1987 and 1990 when underworld elements caused mayhem in the country.

Many historians, anthropologists and sociologists have already recorded this recent conflict-ridden history of Sri Lanka but a literary rendering could be new approach. This is intended to be worked out through some of the works of renowned Sri Lankan writers of new English literature who are either diasporic or indigenous. Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost*, Romesh Gunasekera's *Monkfish Moon*, *Reef*, *Heaven's Edge* Shyam Selvadurai's *Funny Boy*, Jean Arasanayagam's *The Dividing Line* would be to name a few.

To achieve its objective, this paper would initially examine the manner in which this theme of conflict is presented by these authors (their point of view, personal approach and the narrative techniques used). Then, it would measure the impact of conflict on Sri Lankan society, for invariably new identities and different ways of thinking and living have seen the light of day as a result of it. Ashok Ferry's *Collpetty People* Nihal de Silva's *The Road To Elephant Pass*, Elmo Jayawardena's *Sam's story*, considered as works of a new generation of Sri Lankan writers of English literature would also be used in this study of social changes.

PANEL 3A: CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE IN SOUTH ASIA

Panel abstract

Panel Convenor: **Ganesh Panchan Zinthiya**, Loughborough University
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Armed conflict and political repression has been a key player in shaping post independent South Asia and have become a reality in the region. Many of the issues influencing prevailing conflicts are common to most if not all. In the separatist struggles whether in north east India, in Bangladesh or in Sri Lanka, there are the complications caused by external factors. Other conflicts erupt from critically important divisive issues such as religious strife and sectarian conflict. There are also the caste conflicts and violent social conflicts with a political programme such as Naxalism in India, Maoist struggle in Nepal or the JVP insurrections in Sri Lanka. Associated to this is the legacy of social and cultural violence that has manifested across societies affecting all citizens. Women have become direct victims of war and political repression through multiple forms of violence, trafficking and displacement. According to UNICEF South Asia has been classified as the region with the highest rates of different forms of violence against women. Yet violence against women is often under reported if not "normalised" as acceptable social behaviour. Another disturbing trend is the recruitment and training of young children for combat that is becoming a social problem and equally increasing the challenges that the countries will face during post conflict reconstruction. The panel welcomes research papers exploring the dimensions of violence and conflict in South Asia. Suggested themes will be but not limited to: forms and meaning of conflicts; gender impacts of conflict; position of children in conflict; social and cultural forms of violence against women and girls; displacement and force migration; government policies and the role of international agencies in preventing violence against women and children; challenges to post conflict reconstruction

Dr. Dibyesh Anand, University of Bath

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"Look, The Muslim!": Hindutva and the politics of imagination

Representation of the Self and the Other(s) is integral to the ideology, identity, and action of political movements. For movements that can be classed as politically Right, a hagiography of the Self is based upon the representations of Other as threatening thus justifying political violence. The Hindutva (the Hindu nationalism movement or the Hindu Right) in India is no exception. Its claims of representing a pre-existing Hindu nation, while at the same time acting to construct a coherent Hindu nation, has at its core a conception of threatening Others. These Others are the two numerically significant minority communities in India – the Muslims and the Christians. As the developments throughout the last century in general, and 1990 onward in particular, show, the figure central to the imagination of Hindutva is 'the Muslim' – a version of Muslim masculinity deriving its danger from a mix of stereotypes of religion (Islam as rigid and fanatical), history (a history of violence especially against non-believers), physicality (Muslim male body as virile), and culture (Muslim culture as backward, corrupt and immoral). The paper argues that it is the particular stereotypical representations of 'the Muslim' that helps us make sense of how extreme collective violence against actual Muslims is normalised, underplayed, and legitimised in the collective imaginary of many Hindutva followers. Communal violence does not directly result from negative stereotypes. But these representations facilitate particular forms of violence (such as the extreme use of sexual violence), mask instrumentalist aspects of violence, and often allow the business-as-usual attitude for many within the majority community of Hindus in India. The victims (in most cases minorities) are cast as the instigators of violence, while the Hindu Self is presented as tolerant and defensive. The prevalence of anti-Muslim stereotypes may offer a clue as to the silence of the majority (not necessarily their active participation in anti-minority violence). Anti-Muslim violence in Gujarat in 2002 is used as a case study to examine the lethality of stereotypes.

Jeevan Raj Sharma, University of Edinburgh

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Fieldwork in the context of socio-political conflict: some methodological issues

Conducting fieldwork in the context of 'terror' and 'terrorism' and complicated political topography raises several methodological, ethical and even practical problems and opens new avenues for discussion. In this paper I discuss several methodological and ethical issues as experienced during my one year long fieldwork in Nepal which played a crucial role to my research process and its results. What are the methodological and ethical challenges of working in the context of conflict? What are the academic, physical as well as psychological dangers that one faces while conducting fieldwork in the context of conflict? How does one negotiate the fieldwork relationship and conduct the fieldwork in such a context? In this paper I examine and discuss the issues of researcher's identity, risk, objectivity, ethics, fieldwork methods and personal commitment in the fields in a politically complex and violent context. I propose to present my experience as a native researcher working on the issue of population mobility and livelihoods in the context of socio-political conflict, which, in the process of fieldwork meant some modifications in the original study design and carry on with research project in a timely manner. I hope to address more explicitly the emerging nature of my work, how my interests were shaped as a result of the changing political and security situation in Nepal. I discuss these issues as they have played a crucial role in making my study, as it is, both in terms of site, strategies and the results.

Tanya Sheikh, International Institute for the Study of Islam, Leiden

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'Love marriages' revisited: the Shaista Almani case

In June 2003 Shaista Almani, a 22 year old schoolteacher eloped with her lover Balaksher Maher. Consequently, her face was plastered on every newspaper cover in the country for over a year. What happened? Had somebody pressed the repeat button? Was this case a carbon copy of the now infamous 1996 Saima Waheed case which had initiated a nation-wide debate in Pakistan on a woman's right to marry without the consent of her *wali* (legal guardian), even though the Federal Shariat Court had upheld this right already in 1981? The judges of the Lahore High Court had held Saima's marriage to be valid, even though her father's consent had not been obtained. Leave to appeal the decision was granted and in December 2003 the Supreme Court again upheld a woman's right to contract a marriage without the consent of her *wali*.

In this paper I show how Shaista's case was not only a power struggle between women's groups fighting for women's rights and the feudal lords who wanted to maintain the status quo, but also how Shaista's story was embedded in a struggle for state resources. Furthermore, I show how Shaista's case was also about a struggle for power and authority between the official legal system and the unofficial, i.e. *jirga* system in Pakistan. I will show that though there are similarities between the Saima Waheed case and the Shaista Almani case, there are also subtle differences. The SC decision, though not able to morally legitimize a woman's right to marry without the consent of her *wali*, did shift the parameters of the debate.

PANEL 3B: DYNAMICS OF POVERTY AND LABOUR IN SOUTH ASIA

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An enabling or disabling right? The nexus between child labour and poverty in Bangladesh

Recent research demonstrates the centrality of poverty and the political economy to child labour in Bangladesh. This reading of child labourers in Bangladesh enables the cultural contextualizing of entitlements and responsibilities so as to challenge the uncritical application of social and cultural rights discourse where poverty and economic injustice is endemic. Current preoccupations in development circles with cultural rights without considering the ways in which economic rights of families and communities are denied imply the concomitant negation of class, poverty, and material deprivation. Such disregard is to disallow dialogue on the economic inequities brought about by the global and local political economy, which continues to be an integral aspect of ground conditions in Bangladesh - and therefore, remain a powerful explanation for the incidence of child labourers in the country. Our research contributes to this incipient research agenda to underscore the central import of poverty in the prevalence of child labour in Bangladesh. This paper argues that a failure to fill the gap between child rights discourse and poverty hampers the ability to eradicate child labour in any comprehensive manner. The ensuing danger is that child rights could end-up as a disabling rather than an enabling right.

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Networks in the traditional economy – evidence from India

There is a broad consensus among economists that social networks influence labour market outcomes. In spite of a rich recent literature within labour and the so-called new social economics, however, important questions about the roles of social networks in traditional economies remain. The present paper combines migration data from the NSS Employment Surveys, an innovative econometrics approach and novel theories to revisit three key questions about social networks and labour market outcomes in a developing country. Firstly, what is the relationship between the human capital or skill-intensity of jobs and the role of networks in job search and recruitment? Secondly, what new insights may be gained from a careful disaggregation of the impacts on current migration of the

stock of existing migrants ? Third and finally, does social structure impact on network access and use among migrants, and if so precisely how ?

Dr. Manoj Agarwal, University of Lucknow

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Deficient demand for development in a rapidly growing economy: the Indian scenario

Now it is well known that India has been making rapid strides in moving its economy forward. It is creditable for this most populous nation, next only to China, that it has been able to turn the difficult phases of even liberalization, privatization and globalization since 1991 in its favour as this gets reflected in sustained high growth rate of the economy; fast emerging service sector, continuously increasing forex reserves; improvements in various macroeconomic parameters; etc. However, behind these success narrations, there appear to be many disquieting and uncomfortable dynamics which should be might not only become cause of concern but which might also belittle the prospect of fast and sustained growth of this emerging economy of the South Asia.

There might be many grey areas like prevalence of mass poverty and unemployment; growing inter-regional, inter-sectoral and inter-personal inequalities; growing strains on slow growing infrastructure; etc. However, besides these, what must be the concern at this stage is the deficiency in demand for development by the people as well as the agents of development. There might be various indicators of this low demand. Moreover, there might be various causes of the low level of demand for development and all these get reflected in many social and economic tensions in the nation. This paper attempts to find out the nature, causes and consequences of low level of demand for development in this rapidly growing South Asian economy while the presentation would be exploratory and descriptive in nature.

PANEL 3C: JUDICIAL ACTIVISM AND CIVIL SOCIETY: IN WHOSE PUBLIC INTEREST ?

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"Taking the State to Court" – or how the Calcutta High Court is stifling academic debate

As censorship in itself raises attention, state intervention tends to make books more interesting. This is particularly so, when a powerful institution manages to suppress content dealing with its very own activities. Therefore, my Book "Taking the State to Court – Public Interest Litigation and the Public Sphere in Metropolitan India" (Oxford University Press) is relevant not only for an academic public.

Shortly after the updated version of my doctoral thesis was launched in early 2001, the Calcutta High Court began hearing a case of contempt against me and the publisher. OUP soon stopped international distribution. The matter has been kept pending since. There is reason to doubt there will ever be a conclusive and final judgment. In a pragmatic rather than legal sense, the issue has already been settled – the book is no longer available.

In social science terms, my goal was to contribute to the debate on governance. I believe to have come up with a relevant distinction between the (normally blurred) concepts of public sphere and civil society. In my view, the public sphere emerges once state agencies are included in the ongoing bargaining and debate among various interest groups which represent civil society. This notion presents a significant contrast to much recent writing on India, in which it has become popular to explain poor governance with inadequate features of civil society or the social fabric in general. India's immense variety of religions, castes and languages are regularly mentioned in this context. My focus, instead, is on the repressive characteristics of government institutions more typical of a colonial power structure than of representative democracy. In this context, I elaborate on how the courts are playing a vital role in making public institutions more accountable.

Originally, my book was meant to provide food for thought in academia. But due to the court intervention, it has become an issue of wider concern. The judiciary's reaction seems odd, given that

my assessment of its role is overwhelmingly positive. For instance, I repeatedly state that it serves the deepening of democracy in India.

Basically, my study does two things: It examines how inappropriate urban planning – and governance in general – lead to dramatic environmental problems in the megacity of Kolkata (as Calcutta is now called). Secondly it analyses to what extent non-governmental organisations can mobilise the local High Court and the Supreme Court of India in order to alleviate hardship. I argue that the judiciary is providing a new space for public discourse, by taking up public interest cases in which civil society organizations blame state agencies for their shortcomings. Judges are introducing a sense of official responsibility in the very literal sense of providing a forum in which leaders of government and bureaucracy can be forced to respond.

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Judicial passivism in the public interest

In studies on public interest litigation and the role of the judiciary, disproportionate emphasis appears to have been placed on examining forms of judicial activism, when often it seems more appropriate that judges should act with restraint. In fact, one of the major criticism of judicial activism has been that South Asian judges have become frantically activated and have forgotten their ‘traditional’ role as quiet, sage observer of the *tamasha* before them, expected to extract the thorn of disagreement. However, in much of public interest litigation, the nature of the disagreement is perhaps more ideological than substantial. It appears that in many of those cases, judges have subtly declined to become activist, have either not decided matters at all, or have put the burden of finding a solution on others. The paper uses several case studies to demonstrate that judicial passivism is an underrated aspect of public interest litigation in South Asia and deserves more detailed analysis.

