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PAPER ABSTRACTS
Abbas, Zaheer
*Can You Tell By The Name? Sectarian Self-Expression By The Muslims Of Lucknow.*

On the authority of Abdul Sharar, a playwright and historian, it is reported that during the heyday of Nawabi era Lucknow, ‘no one even noticed who was a Sunni and who a Shia.’ That Sharar did not live during that heyday has done little to disturb this romantic and quixotic picture. Later day historians have tamely followed Sharar’s behest in describing Lucknow as being singularly immune from sectarian bigotry. The first objective of the paper will be to question this dominant and enduring image of the erstwhile Nawabi capital. Drawing from Sharar’s own writing, it will be argued that the sectarian identity of a Muslim was vividly and blatantly expressed through different attire and headdress. Overtime, these sectarian differences impinged on shared religious rituals like Muharram which was sought to be remoulded to fit the Shii interpretation of the event. The move brought in its wake bitter conflict and turmoil, one which continues to plague the sects to this day. The second objective of the paper will be to demonstrate how this tumultuous history has informed the modes of self-expression of present-day Muslims of Lucknow and their places of worship. Thus, avowedly pan-Islamic practices and structures like the azan (call for prayer), the timings of the five canonical prayers and the mosque, have been refashioned to project their sectarian affiliation. Remarkably, elements from the local, non-Muslim culture have been incorporated in an effort to further sublimate the sectarian endeavour. Finally, it will be argued that the shift from corporeal markers of identity observed by Sharar to structures and practices owes to the demise of traditional mode of dressing itself.

Afsar, Rita
*Dhaka’s Changing Landscape: Prospects For Economic Development, Social Change And Shared Prosperity*

My paper is based on an overview of my recently published book on Dhaka’s Changing Landscape. It addresses three compelling concerns arising out of contradictory signals − higher economic growth and higher risks of environment pollution and inequality of rapid urbanisation in Dhaka and many third world cities, compared with rural areas. These questions are: whether the poorer segment of urban population that migrates with dreams for better lives and livelihoods is benefitting from positive economic trends? Are these benefits sustainable in the long run? Have these benefits brought qualitative changes creating scope for this group to have a stake in the city’s growing prosperity like their non-poor counterparts? Addressing these compelling questions is necessary to create a right vision to make the city prosperous, inclusive and sustainable, prerequisites for the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Based on a longitudinal study of 600 households over a span of 20 years, the paper examines demographic and economic trends to understand the patterns, scale, and complexity of urban poverty, income inequality, and rural–urban migration. Going beyond the push–pull debate, the book recasts migration theories by considering migrants’ their self-confidence, hopes, aspirations and resilience, and provided a comprehensive analysis of migration, poverty, space and development nexus, which is necessary for a balanced, sustainable inclusive development policy. It provides a systematic review of the urban poverty, analyses progress made in employment options and occupational mobility for cross-sections. It identifies the determinants of income.

Afzal, Mohammed
*Expanding The Scope Of Women’s Work: Narratives Of Economic Precarity And Medical Practice In Muhammadi Begham’s Urdu Novels*

This paper seeks to investigate how the fictional works of Muhammadi Begham (1878–1908), the first women editor of the Urdu magazine Tehzib-un Niswan, dealt with the question of women’s paid work in the age of feminism. Her editing and publication of the autobiographical account of a Muslim widow Ashrafunnisa, who accepted a teaching job at Victoria Girls’ School in Lahore to sustain
herself, contributed to the destigmatisation of women’s employment in twentieth-century north India. Muhammadi’s novel Sharif Beti (1908) represents the female protagonist’s negotiations with the contending demands of respectability and economic adversity. The stories of respectable women’s struggle with financial difficulties in her works brought out the unsuitability of the gendered division of labour in the lower strata of society, exposing the elitism of the male reformist agenda that confined women to the interior of the house. This justification of women’s contribution to household income sought to revise the idea of respectability in the changing economic conditions of ashraf families in twentieth-century north India. Safiya Begham (1902) articulates the tensions created by a Muslim woman’s practice of medicine in a north Indian family that insists on the observance of purdah, highlighting the dilemmas women confronted in an age which subordinated the women’s question to the interests and solidarity of the larger community.

Ahirwar, Dinesh Kumar


The iconoclastic nature of the social thought of Mao and Ambedkar is evident right through. The destruction of the four olds, the burning of Manusmiriti and rejection of Shastras draws an interesting insight to understand the major focus of two subversive leaders. They were subversives irrespective of their ideological and methodological differences. In demonstrating this, the research shows how Materialism and idealism take parallel path for the elimination of social evils in the society. Mao and Ambedkar’s goal of the reconstruction of society and building social equality were central for them. It dealt with the universal values like equality, liberty and fraternity for an ideal society. Mao emphasised on equality while Ambedkar paid an equal emphasis on the three. Out of three, Ambedkar emphasised on fraternity for building a just society while Mao emphasised on equality. Mao’s journey from materialism to idealism was a result of pragmatism which is primarily grounded in the social context developed through the process of experience and experiment of Marxism. The influence of pragmatism on Mao shifted the focus of his social thought. However, the influence of pragmatism on Ambedkar’s social thought restricted him to use violence as a means to achieve the target that he himself set in the Indian society. The fault line between the social thought of Mao and Ambedkar is the means, not the ends. Means for subversion are different while means for reconstruction of society are common as both want to build a society based on egalitarian principles while giving much space to common education. Ambedkar followed the tradition of pragmatism which has its root in critical theory.

Ahmed, Azeem

**The “Struggle For Equality” And The Pasmanda Movement: Understanding Anti-Caste Movements Among The Muslims**

The paper is an attempt to situate anti-caste movements among the Muslims in the larger tradition of anti-caste struggles in India. In spite of the denial of caste practices among the Muslims in India, we have witnessed mobilizations on the ground, based on caste identity, amongst the subordinated Muslims castes. We can trace the history of contemporary caste struggle among Muslims from early twentieth century with the rise of Momin consciousness. It can be viewed as a starting point for a larger struggle against caste practices and linked further to the rise of Pasmanda politics in the late twentieth century. Pasmanda movement seeks to create a broader sense of Pasmanda identity that can overcome and surpass the inter-caste and inter-religious differences. We see a movement from assertion of caste identity in the Momin politics, to a solidarity of castes in the Pasmanda discourse. The paper argues that the rise of ‘Pasmanda’ movement challenges the monolithic Muslim politics dominated by the privileged castes, by questioning the politics of representation among the Muslims, in terms of its leadership as well as the concerns raised by the larger Muslim politics. The Pasmanda politics focus on attaining the egalitarian values of Islam, by annihilating the existence of caste ine-
quality, provides us with a religious mechanism to understand anti-caste struggle, something that we don’t find within the Hindu caste structure. The paper also attempts to investigate a larger question: can an anti-caste movement emerge in form of a casteless collective, in a caste-ridden world?

Ahmed, Fouzia Farooq
Shama-I-Shabistan-I-Raza As A Book Of Problem Solving
Shama-i-Shabistan-i-Raza (paraphrased translation: The Candle (Guide) to the Esoteric (Practices) of Razais a manual of rohani (spiritual) amliyat (acts), tawizat (amulets), falnama (omens) and Khawb-namah (dream interpretation) that were practiced by the founder of Barelvidenomination of Sunni Islam Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi (1856–1921) and other grandees of Barelvi school of thought. This book is considered to be one of the major work of amliyat genre. Using this book, which was compiled by Ahmad Raza’s close disciple Iqbal Ahmed Nuri in Urdu in [1970] and later also published in Devanagri script, I will explore the Indo-Islamic tradition of amliyat. I will argue that this book, and the amliyat genre more broadly, offer us insights into the psychological, social and physical problems people have faced in north India and their faith based solutions. I will begin with a careful reading of the content and morphology of the sections of the book that deal specifically with the creation of amulets of various kinds - naqsh (imprints), tawizat (amulets), wazaif (holy verses for recitation). I will show how the text relates to Islamic scripture, and strategically negotiates the line between permissible (nuri) and impermissible (nari) magic. I will also discuss the other contents of the Shamatext, and proceed to place the Shama-i-Shabistan-i-Razawithin the broader landscape of South Asian magical texts. In doing so, I will offer a specific entry into the process of vernacularisation of Islam in South Asia, but also add to the history of social, emotional and physical wellbeing and healing in the region.

Aithal, Vathsala
Between Powerlessness And Agency: Engagement In The Rohingya Crisis
The displacement of 800,000 Rohingya from Myanmar since September 2017 and their flight to neighbouring Bangla Desh has led to several challenges. Political analyses on the reasons for displacement range from geo-political to economic interests to radicalization til ethnic cleansing and genocide. Despite empirical evidence available the UN and the international community are hesitant to name Myanmar’s move as genocide that as per international law could prompt action against it. For the displaced Rohingya it is a question of remaining in Bangla Desh without refugee status or returning to Myanmar without rights. Myanmar has, in fact, made provisions for resettlement, but voluntary return seems unlikely as the state refuses to grant the Rohingya full citizenship rights. Bangla Desh, showing hospitality to such large number of people, has its own limitations. Despite economic advancement in the last years it is still a developing country with major challenges. Global warning and the rise of the water level pose a constant challenge, the arrival of the refugees worsening the situation. Socially, host communities are threatened by the arrival of the newcomers. In this situation of instability and restricted conditions urgent questions arise: how can we conceptualize the agency of the Rohingya themselves as well as the stakeholders (policy makers, NGOs, social workers)? How can the Rohingya and the host communities be empowered? Can we develop a South Asian perspective on displacement? In an innovative (interdisciplinary and multiperspective) approach the paper discusses durable solutions in the context of protracted displacement for refugees as well as the host communities.

Akai, Toshio
Where Japan’s Mediumship Intersected Western Occultism
Japan’s Interwar years were the period when the spiritualist “mind cure” movements reached its heyday. In spite of the continuity they had with pre-modern mediumship tradition of folk Buddhism and Shintoism, the movements were no doubt a modernized form of the indigenous healing method
where psychic capability of each healer was highly appreciated and extensively trusted among mass population. These movements look indigenous and independent from the spiritualism then favored in Western world, but recent studies has revealed that a Japanese Theosophist was involved into them probably with the purpose of harmonizing them with the occult theory he had learned in a Theosophical circle. Arguably, this was the first attempt to coalesce local Japanese mediumship traditions with broader context of Western occultism and his duty here was to explain indigenous spiritual phenomena with modern occult theories and terms. This man, a painter called himself Tami Koumé, is worth studying in terms that he did similar coalescing a few years before when he made his friends Western poets in London understand Japanese traditional stage performance No in spiritualist context, and thus inspired W. B. Yeats to create his mystic play At the Hawk’s Well in 1916. Using the materials recently discovered, to trace his occult pilgrimage and find how this theoretical hybridization of Western and Japanese mediumship came into Koumé’s idea is the purpose of my paper.

Akepiyapornchai, Manasicha
*Translating Tamil God Into Sanskrit In Vedāntadesīka’s Dramidopanisattātparyaratnāvali*

Through the myriad intersections of language, scripture, and theology, I explore the role of translation in a religious community of medieval South India. Specifically, I investigate scripturalisation of vernacular devotional poetry through translation within the Śrīvaśīnava, the most influential orthodox brahmanical community devoted to God, Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa. From its beginning around the tenth century CE, the Śrīvaśīnava have been grounded in Sanskrit and Tamil scriptures, the Upaniṣads and the Tiruváymoli respectively. Around the twelfth century CE, the medieval Śrīvaśīnava began to translate Sanskrit scriptures into Tamil and Tamil scriptures into Sanskrit, thus bringing the two languages, scriptures, and, importantly, different theologies into conversation. Among the translations, the Dramidopanisattātparyaratnāvali by Vedāntadesīka, a significant Śrīvaśīnava theologian who lived around the thirteenth century CE, is arguably the most important one. I argue that, by translating the Tiruváymoli into Sanskrit, Vedāntadesīka transformed the Tamil devotional poetry which focuses on the relationship between God and His devotees into a Sanskrit philosophical distillation of the ontology of God and claimed the equivalence between the Sanskrit Upaniṣads and the Tamil Tiruváymoli. The Dramidopanisattātparyaratnāvali obscures the linguistic, scriptural, and theological heterogeneity of the two heritages and allows the imagination of unitary communal identity. Thus, translation into an authoritative language like Sanskrit is indispensable to the scripturalisation of vernacular literature and a formation of a unified religious community.

Aktor, Mikael
*Purification Rituals At The Sree Dharma Sastha Temple, Sabarimala, And The Tantrasumuccaya*

Right after two women in their 40s had entered the Sree Dharma Sastha Temple at Sabarimala on the second of January 2019 the priests of the temple performed a purification ritual to remove the pollution caused by the incident. Both events, the entrance of the two women and the purification ritual, were reported as controversial, each for its own reasons. The women were said to be the first to enter the temple since September 28, 2018, when the Indian Supreme Court declared the exclusion of women between 10 and 50 of age from entering the temple unconstitutional; and the purification ritual was criticized as a practice of untouchability in relation to menstruating women. Several news media quoted an earlier affidavit by the chief tantri (priest) of the temple, where he expressed the view that it is a Hindu custom that women in their periods refrain from religious activity such as temple service, and as evidence he referred to the medieval text, the Tantrasaumuccaya, which he said is the basic textual foundation of temple worship and temple management in Kerala. The purification ritual was also said to be performed according to the instructions in the same text. But what does the Tantrasaumuccaya actually say about women’s temple entrance, and in what context? In this presentation I will go through the relevant text passages of the Tantrasaumuccaya. The ideas about pollution and purification in the text will be put into a historical perspective. Also, the role of the Tantrasaumuccaya for the temple administration in Kerala will be discussed.
Al Adawy, Heba

*Producing ‘Positive’ And ‘Secure’ Educated Subjects*

Despite its professed goal of investment in the knowledge economy, the Pakistani higher education domain is heaving under budget cuts under IMF conditionalities, and beleaguered with crumbling infrastructure and rising fees. Moreover, universities have also increasingly come under the ‘security ambit’, with recent national security policies casting university students as ‘captive audience’ to be ‘secured’ through ‘soft measures’. My ethnographic project examines the various interventions to steer students towards “healthy,” “positive” and “productive” activities as well as the performative and political function of the ‘development’ discourse that underpins them. In the continued absence of ‘student unions’, banned three decades ago, how do these initiatives structure the terms of engagement for the university student, and what are the stakes of this state-led ‘positivity imperative’ (Sukarieh 2011) in the time of terror? I explore how an assemblage of state-sanctioned youth initiatives seek to build ‘resilience’ and ‘secure’ students by co-opting them into a neoliberal, technocratic and sanitized form of national engagement. In this university space laden with neoliberal desire for the aspiring and precarity for the political conscious, my paper will focus on how different activists inhabit and create space - by performing ‘silences’ and participating under the “public/official transcripts” (Scott, 1992) – in order to engage in prefigurative politics. I will use insights to reflect on the ‘ambiguities’ of domination (Wedeen 2015) and the ephemerality of contestation that maintains an oppositional consciousness (with or without) translating into political action.

Alam, Eram

*Foreign Bodies: On The Politics Of Professional Migration*

This talk explores the enduring consequences of postcolonial physician migration from South Asia to the United States. Initially conceived during the Cold War as a short term solution to US doctor shortage, this migratory route has become vital to the functioning of the US healthcare system over the last fifty years. However, despite the invitation to provide care in the United States, Foreign Medical Graduates’ (FMGs) professional skill and expertise was repeatedly questioned by established medicine as well as broader publics. I begin in the clinical space and use this site to uncover how foreign physicians complicated normative constructions of physician expertise, credibility, and authority and developed different doctoring strategies to effectively provide care to patients. In spite of the challenges posed by virtue of their “foreignness”, these physicians acquired skills and knowledge, which eventually allowed them to leverage their medical training into various forms of economic and political capital. This was important during their “fight for equality” – a political campaign aimed at ending discrimination and demanding inclusivity from the US medical profession. Foreign physicians organized into an Alliance of FMGs and marshaled persuasive rhetorical arguments used during anti-colonial struggles and the Civil Rights era to argue for equal treatment. Within this Alliance, South Asian physicians emerged as the most vocal contingent eventually solidifying their position as a recognizable political “brand” – a “brand” with a unique presence in the American public imagination.

Albrecht, Jessica

*“Mothers Of The Daughters Of Ceylon”: Marie Musaeus Higgins’ And Miranda Canavarro’s Theosophical Feminism*

The issues of gender and feminism in their relation to Sri Lankan Buddhism are highly debated, in the scholarly field as well as in the political. Also, the impact of the Theosophical Society on Sinhalese reform Buddhism, in particular on Anagarika Dharmapala, is widely acknowledged. However, looking at the discourse of gender within Sinhalese reform Buddhism, scholarship does not take into account the influence of gender conceptions within Theosophy; despite the fact that Dharmapala and Theosophists founded Buddhist girls schools in order to “preserve an ideal Buddhist womanhood” which should not be corrupted by sending Buddhist girls to Christian missionary schools. The Sanghamitta Girls School, which provided a home for Buddhist girls in Colombo in the 1890s and
1900s, was successively led by the theosophical feminists Countess Miranda Canavarro, an American Theosophist, and Marie Musaeus Higgins, a German-American Theosophist. Higgins even founded her own school, the Musaeus College, which still exists today. Both saw themselves as “mothers of the daughters of Ceylon”, as well as the saviors of their “brown sisters”. This paper argues that their imperial and theosophical feminist ideas as well as their conceptions of gender highly influenced gender conceptions in Singhalese reform Buddhism. It maintains that the analysis of the imperial entanglement of theosophical feminism and Dharmapala’s reform Buddhism can illustrate how Victorian gender norms were adapted for the conceptualization of “the ideal Buddhist woman”; respectively, how these theosophical feminists legitimized their imperial feminism through creating a difference between them and their “brown sisters”.

Ali, Muntazir

Significance And Context Of Quranic Verses, Hadiths And Keywords: An Epigraphical Survey Of Deccan.

The epigraphy Branch of Archaeological Survey of India has discovered lots of Arabic and Persian inscriptions from Deccan region (i.e. Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmednagar, Bidar and Berar). These epigraphs are found in sectarian buildings such as mosques, tombs and ashurkhanas (i.e. Shia Muslim mourning place) as well as secular structures such as forts, palaces, gateways, tanks, wells, gardens, caravanerais and learning centers. Every inscription has its own significance and context, besides decorative and information-recording functions. For example, Quranic verses and hadiths may be used for ornamentation but they are also placed as per the edifice’s nature, place and location. Sectarian identity played a clear role: the first creed of Islam with bismillah is common in Islamic inscriptions of India but the declaration of faith of Shia Muslims is distinctive in that they also add the name of Ali. Mention may be made of Nad -i- Ali and names of Prophet’s family. These distinctive Shia features are particularly common in the Shia Sultanates of the Qutub Shahis and Adil Shahis. Epigraphical sources of medieval India bear numerous Hadiths, certain Quranic verses and some appropriate chapters since such scriptures are connected with sacred signs and blessings. Numerology using the abjad system is also frequent: 786 is very common but other figures, such as 92 for Muhammad or 110 for Ali etc. are also used. By surveying these features, this paper will make a preliminary attempt towards analyzing the significance of the textual and graphic choices in the Arabic and Persian inscriptions of the Deccan region.

Allred, Jane

Sanskritizing Kannada / De-Sanskritizing Panini: Bhaṭṭākalaṅkādaēva’s Humble Contribution To Paninian Grammar

Bhaṭṭākalaṅkādaēva’s Karṇaṭakaśabdānuśāsanam (KAŚ) (1604), despite being the most comprehensive pre-colonial grammar of Kannada, has received relatively little scholarly attention. This lack of regard for the KAŚ may be due to an incomplete understanding of its genre. Undeniably a vernacular grammar, it also engages the Paninian grammatical tradition in a way which many other vernacular grammars do not. Offering a close reading of Bhaṭṭākalaṅka’s introduction, I will suggest that as much as his text is a grammar of Kannada, it achieves this through a decidedly non-Sanskritic attempt to universalize Pāṇini’s method. Bhaṭṭākalaṅka thus places Kannada and Sanskrit on the same level; his text is in many ways a grammar of both vernaculars. This radical revaluation of the two languages takes the KAŚ in several intriguing directions. Here, I turn to the text’s metalanguage, which Bhaṭṭākalaṅka creates through adapting, decontextualizing and even changing terminology to fit the end of describing the rules of Kannada as succinctly as possible. While such practices are hardly new, Bhaṭṭākalaṅka’s architeconic approach to Kannada grammar reveals a unique approach to Paninian grammar – one coincidentally followed by many modern linguists such as Bloomfield. Such an approach uses Pāṇini’s method to uncover more fundamental structures of language which are not limited to – and even absent from – Sanskrit. Bhaṭṭākalaṅkādaēva’s text thus presents a unique
case study of early modern grammar, insofar as it reveals the potential diversity of approaches to an aging Pāṇinian tradition in an era often exclusively understood through Navya-Vaiyākaraṇa texts.

**Angermeier, Vitus**  
**Waterscapes In Āyurveda: Mapping Health And Disease Through Hydrology.**

Waterscapes have a probably unexpected significance in Āyurveda, because the quality and characteristics of water differ depending on its source. While some kinds of water have the potential to improve health and to heal diseases, others can be harmful or even life-threatening. For this reason all the main compendia of ancient Āyurveda contain a section on water, discussing inter alia the specific characteristics of certain bodies of water. If these are small, they are said to be dependent on the environment surrounding them. In contrast, the characteristics of rivers are determined by several conditions, like origin, direction, flow velocity etc. Apart from that, the classical Samhitās are a bit stingy with information. However, the extant commentaries on these foundational works provide us with a much clearer picture of the aesthetic, topographical and dietetic characteristics of water bodies and their vital content. Furthermore, it is possible to distill from them eco-historical information about their origin (are they man-made or natural?), about their aquatic flora and fauna, their medical significance and about geography of disease. The real meanings of the Sanskrit words for water bodies as well as their characteristics are still poorly studied and the dictionaries contain meager and often misleading information. The examination of the relevant material in classical and medieval Āyurvedic literature, presented in this paper, provides surprising insights into morphological, socio-cultural, ecological and medical significance of water and closes several gaps in our knowledge about various water bodies.

**Ariav, Talia**  
**On The Ethos Of The Multilingual: Exploring Sanskrit Registers Of Performance In Maratha Tanjavur**

The Maratha court of Tanjavur, particularly under king Śāhaji I (1685–1712), is often viewed as a paradigmatic example of multilingual production crossing vernacular and cosmopolitan divides, especially in the context of its booming culture of performance. My point of departure is that this ethos of hybrid culture, often linked with praise for the king, was being consciously staged. When this hybridity in texts of performance is not taken at face value, it can in fact illuminate the different modes, asymmetries, and implications of multiculturalism. What can we learn from lingering on the differences between languages and within linguistic registers, which the courtly rhetoric tends to gloss over? I will focus on three staged productions from around the court, which together form an axis of different Sanskrit registers. Saptarṣi’s Mohinivilāsaākuraṇa is a Sanskrit-Tamil dance drama in a Tamil genre that was famously being reinvented; Vasudevakavi’s Sanskrit padam songs range between classical and colloquial Sanskrit within a markedly non-Sanskritic genre; Rāmabhadra Dīks.īta’s Śr.ṅgārātilaka-bhāna employs a classical Sanskrit register, within a classical Sanskrit genre that was being radically revived. These works share a governing erotic and humorous tone, and a certain conscious linguistic and generic hybridity. However, they drastically differ in the kind of hybridity they offer, in their vision of Sanskrit as a language of performance, and in their implied audience members. By exploring differences in the performed Sanskrit of early modern Tanjavur, this paper will offer distinctions within the underexplored category of the multilingual.

**Arora, Shubham**  
**Positioning The Body: An Account Of Sex Positions In The Kokaśāstras In Medieval South Asia**

The “Kama Sutra” is widely known as “the” classical Indian sex manual. Yet, one of its most famous features—the list of sex positions—remains unstudied. These sex positions have substantially changed and proliferated over time. They permeate “pop erotic-self-help culture” today, in works like “Kama Sutra Workout”—which boasts 300 sensual “sexercises.” However, why are there so many, and what
do they mean? The “Kama Sutra” belongs to the Sanskrit literary genre on erotic pleasure, and it was a significant part of South Asian courtly culture. Despite socio-cultural and psychoanalytical studies of this genre, which label its sex positions “acrobatic,” there is no sustained analysis of the sex positions as a phenomenon. From the very first list that remains extant, the twenty-six body positions for attaining sexual pleasure in the view of the possible combinations of the genitalia of different sizes in the fourth-century CE “Kama Sutra,” to the eighty-four sex positions that intertwine worldly pleasure (bhoga) and asceticism (yoga) for householders in the sixteenth-century vernacular “Koka Shastra,” there is a remarkable socio-cultural shift in the treatment of sex positions. I will analyze how the physically complex and rich bodily sex positions were developed and how its authors combined eroticism with ascetic and tantric body cultures. The authors of the “Koka Shastra” genre, ascetic and tantric practitioner themselves, brought courtly eroticism into the ascetic world and contributed to the tantric sexual-yoga. This study will investigate published and unpublished manuscripts from the 15th through the 17th century to historicize and analyze their portrayal of sex positions

Arzoumanov, Jean  

At the turn of the 19th century, British colonial officers developed a marked interest in sectarian divisions among North Indian sects. In Calcutta, Benares and Delhi, several officers commissioned Hindu authors to write classificatory accounts of sectarian groups. Written in Persian, these texts were illustrated and contained precise depictions of sectarian marks and more specifically of tilakas worn by devotees. Tilakas had been historically translated in Persian with the derogatory term qašqa, literally “the marking on an animal’s forehead”. Tilakas, clothing and accessories were provided as clues enabling observers to formally identify a member of a given community. Strangely enough these texts do not seem to have had any predecessor, both in terms of classification patterns and in terms of the emphasis given give on the actual details of the tilakas. If sectarian marks had been a feature of some sectarian treatises, they had indeed never been presented in a systematic way. The production of these texts was a consequence of the new emphasis given by colonial officers on the understanding and management of ascetic groups. The Hindu writers of these texts did not write from a sectarian point of view, but they contributed to the development of a whole new genre. Indeed these texts circulated both in manuscripts and prints and had a significant if underestimated influence on ethnographic literature on religious groups in Northern India throughout the 19th century.

Asaduddin, Mohd  
*Translation, Nationalism And Minority Identities In South Asia*

In a talk held at Bibliotheque nationale de France, Paris, a couple of years ago, Julia Kristeva had asserted that the language of Europe is the language of translation. This is, indeed, truer in the case of South Asia. Translation is integral to the development of languages and literatures in South Asia and the formation of group identities. Translation was an important tool in the anti-colonial struggle waged by the South Asian countries against their colonisers and lack of it often fueled linguistic nationalism and chauvinism in postcolonial times. In India, a country with rich literary traditions in 24 languages, it led to linguistic reorganisation of provinces, in Sri Lanka, it aggravated Sinhala-Tamil conflict and in Pakistan it resulted in the division of the country and the birth of Bangladesh. In contemporary times, lack of adequate translation and mistranslation at different levels have endangered the lives of Rohingya Muslim refugees from Myanmar who were victims of a state-sponsored genocide, and Tibetan refugees who fled from their country and established a state-in-exile in Dharamshala in India. Further, Translation is now playing a crucial role in establishing solidarities along linguistic divides in struggles against gender justice and discrimination against oppressed minority groups like the Dalits, Muslims and LGBT communities. My paper will briefly touch upon the issues listed above to provide a broad context and then focus on providing an in-depth study of some minority groups to highlight the crucial role translation is playing in changing their lives.
Ashraf, Muhammed Niyas
*Mawlid As Text And Ritual: Prophetic Love And Devotion In Colonial Malabar*

The genre of poetical panegyrics on the prophet Muhammad emerged through mawlids composed for veneration and generally recited at his nativity celebration (mawlid/milād), nerchas (celebration of endowments) and domestic religious private spaces. Invocation of blessings and greetings on the prophet became an independent ritual activity, and its supposed spiritual power for healing contagious diseases transformed the Mawlīd text into a sacred one with curative and talismanic qualities. This paper delineates how the Mawlīd as a text and ritual celebration impacted the moral dispositions of Malabari Muslim mindscapes and why its recitation and performance received massive acceptance during anti-colonial struggle. This study offers how the ritualistic performance of mawlīd texts and mawlīd gatherings created a ‘sacred space’ in Malabar and attributed a tremendous array of the literary, thaumaturgical, liturgical, and practical application of religious percept in everyday life. How the belief in barakā (blessings) of these poems constructed the recitation as a ‘ritual and virtuous act’ and an ethic mode of comportment in the social and religious practice of Muslims. This paper will analyze how the emotion of Islamic piousness reflected in celebrating the mawlid and ritually reading texts, believing in the positive power of acquiring blessing according to Islamic norms and values? By looking through the lens of prophetic piety, this study concentrates on why invoking the prophet as an object of veneration and source of barakā became independent ritual activity and how these texts transformed into ‘sacred biographies’ with curative and talismanic qualities.

Asia, Syeda
*Emotions, Identity & The Entrepreneurial Self: Narratives Of Working Muslim Women In Rural India*

This paper explores the relationship between emotions, identity and work in the narratives of Muslim women from rural India. Using an in-depth account of two families from Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan where all women work, the attempt is to explore the articulation of an ‘entrepreneurial self’ that brings to light a newer interpretation of the emotions as a methodological conduit in anthropology. Describing in detail their struggles, negotiations and decision-making in the everyday, the paper aims to move towards socialities that are founded on complex articulations of emotions at work. This paper aims to bring to the forefront the spirit that these women carry to push the boundaries of cultural constraints. It emphasizes the need to move towards newer forms of anthropological understanding of emotions through work settings in order to critically depart from earlier theories of presentation and performance of the self. This paper explores the entanglement of identity, work and the ‘entrepreneurial self’ through a lens of emotions. Through fieldwork panning over two years with rural entrepreneurs in north India, the attempt here is to re imagine the complex interplay of social positioning as women, Muslims and earners of the household through their articulation of emotions in the everyday.

Babu, Suresh
*Impact Of Historic And Strategic State Policy On Recent Coconut Trade At The Nicobar Islands*

This paper discusses the archipelago’s protracted recovery in coconut-based exports after the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and Tsunami, based on data collected during ethnographic fieldwork in 2014–18 among producers and traders of coconut-based products at Little Nicobar and Great Nicobar Islands. We discuss the decline and recovery of the islands’ primary economic activity – cultivation, processing and exporting the Coconut (Cocos nucifera) – through analyses of exports and imports at the four revenue ports of the Nicobar archipelago between 2003 and 2017. However, experiences in these activities differ in terms of nature of participation, stability and success. At Great Nicobar Island, Coconut plantations have been increasingly leased to contractors, with cultivators lobbying for better prices. There is also a clear chasm along ethnic lines, between the production and trade practices of Nicobarese tribe and the mainlander communities first settled by the Indian State 1969. This geopolitically motivated resettlement of mainlanders in 1969–79 followed the declaration of
the archipelago as a tribal reserve under the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, (ANPATR) 1956. We therefore argue that the differential economic opportunities and outcomes for the people of Nicobar today are shaped by historic and strategic State action in the post-independence period, such as the ANPATR and resettlement of 60s-70s. This case highlights the complex outcomes of State policy for environmental, social and developmental outcomes.

**Bachrach, Emilia**

*Mobile Masculinities And Hashtag Hinduism*

Instagram, a photo and video-sharing service, allows users to engage in social networking through pairings of image and text. Drawing on interviews and discourse analysis, this paper unpacks the relationship between image and text on Instagram profiles belonging to male religious leaders of Pushthimargi Hinduism—a Krishna devotional tradition with roots in northwestern India. These men, such as Vishal Goswami (b. 1980), have thousands of devotee-Instagram-followers from across the globe, and post to their accounts daily. By using similar sets of hashtags—such as #divinelove, #God, #familytime, and #weekendfun—on photos that capture diverse situations ranging from family vacations and daily routines (e.g., cooking breakfast for children or shopping) to formal ritual activities in temples (e.g., festival processions), figures like Vishal Goswami model a distinct type of Indian masculinity meant to show that Pushthimargi devotion is compatible with the everyday-life aspirations of an increasingly affluent and transnational demographic of devotees.

**Bagad, Prashant**

*Hari Narayan Apte’s Concept Of Vidagdha Literature*

I offer a philosophic-aesthetic interpretation of the distinctive concept of “vidagdha literature” put forth by Hari Narayan Apte (1864–1919), a pioneer modern Marathi novelist, in his lecture titled “Vidagdha Vangmay” delivered in 1911. Apte deals with fundamental questions in literary aesthetics: What is literature? Is it different from science? Is it just entertainment? What kind of understanding does it provide? He draws on four major sources: Sanskrit poetics, Western poetics (Aristotle or Thomas De Quincey), his own experience of creating a new kind of fiction, and the contemporary ideologies of social and national reform. Apte’s notion of vidagdha literature is a result of the synthesis of some of the major ideas from these sources. In distinguishing literature from science, Apte repeatedly says that a literary work does not make a direct statement. He also appears to restrict himself to recycling the oft-maintained views that literature’s beauty lies in implicit, suggested meanings or that literature presents truths in a palatable, sugarcoated ways. In my view, the conceptual twist given to the notion of vidagdha is the most striking aspect of Apte’s view. In Sanskrit poetics, a vidagdha work of literature means a skillfully crafted composition that caters to the taste of a person of cultivated aesthetic sense. Apte connects vidagdhata to the literary work’s capacity of revealing truth. A novel is vidagdha if it gives us “satyabhas”. This does not mean that a work of literature creates an illusion of truth, but, to speak in a Heideggerian vein, that it is an appearance of truth; it becomes a site where truth discloses itself.

**Bahl, Aditya**

*Jujhaar: On The Poetry Of Revolution In Punjab, 1960s-70s*

This paper is part of a larger project of recovering and archiving magazines of guerilla literature in Punjab, where a Mao-inspired Naxalite guerrilla struggle emerged during 1960s-70s, in response to widespread immiseration unleashed by the US-sponsored Green Revolution. Scholars have categorized the radical Punjabi poetry of this period as “jujhaarvadi kavita,” while theorizing “jujhaar” as analogous to the Euro-American notions of “resistance” and “commitment.” This paper offers an alternative theorization of “jujhaar” by drawing on previously unavailable archives. When the agrarian landscape began to be suddenly transformed in 1960s, the Punjabi poets, some of whom were
guerrillas, Party members and peasant leaders, responded by radically repurposing the centrality of prakriti in the Sanskrit kavya traditions. Others also drew on the older, non-literary traditions of udaasi, boli and dhadi, while trying to cognize the totality of post-War capitalism from the vantage of Sikhism. By early 1970s, the guerilla magazines were beginning to depict Guru Gobind as a Maoist, while often consecrating Mao as Allah. Further, they also featured rigorous critiques of agrarian political economy alongside translations of contemporary literatures from places as diverse as Angola, the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Congo, China, Palestine and Chile. This paper theorizes “jujhaar” as a mode of “vernacular improvisation” that Punjabi poets developed by bricolating different literary, religious and political traditions in order to construct forms that could adequately cognize and resist the rapidly changing dynamics of post-War capitalism.

Baier, Karl
Yoga And Magic In The Work Of Henri Clemens Birven
Henri Clemens Birven (1883–1969) was one of the most interesting proponents of German occultism in the pre- and postwar period. His doctoral thesis from 1913 deals with the “transcendental deduction”, a central topic of Kant’s philosophy. Later Birven became a secondary school teacher. He was a friend of Gustav Meyrink and an acquaintance and translator of Aleister Crowley. He also knew Julius Evola and appreciated the works of the Italian right-wing esotericist. The well-educated Birven wrote books on the role of magic within Goethe’s Faust and the works of the magic idealism of the romantic poet-philosopher Novalis. Between 1927 and 1932 he was the editor-in-chief of the important occult periodical Hain der Isis. This paper focuses on two books that Birven published after World War II: Lebenskunst in Yoga und Magie (“The Art of Life in Yoga and Magic”, 1953) and Pförte der Unsterblichkeit. Yoga als Weg zur geistigen Erneuerung (“The Gateway to Immortality. Yoga as a path towards Spiritual Renewal”, 1961). These publications can be interpreted as an attempt to connect Birven’s occultism (and with it the alternative religious culture of the inter-war period including its reception of yoga) with the revival of popular yoga in post-war Germany.

Bajaj, Himani
‘Safe’ Technologies, Sexual Ambivalence: A Study On Experiences Of Young Women In Urban Delhi
The availability of an extensive range of medical technologies and increasingly globalized items, such as pharmaceuticals for contraception, conception and sexual dysfunction has not only influenced the global public health discourses but also ideas about sexual and gender relations. While the global focus on politics of non-normative sexualities and public health have developed as a discursive field, the experiences and issues of heterosexually active women have got only marginal attention in this respect given the history of feminist struggle for women’s sexual autonomy. The public health discourse on ‘safe sex’ in India is still struggling to address the question of sexuality holistically and theoretical engagement with heterosexuality remains practically absent from this discourse. This work attempts to fill this gap by building on the contemporary understanding and negotiations of women’s intimate and gender relations. An analysis of the interviews of 35 middle-class unmarried women in Delhi – a population seldom considered ‘sexual’ or primary consumers of contraceptives– reveal the gendered nature of conversations and negotiations around contraceptive practices of young men and women. Not only is it tied to the ‘dichotomous’ idea of risk and sexual freedom but also experiences of sexual ambivalence faced by women in establishing heterosexual partnerships, say through different digital platforms. It is imperative to understand these negotiations within the constantly shifting cultural and technological arrangement of sexuality, reproduction and gender which as argued are (re)defining the contours of ‘sexual autonomy’, ideas of ‘safe sex’ and ‘choice’.
Bajpai, Anandita

The Sound Of Friendship: Warm Wavelengths Of Radio Berlin International During The Cold War Years In India

Radio Berlin International, also called the “voice of the German Democratic Republic” began its journey as a broadcasting station on the 20th of May, 1959. The station was an important medium for presenting the GDR in five continents across the world. Its Hindi Department, established in 1967, enjoyed an enormous popularity across the vast stretch of Hindi-speaking parts of India. This paper will trace the history of the radio station’s trajectory in two directions– from the perspective of those behind the microphone– the presenters, translators, journalists of the Hindi department on the one hand, and from the perspective of those glued to the radio set– the listeners and fan clubs of the station in India on the other. The rich written, visual (photographs and travelling objects), oral and aural sources (sound files of individual broadcasts), which inform this truly entangled history of India-GDR relations, have hitherto not been the subject of any systematic research endeavours. The paper will elucidate how the lexical repertoire of sneh, pyar, garmahat, mananiyta– affection, love, warmth and recognition, which informs both the narratives of the presenters as well as the listeners, needs to be taken seriously in order to unpack a history of emotions which duly entangles itself with tactile materiality. How did India become a site for sonically mapping Cold War affiliations? How were love and recognition performed through objects (gifts sent to fans by the station) and letters (fan mail)? The paper will contribute to the panel by combining theoretical debates from the fields of Cold War history, the history of emotions and a historical anthropology of material culture.

Bakshi, Ekata

Rethinking Partition Induced-Migration In West Bengal, India: A Study Through The Lens Of Gender, Caste And Region

Partition studies in the Indian subcontinent, especially in Bengal has remained myopic, in terms of its regional focus, despite the recent challenges provided by feminist and anti-caste literature. This paper, thus, argues for a differential understanding of refugee-hood and rehabilitation by locating it in a non-metropolitan city in West Bengal – Asansol, where, erstwhile rural lower/outcaste class refugees from government camps were rehabilitated to provide cheap labour for industrial development. Ethnographic insights, point out, that despite being highly exploited and remaining socio-economically marginal, the refugee families gained limited stability and some mobility as the male members became blue collar labourers. This was undone by general economic down turn of the city after globalization, increasing their dependence on the poorly paid informal sector. Further, existing injunctions against women joining blue collar work, concerns about physical safety in the hostile city-space and lack of social and cultural capital, forced the women of these families to remain restricted to the domestic space or take up extremely underpaid informal work, while being simultaneously excluded from access to formal education. The socio-economic marginalization of such families and its recent intensification have ensured that the same pattern is repeated over generations inhibiting the possibility of gendered mobility, except for in marriage. The paper then focuses, on the long-duree of refugee-rehabilitation through the intersecting lenses of caste, gender and region for a nuanced understanding of the ongoing legacies of vulnerability created by the Partition.

Bakshi, Kaustav

On The Precarious Side Of The Lakshmanrekha: Gay Men, Family Surveillance And Framing Of Moral Boundaries In Contemporary Sri Lankan English Fiction

In contemporary Sri Lanka, English novels have been instrumental in giving a voice to queer individuals, besides the socio-political movements pioneered by Companions on a Journey and later, more intensely, by Equal Ground. My paper will look at the street LGBTQ politics in Sri Lanka, and the associated emergence of fictional narratives on queer citizen subjects. In so doing, the paper will focus on how the idea of lakshmanrekha or moral boundary is negotiated with by queer individuals, who
are always already on the other side of the boundary, queerness being immoral, ‘unnatural’, unrighteous. The struggle here is, therefore, slightly different: it is more about making queerness acceptable within the collective moral vision as ‘normal’ and nothing threatening to the moral edifice of society. Drawing from Obeyesekere’s work on Sri Lankan society’s unwarranted emphasis on lajja-bhaya (shame-fear) and feminist interventions with the idea of respectability, as part of a healthy, moral life, I shall look at two novels, Selvadurai’s Funny Boy and The Hungry Tide. These novels revolving around two young Sri Lankan Tamil male citizen subjects show how queer individuals are incarcerated within certain non-negotiable boundaries so as to keep the family’s ‘honour’ inviolate; how queer individuals are subject to a fearful moral surveillance which makes their lives precarious, and how they resist it in order to ‘belong’. I shall argue that they are accommodated within the affective space of the family only when they could shed their queerness outside the lakshmanrekha the family has inscribed around its members in order not to transgress any social code of morally approved living.

Baldt, Erika
“Like A Web Of Pearls On Thread:” Women And The Bhagavad Gita In Modern Times
This presentation will explore the idea that The Bhagavad Gita provided women with access to spiritual life that had previously been limited, as evidenced by Krishna’s claim to Arjuna that “Those who take refuge in Me, even women, Vaishyas, Shudras, or those born impure, they nevertheless reach the highest destination” (9.32). I will apply this idea to several female figures of the late 19th and early twentieth centuries: Helena Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society; Annie Besant, creator of the All-India Home Rule League; and Virginia Woolf, British modernist author. Blavatsky’s interpretation of the Gita and her use of the text as a foundation for the Theosophical Society was extremely influential, as she is said to have introduced the Gita to Gandhi, as well as to Besant. Like Blavatsky, Besant became well known on both sides of the Atlantic, and in 1919 she was invited to speak at London’s 1917 club, where she came in contact with Virginia Woolf. Even though there is no evidence that she had read the Gita, I will argue that Woolf’s encounter with Besant, as well as her relationship with Gita scholar T.S. Eliot, inspired her 1925 novel Mrs. Dalloway, as its themes of war, death, and time bear striking similarities to the Gita. The goal of this presentation will be to show how the Gita was central to these three figures’ specific career trajectories as well as to their more abstract understanding of human kinship.

Bandyopadhyay, Aparna
An Intimate History Of Colonial Bengal: Negotiating The Problem Of Sources
As a researcher seeking to write a history of women’s lived experiences of heterosexual intimacy in the context of colonial Bengal, India, I was plagued by a paucity of sources. The present paper unfolds how this researcher negotiated the problem of sources in order to write this history. I had banked on the autobiographies and memoirs penned by women in this period, but I was disappointed. A woman writing her ‘self’, with one or two exceptions, seldom chose to expose the intimate aspects of her life to the reading public. They were, however, more candid and less inhibited about expressing their agonies and ecstasies on the pages of a diary. The proposed paper will closely look at a few diaries left behind by women in colonial Bengal, and examine how these unveiled their turbulent mindscapes, their emotions, desires and frustrations, and also their daily acts of contestation that were not quite in keeping with the ideal of passive, de-eroticised womanhood so zealously upheld in this milieu. Apart from diaries, fiction penned by women also provided me valuable glimpses into the interiors of women’s minds. The present paper will focus on a few novels by Nirupama Devi and Ashalata Singha, two eminent writers in early twentieth century Bengal, The personal pervaded their fiction, with a concomitant blurring of distinction between the fictional protagonist and her creator. My paper thus seeks to assess the importance of women’s fiction and diaries as keys to the intimate worlds of Bengali women in colonial Bengal and thus strives to find an answer to the problem of sources that invariably plagues a historian seeking to write a history of emotions in the context of South Asia.
Banerjee, Debjani
*Masquerading In The Margins: The Figure Of The Bystander In South Asian Literature*

In literary studies, margins have traditionally been perceived as powerful spaces where “discursive liminality provides greater scope for strategic manipulation” (Bhabha 1994) of the center and allow readers to conceptualize identity formations beyond categories organized around the nation State. With the steady erosion of democratic principles across the world today, Homi Bhabha’s theoretical formulations about the potentialities of margins merit reconsideration. This paper demonstrates the ways in which the margins, once considered sites of resistance, have become co-opted by majoritarian discourses across nation states in South Asia. Through a reading of South Asian diasporic literature, this paper will identify the ideological moments that majoritarian discourses underpin in order to occupy the margins; focusing on The Good Muslim by Tahmima Anam, The Far Field by Madhuri Vijay and Island of a Thousand Mirrors by Naomi Munaweera, the paper argues that the junctures when majoritarian discourses, electoral arithmetic, state power are aligned, the mask created through marginal rhetoric slips. The central problematic of my paper is represented by the gendered figure of the bystander who challenges the masquerade of majoritarianism. Can the readings of these texts offer possibilities of new forms of political engagement for women through destabilizing the center-margin dyad and displacing the hegemonic apparatus of value coding? By addressing this question and its subsets, my paper examines power contestation in contemporary South Asia, draws attention to the ideological histories of spaces as well as the conflicted relationship between the center and the margins.

Banerjee, Samayita
*Itinerant Museums: Situating Antiquarian Practices And The Role Of Museums In The Littoral Sundarbans*

This paper traces the beginning and growth of a museum-building movement in the Sundarbans, India. It argues that the museum building movement emerged in Sundarbans because of the fast disappearing traces to the history of the region because of the riverine and oceanic forces. Geographically the Sundarbans fall under the active deltaic belt is still going through a process of ongoing changes that creates a unique kind of a littoral space. This paper studies the local museums of deltaic Bengal which used antiquarian practices to withstand not only the overwhelming apparatus of the post-colonial state but also a shifting landscape. Museums in Sundarbans function as the survival force for the people who want to lay claim to the space as much as the vaunted tigers, crocodiles and the mangroves. Museums play a very important role in promoting a connectedness among not only its inhabitants but also with the antiquity of a fluvial landscape. Unlike the de-contextualized colonial museum these local museums exist because of the anxieties of the local collectors who intend to preserve a history and contest the narrative of the post-colonial state that extends more protection to the endangered animals than the inhabitants. Based on the ethnographic study of a few such museums and archives of an amateur archaeologist-antiquarian of Sundarbans, this paper will show how the museums re-enact and contest a space that is ephemeral and explore the affective bonds that enable protection and preservation of a history that is under attack from multiple forces.

Banerjee, Swapna
*Exploring Marginalities: Representations Of Male Domestic Workers In Two Films On Colonial And Postcolonial Bengal, India*

Domestic workers, an integral component of the demographic map in precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial India, inhabit the margin in multiple ways. Marginal in societal hierarchy, in economic standing, in political belonging yet ubiquitous in the socio-cultural landscape of South Asia, domestic workers offer a rich scope for interrogating questions of marginalities. Underscoring the connection between domesticity and manhood, a connection marginal in current historical literature, my pa-
per will explore representations of male domestic workers in two films on colonial and postcolonial Bengal, Jalshaghar (The Music Room, directed by Satyajit Ray, 1958) and Golpo Holeo Sotyi (Its True, Although it seems like Fiction, directed by Tapan Sinha, 1966). Ananta, a side character in Jalshaghar, from the beginning to the end serves as the caregiver and the confidante to the main protagonist of the film, an old, lonely, impoverished aristocrat. In the popular comedic film Golpo Holeo Sotyi, the servant Dhananjoy is featured as the magical “rescuer” and “problem-solver” in a “crisis-ridden” multigenerational, extended Bengali household. The paper will address the affective care work performed by each and pay close attention to the marginal yet crucial location of these servants in two very distinct situations, one extremely somber and the other critical yet comedic. Arguing that male servants’ loyalty, labor, and intimate work were constitutive of their subaltern masculinity and that of the reified hyper-masculinity of their bourgeois employers as well, the paper will attempt to shed light on the contingent notion of marginalities in the context of domestic culture of India.

Barois, Christèle

A Note On The Printed Editions Of The Śivapurāṇa

From the end of the 19th century, two distinct recensions of the Śivapurāṇa were published, each corresponding to a different organisation and contents of the text. Both these recensions, represented by the edition of the Ganapatikṛṣṇajī’s Press, Bombay, 1884, and the Veṅkatesvara Press, Bombay, 1906 respectively, seem to be the result of editorial choices of the time, consisting of groupings and arrangement of textual subdivisions (saṃhitā or khaṇḍa) claiming to belong to the Śivapurāṇa in their colophons. How were the subdivisions, saṃhitā or khaṇḍa, selected? What was the purpose of these publishers? Based on a systematic examination of the Indian and European catalogues of manuscripts and the printed editions of the Śivapurāṇa, this lecture will explore the process that led to the formation of the two recensions of the text, and provide examples of the editorial interventions that took place at different textual levels (frame stories, chapter divisions, commentaries).

Barua, Rukmini

Regulating Romance: The State, Family And Technology In Contemporary Delhi

Delhi’s recent transformation into a ‘world class city’ has had severe repercussions on the urban working poor—in terms of increasingly precarious work relations, shrinking social space and insecure housing arrangements. Against this backdrop, this paper examines gender relations and the everyday dynamics of (hetero)sexuality and intimacy in workers’ neighbourhoods of the city, through the lens of romantic love and the tensions surrounding its articulation, display and resolution. I follow two interconnected lines of inquiry, analysing various competing and overlapping registers of regulation and their negotiations. The first examines the thorny relationship between ‘love’ and ‘arranged’ marriages, focusing on the strategies employed to navigate this ideologically powerful, though practically porous distinction. I attend to the anxieties around the ‘court marriage’ and chart the interplay between social and state regulations of romantic, sexual and conjugal intimacy. I suggest that historically contingent and gendered ideas of social respectability play a key role in practices of romance. The second maps changing technologies of romance, focusing on the content of and contestations around the use of whatsapp messaging. I trace the vocabularies of romantic communication, addressing the ways in which popular culture (Hindi movies and TV serials) interacts with and shapes local repertoires of love. These new forms of communication, I contend, are gendered and spatialised and patterned by the quotidian rhythms of work and life. Drawing on ethnographic research from Delhi, this paper aims to reflect on the implications of urban change on the intimate spheres of working lives.
Basu, Chandreyi

*Child's Play: Materiality Of Children's Shrines In Early Mathura*

Traditional art historical scholarship on early Mathura has mainly examined the region’s multi-layered religious landscape through the lens of Buddhist, Jain, and brahmanical iconography. Moving beyond broad sectarian classifications, this paper presents a gendered reading of the nature of ritual activities at sacred sites dedicated to children. While the exact location of these shrines within Mathura is hard to pin point due, in part, to the nature of colonial archaeology, the art historical records include a rich body of material evidence for cults related to childhood masculinity. The most prolific objects left at such shrines comprise striking stone images of mature female caregivers with newly born male children and adult male mentors of young boys. These stewards are often animal headed. Since the images visually emphasize adults, the figures of infants and children have remained peripheral in art historical discussions of religious iconography. Undoubtedly, these offerings were made by adult men and women in gratitude for safe pregnancies and protection of their progeny from illnesses. Consequently, while the male infants and boys, themselves, had no voice in their own representation, the images nevertheless played an important role in their socialization. What does it mean that children were consistently sexed male at these shrines? In addition to stone images, this paper also analyzes terracotta remains related to children’s lives (such as toys and rattles) to shed light on what it meant to be growing up male around early Mathura’s shrines.

Bautze, Joachim

*The Lost 18th Century Utsavamalika (Garland Of Festivals) Of Shri Nathji In The Jhala Ki Haveli, Garh Of Kota, Rajasthan*

During his time as diwan of Kota, Jhala Zalim Singh (1730–1823) established an immense haveli within the garh of the city which still bears his name, the Jhala ki Haveli. Over the years this palace-like structure fell into decay, especially since the royal family of Kota -ardent followers of the Vallabha Sampradaya since 1720- felt overpowered by the intrigues of their former chief-minister who, in the end, secured for him and his family an independent state which had to be cut out from the territory of the state of Kota: Jhalawar. One part of the Jhala ki Haveli consists of an open rectangular court with an adjacent verandah followed by a windowless room on its eastern as well as western side. Both the walls of the verandahs as well as the windowless rooms behind are -or rather were- covered with murals dating from the last quarter of the 18th century. The western room on top of its southern and western walls show altogether 30 different shringars (set-ups) of Shri Nathji. This sequence of red bordered paintings in vertical format is only interrupted by a scene showing the divan and the young Maharao Umed Singh of Kota (1771–1819) apparently with their sons, MK Kishor Singh (b. 1781) and the son of the diwan, Shri Madho Singh (b. 1773) worshipping Shri Nathji together with the saptasvar- upas on the occasion of the annakut-festival in the haveli at Nathdwara. All these scenes disappeared by 1995 but can still be documented with photographs taken earlier.

Beri, Pallavi

*Victimised In The Name Of Protection – Revisiting The Institutional Reforms For Marginalised Women In Shelter Homes*

‘Oppressed in private, disempowered in public’ - the life of women is marked by endemic marginalisation as a result of systemic subjugation and victimisation sanctioned by the patriarchal logic within the realms of domesticity as well as while engaging with the state and society. Various forms of gender-intensified disadvantages in the form of social suppression, economic discrimination, political isolation and cultural domination explain how women have been systematically relegated to marginal sites. A range of legal and institutional reforms have been introduced with the purpose of securing socio-legal justice and institutional support to women in distress. In India, the reforms came in with the establishment of women shelter homes towards providing shelter, care and protection to aban-
donen, marginalised and abused women. Despite the claimed attempts to ascertain the purpose and functioning of the shelter homes, parallel stories of neglect, torture, harassment of helpless women have continued to mark headlines. Most often the fact that state institutions are constituted by hierarchies of gender and that institutions created new forms of gendered subjection and marginalities is ignored in policy. The paper offers a feminist critique of institutional reforms and interrogates how the reforms rather than eliminating those conditions of marginalisation reinforce gendered subordination in the name of ‘protection’. Through a narrative account of the inmates of shelter homes, the paper illustrates how the lacunae in the laws and its institutional mechanisms with the functional ideology of ‘protectionism’ have made the task of patriarchal oppression easier.

Bevilacqua, Daniela
When Genders Break Traditions: The Kinnar And The Pari Akhārā
Traditionally there are 13 akhārās which collect nāgā sādhus belonging to traditional orders. Akhārās function as administrative bodies that take under control the ascetic world. In the last years the traditional number of akhārās has been challenged by women and Kinnars (Hijrās). In the 2013 Prayag Kumbh Melā, Sādhvī Trikal Bhavanta organized a separate akhārā for women, the Pari Akhārā, established in order to allow women to play a role in religion but also to encourage them to take the path of religion in a safer context of only women. However, in 2014 Nashik Kumbh, it was allotted a small plot, and in 2016 Ujjain Kumbh Melā, it seemed to have been completely side-lined. A completely different result was obtained by the Kinnar Akhārā, founded by Lakshmi Narayan Tripati during the 2014 Ujjain Simhastha, the same year in which the third gender was officially recognized by the Supreme Court. This akhārā unifies various community of Hijrās from all over India in order to restore the religious dignity of the transgender community. Given the huge support that the akhārā received in the 2019 Ardh Kumbh Melā, it was officially recognized by the Jūnā Akhārā, and included among its supported orders, which lead to a historical change in the schedule of the main bath processions. Based on exclusive ethnographic data this paper is going to analyse in detail the officialization of the Kinnar Akhārā. Likewise, it will inquire about the Pari Akhārā analysing the reason for its decline. These case studies will lead to general considerations about the new challenges placed by genders, also inquiring whether these challenges can actually lead to changes in the Hindu orthodoxy.

Bhatt, Kalpesh
Green Fields And Dry Homes: Ethical Subjectivation Of The Sankari Swaminarayan Community
Living in a bucolic landscape of green fields, the Dubla community of the Sankari village in Gujrat, India, mostly follows the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, a transnational Hindu organization. As BAPS propagates its key theological doctrine that God is omniagent and omnipotent in subaltern, low-caste communities in rural areas, a paradoxical question is often raised: if God is both all-doer and ever-compassionate, why, despite my sincere efforts and prayers, does he not solve my perennial problems? Drawing on my ethnographic research conducted in Sankari, this paper examines the tensions and complexities of theologically engaged anthropology of hope by asking two questions. What sort of secular meaning-making frameworks does BAPS create from its theological doctrines and use them for what Foucault calls ethical subjectivation? How do BAPS practitioners negotiate these frameworks to create and act upon their everyday ethics? By placing the voices of ordinary people at the center of theology, this paper shows how everyday decisions and actions potentially resist, revise, and rejuvenate both historical expectations and theological expositions. It argues that acquiring devotional practices can have utility for those hoping to participate in aspirational discursive contexts where lower caste markers are de-emphasized in favor of qualities perceived as necessary for mobility. Such cases of lived religion and practical theology transcend the disciplinary boundaries in the study of religion by showing how meanings that emerge out of theological signification become vectors for understanding, establishing, and sometimes undermining agency and autonomy of faith-based communities.
**Bhattacharjee, Aditya**  
*Ganapati Transformed: Diachronic Inquiries Of Shrines To Hindu Gods In Suburban Thai Buddhism*  
Scholarship on Thai Buddhism has largely addressed Indic-ness as a feature of a distant past, neglecting its enduring relevance in both contemporary and urban cultic contexts. Here, I offer a paradigmatic shift by considering visual indicators of the Indic in modern-day Thai religion. To do this, I focus in this presentation on the material and narrative evidence to theorize the rise of smaller shrines during the past decade to the status of major institutionalized sites in suburban Bangkok. I focus especially on the Uthayan Phra Phikhanet Khlong Khuean (Khlong Khuean Ganesh International Park [KKGIP]) and the Thewasathan Nâkha Thurakhâ Thewi (Naga Durga Devi Temple/Wat Khao Khlong Si [NDDT]). Drawing from anthropologist Pattana Kitiarsa’s concept of popular Thai Buddhist hybridity, my aim is to supply a renewed evaluation of many of the key terms misleadingly viewed as fundamental to the classificatory systems of Asia and Asian religions.

**Bhattacharya, Bhaswati**  
*Social Space, Ideas And Practice: Urban India, 1940–1970*  
Focusing on the visitors of the India Coffee House (ICH), an all-India chain launched in 1936, this paper seeks to underline the significance of transcultural intellectual exchanges in the new urban space for the formation of individual and group ideologies from the 1930s to the 1960s. In cities where ICH was located, the place became a hub of resident and visiting intellectuals engaging in informal conversions over everything under the sun. Who visited the space and what did they think about the space? In what ways were their engagement with the space transcultural, and how did the process impact their lifeworld? Right from the interwar period, the foundation of the Communist Party of India, the Progressive Writers’ Association, to Indian Peoples Theatre Association, the Hungry Generation movement and the Naxalite Movement of the 1960s, politico-cultural activities on behalf of urban intellectuals in India resulted from an intensive engagement with similar movements in the West. ICH provided the space where they interacted with other, and often helped shaping their career. The paper argues that not only that the middle class visiting the India Coffee House and were products of direct or indirect cross-cultural intellectual exchanges, they celebrated such exchanges. While the import of literature from the West implied that the English educated Indian middle class was familiar with the ideas and works of Western philosophers, specialists and writers, many of these intellectuals had come in touch with Western ideas during their study abroad. A consideration of these exchanges is necessary to understand the socio-cultural history of urban India during the period.

**Bhattacharya, Nandini**  
*What Is A Pharmacist? Professionalisation And Praxis Of Dispensing In Modern India*  
The palimpsest of the western development of medical professions (and thereby marginalizing untrained or informal practitioners) cannot be fitted to the Indian context of modern India. This paper will query the process of professionalisation of pharmacy as well as medical practice itself in India, and argue that the practice of medicine, dispensing and even minor surgery were indistinguishable in colonial India so far as practitioners of both western and indigenous medicine were concerned. Therefore the institutionalisation of the academic discipline of pharmacy in 20th century India (distinguishing it from the more general study of pharmacology/materia medica in the 19th century) had little impact on the informal consultation/dispensing of biomedicine. This was complicated by the practice of qualified doctors who attached themselves informally to distinct retail establishments and even conducted medical practice from within their premises. Even when the profession of pharmacy became more firmly entrenched in independent India, the lack of legal clarity and on account of popular demand, the lines between medical practice and dispensing medicine remain blurred.
Bhowmik, Ranjamrittika

Mystical Utterances Of Sahaja: The Soul-Body Amalgam In Caryāgīti, Tukkhā And Bāul-Fakir Songs Of Bengal

My paper aims to study the Buddhist Caryāgīti (8th to 12th century), a collection of mystical songs of realization in Apabhraṃśa language attributed to the Buddhist Tantric mystic-saints, variously claimed as proto-Bengali, proto-Maithili, even proto-Hindi. I combine textual and anthropological methods in my studies of esoteric devotional traditions, through a diachronic analysis of the songs of the Caryāgīti, the songs of Tukkhā, and the Bāul-Fakir songs of Bengal influenced by the Buddhist Sahajayāna, Śaiva, Śaktī, Vaishnav and Sufi devotional traditions of north-eastern India. A unique part of my project is that through extensive fieldwork in rural regions of Bengal, I have been collecting Tukkhā songs, composed by the Rājvamśī community in the Rājvamśī lect, a living esoteric tradition. Most these songs have not been published or translated into English before. Through a comparative literary analysis, I have studied a number of common poetic metaphors and symbols in these songs. I discuss the importance of figurative language in relation to the rhetoric of religious imagination and how the emotional performance of mystical and poetic utterances could be addressed as a ‘transgression’ in their sociocultural and political context. I will be analyzing the complex structures of signification associated with mystic speech, while reflecting on the limits of language in the expression of the ‘ineffable’ through music. I will be exploring the Buddhist emotional states of Sahaja (innate bliss), Karunā (universal compassion) and Sunyatā (void) through the interiorization of the corporeal and the mental as a means to express an aesthetic and spiritual sublimation of the soul.

Bhutia, Anisa

Khatag And The Making Of Kalimpong: Rethinking The Tibetan Material Culture

This paper explores the question of how khatag, a ceremonial scarf traditionally used by Buddhists is (re)shaping Kalimpongs economic and global connections. Its uses range from wedding ceremonies, funerals, welcoming the guests or any special occasion. One of the places it is produced is Kalimpong, a district currently located in the Northern frontiers of West Bengal and is circulated globally. Following an ethnographic line of enquiry, this paper engages with the material culture of Tibetan object khatag. Using walking as a methodological tool we explore the ‘Tibetan Market’ of Kalimpong, ultimately questioning what does one mean by a ‘Tibetan goods’. A walk around the market in the town one can find many Tibetan items like prayers flags, incense sticks, statues, khatag etc. Among all the given commodities khatag is used in the day-to-day activities and has become a part and parcel of the Himalayas not just limited to the Buddhists but to various population settled in the Himalayas. Hence, I have chosen to explore the commodity khatag and engage with the question of how do commodities give meanings to a place. Further, due to its widespread presence in the Himalayas, through the panel, I aim to engage with the question if khatag as an object can be considered as an embodiment of the cosmopolitan pan-Himalayan identity.

Bikku, Bikku

Religion, Nature And Anthropology: A Perspective From The Bishnois Of India

There are numerous communities all over the world that have a close relationship with their environment, particularly with natural resources and wildlife. The Bishnoi is one such community in the Thar Desert of Rajasthan, India with distinctive religious practices called Bishnoi Dharma since the 15th century AD. They follow wildlife and other natural resources conservation practices as part of their religious doctrine. The agro-pastoralism and agroforestry have been the major lifeline of the inhabitants in the Thar Desert for the centuries. The Bishnois are well known in the Indian Great Desert region by following Agroforestry and agro-pastoralism by protecting indigenous trees, such as Khejri (Prosopis cineraria), kankeri/ Kankedia, Jal, plants and herbs; local wild animals and birds and numerous other species for the centuries. However, recent changes in land use and urbanization
have affected the Bishnois’ relationship with the environment. This paper-based on intensive fieldwork among the Bishnois of the Khejarli village in western Rajasthan, for a period of 15 months using anthropological methods. The combination of both religious beliefs and local ecological knowledge practices have been the major factors for the Bishnois to conserve trees and wild animals in their surrounding habitat for the centuries. The paper attempts to address the origin of Bishnois religion and worldviews, history, theological understanding as well as how these religious beliefs and practices contributed to the conservation of nature and shaping their culture. The paper also focuses on the Bishnois’ respond to the contemporary discourse in conservation, politics and religion changes.

Birch, Jason

*The Transmission Of Premodern Yogāsanas By Illustrated Manuscripts And Printed Books*

This paper will examine a collection of yogāsanas (yogic postures) that was probably practised in India in the eighteenth century. The earliest source is a handwritten manuscript with watercolour paintings that was created in the mid-nineteenth century. It depicts Jain ascetics performing 108 āsanas. The majority of these āsanas were published in a printed book in Hindi with illustrations of Śaiva ascetics performing the postures. Also, Sanskrit descriptions of the same āsanas were published in a modern commentary on the Yogasūtra. From the 1930s onwards, this collection of āsanas had a significant influence on modern postural yoga through the publications of Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh. This talk will examine how physical practices have been transmitted by manuscript and printed books across sectarian, cultural and national divides.

Blaikie, Calum (and Craig, Sienna)

*What Counts As A ‘Text’? Narrative, Authority, And Knowledge Transmission In Sowa Rigpa Encounters*

What constitutes an important or valid text in contemporary Sowa Rigpa praxis? How do different actors value, understand and apply various textual sources? These questions emerged as pertinent during a pharmacy-focused Sowa Rigpa workshop held in Kathmandu in 2011, involving 40 practitioners from China, India and Nepal, as well as four anthropologists from Europe and the USA. This paper examines how documents ranging from the classical medical corpus, pharmacological and ritual texts to workshop programmes, academic articles, plant databases, and government certificates were produced, debated and deployed in and around this event. It reflects on the ways such texts facilitated meaningful interactions – translation, knowledge transmission, epistemological tensions – during this collaborative and cross-cultural process. The specifics of this workshop illustrate broader dynamics about the social production and reproduction of medical and cultural authority in relation to Sowa Rigpa – among practitioners of Sowa Rigpa themselves and between these practitioners and practitioners of anthropology and philology. Through an analysis of the different forms of text that were in circulation at this workshop, as well as how these texts came to life through embodied actions (participating in rituals, visiting herb markets, making medicines together) the paper argues that practitioners and scholars are increasingly interacting with and through a widening range of textual genres. These interactions, in turn, contribute to the coproduction of Sowa Rigpa both as a field of knowledge-practice and as a field of academic representation.

Bocchetti, Annalisa

*Inner And Outer Pilgrimages In The Mystical Narrative Of The Citrāvalī By Usmān*

The Citrāvalī (1613 CE) by Usmān belongs to the literary genre of the Sūfī Hindavī romances (premākhyans), constructed on the motif of the devotee’s mystical journey towards God. Drawing from the local religious imagery, the Sūfī Indian poets juxtapose the figure of the Sūfī seeker to that of a Rājput prince who gives up his status and goes in search of his beloved, turning into a premyogī. The prince endures many obstacles along his mystical ahead of his intimate encounter with the di-
vine. In the Citrāvalī, the hero traverses both real and metaphorical cities (Gorakhnpura, etc.), bumping into every sort of pilgrims and ascetics, such as followers of Gorakhnāth and Janagama groups. What distinguishes the Citrāvalī from the other sources is the insertion of a geographical event in the story, when some yogis go looking for the prince on the princess’ behalf. In this episode, Usmān mentions the lands of Islām, Buddhist centres and Hindū tīrthas, giving glimpses of local practices and rituals such as the Pancakrośī yātrā and the karvat sacrifice in Kaśī. Sometimes, he also gives personal opinions, for example referring to the Muslim Hājj he questions the benefit of going on pilgrimage for those who lack a pure heart, thus emphasizing the internal perspective of Sufism. In this paper I will try to explore the metaphor of the pilgrimage and the rhetoric of sacred geography in a composite early modern Indian text, in connection with the process of the Indo-Muslim identity formation marked by moments of assimilation, competition and negotiation within the multi-religious 17th century North India.

Bochkovskaya, Anna
'Marginal' Scriptures In Contemporary Punjab: A Heterochronic Approach

Recent decades have featured an explosive growth of marginal religious or pseudo-religious communities (deras) in the Indian state of Punjab. Embracing a large number of Dalits who reside predominantly in rural areas, non-Sikh dera focus on religious and social issues; their leaders/neo-gurus have become very influential in many spheres, including economics and politics. In many cases dera leaders declare a universal character of their ideology, but at the same time all of them appropriate basic symbols of a religious identity and adjust them to own needs, which allows mobilizing new followers in Punjab and beyond. Since a majority of Punjab’s population are Sikhs, neo-gurus mostly focus on Sikh symbols including their main scripture, the Guru Granth. Attempts to produce own controversial sacred texts as ‘counter-scriptures’ or ‘alternatives’ to the Sikh holy book have been made by Sant Nirankaris, Dera Bhaniarawala and Dera Sacha Sauda – three of six dera whose activities are proclaimed ‘most dangerous’ by mainstream Sikh authorities. Another version of an alternative scripture is Ravidassias’ Amritbani Granth based on the hymns of medieval mystic poet and philosopher Sant Ravidas. This paper is an attempt to conceptualize the counter-scriptures phenomena using Michel Foucault’s idea of heterochrony that defines time-accumulating entities or places. Trying to simultaneously combine the eternal and the temporal as well as amalgamating different epochs (or ‘slices in time’, to cite Foucault), such scriptures contribute to the construction of new socio-religious boundaries and identities in contemporary Punjab.

Bose, Rajanya
Land, Labour, Indigeneity And Class: An Enquiry Into Agrarian Transition Among Adivasis In India

Scheduled tribes have suffered disproportionately the impact of displacement due to developmentalist projects promoted by the post-colonial Indian state. While constituting 8.6% of India’s population, they comprise more than 50 percent of those uprooted from their habitat since independence. Many tribes, in response, have used the language of indigeneity and represented an authentic intimate relationship with their natural surroundings to claim legitimacy over their territory, identifying themselves as Adivasis meaning original inhabitant of land. However, the ongoing alienation from land has intensified a process of ‘de-territorialisation’ among the Adivasis, who now form a disproportionately large percentage of both migrant labour and casual wage labour populations, seeking employment in the urban or non-farm economy, engaged in poorly paid low skill work. India’s industries have been incapable to absorb the labour force ‘freed’ from means of production, resulting in most landless or marginal adivasi farmers joining the ‘classes of labour’ who depend on the sale of their labour power in the informal economy under precarious conditions to reproduce themselves. This paper discusses the salient features of such agrarian transition faced by the adivasis in India under a neoliberal regime in the past three decades. It argues, such a transition requires the adivasis now to defend both territorial and labour rights, therefore demanding new tools of struggle, new
organizing principles and broader solidarities beyond ethnic lines. In such an imagination of adivasi politics, class politics will not replace ethnic politics but open up spaces where they constitute each other.

**Bradbury, James**  
*Kolkata’s Refugee Colonies: Making And Unmaking A Political Community*

The refugee colonies of South Kolkata were established by Hindus displaced from East Bengal in the 1950s through forcible occupation of land on the edge of the city. These refugees found political representation through their strategic alliance with communist and socialist parties, and in turn contributed to the electoral success of the Left Front coalition, which governed West Bengal from 1977 to 2011. The Left Front granted rights to the refugees over the occupied land and incorporated this “refugee city” into the municipality. The Left parties, particularly the Communist Party of India (Marxist), accrued a strong influence in this part of the city which has outlasted the political demands of the refugee movement. However, successful rehabilitation has undermined the sense of the refugees and their descendants as a unified political community.

Much scholarship has focused on the refugees’ role in sustaining the Left Front for an unbroken thirty-four years. However, this analysis of the relationship between the refugees and the communist parties has not been extended to explore the rapid decline in support for the parliamentary Left since their electoral defeat in 2011. This paper traces the decline of the CPI(M) in relation to the evolution of the colonies into middle-class suburbs, in which the refugee political identity has become largely irrelevant. In a broader sense, the paper reflects on the role of urban space in making and unmaking political communities.

**Brick, David**  
*The Debate On Cross-Cousin Marriage In Classical Hindu Law*

It has long been recognized that the Indian subcontinent is home to two markedly different systems of kinship that broadly correspond to prominent linguistic and geographical divisions in the region: those of the Indo-Aryan North and the Dravidian South. Moreover, scholars have widely agreed that the most distinctive feature of Dravidian kinship is the widespread practice of cousin-cousin marriage in its various forms. In the Indo-Aryan North, by contrast, a man is generally forbidden from marrying a woman to whom he is biologically related in any way within a fairly large number of generations. Nevertheless, by the close of the second millennium CE, Brahmin intellectuals throughout India shared in common both a canon of scriptural sources and a complex tradition of jurisprudence known as Dharmashastra. Hence, this raises the question: how did classical Brahmanical jurists of the North and South deal with controversial issue of cross-cousin marriage? It is this question that this paper aims to address. In particular, it will analyze the earliest and most influential defense of cross-cousin marriage within the Dharmashastra tradition, that of the South Indian jurist Devaṇṇa Bhaṭṭā, who composed his voluminous legal digest, the Smṛticandrikā, roughly between the years 1150 and 1225.

**Browarczyk, Monika**  
*A Second Life Of The Second Sex. Prabha Khaitan’s Hindi Rendition Of Simone De Beauvoir’s Classic*

Simone de Beauvoir’s Le Deuxième Sexe (1949) is a flagship feminist book and a milestone in women’s movement, its iconic status confirmed by dozens of translations. The only available Hindi rendition by Prabha Khaitan was published under an altered title, Strī upekṣitā, or literally, “The Neglecting of Women,” in 1991. The first English translation by Parshley, The Second Sex (1953), provided the source text for the Hindi rendition as Khaitan’s command of French was inadequate to use the original. Parshley’s text remained the only available English version for more than fifty years—i.e. from its publication till 2009, when the new translation came out—even though it had been widely criticized for omissions, mistranslation of philosophical terms and, hence, for the overall flattening of the
multilayered French original. Though handicapped by her lack of French and working with a flowed English translation, Prabha Khaitan was undoubtedly well equipped to work with such a multidimensional and multi-referential text closely associated with the existentialist and feminist thought. She had studied Western and Indian philosophy, her PhD thesis was on existentialism of Sartre, she had written extensively on existentialist thinkers (such as Sartre and Camus), was an outspoken feminist, and a Hindi writer both of essays on women’s issues as well as creative writings. By close reading of Khaitan’s introduction to her translation of de Beauvoir’s opus magnum and of some passages of the Hindi translation, the paper proposes to examine Khaitan’s Hindi rendition from the theoretical perspective of ‘human factor’ and ‘gendered reading’ in the process of translation.