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Taking justice seriously: judicial public interest and constitutional activism in Bangladesh

Orthodox legal thoughts tend to marginalise the capacity of the judiciary to foster social changes and constitutional developments. Relatedly, the increasingly important concept of ‘judicial activism’ has received only reluctant receptions, if at all, in the West. But the evolving activist South Asian jurisprudence offers a strong antidote to the widely-held traditional views about judicial social capacities. South Asian ‘public interest litigation’ (PIL) has attained remarkable achievements in terms of rights-protection, democratisation of justice, and promoting constitutional governance.

By analysing the jurisprudence that goes under the rubric of ‘public interest litigation’, this paper aspires to assess the performance of the Bangladeshi judiciary in providing ‘justice for all’ through the promotion and protection of ‘public interest’ and imperatives of constitutionalism. Entrenched in the late 1990s, Bangladeshi PIL was originally thought of as a means to achieve an accessible judicial system for the poor and the deprived. Unlike its earlier focus primarily on constitutional rights claims, PIL has recently extended its stake to more issues concerning constitutionalism. However, as against a tower of hopes, PIL has not delivered up to its potentials and promises. It is said that the elitist use of PIL has undermined the much-needed focus on social justice and empowerment.

This paper argues that PIL’s underperformance is not rooted in its elitist use, but elsewhere, such as the judicial ‘unwillingness’ to continue to remain jurisprudentially creative. Adopting a broader rather than minimalist approach to PIL, it focuses on the limits of social-rights-centric concept of social justice, and argues that enforcing principles of constitutionalism through litigations, even if filed by elites, could be a viable avenue towards social and constitutional justice. For delivering judicial activism, this paper concludes by suggesting a justice-based model of public interest and constitutional adjudication.

PANEL 3D: ISLAMIC COMMUNITY AND POLITICAL HERITAGE

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The community of monuments and the monuments of a community: understanding the idea of an 'Indian Muslim architectural heritage'

The objective of this paper is to examine the process of *monumentalisation* in colonial India and its relationship with the idea of an 'Indian Muslim architectural heritage'. The paper looks at the colonial archaeological initiatives that recognised Indian historic buildings as an important source of objective history. In this endeavour, these attempts helped in formulating the fixed identities of Indian communities primarily on religious bases. To find out 'who built what', the colonial archaeological efforts proposed a number of inferences. It was established that Muslims as a foreign civilization, following the spirit of Islam, came to conquer the Hindu civilisation. In order to demoralise Hindus, these Muslims invaders focused primarily on Hindu religious places of worship. They destroyed these sites and/or converted them into mosques. The desecration of Hindu temples by Muslims therefore became a focal point for historical discourse in colonial India. Consequently, in this schema, the historic buildings as protected 'monuments' became a point of reference for official history as reliable, authentic and objective 'sources'.

We focus on a very crucial phase of this process of monumentalisation: 1850-1904. In this period, the acquired knowledge of Indian architecture was systemized and different analytical categories were established. We argue that the listing and categorization of buildings as a source of history on religious bases provided a fixed religious identity to these historic sites. As a result, every single historical object became a part of a larger 'communal' grouping. In this sense, the religious categorization legitimised the colonial notion of 'Muslim invasion' and 'Hindu resistance'. At the same time, the newly 'discovered' connection between the Indo-Islamic buildings and the wider Islamic heritage was exploited by the Muslim elite(s) to emphasize the common heritage of a homogenous Muslim community in India.

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Islam and the works of Professor Muhammad Habib

In post independence India, the historians of Aligarh Muslim University (Then only Muslim University) took the responsibility of objective history writing and historical research on the history of Islamic period of Indian history. Prof. Mohammad Habib was one such pioneering historian. Belonging to an elite family and British educated young professor he could have migrated to newly created Pakistan and perhaps could have lived an equally distinguished life. But he chose to stay and find a place for himself in India.

He later turned out to be most prolific on the period which is often called Delhi Sultanate. His writing on Turkish invasions and sufi saints have attracted much historical and academic attention. A professed non practicing Muslim who got to read and admire Islamic scriptures late in life, he turned out to be a great scholar of Muslim Sufis. Quite ironically, he is also regarded as Marxist, even though his understanding of Marxism was weaker than that of Islam.

The paper proposes to examine the interface he had with Islam. On what levels it influenced or affected him and his methodological apparatus. His extensive covering of Sufi saints and a rather sympathetic views on early Turkish invasions compel us to look into his historical writings. I take this hypothesis that being a Muslim in Post partition India it must have been necessary for him to reinforce his Muslim identity and study Islamic history with new academic enthusiasm. This clashed with his new-found interest in Marxism.

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The mullah-military alliance in Pakistan

The history of political Islam in Pakistan, and, for that matter, around the world, is intricately connected to geo-politics in southwest Asia, as has been documented exhaustively. At the same time there is very little evidence to suggest that the emergence of the religious right as a political force in Pakistan is premised upon the expansion of an organic social base. In fact, revivalist tendencies within Pakistani Islam are scattered and relatively uncommon as compared to the much more widespread syncretic traditions that have evolved over centuries and are typically represented by the Sufi orders found across the sub-continent.

In the period that has followed the beginning of the 'war on terror', corporate media and official western representations of revivalist trends in Pakistan have been almost completely de-contextualised. This representation has provided both the dominant military state oligarchy and the religious right an ideal opportunity to reinforce an old alliance previously supported by Western imperialism. This representation has also further eroded the organising capacity of already weak progressive social and political forces in Pakistan.

In this paper we seek to trace the history of the so-called 'mullah-military alliance' in Pakistan and by extension establish that the political and social survival of both the Pakistani military and the religious right is based on the persistence of a dialectic relationship between a secular modernity and Islamic ethos in the country that can be traced back to the country's creation. Outlining the evolution of this state ideology since the time of partition will demonstrate how the religious right has emerged as a social and political force with the consent of the state.

The paper will discuss two critical junctures in this mullah-military alliance, both of which demonstrate the centrality of regional geo-politics. The first is the Afghan jihad and the second the "war on terror". The former allowed the state and the religious right to consolidate their historical alliance overtly, with the support of the 'international community' whereas the latter ostensibly is the cause of conflict between the two. However, the paper will argue that there has been no meaningful discontinuity in the alliance. The paper will include a discussion of the nature of the Pakistani state and the fissures within the parties of the religious right. It will also discuss why there are latent tendencies within Pakistani society that point to the fact that the 'revival' of the religious right is but a temporary and exaggerated notion.

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A strategy for removing the deadlock in the peace process between India and Pakistan

The three years long peace process between India and Pakistan has failed to achieve progress along any of the border disputes between two countries. This situation is often described as a deadlock but there is no research available on what the deadlock is and why there is a deadlock. Analyzing the nature of this peace process and statements of the leadership of the two countries in light of the history of relations between two countries, an attempt is made to locate and understand the nature of this deadlock. One of the findings of this paper is that the unpreparedness of public opinion, especially in India, for the final resolution of the Kashmir conflict is the main cause. The unfortunate 'community memory' attached with the partition of the subcontinent, which has developed into a 'complicit ideology' for the Indian and Pakistani communities is preventing the two communities to agree upon giving concessions to each other. The people-to-people contact approach is explored to address this problem and the four methods suggested by Roger Fisher and William Ury in their book "*Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*" are applied on India-Pakistan peace negotiations to

suggest practical steps towards the win-win negotiations. This paper attempts to come up with some practical suggestions for policymakers in India and Pakistan to remove the deadlock in the peace process.

PANEL 4A: NEW HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE STATE IN POST-COLONIAL SOUTH ASIA

Panel abstract

Panel Convenor: **Taylor Sherman**, University of Cambridge

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Interest in the post-colonial state in South Asia has grown significantly in recent years. However, many of the most influential scholars have tended to take a theoretical approach, and have not focused on the bricks and mortar of social, economic, political and institutional change in the post-colonial period. Moreover, even those publications concerned with such matters have not been grounded in government archives to any significant extent. This panel invites scholars, and particularly graduate students, to bridge the divide between pre- and post-independence histories and to examine the emergence of the post-colonial state by using (and interrogating) government archives. The panel will address questions about the differences and similarities between the post-colonial states and their colonial predecessor and about the changing relationship between the state and its population. To this end, the panel will examine the various ways in which the state extended itself into new territories, whether social, economic or geographical. Papers may examine the impact of changes such as the absorption of the Princely States into the new nation states, or the rise of the welfare system. The dialectical relationship between the state and resistance will also be addressed. In this pursuit, panellists may analyse the changing relationship between the state and religion, the question of identity formation, or how different segments of the public fashioned the state for their own ends. An important feature of this discussion will be an attempt to relate post-independent structures to their late-colonial heritage. In sum, this panel seeks to bridge the divide between pre-1947 histories, which have been firmly established in the archives, and post-1947 histories, which have yet to explore the archive in all its complexities, by using government documents and private papers to examine the nature of the post-colonial state in South Asia.

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Enemies of the state – the reaction of the Indian State to the Telengana uprising from 1946 to 1952

What was the nature of the Indian state at independence? To what extent was it continuing the legacy of the colonial Raj? In September 1948 the Indian army entered the territory of Telengana. It was reacting against a communist led peasant rebellion that had been attempting land reform since 1946 and a recalcitrant head of state who refused to accede to the Indian union. An examination of the new Indian state's response to its enemies in Telegana shows the priorities that were driving the new state. Communism was defined and treated as a parasitic germ in language and disciplinary measures similar to the British Raj. It was even dubbed a communal organisation – a particularly telling label during the period of partition of the subcontinent. This paper argues that on the question of sedition the Indian state took on the same assumptions and characterisations of the 'enemies of the state' as the British. Through an examination of the state's reaction to the Telengana Uprising, questions concerning the definition of communism, dissent and traitor hood can be addressed. The decisive police action conducted by the state also demonstrates how leaders of the new state perceived its role in enforcing the boundaries of political India.

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State of emergency and the emergent state: the police action and anti-communist operations in Hyderabad and the formation of the Indian state, 1948-1953

This paper explores the impact of the Police Action and anti-communist operations in Hyderabad on the formation of the Indian state, 1948-1953. It examines the administrative, social, political and financial constraints which impacted policy as the new Indian government took power in this territory. Absorbing Hyderabad into the Indian Union was not easy. To do this, the Indian Government had to fight a two-stage battle: first against the followers of the minority Muslim leader, the Nizam of Hyderabad, and then against a communist insurgency. The paper begins with an analysis of the initial aims of the Police Action and the conduct of the military during the first months of the occupation of the territory. It highlights the ways in which the strategies of the military officers in charge of the occupation differed from the policies articulated by the politicians in Delhi, and it explores the impact of these differences on the practical politics of governance in Hyderabad. The paper also underlines the multifarious difficulties which served to restrict the ability of the new authorities to use the formal criminal justice system to punish either the followers of the Nizam or the communists. It is argued that, because the Government of India faced these troubles during the time that it was drawing up its constitution, the shortcomings of the administration of justice in Hyderabad impacted the character of the Fundamental Rights protected in the Indian constitution. After fourteen months of military rule, control of Hyderabad was handed over to a civilian administrator. The last part of the paper considers the policies of economic uplift and forced modernisation which constituted part of the civilian response to the communist movement, and situates these programmes in the context of the development strategies of the post-colonial state. Using archival sources from India, this paper compares these on-the-ground battles to similar struggles which had been waged by the colonial state, and highlights the impact which the war in Hyderabad had on the shape of the state in India.

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Knowledge, archive and disciplinarity in the making of postcolonial tribalisms: reading a 1980s crisis narrative in Santal Parganas

This paper looks at the complex relationship between colonial history and archival epistemology in the fashioning of local *tribalisms* in contemporary South Asia. Recent histories or radical anthropologies of colonialism- of self-consciously postcolonial kinds one might add- have tended to either directly question the claims of the archive over *all* colonial pasts, looking for pure histories in popular memory and indigenous mentalities instead, or have subjected the colonial record to gruelling, relentless, and very often now, repetitive discourse analyses. Both the manoeuvres have tended to generate a monotonously familiar result: an anthropology-inflected oral history that has often dangled precariously between full-fledged ethnography on the one hand and old-style social history on the other.