Buchholz, Jonas

The Country And The City: The Cultural Ecology Of The Kāñcippurāṇam

My paper will look into the first two chapters of the Kāñcippurāṇam, an 18th-century Tamil Sthalapurāṇa of Kāñcipuram. These chapters, labeled Tirunāṭṭuppaṭalam, “Chapter on the Sacred Country,” and Tirunakarappaṭalam, “Chapter on the Sacred City,” respectively, contain a florid description of the region around Kāñcipuram and of the city of Kāñcipuram itself. While the Kāñcippurāṇam is based on a Sanskrit source, the Kāñcimāhātmya, these chapters do not correspond to the Sanskrit text, but follow a distinctly Tamil literary model. Thus, the text makes use of Tamil literary conventions, such as the concept of the five “landscapes” (ṭīṇai), each of which is evoked in the portrayal of the region around Kāñcipuram. Such descriptions of the country and the city are typical for Tamil Sthalapurāṇas. Similar sections are found in almost all texts of the genre, but also in earlier Tamil texts, such as the Kamparāmāyanam, on which the description in the Kāñcippurāṇam seems to be modeled. In my presentation, I will locate the Tirunāṭṭuppaṭalam and the Tirunakarappaṭalam of the Kāñcippurāṇam in the framework of the literary tradition of which they form part, but also look at them through from a perspective of cultural ecology. How does the text transform real-world landscapes into literary fiction? To what extent are the descriptions of the country and the city purely conventional, and to what extent do they reflect realities on the ground? By reading the Kāñcippurāṇam against the background of its specific genre conventions, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of the relations between nature and culture in Tamil Sthalapurāṇas.

Cannon, Brian

Reconsidering Customary Law: Local Legalities In And Beyond Colonial Rajasthan

Most often bifurcated between customary and colonial law, the historiography of jurisprudence in British India has long maintained a division between legal practices inherited from European models, to ones of indigenous origin. Recent literature has tempered this division to suggest the various ways in which customary practices were in fact codified by British legal scholars, seeking to posit a generalizable model within which to understand traditions inconsistent with their own. This work hints at an important overlap that, when further probed, can help us to better understand how colonial and indigenous legal institutions operated in tandem. This is especially true of India’s princely states, which, though enjoying titular administrative autonomy, often deferred to British legal norms while simultaneously working beyond them. This paper explores this contention through the lens of a regional tribunal in the Marwar state of Rajasthan. The nineteenth century tribunal, known as the khat darshan, provided a local forum in which higher-caste landholding claimants – Brahmans, Mahajans, Charans, and Bhats among them – could seek redress to disputes of land use, water infrastructure, and other agro-social grievances. Limiting the tribunal’s access to particular communities necessarily cached the proceedings in a context of intensely local social relations, while at the same time positioning them on the lower rung of a higher (colonial-inspired) legal ladder, above which disputes could be appealed. This paper employs the tribunal as a case study to complicate the interconnected nature of legal practices in colonial north India.
Cantu, Keith

“My Spirit Seemeth”: Śrī Sabhāpati Svāmī’s Refutation Of The Lotus-Kingdoms

The literature of Śrī Sabhāpati Svāmī (b. 1828 in Madras, Tamil Nadu) formed a compelling synthesis of early modern Tamil yogic philosophy and practice that spread across India and was also engaged by colonial-era occultists such as Henry Olcott, Franz Bardon, and Aleister Crowley. In this paper I focus on a primary feature of Sabhāpati’s system, namely his practical method of refuting or canceling twelve cakras and four superseding principles as not being part of oneself, the act of which was presented as a means of attaining “Śiva’s Yoga of Kings” (civarājayōkam). In this paper I first demonstrate how the names for the cakras (“wheels”) or kamalas (“lotuses”) in Sabhāpati’s system of yoga were uniquely homologized with abstracted physical and mental faculties (e.g. elements, senses, passions, intellect, conscience, memory, and others), and were also described as “kingdoms.” These were also interwoven into a complex web of mantras and astrological correspondences, as especially outlined in Sabhāpati’s works in vernacular Indic languages. In the final part of the paper I describe how the yogin was directed by Sabhāpati to refute these cakras over the course of meditation in order to acquire a power of universal flight or projection out of the cranial vault, allowing him to experience an identity with various gods conceived of as the Brahman, especially Śiva and Viṣṇu, or Devi, and note a few likely reasons that occultists found this method so attractive.

Cattoni, Nadia

The Science Of Palmistry In Anand Kavi’s Kokasāra

The Kokasāra or Kokamañjarī by Anand Kavi is a kokaśāstra written in brajbhāsa in the beginning of the 17th century. As it is referenced in several manuscripts, Anand Kavi’s text is a compendium of previous works discussing well-known topics of the genre such as typologies of women and men, lists of sexual positions or kinds of marks and embraces. In a first part, this presentation will show how complex systems of erotological knowledge were summarized and simplified in the Kokasāra, sometimes to the extreme. I will argue that these changes are not only due to the compilation of several works but are testimonies of the adaption of the text to a popular and less literate audience. In a second part, the presentation will investigate less known chapters of kokaśāstras introducing topics like palmistry (sāmudrika) and the reading of important signs on women’s body. This part will show how Anand Kavi’s Kokasāra understands the science of palmistry, traditionally incorporated into kāmaśāstras/kokaśāstras.

Caumanns, Volker

Towards An Adaptation History Of The Viśvantara Jātaka In Tibet And Beyond

When Buddhism was introduced to Tibet, not only religious doctrines and practices found their way into the Land of Snows, but also South Asian narratives. In this corpus, the accounts of the Buddha’s life and the tales of his former existences, the jātakas, occupy a central position. Several of these jātakas gained wide dissemination in Tibet, among them the Viśvantara Jātaka. Translations of various Indian versions of this jātaka, in which the selfless generosity of Prince Viśvantara is extolled, can be found in the two collections of the Tibetan canon. These translations served as a basis for numerous autochthonous Tibetan adaptations of the tale, including the libretto of a popular Tibetan opera, extensive retellings by “treasure discoverers” (gter ston), an elaborate ornate poem, and, in recent times, a Bhutanese movie. Focusing on the different Tibetan editions of the libretto and its various translations in Western languages, this paper addresses the following questions: What do we know about the Tibetan (and Western) communities for which the libretto was prepared? In which ways does the libretto — as an adaptation of the jātaka — responds to the religious, intellectual, and aesthetic concerns of these communities? How do paratexts, but also the choice of medium and genre, provide a framework for the reception process? And, in which ways are the Tibetan editions and Western translations presented to the recipient as adaptations? By asking these questions, I will
explore some of the basic aspects of an (as yet unwritten) adaptation history of the Viśvantara Jātaka in Tibet and beyond.

Chakraborty, Anwesha
*The Return Of The ‘Local’: Study Of Three Neighbourhoods In Kolkata From 1990s To Present*

The present paper seeks to analyse the spatial, social and political transformations within three select neighbourhood spaces in the city of Kolkata since the liberalisation of the economy. As has been noted by many scholars on urban studies, this period saw a ‘reversal in pattern’ from earlier patron-client based network bondages in neighbourhoods in Kolkata. This paper relies on the literature available on the subject in the case of the city of Kolkata but further would like to see the implications of these changes in case studies in eastern, northern and southern regions of the city. The paper also tries to note that these studies were mostly conducted during the reform phase of the Left Government during its closing years and not a comprehensive study of Mamata Banerjee’s style of governance effective at the local level has been taken into account. Thus the paper will argue that certain measures made by the government like donating huge sums of money to clubs has been incorporated into the political culture of the urban environment. Moreover the paper seeks to understand the effects of the general economic stagnation of the city and the interest and functions of local representatives in delivering services to the citizens of a neighbourhood space in the current environment.

Chakraborty, Debadrita
*Masculinity In The Making Of Nations: Men Complicit In The Rise Of Right Wing Politics In India*

The ideal of masculine Hinduism which is currently being employed within the Indian national rhetoric to sustain and build a modern Hindu Rashtra is a direct consequence of India’s tryst with British imperialism. Since it is men who, as real actors of nationalist movement defend their homeland and the honour of women, the current Indian right wing politics ensures that men continue to uphold the ideals of Hindu hegemonic masculinity defined by martial prowess, muscular strength, moral fortitude and a readiness to battle groups in order to strengthen the nation. Any man who fails to uphold the above mentioned ideals are then considered a peril to the security of the nation, labelled as powerless, inferior, passive and is reminiscent of India’s colonial oppressed and emasculated past. Masculine Hinduism is thus rooted in a rigid ‘us vs them’ view of nation that becomes implicated in violence and intolerance. However, while the hegemonic notions of Hindu masculinity are achieved by a small minority who become the public face of gender and sexual politics, the majority are those who reap benefits from such gendered arrangements by being complicit with the hegemonic project. Through my examination of the complicit male characters in select media, film and textual narratives, I wish to examine how the complicit man appealed by mythic and masculinised historical beliefs coupled with religious nationalism turns, calls upon right wing hegemonic socio-political discourses to perpetrate violence over the minority other, along with the ways in which they force themselves to reconcile with the hegemonic world perpetrating violence upon the other and by that logic upon themselves.

Chakravarthi, Sujoy
*‘Homeward Bound?’ – Assessing Gorkhaland As An Imaginative Geography And The Indian-Nepali Identity In Select Works*

The Darjeeling hills, largely associated with the image of a quaint hill station, possesses a history of disenfranchisement from the Indian mainland. This discontentment found expression through the Gorkhaland movement, which demands a separation of the region from the state of West Bengal in order to form its own administrative province. The lack of unifying history and culture has resulted in the local populace perceiving themselves as ‘other’ to the dominant ‘mainland’ - sentiments which have occasionally culminated in mass civil unrest and violent clashes. This history has been underscored by a quest to establish a clear sense of identity. This paper focuses on how the idea
of Gorkhaland has been employed in the discourse which has shaped a community’s identity and enabled it to appropriate the space for a territory yet to come into existence – how the borders of ‘Gorkhaland’ have already been demarcated despite having no political sanction. Following the argument of ‘imaginative geography’, the paper analyses how exploiting the emotional connection between place and people has legitimized the concept of a ‘regional identity’. Further, this paper will also explore a selection of Nepali literature from this region in order to understand the Indian-Nepali identity. Themes ranging from the suffering of Nepalese migrants in early years to growing narratives of self-determination as the demand for Gorkhaland intensified will be explored from authors such as Indra Bahadur Rai and Agam Singh Giri amongst others. This will provide an insight into Darjeeling and its people, creating a review of the movement whilst reflecting on the present day and future of Gorkhaland.

Chakravorty, Mayurika
Feminization And De/Reterritorialization In A Transnational Adaptation Of Ramayana

How many Ramayanas? Three hundred? Three thousand? At the end of some Ramayanas, a question is sometimes asked: How many Ramayanas have there been?” enquires A.K. Ramanujan in his seminal essay on the plethora of adaptations of the Indian epic in South and South East Asian cultures spanning several centuries. In fact, textual scholarship on the Ramayana identifies thousands, not just hundreds, of variations of the text, and scholars like Paula Richman have questioned the ‘original’ and canonical status that has often been attributed to Valmiki’s Ramayana. Several variations have subverted the Hindu Brahminical and patriarchal overtones of Valmiki’s version, and one can trace a rich tradition of anti-caste (e.g. the Jambavantapurana from South India) and feminist renditions (e.g. the sixteenth century Chandrabati Ramayana which continues to be invoked and adapted by contemporary authors and artists) from the subcontinent. Within the context of this heterogeneous textual tradition, this paper analyses a twenty-first century animated film adaptation of the Ramayana, Sita Sings the Blues (2008) by the American artist and filmmaker Nina Paley, which juxtaposes the Ramayana narrative from a feminist point of view with the filmmaker’s personal narrative of love and loss. While I examine the process of cartoonification of a world epic, and the stylistic intermedial shifts in the process, the paper specifically focuses on the feminization of the Ramayana narrative in a transnational context and the de/reterritorialization of the narrative from ancient South Asia to contemporary North America.

Chambers, Thomas
Between Marginalisation & Connectedness: Muslim Artisans In India

Representations of Indian Muslims and Indian craft industries often share a narrative of decline, marginalisation and nostalgia. This paper challenges these representations through an ethnography of the Muslim dominated woodworking mohallas (neighbourhoods) of Saharanpur, a provincial city in northwest Uttar Pradesh (India). Whilst structural conditions produce affective and material forms of marginalisation within the community, everyday life in the mohallas is also shaped through connections and networks of migration, religiosity and production. An exploration of these networks – as well as the subjectivities and imaginaries they produce – reveals a far more complex and nuanced picture of life in the mohallas. However, the ethnography provides more than a celebratory account of connectedness. Networks that may be enthused as productive of cosmopolitanism or transformative social imaginaries, also embody dualities which, under late capitalism, enable global chains of supply to maintain production through socially embedded networks. Migration may involve the crossing of boundaries and (imagined) borders within the local urban context, yet a sense of being bordered and marginalised can be equally mobile and continuities present in experiences of migration produce forms of enslavement as well as opening transformative horizons. By ‘connecting the margin’, through a dialectical analysis, this paper thinks through these dualities by providing an ethnographic account which shares everyday life, work and migration with Muslim craftworkers in the city as the navigate networks, spatial forces and intensifying pressures from an increasingly hostile state.
Chandra, Paresh  
**The Caprice Of Writing: A Ghalibian Poetics Of The Ghazal**

In this essay, I read the first ghazal of Mirzā Ghālib’s Urdu Divan as a statement and as an example of Ghālib’s poetics of the ghazal. I attempt to understand the phrase “the caprice of writing” (shokh-e tahārī) which occurs in the very first distich (matlā) of this ghazal as a term of art designating a specific understanding of poetic-imaginative freedom. The ghazal writer who understands the nature of this freedom cannot but face up to the thought of the non-necessity of poiesis. Its figures (paikar) complain of their non-necessity, of the fact that they are born in caprice. If a commonplace of the ghazal is that the beloved’s discourse is defined by coquetry (shokh), i.e., capricious self-disclosure that refer only ambiguously to the “reality” of the beloved, then the ghazal (at least Ghālib’s Urdu ghazal) is a form in which the lover’s discourse recognizes its own caprice (shokh). It recognizes, in other words, that though it claims the necessity of desire’s expression (jażbah-e be-ikhtiyār-e shauq) as its raison d’être, in fact, it the caprice of thinking (shokh-e andeshā) transforms desire into an occasion for its own actualization as the caprice of writing (shokh-e tahārī).

Chandra, Uday  
**Rediscovering The Primitive: Adivasi Histories In And After Subaltern Studies**

Once a mere anthropological curiosity, the “tribal” as a quintessential subaltern figure came to be reworked in the 1980s and 1990s as the anti-colonial rebel par excellence with his own impenetrable lifeworld and habits that stood in opposition to the modern state and capitalism. The old colonial tropes of irreducible cultural difference, underwritten by a paternalistic ideology of “primitivism,” now re-emerged, most notably in the writings of Ranajit Guha, as the basis of a new historiographic and theoretical turn in postcolonial India. To show what such Subalternist historiography leaves out and why, I turn to Guha’s evocative description of the Santal Hul of 1855. For Guha, as for his colonial predecessors, the Hul represented the outburst of the irrational savage, entirely at odds with the workings of the modern world. Yet colonial records clearly document, on the one hand, the Santals’ well-established grievances of the Santals against moneylenders, their petitions and appeals to the local state, and, on the other hand, the influence of Christian missionaries in the rebels’ articulation of “millenarian” ideas. Reflecting on the problems inherent in Guha’s historical methods and turning afresh to the same colonial archive, a different view emerges of adivasi engagements with the modern state and economy in the mid-nineteenth century. This view of the past depicts the modern tribal subject within the logics of modern statemaking and capitalism, not outside or prior to them. Acknowledging how state and tribe constitute each other in the margins of modern India is, I argue, a necessary task for radical historiography today.

Chandra, Vinita  
**Claiming Religious And Ritual Landscape: A Case Study Of Pānīnī Kanyā Mahāvidyālaya**

Like most mainstream religions, women have been on the margins of religious and ritual leadership in what is popularly construed to be Hinduism. The teaching of Veda through techniques for oral transmission, and performance of rituals have been heavily masculinized activities. The aćāryās in the Pānīnī Kanyā Mahāvidyālaya, a women’s college in Varanasi established in 1971, seek to intervene in both these spaces. Oral teaching of the Veda is part of the curriculum and regular practice of the Vidyālaya, and the teachers and students also engage in performance of yajña, performance of all the sixteen samśkāras and paurohitya karma- activities highly prohibited for women. I seek to study how these women exercise their religious agency through forging, claiming and enacting meaningful religious identities. In the process, are they able to strategically reform or transform the religious landscape by rejecting strict obedience to tradition, even as they situate themselves within the confines of tradition? What are men’s responses to this challenge from within? In recently conducted interviews, I found men involved in teaching of Veda are contemptuous of memorization and chanting of Veda by females in the Mahāvidyālaya, soon approaching half century of its existence. I seek to
understand the challenges that the founder women teachers would have faced in rupturing the patriarchal sphere. What have been the means through which they have resisted these pressures? How have they negotiated space and place for themselves? I also seek to understand what is that drives women to intervene on the landscape of religion and ritual- a wish to wield power and authority, or to challenge it?

**Chandrashekhar M, Raja**  
*E V Ramasamy Periyar And His Rational Humanistic, Self-Respecting, Intellectual Engagements*

E V Ramasamy Periyar (1879–1973) ideated that castes would proliferate and perpetuate in India as long as God, Religion, Shastras and Brahmins are sustained and not abolished altogether. The Indian Social Reformist, who started the Self Respect Movement and pioneered Dravidian Nationalism became a central figure of social engagements in the South. He laboured to perform an exemplary resistance against Braminical dominance, superstition, caste discrimination, child marriage and women oppression. He pronounced and promoted the principles of rationalism, self-respect and equality. He opposed the exploitation and marginalisation of the non-Brahmin Dravidian People of South India and was venerated as an icon of lower castes. He was regarded a pragmatic propagandist and an atheist who attacked the evils of religious influence on society. He ideated defiance, anger and subversion into new social ideas of resistance. This movement which gave a voice to the disadvantaged and discriminated communities soon started exerting tremendous influence on political parties. The basic characteristic of the movement was lost in the movement’s bid to the broadening of the social base, for political outcomes had completely played against the anti-caste agenda of the Periyar movement. Periyar declared that his agenda in politics would revolve around atheism, nullity of the Congress party and Brahmins as caste vendors of the Hindu religion. The political mutations of the social movement have made the people disillusioned about the ideals for which the social movement was initiated.

**Chatterjee, Bhaswati**  
*Daughters Of The Social Reform: Challenges And Negotiations*

The twentieth century ‘second social reform movement’ started with the Sarda Act (1929) and culminated in the Hindu Code Bill (1954–56). In contrast to the reform of the nineteenth century, now the women’s organizations played a significant role. Bengali women also became a part of this momentous change. Their struggle was not only against the colonial rulers, but also against conservatism and patriarchy. I have chosen three autobiographies of twentieth century Bengali women who in tune with the changing era transgressed the normative behavior of middle class femininity and crossed the ‘laxmanrekha’ to enter into the public world of politics and social activism. I have chosen Renuka Ray’s *My Reminiscences: Social Development During the Gandhian Era and After*; Manikuntala Sen’s *In Search of Freedom: An Unfinished Journey*; and Ashoka Gupta’s *In the Path of Service: Memories of a Changing Century*. In all these narratives, they conveyed their gratitude to their mothers who helped them transcend the barrier and were their main pillar of support. While Renuka’s mother was an ‘early feminist’, Manikuntala’s mother maintained seclusion. Ashoka’s mother was a young, dependent widow who later made her career as an author. These mothers in tune with the nineteenth century reforms did not let their daughters marry early, gave equal opportunity to study along with their sons. Later these daughters entered the public world of politics and social activism and fought for the legal rights of women, the unprivileged. They became a part of the second social reform movement and helped in re-constructing the newly independent nation.

**Chatterjee, Nandini**  
*The Wrath Of A Woman: Curses As Injunctions In Indo-Persian Legal Documents*

In pre-modern South Asia, the legal orders frequently combined the threat of physical and material sanctions with those that were societal, ritual and supernatural. Persian and bilingual inscriptions
on stone recording land grants, for example, often threaten loss of religious and social status, and
gendered injuries to family honour to transgressors, indicating a cosmology with a wider field of
significant and definite cause and effect. This paper investigates a Persian language deed of gift, in
which a Hindu woman in a landed family in Mughal Malwa in the late seventeenth century recorded
the transfer of certain villages in her possession to her nephews. The document, which was sealed
by a qazi or Islamic judge, mimicked royal and noble orders by purporting to appoint younger male
relatives to the ‘service/office of children’. It also appended a threat to those that would dare to en-
croach upon that property and its title, saying ‘On the day of Judgement, I will seize their skirt!’ This
dramatic and individuated curse, with its possible invocation of the sirat al-mustaqim, the narrow
and slippery bridge that Muslim souls must cross in order to enter paradise, allows us an opening for
considering concepts of filial duty, women’s property-holding practices and notions of righteousness
in Persianate Mughal India.

Chatterjee, Sanhita

Domestic Goddesses And Double Shifts: Bengali Married Women’s Negotiation Of Professional And
Domestic Labour

This paper will explore the experiences of married women in neoliberal India, who have chosen to
negotiate the challenge of maintaining their professional identity and being a “domestic goddess”.
Drawing upon in depth interviews with women from Kolkata’s Bhadralok class - a historically as well
as culturally dominant class in the region - this paper analyses their experiences of balancing their ca-
reers outside the home and their domestic responsibilities within the patrilineal family structure. The
paper argues that the majority of these women work a “double shift” and are typically engaged in a
conflict between paid professional labour and unpaid emotional labour. I analyse their views regarding
their roles as wives (and often mothers) within their marital home (husband’s extended household) and the wider impact that their domestic responsibilities have on their professional identities.
My initial findings are that, under the traditional pressures of adjusting in a patrilineal family structure
and the more contemporary pressures of living in an increasingly consumerist society, married wom-
men’s choices are restricted when they enter their husband’s family. In most of these cases there lies a
trade-off between forgoing their career progression and satisfying the demands of the household. As a
result they take on a “double shift” as the uneasy trade-off for acquiring the status of a “domestic god-
dess” within their new marital household. Key words: Emotional labour, double shift, unpaid work,
Bhadralok, patrilineal structure, choice

Chatterjee, Shraddha

Sexual Subaltern Subjects As Signifiers Of The Current Crisis In Queer Politics In India

When two young women, Swapna and Sucheta, committed suicide in Nandigram, West Bengal, in
2011, queer activist interventions told the story of two abject figures unable to survive the cruel con-
sequences of loving each other, highlighting the violence on lesbian bodies in contemporary Indian
society at the cost of excluding their class, caste, and gender as definitive of their life’s trajectories.
This allowed queer activists to situate Swapna and Sucheta as another lesbian suicide. What was
missed in this encounter was the crucial question of whether Swapna and Sucheta would have told
the stories of their lives in the same way had they been alive. Situating them as sexual subaltern sub-
jects, drawing especially from Guha’s and Spivak’s interventions in the understanding of the figure
of the subaltern, allows us to trace a crisis in contemporary queer politics in South Asia through the
consistency of Swapna and Sucheta’s silence. In the inability of queer politics to offer a framework
of representation without the erasure of sexual subaltern subjects, a larger reflection of the limits of
queer politics becomes possible. In this paper, I will explore the tensions that emerge when we allow
sexual subaltern subjects to orient our exploration of the discourse and desire of queer politics in
South Asia. In doing so, I will demonstrate how sexual subaltern figures reveal not only the aporias
of queer discourses and identifications, but also highlight the specific ways in which sexual subaltern
Chaudhary, Sujata
*Administration Of Hindu Temples: Analyzing The Regional Trajectories Of State-Religion Interactions In Colonial And Post-Colonial India*

In the early 19th century, as the East India Company expanded its control, Hindu temples and the revenue they generated became one of the sites of the British administration. As a result of the expansion and establishment of state institutions such as bureaucracy and judiciary in the colonial period, intervention in religious matters became common. This paper focuses on the processes of bureaucratization and judicialization, two distinctive capacities that developed during the colonial administration and have implications for the post-colonial context. These important processes unfolded differently across India and are particularly complex in the case of former princely states, wherein religious matters were not subject to state control. The independently governed princely states were integrated into the Indian Union in the 1950s, even though, many were not willing to join given the autonomy in administration under a Hindu ruler. To this day, they oppose ‘outside interference’ in internal affairs leading to conflicts related to the administration and ownership of Hindu temples. Drawing examples of regional tensions from Himachal Pradesh and former Madras Presidency, and their resolution in secular law courts, the paper analyses lawsuits filed in the provincial courts against the government appointed bureaucrats. Employing a comparative-historical approach to examine lawsuits from North and South India, it explores the peculiarities of regional histories. The paper identifies different regional factors to argue that a framework based on ‘sub-national’ histories is relevant to examine the multiplicity of state-religion relations in India as opposed to a generalized ‘national’ understanding.

Cherian, Anita Elizabeth
*Revisiting Princely Patronage, The Institution And Practice Of The Zonal Cultural Centres: Hauntings, Continuities, Conjunctions*

Broadly, my research is concerned with cultural policy and with institutions that support and promote the performing arts in independent India. In this paper I look at a curious governmental configuration: that of the post-colonial Indian state’s oblique ‘revisiting’ in the mid-1980s of the frameworks of princely stewardship for the arts. My interest is in the Indian government’s inauguration in the 1980s of a series of seven cultural institutions intended to supplement, and in time perhaps supersede, the National Akademies established in the 1950s. These institutions, the seven zonal cultural centres (ZCCs), constituted an alternative institutional model. They were characterized by their territorial spread across the length and breadth of the subcontinent. Of relevance to this paper is the government’s deliberate location of several of the ZCCs in the capitals of former princely states. My paper will explore the conjunctions and continuities in narrative and thinking about patronage in the Princely states of Udaipur (North West Zone Cultural Centre), Patiala (North Zone Cultural Centre) and Thanjavur and the (South Zone Cultural Centre), and the ZCCs established within their precincts. My analysis will draw upon an examination of the archives of both the princely states mentioned above and of the particular ZCCs. Besides this, the work will also use material derived from fieldwork.

Chhetri, Prem
*Ethnicizing Federalism In Nepal: Claims For A Limbu State In Province Number 1 After 2008*

The installation of federalism in Nepal was one of the major challenges to be addressed by the new government in Nepal after the instauration of democracy in the country after 2006, and the preparation of a new Constitution from 2008 (the Constitution was finalized in 2015). The central controversial issue in this endeavour was the criteria to be used for the delimitation of the federal ‘provinces’, either on the basis of ethnicity, or of other criteria such as geography. The debate over federalism was one of the major causes for the failure of the first Constituent Assembly which was dissolved in 2012. The
Limbus, one of the larger ethnic groups in East Nepal and member of the indigenous nationalities, for example, were demanding a redrawing of the Province Number 1 in eastern Nepal along the boundaries of the ancestral Limbu territory and its renaming as ‘Limbuwān’. My paper focuses on the recent history of the struggle for the Limbuwān Province. It will discuss the organizations and people involved in this struggle. Through this case-study, I explore the interactions between identity and politics in the context of state restructuration in 21st century in the Nepal-India borderland. I show how identity has become a central element of political action; in line with previous studies on this topic I will endeavour to show how the struggle for Limbuwān contributed to reinforce inclusive political representation and democracy in Nepal (cf. Hangen 2010; Onta 2006; Hangen & Lawoti 2013).

Chilcott, Travis

Sādhana-Bhakti And Conceptualized Perceptions Of Krṣṇa: Investigating Historically-Embedded Theological Claims Through Multidisciplinary Researches

References to perceptions of the divine abound in the history of South Asian religions. Many of these directly conflict with essentialist views of “mythical experiences.” An excellent example are referenc-es to perceptions of Krṣṇa found throughout early Gauḍīya theological literature and the texts that inform it, such as the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa. Early Gauḍīya theologians argue that such conceptualized perceptions (savikalpa-pratyakṣa) of Krṣṇa, which generally occur in the advanced stages of one’s absorption in Krṣṇa, are more complete than indeterminate perceptions (nirvikalpa-pratyakṣa) of brahman. To this end, as Holdrege (2014) notes, they allot “a pivotal role to various meditative practices as a critical component of the Gauḍīya path of sādhana-bhakti, and more specifically rāgānugā-bhakti, that can serve as means to attain direct experiential realization of Krṣṇa’s vigraha, absolute body, and his unmanifest līlā.” But how do we make sense of such historically-embedded theological claims? Are they references to perceptions people actually had, a means of establishing the authenticity of the path of devotion, or some combination thereof? Why do sādhana practices play such a critical role in their occurrence? Drawing on humanistic (Taves, 2009) and ethnographic researches (Luhrmann, et al., 2010) on religious experiences, cognitive theories of learning (Rumelhart, et al, 1976; Bechtel et al, 2002), and attribution theories (Spilka et al, 1985; Malle, 2004), I argue that central practices of devotion serve to create favorable cognitive conditions for the occurrence of what early Gauḍīya theologians reference, describe, and attribute as being perceptions of Krṣṇa.

Chodon, Rigzin

Monthly Newspaper From Ladakh And Kyelang (Early 20th Century)

The monthly newspaper La dvags kyi ag bar, in the Tibetan script, published by Moravian Missionary August Hermann Francke between 1904–10, was the first of its kind in the Ladakh region. It was printed on a lithographic press from Khalatse village in Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, with the idea of imparting Christian teachings using the local language and script. The paper was revived in 1927 by Rev. Walter Asboe from Kyelang in Himachal Pradesh and subsequently in Leh with the titles Kye lang ag bar and La dvags pho nya respectively. The first monthly paper followed the idea of using the local script, to which notions of sacredness were closely associated as Buddhist religious texts was written in the same script. News – local, national, international – constituted an important section of the paper, which also contained local maxims and local folklore adapted to offer Christian moral lessons to readers. The contents of the paper thus formed an interesting blend of local oral traditions and scriptural practices with biblical and secular knowledge. The revival of the paper introduced a different approach. It included practical advice and imparted new knowledge relevant to day-to-day practice – like the use of chimneys and kitchen hearths, improved farming techniques etc. These monthly newspapers published at the Kyelang Mission House in Lahaul and Leh Mission House are full of new ideas – they can be seen as an avant-garde forms of writing, as collaborative textual and visual productions, providing space for many local writers to publish their works and establish new modes of expression.
Chui, Tony
*Fluid Urinalysis: Five Chapters From The Medicine Of The Moon King*

The Medicine of the Moon King (Sman dpyad zla’i rgyal po) is considered one of the earliest authorities in the Tibetan medical tradition, and it has deeply impacted the theoretical and practical aspects of the tradition. An examination of its section on urinalysis, which consists of five consecutive chapters, shows that a wide variety of theoretical frameworks is offered in each chapter: from a discussion of the physical appearance of urine to the effects of seasonal influences, and to demons as a pathogenic factor; from basic Chinese five-element (wu xing) geomancy to the application of Chinese geomantic cosmology to the human body. Although these concepts can be observed as complementary across the chapters, the five chapters can be read independently and are self-explanatory even without knowledge of the others. Urine diagnosis can thus be carried out in the context of a variety of different methods and perspectives. While there is a lack of diagnostic homogeneity across the five chapters, the different presentations serve to frame urinalysis in a case-based, differentiated and pragmatic fashion instead of limiting its practice within a single, unified chapter. This paper assesses the flexible diagnostic potential for medical practitioners of this dynamic fluidity in urinalysis methods in the Medicine of the Moon King at this key developmental stage in the medical tradition. As the Chinese geomantic, macrocosmic worldview interacts with the practice of medicine at the microcosmic level of the individual, the result is an enriching nuance and flexibility which can safeguard against any limitation and rigidity in the diagnosis of pathology.

Ciabattoni, Agata (and Freschi, Elisa)
*Getting In The Mind Of Medhātithi With The Help Of Formal Argumentation*

This paper discusses the benefits of applying formal argumentation theory to Dharmaśāstra reasoning. For this purpose, we will analyse cases in which the discussions become extremely elaborated, usually through the application of Mīmāṃsā-influenced reasoning rules, as in the texts by Medhātithi (9th c.) and Vijñāneśvara (12th c.). Such texts can become extremely complex and do not always make their selection process explicit. In other words, it is not clear why, e.g., Medhātithi finally selects one solution to the controversy he examines over the others. Our formal tools, which enable us to elaborate a diagram of the structure of the argument, will make this structure clearer, displaying their hidden hypotheses and showing which arguments are considered to be stronger or weaker and why. For instance, is analogical reasoning able to provide stronger support than, e.g., authoritative statements? We will examine case studies such as the discussion of corporeal punishment (ad Manu 8.318). We will thus show how, once the relevant sources have been selected, edited, translated and discussed, one can add a further layer of understanding by formalising them into an argumentation framework.

Clark, Matthew
*The ‘Mystic East’ And Psychedelics: Soma/Haoma And Complex Plant Formulas In Ancient Asia*

In several recent publications I have presented evidence that the ancient ritual drink known as ‘soma’ in South Asia and ‘haoma’ in the Zoroastrian tradition was originally a multi-plant formula that comprised various plants that acted as analogues of ayahuasca, which is a powerful psychedelic concoction used by various groups in South America. If indeed this was the case, then for many centuries the brahmins of South Asia were regularly experiencing non-ordinary states of consciousness. I speculate that these experiences may have led to the development of yogic techniques to attain such states without the use of plants, and that the tropes of ‘enlightenment’ and ‘liberation’, which are core features of South Asian philosophy and spiritual practices, have their roots in psychedelic experience.
Columeau, Julien Régis

‘Panjābī’ is the first journal in Punjabi language published in Pakistan after its independence. This journal was published in Lahore between 1951 and 1960 by Faqeer Mohammad Faqeer, a Pakistani nationalist close to right-wing circles, and he attempted in its issues to present a specifically Pakistani version of Punjabi language and literature, as this language was in Pakistani Punjab stigmatized as that of the Sikhs. Faqeer Mohammad Faqeer published on a regular basis in ‘Panjābī’ some political texts and made Punjabi the vehicle of a nationalist and Islamic ideology that had been, until then, expressed mainly in Urdu. He also developed a defense strategy of Punjabi, highlighting the richness of its literary corpus and disconnecting it from the Sikh and Hindu communities. This zeal to pakistanize Punjabi lead two collaborators of ‘Panjābī’ (Sardar Khan and Waqar Ambalvi) to present a proposal for a standardization of Punjabi in Pakistan which would distinguish it from Indian Punjabi (this new standard was subsequently named by Waqar Ambalvi ‘Pāk panjābī’). This journal had also the ambition to produce and showcase a specifically Pakistani Punjabi literature. Between 1951 and 1960 it published 734 texts, written by 284 authors, from all poles of the literary field (Marxists, conservatives, modernists). The literary corpus of modern Pakistani Punjabi was thus considerably enriched, and this remains its most notable contribution. I will analyze in this paper the various fields of intervention of ‘Panjābī’, its contribution, and its role in the defense and diffusion of Punjabi in Pakistan in the years which followed partition.

Consolaro, Alessandra
Translating Adivasi Literature: Rescuing From In/Visibility?

Adivasi people are one of the most marginalized groups in Indian society. Literature has become for them a field of struggle and Adivasi writers have entered the literary field in major regional languages. Translation from Adivasi languages into regional and international languages has become a major strategy in order to gain visibility. At the same time it poses the issue of adapting to national and global hegemonic discourses on heritage and indigeneity. For example, in 2014 three generations of Adivasi writers from all over India gathered in Ranchi, Jharkhand, for the first national conference on Adivasi writing. They elaborated the so-called ‘Ranchi manifesto,’ that has since remained as the main reference for Adivasi writing. Samuhik anubhuti – collective expression – is introduced as the main identifying element in Adivasi literature, but this at the same time reflects the dominant discourse on tribal identity. In my paper I discuss issues in negotiating between the local and the global discourse on Adivasi-ness when translating for an international audience, addressing issues of visibility, indigeneity and citizenship. I will focus on the English, German and Italian translations of Angor, the first poetry collection by Jacinta Kerketta, a journalist and poet from Jharkhand who succeeded in becoming acclaimed in the Hindi literary world and abroad.

Correndo, Chiara
Hybrid Adivasi Leadership Patterns After Pesa

In the proposed intervention, I will elaborate on the objectives and provisions enshrined in the 1996 Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, comparing its contents with the following Jharkhand Panchayat Raj Act (JPRA). The purpose of this comparison is in fact to underline how the JPRA, imposing a top-down model of decentralisation in which the role of the traditional village assembly was considerably downsized, did not completely fulfill the expectations tribal people harbored in it but, instead, because of some structural flaws, paved the way for further exploitation facilitating the control of the state and large corporations over traditional structures and local resources. After describing the traditional administrative structures in these tribal areas, I will then analyse how the introduction of the Panchayati Raj system has changed the aspect, duties and scope of traditional leadership, reducing its power and intensely diluting its sphere of action, leaving room for the state to penetrate
in the rural setting and disrupt traditional methods of governance and dispute settlement. Finally, building on the interviews I collected, I will highlight, on the one hand, how traditional leadership in Jharkhand is collapsing, being devoided of any power both by the top-down decentralisation system and from within, slowly losing its bases of legitimation and the hold over natural resources which used to be the economic and social glue of tribal communities. On the other hand, I will point at how it still plays a pivotal role in protecting the community and building up resistance strategies against state attempts to deprive indigenous communities of land and resources.

Craig, Sienna (and Blaikie, Calum)

What Counts As A ‘Text’? Narrative, Authority, And Knowledge Transmission In Sowa Rigpa Encounters

What constitutes an important or valid text in contemporary Sowa Rigpa praxis? How do different actors value, understand and apply various textual sources? These questions emerged as pertinent during a pharmacy-focused Sowa Rigpa workshop held in Kathmandu in 2011, involving 40 practitioners from China, India and Nepal, as well as four anthropologists from Europe and the USA. This paper examines how documents ranging from the classical medical corpus, pharmacological and ritual texts to workshop programmes, academic articles, plant databases, and government certificates were produced, debated and deployed in and around this event. It reflects on the ways such texts facilitated meaningful interactions – translation, knowledge transmission, epistemological tensions – during this collaborative and cross-cultural process. The specifics of this workshop illustrate broader dynamics about the social production and reproduction of medical and cultural authority in relation to Sowa Rigpa – among practitioners of Sowa Rigpa themselves and between these practitioners and practitioners of anthropology and philology. Through an analysis of the different forms of text that were in circulation at this workshop, as well as how these texts came to life through embodied actions (participating in rituals, visiting herb markets, making medicines together) the paper argues that practitioners and scholars are increasingly interacting with and through a widening range of textual genres. These interactions, in turn, contribute to the coproduction of Sowa Rigpa both as a field of knowledge-practice and as a field of academic representation.

Cs, Vijayashree

Renegotiating Identities Through Reshaping Rituals: The Case Of Bhutaradhane

Bhutaradhne is a distinctly unique ‘spirit worship’ tradition patronised by the Tulu community located along the west coast within the southern state of Karnataka in India. Pre-Brahmanical customs of spirit, ancestor, hero, totem and animal worship gets reflected in this tradition. The Bhuta cult is relatively crystallized through oral histories and organized belief systems. The tradition exhibits inextricable linkages between its rituality, visuality and materiality. Bhuta (spirit) worship is practised as private worship within the confines of a private residence or as highly visible performative rituals in public shrines known as Bhutasasanas. There are more than 300 known varieties of Bhutas. Different caste groups ascribe to different Bhutas and perform specific tasks during the ritual. There is a clear articulation of hierarchy through demarcation of space in the Bhuta shrine. Presently, the tradition of Bhutaradhane, notions of the shrine, the rituals performed in them and its material culture have become significant symbols for self-assertion and identity construction/negotiation for the Tulu community. Drawing from the author’s extended field experience in the region, this paper examines three aspects – firstly, it explores the operation of the dynamic right-wing forces permeating in the region and its effects on the rituals; secondly, it evaluates the relational systems between the increasing transnational economic activities and the visuality of the ritual; thirdly, it demonstrates how the community as whole and the various caste groups that operate within them deploy the visual imagery to further their aspirations and reshape identities.
Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, Marzena
Along The River, Towards God – Kaveri And Pañcarāṇga Shrines
Water reservoirs have always been challenging imagination of inhabitants of India for obvious reasons, valid also in other cultures – water not only gives life, ensuring vegetation, but also, through its natural and sometimes unbridled power resembles gods or rather goddesses, thus the rivers are often personified as females. The topic of Indian rivers being constituents of both the natural and cultural landscapes of India, has already been treated by scholars, among them Indologists and it is also an element of the ongoing project within which we are working on some South Indian māhāmyas. Working for some time on the māhāmyas of the holy kṣetra in Śrīraṅgam, I cannot overlook the importance of the river for this place, but also for the whole region. One of the specific religious phenomena of the region is the concept of not only one but several raṅgas situated along the banks of the river Kāveri or on its islands. They are collectively called pañcarāṇga – five raṅgas. I would like to dedicate my presentation to the above mentioned issues.

D’Avella, Victor
Innovations In The Telugu Verbal System
The traditional grammarians of Telugu took as a given that their language derived, in one way or another, from Sanskrit, which was the prakṛti »original« whereas Telugu was the vikṛti »modification«. While this assumption extended deep into the structure of the language as well as the technical, metalinguistic terminology, it did not, in every case, hamper a creative and even accurate analysis of the Telugu language, which possesses a number of features partially or entirely foreign to Sanskrit such as auxiliary verbs (dhātupallavamu), relative participles (dhātujāviśeṣaṇam), and habitual (taddharma) verbal forms. My presentation will focus on the Telugu verbal system as described in the Āṃśaṅga of Nannayabhat. with the commentary of Ahobalapati (both composed in Sanskrit) and in what ways these new concepts were treated in an extended framework of Sanskrit grammar. After an introduction to how Telugu verbs were classified into three categories (upakṛti, pariṇāti, and saṃvṛti), I will offer an overview of the tense and modal systems as explained by Ahobalapati and with additional insights from the last great traditional grammarian, Chinnayasuri, as well as his commentators. I will concentrate on the Telugu auxiliary verbs and the new “tense” category of taddharma. In close, I will draw conceptual parallels with (but also note divergences from) the linguistic mode of analysis found in Prakrit grammars.

Dallapiccola, Anna L.
Painted Representations Of Sacred Sites In The 18Th-20th Centuries
The poetic works of the alvars and the nayanmars created the sacred landscapes of the Tamil region between the sixth and the ninth century. Thus, specific sites sung by the poet saints became especially holy either to Vishnu or to Shiva. A number of these became relevant places of pilgrimage during the Chola period; further developments took place first under the Vijayanagara and, subsequently, under the Nayakas (mid-sixteenth to mid eighteenth century). Thanks to the benefactions of the Natutkottai Chettiaris, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a number of Shaiva sites underwent a further phase of renovation. The paper focuses on the development of the representation of selected holy sites from the Nayaka period - when the pictorial representations of either individual sites and their sthalapuranas, or of full sets, such as the 109 Vaishnava divyadeshams and the 275 Shaiva sthalams - became an important feature of the artistic repertoire - to the late 19th century. Sacred sites and individual murtis connected with them became a popular theme in the nineteenth century. The so-called ‘Thanjavur’ and Mysuru paintings, painted textiles, reverse glass paintings and albums are cases in point. This trend continues to the present day in ‘Calendar’ prints of various sizes, ranging from posters to pocket size Furthermore, in some temples three-dimensional figures set against a painted background, suggest the salient phases of the sthalapurana, enabling thus the viewer to immediately be able to identify the murti and the various stories connected the place.
Dandekar, Deepra
Fiction As “Method” For Approaching Religion Among Christian Converts In 19th Century Maharashtra

Fiction writing, especially in the vernacular, constituted an important method for Christian converts to approach religious change and transformation in 19th century Bombay Presidency (current day Maharashtra). Converts used auto-/biographical and other stories to express their religious experiences- not just of Christianity, but also of their earlier religious affinities (mostly Brahminical Hinduism) that disappointed them. Using two prominent Marathi examples of vernacular literary fiction describing Christian conversion from the latter half of the 19th century (The Subhedar’s Son written by D.S. Sawarkar in 1898 and The Wanderings of Yamunabai written by Baba Padmanji in 1857), this presentation analyses how fiction-writing became a popular genre for Christian converts articulating the realism of Hindu oppression in their religious journey towards Christianity, often described as liberating and emancipatory. While fiction-writing entailed expressing the realism of Hindu oppression without the responsibility or burden of maintaining facticity, converts increasingly began using fiction to express their truthful religious experiences more “freely”. In this presentation, I argue that convert fiction-writing about Hindu oppression and Christian liberation enabled a re-endorsement and re-experience of convert reality, facilitated by the sharing of individual narrative and biography across missions and generations of converts. In this way, I suggest that fiction-writing encompassed an interstitial method, a third space to prevalent theological, historical, or anthropological approaches to religion.

Das Gupta, Sanjukta
The Centre And The Margin In Jharkhand Adivasi Histories

This paper looks into the shifting categories of the centre and the margins as reflected in Adivasi histories of Jharkhand. Since colonial times, marginality – not simply political and economic, but also as the culturally backward other – has been imposed upon the different Adivasi communities of the region. This idea of marginality was borrowed and perpetuated by Indian nationalists, even as they sought to represent themselves as the spokesmen of Adivasi exploitation, as well as in the post-colonial state which as the provider/redeemer enunciated various schemes of tribal ‘uplift’ and ‘development’. In contrast, however, the Adivasi relationship with the pre-colonial power structures was a more complex and nuanced phenomenon, with experiences of both expropriation as well as collaboration and partnership with regional polities. Through an analysis of a range of historical memories encapsulated in oral literature, political tracts, constitutional debates, memoirs, local and popular histories and social media discussions, this paper illustrates how this historical complexity was reduced to a simplistic representation where marginality became the centre-focus around which domination and exploitation were placed to construct a new idea of Adivasi identity. As Adivasis appropriated the notion of the margin, and actively selected their lived experience of marginality, their indigeneity and rootedness to their land was emphasized in their confrontation with dominant discourses in the political domain. The notions of centre and margins were thus constantly reconfigured in the context of Adivasi political mobilisation.

Das, Pratim (and Ganguly, Aratrika)
Mapping Memory And Nostalgia: Identity In Liminal Space

This Paper tries to understand the historical and political context of Burmese Repatriates who repatriated during enforcement of nationalistic policies in Burma and it will conceptualize the oral narratives of Burmese Repatriates; focusing on the identity crisis of the repatriates from Myanmar who are now settled in and around the city of Kolkata. The country of Myanmar was under the British Empire from 1824 to 1948, many Indians (undivided British India) went to Myanmar (known earlier as Burma) for better job opportunities and many went there as part of the British Army or as a part of the Indian
National Army formed by Subhash Chandra Bose. However, the repatriates started migrating back to India during various phases of the 20th century either due to various anti-Indian riots started from the early 20th century and ethnic conflict or because of the nationalisation imposed upon the people of Burma by General Ne Win, former President of Burma. This paper focuses on the migration and dislocation of Indians of Burmese origin settled in and around Kolkata, India and how they are still living with the memory of their lives in Burma (in their imagination it is Burma still now and not the modern-day political country of Myanmar) and it subsequently becomes the narrative of their living. Analysis of the repatriate narratives of Burma Colony in Bengal will be a departure from the grand narratives of Burma and Repatriation. Besides, it will trace the Cultural memory and sense of nostalgia of Burmese repatriates across generations.

Das, Ritanjan (and Rhoads, Elizabeth)

*God, State And The City: Negotiating Urban Development Around Religious Properties In Calcutta And Rangoon*

In 2006, news broke that the Indian car manufacturer Tata Motors would establish a new car factory in West Bengal. To make way for the factory, several thousand mostly small and marginal farmers were dispossessed of altogether 997 acres of farmland in the Singur area, located 45 km outside the state capital of Kolkata. The controversy that ensued as local landowners mobilised in defence of their farmland propelled the land acquisition in Singur to a matter of national and even global concern, as it evolved into one of India’s most talked-about new land wars. The movement of these so-called “unwilling farmers” eventually succeeded in shutting down the factory in 2008. While the movement thus achieved its one-point agenda, local life “after the factory” has been characterised mostly by half-hearted efforts at land restitution; the accelerating diversification of livelihoods away from agriculture; and the continued intervention of political forces trying to politicise the recent history of land dispossession and resistance in Singur in competing ways. In this paper, we survey the ways in which local livelihoods and forms of political organisation have evolved in Singur in the wake of dispossession. Both authors have done long-term fieldwork in the Singur area during 2007–2009, with repeated follow-up visits since. We base our analysis on ethnographic material collected during this period, as well as two surveys (covering around 225 households) conducted a decade apart (by Nielsen), in order to offer both qualitative and quantitative insights into post-dispossession transformations. This paper thus represents our first attempt at a longitudinal analysis of these processes.

Contemporary urbanisation in South/Southeast Asia is dominated by multipronged debates around land and dispossession. However, a critical dimension of the land question, something with current and historic relevance, is rarely at the forefront. This is the question of land owned by God, i.e. religious land/properties, and the state’s handling of such properties in the context of urban development. There are serious ongoing debates, particularly in India, about whether religious properties - as collective cultural assets and part of a larger heritage - can be considered private or public places, and the legal-political ramifications of such decisions (the long tussle to bring the Nataraja temple under state administration in Tamil Nadu, the current case of Sabrimala in Kerala, and the Ayodhya dispute in Uttar Pradesh). What we propose in this paper is a novel approach of placing this debate in the urbanisation domain. Using a comparative study between two cities with an integrated colonial past – Calcutta and Rangoon – we explore how a state (and its agencies) approaches Hindu (debuter) and Islamic (waqf) religious properties when they stand in the way of urban regeneration? There are numerous, and openly visible instances of urban development bypassing such properties (roads/flyovers being redesigned to avoid acquiring religious land), often succumbing to powerful religious and political networks. But how a state negotiates with a wide array of conflicting imperatives – development priorities, religious sentiments, legality, and local political dynamics – has not been studied before. This paper represents our first attempt at a longitudinal analysis of these processes.
Dasgupta, Sangeeta

*Adivasi Studies: A Historian’s Voice*

How do we, as academics in university spaces respond to the different ways in which narratives centering on adivasis are crafted, their past explored and explained? How do we understand the historical imperatives of unpacking colonial discourse and recovering adivasi voices from the colonial archive, and counterpoise it to a communitarian initiative which privileges myths and legends, oral narratives and lived experiences? Exploring such issues makes us realize the challenges implicit in the field of Adivasi Studies, which, I argue, is constantly re-thinking its domain, incorporating newer themes of research within its ambit, recognizing the limits of its enquiry, and yet creatively thinking of ways to respond to the challenges that emerge.

Dasgupta, Supurna

*“Are You Home?”: Erotics Of Leisure In Bengali Poetry From The 60s*

Speed and newness are frequently found to be central to the postcolonial imaginary. While the newly decolonized nation-state ceaselessly seeks to define itself in fresh and unique terms, it is also riddled by an internal impetus of ‘catching up’ with erstwhile imperial powers, hence the obsession with speed which almost echoes imperial futurism. Such was also the fraught case of South Asia where post-independence writing had the burden of radically reinventing the nation even while they played out diverse postcolonial developmental desires. In this paper I argue that the avant garde poetry of the 1960s from Bengal refused to align itself with this vision of speed and development, and instead chose to pursue newness through a cerebral and corporeal engagement with leisure, verging on the erotic. 1960s in post-independence Bengal saw the progressive nation-building rhetoric of Nehruvian poetics, premised on work, future, and focused purposefulness. But avant garde poets were disillusioned by the trauma of partition and neo-colonial unemployment. They invented an amoral universe of leisure, shadowy nostalgia, and purposeless meandering. Through the work of one quintessential poet, Shakti Chattopadhyay, I will investigate two aspects of this poetics which found in leisure a suitable anchor. First, leisure provided the poets with a conceptual space to dive into Freudian depths or travel across civilizational histories and planetary time. Second, unheeded in the public, power translated itself into a private polymorphous sexuality, frequently experimenting with itself on the passive female. This libidinal economy of leisure marked a new mode of marking postcolonial time.

Dash, Bidhan Chandra

*Dalit Utopia Interrupted: Violence And Exclusion In Higher Educational Institutions*

From the ‘Baliraj’ of Jyotirao Phule (The rule of Bali-The King) to Ambedkar’s ‘land of Buddha’, utopias have been crucial for the Dalit articulation of an alternative and ultimate liberation. These utopias have manifested in diverse forms such as, mythologies, popular memories, oral histories, art and cultural forms. These utopias, often seek to alter the past for an alternative future, with belief that understanding the beginning can create the possibilities of imagining the end. However, all the Dalit intellectuals and movements have emphasized the path of education crucial for an emancipatory future, as education has the power to provide a voice to articulate and express dissent. The recent reports on the entry of Scheduled Castes population into higher educational institutions show an exponential growth. While, more Dalit population seek higher education their attempts have been mated with violence (both mental and physical) and multi layered forms of exclusion. The frequent cases of death of Dalit students in various higher educational institutions are evidence of the complex nature of violence unleashed on the aspiring Dalit youths. With an in-depth analysis of the scenario of the contemporary higher educational institutions in India, this paper tries to understand the dreams and aspirations of the Dalit students and the trials and tribulations in achieving them.
Davis, Richard

*The First English Gita And Four British Orientalists*

My paper will examine the moment of the first English translation of the Bhagavad Gita, by the British officer Charles Wilkins working with the Brahmin pandit Kasinatha Bhattacharya. In 1785 the Bhagavad Gita became a modern book for the first time, with all its paratextual accompaniments, available for dialogues with new audiences in Europe and throughout the world. My focus will be on the ways that its first audience, the British Orientalists based in Calcutta, situated the Gita. I will look at four significant figures: William Jones, Charles Wilkins, Nathaniel Halhed, and Warren Hastings. I explore how each of them contextualized or framed this newly translated work. While all shared some presuppositions, they differed in their fundamental perspectives on situating the work. These differences, I will argue, anticipated and helped form several of the principal directions in the reception history of the Bhagavad Gita in worldwide settings over the following two centuries. Scholars including myself have examined the first English translation, and I have examined the relationship between Wilkins and Kasinatha. There is a worthy scholarly literature on the ways this translation and other Orientalist translations provoked an “Oriental Renaissance” within European intellectual circles. But the responses of Halhed and Hastings have not formed a major part of the historical inquiry into the early reception history of the Gita, and I argue they add important dimensions to this history.

De Clercq, Eva (and Van Overberge, Tine / Winant, Simon)

*Jain Mahābhārata In Classical Hindi: Bulākīdās’ Pāṇḍavapurāṇ*

Episodes from the Mahābhārata can be found from the earliest strata of Jain literature. Over the centuries, Jain poets adapted the epic in compositions in various literary languages, both classical and vernacular, including Classical Hindi. Scholarship (e.g., Cort 2013, Clines 2018, Plau 2018, Bangha 2013) has only started to disclose the vast corpus of high quality Jain literature in Classical Hindi, and its significance for North Indian literary culture. This paper represents the first attempt at exploring the Pāṇḍavapurāṇ of Bulākīdās (17th c.), a self-proclaimed bhās. ā of the Sanskrit Pāṇḍavapurāṇa, composed just a century earlier by Śubhacandra (1552). By conducting a close reading of one selected episode, we will examine the modifications made by the poet to conform his work to the requirements of contemporary Classical Hindi literature (e.g. Plau 2018 on Rāmcand Bālak’s adaptation of Raviśeṇa’s Jain Rāmāyan. a), and the extent in which he stays true to Śubhacandra’s Pāṇḍavapurāṇa in Sanskrit.

De Jonckheere, Heleen

*Adapting An Adaptation Over Time And Space: A Case Study From The Jain Tradition*

The literary culture of the Jains, as of South Asia in general, is filled with adaptations of authoritative narratives. These have taken on different forms from translations and retellings to appropriations and countertexts. This paper wants to explore the different adaptive processes at the base of adaptation-products by looking at a specific narrative from the Jain tradition, called the Dharmaparīks. ā. This didactic-polemical frame narrative is in itself an adaptation as it satirizes stories from the Hindu Purān. as and epics in order to criticize Puranic Hinduism. It has also been adapted over time and space through several versions written from the tenth to the eighteenth century in both Northern and Southern India. The analysis of the paper will first focus on the Dharmaparīksā story (in the authoritative Sanskrit version by Amitagati) as an adaptation of the Puranic tales that indicates the creative ways in which the Jains engaged with and countered Hindu dominance. Secondly, the paper will explore the ‘afterlife’ of this narrative through its different adaptations focusing on language and style, as well as aspects that indicate a change in how the story was mediated. This will expose a second layer of adaptive processes, over the first oppositional layer, that is induced by changes in socio-historical, geographical and linguistic setting, together with changes in aesthetic culture. In this way, the paper will not only demonstrate the range of adaptation-products one narrative can engender, but also the range of contexts that are negatioted within these adaptations.
De Koning, Deborah  
**The Ravana Mandiraya In Colombo**

This paper evaluates the relevance of a Ravana shrine for the post-war phenomenon of Ravanisation and the methodological advantages of conducting ethnographic research at a shrine. The past five years I have conducted research on the post-war (after 2009) interest in Ravana among Sinhalese Buddhists in Sri Lanka and I have introduced the concept Ravanisation to coin this phenomenon. So far, only some very exploratory research has been conducted on this phenomenon and others have framed it as 'a rewriting of the island's history' and a 'narrative'. I, in contrast, conducted in-depth research at two sites to investigate this phenomenon in detail. One of the sites was the urban Buddhist temple site the Sri Devram Maha Viharaya in Colombo where a Ravanamandiraya (palace) was inaugurated in 2013 at the shrine section. In the first part of this paper I discuss how the materialising and ritualising of Ravana in this Buddhist shrine contributes to place Ravana, a mythological figure mainly known from Hindu mythology, in a Buddhist timeframe, worldview, and devotional framework. The second part of this paper evaluates the methodological advantages of selecting a shrine to study a recent phenomenon on grassroots level. I employ in that section the concept solidification (of a tradition) as introduced by Juergen Schaflechner in his monograph on the Hinglaj Devi Hindu shrine in Pakistan. I discuss how the Ravana mandiraya in Colombo plays a diverging and converging role in disseminating (emerging) ideas and what the methodological advantages are of selecting shrines as case-studies.

De Simone, Daniela  
**Aśoka's Pilgrimage To Bodhgayā: Kingship And Dhamma In Early India**

Shortly after the end of the Kaliṅga war and the decision to practice and spread dhamma, Aśoka set off on a dhammayātā to the site of Śākyamuni’s awakening as the “Beloved of the Gods” declared in one of his edicts. His claim seems to be supported by the recovery of the so-called vajrāsana or ‘diamond throne’—a decorated sandstone slab stylistically comparable to Aśokan capitals—at the site of the Mahābodhi temple in Bodhgayā in the 19th century. The Mauryan king might have had the stone slab installed under the Bodhi tree to commemorate the spot where Śākyamuni sat in meditation and gained liberation from suffering. Aśoka’s pilgrimage to the sites associated with the Buddha’s life is a recurring theme in early Buddhist literary and artistic productions, and his visit to Bodhgayā is the highlight of the journey. The awakening represents the major turning point in Śākyamuni’s life because it is at Bodhgayā that he becomes the Buddha. Aśoka’s pilgrimage to the site of Śākyamuni’s awakening represents the legitimisation of his role as a cakkavatti or Buddhist sovereign following the Kaliṅga resolution. This paper intends to analyse artistic and literary references to Aśoka’s pilgrimage to Bodhgayā in order to understand the implications of the depictions of this episode in post-Mauryan art and literature, particularly in relation to the representations of Buddhist kingship in early India.

Dębicka-Borek, Ewa  
**Cultural Ecology Of The Hunting Festival In Ahobilam**

The Śrīvaishnava centre of Narasiṃha worship in Ahobilam (Andhra Pradesh) is likely to host the most complex version of a Hunting Festival in South India. The annual festivities (Tel. pāruvet.ā: pāru – to run, vet.ā – hunt; Skt. mṛgayātṝa/mṛgayotsava) are linked to the saṃkrānti festival, held in Andhra for 3 days in the mid-January to mark the beginning of a harvesting season. Contrary to other temples where the ritual hunt lasts for 1 or 2 days, often being organized on the occasion of mahotsava or vijayadaśami, in Ahobilam the god’s hunting trip takes ca. 40 days, with the deity visiting 32 sites. The significant role of Vijayanagara kings’ patronage in making Ahobilam a recognizable site on the pilgrimage map of India as well as the extension of territories marked by processions in this particular period (Orr 2004) suggest that the route traversed by Narasiṃha during his hunt is conceptually
rooted in the times of Vijayanagara Empire. In my paper I shall discuss the particular features of Aho-bilam Paruveta in connection to local substratum of Narasimha cult at the spot, that is the traditions of autochthonous hunter-gathering Ceñcū tribe whose beliefs have significantly influenced the local form of worship, and whose integration into the state was important to Vijanagara rulers. That this appropriation was by no means one-directional show various local versions of a popular narrative on Narasimha’s second wife, which, depending on the provenience, present either Narasimha or his Ceñcū wife as submissive. Remarkably, this narrative has also enriched the scenario behind the local version of a ritual hunt, otherwise viewed rather as symbolizing the god’s royal features.

Depala, Kush

*Theology For Ethno-Indologists: The Case Of A Rewritten Pûjâ Text*

As collaborative and project-based scholarly outputs increase, we see that scholars of South Asia traverse disciplinary bounds in order to gain new insights into the phenomena they examine. In this paper, I shall examine a cross-discipline which combines textual history and anthropology: ethno-indology. Popularised by Axel Michaels, the approach helps us better understand the agency of a text beyond the words on a page, especially in the field of ritual studies. Although the combination of anthropology and textual history allows Indologists to form new theories relating to ritual innovation, community formation and sociological changes. In this paper I argue for the inclusion of theology in order to understand the deeper-rooted forces from within the tradition that drive change, as opposed to external factors such as socio-economics. I will examine the case of the Svāminārāyaṇa-Mahāpûjā – first used in October 2018, the text is now regularly performed by its community, taking the place of previous versions of the ritual text. By comparing the two texts, we can see how the new text has been composed in relation to the old one, therefore allowing us to trace the history of this text and practice. Using ethnography allows us to capture the text’s performance. However, without understanding the theology that underpins the text, it is impossible to understand the drive behind writing this ritual anew – here, clarity in religious doctrine determined the need for a new, purpose-written text. Thus, by adding the lens of theology to the fruitful combination of historical and anthropology within ethno-indology, we may discover new explanations for phenomena in South Asian studies.

Dey, Chandrayee

*Songs Of Protest And Desire: Muslim Women Of Bengal*

Bengali Muslim Wedding Songs (biyer geet) is a century-old tradition practiced solely by Muslim women of Bengal in a socio-religious setting. The thematic and contextual aspects of these songs show how women use this ritualistic performance as a tool to voice their protest and desire rather than performing a prescribed ritual confined to patriarchal religious norms. These songs are composed orally by Muslim women of Bengal and memorized across generations. Agency of women passes on as legacy when women of the latter generation modify themes and contents in accordance with their contemporary social scenario. In parallel with the thematic element, the gradual changes in terms of performance space and audience advocate female agency and autonomy. This paper looks into the world of Bengali Muslim women and their everyday religion through these songs and examines how position of women in Muslim religious rituals is redefined in this practice. Women are not passive sufferers here. They actively take part in defying the role assigned to them and sing about their deprivation and anguish. Women set their own stage in this ritualistic setting using the same religion that confines them. This paper travels along the living traces of this tradition across districts of West Bengal and present Bangladesh discussing dimensions of female agency in Muslim religious setting. In this paper, a comparative methodology for thematic and contextual study involves an audio presentation of live recordings, field reports, transcripts of interactions with performers and English translations of select songs.
Dhull, Aanchal

Between Market And “Home-Cooked” Food: Understanding Contours Of Domesticity

Feminism has historically shared a troubled relationship with domesticity. Much has evolved since the anti-domesticity stance taken by “second wave” feminists, who brought attention to the figure of housewife (See, for instance Friedan 1963; Oakley 1974). However, this was followed by critique from Black feminists who argued that all women did not have the choice to “reject” housework. Unlike the West, the issue of housework has not garnered as much attention in the Indian context, nor has it been at the center of feminist political mobilization. Parallel to this, feminist scholarship has focused on domestic workers in terms of labor conditions and rights, but not on housework as such. Therefore, housework in the Indian context has not been framed in terms of oppression/empowerment binary, but how caste and class intersect with housework. Based on a field study conducted in Delhi, the paper problematizes the discourse around ‘choice’ through women’s narratives on cooking. Across the range of interviews conducted, it was found that decisions pertaining to cooking are not autonomous, rather constructed by and reflective of reconfigurations in the market and as well as family. The analysis also seeks to understand how women conduct themselves in these conflicting undercurrents, where women are constantly engaging with a growing market of convenience food on the one hand and the moral pressure to make homemade products on the other. Keywords: Feminism; domesticity; cooking; choice; family.

Dimitrova, Diana

Emotion, Ritual And Body In The Devotional Tradition Of Radhasoami

This paper studies the interface between emotions, rituals and the body in the devotional tradition of Radhasoami. It seeks to explore emotions related to embodied ritual practices, as revealed in the notions of guru-bhakti, of āratī, and of satsāṅg. The teachings of Radhasoami require that a guru be alive and present in a bodily form for the devotee, and they regard the living guru as an incarnate form of the Absolute. The Radhasoami religiosity invites the devotee to meditate on his guru and encourage followers to meditate on him. During a (mental) āratī, which represents an internalization of ritual worship, the devotee might offer to his guru the parts of his inner body. Furthermore, Radhasoami followers are in the presence of their guru during the satsāṅg, or collective religious service, together with other devotees. Thus, the emotions of belonging and togetherness with the other devotees are intertwined with the emotions of loving devotion and awe for the guru. It is therefore important to reflect on this large spectrum of emotions during embodied ritual practices in their togetherness. Thus, my paper will discuss emotions, such as awe and love for the guru, and feelings and emotions of belonging with the other fellow members in relation to guru-bhakti, āratī and the satsāṅg, and based on textual analysis of several Radhasoami texts and interviews with members of the Radhasoami tradition.

Dombrowicz, Katarzyna

The Warp Of Labour And The Weft Of Leisure In Abdul Bismillah’s Jhīnī Jhīnī Bīnī Cadariyā

The Muslim silk weavers of Varanasi, belonging to the julahā community, are well acknowledged for their extraordinary skill of silk weaving resulting in the highly valued Banarasi silk sarees. They are also known for their love of leisure, by some mockingly called ‘the love of idleness’ or even more spitefully ‘innate laziness’. The negative view of julahā’s attitude toward leisure stems from misunderstanding of its role in the very act of weaving the finest silk while they both are actually intricately intertwined, just as the warp and the weft of the cloth itself. Their very specific work-mode that has been developed and sustained throughout centuries puts a great emphasis on the proper balance between labour and leisure. Abdul Bismillah’s Hindi novel Jhīnī jhīnī bīnī cadariyā (1986) offers a very rich, detailed depiction of the Varanasi julahā community at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s. It provides a deep insight into the day-to-day work of Indian Muslim weavers as well as a complex image
of their leisure-related practices. The ordinary weaver’s love of leisure conflicts with capitalist goals of modern economy. This in turn intensifies already existing inequalities and hinders the social development of a community. Referring to the Marx’s theory of class struggle, which is an essential feature in the JBC narrative, with the ideas of recent Leisure Studies, this paper aims to explore the leisure scenario of julahās in the context of their struggle for freedom – economic, social and artistic. The issue of colonial stereotype of lazy julahā and its survival in post-colonial India will also be addressed.

Dupont, Véronique
Slum Redevelopment And Differentiated Resettlement In Delhi. The Case Of Kathputli Colony Rehabilitation Project.

This paper focuses on the first slum redevelopment project implemented by the Delhi Development Authority to rehouse slum dwellers in multi-story buildings under public-private partnership. The families’ rehabilitation requires their relocation in transient accommodations during the construction of the housing complex. The evacuation of Kathputli Colony, the targeted slum, displaced around 18000 people from 2014 to 2017. The residents eligible for rehabilitation were resettled in a transit camp located 3kms from the initial site. We examine the consequences of such temporary resettlement on their lives. Although relative proximity limits the disruptive effects on livelihoods, relocation impacts everyday spatial practices. We also show how conditions of habitat tend to reproduce slum conditions. As the transient lingers on, the residents’ fear of being excluded from the housing scheme is fuelled by the planning authority’s and the builder’s tactics. This impedes the residents’ mobilisation for better amenities. The transit camp, as a space under surveillance, is analysed as a spatial dispositif, a space of “formation of more governable citizens”. Next, we show how eligibility criteria entailed differentiated resettlement and exclusion. Some families were resettled in flats in a township 20kms away, while those considered as ineligible for the project were left to fend for themselves. Finally, we highlight how differentiated resettlement conditions reflect differential treatment of slum dwellers depending on official criteria such as residence proofs, but also on local power position, negotiation capacities, and support for the redevelopment project.

Dutta, Debajit
The Raj And The Princely States Of North-East India: An Account Of Monetary Diplomacy

Investigations on monetary history have been the subject of research both by Indian and foreign scholars almost since the beginning of Indological research. Money as one of the pillars of civilisation in any country has been an indispensable theme for study. The theme further offers scope for in-depth studies in various aspects of history and also be studied from the point of view of the contemporary economy, political vicissitudes and aesthetic sensibilities of any region and its people. Pre-modern North East Indian princely states namely Ahom, Tripura, Koch Kingdom and some other minor densities were not devoid of the practice of minting coins, as issuing coinage was considered an integral part of the state formation process and legitimization of political authority. As coinage was massively used to serve the political, economic and religio-cultural spheres in those days, so after the consolidation of power the British authority tried to curve the status of these indigenous currencies and the process of demonetization of princely coinage started and it can be considered as a remarkable field of investigation. Thus the present article focuses on the monetary history of pre-modern North East India and tries to understand its demonetization process after the arrival of British rule in this part of the country. By scrutinizing archival data the paper will investigate the British monetary policy to abolish the age-long princely currencies of North East India namely the currencies of the Ahom, Tripura and the Koch kingdom and it also seeks to explore the impact of the demonization of princely coinages over the common people as well as on the ruling elite of the region.
Elison, William

“Bloomin’ Idol Made O’ Mud”: Shrines And Darshan In The Short Stories Of Rudyard Kipling

Hindu shrines, temples, and murtis (idols) figure in a set of stories by Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) in which the author seeks effects of humor, horror, and wonder. In these texts, Hinduism—its iconography, mythology, and cultic practice—poses a challenge to the Victorian reader’s sense of what is rational and possible. Building on my own earlier ethnographic work, I look to the literature of the British Raj to examine an important question in the study of darshan, or visual worship. Along with the possibility of ritual failure, a theory of darshan must allow for the possibility of unintended success. That is, what if a murti “works” on an unbeliever? What happens when a sahib sees the god in a painted rock? I will discuss three short stories: “The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney” (1889), “The Mark of the Beast” (1890), and “The Bridge-Builders” (1893). I situate the three as examples of what I call the idolatry story, a form refined by Kipling in the context of colonial India but explored by other British and American writers of fantastic fiction as well. What are the implications of Kipling’s darshan experiments for the study of colonialism? For the study of Hinduism?

Engels, Jeremy

The Ethics Of Oneness: Reading Democracy Alongside The American Transcendentalists And The Bhagavad Gita

What does it mean to live a life committed to oneness? It might be surprising, given that Americans are rightly known the world over as a people committed to values of rugged individualism, autonomy, and self-reliance, but for a small but influential band of American thinkers during the 1800s, this was the central philosophical question, the riddle of all riddles, the knot that had to be untied in order to determine what it meant to behave ethically—and democratically. Inspired by the appearance of early translations of Indian philosophical and religious texts in the United States during the 1800s—including, especially, the Bhagavad Gita—both Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman reminded their readers of the ontological truth of oneness and wrestled with the practical implications of this truth. In this presentation, I recount how Emerson and Whitman read the Gita as a concrete, practical, ethical challenge to live a life of oneness (ekatvam). I focus, in particular, on how Emerson translated Krishna’s directive to Arjuna to “see the divine self in all creatures, and all creatures in the divine self” (6.29) into a call for a new kind of communication as yoga. Emerson democratized the divine avatar of the Gita by arguing that all people are gods walking on earth, and he encouraged his readers to address the divine part of their interlocutors whenever speaking to them. Whitman, in turn, further democratized Emerson’s philosophy of oneness by explicitly arguing for the divinity of the body (and not just the soul). For both, living a life committed to oneness demanded rhetorical devotion.

Erlich, Michal Riva

Biographies Of Magnified Agency: From Housewives To The Founders Of Guru-Bhakti Communities

The paper explores the life journeys of two female gurus—Śrī Rājmātā (1934–1999) and Śrī Rājeśvarī Devā (born in 1960). Each one founded a small and local guru-bhakti community in one of Delhi’s peripheries leading several hundred devotees who belong to the city’s geographical, economical and sociocultural margins. Such communities are pervasive yet under-researched in the academic literature that tends to focus on famous, pan-Indian, wealthy gurus and their followers of the middle-upper classes. Often, the peripheral communities are led by female gurus. In this paper, I inquire how Śrī Rājmātā and Śrī Rājeśvarī Devā, two common housewives, who were not born either nurtured to be religious leaders gained authority and became founders of devotional communities. In order to answer this question, I analyze the life-stories of the two gurus which I gathered during two years of in-depth ethnographic fieldwork within their communities. I argue that these life-stories are narratives of magnification of agency. They tell about the journey of self-made female gurus who transformed themselves from passive women with almost no influence on their own lives to powerful religious leaders who have a deep impact on others. The paper traces the emergence of their magnified agency. It further argues that this kind of agency is the result of these women’s ability to
locate themselves as the focal axis of network of exceptional earthly and divine associations that transcend their defined traditional boundaries without demolishing them.

Farkhondeh, Iris

To What Extent Are The Sanskrit “Bawdy Satires” From Kashmir Embedded In Kāmaśāstric Tradition?