What has been grossly left undefined in these quarters is the epistemological status of history itself. Is there history beyond the archive? Or is history, like allegedly so much else in post-Enlightenment thought, just a hyper-textual play of narrative surfaces and linguistic signifiers? In mapping the contours of colonial cadastral politics and indigenous discourses on landed status and sovereignty in tribal Bengal, this paper tries answering these questions by suggesting that the colonial record is still an active force in contemporary rhetoric of citizenship, cultural privilege, and legitimacy. It examines how the force of the bureaucratic record generates its own momentum in postcolonial contexts, and substantively shapes both memory and *forgetting* by providing not just a field for political contests over identities and categories, rights and accesses, but also by supplying powerful phraseologies of juridical and legal kinds in local dramas of ritual authority and cultural dissent.

Reading closely the mnemonic metaphors deployed in a rumour about a commodity crisis that began to circulate in Santal Parganas in the 1980s, it explores the long colonial history of cross-disciplinary transaction of knowledge that have inflected upon ideas of aboriginality and tenurial authority in the making of ethnic identity and *wildness* in colonial and postcolonial India. Focussing on the archival careers of one agrarian tenure- the *Ghatwali* estates in Santal Parganas- this paper examines how unstable vocabularies and shifting discourses, much of it colonial, about kingship, sovereignty and *contract* have generated a tribal refusal to participate in the nationalist drama of

socialist equity and consensual statemaking, and produced instead a stubborn mnemonic dissidence against the idea of postcolonial citizenry itself. In this staging of dissent and dismissal, ironically, the language deployed in Santal Parganas is the language of nineteenth century colonialism.

Tribal memory and orality on the margins have at once fashioned and subverted this (post)colonial bureaucratic language, disrupting the linearity of archival narratives, while at the same time forcefully appropriating the written corpus and textual assemblages of colonial bureaucratic record. At issue here is the status of the *archive* itself: the fundamental conflict in Santal Parganas is not just between state-regimented citizenships on the one hand and dissonant tribal imaginings on the other; it is about the right to produce, narrate, and control the local record and the *paper machine*. The local *kuchery* is more than just a corpus of land deeds and family genealogies: it is a marker of sovereignty and autonomy, of old statuses and new political rights; a site of juridical tangles and tribal dissidence; a field of knowledge and contest. This paper would explore the continuing relevance of the colonial *kuchery* in the contemporary rhetoric of power and authenticity in Santal Parganas, examining how nineteenth century grammar continues to shape the language of ethnicity, marginality and self-fashioning in postcolonial India.

PANEL 4B: ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS : GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNANCE IN SOUTH ASIA

Panel abstract

Panel Convenor: **Dr. Emma Mawdsley**, Birkbeck College

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We invite papers for this session looking at environmental government and governance in South Asia. The focus will be on analyses of institutions and/or organisations - political parties, the bureaucracy, environmental organisations, local action groups, the regulatory system, and the judiciary; and on wider social actors - the media, consumers, citizens and so on. The session aims to examine the agents, frameworks and politics of environmental governance and government, with attention to how environmental change is perceived, represented, ignored, contested and/or regulated by different social and political actors.

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Forest villagers in northeastern hill forests of Bangladesh: linkages between their livelihoods and forest conservation

Khasia, an ethnic community of northeastern region of Bangladesh, have been forests areas as forest villagers since early 1950s. Since their settlement, the Khasia people have been practicing betel leaf-based agroforestry on allotted land and supplying labour to FD for the protection and development of plantation as well as conservation of natural forests. However, livelihood of these people and their contribution on forest conservation still remain unexplored. Taking a sample forest village (Khasia *punji*) of Sylhet forest division, Bangladesh as a case study, this paper explores the livelihoods of villagers and their contribution on forest conservation.

More specifically this article answer the following question: a] what are the situation of livelihood capitals (human, physical, natural, financial and social capitals) that are building blocks of livelihood among forest villagers; b] what are the livelihood strategies Khasia people adopted to sustain their living; c] what are the institutions and level of local governance that facilitate resource utilization and management; and d] what roles Khasia people do play in forest conservation.

Findings indicate that even though they have very limited diversity of livelihood strategies, the villagers are reasonably well-endowed with all capitals of DFID's sustainable livelihoods framework. Strong social capital, stable natural asset and, productive and market-oriented agroforestry system facilitates the generation of financial and physical capitals that make the livelihoods of Khasia people sustainable. At the same time, their reciprocal contributions support forest conservation. For the further betterment of livelihood and forest conservation, however, more attention should be paid in

improving some issues of local governance such as transparency and accountability in decision making processes, etc. Lessons learned from the study could be utilized in formulating future participatory forest management schemes in the country.

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Form of urban local government in India

Urban local governments are important actors in local-level governance. These institutions are often blamed for the poor governance of urban areas. In India, numerous initiatives have been undertaken to strengthen local governments and to improve service levels in urban areas. In this paper an attempt has been made to analyse the form of urban local governments in the light of recent urban sector reforms in India. This review has shown that a number of measures have been taken to make urban local governments autonomous, participatory, representative, transparent, accountable and dynamic. However, on-going research on the subject indicates that such reforms have not brought about a significant change in the functioning of a large number of urban local governments. It is concluded that there exists an urgent need to carefully evaluate the impact of recent reforms and assess the prevailing conditions at local government level using suitable indicators of good urban governance.

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Postmaterialism and Indian middle-class environmental values

Environmentalism and human relationships with the environment in India have been examined from both an elite/State or indigenous/tribal perspective. The middle-classes, through this set of literatures, are relatively under-researched, and becoming more important in explaining the direction of policy and the changing urban landscape (Baviskar 1995). Environmental values amongst the middle-class in most industrialised countries have been explained (although contested) using the postmaterial thesis on the link between values and affluence. Inglehart's (1977) thesis has been widely accepted as the basis upon which to examine the nature of human-environment relationships in both industrialised (also affluent) and consequently developing (also relatively impoverished) countries. This theory helps perpetuate the idea that people in the developing world do not (and cannot afford to) hold environmental values.

This paper looks at the basic idea suggested by the Inglehart (1977) thesis using the case-study of two residential colonies in urban India. Through data collected from interviews and questionnaires, I suggest that affluence (although raised as an issue) is not the sole factor influencing an environmental concern. Furthermore, I would also like to argue that environmental concern (as opposed to activism) is multifaceted and was exhibited by respondents of the survey as the result of a number of influencing factors ranging from the influence of media to personal (lived) concerns. Although this paper does not disagree completely with the postmaterial theory, it argues that it is a limiting perspective upon which to understand the complex nature of environmental values and the factors that influence their existence and formation.

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Perils of the precautionary principle: environmental policy lessons from governing genetically modified crops in India

The precautionary principle is widely seen in international environmental debates as a rationally sensible, if not morally righteous, approach to assessing the safety of genetically modified crops. Their human health and environmental impacts, especially the latter, are unclear and remain subject to considerable dispute. Contrary to the approach of several other pro-biotechnology states, the Indian Government has long developed and refined the precautionary principle as the basis for assessing the

safety of GM crops. While the precautionary principle aims to minimise the level of risk posed by biotechnologies, the protests of civil society groups surrounding the release of Bt cotton and other GM crops point to the difficulties of implementing this principle in practice. The paper examines the challenges of applying the precautionary principle, demonstrating on the basis of extensive fieldwork conducted in India during 2002-2004 that this principle may create more perils than promises to avoid. Not only does it provide political space for those who seek to prevent the dissemination of new biotechnologies and to obfuscate the examination of sound science through reasoned debate, it also offers new scope for bureaucratic delays and corruption that may ultimately work against the interests of Indian farmers.

PANEL 4C: MEDIA AND CENSORSHIP

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Making the cut: censoring Hindi cinema in contemporary India

The proposed paper is part of a larger project that explores the cultural politics of matrimonial representations in popular Indian cinema. The thesis argues that commercial Hindi films from the 1990's onwards had become more conservative as a reaction to the potential anxieties surrounding globalisation and as a result of the influence of a reactionary political agenda of the *Hindu Right*.

In the absence of a self-regulatory mechanism within the Indian film industry, I believe there is evidence of growing politicisation of the censorship process through the 1990s as exemplified by the antiquated legal provisions for censorship of Indian Cinema such as The Cinematograph Act of 1952, the 1993 Revision of the 1952 CBFC guidelines and the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986. Through the government-appointed Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), there has been increasingly persistent Governmental and judicial interference with artistic expression particularly by the *Hindu Right* during the 1990s and thereafter whilst the ruling party. To support my argument I attempt to find evidence in the arbitrary/repressive censorship practices of the CBFC, the excision activities detailed in the Annual Reports of the CBFC and the political nexus of the Film Industry and the CBFC members particularly of the Chairperson, all of which point to a repressive regime.

In this paper I engage in the analyses of the protracted legal controversies and the moral panic caused by commercial Hindi films such as *Khalnayak*, *Bandit Queen* and *Fire* that tested the limits and challenged the parameters set by the archaic and anachronistic Cinematograph Act of 1952. These case studies shall highlight the CBFC's attempts at moral policing to appease conservative pressure groups and the obsessive regulatory concerns of the state apparatus regarding "obscene, indecent and/or immoral" cinematic material.

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A rose by any other name: exploring the politics of roja

Tejaswini Niranjana's evocative account of a viewing of Mani Ratnam's blockbuster, *Roja* (*Roja/The Rose*, 1992) touches on topics at the heart of this essay. Released to wide commercial and critical acclaim in 1992 and the subject of much academic discussion since then, *Roja* was the film that brought accomplished South Indian director Mani Ratnam to the attention of the wider Indian audience. Dealing with complex contemporary issues of separatism in Kashmir and wider notions of Indian nationalism, *Roja* juxtaposes the personal story of a young Tamil cryptologist kidnapped by Kashmiri militants and his wife's desperate struggle to free him with the burning and basic political questions that India faced in the 1990s, 'Who is an Indian? What defines him/her? What is the state of the Indian nation?'

This essay aims to analyse *Roja's* often simplistic responses to these queries. In order to understand these responses, I will look at how *Roja* depicts Kashmir and Tamil Nadu, the portrayal of Hinduism and Islam, the depiction of the Indian state as represented by the Indian Army, the characterization of Rishi, Roja and Liaquat Khan and Rishi's loyalty to the Indian state which veers between a brand of nationalism and outright jingoism versus Roja's loyalty to her husband above all else. I am also interested in exploring the differences between the dubbed Hindi version and the original Tamil version. It is my contention that the mere act of dubbing robs *Roja* of the regional context so critical to understanding the film. When viewed through a regional lens, *Roja* provides subtly different answers to the questions it raises, though these answers continue to be both confusing and contradictory. For the purpose of this essay, I will refer mainly to the original, Tamil-language version of *Roja* mentioning the dubbed Hindi version only to compare the two.

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"Say Shava Shava!": self-censorship, changing states and the cultural economy of 'Punjabiya' in Bombay cinema

This paper explores the layered and meaningful construction of 'the Punjabi world' of commercial Bombay cinema, post-1947. The paper discusses the complex ways and means, backdrops and rationales, by which Bombay cinema has constructed a habitus of discourse, representation, symbolism and silence, a universe of meaning and metaphor, identity and alterity. Here, self-censorship, commercial sense and the evolution of the postcolonial State have played important roles in the cinematic depiction of a 'normal' world, in the filmic fleshing-out (and separation) of the realms of history, politics, reality, fantasy and fun. The paper is based upon detailed ethnographic information and experience gathered from both Bombay film-makers and Punjabi film-viewers in India.

The paper traces the emergence (and eventual dominance) of the Punjabi hero-director-producer combine in Bombay cinema. It analyses the various markers of identity and exclusion that have, over decades of tumultuous political, economic and social flux in India, become 'normal' in and via the media of mainstream films. The paper thus presents an analysis of what it has meant to 'be Punjabi' in and at the movies, how Bombay film-makers imagine, stratify and calculate viewers' tastes, how commercial estimates then inflect the making of films, and the cinematic customs, manners and meanings eventually presented to film viewers.

The paper's fundamental argument is that commercial Bombay cinema has punctuated every sphere of Indian ritual life. The paper presents a discussion of the 'colourful' choices (drawn from folk, agrarian and commercial culture), the 'glamorous' optimism (derived from complex colonial discourse) and the powerful silences (stemming from Partition) that influence Bombay film-makers in their cinematic portrayal of 'Punjabis'. The paper also discusses the agency and limitation this process affords to film-viewers who consume and reject cinematic images and cultural themes filtered through various lenses of context, situation, aspiration and pleasure. The roles played by (derived) cultural 'pride', commercial calculations and personal silences, shot through with dark memories, issues of governmentality and emotions of deep loss (demanding both silence and cultural compensation), come in for especial focus and analysis.