The Samayamātrā is one of the works that R. Salomon labelled as “bawdy satires”. It is a satirical poem composed by the 11th century Kashmirian polymath Kṣemendra. In the opening of the text, Kṣemendra introduces his work as a useful treatise for courtesans. The poem is replete with references to kāmaśāstra literature. The character of the bawd turns into an instructor and imitates the learned style of the śāstras so well that G. Wojtilla was tempted to try and find a treatise that could have inspired Kṣemendra. Through a thorough comparison of Kṣemendra’s Samayamātrā with kāmaśāstric literature on the one hand and with another bawdy satire from Kashmir, namely Dāmodaragupta’s Kuṭṭanīmata (8th century), on the other hand, the presentation will enable us to see how kāmaśāstric works permeate Sanskrit literature and why reading them proves highly fruitful to better understand literary works that were considerably influenced by the tradition of erotic treatises that kept on being very much alive. It seems that Kṣemendra wanted his audience to read at least parts of his work as if they were indeed passages from kāmaśāstras. The presentation will try and delineate to what extent Dāmodaragupta and Kṣemendra drew inspiration from kāmaśāstras and how they appropriated this tradition.

Farooqui, Amar

Princes, Anachronism And The Anti-Democratic Impulse

The colonial relationship with princely states evolved during the nineteenth century through constant negotiation and re-negotiation. In the latter half of the nineteenth century the British Indian government sought to codify the relationship, while at the same time keeping it fluid. Following the revolt of 1857 the British increasingly relied on the support of princely rulers to stabilize their position in India. It was therefore in their interest to allow some degree of autonomy to the states. The actual extent of power that a state enjoyed was determined by various factors, most importantly by its size, the specific historical context of its incorporation into the Indian empire, and the role that it had played in the revolt. Ever since the imperial assemblage or ‘durbar’ of 1877 held in Delhi to announce the new title of Victoria, Indiæ Imperatrix, princely rulers were central to royal events organized in India. Bernard Cohn has unravelled the several layers of political and cultural meaning of this spectacle, the key to which was the assertion of the sovereignty, and the status of the princely rulers as vassals of the monarch. The political importance of Indian princes was publicly recognized on all such occasions, of which the 1911 ‘durbar’, with George V’s presence, was the most ostentatious. The paper argues that the anachronism of the 1911 event, against the backdrop of nationalist politics, made the princes complicit through their conspicuous participation in archaic ceremonial, in the agenda to promote the imperial idea. In committing themselves to empire so visibly they rendered themselves historically irrelevant to the idea of a modern democratic nation.

Feldman, Shelley

Hidden In Plain Sight: In-Situ Displacement In Bangladesh

Displacement is often narrowly defined as the forced removal of people from one place to another, most often through violent means. It can entail the exercise of eminent domain, constitutionally authorized land grabs, or bureaucratic interventions that legitimate the confiscation of private property by corporate interests. Public-private development initiatives are another compelling example of such displacements, where investment in infrastructure and industry are deemed more worthy than the rights of small-scale private property owners. The displacement outcomes that follow expose how private accumulation and public/private investments are used to showcase the country becoming modern and improving its ranking among the world community of nations, often at the cost of rural residents. Yet, the literature on the mobilities that accompany displacement in response
to development initiatives, such as large infrastructure projects, leaves a number of critical issues hidden from view. As the impulse of this panel makes evident, displacement is a dynamically unfolding, contingent social process that invites attention to the following critical questions: can members of a community be displaced without being forced to leave their home, community, or property and livelihood? If so, what conceptual architecture will enable us to make sense of such relations of displacement? In other words, how might we rethink displacement as a concept that need not assume mobility as its central thematic, and what might such a rethinking contribute to understanding postcolonial South Asia today? Examples from Bangladesh provide the empirical context for exploring these possibilities.

Filimonova, Alina

Unique But Common: Marginality Of Pakistani Hijras In South Asian Perspective

Marginality of hijras in Pakistan requires inter-disciplinary approach firstly because the very phenomenon of hijra is multidimensional itself. On the one hand, the term “hijra” is broadly applied to mark out a person with any deviation from commonly accepted gender roles – from physical deformity to the mismatch between sex and gender identity. On the other hand, hijra communities precede not only state of Pakistan, but even the coming of Islam to South Asia, dating back to ancient times and thus serving as a link between the present-day Pakistan and the pre-Islamic history of the region. For these reasons position of hijras can be analyzed not only from the point of view of social psychology, economics, civil law and religious studies, but also culturology, since Pakistani hijras form a cultural phenomenon in terms of their historical and national specificity. The whole concept of hijra is marginalized in Pakistan at various levels and by means of different instruments. However, besides standing apart from common patterns of modern Pakistani society, the local hijra community derives many of its behavioral standards from the general hijra tradition that has been persisting in South Asia for centuries. For this reason, it is by putting Pakistani hijra culture in the broader interstate perspective that its complexity can be truly understood. In this paper we aim to explore the uniqueness of Pakistani hijra marginality in two dimensions: within the inner discourse of Pakistani society and in the transnational context of multi-layered hijra communities in South Asia.

Formigatti, Camillo A.

Lithography In 19th Century Mumbaï: Bapu Sadashiv Sheth’s And Other Lithographic Presses

The diffusion of movable-type print in nineteenth century India is paralleled by the widespread use of lithography as a means of text reproduction. This paper will investigate the terminology for print as exemplified in selected Sanskrit lithographs printed in Mumbaï at Bapu Sadashiv Sheth’s printing press, comparing it with the terminology found in colophons of Sanskrit manuscripts from different periods and areas. The paper will also discuss the choice of texts, format and layout solutions adopted by this printer, briefly comparing with material printed by other lithographic presses from the same time and area.

Framke, Maria

Producing ‘Useful’ Anti-Imperialist Knowledge As A Means Of Subsistence: The Multiple Lives And Audiences Of Devendra Nath Bannerjea

In the first half of the 20th century, European cities became vibrant meeting points for anti-imperial actors. Transcending local, national and/or imperial boundaries they lobbied like-minded individuals, civil society groups and international organisations to support their anti-imperialist agendas and established networks of protest, solidarity and knowledge exchanges. By tracing the life-history of one such actor, Devendra Nath Bannerjea (1889–1954), from Ludhiana in the British Indian Punjab, via Oxford, London, Geneva, Rome to Berlin, the presentation examines the comprehensive and detailed knowledge he produced on two themes for diverse audiences: (1) the nature and consequences of colonialism in India, and (2) the future Indian nation-in-the making. Not just the changing nature of
his political concerns, but also private aspects, especially his rather precarious living situation, had an effect upon Bannerjea’s intellectual output. Against this background, it is of interest to ask how daily living conditions of anti-imperial actors, different political environments and varying expectations of various audiences influenced and shaped the knowledge production and circulation.

Freitag, Jason  
*Nietzsche In India: A. K. Coomaraswamy And The Supermen In The East*  
This paper explores translation of cultural ideals in the service of Indian nationalist cultural politics, specifically A. K. Coomaraswamy’s understanding of Friedrich Nietzsche. Coomaraswamy (1877–1947), a central figure in Indian thought and nationalist history, was an expert on the arts of the Indian subcontinent and the relationship between art, education and the development of a national character. He championed a swadeshi approach to Indian art that privileged a pure and ideal India in distinction to a materialist West. Coomaraswamy’s writings explore the intersection of the political and spiritual as they create the unique synthesis that marks Indian cultural and historical consciousness. In this paper, I explore how his “Cosmopolitan View of Nietzsche” appropriates the Nietzschean Superman ideal into the pantheon of Indian religious achievers. Then, I show how, in much less well-known essay, “Rajput Cartoons: A Criticism after Nietzsche,” Coomaraswamy positions Rajput painting as an expression of a pure Hindu essence and a will to power that lays the ground for the Indian nation. Taken together, I argue that Coomaraswamy’s essays locate generally in India the spiritual power, and particularly in the Rajputs the temporal power, that Nietzsche sought in his ideological antidote to Western (read Christian) civilization. Coomaraswamy, however, far from privileging Nietzsche, actually subordinates and Indianizes Nietzsche by showing how India already existed in that space beyond good and evil that Nietzsche idolized. Coomaraswamy introduces what he sees as India’s supermen, the Rajputs, to the Nietzschean analysis that was, in his mind, rightfully suited to them.

Freschi, Elisa (and Ciabattoni, Agata)  
*Getting In The Mind Of Medhātithi With The Help Of Formal Argumentation*  
This paper discusses the benefits of applying formal argumentation theory to Dharmaśāstra reasoning. For this purpose, we will analyse cases in which the discussions become extremely elaborated, usually through the application of Mīmāṃsā-influenced reasoning rules, as in the texts by Medhātithi (9th c.) and Vijñāneśvara (12th c.). Such texts can become extremely complex and do not always make their selection process explicit. In other words, it is not clear why, e.g., Medhātithi finally selects one solution to the controversy he examines over the others. Our formal tools, which enable us to elaborate a diagram of the structure of the argument, will make this structure clearer, displaying their hidden hypotheses and showing which arguments are considered to be stronger or weaker and why. For instance, is analogical reasoning able to provide stronger support than, e.g., authoritative statements? We will examine case studies such as the discussion of corporeal punishment (ad Manu 8.318). We will thus show how, once the relevant sources have been selected, edited, translated and discussed, one can add a further layer of understanding by formalising them into an argumentation framework.

Friedlander, Peter  
*Pilgrimage And Patronage: Ahilyabai’s Contribution To India’s Sacred Landscapes*  
This paper examines the relationship between pilgrimage patronage and performance. I investigate the ways that Ahilyabai Holkar (1725–95), the queen of Maheshwar in Madhya Pradesh, created pilgrimage networks by sponsoring not only temple construction but also the construction of roads, dharmshalas and wells to facilitate pilgrimage journeys. The study is based on field work carried out in Maheshwar in 2014 and 2017 and a review of textual sources. The focus is on the relationship between a weekly yātrā which has been carried out since her death, and continues to this day, in Maheshwar and her patronage of Indian pilgrimage networks. I describe how every Monday a group of
royal servants carry a palanquin bearing the queen, now represented by a painting of her, on a ritual journey from her palace to three temples where she makes offerings and then back to her palace. She visits the temples of two local deities, Sahasrabahu Arjun and Dudhiya Devi, and then a Kashi Vishvanath temple she had constructed in Maheshwar at the same time as she sponsored the rebuilding of the Kashi Vishvanath temple in Varanasi. I then explore how local story telling traditions from Maheshwar explain her motivations for undertaking this yātrā by linking her external pilgrimages to her visions of pilgrimage as an internal act of devotion. I conclude that through her patronage of pilgrimage networks and sculptural and architectural traditions and the construction of Kashi Vishvanath temples in both Varanasi and Maheshwar she sought to link her inner personal devotional practices to sacred journeys in Maheshwar envisaged as a microcosm of the sacred landscape of India.

Fujikura, Tatsuro
The Evolution And Prospect Of Tharu Adivasi Movement In Nepal

The Tharu are an indigenous people who live across the Tarai plain near the border between Nepal and India. This paper focuses on Tharu on the Nepal side. During the 19th century, the Nepali state defined Tharu as a ‘clean but enslavable’ jāt. Since Tharu were almost the only year-round residents in the malarial area of Tarai, they retained a relative degree of autonomy. However, after the malaria eradication programs in the 1950s and 60s, migration of the Nepalis of hill origin increased, and a large number of Tharus lost their land, and many of them became bonded laborers called ‘kamaiya’. With regards to Tharu movements, we first see Tharu elites coming together towards the end of the 1940s and organizing a ‘caste association’, seeking to improve the status of Tharu in the caste hierarchy. Towards the end of 1980s, on the other hand, we see a more development-oriented organization by the common youth, engaged in literacy and human rights education. This organization led a successful non-violent movement for the emancipation of kamaiya in 2000. During the ‘people’s war’ (1996–2006), the Maoists actively recruited Tharu, and many of them did participate in the movement. After the peace agreement, they demanded a Tharu federal state. Their demand was completely denied by the Constitution of 2015. Currently, some Tharu are engaged in efforts at the municipal level for official recognition of ‘traditional’ Tharu institutions of self-governance. Through reviewing the complex evolution of Tharu movements, the paper seeks illuminate multiple possibilities as well as challenges of Adivasi studies.

Galewicz, Cezary (and Mucciarelli, Elena)
The Dance Of Kuratti

Kuratti, partly fortune-teller, partly goddess, has been a well-known figure who widely travelled across South India. Primarily a daughter of the hills, her footprints can be found almost everywhere: in poems, plays and songs, courts and stages, sacred groves and shrines. Her wanderings have brought her among the Malayars of North Kerala and into the temporary shrines where the Teyyam is performed (Freeman 2003). An encounter of goddess Kuratti with the community of Malayars has been recorded by the most peculiar and still puzzling work, the Tirunilalmā. Here Kuratti can be seen worshipped and joined by Malayars in a very special dance by her own shrine erected outside the walls of the magnificent temple of Āranmula. Her presence seems vital for a ceremony centred on an elaborate and spectacular rite of purification meant to remove bad effects accrued to the temple’s main deity. But the story of Kuratti happens also to make part of another ritual called Nilalkuttu – the ‘piercing of the shadows’. The figure of Kuratti reappears as a golden thread weaving through different domains: the tōr.Constraint songs, the Teyyam practices, and the shrines that she is believed to inhabit or visit. All these spheres can be seen as “shrines” marked by specific and distinct materialities and their interactions can only be studied effectively against the background of the communities that activate them. Using textual sources and ethnographic data of different genres, the paper attempts to connect the figure of Kuratti to places she visits through a focus on the material aspects of the place and space-making practices associated with her cult in order to offer and extended idea of a shrine.
Galton, Jonathan

_A View From The Rooftop: Conflicting Visions Of A Neighbourhood Redevelopment Project In Mumbai_

Standing on the rooftops of the BDD Chawls, a central Mumbai housing colony, you can read the city’s recent history in its skyline. The informal name for the local area, Girangaon (“village of mills”) is explained by chimneys, relics of the now defunct textile industry that fuelled Mumbai’s economy for much of the twentieth century. These are dwarfed by blue-glass and concrete behemoths representing a new neoliberal order: malls, office complexes and luxury residential high-rises. The BDD Chawls, themselves a throwback to the bygone mill era, are in the process of demolition and redevelopment by the state housing agency, with promises to accommodate chawl residents free of charge in the forthcoming flats. Ethnographies of urban redevelopment are often framed in terms of a conflict between the interests of residents on the one hand and the interests of developers, planners and politicians on the other. Less attention, however, has been paid to conflicts around urban renewal arising among residents themselves. In this paper I draw on a year’s ethnographic fieldwork in the neighbourhood to demonstrate how the ostensibly beneficial BDD Chawls rehousing project has sharply divided the residential community, exacerbating existing political and religious and regional fault-lines.

Ganguly, Aratrika (and Das, Pratim)

_Mapping Memory And Nostalgia: Identity In Liminal Space_

This Paper tries to understand the historical and political context of Burmese Repatriates who repatriated during enforcement of nationalistic policies in Burma and it will conceptualize the oral narratives of Burmese Repatriates; focusing on the identity crisis of the repatriates from Myanmar who are now settled in and around the city of Kolkata. The country of Myanmar was under the British Empire from 1824 to 1948, many Indians (undivided British India) went to Myanmar (known earlier as Burma) for better job opportunities and many went there as part of the British Army or as a part of the Indian National Army formed by Subhash Chandra Bose. However, the repatriates started migrating back to India during various phases of the 20th century either due to various anti-Indian riots started from the early 20th century and ethnic conflict or because of the nationalisation imposed upon the people of Burma by General Ne Win, former President of Burma. This paper focuses on the migration and dislocation of Indians of Burmese origin settled in and around Kolkata, India and how they are still living with the memory of their lives in Burma (in their imagination it is Burma still now and not the modern-day political country of Myanmar) and it subsequently becomes the narrative of their living. Analysis of the repatriate narratives of Burma Colony in Bengal will be a departure from the grand narratives of Burma and Repatriation. Besides, it will trace the Cultural memory and sense of nostalgia of Burmese repatriates across generations.

Ganser, Elisa

_Dance Tradition In The Making Between Manuscript And Print Culture_

The first publication ever into English of a treatise on Indian dance is the Mirror of Gesture, translation of the Abhinayadarpana by A. K. Coomaraswamy and D. Gopalakrishnayya, published in the United states in 1917. Although this translation became extremely popular among dance practitioner in the 20th c., it is too often forgotten that it was prepared on the basis of a previous printed edition of Nandikeśvara’s Abhinayadarpana, prepared by Tiruvenkaṭṭācārya and published in Madras in 1874, with reprints in 1887 and 1905. This edition of the Sanskrit text was published in Telugu script and accompanied by a Telugu gloss and illustrations for the hand gestures. Moreover, it was printed along with two other texts, the Bhārata Rasa Prakaraṇa a short treatise connected with the Nāṭyaśāstra with a Telugu translation, and some padams by Rāja Mannāru Gudī Sabhāpatayya Gāru—a composer
and dance master connected with the Thanjavur court of King Serfoji II (1798–1833)—replete with a Telugu commentary composed by Tiruvelikatācārya. Taking cues from this triptic of texts in one of the first print publications of texts on dance in the colonial period, this paper compares the textual practices displayed in them (translation of Sanskrit technical texts on dance, explanatory commentaries on padams, visual illustrations, etc.) with those preserved in the earlier manuscript tradition and in printed texts produced in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It discusses which philological practices are possibly inaugurated in the early printed editions, and which other are inherited from the previous textual transmission, and how these practices are mobilized in the making of a dance tradition.

Garalyte, Kristina

*Beef As Anti-Caste Utopia*

A contentious and highly sensitive topic with regard to the Hindu culture, beef has also been central issue in the debates about the subordination and liberation of former-untouchables. This paper traces the historical evolution and contemporary representation of beef as a symbol of the anti-caste Utopia starting with B. R. Ambedkar and culminating with the ideas of Kancha Ilaiah and the recent beef festival initiatives by the Dalit-Bahujan students on Hyderabad university campuses. The paper will discuss the semantics of beef as constructed by different ideologues and actors of the Dalit-Bahujan movement. It will also seek to evaluate mobilizing potential of the symbol of beef and to highlight emerging challenges within and without the movement while employing beef as a symbol of Dalit-Bahujan emancipation.

Gerke, Barbara

*When Practice Contradicts Texts: The Use Of Panacea In Sowa Rigpa*

This presentation addresses one of the key panel questions: How to bridge the gaps between pre-modern writings and the (post)modern predicaments facing contemporary medical practitioners relying on texts, as well as the researchers translating and interpreting them? It specifically looks at research situations where textual descriptions of the potency and efficacy of certain formulas contradict and challenge clinical experience.

Panacea are frequently presented in Tibetan medical texts with the aphorism “a hundred diseases, one cure”—in Tibetan né gya men chik (nad brgya sman gcig)—a poetic statement attributing unusually broad benefits to one formula. Such sayings have contributed to patients’ expectations when asking amchi for such formula prescriptions or buying them over the counter. Ethnographic encounters with amchi in Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh, India, reveal that patients’ high expectations of panacea can be uncomfortable for the physician prescribing it, especially when the desired results fail to manifest.

With textual and ethnographic examples concerning the popular formula “White Yogi Pill” or Druptop Rilkar (grub thob ril dkar), this paper raises questions relating to conflicting literal statements of formulary texts when researching the commodification of such drugs and their impact on daily clinical practice. How are ideas of potency expressed in literature and in practice? I suggest that bridging such gaps between text and practice requires careful application of both contextualized translations and ethnographic research in order to avoid misrepresentation of a medical tradition relying on such formulas.

Gheewala Lohiya, Anishka

*How To Raise The Divine Baby Krishna; The Pushtimarg Way Of Devotional Seva*

It’s like having a baby, but you don’t have to wait the full nine months!”, said one of my interlocutors laughingly. The Pushtimarg (Path of Grace) who develop a personal kinship relationship with their deity baby Krishna. Through seva (devotional service) that parallels human behaviours devotees get...
to know their Krishna as one gets to know their child. The Pushtimarg follows the path of devotion or bhakti rather than jnana or knowledge to find their way to Krishna, yet as they say, Krishna is contrary and unknowable. As a child he is adorably naughty, depicted with one handing stealing some butter, and the love that people feel for him goes across sectarian boundaries. However, in 18 months of anthropological fieldwork, I found that there were many ways people worshipped, not simply following strict seva manuals or guidance from a spiritual expert i.e. a guru or priest, but based on their relationship they would feel their way through decisions on how their Krishna leads his life in their home. Whereas scholarly interest has often been restricted to temple-based worship, perhaps due to access, this paper offers an ethnographic view into domestic worship. In the Pushtimarg, this is the ideal-type of worship, where devotees have Krishna at home and spend their time with him. This paper aims to showcase the diversity in the specificities of Pushtimarg worship at an individual level. It is undeniable that we are moving towards, or indeed are at the point of, Hinduism being a World Religion. This can narrow perspectives on what it means to be Pushtimarg. Through the lens of kinship we can see how the liturgy is interpreted and put into practice by devotees themselves.

Ghosh, Abhishek
‘Eyes Tinged By The Salve Of Love’ – Forming Of Gaudiya Vaishnava Canon And The Hermeneutics Of Bhaktivinoda

This essay examines what is ‘canon’ within Gaudiya Vaishnavism and argues that the hermeneutics of this tradition presupposes that the affective dimension in reading sacred texts overshadow its primary or even secondary meaning. The metaphor of ‘salve’ derives from the Brahma Sāmahita verse 38, a text of unknown antiquity said to have been discovered by Caitanya (1486–1533). When the eyes of the hermeneut are ‘tinged’ with the ‘salve of love’, s/he is said to be able to perceive an affective transrational reality that goes beyond the scope of human logic. This paper offers three examples of such hermeneutics, and the role of canonical texts such as the Bhagavad Gitā, Bhāgavata Purāṇa (BhP), and the biographies of the founder Caitanya-caritāmṛta and Caitanya-bhāgavata. Of the three examples, the first one is a reading of the first three words of the BhP 1.1.1 derived from the Vedānta Sūtra ‘janmadi asya yataḥ’ which in the conventional sense refers to the creation, maintenance, and dissolution of the cosmos. But in Jīva Gosvāmin’s Kramasandhārtha it happens to mean the ‘birth and activities of Kṛṣṇa’ instead. The second example is from BhP 11.05.32 which is reframed without reference to context and interpreted by a series of Gaudīya commentators to be a prediction of the avatarhood of Caitanya. The third example is from the Caitanya Bhāgavata where such a hermeneutical tradition continues in the colonial period in the works of Bhaktivinoda (1838–1914). He uses the term ‘prithivi’ from its sixteenth-century context, but interprets it to include the Americas and Australia, new global spaces where bhakti-rasa needed to be introduced.

Gill, Bani
Nocturnal Microsites In The Emergent City: African Kitchens In Metropolitan Delhi

The turn of the 21st century has seen a rising trend of migration from the African continent to India, several of whom arrive as traders, students, medical tourists and asylum seekers. Despite longer histories of circulation and movement, African migrants constitute a hyper-visible entry on India’s social landscape and fractious exchanges and racial tensions have accompanied this migration, especially in urban spaces. Amidst the context of racialized hostility and rapid urban transformations ongoing in metropolitan Delhi, how do African migrants navigate daily life in interstitial spaces of the city? How do these everyday practices, in their interaction with legal norms, built forms, sociocultural rhythms and spatiotemporal landscapes of the city, further an understanding of the urban as dynamically inhabited? Drawing upon 12 months of ethnographic fieldwork with West African migrants living in an unplanned settlement of Delhi between 2015–2017, this paper traces African migrants’ place making practices and the emergence of “new” nocturnal microsites that serve as repositories of experiences, connections, performances and improvisations that reshape and remake the city anew.
Giri, Kanad  
**Narratives Of Dissent: Exploring Communitarian Identity In Post-Partition Bengali Dalit Magazines**

The paper will be a study of Bengali Dalit magazines of the post-partition era, the advent of which can be viewed as one of the first attempts to consolidate a distinctly Dalit sensibility and aesthetic, based on communitarian experiences. The publication and circulation of magazines, often by writers and editors themselves, were aimed to create a space of collective articulation as the mainstream publication houses seemed reluctant to publish writings which could hurt the sentiments of elitist, urban writers. Here, I will argue that the rise of Dalit magazines in 1980s did not only forge a collective solidarity among the victims of caste-hierarchy, but also transformed the act of articulation and writing into a political force. In these magazines, one finds repeated assertion of the experiences of partition, homelessness and subsequent resettlement in a land which is yet to consider them as its citizens. By exploring narratives of casteism, partition and post-independence political upheaval from a subaltern perspective, I will show how the writers make the reader aware of the ‘other side of the hi(story)’ which has never been explored. In reading these magazines, one finds that there is always a conscious effort to move beyond the Dalit experiences in particular by establishing a feeling of cohesion and collectivity with other marginalized communities. These magazines, I will argue, aim to establish a wider communitarian identity in the world: a sense of belonging that will counteract the feelings of rootlessness and social discrimination and will define the individual by going beyond the historical experiences of torture, humiliation and social segregation.

Glushkova, Irina  
**Photo Albums As A Link Among Maratha Princely States**

At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, photo portraits of Indian princes and picturesque views of their domains presented in photo albums had become a mandatory object of colonial discourse. As a diplomatic go-between, the mounted pictures assembled under a leather cover decorated in gold stood as expressions of the subordinates’ loyalty, intended to evoke the sympathy of the authorities, and as a visual and material argument of sovereignty. Usually timed to the schedule of viceregal tours of the respective regions, these ‘welcome’ albums were manufactured by established photo firms, who competed for their commission. The states, especially those of meagre size and wealth, also tried their best to receive high guests and drew their attention by showcasing local places of interest and announcing new projects. In addition to their other affinities and connections, the Maratha states of Central India built a shared aesthetic style by occasionally calling upon the services of the same photographers. These included the No 1 Indian photographer, Lala Deen Dayal, who, at the start of his career, worked under the patronage of both influential Indore and tiny Dhar. Starting with albums presented in 1902 and 1912 by the ruler of Dhar to two viceroys of India, and the copies of the second one given to another viceroy in 1922 (all now in repositories in the UK), I plan to elaborate on the Maratha princes’ involvement in the multifaceted ritual of gift-giving and their contribution to the preservation of ancient monuments strategy facilitated by the circulation of princely photo albums.

Francesco Godano  
**Logical tools of medieval European legal scholarship. The quaestio and its resonance in Indian philosophy**

This paper presents the first results of a comparative research in the medieval commentators of legal texts in Italy and South Asia. While apparently far apart, the two traditions show a remarkable degree of similarity with respect to the general scientific vision and the logical and argumentative patterns they employ. The comparison involves Dharmaśāstra commentators of legal texts (6th–12th c.) and Italian commentators of Justinian’s Corpus Juris Civilis (12th–15th c.). The two groups share a common epistemological view: they both considers the two fundamental authoritative texts (the Justinian
books and the Veda) as a perfectly consistent, complete and universally valid body of rules, closely connected with the religious domain. Interpretation is thus conceived as a means of finding the right understanding of the texts. In spite of this formal feature, both traditions operate in a creative way, and have in fact a strong systematic approach, which draws general principles from the authoritative texts in order to generate new rules and adapt to social change. The two lines of scholars also display common logical features in their works. Both make an extensive use of dialectical reasoning, which is conceived as a powerful heuristic tool. Controversial matters are analyzed with a strikingly similar argumentative framework, exhibiting a debate of opposing arguments supporting possible solutions. Interpretive principles and reasoning patterns thereof are often shared. Such similarities - which in turn better illuminate the respective differences – doubtlessly call for further investigation on the scientific development of these two (not so) distant worlds.

**Godbole, Girija**  
*Surviving Evictions In The Times Of Rising Land Prices: The Case Of Katkari Tribal Group In Western Maharashtra, India*

The Katkari tribal group in Maharashtra, India categorized as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), suffer from abject levels of socio-cultural exclusion and economic deprivation. The ownership of cultivable land amongst the Katkari is rare and large-scale landlessness prevails among them during present times. Many Katkari habitats are without a title to the sites on which they are located. The Katkari problem to land title where they are residing is different than the land tenure problems faced by urban slum dwellers. They did not squat in public or private spaces illegally but rather settled where they had been invited to do so by the landlords (often belonging to the dominant caste) and other employers in need of laborers. The Katkari who provided cheap labour, were not given the housing rights normally associated with permanent settlement and membership in a village. Tenure over the land where they built their homes remained in private hands rather than being incorporated into a legal village site. Rising land prices due to economic boom are prompting legal landholders to sell their lands. This has in turn led to attempts to evict Katkari forcibly from land where they lived for generations and has resulted in breaking of patron-client relationship. Based on empirical research with the Katkari in Pune district in western Maharashtra, this paper presents nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by the Katkari threatened with eviction from their habitation land and the coping strategies they have adopted to fight these eviction and/ or to adjust to the new places where they have been forced to shift.

**Goren Arzony, Sivan**  
*Feels Like A Vernacular: The Construction Of A Vernacular Literary Identity In The Līlātilakam*

Vernacular grammars and books on poetics from South Asia are commonly constructed on the premises of Sanskrit grammar and poetics. This can be depicted in the organization of book chapters and sub-chapters; in the selection of categories and paradigms; and in the deployment of a Sanskrit vocabulary and Sanskrit modes of analysis. Reading such books, one can sometimes get the impression that these are Sanskrit books that only use the vernacular as a case-study. Such is the case with the Līlātilakam, Kerala’s first (and almost only) premodern vernacular grammar and book on poetics. The Līlātilakam is written in Sanskrit, cites Sanskrit authors as authoritative precedents, and offers long lists of Sanskrit poetic faults, virtues, and ornaments, illustrated by verses in an elevated register of the local vernacular, termed Man. ipravāl.am. Yet, reading closely, one can trace multiple occurrences where Sanskrit grammatical rules, poetic conventions, and norms are transgressed, in favor of a local flavor of poetry. In my talk, I will explore three such cases, dealing with syntax, bi-textuality, and theme. Tracing Sanskrit’s accommodation and restriction, I will demonstrate how vernacular literature gets theorized for the first time in a text that is aware of its novelty.
Govindan, Ramkumar  
*‘Long Live Ambedkar, Periyar And Marx’: Arunthathiyar Movement And Assertion In Tamil Nadu*

It is the slogans used by Arunthathiyar movements in any programmes, protest and commemoration etc. Ambedkar centenary was an important period in the proliferation of Dalit movement and assertion in several parts of India. Tamil Nadu too had witnessed radical and assertive Dalit movements against caste oppression. They are not only radical in action but also ideologically inspired by thoughts of Ambedkar, Periyar and Marx. Those three leaders’ anti-caste, equality, reason, self-respect, and upliftment of the subaltern, ideologies are the bases for Dalit movements in Tamil Nadu. In the same line, contemporary Arunthathiyar movements begin to fight against caste discrimination, educating and mobilising people for their rights. Arunthathiyars are one of the most populated Dalit castes in Tamil Nadu, who are more backward in terms of social, economic and education compare to other major populated Dalits castes Paraiyars and Devendra Kula Vellalas. They are also socio-politically less mobilised. This paper helps to understand how the ideologies of Ambedkar, Periyar and Marx resonates in the assertion of Arunthathiyar movements and their struggles. Does this ethnography account narrates how Arunthathiyar movements, emerges and mobilise people in anti-caste ideology? And also, how the ideology of those leader makes movement vibrant and vision for equal society? This study describes Arunthathiyar Liberation is the precondition of the Liberation of Dalits.

Graner, Elvira  
*Including The Marginalised: Governing Digital Divides In India*

At a global level, discourses on communication and e-governance suggest a wide or even universal inclusion into the “digital society”, particularly among youth. On the other hand, marginalisation has continued to be a core characteristic for many socially and regionally disadvantaged groups across the ‘Global South’. Counterbalancing these have remained a critical aspect of formulating national policies, and even more so for implementing these at the local level. Some of these debates have been captured in discourses as ‘digital divide’. The paper aims at providing analyses from India, where on the one hand digital policies, particularly Modi’s “Digital India”, have addressed the need for counterbalancing marginalisation, for both access to communication and core government services. Thus, India can be seen as the epitom of a communication hub, with globally well-connected centres but vast rural (and urban) areas where digital communication has remained limited to privileged social groups. Based on Fukuyama’s (2013) ideas of governance as “a government’s ability to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services” it will then address digital divides from a broader angle of exclusion and marginalisation. Empirical evidence of such selective inclusion and marginalisation processes can be found, inter alia, in Youth Surveys that have been conducted in recent years.

Graner, Elvira (and Sen, Samita)  
*Governing Marriage In India: (Re-)Negotiating Lakshman Rekha*

While common across the world, in India child marriages are of high political concern, due to the country’s particular demographic profile. Being home to the largest group of girl brides worldwide, the state maintained that it is primarily a “cultural practice”, and thus kept turning a blind eye over the past decades. Yet, besides addressing it as a crucial obstacle for development goals, more recent discourses even depict it as a violation of human rights. This paper will outline the core features that define child marriage in India, and the government’s recent attempt(s) to re-define this core aspect of “Lakshman Rekha”. It will briefly summarise the legal reform processes, sketching the long and tedious way to finally pass the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act in 2006. It will portray the core aspects of child marriage in India, such as low annual rates of decline, along with vast regional and social disparities. These will be illustrated by a current project from West Bengal. Based on Fukuyama’s (2013) ideas of governance as “a government’s ability to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services” it will then address child marriage from a broader angle of exclusion and lack of citizenship.
Granziera, Patrizia  
**Catholic And Tamil Divine Mothers: Art And Ritual In Tamil Shrines**

Popular and classical traditions in India venerate the earth as the life-giving and life-nourishing mother. Hence the earth, its mountains, rivers and oceans are seen as our mother. Indian art personifies these forces of nature in the form of beautiful ladies such as the tree nymphs, Yaksis, or the river goddesses, Yamuna and Ganga. Even Durga was probably originally a goddess of the forest and vegetation. In rural Tamil Nadu the goddess is intimately connected to the soil and thus to concepts of both fertility and death. In almost all the founding myth of a Tamil goddess temple, the deity manifests its presence in the form of stone, a piece of wood or a statue buried in the ground or submerged in the water. Usually somebody cuts the log or the stone and blood gushes out proving the presence of the deity on that particular spot, often in a forest, near a tree or a body of water. This paper will discuss the hagiographic account of Our Lady at Konankuppam and its artistic representation found in the shrine dedicated to her and built by the Jesuit friar Giuseppe Beschi in the 17th century. The story of “Perianayagi Amman” resonates with the Tamil tradition of a deity self-manifestation and the deep relationship between shrines and community in Tamil Nadu. Two similar Tamil legends will be considered, that of Senganzhuneeramman in Veerampattinam and the goddess of Taimangalam village. This comparative analysis will be based on the examination of texts, devotional images and other artistic material found at these three shrines.

Guenther, Julia  
**Feminist Literary Spaces: An Analysis On Power Relations Within Translation Discourses**

While translations opened possibilities for marginalised voices to be read, a criticism that I have to contend with in my PhD research from colleagues in India is that I have to use translated texts to achieve my research aim, which is to examine how feminist writers’ subjectivity formations and resistance reflect in their literary texts and vice versa. For my PhD research, I interviewed Dalit and Muslim feminist writers based in Telangana, South India. Despite being met with an understanding, I felt uncomfortable using the language of colonisation to conduct research that aims to deconstruct postcolonial notions and hegemonic dynamics. Fiona Smith (1996), a geography lecturer at the University of Dundee, argues that translations, especially if they are from ‘local’ to academic knowledge, are embedded in power relations. Using feminist epistemology, I reflect upon these power dynamics in this paper. However, she also suggests that the ‘hybrid spaces’ (Smith, 1996: 163), which arise when translating one language into another, should not be understood as a ‘problem’ but rather as spaces of conceptual and … political opportunities and negotiations’ (Smith, 1996: 165). The encounter of the different pieces of knowledge is thus an opportunity to deconstruct stereotypes and power relations as well as create common ground for resistance and solidarity. In this interdisciplinary study, which draws upon sociological, postcolonial and literature theories from a feminist perspective, I further deconstruct, analyse and discuss these spaces, when the literary texts from the feminist writers I interviewed are published in English.

Gul, Ambreen (and Shah, Gulbahar)  
**Sufi Shrines Of Kashmir: Analysing The Impact Of Socioeconomic And Political Transformation On The Relationship Between The Shrines And The People.**

The dissemination of Islam was considerably peaceful in Kashmir. Propagated by Sufi saints, Islam emerged as a rebellion against the caste system of the society. By the 14th century Kashmir came to be dominated by the Muslim rulers. The relationship between the shrines dedicated to the Sufi saints and the Kashmiri people has been one of veneration and succour during the difficult times. However, the priestly class associated with the shrines tended to have a relationship bordering on exploitative with the Muslim population of Kashmir. Receiving land grants and endowments from almost all rulers of Kashmir, the priestly class of the valley enjoyed a privileged status. The changing socioeconomic
conditions after 1947, especially because of extensive land reforms, and political changes brought about by three decades old insurgency eroded the power of the priestly class significantly. This change also transformed the relationship of Kashmiri Muslim population with the shrines, with considerable inroads made by the Wahabi ideology into the valley. The resentment against the priestly class was extended to these hitherto much loved and respected shrines. This research analyses the dynamic nature of this relationship through an ethnographic survey to understand the reasons for the people of Kashmir to continue or discontinue the shrine worship. The religious aspect of the veneration of shrines and saints is explained through socioeconomic and political reality prevailing in Kashmir.

Gupta, Arighna
The Sovereign And His Signature: Cases Of Eighteenth Century Little-Kings In Bengal
This paper is an exploration of the concept of the “sovereign” in courtly literature in late 18th century Bengal and vernacular texts produced from the Fort William around 1800 – 1805. While the eighteenth century was marked by tremendous dynamism in terms of politics, the representations of the political was equally intriguing. Breaking away from an empire-centric focus, this paper highlights local claims to the political. The first set of texts explored here were composed in the court of a “little king”, who shifted his allegiance from the Nawab of Bengal to the new realm of the East India Company in South-Central Bengal, Krishnachandra Ray. Although termed as epic-poems (one of which was a Mangal Kavya), this paper argues that these were political commentaries composed in a particular aesthetic style. This paper foregrounds the role of the signature (bhanita) in these epic-poems and argues that these might have belonged to the tradition of adab literature, imbued with political significations. The second set of texts examined are biographies of kings produced under the Company patronage from Calcutta. This paper reads these biographies as part of a similar genre of political commentaries. While the two forms seem ostensibly similar, they also mark a shift from the earlier representations of the local sovereign who legitimized themselves always through the symbol of the divine and the Mughal Emperor, to a politically ambivalent sovereign, free from the significations of the eighteenth-century political discourse.