PANEL 4D: DEMOCRATISING MOBILITY: CASTE, CLASS, RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

Dr. Arun K. Jana, University of North Bengal, India

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Ethnic parties and multi-party democracies of South Asia: comparing the Indian and Sri Lankan case

There is a remarkable similarity between India and Sri Lanka. The most remarkable feature is that democracy, which has been a casualty in many parts of the post-colonial world, has survived in both the neighbouring countries. Elections have been held quite regularly and parties compete almost freely in these elections. The voter turnout had been high, which, reflects the tremendous faith of the

people in the democratic process. Parties had interacted and competed with each other and this competition have given way to a multiparty system. In India there is clear trend towards bipolarization whereas in Sri Lanka the system is already a bipolarized one since 1956.

So far as party politics is concerned probably the most significant feature has been the growth to prominence of ethnic parties in recent years in these countries. In India expansion of ethnic parties has altered the party system at the national level significantly. In Sri Lanka ethnic plurality has also given rise to a number of ethnic forces. These forces have grown to prominence in recent years, which in turn has complicated party competition and the system. Observers on these ethnic parties generally consider them as forces that strengthen democracies in plural societies since they represent various ethnic groups. However, some ethnic parties like Ahom Gana Parishad and the Shiv Sena in India are also known to have induced tensions and conflicts particularly in the course of their expansion. Similarly in Sri Lanka ethnic forces have led to the ethnicization of the society. This is partly because ethnic forces often pursue aggressive strategies in their attempt to create a sense of belongingness among the ethnic community they mobilize and represent. In this process they differentiate and exclude others in the region or state, which give rise to conflicts, often violent with the other. In a situation of this kind the question, which becomes crucial is, how far ethnic forces strengthen or undermine democracy and pluralism in both the countries? The paper seeks to answer this in three different sections.

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Caste and its influence on class mobility

This paper aims to study the influence of *caste* on class mobility, and is part of a larger study on class mobility patterns of women and men in India. Class mobility, a relatively unexplored area of research in India, implies intergenerational movement from class origins (parent's class) to class destinations (current class position) and is significant for studying class inequalities. This is done by comparing the *relative* rates of mobility or relative chances of, for example, someone from working class origins making it to the salariat as compared to those from intermediate or salariat origins.

The existence of a caste system places India in a unique position with regard to class mobility. Certain castes have been historically associated with particular occupations, an association which is believed by some to be melting due to the process of modernisation. Hence, I ask whether belonging to a particular caste still carries with it the ability to prevent downward class mobility or encourage upward mobility.

In this paper, I study the inter-relationship between caste and class, both theoretically and empirically. A major emphasis of this research is on the gender aspect of mobility. Women play a crucial role in caste and occupational continuity, in addition, given the many examples of the marginalisation of women with increasing modernisation, a study of how gender and caste together influence class mobility patterns is of significance. This research attempts to separate the influence of caste on mobility at both the rural-urban as well as regional levels. The data for this paper comes from the current (2004) round of the National Election Study conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. The data is collected by a nationally representative, stratified random sample of over 27,000 respondents. This is especially useful for the present study as it includes detailed background information on both the respondent and their parents including their occupations and caste background.

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Religion and social development: the case of Kerala, India

The Indian state of Kerala is a confluence of all major religions of the world –Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. Kerala is sixty percent Hindu. The rest is non-Hindu population, Christians and Muslims fairly evenly distributed. These religious systems coexist in Kerala harmoniously for several centuries.

There are hardly any major inter-religious conflicts. Hindus, Muslims and Christians live peacefully and interact each other in their daily life. Tolerance is the well-accepted norm. How Kerala has evolved in to a tolerant society within the framework of diverse belief systems. What is the sociological function of religion in Kerala? What is the contribution of religious pluralism in Kerala's celebrated social development model? To find answers to these questions a re-visiting of social and cultural history of Kerala is required. Thus following specific objectives would be pursued in the present study:

1. To reflect upon the socio-religious and caste reform movement in Kerala
2. To reflect upon the social behaviour of Syrian Christians in Kerala who claim their origin to the first century A.D.
3. To reflect upon the role of protestant missionaries in the education and social development of Kerala during the British period.
4. To make an assessment of social function of religion in Kerala.
5. To examine the relationship between Human development and social function of religion in Kerala.

It is hypothesized that Protestant Christianity that came to Kerala along with British colonialism could not break the overarching dominance of Hindu value system. This in turn contributed to religious harmony and social identity of multiple cultures. Further the 'clash of civilization' does not hold much water in the context of Kerala

PANEL 5A: LIBERALISATION AND ECONOMIC REFORMS IN INDIA

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Entering the Indian market: myth and reality

India, like China, has long captured the imagination of foreign merchants as offering a market of immense potential. In recent decades India has been overshadowed by China, but with the liberalisation of the economy in the 1990s, and substantial growth, the myths have reappeared. However, despite its size – at purchasing power parity rates it is the 4th largest in the world – success for many foreign firms in the Indian market has been elusive. Although imports into India have surged over the last three years (up 12% in 2002, 26% in 2003, 37% in 2004) much of this has come from China whilst other countries have struggled to retain a share. New Zealand's share of Indian imports has slipped from 0.16% in 2001/2 to 0.10% in 2004/5.

As in China, the difficulties for foreign companies are substantial and rewards not easy to come by, but neither market can be ignored so it is imperative for companies (and governments) to analyse dispassionately the opportunities and the barriers. This paper situates the re-emergence of India into the global economy as part of the Asia resurgence compares Indian liberalisation with that of China's opening to the outside world.. It then looks specifically at the experience of New Zealand companies. Despite commonalities in languages, legal traditions (and a shared passion for cricket) and in spite of the rapidly increasing numbers of Indian immigrants to New Zealand, trade has not taken off and twice as many companies export to China as to India.

This paper draws on fieldwork funded by the Asia: New Zealand Foundation in India (Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai) in February 2006 and seeks to identify the factors leading to success, or failure, for New Zealand companies in the Indian market.

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The economies of price war in the Indian newspaper industry

The present paper investigates the economies of the price war in the Indian newspaper industry and its impact on the medium and small newspaper groups. The Indian newspaper industry since the mid nineties has witnessed frequent price wars initiated by the market leaders to increase circulation thereby attracting more and more advertisers. This anti competition practice of the few market leaders have jeopardised the economic viability of the medium and small newspaper groups. Most of the medium and small newspaper groups in India operate on the marginal profits and find it difficult to retaliate to the price cut of the market leaders thereby loosing on circulation. Also most of the newspaper firms in India are not listed on any stock exchange, which implies that the capitally starved newspaper cannot borrow money from the capital market as they cannot sell their shares. It was believed that with the help of foreign direct investment (FDI) which was approved in June 2002 with the cap of 26 percent on news and current affairs segment; the medium and small newspaper firms will come to relief through collaborating with foreign partners thus breaking the monopoly which is rapidly gripping the Indian press. However the current trend in FDI suggests that it is the Big and profitable newspaper groups of Indian which will be able to attract foreign funds. In the present market situation the diversity of the Indian newspaper industry is under severe threat as the unfair market practice of the powerful newspaper firms are compelling the small newspaper out of business. There is an immediate need to take measures to curtail the mal practise of the few market leaders and initiating policy measures to maintain and promote the diversity that typifies the Indian press.

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The impact of economic reforms on Dalits

Globalisation is a much – touted concept since it was introduced. Pressure is mounted to accept it and argued that there is no escape from it. It has come to represent a policy – an economic, social and political. It is a policy that is aggressively advocated by certain powerful interests and thrust down on the rest of the nations.

The countries of the third world are the most affected, as they were victims of colonialism in the past. They have inherited a legacy of backwardness from their colonial masters. Having achieved freedom during the middle or the later half of the 20th century, they find themselves left out in the cold, particularly as to capital and technology needed for development.

The paper analyses the impact of economic reforms (part of globalization process) on Dalits in India. The Congress government introduced the reform process in 1991, opening up the markets. But it was not easy for the government in power to implement these reforms, as some political parties opposed them vehemently. They feel that the weaker sections who constitute more than 50% of the total population (a part of whom are Dalits) are going to be affected very badly. The impact on Dalits, whether economic reforms benefited them, safety nets / measures the government has to take to protect their interests are discussed in this paper.

PANEL 5B: POST-TSUNAMI AND POST-WAR SRI LANKA: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES IN NATION-BUILDING

Paper abstract

Panel Convenor: **Dr. Chaminda Hettiarachchi**, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

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Sri Lanka is one of worst hit country by 26th Dec. 2004 Tsunami the most destructive natural disaster of modern times. It killed more than 30,000 Sri Lankans, displaced about 700, 000 and cost of economical damage of over US\$ 1.8Bin. The timing of Tsunami was also critical for Sri Lanka as it was trying to recover from another made disaster of ethnic war which has been the bloodiest and longest war in Asia extended over two decades.

However, after a successful relief phase of post-Tsunami destructions, Sri Lanka is planning its short term and long-term reconstruction process. With high international solidarity and local enthusiasm for a modern country and the Sri Lankans are optimistic and highly motivated about their nation building exercise. All the stakeholders of the process including the government, academics and professionals, civil society, business community and international donors all are trying to collaborate in the reconstruction process and nation building. However, the picture is not so optimistic due to several key reasons.

Inefficient and slow government institutions, corruptions and lack of transparency, long lasted rivalry of political parties, probability of outbreak of civil war and rising religious fundamentalism and ethnic nationalism are some of major obstacles. This panel tries to look at such problems, possible options available to Sri Lanka in nation building and the role of the international community.

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Voluntary involvement in post-tsunami nation-building: a pioneering experience of a premier business school

Tsunami disaster was a clarion call for unity of all and utilisation of all resources towards the three R's, relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. There was an awakening among the general public in terms of committing themselves voluntarily in contributing to the well being of the affected masses.

In this backdrop, Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM), the premier management institute in Sri Lanka came forward in an unprecedented approach of converting required academic assignments and modules of the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program catering for the disaster management aspects. Skill projects, usually involving a business study or an organisational improvement were converted to camp improvement and developmental projects. The diversity of needs of selected Tsunami camp occupants ranging from physiological needs to self-esteem needs was addressed, whilst assisting the officials in charge of camps to improve the aspects of planning, organising, leading and controlling. Moving one step further, solutions of temporary shelter by way of constructing semi-permanent houses was also done, liaising with donor agencies such as World Vision for needed funds. Such development projects also included employment generation schemes such as establishing small business ventures. As a contribution for the reconstruction phase, many permanent housing schemes, pre-schools, boat-manufacturing yards, were also constructed coordinated and project management done by the MBA students with the funds received from donor organisations.

In brief, Tsunami provided an opportunity for sensible Sri Lankans to voluntarily come forward in assisting the nation building and PIM's approach was a pioneering trendsetter for the academic fraternity. As Professor Gunapala Nanayakkara, Director of PIM aptly coined, it was a call to DIE in the time of disaster, in terms of Dedication, Innovation and Execution. It is expected to share this pioneering experience of PIM with the conference participants with salient points on voluntary contribution in managing the aftermath of a devastating natural disaster.

Vallipuram Kanagasingam, Eastern University Sri Lanka

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Post-tsunami and post-war Sri Lanka: challenges and perspectives in nation-building with special reference to the fishing industry in the Batticaloa district

The destruction and devastation caused by Tsunami has caused an unprecedented blow to the economy and manpower resources of the nation, especially to that of the Eastern coast of Sri Lanka, which has already been ravaged by the two decades old bloody war. With the few sparkers of hope that flashed by the MOU, all went off to darkness by Tsunami tidal waves. As every disaster has its blessings, the disaster caused by the tidal waves has to be perceived as a window of prosperity.

Tsunami tidal waves like those natural disasters that wreaked havoc across Sri Lanka as well as many other nations in the Asian region on Sunday December 26. Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand,

Maldives, Somalia, etc., were affected by these massive waves that are usually caused by earthquakes deep under the ocean floor. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, mostly coastal areas such as Batticaloa, Amparai, Jaffna, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee, Galle, Matara, and Hambantotta were severely hit by Tsunami.

The tsunami disaster, which is measured by using Richter scale, formed by an under water earthquake of the coast-belt of Sumatra island, was measured 9.0 in magnitude on the Richter scale. Mainly, impact of tsunami influenced on fishing sector in the island as the event had affected the coastal areas in the island. Fishing industry is one the important sector in Sri Lanka, which contributes 2.5% to the GNP (2004). Thus, as fishing industry is severely hit by tsunami. National economy was dramatically back warded. The affect of fishing in Sri Lanka has the strongest impact on Eastern and Southern Provincial fishing community. Thus, in Batticaloa district, 28 fishing villages affected by Tsunami.

Fishing Industry is most important income generation source in the Batticaloa district, which is mostly affected by recent tsunami as already mentioned. Mostly, NGOs assist to rebuild fishing industry. Therefore, the research problem is how far fishing industry is benefited by Government and NGOs ?

Objective of the research was to measure the impact of tsunami disaster on the fishing industry and to know how to implement tsunami project to rebuild fishing industry of the Batticaloa district.

The research study was concentrated impact on fishing industry in the Batticaloa District based on Economic, Social, Psychological and Environmental dimensions. The primary and secondary data were used to analyze for this study.

Fishing industry is an important income generation source in the Batticaloa district, which is severely hit by tsunami tidal surge. Mostly, Government and NGOs strive to assist rebuilding fishing industry. But, progress is very slow compared with not only other countries, but also other districts in Sri Lanka. The affected people still are living in temporary houses depending on government's grants, is the best example to clearly portray the phenomena.

Dr. Chaminda Hettiarachchi, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
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Post-tsunami and post-war Sri Lanka - challenges and perspectives in nation-building

Sri Lanka is one of worst hit country by 26th Dec. 2004 Tsunami the most destructive natural disaster of modern times. It killed more than 30,000 Sri Lankans, displaced about 700, 000 and cost of economical damage of over US\$ 1.8Bin. The timing of Tsunami was also critical for Sri Lanka as it was trying to recover from another made disaster of ethnic war which has been the bloodiest and longest war in Asia extended over two decades.

However, after a successful relief phase of post-Tsunami destructions, Sri Lanka is planning its short term and long-term reconstruction process. With high international solidarity and local enthusiasm for a modern country and the Sri Lankans are optimistic and highly motivated about their nation building exercise. All the stakeholders of the process including the government, academics and professionals, civil society, business community and international donors all are trying to collaborate in the reconstruction process and nation building. However, the picture is not so optimistic due to several key reasons.

Inefficient and slow government institutions, corruptions and lack of transparency, long lasted rivalry of political parties, probability of outbreak of civil war and rising religious fundamentalism and ethnic nationalism are some of major obstacles. This paper tries to look at such problems, possible options available to Sri Lanka in nation building and the role of the international community.

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Tsunami: use and abuse for nation-building in Sri Lanka

Tsunami is the worst ever-natural disaster hit Sri Lanka according to the available historical records. This disaster has taken over 40,000 lives according to official reports. However, it can be safely assumed that plus or minus 100,000 people lost their lives and over several hundreds of thousands families were displaced. The damages to property calculated to be billions of rupees. This disaster hit Sri Lanka when she has been facing serious ethnic problem for which many parties has been polarized over the potential solutions to the problem.

When Tsunami hit Sri Lanka the natural human reaction went beyond the politics or ethnic or any other division and everybody united to help the victims. This phenomenon did not continue though many had hopes that this worst disaster had been punished every human for injustice and therefore everyone has to work together to build the nation. However as country is polarized politically, ethnically, culturally and socially, the activities carried out by different groups were criticized by every polarized groups not merely to help the victims but to achieve their political and other desires. Thus while having some hopes for nation building after the disaster, the incident is now abuse by many stakeholders who are involved in the nation building effort. At the next level physical rehabilitation of the houses though temporally solve the problem of shelter for those lost everything but doors have been opened for many potential social and cultural problem among the victims at grassroots level.

A content analysis will be carried out in order to understand the views and opinion expressed by conflicting political and ethnic groups soon after and later the incident of Tsunami. In addition, data from rehabilitation programs will be collected in order to assess the future problems that would positively and negatively affect the effort of the nation building.

The findings or the expressions made by the author based on logical analysis of available secondary and primary data will establish to what degree the natural disaster has positively contributed towards the nation building and how this was later faded away due to various types of polarization. Author will argue what went wrong in the nation building effort and who will be responsible and what can be done to mitigate it. The other aspect is the impact on nation building in the physical rehabilitation efforts and the output of physical rehabilitation effort.

PANEL 5C: WOMEN AND POLITICS IN INDIA: AGENCY, CULTURES AND CAREERS

Paper abstract

Panel Convenor: **Dr. Mauela Ciotti**, University of Edinburgh

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Scholars claim that the 1990s have been marked by a new wave of democratisation in India, with the lower strata of the population as its main actors. With reference to north India, the consolidation of political parties drawing their vote bank from low and middle-ranking communities has led to the creation of a new class of women in politics. During the same period, Hindu Right women have been very vocal and visible in the political scenario. Further, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments introducing reserved quotas for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions as well as in Municipal Bodies have brought countless women in office. This panel aims to bring together papers exploring emerging forms of women's political participation and focusing on their agency, the structures and the political cultures within which they operate as well as the consequences of their participation at the local, state and national levels. Papers are invited to address a number of questions such as: which are the changes and continuities between women's political activities in the past and in the present? Is women's caste identity the most salient factor shaping political agency and/or are class, gender and religion equally or more relevant in the way women carry out political activities? How do women's political activities affect household gender relations? Has women's involvement in politics contributed towards their status improvement and initiated a process of upward social mobility? How have reserved quotas impacted on women's political performance? Have reserved quotas paved the way to women's political careers beyond local governance institutions? Is there evidence of alliance/sisterhood amongst women in politics belonging to different castes and communities? Which are the features women in politics share across the political spectrum and contexts of participation?

Dr. Sumi Madhok, School of Oriental and African Studies

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Political intrigue, coercion and agency: snapshots of Dalit women and political citizenship in North West India

This paper examines the experience and processes of modernity i.e. its institutions and discourses in the context of political participation of *dalit* women in local government in Rajasthan. More specifically, it explores at the relationship between the modern language of individual rights, citizenship and democracy and implicit within these that of individual agency and the access to and the actual experience of women representatives in the Panchayat bodies. It looks at the point of contact with these ideas, the ensuing moral interaction and the extent to which they are regarded as 'useful', of being worthy of inclusion and moral pursuance as well as 'effective' in articulating political demands. In short, it looks at what it means to be a political agent, one who is female and a *dalit*, in a part of rural India.

Dr. Kalpana Wilson, School of Oriental and African Studies

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Politics and 'agency': struggles of rural women agricultural workers

This paper draws upon the experiences and perceptions of rural women agricultural workers in India who are engaged in movements for political and social change, to contrast neo-liberal and feminist understandings of 'agency'. The emphasis upon women's 'agency' initially emerged from feminist analyses of patriarchy, and in particular from critiques by Black and Third World feminists of 'racialised' liberal feminist perceptions of 'other' women. However, it will be argued, dominant development institutions such as the World Bank have appropriated and transformed the concept with the result that feminist analyses of power and ideology have been marginalized in favour of notions of individual choice. The struggles of predominantly dalit women agricultural labourers in Bihar, which have involved many in sustained political activism, provide a number of insights into the implications of this.

Dr. Manuela Ciotti, University of Edinburgh

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At the margins of feminist politics? Everyday lives of women activists in northern India

This paper draws on long term ethnographic fieldwork on historically marginalised women's political participation within party politics and rural and urban local governance bodies. This research project aims to locate women within the democratisation wave from below that has swept northern India since the 1990s and the introduction of reserved quotas for women within the above bodies. The paper interrogates the possibilities for the existence of feminist politics in the spaces analysed, dense with masculine powers, caste identity-driven politicians and considering women's often 'young' political careers. It is argued that the condition of women inhabiting this South Asian site—who share features with women politicians at all levels of the Indian polity as well as cross-culturally—presents a theoretical impasse: labelling these Indian women activists' practices as 'non-feminist' would *negatively* connote the subjectivity and agency of all those women who are engaged in different 'political worlds'—even when they replicate power structures and unequal gender regimes, or when they embody traditions which are not exclusively based on the 'gendered individual' as an actor or beneficiary of politics. This paper explores plural and alternative ways of analysing women in politics vis-à-vis western and South Asian feminist discourses, so that women's agency is not constrained by categories which, by themselves, might only offer partial explanations for everyday political life in a slum, a village or a state capital. Finally, the paper calls for increased empirical engagement with the interlocking relationship of vernacular politics, cultural feminism(s) and women's local political agency and identity.

PANEL 5D: MOVING BEYOND MIMETIC ENCOUNTERS: MEDICAL INNOVATION AND INDIGENOUS MEDICAL SYSTEMS IN COLONIAL INDIA

Paper abstract

Panel Convenor: **Rachel Berger**, University of Cambridge

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The indigenous medical systems of South Asia have traditionally been conceptualised by Historians of medicine in relation to the colonial medical regimes that sought to replace them. This has led to Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha being studied through categories derived from its engagement with bio-medicine, hence reproducing a largely static, homogenised and dependant view of these medical regimes in the colonial period. Our work aims to displace the moment of 'encounter' from the centre of this discourse, and explore the varied and complex factors that fuelled the development of medical innovation within these systems. By exploring tensions around class, gender, sexuality, caste and religion, we also aim to expand upon the essentialist conception of 'ancient' authority that has characterised both the resurrection of the ancient medical systems during this period and the historiographical approach employed when studying them as separate entities.

Projit Mukherjee, School of Oriental and African Studies

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The story of the Tortoise or reading the pulse in colonial Bengal: social history of a diagnostic method

In this paper I wish to explore the dynamics by which a relatively recent innovation i.e. the diagnostic technique of *nadi parikkhya* or pulse examination was appropriated by Ayurveda and subsequently raised to centrality.

There are three main objectives of this study. First, I wish to open up the category of 'Ayurveda' as one with regional and class tensions and variations. Second, to show, indirectly through the study of pulse, the very identity of the canonical Ayurveda as a 19th century construction, instead of being the antique atavism that it is made out to be by both reformers as well as revivalists. Finally to view the relationship between bio-medicine and Ayurveda as being much more complex than an apocalyptic encounter, but rather as a complicated dialogue in which there were both moments of confrontation as well as moments of mimetic engagement, within which bio-medicine became yet another source of cultural authority, whereby to justify certain medical praxes.

Finally I shall also try to use the study to investigate if it is possible to advance a broader definition of 'science' itself, unhitched from its narrowly Eurocentric paradigms. The themes of class politics too shall continually inform our study, thereby re-iterating the now familiar assertion that medicine and science are both irreducibly political.

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Debility, diet, desire: towards a history of late 19th century everyday health awareness in Bengal?

Late 19th century Bengal witnessed the publication of hundreds of 'vernacular' medical manuals, which proliferated into multiple editions. Frequently advertising themselves as 'authentic' translations of medical 'classics' that emanated from various lineages, these manuals in Bengali represented the interactions between medical ideas that cut across traditions. These medical manuals form a part of a larger corpus of manual-literature in contemporary Bengal. This essay, conceived as a part of a broader engagement with everyday health practices in late 19th century Bengal, concentrates on some of these medical manuals. It locates the culture of manual writing in late 19th century Bengal in the context of diverse demands of two overlapping markets in print and medicine, among many other factors. This essay predominantly focuses on the themes of *durbalata* (everyday forms of little debilities), diet and desire. These were concepts that were almost obsessively reiterated in the pages of these manuals. At an abstract, theoretical level, 'diet' and 'desire' inhabit and signify ostensibly two

different, mutually exclusive worlds dotted by disciplinary restraint, health consciousness and celebration respectively. Indeed, a plethora of understandings around debility brought the notions of diet and desire into incestuous proximity. The mutually contaminating dialogical interaction that followed, contested the apparent serenities involved in the notions of 'diet' and 'desire'. While the stereotype of debility woven around the Bengali in late 19th century Bengal shaped the interaction between diet and desire, the stereotype itself was reinforced and sustained through the dialogue that it helped emerge. This paper asks whether the repeated invocation of these categories in the myriad forms of medical literature informed certain notions of 'Bhodrolok' morality, ethics and aesthetics that were crystallized towards the end 19th century.

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Discourses of disease in a colonial plantation

The expansion of tea plantations in northern Bengal in the late nineteenth century occurred in three distinct terrains; first the Darjeeling hill area from 1856, and next in the foothills, known as the Terai from 1862, and were extended to western Duars in plains immediately beyond from 1872. The medical topography of colonial Bengal had been in Anglo- Indian medical discourses articulated in terms of the dichotomy of healthy hills versus the diseased plains, in this case, Darjeeling against Duars. Therefore the extension of tea plantations in the entire area in the late nineteenth century occurred amidst differences in Anglo- Indian medical theories where climatic and miasmatic understandings of disease jostled and co-existed with the newly discovered understanding of the mosquito –vector causations of malarial fever.