Hakala, Walter
Improvised Permanence: Urdu Epigraphy In Deccan Princely States
Urdu was just one among the many languages that emerged in the medieval period from the long shadows cast by Sanskrit and Persian. So-called languages of the land (deśya or desī) would eventually become symbols of and the media through which regional identities consolidated into ideologies of nationalism. But Urdu, despite the efforts of its many notable regional chauvinists, never belonged to any single place. Though texts on paper and inscriptions on stone are preserved across the Indian subcontinent, some of the earliest examples of Urdu epigraphy in the Arabic script are preserved in Gujarat and the Deccan—far away from the atavistic “home” of spoken Urdu in Delhi and the Ganges-Yamuna doab. Beyond the Persianate courts of central and western India, Urdu also functioned as a language of skilled trades, education, and commerce. Most histories of Urdu, however, have focussed on its literature to the exclusion of all other linguistic forms. This paper examines the use of Urdu for what Irene Bierman calls “public texts,” i.e., writing that appears in spaces that are “accessible to the whole membership of society.” The princely states of central India were especially rich sites for the production of “naïve” or “primitive” inscriptions prepared by non-elites or those with less exposure to normative regimes of vernacular writing. Examples, including vernacular curses, early examples of English terms in Urdu poetry, and telegrams inscribed in stone, permit a reconsideration of the political implications of the shift in production and reception of public texts away from Persian toward Urdu.
Haque, Reyazul (and Latief, Farhana)

Forensic Nationalism: Everyday Politics Of Normalising Violence

This paper analyses the preference of use of forensic science methods in ‘certain chosen violence related cases’ in the processes of legal investigation within the criminal justice system in India. The paper argue that this preference of forensic methods is aimed at deliberately complicating the processes of criminal investigations which renders the justice mechanism inaccessible to the people at large who do not understand the language of forensics techniques and the results thereof. This paper will employ the case studies of Godhra Train case (2002), Shopian Rape and Murder case (2009), and the case of Akhlaq’s lynching (2015) to substantiate the argument of the paper. Moreover, this forensic investigation culture has also led to the creation of such a socio-political environment where certain political claims get legitimised as facts which leads to obfuscation of an otherwise transpicuous facts. Using this framework, we illustrate how the use of forensic science methods of investigation in ‘randomly yet handpicked cases of violence’ has created a space for the rise of contemporary right-wing anti-minority politics in India where violence is normalised in absence of any sense of accountability. And as an extension of this sense of impunity, the delay in delivery of justice assists the agenda of the right-wing nationalist parties. For this purpose, our paper will problematise the reliability of forensic science on one hand, and will investigate the tendency to displace the question of socio-political justice with a web of what can be called ‘forensic facts’, which eventually normalises the crime and feeds into the making of a majoritarian right-wing political order.

Harder, Hans

The Idle Visionary: Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay’s Kamalakanta (1875)

Few heroes of Bengali literature appear more idle and parasitic than Kamalakanta, protagonist of the eponymous collection of satirical essays (1875) by famous 19th century writer Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay (1838–94). An opium-eater and a drifter, Kamalakanta is a complete failure in terms of the utilitarian model set up under British colonialism. Yet, it is Kamalakanta’s utterly marginal social position that author Bankimchandra uses to voice his most fundamental critique of the colonial order of things. Taking up threads from former work on the topic, particularly Sudipta Kaviraj’s analysis of this text as ‘Bankimchandra’s secret autobiography’, the present paper focuses on idleness and its ambivalences in Kamalakanta and other texts. It will situate the protagonist in his wider context and hopefully yield some clues to the conceptualization of regimes of work and leisure in nineteenth century South Asia.

Harju, Otso

Willful Ignorance And White Supremacy – White ‘Liberal’ Tourists In India As A Hindutva Asset

Orientalist imaginings of India and Hindutva descriptions of self often come to closely resemble one another: India as a repository of ‘ancient knowledge’, ‘wisdom’, ‘spiritualism’, ‘peace’, and the like. In contemporary times these projections meet specifically in Western tourism/tourists and the globalization of Yoga and a seemingly apolitical neo-‘Hinduism’. In my paper, I look at backpackers and yoga-tourists as the heirs of ‘positive’ orientalism, and at how they are recognized as useful for a Hindutva cause by both governmental and non-governmental forces in India. White tourists, who travel to ‘Incredible India’ to partake in festivals, ‘colors’, ‘diversity’, and (semi-)religious wellness- or eco-retreats, come to function as ambassadors of a on the surface ‘feelgood’, but de facto (and curiously) both racist and Hindu right-wing vision of India. White tourists, who travel to ‘Incredible India’ to partake in festivals, ‘colors’, ‘diversity’, and (semi-)religious wellness- or eco-retreats, come to function as ambassadors of a on the surface ‘feelgood’, but de facto (and curiously) both racist and Hindu right-wing vision of India. Especially useful ‘brand ambassadors’ are – I argue – urban, middle-to-upper class, Yoga- and animal rights-interested white people, who in their home countries often see themselves as representing ‘liberal’ politics. Cluelessly or callously, these tourists come in their ideas about India to propagate a vision defined by monolithic Hinduness. In my presentation I give both a critical discourse analysis of the collusion of white neo-orientalism and jargon in the Indian tourist industry, as well as practical examples of these connections in the forms.
of Yoga retreats and eco-tourism developments. Further, I ask what personal politics sustains these forms of deeply uncritical white tourism: willful ignorance or a silent investment in white supremacy?

Hartig, Anne
Reincarnated Gods: Changing Strategies Of Display In Modern Hindu Temples In North India
Scholarship has stressed how the display in the devotional context is different from the display of an image in the context of a museum, which has been presenting images, removed of the many layers of clothing and religious meaning, as works of art (Davis 1997, Guha-Thakurta 2007, Paine 2013). In recent years, in an effort to attract and engage varied constituencies, curators have attempted to replicate the devotional setting in the space of the Western museum. This paper argues that if the museum has rethought object-centred display, the Hindu temple is not a static entity either, adopting modern strategies of display, including those in the museum. The manipulation of light, the use of labels and pedestals, foregoing or modifying the use of fabrics, are some strategies discussed in the context of the Saraswati Mandir (1960s) in Pilani, in Rajasthan, Akshardham (2005) in Delhi and smaller local temples in North India. Thus, the paper argues that the Hindu temple needs to be read not as a timeless institution but as an institution that adjusts to the needs and requirements of the time.

Hawley, Nell
Pañcarātra (“The Five Nights”): A Miniature Mahābhārata In An Unusual Disguise
While the field of Mahābhāratas represents a spectacular diversity of languages, genres, and localities, one narrative line cuts across much of it: the story of the Pāṇḍavas living in disguise in the court of King Virāṭa. Many Mahābhārataas spotlight this branch of the sprawling story, among them Mahābhārataas in Tamil (Shulman, 1985), Old Hindi (Pauwels, 2020), Apabhramsha (De Clercq and Winant, 2020), and Telugu (Kamath, 2020). Why so popular? The story’s themes of renewal, inversion, and subversion (van Buitenen, 1977; Shulman, 1985) are well suited to literary and performative creativity. Its narrative arcs reach (relatively) clear points of resolution—e.g., the killing of Kīcaka—that make it possible to express core elements of the Mahābhārata story without lingering on the ethical and emotional instabilities that fill much of the epic tradition. And since the Virāṭa story mirrors the greater Mahābhārata, it allows poets and performers to gesture at the Mahābhārata as a whole—an irresistible offer. Here I discuss one such encapsulation: Pañcarātra (“The Five Nights”), one of the six Mahābhārata-themed “Trivandrum plays” edited by the Bhāsa Projekt Würzburg (e.g., Brückner, 2007; Steiner, 2007) and linked to kūṭiṭṭāṭam performance (Oberlin, 2001). The Pañcarātra makes an important and surprising move. It uses the Virāṭa story to bring the Mahābhārata to an early conclusion: the cousins split the kingdom and avert the war entirely. This, I argue, reflects the Virāṭa story’s tendency toward self-resolution but also carries out its ethos of masquerade. The play’s unusual denouement offers the only semblance of a resolution—a fraught conclusion disguised as a happy ending.

Headley, Zoé
Curses And Oaths In Village Legal Culture (Tamil Nadu)
This exploratory paper seeks to delineate, describe and hypothesize on the nature, content, and purpose of the use of curses (cāpam) and oaths (cattiyam) in “para”-legal documents. The documentation analyzed consists of petitions, appeals, and judgments surrounding the trajectory of conflicts and crimes having occurred in villages of south-central Tamil Nadu in the late 19th century and the early 20th century. The management of these conflicts and crimes, kept away from the colonial administration of justice, came under the jurisdiction of the repositories of local judicial authority: caste panchayats, village panchayats and caste headmen.
Heehs, Peter
The Myth Of The Theons: Constructions And Deconstruction Of The Image Of Two European Occultists

Max Theon (Maximillian Bimstein) and his wife Mary Ware were significant European occultists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their Mouvement Cosmique had branches in several countries and their publications circulated in occult circles in France and the United States. They are perhaps best know as the teachers of Mirra Alfassa, later the Mother of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The Theons presented themselves as the custodians of the world's original wisdom Tradition. They spoke little about their lives but their followers sketched biographies for them consistent with this role. Toward the end of the 20th century researchers uncovered documents that filled in the outlines of these sketches, correcting some of the more notable fabrications, but they still took face value most of the claims made by and about the Theons. More recent researchers have gone deeper, unearthing many documents bearing on the early lives of Max Bimstein and Mary Ware. These discoveries make it necessary to reevaluate their place in the history of modern occultism.

Heidemann, Frank
Trade, State, And Kinship In Minicoy (Maliku) – Connectivity of a small Indian Ocean island

Trade, state and kinship were the major links of Minicoy (locally called Maliku) to the outer world. The island was part of the Sultanate in Male and followed the call for conversion to Islam in the 12th century. In the 17th century this most northern part of the Maldives became a tributary to the South Indian Ali Rajas, but the islanders continued their trade with Male, Ceylon and India and maintained their kinship relations with the Maldives. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the island was under British administration. In 1956 Maliku became a part of the Indian Union and today marks the south-western border of the nation state. Trade and marriage ties, which once linked the Malikuns to the islands of the Maldives, were discontinued, because an international border separates the territories. In this paper I shall discuss the relationship of Malikuns to the littoral societies in South India, which have undergone drastic transformations after 1956. In Kochi and other harbour cities a small Malikun diaspora is emerging. Medical care, formal education and new openings in the economic field had a lasting impact on mobility and residential pattern. Today, most men from Maliku work on trading ships world-wide, holding Indian passports. Two seamen's associations are based in Mumbai, from where the Malikuns embark. In the course of this new orientation, the islanders have established new ways of interaction with the littoral societies in Kerala and with the administration of the Indian state.

Helton, Christopher
Mystical Ontology Or The Lack Thereof: A Hermeneutical Critique Of Agehananda Bharati's Conceptualization Of Mysticism

This paper will examine the theoretical reification of the mystical experience put forward by Austrian-born scholar Agehananda Bharati, particularly in his work “The Light at the Center,” from the perspective of the hermeneutic of a Western “convert.” The author aims to contextualize this reification within the Western orientalist-Indological hermeneutical continuum. This critique is intended to contribute to a broader body of research, undertaken by the author, dedicated to the unjustly overlooked life and work of this controversial and unorthodox scholar-sannyasin.

Henn, Alexander
Shrines Of Goa: Materiality, Transience, Resilience

In this paper I will explore the materiality of Hindu and Catholic shrines in Goa as an issue that historically determined convergence, competition, and conflict between the two religious traditions. In a first step I will compare ideological (theological) and practical (political) conventions and poli-
cies from both traditions with regard to the materiality, iconicity, and localization of shrines. This will include examples of conflict (iconoclasm), competition (contiguity) and convergence (overlapping) between traditions and shrines. In a second step I will discuss how issues of materiality influenced the appreciation, transience and resilience of Goan shrines in the light of historically changing and culturally differing understandings of the concept of ‘religion’.

Henry, Justin

*The 19th Century Sri Lankan Sanskrit Renaissance And Legacy Of The Sinhala Rāmāyanā*

This paper catalogs the reception of classical Sanskrit literary works by Sri Lankan authors in the late 19th century, with special attention given to the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa—its translation into Sinhala and enduring legacy in subsequent 20th and 21st century Sinhala novels, drama and music. I argue that the “neoclassical” style of Sinhala drama which emerged under the influence of continental Sanskrit literature was conceived under two competing impulses. The first was a cosmopolitan impulse to embed Sri Lanka within a broader Indic world of literary and creative arts, drawing in diverse musical influences from Hindustani theatre and Tamil nāḍāgam. The second was a competitive, indigenist, and parochializing tendency, exemplified by the eventual preference of the same poets and dramatists who first translated classical Sanskrit works into Sinhala for subject matter related to heroic Sinhala kings of the distant past, and by the valorization of Ravana at the expense of Rama in later re-tellings of the Rāmāyaṇa.

Hoeppe, Götz

*Counting Fishes: Genealogies Of Numero-Politics On The Malabar Coast*

This paper considers efforts and practices through which governable objects in the fishery have been defined, measured and debated in south India. Assessments of fisheries resources commonly revolve around issues of quantification. Yet numbers and the measurements that produce them are inevitably embedded in “disciplined fields, systems of registration and surveillance, technological checks and verifications, and fragile networks of trust” – elements of what sociologists Aryn Martin and Michael Lynch (2009) have termed numero-politics. By focusing on fisheries research conducted at the West Hill Fisheries Research Station of the Madras Fisheries Department (now Kozhikodu, Kerala) in the 1920s – 1940s, I probe into the difficulties and the means of defining and quantifying resources of the Indian oil sardine (Sardinella longiceps) in a late-colonial setting. This work resulted in the first regulation of marine fisheries in south Asia. Drawing on ethnography, published records and archival research, I illustrate the challenges of producing a scientific alternative to fishers’ local understandings and take this case as a starting point to reflect on later practices and politics of quantifying fish resources on the Malabar coast.

Hofmann, William

*Songs Of Love And Loss: Early Vernacular Sufi Musicking And The Development Of An Indo-Persian Music*

The historical narrative concerning the development of Indian classical music is largely based on uncritical readings of 17th and 18th century texts produced in Mughal courts, which focus on the role played by Sufis and courtiers of the Delhi Sultanates centuries earlier. Approaching this narrative from a standpoint of translation, this paper will look at the performance of vernacular song forms within the space of the Sufi khanqāh, or hospice. Tracing the introduction of vernacular poetry and song as found in Persian-language religious texts, I investigate early song-text collections to examine what they tell us about the performance practices of Sufis, and their role in the development of Hindustani classical music. Within the recorded discourses of 15th – 16th century Chishti (and Chishti-adjacent) Sufi Shaikhs, we find some of the earliest examples of Sufi song-texts in Hindi, complete with rāga prescriptions. As the ‘translation’ of Sufi ideology, these vernacular songs occupied an important po-
sition within the repertoire of qawwāls, being performed alongside Arabic and Persian song-genres, and written down within didactic texts recording the assemblies of Sufi Shaikhs. I will particularly focus on the jikrī song genre, as it seems to have occupied a place of significance among Sufi qawwāls performing between Delhi, Jaunpur, Gujarat, and the Deccan. By examining the contexts of Sufi performance practices within contemporary 14th and 15th century texts, I hope to unpack the ways in which Sufis used vernacular music and poetry as a central component of spiritual practice, and what it meant for the development of Hindustani music.

Holwitt, Pablo
The Chimeric City: Urban Renewal in Central Mumbai As Ideological Assemblage

Since the introduction of liberal market reforms during the early 1990s, processes of urban development in India have been subsumed under the label of neoliberal urban renewal. This concept has been used to explain numerous aspects of contemporary urban transformation, including the formation of a new class of consumer citizens, the construction of gated residential complexes and malls, gentrification processes and displacement of the poor or urban beautification projects. However, neoliberalism as a master narrative has also attracted its fair share of criticism. It has been viewed as a rather vaguely defined concept derived from cities of the Global North that favors a top-down perspective and ignores many of the more contradictory elements of Southern urbanisms. These criticisms feed into more general debates about the limits of neoliberalism as an analytical concept and demands for more nuanced approaches towards the study of global capitalism and its impact on regions and localities. In response to these discussions, this paper develops a notion of urban renewal in India as an assemblage of various ideological currents that can merge, compete and clash in multiple ways. It is argued that conceiving of ideologies as tendencies rather than encompassing frameworks allows to account for the complex articulations of urban renewal on the ground. Taking contemporary redevelopment processes in the city center of Mumbai as a point of departure, the paper traces the ways in which ideological assemblages become manifest in space through processes of urban renewal.

Hüsken, Ute
Transcultural Theravāda Buddhist Nuns’ Communities

The re-establishment of the Theravāda Buddhist nuns’ community in the 20th and 21st centuries poses specific challenges to the local Buddhist communities, which turn out to be very specific to each location and situation. Female and male practitioners have to deal with specific local resistances as well as navigate the global entanglement and interaction of local communities. All these factors add to the need of the traditions’ transformation and transcreation. This contribution will take the “International Bhikkhuni Ordination” which took place in January 2019 in Bodh Gaya as its starting point, discussing the diverse factors that prevent or enable local and international leadership of specific Theravāda Buddhist nuns, and looking at specific “hybrid” forms of Buddhism that emerge in the context of global Buddhist networks.

Ibanez, Léticia

Eluttu (“Literary Work”), which ran from 1959 to 1970, is the most prestigious Tamil literary magazine of its time. Closely identified with its main-contributor-cum-director C.Cu.Cellappā (1912–1998), Eluttu didn’t serve any ideology nor strive for commercial success: it was all about “serious writing”. A paradigm of dedication to the cause of literature, this monthly magazine launched several major writers, gave a place to new literary genres such as putukkavitai (free verse poetry) and placed considerable emphasis on literary criticism/articles dealing either with Tamil or foreign literature. C.Cu.Cellappā wanted to develop an awareness of World literature with a focus on English-language works and in
In this respect, Eluttuwas the most Westernized Tamil little magazine of the 1960’s. A heir to the modernist tradition shaped in the 1930’s by Maniţkoţi (“The Jeweled Banner”), the pioneer of Tamil little magazines, Eluttu endeavored to deprovincialize Tamil literature, which would become attuned with international aesthetic trends. By accepting the West at the center of the République mondiale des lettres (Casanova 1999), Eluttu stood against the devotees of Tamil classical language and literature. Eluttu’s literary ideal was both Tamil and international: this paper aims at analyzing what the writers involved in Eluttu meant by those two notions and how they tried to articulate them.

Ingole, Prashant
Reproduction Of Anti-Caste Discourse In Contemporary Visual And Verbal Forms
In the post-colonial context, politicization of dalit-bahujan anti-caste resistance by and large could be read in two phases—one as the rise of Dalit Panthers Movement during 1970s and second is from 1990s as the post-Mandal time. This was also a time when Dalit literature and movement started to translate in various regional languages in general and English in particular, which has helped in shaping dalit-bahujan academic and cultural activism. In relation to this, present paper will explore the question of representation and ‘lived’ experiences, specifically power and authenticity in visual and verbal narratives. The paper seeks to understand how representation and ‘lived’ experiences differ, differently in different forms of narration? How experiential factors such as caste, class, gender, humiliation, and identity have represented in verbal and the visual forms of expression? How visual and verbal forms of narration help in reproduction of anti-caste discourse in contemporary time. By bringing Dalit and visual studies together the paper maps different perspective focusing on the functioning of caste in contemporary Indian society. The paper argues that, anti-caste narratives in contemporary visual and verbal forms generate the social consciousness among the oppressed sections of the society so that collective solidarity can be formed and also the social democratic space can be created. Moreover, reproduction of anti-caste discourse helps to showcase the legacy of anti-caste leaders as the step forward towards ‘less unjust’ and egalitarian society.

Iqbal, Hamza
‘I Destroyed Myself And Yet Have Not Despair’: Jaun Elia And The New Aesthetics Of Despair
While melancholy has been – and continues to be – interrogated by significant thinkers from the past and present due to its rather significant import (Freud, Benjamin, Agamben, Sontag, Pensky, Ferber), a re-visitation of the concept of despair appears to be both necessary and timely. In this paper, I will propound a new aesthetics of despair through the poetics of one of the most prominent, controversial, nihilistic, philosophically inclined, and essentially despair-stricken contemporary Urdu ghazal poet from Pakistan, Jaun Elia. As is evident from Elia’s writings, the emotion and/or concept of despair has come to have new meaning in the contemporary Urdu tradition wherein by its embrace, it has become a mode of resistance. This meaning is a result of a fractured and modern post-colonial world that a post-colonial subject is thrown into. While the source of their despair may have been similar, the Urdu writers before Jaun as well as some of his contemporaries had the tendency to sulk in their despair, lament or nostalgically long for a pre-despair time; Jaun, however, seems to thrive in his and thus flips the logics of rationality, remembrance, and mourning in and through his poetry and that is what my paper will consider.

Islam, Asiya
Daughters Of Domestic Workers: Young Women And Socio-Economic Change In Contemporary India
While there is relatively limited scholarship on domestic workers in India – a large, female dominated, and expanding workforce – much has been said about the new opportunities for women in the burgeoning service economy of urban India. In this paper, I draw attention to the collision of these two worlds through my ethnographic research with young lower middle class women in Delhi.
employed in cafes, malls, call centres, and offices, many of my respondents told me that their mothers had previously worked as domestic workers. My respondents, pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees, did not see domestic work as befitting their skills, reflected in their oft-repeated rhetorical question – “Why would we do that when we're educated?” In some cases, by securing employment, these young women had managed to ‘relieve’ their mothers of domestic work, indicating a system of exchange of labour among women within families. As such, while young women acknowledged the value of their mothers’ labour in securing their futures, they also distanced themselves from domestic work by associating it with necessity, servitude, and low skill. In this paper, I draw upon these varied narratives to explore emerging enclaves of women’s employment in urban India, shifts in ideas of ‘respectable’ labour for women, and new and continuing precarisation of women’s work. More broadly, these inferences contribute towards understanding women’s labour as a site of gender and class formations in contemporary urban India.

Jagannathan, Bharati
An Attempt At Gendering Of Pilgrimage

Between the 7th and 9th centuries emerged a vast corpus of literature in Tamil expressing deep personal devotion to one of the two major deities of the Hindu pantheon, Siva and Vishnu. This ‘bhakti’ poetry was often mystical, but equally often expressed itself in corporeal and material terms. Drawing both on a large, pan-Indian mythological corpus and on specifically Tamil notions of the divine being simultaneously transcendent and immanent, the hymnists sang of their chosen lord as resident and mystically active in specific locations, largely within the Tamil region in India's deep south, but also scattered across the vast subcontinent. These poet-saints are said to have literally mapped a pilgrimage geography. Exalting these shrine centres with thick descriptions, the hymnists encourage the listener— listening and reciting religious poems being considered a meritorious act— to embark on pilgrimage. Each poet/ess conceived of an individual relationship with the deity— as child, parent, friend or lover; each maps an individual peregrination. While the men poets seem to have been more peripatetic than the two poetesses, one each in the Saiva and Vaisnava traditions, the latter are no stay-at-homes. Is it possible to trace through this poetry, patterns of women’s travels? Are the shrines they speak about imagined destinations or do their poems sketch actual journeys? Who were their travelling companions? Do women’s experience of place in this literature differ from men’s—and how? My paper will try and address these questions in order to understand an unexplored dimension of pilgrimage.

Jaoul, Nicolas
Caste And The Outcaste. Does The Study Of Subaltern Caste Formations Still Matter?

What can the multiplicity of jatis among the subalterns contain as knowledge of Dalit social pasts? The issue has been neglected from all sides. The Dumontian anthropological discourse has interpreted the replication of caste structures among Dalits as a sign of cultural consensus to the detriment of historical problematisation. Subaltern Studies’ attempts to rethink social history from below through vernacular idioms, also failed to address the question beyond its own focus on alternationalist discourse, revealing the weakness of its Gramscian commitments. Even the Ambedkarite emancipatory discourse which has focused on Dalit identity as an encompassing category working towards the dissolution of castes, failed to address the multiplicity of Dalit identities, often leaving the social past to mythological narratives by Dalit jati organisations. After recalling previous attempts to combine Ethnography and History in the field of caste studies, I will bring up some methodological insights gained from my current fieldwork on a Dalit mythological character (Supatch Sudarshan) among sanitation labour migrants who spread to several states from Uttar Pradesh, and whose study has enabled me to enquire into these pasts.
Jeffery, Roger
*Current Challenges For Doctors In South Asia: Not Deprofessionalisation But A New Form Of Professionalisation?*

Western-trained doctors in South Asia struggled to establish themselves as a medical ‘profession’ in the 1920s and 1930s, and these struggles continued into the post-colonial period. The direction of travel is, however, no longer clear. The past 10 years have seen increasing evidence of crisis in doctors’ collective ability to provide a form of self-regulation. The Supreme Courts in both India and Pakistan have suspended the operations of their country’s medical councils in the face of a proliferation of poorly regulated private medical colleges. Practitioners of alternative systems of medicine and unqualified medical practice continue, while new ‘short-course’ doctors take over tasks previously restricted to fully-fledged MBBS doctors. The diversification of the social origins of medical students, with rising numbers of female doctors, threaten their aspirations to high status and earnings. This paper will survey the evidence for a ‘crisis’ across the region or are alternative, stable forms of institutional arrangements emerging.

Jenkins, Christopher
*‘International Justice Within Reach Of All’: The Rise Of India’s ‘International Courts’, 1830–1860*

This paper discusses a largely unknown example of Princely State-driven co-operation and innovation: the development of ‘international courts’ to deal with cross-border disputes that involved litigants from different States. These had their beginnings in the 1830s in the exchange of Princely State ambassadors in what is now Rajasthan. At the instigation of the princes themselves, regular courts were established, composed of judges representing the several States involved. Initially, these dealt with many types of cases which had an ‘international’ element; but were later restricted to cross-border crimes against merchants. By the 1860s the courts had developed complex rules on jurisdiction, precautions for travellers, and restitution. In addition to the immediate goal of deterring crime, the courts sought to create economic incentives for States and merchants to improve security of trade routes. These courts are examples of a phenomenon historian Lauren Benton has described elsewhere: state formation through the building of rule-bound institutions, which anticipated much later structures of international law. These ‘international courts’ can be contrasted with the ad hoc measures used in the suppression of ‘thuggee’ – which paid little respect to the rival jurisdiction or agency of the Princely States. Rather, the courts were a ‘rule of law’-based response which depended on the political and legal buy-in of the States and merchants involved. Indeed, they were supported by the British because, in the words of one official, they brought ‘international justice within reach of all’.

Jha, Manish K.
*Right Wing Populism And Citizenship Conundrum: Making Of Stateless Population In India*

We are witnessing unprecedented rise of populism in different parts of the globe. The spectre of populism is transcending boundaries and India is one of the recent but vigorous entries in the league that asserts populism through electoral democracy. The paper situates populist politics in India by specifying the community faultline in South Asia through partition and subsequent developments in the subcontinent. The political economy of people’s mobility across the border has led to contention around legality, demography and electoral outcomes. The paper elucidates how populism and the politics of insecurity have been played out whereby perceived collective threats are framed and acted upon. Traversing from past to present and apprehending the lurking dystopia, the paper shall explain politics of othering ‘illegal’ migrants in the Indian state of Assam that has recently rendered 1.9 million people non-citizen. How are we to understand the economic, political and religious thread of this populism that allowed nationalist regime to go overboard with National Register for Citizenship (NRC) and proposed citizenship Bill? How do we engage with the rhetoric and claims that appeared to have secured populist support for right wing through policy-legislative and juridical
decisions? To understand how migration has been framed as a threat to the people, the paper shall engage with politics of insecurity, anxiety and grievance. The paper examines how certain incidents in historical conjunctures produced a convergence between migration, nationness, and stateness and how populist leaders are practicing their politics through interplay of polity, language, region, ethnicity & nationality.

Jiwrajka, Surabhi
*From Folk To Film: Adaptation Of An Indian Folktales Across Genre*

Indian folklorist and author Vijaydan Detha spent his life collecting folktales from Rajasthan, India. In this paper, I explore a folktale titled Duvidha (The Dilemma) from Detha’s collection of recreated folktales. The transcreation of this folktale across diverse, yet interconnected genres of Rajasthani vaat, short story and Bollywood cinema are interpreted. The multi-tiered adaptation of Duvidha, from folktale (an oral version that I recorded in my recent fieldwork) to a Rajasthani short story, to translated stories and then, two Bollywood films, produced 28 years apart, are being utilised to understand the changing socio-cultural context of a 300 word folktale. By looking at these adaptations across genre and time, this paper explores the packaged worldview, the perpetuated beliefs and the upheld values in each rendition that is an interpretation in turn. The transformation of the core message that inevitably follows the changing authors, audiences and disciplines of this ‘text’ is utilised to understand the dynamic and dramatic nature of the changing folk, both in form and value. For instance, the revisions and recreations in every adaptation lead to the potential for subversion and resistance by the female protagonist. Furthermore, a comparative analysis of adaptations within genre explains the change in value, for example, of aollywoodisation of culture. The unique genre of folktale-inspired-fiction is utilised to study the skillful merging of traditional storytelling with modern literary techniques. Finally, the inconsistency in acknowledgement of Detha’s folk sources is used to answer the vexing question of authorship associated with the folk and its adaptation.

Jones, David
*Specialists Or Generalists: Debates About The Development Of Cardiac Surgery In India, 1948–1968*

Speaking at the Association of Surgeons of India in 1950, Minister for Health Amrit Kaur described the contributions that surgeons could make to the modernization of independent India. Surgeons, however, faced a difficult choice as they worked to develop their profession. Some wanted to invest resources in generalist surgeons in hopes of making basic surgical care available to all Indians. Others wanted to invest in specialists to ensure that India could participate in cutting-edge surgical research and care. These debates shaped the emergence of cardiac surgery in India at two early centers: the Christian Medical College in Vellore and the King Edward Memorial Hospital in Bombay. CMC had a proud surgical history, having made important contributions to the management of vaginal fistulae and leprosy. Hospital leadership invested in thoracic surgery in the 1940s to offer new treatments for tuberculosis. This gave surgeons the opportunity to explore new techniques of cardiac surgery. Debate quickly emerged about whether investments in cardiology and cardiac surgery made sense for CMC. A parallel controversy took place at KEM, where the dean debated the Bombay Municipal Corporation about the role of surgical research at a public hospital. The Rockefeller Foundation influenced both sites, offering financial support if they adopted an American model of full-time faculty clinician-researchers. The appeal of the modern proved irresistible. Both institutions invested the resources needed to make cardiac surgery possible, culminating in the first successful open-heart surgery in India, at CMC in July 1961, and the first heart transplant (unsuccessful) at KEM in February 1968.
Jorcke, Kathleen

**Heinrich Uhle’s Critical Edition Of Śivadāsa’s Vetālapañcavimśatikā As Adaptation**

The goal of publishing a critical edition is to present a reconstructed text that is as close as possible to an assumed original text, often called the urtext. Although this does by no means imply that a critical edition claims to be an original text, when serving as basis for translation or further studies critical editions are often received and treated as if they were the ‘originals’. In doing so, it is not acknowledged that critical editions would not exist without the existence of other texts, namely the manuscripts upon which they rely. Critical editions must be regarded as transpositions of preexisting texts – they are adaptations and not ‘original’ works. In this paper I want to examine to what extent critical editions of Indian story literature are the result of multiple adaptive processes, using the example of Heinrich Uhle’s critical edition of the Vetālapañcavimśatikā of Śivadāsa. By considering the critical edition and manuscripts not only as narrative texts, but also as material objects, the paper focuses on intertextual, cultural and medium-specific aspects. What are the effects when manuscript texts are turned into books? How does the assumption of an urtext correspond to the historical reality of the manuscripts? How does the story of Śivadāsa’s Vetālapañcavimśatikā as represented in Uhle’s edition change in the light of new known manuscripts? Only by fully understanding the ways in which critical editions of Indian story literature are not originals, but adaptations, we can find a way of critically dealing with editions such as Uhle’s when using them in academic contexts.

Kabra, Asmita

**Resettlement Outcomes In The Context Of Heterogeneous Land Quality: A Case Study Of Adivasi Conservation Refugees In Central India**

Co-authors: Dr Arnab Mukherji (Assoc Prof, IIM-Bangalore) and Sonam Mahalwal (Research Scholar, SHE-AUD) Forced displacement for public, private or joint infrastructure projects has been a major driver of impoverishment among rural and marginal households in the Global South. Land-based livelihood restoration which retains spatial integrity of previous settlements is considered least disruptive, since it enables households to retain some links with previous livelihood patterns and deploy existing social networks in mutually beneficial ways. Displaced households are often resettled on non-agricultural scrub land brought under cultivation for the first time, with a high probability of variability in farmland quality across different households. Little research is available to indicate the impact of variations in land quality on future livelihoods. This paper examines differences in livelihoods in conservation-displaced villages in Madhya Pradesh, who were resettled during 1999–2001 on de-notified forest land of poor but variable quality. The rehabilitation package included a 2-hectare plot of land for each displaced household. The quality of land at the relocation site varied across and within villages, depending on slope, soil and rock formation, degree of degradation and proximity to source of water. Distribution of farm land to households took place through two types of lottery systems - one took variable agricultural land quality into account, while the other did not. We compare livelihood outcomes between the ‘risky’ and ‘safe’ lottery systems in terms of household income, livelihood diversification patterns and social cohesion.

Kalb, Emma

**“Alas For That Invaluable Jewel”: Attachment, Companionship And Loss In The Court Of Aurangzeb**

In 1685, Bakhtāwar Khān, elite eunuch servitor and intimate companion to the emperor, died after eight days of illness. In the days that followed, a grieving Aurangzeb publicly mourned his loss, making an unusual display of intimate attachment. This paper explores the longer history of the relationship between these two figures, over the course of three decades in which a close relationship was formed between emperor and servitor. This relationship and its various representations were crucially shaped both by Bakhtāwar Khān’s position as an educated, highly literate court figure as well as by the particular forms of intimacy made possible by his eunuch status. Drawing on both court histories
and administrative documents, including texts written by Bakhtāwar Khān himself, this paper will explore the links between the language of these texts and normative ideals around intimacy and companionship. Through tracking the language used to describe this particular intimate and unequal relationship, the paper examines the relevance of normative discourses around the advising of kings and the roles of the wise and pious; by extension it also suggests productive ways to re-interpret the appearance of other elite enslaved individuals as influential companions and advisors. It will also consider how the depiction of love and intimacy between emperor and eunuch resonates with broader understandings of the intersection between the intimate, the social, and the political. In fact, a close examination of this entanglement shows how these relationships of intimate attachment were central to the discursive construction of the Mughal emperor and of the state.

Kamal, Ajmal

**Literary Journal As A Means To Break Out Of Cultural Myopia**

When I started an Urdu literary journal, called “Aaj” (“Today”) from Pakistan in 1981, it was an attempt to break out of what I can now call cultural myopia of the Urdu literary world. An important literary column in the daily Pakistan Times, Lahore, took notice of the first issue in 1981 and found that the journal tries to see and present the contemporary world literature “as a unified manifestation.” The next issue could not be published before 1986. However, “Aaj” was launched as a quarterly in 1989 and it has completed its thirty years now. During this time 107 issues have been published (not counting the first two) and it has developed a small but worthwhile circle of readers, writers and - most importantly - translators. By putting this vision into elaborate practice, the journal has endeavoured to resist the cultural myopia that, in my view, plagues the vernacular literary activity in Pakistan - and indeed the entire region of South Asia. Using Urdu translations of fiction, poetry and non-fiction from various languages of South Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, Europe, Africa and North America, the journal has been acknowledged to have helped construct a literary world encompassing the region and beyond. When I came to New Delhi in 2016 to pursue PhD in Sociology at the South Asian University, I interacted with scholars from all South Asian countries and felt that people associated with literature in the various vernaculars of the region are more or less unaware of the development of literary traditions in other neighbouring vernaculars. So I started another literary journal, City: A Journal of South Asian Literature, and have edited and published 3 issues.

Kamenov, Nikolay

**Labour, Property, And Gender In The Context Of The Cooperative Movement In Western India, 1900 To 1950**

The paper examines the entangled issues of labour, property and gender within the context of the history of the cooperative movement in the first half of the 20th century in Western India. The dialectic relation between the movement and the ‘women’s question’ was a complex and outspoken issue. On the one hand, having a focus on economic questions such as capital allocation, the original cooperative legislation allowing for credit cooperatives reinforced – or at the very least did not challenge – existing gender inequalities. Members of villages cooperatives in the first decades of the movement were overall male household heads. On the other hand, the cooperative movement did recognize and explicitly address the possibility of women’s emancipation through their engagement as economic agents. Importantly, this was not in the form of land proprietors with the accompanying access to credit, but rather as small producers in the textile and dairy industries. In this relation, the paper also draws attention to the fact that the cooperative movement was identified by other reform organizations such as the Servants of India Society or, even more meaningfully, by the All India Women’s Conference, as a viable channel for promoting their own ‘women’s’ agenda.
Kamińska-Jones, Dorota

The Himalayan Mountains As A Transformational Space For British Woman In The Colonial Period

The paper will explore the Himalayan mountains as a place of exploration for British woman in the second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. This period was extremely important for the women’s movement in Europe. As will be emphasised during the paper, one highly significant factor thereof was travel in the Himalayas. For British women, this was a space of transformation on many different levels. The most important was empowerment, which had a massive impact on the history of the woman’s movement, yet remains under-explored in research thus far. During the paper a plethora of sources will be examined, including visual materials in particular, at yet under-studied as they are not considered “high art”. However, as I will argue, such illustrations are extremely relevant as they were created by women explorers themselves and published in their memoirs. The Himalayas often appeared in these sources in many contexts but always as an important factor – the background, a witness, an agent of change, and virtual participant in these transformation and explorations. This paper represents an interdisciplinary approach, mainly focused on post-colonial and feminist perspectives.

Kanamarlapudi, Sravani

Śaśirekha Parinayamu: Tracing The Rich Cinematic Legacy Of An Oral Telugu Folk Story

Supposedly based on oral folklore traditions from the Telugu regions, *Sasirekha Parinayamu* is a story that has had a remarkably rich biography in pan-Indian cinematic productions. Drawing from the familiar pool of *Mahabharata* characters yet creating the titular heroine *Sasirekha* as the daughter of *Balarama*, the story narrates the events surrounding the marriage (parinayamu) of Sasirekha and *Abhimanyu*, brought into effect by the mediation of the ever playful *Krsna* who leverages *Ghatotkaca*, the demonic son of *Bhima* in the process. A similar negotiation between traditional and innovative elements is revealed from the fact that though this story doesn’t feature in the Sanskrit epic, one is clearly reminded of the way *Subhadra* gets wedded to Arjuna there by Krsna’s machinations. Taking this fascinating story as a vantage point, this paper aims to parse out such Janus-faced negotiations occurring between the classical and vernacular Mahabharata traditions. In addition to analysis based on the disciplines of textual and folklore studies, keeping in tune with the conference’s theme of interdisciplinary approaches, I will also trace the strikingly rich life of the story in film traditions as it emerged as a classic in the wake of over eight film adaptations between 1925 to 1984 spanning across the languages of Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Hindi, Marathi, and Gujarati. By way of coda, this paper will end by discussing the crowning glory of this rich series of films, the 1957 Telugu/Tamil version titled Mayabazar, which in 2007 became the first Telugu film to be digitally colorized and which still remains very much alive in the collective memory of the Telugu people.

Kanchan, Namrata

Political Notes Of The Kitab-I Nauras: An Analysis Of Aesthetically Embodied Kingship Practices In Ibrahim Adil Ii’s Bijapur

In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, Sultan Ibrahim Adil II (r. 1580–1627 CE) propagated the nauras ethos—a culturally and linguistically polyvalent concept—articulated primarily through its Sanskrit meaning of nine (nau) “juices” or essences (rasas) of an artistic work that evoke various emotions in the audience. An avid music lover, he is renowned for his Dakani treatise on classical music titled Kitab-i nauras (circa 1582). Portrayed by some scholars as religiously unorthodox, Ibrahim Adil and nauras get located chiefly within narratives of Bijapur’s political instability caused by the eccentric, artistically absorbed, Hinduphile sultan’s indulgence in leisure over statecraft. Recent Deccan scholarship has challenged such notions and while scholars have done much to erase perceptions of nauras as a product of Ibrahim Adil’s idiosyncrasy, doubts persist. Dislodging these uncertainties requires a new approach to study Ibrahim Adil and his nauras. Locating the sultan within a culturally
intersectional matrix and shifting the focus to the rasas—especially its overlooked corporeal dimensions—and its relationship to Ibrahim Adil’s kingship practices yield fresh insights to tilt the discourse in favour of a reasoned and politically astute sultan who crafted an embodied nauras ethos to govern a heterogenous populace.

Kapuria, Radha

Musicians’ ‘significant Geographies’ In Colonial Punjab: From Patiala And Kapurthala To Lahore And Delhi

The waning of Lahore (post-1849) and Delhi (post-1857) as courtly centres and the concomitant rise in prominence of Patiala and Kapurthala transformed the political economy and cultural organisation of Hindustani music in Punjab. In this paper I will demonstrate the broad impact of musical developments at the Punjab courts of Patiala and Kapurthala, on other princely states such as Jammu, Jaipur and Baroda, but also beyond princely India, in erstwhile royal centres such as Lahore and Delhi in ‘British’ India. Conversely, standards of bureaucracy in British India came to inform norms of musicians’ recruitment in Patiala, marking the transition from an older, more informal set of rules governing musical patronage, similar to those in Baroda (Bakhle 2005). Tracing the emergence of a new devotionally-oriented ‘classical’ music palatable to Anglicised middle classes, yet carrying within it older trajectories of sensuality, I will show how rulers like Bhupinder Singh at Patiala and Jagatjit Singh at Kapurthala, influenced the aesthetics and practice of musical patronage in middle-class settings in British India too (Jhala 2015). In the process I offer an answer as to why it was that, of the many princely states, it was Patiala alone that emerged as the singularly representative lineage of Punjab’s classical music. Focussed on a range of musicians—Behram Khan, Goki Bai, Tanras Khan, Ali Baksh-Fateh Ali, Kalu Khan, Bhai Booba, Rehmat Khan, Maula Baksh and VD Paluskar—I demonstrate how the multitudinous migrations of musicians within ‘significant geographies’ (Orsini 2015) helped create a distinctive Hindustani musical ‘space of performance’ in colonial India more generally.

Kar, Tania

Colonial Governmentality And The Structuring Of State Spaces: Re-Examining British Justifications For The Hindusthan-Tibet Road

The Hindusthan-Tibet Road is one of the earliest known colonial infrastructural interventions in the north-western Himalayan Region. This project can be situated at the cusp of administrative changes in the Indian colony—from being ruled by the East India Company to being brought under the direct administration of the Imperial state. This also meant a transition in colonial administrative rationality—from a purely mercantile logic of imperialism to a more liberal governmentality, reflected in some of the justifications for the building of the Hindusthan-Tibet Road. With the conceptualization of Indian colonial subjects as a population, surveying both land and people became important knowledge production activities for the colonial state. These projects relied heavily on the ability of the colonial state to make inroads into previously unexplored regions. Simultaneously, with infrastructural interventions at the level of physical space, especially through road building projects, the possibility of politicizing the environment became apparent. Taking the spatial imperatives of sovereign and disciplinary forms of power from Foucault, my study has engaged with questions of colonial governmentality by situating the Hindusthan-Tibet Road as a point of departure.

Karki, Dikshya

Women In ‘New Nepali Cinema

Nepali films have enjoyed a renewed popularity among its audiences since 2010. These new narratives display a world of male migrants caught in a rapidly urbanizing cityscape or loitering in villages. While their female counterparts oscillate between prescribed gender roles and attempts to become voicing subjects. As an investigation into the place of women in a ‘new Nepali cinema’, this article
discusses the filmic imaginaries of femininity caught between worlds of tradition and modernity in contemporary Nepal. It decenters a developmentalist lens through which most gender discourses in Nepal are presented by studying a range of popular Nepali films. It argues that the overshadowing of a critical reading of these films by their box office success highlights a deeply rooted patriarchal problematic already inherent in the functioning of the Nepali state.

Karnick, Anirudh

Kavītā And Sāhitya In Early 20th C. Hindi Literature

In Literary Cultures In History, Sheldon Pollock forcefully insisted that the argument that literature can be anything is an ahistorical essentialism. Scholarship since has had to take into account how literature was conceptualized at a particular time and in a particular place – to not equate textual materials with literature and to not take language or region as self-evident categories – it has had to try and work out the ‘emic’ perspective on what ‘literature’ is. The importance of this corrective in the study of pre-modern literature is self-evident. What strikes the contemporary reader of early 20th C. Hindi literature, however, is how uniformed, contested, and un-self-evident, the concept of ‘literature’ and ‘poetry’ is for critics and poets such as Sumitrānam Pānta, Hazārīprasāda Dvivedi, and Sūryakārtta Tripaṭhi ‘Nirālā’. Using Pānta’s preface to his volume of poems, Pallava (1926), as a pivot, I will delineate the wide-ranging exchanges between the three figures mentioned above, and how they seek to build a modern poetry and poetics from scratch, using sources as diverse as the Vedas, Kalidasa, Wordsworth, and Tagore – and with the nation that is soon to come into being on the horizon. Hindi is appreciated by Pānta and ‘Nirālā’ precisely for not having a history, unlike Braj and Bengali, while Dvivedi tries to mediate between Hindi’s past and its present. In doing so, I will build on scholarship on the early 20th C (Sujata Mody, Guriqbal Sahota) and more broadly, on modern writing as writing ‘from the ground up’ (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy).

Kaur, Balwant (and Verma, Vibhas Chandra)

Humiliation, Resistance And Dreams In Translation : A Study Of Lal Singh Dil’s Memoir And Poems

The life of subaltern Punjabi poet Lal Singh Dil is a chronicle of depravation, displacement, struggle and broken dreams that echoes the plight of several marginalised identities. His poetic aesthetic is woven by a mix of Punjabi folk, its culture, casteist subjugation, extreme-left movements, systemic and upper caste atrocities and contemporary history. So far there have been two translations if ‘Dil’s poetry from Punjabi to English-1:- “Poet of the Revolution: The Memoirs and Poems of Lal Singh Dil” translated by Nirupama Dutt , New Delhi, Penguin Viking, 1998;2:- “Lal Singh Dil : Selected Poems” translated by T C Ghai, Delhi, L G Publishers, 2017) Our presentation will focus on three important issues:(1) Socio-political landscape of Punjab after the 1947 partition and the question of Dalit identity in this space.(2) An exploration of the vivid and multifaceted life and works of Lal Singh Dil by analysing the major theme of identity politics/ struggle for self-respect in Dil’s autobiography.(3) Examining the English translations of Dil’s memoir and poetry and the politics around translation. Our analysis of these translations will focus on:1. Selection criteria for the translated pieces and identifying cases of Under-translation/Over-translation2. The target audience of the translator,3. Translation of cultural vocabulary, folk life and related political discourses.4. An attempt to examine the overt and covert political associations and the nature of conflicts in these translations

Kaushal, Anuj

Hybrid Sexuality: Where Kokkaka Meets Ibn Sina In Twentieth Century North India

Recent scholarship has characterized the late 19th-early 20th century as a period marked by the development of ‘Hindu sexual sciences’. This presentation seeks to argue for a ‘hindustani sexual science’ instead. I base my argument on an Urdu-hindustani text which combines Ibn Sina’s Qanun with Kokkaka’s Kokshastra. From Kokkaka, the author borrowed the categorization of women based on physiognomy. He then harnessed it to Ibn Sina’s austere scientism that ironically, also spurned the
pursuit of sexual pleasures (al-ladḥda al-hissiya). By combining both, the modern author appears to have arrived at a profile of ‘deviant’ women who the educated middle-class man was expected to recognize and avoid. At the same time, this allowed the modern writer to assuage masculine anxiety by removing passionate or rough sex from the conjugal bed. This text appears to also represent an abundance of similar texts in the same vernacular register in the cheap print market of this period. This abundance suggests a pluralism of sexologies in the period, rather than a singular sexological tradition claimed in recent scholarship.

Kavya, Krishna K. R. (and Sooraj S S)

Intersection Of Caste And Gender In The Sabarimala Issue: Problematizing The ‘Hindu Devotee’

In September 2018, the Supreme Court of India ruled that pilgrims irrespective of gender can enter and worship in the Sabarimala Temple. It upheld the Right to Equality under Article 14 and the Right to Freedom of Religion under Article 25 of the Indian Constitution by quashing the Kerala High Court’s ruling of 1991 which banned women of menstruating age (between 10–50) from entering the temple. In this context the paper will map the arguments of three groups which emerged supporting/opposing the Supreme Court verdict -- the ruling Left government, the Right-wing groups (like BJP, RSS) and the Dalit groups-- and examine their positions with respect to gender equality and religious belief. The paper argues that the law and the mainstream discourse on the Sabarimala issue centres around the confidence about a unified subject—‘the Hindu Devotee’. The Dalit intervention and the bringing in of the caste question especially by the Malayaraya and Pulaya communities problematize and collapse the entire discursive structure centred on a unified ‘Hindu devotee’ devoid of caste. Thus the paper further argues the ban on women’s entry into Sabarimala as a larger upper-caste Hindutva project and the Dalit involvement as crucial; as the whole debate on belief cannot but centre around the question of gender and caste patriarchy which are inseparably intersecting in the Indian context.

Kędzia, Ilona


In this paper, in connection with the methods of cultural ecology, I will examine the concept of Tamil Siddha medicine as an integral part of the local cultural ecosystem, mirrored in selected textual sources of Tamil Siddha medico-alchemical literature. My research will be based in particular on the study of chosen works ascribed to Yākōpu alias Irāmatēvar (ca. 17th-18th century), one of the prominent Tamil Siddhars. The texts of the Siddhar are usually composed in the form of practical manuals, transmitting various recipes and advises dedicated to adepts of medicine, alchemy and yoga. It may be expected that the traditional science of medicine, with its rich collection of materia medica comprising local herbal and animal products, as well as lifeless matter in form of minerals, is intrinsically tightly connected with the local environment. I will therefore investigate how such connections are expressed in the texts. Moreover, I will consider how the local nature, represented in the medico-alchemical Siddha literature by the notions related to the indigenous natural ingredients, is perceived from within the Siddha tradition, with the special reference to one of the key-ingredients used in Siddha lore called “the triple salt” (muppu), and its depictions in the texts. I will furthermore explore the Siddha worldview underlying the described practices, according to which human being may be seen as an inseparable entity of the universe of interconnected and mutually interacting components.

Keerthi, Naresh

Being Local - Dēśī And Dēśya As Linguistic Categories In Old Kannada

An enduring contribution of the Prakrit grammarians to linguistic thought in India, is the lexical typology of tatsama, tadbhava and dēśī words. This typology has gone beyond the grammar books of Prakrit, to the South Indian languages, whose early grammars adopt this classification, with oc-
casional additions. The earliest grammar of Kannada - the Kavirājamārga (8th century CE), has much discussion about the harmonious combination of words from across these different classes - be it within a compound, or in a prose sentence or in a verse. It appears that notions such as grammatical well-formedness, poetic diction and literary register are all organised around the agreeable synthesis of members of these distinct taxa. This paper will discuss the tatsama-tadbhava-dēśi classification as an exercise in contrastive linguistics, and thereby trace the role of these categories in forging a polyphonic linguistic identity for Kannada. Further, mārga and dēśi are the two tenors that are claimed to characterize literary Kannada. This bipartite classification has a complex history that is enmeshed with the domains of theatre, poetry, dance and music. This paper will also attempt to tease out connections between the two denotations of dēśi – one as a label of linguistic singularity and the other as a marker of poetic alterity.

Keller, Sara
*Water-s In The Western Indian City (10–16th C).*

In South Asia, water has been largely responsible for the shaping of the urban landscape. Not just cities like Varanasi, Ayodhya or Dwarka which religious narratives has been woven around water and its spiritual dimension, not just port towns like Calcutta, Calicut or Khambhat (Cambay) which economic dynamism relied on their water/land connection, but also other South Asian cities have prominent waterscapes and water structures. A rich bibliography on water monuments in South Asia provides today extensive data on individual structures such as well and step wells, tanks and lakes, tahkhana-s and garden installations etc. My paper proposes to look at water at the larger scale of the city, and to consider connections, interactions and concurrences that participated to the construction of waterscapes and water management systems in an urban context. It aims to show that the development of water structures built in and around the city participated to the shaping of an urban identity, whereas the inhabitants could access multiple waters for multiple uses. The paper presents the results of my recent and ongoing archaeological and historical work on access to water in the Western India cities, especially Ahmedabad, Bharuch and Dabhoi.

Kerin, Melissa
*Concerning Birth: Fertility Practices And Rebirth Traditions At Tingmosgang’s Avalokiteśvara Shrine*

Safely nested within an amulet box and shielded behind three layers of glass, one can find a white marble, four-armed sculpture known among Ladakhi’s as Thukche Chempo (Thugs rje chen po). Enshrined in the Ladakhi village of Tingmosgang, pilgrims from all over Ladakh come to propitiate this deity for many reasons, but chief among them is to ask the deity to grant the devotee/s children. As my paper will demonstrate, this c. seventeenth-century Buddhist shrine has been folded into little-known fertility practices among Ladakhi Buddhists. In fact, Tingmosgang’s Thukche Chempo shrine is grouped within a network of Buddhist shrines known to help women conceive. Of these, Tingmosgang is understood to be the most powerful, which is due partly to its status as a rang-chung (rang byung) or self-manifesting sculpture. Given this shrine’s powers to help women conceive, as well as to help devotees with a number of other concerns, there is a high incidence of reincarnation among Tingmosgang villagers. “We want to return to the soil where Thukche Chempo lives” explains one villager. This paper—drawing from ethnographic accounts, art historical analysis, and textual information—documents and investigates the little-known history of the Thukche Chempo shrine and the current reception and propitiation of it among villagers of Tingmosgang and beyond. In so doing, it seems this shrine may be much more than a nexus between divinity and devotee; it may instead be understood as an active agent directly affecting conception and rebirth among Ladakhi Buddhist communities.
Keshavamurthy, Kiran

*Articulating The Tamil Modern: Debates In Tamil Literary Criticism*

This paper is a preliminary investigation of the debates that took place in the early decades of the twentieth century on the question of Tamil modernism. With the emergence of many short-lived little magazines in Tamil, there arose multiple and often opposing notions of what constituted a modernist aesthetic. In fact, these literary magazines were, like in many other Indian languages, the platform where these debates emerged and took place. From the 1930s to the 1970s and 80s (Manikkodi, Kachatathapara, Ezhuthu, Kanaiyazhi, Aaraichi, to name a few) there were at least five to six major literary journals that variously shaped the trajectory of Tamil modernism in its relationship to Tamil society and politics. This paper will confine itself to the initial efforts to found a field of Tamil literary criticism and its attempts to define the modern. What was remarkable about this initial phase was the attempt to negotiate with the weight of premodern Tamil prosody and a long history of Tamil poetic works, which were accompanied by elaborate commentaries. While the study of Tamil prosody and poetics had already been well established by the late nineteenth century, modern literary critics in the twentieth century drew from various strands of Sanskrit and Tamil classical texts and from European Romanticism to create aesthetic categories like rasa, dhvani, akam, puram, experience, taste, interiority etcetera to enable an ‘objective’ evaluation of modern Tamil literature. I shall focus here on the debates between K.N. Subramaniam, one of the most prolific Tamil literary critics, writers and translators and T.K. Rasikamani, a scholar of premodern Tamil and his literary disciples.

Khan, Aasim (and Suri, Ratan / Webb, Martin)

*Politics Of Jaankaari: Mediation And Marginalisation In Digital Delhi*

Working in collaboration with community-based advocates aiming to help people file social protection claims online, we investigate how marginalization is experienced in a rapidly digitalising urban India. In rethinking the politics of digitalisation, this paper investigates how marginality is produced and resisted in processes that mediate between digital infrastructure and socio-economic realities. Our focus is on the welfare schemes aimed at the ‘economically weaker sections’ that require citizens to make welfare claims online. Drawing on fieldwork and survey conducted in the East-Delhi neighbourhood of Trilokpuri, we find that a majority of those seeking support for accessing digital services online belonged to the Dalit and ‘backward classes’ among minority communities, with women’s participation crucial in the process of accessing social protection online. Although caste and gender are rarely accounted for in the discourse of digitalization, we also found these to be significant factors in how marginalization is experienced and contested on ground. Further, we draw a contrast from private provision for information and documentation (cyber-cafés and pay-per-use internet), and voluntary digital advocacy, to show potential for leadership roles emerging within these communities. In evaluating these effects and processes of mediation, we show that while digitalization can be a site for exploitation, lending themselves to governmentalties that can deepen social divides, mediation effects can also reduce marginalization, build communal solidarities and limit commercial exploitation.

Khanam, Afroja

*Local Expert Perceptions On Slum Communities And Slum Evictions In Dhaka, Bangladesh: Case Of Korail Slum*

In Bangladesh, millions of people are forced to migrate from rural areas to urban slums due to poverty, river erosion, loss of cultivable land and livelihoods, land-grabbing and large developmental and industrial projects such as mining, building dams etc. This paper concentrates on one of the oldest and biggest slums in Dhaka, the Korail slum. In the course of the years, parts of it have been evicted several times, and there have been violent confrontations between the government authorities and the residents. Based on two months of fieldwork including interviewing representatives, staff
members and practitioners of several NGOs working directly with slum issues, forced displacement and migration; also experts, researchers, academicians, academician activists working with the same issues, this paper examines local expert’s perception on slum communities and evictions. Findings show what they think about how this issue can be tackled in a more peaceful, practical and effective way. Thus, it will ensure the interests of both the slum communities and the government.

Kidpromma, Amnuaypond

*Womanhood And Female Agency In Bengali Vaishnava Sahajiya Tradition*

This paper examines how Vaishnava [Sahajiya] female renouncers exercise their power and agency within Vaishnava patriarchal framework. The Vaishnava tradition is the bhakti tradition blended together with tantric practices, believing that an esoteric ritual (yugal sadhana) is a way to liberation in which a joint renunciation of female-male pairs (yugal sadhu) is highly required. That said, unlike the Brahmanical renunciation, Vaishnava accepts women as a legitimate renouncer. Drawing on a well-grounded ethnography of Bengal Vaishnava renouncers, I suggest that one way in which Vaishnava female renouncers try to find advantage in their way of life is to align themselves with the conventional Hindu and Vaishnava male-confined tradition. Accordingly, in contrast to the Western Feminist discourse, the female agency that we will see in this paper is not described in terms of resistance to male domination. It is not about women marching on the road to protest against patriarchy. It is also not about women wanting to become like men and take over their privileged position. For Vaishnava practitioners, female agency is about how to live harmoniously by following virtues constructed under the ideal of ‘womanhood’. Yet, to a degree, it is these women who actively maintain and sustain the patriarchal system.

Kishore, Sushant

*The Ludic Reification Of Hindutva – The Hindu Self And Muslim Others In Play/Games*

Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), the flagbearer of Hindutva in India has persisted through three federal bans and operated under the garb of a “cultural” organization, as opposed to a political one, and affected the transformation of real-politik in India. The Sangh has affected this through ninety years of insidious expansion into the quotidian sphere of the urban middle class and mobilizing communities of diverse backgrounds and interests against an imagined common enemy, an outsider who raided of temples, ravened cows, ravished Hindu women and reproduced rapidly – the Muslim. This imagination of the Muslims is perpetuated and practiced in routine performances of Self and the Other in the exercises, games, rituals and the informal pedagogy of the Shakha – over fifty thousand daily congregations where millions of volunteers are indoctrinated into the ideology of Hindutva. Based on ethnographic data and, the paper discusses the deployment of play, exercise and ludic activities towards the construction of a Pavlovian subjectivity tied to the commands of the Supreme Leader through the whistle of his proxies. This physical training goes hand in hand with ideological and cognitive conditioning. Focusing on the banal Shakha, and its processes of psychosomatic conditioning, the paper discusses the discourses, and discursive performativity, that reinvent, reimagine and reproduce the Muslim Other against whom the Hindu Self must be constructed.

Kiss, Csaba

*Devotion Unmarked: The Reinterpretation Of The Four Life-Stages In The Vṛṣasārasaṃgraha*

The Vṛṣasārasaṃgraha (7–9th centuries), a hitherto unedited lay Śaiva (but partly also Vaishnava and Dharmaśāstra-type) text transmitted in the so-called Śivadharma-corpus, makes an attempt to wholly internalise the four life-stages (āśrama) of orthodox Brahmanism, and at the same time to strip them of any outer signs. At various loci, it gives lists of orthodox ‘marks of devotion’ (such as clothes, the sacred thread, girdles, ash-marks, seats, rosaries, water-jars, etc.) now reinterpreted as internalised qualities (such as the meaning of sacred texts, the three guṇas, compassion, truthfulness, etc.). I
propose to investigate the motifs behind this process and behind the total and conspicuous absence of any other mention of ‘marks of devotion’ in the Vṛṣaṅgasaṃgraha. Was the redactors’ main purpose to level out the text’s various sectarian affiliations by wiping out any concrete teachings on visible marks? Is this a reflection of contemporary communities with mixed identities? Is this also a critique of the orthodox āśramas?

Kloos, Stephan
(Con)Textualizing Asian Medicines: The “Documentization” Of Sowa Rigpa And The Anthropology Of Texts

As Asian medicines are increasingly integrated into national health systems, and as their progressive industrialization exposes them to national and international regimes of standardization and regulation, we can observe a triple process of “documentization. This process entails: 1) The increasing regulation of Asian medicines through normative documents, such as government acts, drug laws, health and economic strategy papers, national curricula, WHO and WTO policies, etc. 2) An increasing documentation of their practice and knowledge through ostensibly descriptive (but usually also normative) texts, such as official pharmacopoeias, the paper trails demanded by GMP regulations, drug registers, and practitioner certificates. 3) Increasing scrutiny of Asian medicines and their industries, which include both critical scholarly research and public debates in the media. In this paper, I use the case of Sowa Rigpa in South Asia to trace these three processes of documentation. I will show that while texts - mostly in the form of medical treatises - have always been important in Sowa Rigpa, today with the emergence of this new textual genre of “documents”, texts are more central than ever to its knowledge, practice, and politics. I argue that textual research needs to take these documents as seriously as the classical canon, and that anthropological research needs to take them as seriously as conventional ethnographic data. In fact, anthropological expertise is indispensable to correctly read and contextualize this textual genre, and utilize it to generate a better understanding of Sowa Rigpa and Asian medicines today.

Knoll, Eva-Maria
Biomedical Remoteness And Service Decentralization In The Maldive Islands

Relationships between islands and human health are multifaceted. Today South Asian islands qualify as desired recreational outposts; in the past they served as supply stopover in maritime networks, and inevitably, as hubs in disease dispersion or as epicenters of endemic disease formation. Vulnerable to resource scarcity, seasonal storms and drought, small coral islands were particularly challenging to human wellbeing. Yet, these small-scaled, discrete islands also functioned as liminal quarantine spaces, leper colonies and manageable laboratory and eradication settings. This paper discusses the Maldives as a graphic example. For centuries the archipelago was haunted by endemic Maldivian Fever. Genetic founder effects – deposits from ancient monsoon trade and European expansion – sustainably shaped the population, and epidemics traveled fast through the close-knit island communities. The islands remained an uncharted part of the biomedical world well into the 1950s. Successful pathogen eradication programs, esp. of Malaria and Filariasis, proved to be watershed events in the island/health nexus. This transformation allowed for the advent of the thriving Maldivian tourism industry in the 1970s. Since the Maldives have developed into the only upper-middle-income country in South Asia, biomedical remoteness is rooted in tensions between strategies of consolidating and decentralizing power, population and service. The underserved ‘outer islands’ became the contested focal point. Using a medical anthropology approach and an inherited blood disorder as a magnifier lens this paper reveals a perspective from the health periphery on the ongoing struggle for health equity.
**Koch, Ebba**

**New Evidence For Mughal Agra As Waterfront City.**

The riverfront at Agra once formed one of the great sights of Mughal India. In addition to the Emperor Akbar’s fort and the Taj Mahal, both banks of the River Jumna were lined with palatial garden pavilions, mansions and imperial gardens. The riverfront scheme thus gives us fascinating insights about imperial family connections, the Mughal court society, its ethnicities, social conditions and property rights. Today uncontrolled urban development has obliterated the Mughal riverfront city to a large extent. A map of Agra in the Jaipur City Palace Museum (1720s) shows the whole riverside on both banks lined with gardens and palaces from north of the city wall down round the great bend to the Taj Mahal itself. In my book The Complete Taj Mahal and the Riverfront Gardens of Agra (2006/2012) I reconstructed much of the Mughal riverfront city on the basis of the Jaipur map, later British maps, drawings and photos, ground surveys and textual sources. In the present paper I discuss a manuscript scroll of Agra (ca. 1827–31) which was recently added to the British Library’s collections. It shows the river as a blank straight path in the middle of the scroll, its great bend is ignored, while the buildings and gardens on either side are rendered in elevation strung out along a straight base line. Inscriptions in English and Urdu are written above each building, indicating the owners of the gardens, many still going back to the time of Shah Jahan. The new evidence of the scroll is of crucial importance in further recreating what had been one of the great imperial cities of the world as it appeared in the early nineteenth century.

**Kothari, Priya**

**On Katha And Koshtak: Imaging The Seven-Day Sermon In The Vallabha Devotional Community**

Over the last two decades, seven-day sermons (saptas) dedicated to celebrating the life and poetic memory of Lord Krishna have become one of the most popular and pervasive mediums for mass religious education in India, and increasingly around the world. Seated on a throne at the head of the katha congregation, through whom divine speech flows, is the globetrotting guru-preacher – one of the most compelling global images of bhakti today. I propose to explore how the powerful image of Vallabhacharya spreading his teachings through saptas, and specifically, Bhagavata Katha, is created by preachers in live homiletic performance. In this paper, I focus on Gujarati-language sermons performed by Pushtimargi preachers alongside devotional iconography of Vallabhacharya in western India and the United States. I ground this contemporary study in largely untapped 19th and 20th century Gujarati-Brajbhasha-Sanskrit catalogues (koshtak) that bring together hagiographies, katha charts and guidelines, and detailed illustrations of Vallabha and his descendants with devotees. I trace the carefully constructed image of Vallabhacharya performing saptas in these materials, paying close attention to continuities from the Vedic and Puranic traditions, commentarial works and varta literature as well as new artistic representations of guruhood and preaching that emerge in the modern context. By analyzing the ways in which Pushtimargi preachers remember Vallabhacharya as a preacher of the Bhagavata, I hope to shed light on the significant role that images of preaching play in shaping and sustaining local and transnational publics of bhakti.

**Kraler, Magdalena**

**The Occult In Modern Yoga: The Latent Light Culture And Yogic Breath Cultivation (Prānāyāma), 1905–1935**

Up to c. 1950, modern yoga was ingrained in the heritage ofnineteenth-century occultism. Theosophy and American New Thought as oneof the most important strands of occultism informed what modern yoga was to become. This is particularly evident when examining yogic breathcultivation, a phrase I use as an umbrella to include both indigenous prānāyāma and imported breath practices. Presenting the Latent Light Culture, founded by T. R. Sanjivi (d. 1941) in South India in 1905, as a case study, this paper will show how yoga and occultism are blended, and that, against this backdrop, prānāyāma finds new interpretations. The occult society's main publishing organ is the Kalpaka, an
occult magazine having its first edition in 1908. Moreover, the society survives until today by offering correspondence courses. One of the most important figures to influence South Asian integrations of occultism and yoga was the American New Thought author William Walker Atkinson (1862–1932) who published books on “yoga” and “Hindu yogi breathing” under the pseudonym Yogi Ramacharaka. Although the Latent Light Culture conceived occultism as inherently Indian, the society was simultaneously part of a transnational network to inform and distribute its work. In drawing on a chapter of my PhD-thesis on modern yogic breath cultivation, I aim to exemplify that occultism was a crucial framework to reinterpret yogic techniques not just in Euro-American contexts, but also within India.

Krieg, Johan

*Reading The Bhagavad Gita From An Eco-Humanistic Perspective On The Banks Of The River Ganga In Rishikesh (North India).*

Parmarth Niketan, led from 1986 by Swami Chidanand Saraswati, has become today the largest ashram in Rishikesh and one of the most powerful religious institution in contemporary India. A growing number of disciples, pilgrims, domestic and international tourists go to this ashram to receive the teaching of Swami Chidanand Saraswati. The everyday life lived by Swami Chidanand Saraswati does not concur with the orientalist idea that ascetics live a life withdrawn, deeply absorbed into a silent contemplative gaze upon God and separate from the everyday lives of other Hindus. The environmental and Social welfare program established by Parmarth Niketan is rich in its diversity: tiger conservation, green building, reforestation, conservation of the river Ganga, disaster relief, promote collective social harmony and social stability, etc. Swami Chidanand Saraswati stressed the point that Hinduism is an intrinsically humanistic and eco-friendly religion. He reinterpreted Hindu philosophical and religious ideas, especially the Bhagavad Gita, in order to face today’s global challenges. It should be noted that to offer ecological or humanist interpretations of Hindu beliefs is an interpretation of tradition rather than a traditional interpretation. It follows the patterns described by Hobsbawm and Ranger who speak about “the use of ancient materials to construct invented traditions of a novel type for quite novel purposes” (2003, p. 6). Understanding the mechanism by which the doctrines propounded in the Bhagavad Gita are transformed into social and environmental ethics is a complex issue that will be discussed.

Kuehn, Sara

*Sacred Waterscapes As Ecological Habitats For Endangered Animal Species At Sufi Shrines In The Indian Subcontinent*

At Sufi shrines in the Indian subcontinent the valuable resource of water is often encoded with both spiritual and environmental meaning. This paper investigates the ancient practice of keeping ‘sacred’ animals in water sources associated with Sufi sanctuaries. It will focus on water ponds at the shrine of Bayazid Bistami at Chittagong in Bangladesh, and its association with the huge enigmatic black soft-shell turtle called Bistami Kasim; at the Shah Jalal Shrine at Sylhet in Bangladesh which has snakehead fish; and at the shrine of Sufi Pir Mangho, named after Hajji Seyyed Khawaja Hasan Sakhi Sultan, at Karachi in Pakistan, and the Khan Jahan Ali Shrine at Khulna in Bangladesh, both of which house enormous mugger crocodiles. By offering a safe habitat and breeding ground for animals that are members of very rare and endangered species, the sacred water structures that form an important part of the sanctuaries’ topography, function as pivotal refuge. The animals are venerated, fed by hand and protected. They attract large numbers of locals and pilgrims of different religions who queue every day to seek blessings from these animals thought to have restorative properties and to be able to grant boons. Traditionally, they are believed to be the descendants of ‘spirits’ that were metamorphosed into these creatures. The rationale for preserving sacred water sources as spatial habitat for these animals is based on religious beliefs passed down through generations. Drawing upon ethnographic research, local archives and folklore, I will discuss the ecological significance of such hydrological sites and the important role they play in local traditions.
Kulriya, Mukesh

Ramdev’s Mela: A Study Of Pilgrimage From Western India

The saint tradition in the medieval period was a very important phenomenon across the South Asia region. In Rajasthan, Ramdev is one such 14th century figure. He is said to be a Rajput prince and avatar of lord Krishna on one hand, an Ismaili missionary, and son of a Dalit on the other. During his lifetime, he is said to have performed miracles and his teachings have a strong anti-caste assertion and egalitarian spirit. He is very popular among the lower castes and Muslim but was detested by upper castes until recently. In the 20th c. the popularity of Ramdev grew exponentially and it gets reflected in the performance tradition and ritual associated with him. I look at Pilgrimage or Mela as it is popularly called in Rajasthan, an important festival for Ramdev’s devotees. In this paper, I will look at the idea of pilgrimage, what does it mean to walk to the shrine for devotees? How do the sacred geography and sacred calendar come into being? What is the significance of the smaller shrines for the pilgrims? What are the codes and conduct during the pilgrimage? I will take one pilgrimage route as a case study and try to link it up with all the questions raised in the intervention section. What does the idea of walking in a group to a sacred place as experience and memory mean to people, which unlike orthodox pilgrimage breaks the social barrier and facilitate intermingling of people from different social status? How does it negotiate the space of pilgrimage with the older pilgrims? This paper deals with the crucial question of caste, especially in context of recent development that the number of upper caste followers has increased significantly.

Kumar, Bagesh

Marx-Vaad Na Mao-Vaad Sabse Upar Rastravaad: Understanding Right Wing Student Activism

Right-wing ideologies have taken center-stage in national politics across the globe, including many nations in South Asia. Affecting several institutions at once, universities too have witnessed growth in right-wing activism. In India, universities have remained fertile grounds for contestation between students of varied ideological persuasions. This contestation has become more heightened in the last decade. This study, based in Hyderabad Central University, explores the motivations and aspirations of the right-wing student groups. Employing qualitative methodology, this paper examines the iconography, mobilizations, and politics of student groups through unstructured interviews and participant observation. This paper contributes especially in contextualizing celebrated political moments nationally (5 August, 26 January, Kargil Divas), within the setting of campus mobilizations. The shrinking space for dialogue and pursuit of progressive ideals are intertwined with the democratic deficit under market-determined regimes. Liberal politics often misreading the social reality of the marginalized sections, confounds their call for an alternative as a confirmation of its own agendas. The right-wing groups strategically use the discontent with liberal elitist politics to further their agendas along the fault lines of caste, class, and gender. Public spaces hijacked to interpret academic and social issues, appease the traditional constituency of upper-caste elites on the one hand, but also the disenchanted marginalized students on the other. The ideological conflict is further made violent by deploying the ‘repressive state apparatus’ to maintain right-wing hegemony.

Kumbhar, Kiran

The Doctor-Society Relationship In India Before The Rise Of Corporate-Style Hospitals, 1947–1980

Since the 1980s, highly consequential changes have occurred in medical education and medical provision in India, particularly the increasing presence and dominance of private medical colleges and corporate-style hospitals. These developments are commonly blamed by many doctors in India for the commercialization of medical practice and for the metamorphosis of the patient-doctor encounter into a ‘consumer-provider’ transaction. However, a historical exploration of the perceptions and attitudes of doctors and the public shows that the ‘service versus business’ aspects of biomedical practice were being debated in India for decades the 1980s. Besides, neither biomedicine nor bio-
medical doctors have ever enjoyed complete hegemony in terms of public support and trust. In this paper I trace the tumultuous evolution of the relationship between the biomedical profession and the public in India from 1947 till 1980. I explore the reflective writings of doctors in medical journals, memoirs, popular magazines, etc., the writings of journalists and other members of the public, and documents related to legal suits against physicians, to better understand how doctors and people in India thought about each other before corporate-style medical care provision further transformed these perceptions. This study will thus help understand better the origins of the radical changes that occurred in the relationship between doctors and patients in India beginning in the 1980s - changes that have had immense social and cultural impact in the country.