In the historiography of medicine in colonial India, the plains of Bengal have been understood as being framed in terms of a diseased locality. I wish to explore the discourses of disease in the Duars plantations in the context of great demographic and economic changes consequent to the expansion of the tea plantations in the region. While expert malariologists like S. R. Christophers, who were strongly entrenched in the Indian medical establishments delinked disease, particularly malarial fever, from the terrain to the labour management and habitations within the tea plantations, the local doctors from the tea plantations as well as the civil surgeon of the district, a government official, argued for greater sensitivity to cultural and social factors in explanations of disease in the region. This paper suggests that an understanding of disease, medicine and health in a plantation economy needs to be made within several contexts; of public health, plantation and labour migration and settlement.

Rachel Berger, University of Cambridge

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Conceiving the pure nation: Race, reproduction and the politics of late colonial nationalism in North India

Race and reproduction have been major organizing principles in the historiography of science and medicine in imperial settings, but have been taken for pre-determined and often irrelevant categories in studies of indigenous medicine in colonial territories. This omission implies that these systems were left untouched by the racialised discourse of embodied difference that characterised medical thought in the tropical world, and also that when adopted they retained the original social and political meaning vested in them by their European creators. However indigenous medical traditions developed in the twentieth century partly in response to a racialised colonial discursive framework, and created categories of racial belonging that both invoked and subverted the notions of belonging that had been determined on a global scale.

In this paper, I explore the discourse of 'race' in Ayurvedic writing. In particular, the isolation of religion and caste differentiated Indians from each other, providing scientific authority for the social and cultural difference. The engagement with the Indian body in the larger world reified claims to an unfettered biological belonging even as one circulated in the world. Finally, long discussions of pregnancy and reproduction introduced the mechanics of race maintenance and repopulation. By

constructing theories of biological difference upon socially-determined notions of difference, Ayurvedic thinkers leveraged the authority of both the scientific process and the socio-cultural establishment to police the boundaries of community.

PANEL 6A: ASIAN DESCRIPTION OR EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE?

Panel abstract

Panel Convenor: **Raf Gelders**, University of Ghent, Belgium

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This panel explores the gap between Indian culture as lived and the descriptions of it prevalent in the West. It addresses two key questions. First, do contemporary South Asian studies offer accurate descriptions of India, or rather narratives informed by the European experience of an unfamiliar culture? Second, how much of what Western-trained Indian intellectuals say about their own culture is actually rooted in Western cultural history?

These questions will be addressed in light of the research programme lead by *Vergelijkende Cultuurwetenschap* (roughly translatable as Comparative Science of Cultures) at Ghent University. It approaches current ethical, psychological, sociological, anthropological, political and legal theories as descriptions of the way in which Western culture experiences the outside world.

Western scholarship is presented as offering a very limited understanding of cultural difference and non-Western human traditions. Current theories assume that all cultures differ from each other in the same way, and continue to conceive other cultures as pale and erring variants of the West. Today, however, the old stereotypical images will no longer do. If cultures are different, their very experience of difference could also be different. As such, the notion of what constitutes difference could be culturally inflected.

The panel makes a strong case that the European conceptualisation of Indian society and its traditions continues to derive its structure and coherency from a Christian theological framework. The question is how is it possible that a culture-specific conceptualisation continues to be dominant today? How come the Christian-theological premises that continue to guide this understanding of the Indian society and traditions are picked up by the majority of Indian intellectuals? The issue of conversion, the secularism debate, the emergence of *Hindutva*, inter-community conflicts and violence, are studied as problems caused by the imposition of this understanding upon Indian society.

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Asian description or European experience?

In this paper I will argue that contemporary analyses of colonial descriptions of India fail to take into account the cultural background of the colonizers. Many scholars have already indicated to the fact that the knowledge we have of Indian history, culture and society was developed or constructed by the British colonizers. Nicholas Dirks (2001), for instance, claims that the caste system as we know it today is a product of how the British conceptualized Indian society. Before colonization, he argues, the caste system was merely one of the many social structures of Indian society, *viz.* the religious ideology of Brahmin priests. By making the caste system central to their quest for knowledge—knowledge they needed to govern their colonial subjects successfully—the British instituted the Brahminical ideology as the central social structure of India. Sugirtharajah (2003) similarly argues that the monolithic view we have of ‘Hinduism’ today is a colonial construction. She identifies the problem in the colonial descriptions as an exclusive focus on the *textual* part of Hinduism and, moreover, only on those texts coming from the *Brahminical* tradition. As such, the colonizers excluded all non-textual and non-Brahminical aspects of this religion. In this paper I will argue that scholars like Dirks (2001), Sugirtharajah (2003), King (1999), Trautmann (1997), and others, end up accepting as true the descriptions they started out analyzing. In short, contemporary postcolonial studies still accept the colonial descriptions of the Brahmins as evil priests, who invented a hierarchical social structure

invested with divine authority. These descriptions, however, are only intelligible against the background of a Christian Protestant framework. They are descriptions, not of an Indian reality, but of the European *experience* of it. Therefore, it is important to understand the European culture before one can start to develop alternative descriptions of Indian culture.

Dr. Jakob De Roover, University of Ghent, Belgium

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Hindu tyranny and its liberty

From the earliest contact, Europeans created an image of Hindu tradition as a religious tyranny. Yet, in its early phase, the British Raj declared that one of its fundamental principles was to allow utmost complete toleration in matters of religion to all classes of its native subjects. Historical explanations claim that this has to do with the economic and political expediency of colonial rule. This ignores a crucial puzzle. The British indeed argued that toleration was expedient, but also insisted it was a moral obligation of the state. Like other Protestants, they conceived of Hinduism as a false religion. It was the equivalent of popish idolatry: it could not but be a tyranny of priests and prelates, which arrogated from the believers God's gift of spiritual liberty. How could colonials insist that it was a *moral duty* to tolerate the religious practices of this 'Hindoo tyranny', which—they believed—constituted clear desecrations of God's Law? One explanation is to turn them into pragmatic hypocrites. I take another route: to make sense of the peculiar combination of the conception of Hinduism as a tyranny and the obligation to grant it liberty, one has to turn to the developments in Europe after the Reformation. Early modern Europeans could at once condemn certain practices as violations of the divine Law and argue that these practices ought always to be tolerated, because the Reformation had identified Christian liberty as God's gift to humanity. This gave rise to a movement throughout Protestant Europe, which denounced all forms of clerical authority as denials of true spiritual liberty. Accordingly, as the dynamic grew stronger, liberal toleration gained in support and scope. This dynamic accounts both for the deep conviction that religious tyranny would prevail in India and that it ought to be accommodated by colonial rule.

Raf Gelders, University of Ghent, Belgium

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The language of reform reformed

From the early encounters onwards, Europeans experienced the various Hindu traditions as manifestations of priestly tyranny and corruption. The ideas of religious degeneration and the role played by the priests in this process are directly derivative from the Protestant Reformation. I will argue that nineteenth-century Indian intellectuals blindly copied the European language of reform in order to conceptualise their own traditions and society. I will first present a brief overview of the manner in which eighteenth-century Indians debated with the Christian missionaries. Their attitude towards tradition displayed characteristics entirely incompatible with the Christian experience of tradition and the European language of reform. I will then discuss the manner in which Western-educated intellectuals in India came to conceptualise their traditions and society. Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, the Indian social and religious reformers collectively adopted the European language of reform: the various Indian traditions were conceived of as instances of religious corruption and the cause of corruption was believed to reside among the Brahmins. Consequently, the 'Hindu religion' had to be reformed in order to liberate the Indians from priestly tyranny and corruption, in much the same way as the Protestants had reformed Christianity in Catholic Europe. The indigenous attitude towards tradition outlined in the first section suggests that the manner in which the reformers came to conceptualise their traditions does not resonate with their own experience of tradition. This is suggested by the following fact: when Indian intellectuals came to use the concepts and idioms imported from the West, certain peculiar aberrations cropped up. The language of reform did not dovetail with their experience of their own traditions. As such, the concepts

imported from the West form an impediment for Indian intellectuals to reflect upon their cultural experiences in a cognitively fruitful manner.

PANEL 6B: MADRASAS AND MODERNITY IN SOUTH ASIA

Panel abstract

Panel Convenor: **Dr. Matt Nelson**, School of Oriental and African Studies
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Historians, anthropologists, and political scientists with an interest in South Asian Islam have, for many years, used *madrastas* as a point of departure for their work. Since 11 September 2001, however, their efforts have acquired special significance as scholars and policy makers have turned to the modern *madrasta* for ideas about Islam, sectarianism, and, in many cases, global terrorism. This panel seeks to move *beyond* the headlines toward a more refined account of *madrastas* and modernity in South Asia, focusing, specifically, on questions concerning (a) curriculum and (b) pedagogy. What counts as a “modern” religious education, and how have *madrastas* succeeded, or failed, to provide it?

Scholars have already succeeded in revealing a great deal about the political, economic, and historical factors underlying important changes in the administration of modern *madrastas* as well as their role in defining the terms of Islamic law (for example, at the level of specific *fatwas*) and Islamic society (for instance, in the provision of specific social services), in addition to their role in supporting a wide range of social and political reform initiatives (both moderate and militant). But few have examined the educational expectations of local parents, or the experience of individual students, *within the madrasta itself*. What do students learn? How do they learn it? And how does their experience “in the classroom,” as it were, interact with competing conceptions of modernity at the level of the individual, the market, critical thinking, the family, pluralism, and/or modern political rights?

Papers focusing on 19th and (especially) 20th-century India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Maldives are welcome. In addition, academic papers submitted by those with personal experience in South Asian *madrastas* (not only as students, but also as teachers, administrators, or other affiliates) are encouraged, as well as those with personal experience in *madrastas* serving South Asian students in the UK.

Dr. Matt J. Nelson, School of Oriental and African Studies

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Muslims, markets, and the meaning of 'a good education' in Pakistan

For several years, international donor agencies with an interest in education--for example, UNICEF and USAID--have worked with local governments in Pakistan to broaden the scope of neoliberal economic reforms, believing that an effort to promote “school choice” would generate competitive pressures for stronger secular schools.

Nearly 700 interviews with local parents conducted in various parts of Pakistan between July 2004 and January 2005, however, have led me to question the assumptions that lie behind this idea. In particular, I found that efforts to promote “school choice” rarely privilege conventional notions of secularism. Instead, for reasons related to the structure of the existing educational marketplace, the nature of local educational demands--in favour of religion—and the enduring biases of local (sectarian) elites, these efforts have had a rather surprising tendency to shift community resources away from secularism towards sectarianism. Today, children routinely find themselves drawn into sectarian rivalries reinforced by local mullahs, rivalries in which the terms of religious conformity, or unity, are used to draw distinctions between pious “insiders” and dissenting (even heretical) “outsiders.”

Unfortunately, after reading the Qur’an in Arabic, few children proceed to read the Qur’an in a language they can actually understand. The terms of religious “conformity,” therefore, are never permitted to interact with the possibility of interpretive “difference.” Many have argued that the solution to this dilemma lies in suggesting that local parents would be better off without religious education--insisting, for example, that “demand-driven reforms” should exclude “demands in favour of religion.”

But I disagree. Instead, the challenge seems to lie in realizing that, even within existing approaches to religious education, several avenues are open to constructive forms of engagement. Qur'anic recitation "in translation" is just one among many different examples.

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Religious schools, social values, and economic attitudes in Bangladesh

Of late, there has been substantial public interest in religious education in Muslim countries. It's alleged that religious schools or *madrasas* promote extreme values and attitudes and, hence, increase friction and intolerance in the society. If true, this has important implications for the process of economic development. Studies on religious school attendance and the consequent post-schooling outcomes, however, are rare. In particular, none of the extant studies directly focus on the question of non-cognitive outcomes such as economic attitude and values. Little is known, for instance, about the attitude of teachers and students towards issues of social and economic importance such as desired family size, democracy, gender rights, and labour force participation on the part of women, etc.

Using data from an in-depth survey of recognised secondary schools in rural Bangladesh, this paper sheds light on the social values and economic attitude of students and teachers in religious and secular schools. A total of 1000 teachers, spread over a random sample of 94 secondary *madrasas* and 231 schools, were interviewed during February-April 2005. For a sub-sample of schools (N=20), we additionally tracked a sample of 190 girls who graduated from secondary schools between 2003 and 2004. Both the teachers and girls were interviewed in person to gather detailed data on attitudes.

The objective of our study is to test whether students and teachers associated with religious schools display hostile attitudes towards working women, working mothers, gender equity, and democracy. To this end, several regression models are estimated to explore the relationship between religious school affiliation and attitude, controlling for one's personal, socio-economic, and school background. These regressions are estimated separately for the sample of teachers and students. Additionally, using matched data on teachers and students (N=190), we explore how teachers' attitude to a given phenomenon influences a student's attitude. We conclude by discussing the social and economic implications of our findings.

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Pakistan madrasas (past and present): Issues in education and human development

The *madrasa* education system is well-established in many Islamic countries (including Pakistan), but over time the *madrasa* system has changed owing to the weakening of "public-sector" (i.e. state-sponsored) schools. In fact, today, government schools are considered to be horrendous, lacking teachers, books, electricity, running water, even roofs. (A significant number are ghost schools, used by corrupt executives to draw money from the state in return for nothing at all.) I argue that, under these circumstances, Pakistan's *madrasas* have emerged as one of the largest welfare systems in the country.

During the last twenty years, the elite in Pakistan started sending their children to private-sector schools since they were not satisfied with the government schools. But the *madrasas* stepped in for the poor, providing free education, boarding, and lodging. This was a huge service in an environment like Pakistan, where the need for free and accessible primary education is not yet taken for granted.

Madrasas, however, are often labelled "terrorist training camps," despite the fact that many of these institutions are proper schools with no links to terrorism whatsoever. However, one needs to be careful, since many terrorist camps *have* emerged in the garb of *madrasas*. In fact, it's imperative to take note of *what* is being taught in local *madrasas*, and *how*.

The Government of Pakistan is slowly and gradually moving towards various education-sector reforms through a new National Education Assessment System (NEAS), winning much applause within the global community. However, the government is also facing opposition as it begins to

intervene in a system traditionally regarded as a matter internal to people's religious beliefs and sentiments.

My paper will introduce the *madrasa* in South Asia, focussing on their role as "welfare" institutions. It will then go on to describe the nature of life inside the *madrasa*, providing answers to questions regarding the facilities, the curriculum, patterns of enrolment, and teaching methodologies, but most importantly it will outline the job prospects of recent *madrasa* graduates. Simultaneously, the paper will provide information about the government's approach toward *madrasa* reform, focusing on the official status of *madrasas* in the mainstream education system of Pakistan.

Finally, the paper will explore the scope for broadening the life skills and curriculum range taught in *madrasas* to see if positive forms of engagement between the public sector, the development sector, and the *madrasa* might be possible at some point in the future.

PANEL 6C: NEW DESTINATIONS AND DIFFERENT ROUTES : EXPLORING SOUTH ASIAN MIGRATION TO EUROPE

Paper abstract

Panel Convenors:

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This panel will explore South Asian migration to and within European countries that have hitherto been marginal in the narrative of a global South Asian migration. The aim of the panel is to explore the experiences of migrants in European countries, which have recently undergone a shift as contexts of emigration to countries of 'immigration' and the significance of colonial linkages in enabling or disabling migrant entry and routing through European countries.

Whilst the experience of South Asian migration to Britain has been well documented, little is known about South Asian migrant's experiences in a European context. The gaps in our understanding of South Asian experiences are all the more notable given the experiences of 'new' migration and that from former colonies (i.e. Filipino, Moroccan, Albanian, and Senegalese), are increasingly being documented. As other commentators have noted, migration is an important facet in the fashioning of 'Europe' and of a 'European identity'. The focus on South Asian migration in Europe may indeed allow us to understand different institutional (Colonial, Catholic) and informal (kinship) relations that connect 'Europe' and 'South Asia' as emerging geopolitical areas and the affect this has on 'Fortress Europe'.

Given that migration to specific European countries is relatively novel, we would encourage ethnographic papers concerning South Asian migration routes to and/or through European countries. We would be interested in papers that explore the interface between state policies such as migration laws and migrants strategies in relation to their social identities. A broader aim of the panel is to encourage a comparative understanding of the continuities and changes between 'traditional' countries of South Asian immigration – such as Britain – and relatively newly-established European destinations.

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From diaspora to community: Sindhis in Malta, 1870-2005

In the 1870s, a number of Hindu Sindhi traders from the town of Hyderabad set up shop in Malta. The attraction of the island lay in its geographical location, situated as it was on the shipping route from Britain to India via Suez. Sindhis specialized in the 'curio' and souvenir trade, maximizing on Malta's image as quasi-Oriental. They were a classical trade diaspora: groups of Sindhi traders dispersed in various harbour areas around the Mediterranean and beyond, operated webs of trade based on the

circulation of goods, capital, and personnel. These webs originated and were controlled from central offices in Hyderabad.

The second half of the twentieth century was a time of great shifts. First, in 1947 Hindus left Sind en masse following Partition, and for the first time the Sindhis of Malta included women and children. What had been a trade diaspora became a worldwide dispersal of families. Second, the souvenir trade gave way to a more diversified field as Malta's reliance on 'fortress economics' decreased. Third, in 1964 Malta became an independent nation-state and Sindhis were no longer part of the British Empire.

These three processes led to the formation of the 'Maltese-Indian community' in the 1980s. Today, Sindhis see themselves and are seen as an affluent and fully integrated minority group – even as they continue to interact, socially and economically, within the context of a worldwide Sindhi diaspora.

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Dancing the war overseas: artistic performances and identity strategies among Tamil migrants of Sri Lanka

Every year, on November 27th, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) honour their dead fighters all over the world. In Sri Lanka the ceremonies take place in the Tigers' cemeteries, known as Tuillum Illam, while in other countries of the Tamil Diaspora, the settings for celebrations are public places such as theatres, sports centres, schools and public halls. One of the main components of the ceremonies organised by the Tamils of the Diaspora is the recourse to dance, particularly to Bharata Natyam (a South Indian dance style), to narrate the events of civil war.

The aim of this paper is to analyse why dance, instead of another form of expression, has been chosen by Tamil migrants to commemorate their dead fighters. In the first part of my paper, on the basis of my own ethnographic researches, carried out in Italy from 2000 to the present time, I will emphasize the importance given by Tamils to dance as a means of transmission of Tamil "heritage". In the second part of my paper I will discuss the strategies that enabled the adaptation of a choreographic repertoire, sprung from an ancient religious matrix, to contemporary life and to its complex transformations. Finally I will discuss how the perception of Bharata Natyam as an essential ingredient of Tamil identity gives rise to an interesting paradox when Italian dancers are involved in the ceremonies: to these dancers, by virtue of their dance skill, a "new" identity, namely a Tamil one, is symbolically ascribed.

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and **Silvia Sai**, University of Bologna, Italy

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Transnational Khalsa: Sikh identities in Italy between conversion and migration

Much of the literature on migration in Italy has been dealing mainly with the quest of legitimacy and with difference recognition migrant communities try to negotiate with their respective receiving contexts (Grillo & Pratt, 2002). But while much attention has been devoted to some of the most consistent migrant "ethnic" or national communities present in the country, very little has been said until recently about South Asian migrants, who constitute one of the most consistent communities (Caritas, 2005).

This paper will focus especially on Italian Sikh communities. Sikh migrants are not only a numerous group, but also one of the most visible. Furthermore, they have been able to spread a positive image in the public opinion and in the local and national media (AA.VV., 2002; Denti, Ferrari, Perocco, 2005).

Praise to the Sikh migrant communities, which has been able to gain the approval of even one of the most xenophobic political party of the country, the Northern League.

Nonetheless, ethnographic research (in Rome and Reggio Emilia Province) demonstrates that an important role has been played as well by Italian citizens converted to Sikhism, who have been

through years more than willing to act as mediators between the Italian authorities and their Punjabi *bajis* (brothers).

This paper will thus try to draw some considerations about the relationship existing between national Italian converted and transnational Sikh migrants, and to see if and how the ideal of a transnational brotherhood (the Khalsa) has been involved in the negotiation of the relationships between Sikh migrants and Italian authorities.

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The Goan elites from Mozambique: Migration experiences and identity narratives during the Portuguese colonial period

During the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries a large number of Goans left their home country and migrated to Mozambique. This migration flux between the two Portuguese former colonies involved a significant number of members of the local Goan elites converted to Catholicism. The "catholic braman families" formed a strong and deeply organised community that played a significant role in the organisation and structure of the Mozambican society. Drawing on the life narratives of five Goan families currently living in Lisbon, this presentation aims to discuss several aspects of this migration process: the reasons presiding de decision to migrate to Mozambique, the social, professional and economic strategies of integration displayed, the representations, discourses and contacts held with the other communities present in the same context (especially, Africans, European and other Indian groups) and the major reasons that justified their decision to migrate to Portugal after the independence of the colony.

PANEL 7A: CIVIL SOCIETY AND POLITICAL SOCIETY: ISSUES IN POWER AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Paper abstract

Panel Convenors:

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In the context of developing countries, from the 1980s onwards, the state's leadership of development came to be widely questioned. Concomitantly, with the collapse of socialism, weakening of trade unions and social democratic parties, "class" as an instrument of social change also came to be seriously challenged. In a context where both state and class to an extent lost "agency", civil society became the dominant term, both in social science discourse, and in the domain of social practice where NGOs, the voluntary sector, and other associations became central in development/welfare related activities.

As a concept, and as an emerging category of social practice, civil society has been widely critiqued. An important strand of criticism has emerged from the concept of "political society" coined by Partha Chatterjee, who saw civil society as the domain of the western educated elite bound by associational norms borrowed from the west, and political society as more organic eruptions in developing societies from levels and spaces which were hitherto excluded from the space of civil society. Chatterjee thus perceives political society as embodying more inclusive forms of democratization.

This panel would explore the question whether civil/political society - in their current definition as agencies of democratization and empowerment - can in fact fill in the space of "state" and "class". In other words, to what extent is civil/political society an effective agency of change, what are the possibilities and limits within which we need to view these concepts. The panel includes two papers which explore these questions simultaneously at theoretical and empirical levels, drawing on field work

in Southern India. We welcome papers which would draw on other parts of India, or more broadly, South Asian experiences, and which share our theoretical queries.

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Civil/political society and democracy: the debate reconsidered

Marketization reforms have generated an expansion of wealth, but have also highlighted that large numbers remain outside the framework of the new affluence. Both the state and the market are to a certain extent seen as largely disinterested in welfare and redistribution. Civil society has gained much centrality as a domain where these values are prioritized.

The capitalist structure of production has changed from centralized production systems to increasingly decentralized and unregulated structures, which underlie the emergence of "informality" in employment structures. Informality obviously poses serious challenges both to theorists and practitioners of class politics; but in the domain of civil society the issues of deprivation and rights that affect the urban poor/informal sector workers have been addressed by focussing on themes of community/neighborhood/slum development rather than on the workplace, on broad themes of basic amenities rather than on employment/income. Thus the focus is on the citizen, rather than on the worker, and on citizens' rights rather than on the workers' rights.

Given this, how does one theorize political action? This paper looks at the possibilities and limits of civil society activism, in the context, particularly, of urban poverty. First, while activists are engaged at various levels, there is no one single developmental model that drives activism around the multiple issues of urban poverty. Secondly, while community has replaced class, how does one theorize political action in the context of diverse communities? Finally, Partha Chatterjee, has drawn a distinction between civil society -- the domain of the western educated elite bound by associational norms borrowed from the west -- and political society, more organic eruptions in developing societies from levels and spaces which were hitherto excluded from the space of civil society. Chatterjee thus perceives political society as embodying more inclusive forms of democratization. But this raises the question of how to problematize the relationship between civil society and political society. Is it one of conflict, and if so, can one then legitimately look for a defining set of structures which govern such conflict? Would such a search take one back to the classical class conflict of Marxist theory? And does the future, then, belong to civil society, or to political society?

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Who shapes development in North-West Pakistan?

Pakistan perceives of itself as a developmental state. Policies and plans are sanctioned for various sectors by the legislature (itself emerging from Political Society) and annual development budgets are allocated to enable involved state departments (called "nation-building departments") to carry out their missions. International donors provide assistance to the state as well as to the "emerging Civil Society".

A closer look, though, at ground realities of "development" in the mountainous regions of the country's North-West Frontier Province, and taking one sector (forestry) as an example reveals few indications of the presence of a local developmental state - and finds "Civil Society" limited to a few mainly donor-dependant entities. Who, then, drives change and shapes "development"?

The paper searches answers by analyzing the institutional regimes that actually structure practices of local people, and by looking at related societal forces. When taking mainstream definitions of Political as well as Civil Society as field between "citizens" and the "modern state", then both indeed are having little influence on people's livelihoods. The paper proposes that this is because the "modern state" (including its connotation of party-based democracy) is weak at local level and thus does not provide the required identity to feel as being "citizen". This results from the region's history of being - de facto - part of a considerably independent Princely State until around 1970. However, when

going beyond mainstream (i.e. linked to the modern postcolonial state) definitions of Political and Civil Society, then a whole lot of "non-state" societal entities emerge that indeed do have enormous powers in shaping ground realities. The core of the paper is to discuss such groups, having influence locally, but not being recognized by the modern "Political/Civil Society"-discourse (as a matter of fact being labelled, by representatives of the modern discourse, as "religious", "traditional", or "mafia"). This raises basic questions on the analytical usefulness as well as the (enormous) normative power of mainstreamed concepts of Political and Civil Society.

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Civil Society participation in the development of Bangladesh: poverty reduction strategy paper

Bangladesh not among the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) but it is one of the world's Least Developed Countries (LDC) and has been requested by the World Bank and the IMF to prepare a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). This will become a key vehicle for the Bank and the Fund as well as other donors, for managing various debt, loan and aid relationships. The government of Bangladesh prepared an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP) in 2002 and had formulated the final version by the end of 2005. Most of the Bank's and Fund's policy papers and guidelines insist that PRSPs should be 'owned' by the relevant countries, and should be prepared with participation by all relevant stakeholders including the civil societies.

This paper discusses critically the idea of participation by civil society in formulating a national poverty reduction strategy in third world countries such as Bangladesh. It outlines how, in practice, civil society's views and opinions tend to be ignored and bypassed. Yet civil society's participation (and involvement) should be pivotal: civil society is supposed to carry the 'voice of the poor' in developing countries. The government of Bangladesh claims that its PRSP has been drawn up in a participatory way, and that it incorporates the views of civil society. This paper discusses the extent to which this is really the case. This paper reviews the actual role of civil society in preparing Bangladesh's PRSP and proposes an alternative model that could be operationalised in future reviews of the PRSP.

PANEL 7B: RETHINKING THE MUTINY-REBELLION OF 1857-8

Panel abstract

Panel Convenor: **Dr. Clare Anderson**, University of Leicester
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Next year will be the 150th anniversary of the outbreak of the Indian mutiny-rebellion. This panel seeks to both stimulate and provide a space for the presentation of new research on the events that swept across north India during 1857-8. At present research seems to focus on the issue of causation, to construct the mutiny-rebellion as a reactive phenomenon. Thus the policies of the East India Company – social, economic, cultural and religious – are addressed to find answers to the historical problem of why 1857-8 occurred. The questions of whether it was a mutiny, social rebellion, religious defence (or conspiracy), proto-nationalist movement or India's first war of independence are central to the existing literature.

This panel calls for papers that re-examine 1857-8 in new and interesting ways. Can published contemporary accounts on events – Indian and British - be reinterrogated? What archival sources remain untapped or open to new kinds of interpretation? And where do colonial and post-colonial literary and visual imaginings of events fit into our understanding? These and other considerations should reap rich dividends in rethinking the trajectory of the mutiny-rebellion. Further, they should enable scholars to move beyond the issue of causation that is so central to post-colonial understandings of events, and towards an approach that considers the social, economic and cultural impact of 1857-8 in its fullest sense.

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Surviving the maelstrom: the north Indian adventures of Vishnubhat Godse, 1857-1858

The enormous volume of "Mutiny" memoirs that poured from the presses from 1858 onward exemplify the dictum that history is written by the victors. This paper addresses one of the very few memoirs written by the vanquished. The author, Vishnubhat Godse was a Citpavan Brahman from Varsai, a village north of Bombay. His family had been affluent under the Peshvas, but fallen on difficult times by the early decades of the nineteenth century. Godse was trained as priest in the traditional way and followed the family profession of officiating for others. His lineage were hereditary *kulaguru* for an important landlord family of the region - the Vaidyas. The Vaidya household had adapted well to colonial rule and prospered as professionals and lawyers. The young heir Cintanmanrao met Godse when the latter visited his household to performance customary rites. While there, he used to tell amazing stories of his adventures during the great revolt. One day, he asked Godse to write out his recollections in an organized form and promised to pay him the sum of one hundred rupees whenever the book was printed. The latter agreed and arrived after five months, in 1884 with two bound manuscripts and six loose sheets. Vaidya promptly compared the account with that found in Kaye and Malleson and found few significant differences. He attributed those to lapses of memory in the intervening 25 years, and set about preparing a corrected press copy. Before sending it for publication, he showed it to an eminent lawyer, Mahadevrao Apte. The latter advised against publication while the writer was alive. So Vaidya did not print it until 1907. A new corrected edition more faithful to the original manuscript was published by Datto Vaman Potdar in 1966.

Godse was a good scholar of the old school. His style and ideas were little influenced by the new prose style adopted in Maharashtra as a consequence of the colonial educational system. The manuscript is a complex of narratives - things seen interspersed with things heard, and also with what can only be classified as entertaining traveller's tales. Nonetheless, things seen are sufficiently dramatic: as a Citpavan with extensive familial and patronal connections with the Marathi chiefs in north India, Godse had an entree to the inner circles at Bithur where the ex-Peshva Nanasaheb resided and also at Gwalior and Jhansi. He was personally trapped in the fort when Jhansi was besieged and sacked by the British army under Hugh Rose. He then travelled on pilgrimage to various holy places in Avadh and Bundelkhand before returning home on foot with two jars of Ganges water. Of course, his presence does not by itself authenticate the narrative. The text has been known to Maharashtrian historians since at least the late 19th century and generally been read as a straight - almost descriptive report. I intend to probe the various layers of the narrative and bring out their varying degrees of historicity. I conclude by suggesting that the work is valuable to historian in at least two major ways: one as eye-witness testimony, and secondly as a repository of then current rumours about events and persons.

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A maulvi, a captive and a penal settlement: Liaquat Ali, Amelia Bennett and an early cultural history of the Andaman Islands

This paper is part of a broader project on the penal aftermath of the 1857-8 mutiny-rebellion, for historians know relatively little about the fate of the thousands of rebel-mutineers subsequently sentenced to imprisonment or transportation overseas. I will reconstruct the story of one Allahabad rebel leader, Liaquat Ali. He eluded capture for fourteen years, but was eventually arrested and tried in 1872. One of the witnesses for the defence was a woman called Amy (or Amelia) Horne. She had survived the 'massacre' at Satichaura Ghat in Kanpur because a *sowar* (trooper) named Mohammed Ismail Khan had taken her captive. In her trial statement - and in two written narratives - she described how after her escape from Kanpur she was presented to Liaquat Ali and, in exchange for her life, was forcibly converted to Islam. This paper will unpeel some of the layers of Ali's trial and

Horne's accounts to explore the ambivalences of the colonial performance of gender, religion, race and rebellion, both in post-mutiny India and the early Andamans penal settlement.

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'Burning Passions': sati and religious fanaticism in British interpretations of 1857

In the wake of the cataclysmic events of 1857-8, the British in India sought to explain why so many of the inhabitants of India had risen up against them. Political and ideological expediency dictated that rather than probe the various iniquities of colonial rule, the British commentator invariably sought the origins of 1857 in the essential characteristics of the Indian himself, especially his jealous and fanatical attachment to his religion. Stories of 'imagined' religious affronts, such as cartridges greased with animal fat and rumours of bone dust added to government flour, quickly became textbook explanations for the 'Mutiny' and continue to be pervasive to this day as part of the 'mythography' of the Uprising. Yet these explanations tell us much more about the agenda of the colonial observer than they do about the real causes of discontent in India. One surprisingly commonly cited, but still relatively unexplored explanation given by the British for the Uprising was that it stemmed in part from Indian discontent at the British prohibition of sati in 1829. In the years preceding Bentinck's Regulation against widow immolation, those who opposed intervention on the matter had vocally predicted a violent backlash from the orthodox Hindu community, yet this did not materialise. Some thirty years later, however, these predictions were revived, as explanations for 1857 often depicted it, in part at least, as a post dated response to this interference in Hindu religious practice. This paper will explore the political, moral and ideological agendas behind the British resurrection of the sati issue in this context, contrasting British experience of suppressing sati before the Uprising with their inclusion of it as a cause of unrest after the 1857.

PANEL 7C: ART, LITERATURE AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

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Salhesa iconography in Madhubani paintings: a case of Harijan assertion

The present paper deals with assertion of identity by the Harijans of Mithila through the iconography of Salhesa in Madhubani paintings, a predominantly feminine folk art form of northern Bihar. Having remained the exclusive preserve of higher caste for centuries, commercialization and external influences facilitated the entry of depressed caste groups in this field. The past few decades have seen the emergence of distinctive Harijan styles in the form of *Gobar* and *Godana* paintings.

The paper looks at the history of evolution of the *Gobar* and *Godana* styles to explain how Harijans have used this medium to gain recognition as artists. In this process, they have projected Salhesa, the God of the Dusadhs as the central character of their paintings. Rather than using the traditional motifs, the choice of Salhesa appears to be a conscious attempt on their part to differentiate their art. The motivation for this is not only to make their paintings commercially attractive but also to improve their social standing in a caste-obsessed hierarchical society. The various versions of the Salhesa story and evidences from oral traditions of Mithila and regional literature are utilised to explain the symbolic importance of Salhesa in the socio-cultural life of Mithila. The relative success of dusadhs as compared to other castes has also been discussed.

The acceptance of the harijan style and Salhesa themes by the market as well as upper caste painters can be interpreted as a measure of success achieved by the harijan painters. There have been attempts to consolidate these gains by formation of painters' co-operatives and closer association with NGOs.

This paper is based on my own fieldwork and interviews with the painters in Jitwarpur village near Madhubani during the period 1999 to 2004.

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The intractable dilemma of purity: Gandhi and the Partition

This is a study of Gandhi's writings, speeches, and correspondence from 1946 to the end of his life on the subject of violence performed on women. First, Gandhi celebrates the suicides of Hindu and Sikh women performed to preempt rape during the riots surrounding the Partition on the grounds of their preservation of "purity." Later, in the face of the sheer massiveness of the horror, he calls for the social acceptance of the women who have been violated, saying that, though they can never fulfil the highest ideal of womanhood, they ought not to be deprived of life. Though at the level of the practical consequences, these views are manifestly opposed, at the level of their underlying logic, they retain a fundamental preoccupation with women's chastity. Gandhi's core preoccupations remain constant – the valorisation of chastity and concomitant deflection of public attention from the terrible fact of the mass rapes that took place during the Partition. He persistently fails to address the fundamental gender pathology revealed at the heart of South Asian society by these rapes, a pathology to which men were subject but of which women were the victims. This paper compiles a comprehensive overview of Gandhi's shifting views during this brief, though cataclysmic period in the belief that so doing a certain core aspect of mainstream Indian nationalism's patriarchal underpinnings can be laid bare to critique.

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History of medicine attached to the Buddhist monastic tradition in Sri Lanka, 5th to 12th centuries AC

The Buddhist monastic tradition was introduced to Sri Lanka by Venerable Mahinda in the 3rd century BC. From that period onwards the Buddhist monks engaged themselves in activities of propagating the Dhamma throughout the island of Sri Lanka. Some of the monks engaged themselves in the medical practice as part of their role that was to have been played in helping the lay devotees. The early Buddhist teachings did not encourage the monks to practice medicine and this caused a division among the monks. The majority of the tradition bound educated monks appear to have opposed to the monks' practice of medicine in whatsoever form and this is clear from the discussions included in the commentary to the Vinaya (Discipline). However, some monks continued to practice medicine and even composed literature on various aspects of medicine and particularly the thirteenth century medical books bear evidence to this. Most importantly several monasteries were equipped with hospitals belonging to tenth or twelfth century Sri Lanka. This is clearly visible by the archaeological evidence, which also consists of five medicinal troughs and other equipment, which must have been used in the hospitals. Interestingly, the hospital at Polonnaruwa unearthed in 1982 also revealed a number of surgical instruments. In this presentation, I discuss the treatment provided by some monks against the background of the fundamental teachings of the Buddha, the evolution of the tradition of the medical monks and the positioning of the hospitals in the monastic establishments.