Kuzhiyan, Muneer Aram

Pleasurably Pious: The Case Of Muslim Wedding Songs (Oppana) From Kerala, South India

The terms “tradition” and “reform” have often been mobilized to understand Muslim subjectivities and forms of sociability. Alternatively, a textualist/lived Islam dyad has provided the model for analyzing disparate Muslim practices, “religious” or not. The bone of contention within these debates has often revolved around what is “more Islamic” or “less Islamic” about Muslim practices. While piety/everyday Islam models offer important yet divergent insights into Muslim “self-fashioning,” these models often tend to privilege piety or pleasure—each to the exclusion of the other. Against this backdrop, my paper explores the wedding song-tradition (oppana) of Mappilas from the South Indian state of Kerala with an emphasis on how this tradition brings into relief a situation wherein the piety/pleasure binary is pushed to its limits and comes undone. Oppana inhabits an ambivalent as well as ambiguous space, a space that is invested with both piety and pleasure without being reducible to either. Arabi Malayalam songs celebrating the marriage of the Prophet Muhammad and his wives form the mainstay of the Mappila performance art known as oppana. While the religious content of the oppana songs inspires devotional piety, the (oppana) performance renders itself “carnivalesque” such that its devotional value gets tempered by the aesthetic dimensions involved. Oppana, a contentious practice, throws up subtle questions of theological legitimacy for “devout” Muslims. This notwithstanding, it serves as a site that destabilizes any neat and rigid distinction between sacred/profane, piety/pleasure, and tradition/reform. My paper will illuminate this nuance in ethnographic detail.

Laloo, Sashi Teibor

Up-Rooting Colonial Boundaries: Narratives From Jaintiapur And The Southern Khasi Chiefdoms

Meghalaya, a state in North-East India is inhabited by the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo indigenous communities. Based on their geographical settlement, the British eventually categorized the highlands as the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo hills respectively. Upon signing the Instrument of Accession in 1947–48, it was recorded that twenty-five independent Khasi Chiefs (out of which two were forced) joined the Indian Republic. Coming to the Southern region of Meghalaya, Jaintapur, as well as the number of Khasi Chiefdoms, shared a border with Sylhet in Northern Bangladesh. Therefore, the history of the Khasi-Jaintia communities inhabiting the southern foothills can/should never be studied in isolation, an error seen committed by many scholars researching on the various tribes on North-East India. The Khasi-Jaintia for centuries were engaged in brisk socio-economic relations with Sylhet and other neighbouring hill communities. On a personal note, my paternal family hails from Wahlong, a village (once chiefdom) that bordered Bangladesh. This paper, therefore, will briefly discuss the history of political and socio-economic relations between Wahlong and the plains of Bangladesh during the colonial and post-colonial period. The paper will also bring to light the consequences of drawing the Radcliffe line (a colonial boundary based on separatist ideas) across the region in 1947. Shifting the focus from Punjab and Bengal, Partition experiences concerning the hardships of my grandmother and other indigenous communities of North-East India deserves much more academic attention in the overall understanding of Partition Studies in the Indian Subcontinent.
Lanzillo, Amanda

**Building Princely States: Mobile Intermediaries, Labor, And Islamic Heritage 1857–1915**

This paper analyzes the technical practices of architecture and construction in three Muslim-led princely states—Hyderabad, Bhopal, and Rampur. These three states were linked by employment networks that drew in Indian technical intermediaries like engineers, draftsmen, overseers, and lead masons. Mobile intermediaries evolved new technical, aesthetic, and material practices that connected not only the architectural styles, but also the labor regimes of construction between these states. The paper focuses on the labor and technical work at projects of monumental Islamic architecture, including mosques, tombs, and shrines, as well as repairs to older Muslim monuments in Hyderabad, Bhopal, and Rampur. Despite divergent ideologies, in all three states trained technical intermediaries applied materials and technologies associated with industrial and architectural modernity to the re-imagination of regional Islamic heritage. I draw on recent scholarship that has analyzed princely state reorientations of colonial modernities, as well as work on the architecture of the three states. To understand how concepts of architectural modernity and Islamic heritage evolved in tandem between states, I use state records reflecting the employment of mobile intermediaries and use of materials and technologies of construction. In addition, I analyze overlooked local construction, engineering, and masonry manuals, written primarily in Urdu between the mid nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I argue that even when technical intermediaries themselves did not move between states, they shared technical practices and labor expectations codified in this corpus of educational literature.

Larios, Borayin

**Manifesting Divinity In The Everyday – Pune’s Wayside Shrines**

Wayside shrines are sites of creative, idiosyncratic, and unorthodox types of engagement that have no corollary in text or official history. Does the emplacement of a Hanumān shrine in a wall that prevents its traditional clockwise circumambulation (pradaksinā) around the image trigger creative alternatives such as turning on one’s axis on the spot instead? Or does the presence of a shrine in a congested area with little standing space invite a “drive-through darshan” rather than an elaborate ritual at the shrine? In which ways do the materiality and physical environment of urban, public shrines incite the expression of specific ritual practices, modes of devotion, and bodily movement? How do wayside shrines located in the old, yet mixed neighborhoods of Somvār and Rastā Peeths defy civility, legality, and secularism in the public space? How do they, at the same time, shape the everyday rhythms of those who encounter them? Drawing from recent anthropological fieldwork in the old neighborhoods of Pune, Maharashtra, and using Lefebvre’s conceptual frame of rhythm analysis, this paper will try to answer some of these questions by focusing on the creation and negotiation of “sacred” space, and the material expression of religiosity in public space.

Latief, Farhana (and Haque, Reyazul)

**Forensic Nationalism: Everyday Politics Of Normalising Violence**

This paper analyses the preference of use of forensic science methods in ‘certain chosen violence related cases’ in the processes of legal investigation within the criminal justice system in India. The paper argue that this preference of forensic methods is aimed at deliberately complicating the processes of criminal investigations which renders the justice mechanism inaccessible to the people at large who do not understand the language of forensics techniques and the results thereof. This paper will employ the case studies of Godhra Train case (2002), Shopian Rape and Murder case (2009), and the case of Akhlaq’s lynching (2015) to substantiate the argument of the paper. Moreover, this forensic investigation culture has also led to the creation of such a socio-political environment where certain political claims get legitimised as facts which leads to obfuscation of an otherwise transpicuous facts. Using this framework, we illustrate how the use of forensic science methods of investigation in ‘ran-
domly yet handpicked cases of violence’ has created a space for the rise of contemporary right-wing anti-minority politics in India where violence is normalised in absence of any sense of accountability. And as an extension of this sense of impunity, the delay in delivery of justice assists the agenda of the right-wing nationalist parties. For this purpose, our paper will problematise the reliability of forensic science on one hand, and will investigate the tendency to displace the question of socio-political justice with a web of what can be called ‘forensic facts’, which eventually normalises the crime and feeds into the making of a majoritarian right-wing political order.

Lemtur, Nokmedemla

Uncovering Hidden Histories: Himalayan Porters In German Archive

Dominant narratives on mountaineering histories have covered the story of German expeditions in the Himalayas between 1929 and 1939 as one of man’s attempt to conquer nature and project the power of their nation. While it captures the fascinating endeavors of German efforts in the Himalayan peaks, the labor force involved in these expeditions often remain side-lined in the peripheries of such narrative and appear as logistical appendages and anecdotes in various reports. This paper draws the attention to the German alpine club archive, which provides rich potential to trace the lives of individual laborers and also provide information on the larger workforce involved in the efforts of climbing the peak. While this paper is grounded in historical research, it presents the potential of focusing on archives of smaller institutions with links to India’s past. In doing so it attempts to show the entanglements that transcends the geographical bounds of the mountains, this paper attempts to further push the notion of the Himalayas as a trans-cultural space and retrieve hidden histories of mountaineering expedition labor.

Lubin, Timothy

“The Wise Thief And The Brahmin Felon

Starting from an analysis of Mīmāṁsā hermeneutics as employed in Medhātithi’s discussion of Mānavadharmaśāstra 8.314–318 (the famous example of the “wise thief” who seeks the king’s punishment as a form of penance), and Vijñāneśvara’s commentary on Yajñavalkyadharmaśāstra 2.21, which proclaims principles for dealing with conflicts of śrūti-rules, taking as an illustration the problem of self-defense against a Brahmin attacker (quoting MDh 8.348–351). In the course of reconciling the legality of the king’s court with Veda-based, otherworldly considerations such as sin and expiation, these passages show that punishments and penances constitute distinct forms of legal remedy serving different purposes and prescribed by different authorities; the case of the “wise thief” is but the contrived exception that proves the rule. This issue is shown to reflect the more thorough-going distinction between worldly obligations (social compacts, royal commands) and sacred obligations conveyed by Vedic injunctions. This distinction is further linked by the commentators to that between Dharmaśāstra and Arthaśāstra, subordinating the latter to the former.

Lunardo, Filippo

Powerful Places And Dangerous Beings. A 18th Century Dge Lugs Pa Text On gCod.

In the practice and ritual of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of gCod, it is decisive, for the purpose of the practice or ritual themselves, to meditate in places and environments considered particularly dangerous and frightening, as abodes of powerful and hostile non-human beings. In the dGe lugs school of Tibetan Buddhism, the gCod experience has been transmitted mainly by two traditions: the dBen sa tradition and the oral tradition of the dākinis, which particularly stresses practices and meditations in 108 scary places after a special initiation. This paper investigates some special indications of a dBen sa tradition commentary text, the gCod gzhung thar ‘dod ded dpon ma’i tshig don gsal bar ston pa’i nyams len gsal ba’i sgron me, found in the volume 14 of the collected works of the 8th Dalai Lama’s tutor, the yongs ‘dzin Yes shes rgyal msthan (1713–1793). Such indications concern the defini-
tion and the construction of an inner ideal pilgrimage through the description of real scary places, defined by special and unique shapes and atmospheres, and perceived as abodes for a varied range of harmful spirits and non-human entities. All these elements are described by the text as necessary conditions for the manifestation of inner virtues and afflictions: scary places and their inhabitants are to be considered by the god pa as a starting point experience in itself at the beginning of his particular and dangerous spiritual path.

Mahato, Nirmal
Adivasi Water Harvesting System In The Jungle Mahals, Eastern India: An Alternative Idea For Sustainable Future

This paper intends to project the Adivasis (indigenous and tribal people of India) water management in the Jungle Mahals, Eastern India, as an alternative idea in the recent water debates. The Adivasi people had arguably developed their rich knowledge in hydrological management and engineering, dealing with their survey of topography, natural water resources, digging of ponds and nullahs (small channels), raising of embankments, arrest soil erosion and siltation of ponds (bandh). A hydraulic society was developed where water management was closely related to their life and livelihood, social classes, irrigation and agriculture and resource utilization. For the Adivasis, waterscapes may embody living entities, ritual hubs and medium to the ancient mythic world. These people not only conserved the water but also considered the ponds as venerable social relatives with some spiritual qualities, which was reflected in the tattoos drawn on their skin. Thus those ponds became integrated component of their noosphere. Their experience of the water management advocates ethical values that helped them to regulate interactions with their natural environment. Adivasi ways of rain water harvesting accelerated landscape heterogeneity as they planted trees on the banks of the bandh and created an environment to grow an ecosystem around it. The traditional knowledge of the Adivasis has its own significance because of its ecological rational- it’s inspirational being the sustainable use of ecosystem in which it had developed.

Maini, Monika
Student Activism For Saving Public Universities In India: Reflections On Idea Of The University, Student Solidarity And Movement Towards Social Justic

Since, the rise of right-wing government in 2014 the public universities in India, known for their ethos of critical thinking are under the threat of reduced autonomy and increased privatization as expressed by recent policy initiatives. The one university that has undergone a huge turmoil is Jawahar Lal Nehru University (JNU). In order to preserve the democratic ethos of the university, the student activists started “Save the JNU” campaign in 2014 after the Police arrest of their Student union leader for participating in a protest. Since, then this campaign has garnered transnational student support as well as solidarity from students and teachers from universities across India along with the support of liberal thinkers from community such as actors and Journalists. This paper, will investigate the moral arguments of student activists campaigning to ‘save the JNU’ to save Public universities. Drawing from the philosophical idea of the university given by Kant and Habermas, this paper will illustrate how the moral logic is utilized by students to develop alliances with teachers and community to save the public system of higher education. Further I will discuss how the new form of activism disrupt the hegemonic form of leftist activism, questioning the class primacy in leftist student collectives. Highlighting the incidences of persistence of caste, class and ideological hierarchies within the student activist spaces, I argue that these hierarchies limits the egalitarian potential of this movement for higher education for all. Yet there is deployment of strategies to achieve solidarities across ideological differences for social justice.
Malinar, Angelika  
**Coping With “Karmayoga” In Late Nineteenth Century Interpretations Of The Bhagavadgita**  
By the end of the 19th century interpretations of the Bhagavadgītā (BhG) had become a site of religious and political entanglements and were tied into the larger debates about of colonial-modern regimes of power. Interpretations of the text were also negotiating current ideas about the relationship between religion and politics. In this connection, the expression “karmayoga” famously became a catch-word for a certain mode of (political) engagement inspired by ancient Hindu religion. Often in rather abstract ways, the BhG was acknowledged as the source of the catch-word and of the newly emerging figure of the “karmayogin”. But the actual interpretation of the compound as used in the BhG complicated matters for contemporary interpreters due to the semantic polyvalence of “karma” and “yoga” and to the various interpretive perspectives attached to them. The talk deals with such complications in interpretations of the BhG by Swami Vivekananda and Annie Besant.

Mandhwani, Aakriti  
**From The Age Of Dharmyug To The Age Of Dharmvir Bharti**  
The proposed paper will examine the Hindi weekly Dharmyug in the context of the first two decades of post Independence India. Dharmyug was published from 1948 until 1993 by the Bennett, Coleman and Company group. I will particularly focus on the group’s appointment of Dharmvir Bharti, a prominent modernist Hindi writer, as Dharmyug’s editor in 1959. Under Bharti, Dharmyug consciously veered from the Hindu religious content by which it was previously dominated, and instead ambitiously promoted high literary fiction as well as intellectually robust content focused on contemporary pan-India and global philosophical and literary movements. This alteration in the magazine’s offerings resonated with the readers, and led to steep rise in circulation and an unprecedented readership, making Dharmyug the largest selling Hindi magazine of the 1950s and 60s. I will briefly situate the editorial shift within the larger commercial logic that was born out of the success of other Hindi middlebrow magazines in the immediate post-Independence period, as well as other magazines published under the Bennett, Coleman and Company group. In showing post-Independence middlebrow publishing’s conflation of distinctions between “literary” and “commercial” publishing, the paper shall problematize ideas around the “literary” in Hindi. I shall then discuss two examples of travel pieces about domestic life in America published just immediately before and after Bharti’s appointment, and show how Dharmyug fashioned the figure of the ideal cosmopolitan Indian self specifically under the shadow of the Cold War, juxtaposing it seamlessly against a national “Indian” identity and its values of ideal domesticity.

Mantena, Rama  
**Political Futures And The Ends Of Empire: Anti-Colonialism, Federation And Civil Liberties In Twentieth-Century South India**  
The princely state of Hyderabad became home to a unique confluence of political debate, combining questions about the future of Muslim politics and states on the subcontinent with discussions of post-colonial federation. Hyderabad, in the 1940s, was a multilingual and multireligious society, a predominantly Hindu society governed by a Muslim king (the opposite of Kashmir where a numerous Muslim population was governed by a Hindu monarch). What arose in Hyderabad in the colonial period was an emergent critique of monarchy along with an explicit desire for the continuance of the Hyderabad polity, either as a federated unit of India, or as an independent state, after the withdrawal of the British. Previously the history of linguistic nationalism that led to the formation of the first regional state of Andhra Pradesh immediately in post-independence India has been analyzed without any consideration of the history of the dissolution of its powerful neighbor, the princely state of Hyderabad. This produced a widening gap in the historical literature that was at a loss to give voice to political aspirations incubating in the erstwhile Hyderabad state that were broader than the trium-
phalist nationalism of the Indian National Congress. My current research turns to analyze the parallel development of public life, political modernity, the mapping of democratic futures in British India and the Princely state of Hyderabad. Some were coordinated efforts, others were parallel but all were in dialogue with larger international discourses of self-determination and federation to ultimately rethink political futures towards a people-centered government in postcolonial South Asia.

Martelli, Jean-Thomas
*Indian Student Politics As Political Communities: A Subalternist Reading*

This contribution builds on subalternist readings of the community to conceptualise the democratic relevance of student politics in contemporary India. Its ambition is to revisit Partha Chatterjee’s notion of ‘mediation’ between elite and subaltern modalities of political participation. I argue that select student communities – and not only individual political brokers – emerging from flagship public university spaces reformulate popular aspirations of political society into the language of representative politics. Within such institutional premises, youth from deprived backgrounds – who benefit from reservation policies – are socialised in a transformative environment in which political stands by student organisations progressively reconfigure affiliations based on class, caste, gender, religion and social upbringing. While fuelling upward social mobility, political self-change in these universities enables the constitution of a campus community as a public sphere, through channelling critical claims over the functioning and the orientations of the Indian state. I engage with archives of activist material at Jawaharlal Nehru University since the 1970s, and show that student pamphleteering operationalises textual and social expressions of ‘mediation’ between elites and the subaltern. Because pamphlets, both as material objects and rhetoric style claim political truth, they operationalise ‘bourgeois’ forms of association free from the state. Agonistic and vituperative, calls for action of pamphleteers make politics a public concern, equip politically the disenfranchised on campus, and nurture a democratic space targeted by the governmental aspirations of the state.

Melnikova, Nora
*Conceptual Transfer In Translations Of Early Modern Hindi Bhakti Poetry*

The ideas proposed in this paper inhabit the intersection of the fields of religious studies and applied linguistics. Based on the case study, the translations of Early Modern Hindi bhakti poetry into English, the ideas of concept transfer as a type of crosslinguistic influence (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008) and religion as a eurocentric, non-transferable concept (Fitzgerald, 2000) will be explored. In particular, the paper will examine different ways in which translators dealt with various aspects of “religion” in their translations of Early Modern Hindi bhakti poetry. At the same time, it will take into account the fact that the concept of religion has been a disputed subject, especially since the crucial work of Timothy Fitzgerald was published. While translators might be very well acquainted with a concept network of a different cultural milieu, they cannot evade the task of match-making of non-corresponding concepts for the sake of their audience. That is how dharmashastra becomes a code of law, sant a saint, veda a holy scripture, and dharma religion. When translating devotional literature such as the bhakti poetry, a plenitude of “religious” terminology related issues arise that need resolving. This paper will analyze and classify different types of solutions to these problems that can be found in English translations of poems of the prominent sant poets Kabir, Surdas and Mirabai.

Menon, Minakshi
*Editing And “Translating” The Amarakośa: Henry Thomas Colebrooke And The Making Of Colonial Botany, C. 1800*

This paper examines the editorial strategy followed by the Indologist, H.T. Colebrooke (1765–1837), in translating and publishing the famous Sanskrit verse lexicon, the Amarakośa. August Wilhelm von Schlegel praised Colebrooke’s edition of the Amara as a “vortreffliche Bearbeitung”, but his editorial
practices remain a puzzle for later readers. For example, he recorded variant readings of words, especially plant names, in his footnotes without mentioning the manuscripts in which those variants occurred. Here I argue that in order to understand Colebrooke’s translation we must connect it to his natural-knowledge-making practices. Colebrooke used his translation to stabilize the Sanskrit names of plants by connecting them to their Linnaean binomials. His translation thus became a way in which an old cultural form – the Sanskrit lexicon – was transformed to produce a new form of knowledge – colonial botany.

**Menon, Shailaja**

*Periyar: Forging A New Female Self*

If there is one group which has perennially found itself at the margins because of its social location across South Asia, it’s the category of gender. Albeit heterogeneous by nature, women have borne the burden of history, community, tradition and even geography being violently mapped across their bodies. No wonder that the past two centuries has witnessed heated debates on the women’s question in the region ranging from the Altekarian paradigm to the valorized mother figure who is ever nurturing and generous. Many social reformers both male and female sought to battle orthodoxy, religious chauvinism and caste based status-quoism widening the contours of gender justice in the process. The tropes revolved around consent and coercion, public battles over scriptural legitimacy and contentious traditions. The reformers were treading on delicate grounds as the sacred domain of the ‘home’ had to be kept immune from any polluting winds of ‘western’ ideology. Periyar deliberated deeply on the gender issues of his time and sought to forge a new semantics for the same. His speeches and writings worked to create a discursive context which enabled women to be part of the public domain and express their politics in various forms. Periyar also articulated on sexuality, masculinity, the need for a new aesthetics which would prove to be more liberative for women. This paper seeks to unravel the new forms of conjugality, ideas on chastity and motherhood, creating a public space for women through political and literary endeavours as envisaged by Periyar and his Self Respect politics.

**Metivier, Krishni**

*Fighting At The Margins: An Interdisciplinary Approach To The Invisibility Of Black Hindus*

Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) famously addressed the mythic center of modernity, Europe, as “hyper-real.” In Hindu studies, India is another “hyperreal.” Despite portrayals of Hinduism as global and transnational, most narratives perpetuate racial-religious paradigms in favor of an imagined West (i.e. white Europeans and Americans) and an imagined East (i.e. South Asians and the South Asian diaspora). The trend significantly overlooks African Hinduisms (e.g. Ghanananda Swaraswati in Ghana), Hinduisms in the African diaspora (e.g. ashram of jazz musician Alice Coltrane), and even Indians of African descent (Siddis) who migrated, voluntarily and involuntarily, to India during the Indian Ocean slave trade. This paper reflects upon an interdisciplinary method used to sufficiently tackle the marginality and invisibility of black Hindus. First, my study examines the racial-religious paradigms in 20th and 21st century representations of Hinduism, alongside black theology’s essentialized black religious subject to answer why this invisibility persists. Then, to rewrite black agents into Hinduism, I, through ethnographic fieldwork and social network analysis, trace black Hindus’ receptions, transformations, and transmissions of Hindu teachings, and practices in the U.S. By examining discourses in academic histories and theologies, the subjects of the ethnography become germane to dismantling biases and marginalities in South Asian Religions and African and African American studies. Rather than the ethnography reasserting black Hindus’ marginality, the interdisciplinary approach further demarginalize the subject by decolonizing the field.
Mir, Vekar

After The Deluge: Everyday Negotiations Of Dard-Shina Tribe Of Gurez Following Their Resettlement

Following the famous “dams as the temples of modern India” remark by Jawaharlal Nehru, India’s mainstream ‘modernization’ paradigm has unquestioningly accepted the development imperative of the construction and proliferation of dams. This despite the growing evidence of discontent and vocal activism against the seemingly natural ‘dam equals development’ linkage exemplified by Narmada Bachao Andolan and such. While there is a plethora of academic expositions highlighting the dam-induced forced resettlement as a great humanitarian concern as also highlighting that the maximum brunt is borne by the most vulnerable social groups which disproportionately carry the burdens through loss of land and culture, there is a nagging lack of scholarly work on the everyday life and negotiations of displaced and resettled people in their new environs. In this context, the specific interest of this paper are Dard-Shins – an ethnically and culturally distinct group from Kashmiris/Ladakhis and closer to the people of Gilgit and other regions of the Karakoram – with a distinct language Shina. The displacement of the majority of Dard-Shins from their home following the Kishenganga power project construction has been a subject of foaming debate for some time now but the debates, stories and studies stop short of how the group has negotiated and is negotiating its everyday life in their new urban settlement colonies. Based on the ethnographic study of the ‘new life’ in their changed ‘aab-o-hawa’, this paper aims to unravel the ways the Dard-Shins are reconstructing and redefining their lives vis-à-vis the rootedness to their ancestral land.

Mirnig, Nina

The Construction Of Śaiva Identity In The Early Medieval Period: The Śivadharmaśāstra On External Signs Of The Devotee

This paper will deal with the question of external signs of devotion in the Śivadharmaśāstra, the earliest extant text solely dedicated to propagating a complete Śaiva socio-religious order in the sixth/seventh century CE and amongst the earliest to feature prescriptions on this topic in the Śaiva corpus. While the Śivadharmaśāstra focuses on the religious life of the householder devotee, these signs include marks typically associated with the Śaiva ascetic – such as the wearing of ashes – and are also formulated in conjunction with the divinization of the devotee, thereby affording the bhakta a superior spiritual status. This move forms part of the Śivadharmaśāstra’s project to elevate the community of Śaiva devotees above the existing orthodox brahmanical socio-religious order defined through the varṇāśramadharma, with a more radical approach than subsequent texts in the Śivadharma corpus. The paper will thus address the transposition of ascetic markers to the householder context, the related divinization of the devotee and the Śivadharmaśāstra’s impact on discourses about the status of the Śaiva community. It will also be explored to what extent echoes of these prescriptions can be traced in early visual representations of the Śaiva devotee.

Mishra, Vivek

Elite Informality: Spatializing The Privilege

This paper focuses on the geographies of privilege by tracing forms of ‘illegality from above’, and the conflicting responses of different state apparatuses; national, state, and local governments, executives, bureaucracy, and judiciary. In this paper, I argue that the fuzzy relationship between the elites and the state, which is engendered by the marked tensions and/or alliances; not just between different state institutions, but also between the elites and the law, is responsible for producing, managing, and sustaining the informal spatial practices (a phenomenon that has primarily been ascribed to the urban poor) of the elites. This paper intends to highlight the politics behind the formalization (or lack thereof) of unauthorized practices - both economic as well as housing, of the urban elites. This paper draws upon the newspaper archives, government reports, court orders, and primary interviews with different stakeholders. An analysis of Supreme Court of India’s sealing drive of illegal commercial activities in the residential areas, and the response of the state on the emergence of affluent illegal col-
onies in Delhi, (namely, Sainik Farm, Anant Ram Dairy, and Mahendru Enclave among others) suggest that, informal urbanism is at least, as much embedded in the practices of the elites, as it is of the poor. This paper also complicates and extends, the notion of precarity, by situating the idea of self-induced precarity in the discussion of elite informality. I propose that ‘elite informality’ is a useful lens to understand the (mis)appropriation of resources by the elites, and how the produced fuzzy relationship between the elites and the state, transforms the city.

Mohan K, Greeshma
A Brief Excurses Into Food And Travel: Writing Leisure In The Postcolony

Although leisure is understood as a distinguishable break from work, Henri Lefebvre’s counterintuitive claim that “leisure gives rise to an undifferentiated global activity which is difficult to distinguish from other aspects of life” forces us to reckon with a perspective that leisure mimics work, in that is not a necessary, passive distraction but an active condition produced by the very regime of work. Leisure must, he argues “break with the everyday”, cause a rupture which produces feelings of pleasure and repose that must “compensate with the difficulties of everyday life.” For Lefebvre, the need for leisure indicates alienation from work, yet, one of the many questions we need to ask is how does leisure transform when contemporary work cultures aim to incorporate “breaks” into the workday. In my paper, I re-examine the idea of leisure as a break from work. I argue that certain activities such as cooking or working with food, and travel carry the promise of an epiphany, or present an illusion of escape and truly break with the drudgery of gender roles, or the confining nature of provincial existence. Yet, these epiphanies are absorbed into the workday, and only offer momentary pleasure. In my paper I argue that these moments of reflection and pause, wherein time slows down and one feels liberated have political significance and are subversive. In order to make this argument I locate such subversive moments embedded in the fabric of the everyday in two acts: that of cooking and travel. To support my argument I look at the way in which cooking and travel are represented in two decades of Indian English writing spanning the late nineties until 2015.

Mondini, Sara
Renaming Sites, Rewriting Histories. The Role Of Pilgrimage In The Process Of Negotiation And Transformation Of Sacred Sites Shared By Muslims And Lingayats in Northern Karnataka

The mausoleum of the Muslim ruler Ahmad Shah Bahmani (r. 1422–1436) in Ashtur (Karnataka), each year on the occasion of the sovereign’s ʿurs is the destination of a pilgrimage that involve Muslims and Lingayats. This over 150 km foot march touches a series of sites along an itinerary that twists and turns through the districts of Gulbarga and Bidar and culminates with a five-day festival by the mausoleum itself. During the last decades the pilgrimage has gained popularity and is attracting a growing number of devotees. The yātrā, object of recent studies, is often presented as a moment of harmonious coexistence standing against extremisms and religious violences. A closer examination of the contemporary dynamics of frequentation of the site seems to reveal a slow transformation in the attempt to redefine or rewrite its identity. If chronicles and hagiographies in fact allow to trace out its importance and the establishment of rituals through the centuries, today, modern political parties have elected the celebrations as the ideal scenario for political propaganda. The paper, through the analysis of texts, rituals and monuments - as ‘witnesses’ and ‘products’ of this religious complexity - aims to shed light on the present competitions and negotiations on part of the various religious groups, today transposed and inscribed on the cultural historical landscape. This will contribute to speculate on the modern attempt to rewrite the history of the mausoleum and of the further sites touched by the pilgrimage, and their progressive re-definition on the base of local exigences, communities’ expectations and projections.
Moral, Rakhee

Anxiety As Art: Reading People, Precarity And Landscape In Assam’s Borderlands

The literary imagination of landscape is a site for critical and emotional responses to histories that have witnessed violent and often transformative changes in the community. I use the multiple lenses of literature, anthropology and politics to explore how art and poetry translate the anxiety of being in transnational borderlands (in India’s northeastern state of Assam) to a spatio-temporal condition of human experience. Migrant communities along the borders of Assam and Bangladesh have in the last several decades confronted both the ideas of freedom and the perils that attend mobile and shifting societies. A new literary culture that articulates through poetry these fears and promises, now increasingly accommodated in its regional literature, invites attention to its reigning tropes: identity, landscape and the nation.

Morcom, Anna

Hindustani Music And Princely Patronage: A Systemic Historical Study Of Today’s India

Hindustani music is now well-established as a resplendent part of India’s national culture. However, on examining its geography today, it is almost entirely concentrated in a few large cities or centers: Calcutta, Mumbai, Delhi, Pune, Varanasi. Going back even a few decades, let alone back to independence or before, Hindustani music flourished in smaller towns in north India which are now unheard of as places for regular or major concerts. In this paper, I explore what has led to the intense concentration of Hindustani music in a few centers and regions, and its near-disappearance in others. Rather than seeing an abrupt end to princely and aristocratic patronage, I trace a more gradual or piecemeal decline, with Indians of royal or landowning background still significant in the music world. I explore Hindustani music as not just an elite art, but as extending into public and even popular culture in the twentieth century in terms of melas and festivals and so-called ‘light-classical’ genres, and I look at how this has changed in more recent decades. I look at the radical differences of Hindustani music’s presence in the regions of Bihar, UP and Maharashtra in the context of the social, political and economic histories of royalty, landowners, middle classes and key communities of musicians. Taking an systemic approach, I trace a history of upward and downward mobility and of transformation of Hindustani music, its performers and audiences, looking at princely and aristocratic patronage beyond nostalgia, legacy or the past.

More, Shefali

Journey Of Agastya And Lopāmudrā Narrative Through Time.

Sage Agastya and his wife Lopāmudrā are well-known to us through different narratives scattered throughout a vast corpus of Sanskrit texts. The first mention of them as husband and wife appears in Rgveda I.179 (Lopāmudrā - Agastya sāṁvād sūkta). This hymn in the form of a mystic dialogue between Agastya and Lopāmudrā can be unequivocally categorized as an ‘encrypted narrative’ and provides an ideal scope for further expansion of the story. The later texts such as Brāhmaṇas, Mahābhārata, Rāmāyan. a, and Purān. a, etc. have effectively grabbed this opportunity and developed different adaptations of it. The journey of these narratives through the time demonstrates alterations in the portrayal and behavior of the characters to the extent that the bold and fearless Lopāmudrā who expresses her desire for a secret union to her husband in Rgveda is transformed into an ideal of chastity in Skanda Purāṇa. The changing story of their marriage also changes the core of their relationship. This paper attempts to study a few narratives of Agastya and Lopāmudrā and trace the changes adapted in the story over time, and understanding these changes in the social and cultural context.

Mucciarelli, Elena (and Galewicz, Cezary)

The Dance Of Kurată

Kurâtō, partly fortune-teller, partly goddess, has been a well-known figure who widely travelled across South India. Primarily a daughter of the hills, her footprints can be found almost everywhere: in poems, plays and songs, courts and stages, sacred groves and shrines. Her wanderings have brought
her among the Malayars of North Kerala and into the temporary shrines where the Teyyam is performed (Freeman 2003). An encounter of goddess Kurattī with the community of Malayars has been recorded by the most peculiar and still puzzling work, the Tirunilальма. Here Kurattī can be seen worshipped and joined by Malayars in a very special dance by her own shrine erected outside the walls of the magnificent temple of Āranmulā. Her presence seems vital for a ceremony centred on an elaborate and spectacular rite of purification meant to remove bad effects accrued to the temple’s main deity. But the story of Kurattī happens also to make part of another ritual called Nilalkuttu – the ‘piercing of the shadows’. The figure of Kurattī reappears as a golden thread weaving through different domains: the tōrˉrˉam songs, the Teyyam practices, and the shrines that she is believed to inhabit or visit. All these spheres can be seen as “shrines” marked by specific and distinct materialities and their interactions can only be studied effectively against the background of the communities that activate them. Using textual sources and ethnographic data of different genres, the paper attempts to connect the figure of Kurattī to places she visits through a focus on the material aspects of the place and space-making practices associated with her cult in order to offer and extended idea of a shrine.

Mukherjee, Madhuja

Through The Animated Lens Of Graphic/Narratives

This paper tackles the complex dialogue between inter-media art practices and adaptation of a well-known literary text. By referencing my on-going project, which involves creation of a graphic novel and scripting for a stop-motion animation film, I wish highlight the complicated processes of adapting the classic Bengali text namely ‘Ludhak’ (2006), written by the celebrated Bengali author Nabarun Bhattacharya. I wish to develop an analytical map as I not only adapt the plot of the science-fiction novel (about dogs being persecuted by humans) but, also engage in a series of transferences. First, while the original text is in Bangla, both the film and the graphic-novel are in English. Therefore, more important, within this frame is the problem of translation, as well as concerns regarding reinventing the text as image (especially in the context of graphic visualisations). Secondly, to complicate the matter further, one may underline the fact that, graphic-novels as a genre persist on the borderline between novel and visual arts. Hence, I ask -- is this a literary adaptation of a literary text, or digital imaging of literary codes? Likewise, ‘animation’ films thrive on the fringe of multiple genres, and thus, scripting for such narratives entail a range of assimilation and appropriation. Finally, focusing on the questions of intertextuality and specifically on intermediality, I enquire into the function of adapting ‘Lubdhak’ into ‘The Dog Star’, an “E” graphic novel, and to ‘Transformer Room’ (2018, 8 mins.), a stop-motion animation as well as a ‘model’ animation film.

Mukherjee, Nilanjana

The Himalayas As A Spatial Imaginary

The logic of the nation naturalises the imagined landscape of the Himalayas in India as a border. However, the Himalayas have always transcended territoriality and has been a locale for cross cultural exchanges, with religious, spiritual, educational and economic significances. I will study the transformation of this landscape under the British colonial regime in creating a borderland, later readily accepted by the post colonial nation state. The British looked at the Indian landscape through a rigid disciplinary gaze, which subjected its society, time and space to rigorous and hierarchical re-structuring. European methods are applied to both England’s first colony nearer home, comprising of Scotland, Ireland and Wales, and then overseas. While the oppositional binary of the home state and the empire stands unaltered, it is important to view the emergence of both the geographies as constructions of the same gaze. Fashioning of both geographies happened to be acts born out of identical cartographic impulse that shaped both the nation state of Great Britain and the British empire. Remarkably, major contributors in this were Scots, and most influential hubs were universities in Scotland. Significantly, the mapping of the Scottish Highlands had a bearing on the charting of the Himalayas. Scientific expeditions by Hooker, Fraser and Buchanan-Hamilton in these terrains were expressed in strikingly similar terms. The Himalayas became a vast canvas for testing out Scot-
tish Enlightenment’s ideals and sciences. The objective is to understand the colonial cartographic exchanges in this region which culminated in drawing the boundary, which Chad Haines would call ‘undefined border’.

Mukhopadhyay, Mriganka

Despatialization: Offering A New Theoretical Approach For Understanding Occult South Asia

This paper aims to contribute to new methodological and theoretical approaches that bridge the gap between the studies of esotericism and occultism on one hand, and South Asian studies on the other. Making a broad overview of how the esoteric currents from the West and Indian spirituality mutually influenced each other, an attempt will be made to develop a study of an entangled history of occultism. I will discuss how the category of “rejected knowledge” (Hanegraaff) worked in colonial South Asia, where occultism was accepted by the educated middle class and became integrated into mainstream socio-cultural life. On this basis, it will be demonstrated how the notion of “entanglement” and “transculturality” should be used to study occultism in modern South Asia. This paper will critically engage with theories from the field of Esotericism studies, Post-colonial studies, Grammar of Identity/Alterity (Gingrich and Baumann), and investigate how these could be applied in the study of occultism in South Asia, thus giving a new direction in academic research.

Mukhopadhyay, Rita (and Parciack, Ronie)

The Play Of Inter-Semiotic Traffic At Roadside Peer Baba Shrines: Adapting A Sufi Tradition (New Delhi, India)

We explore the inter-semiotic associations and adapted narratives that are invoked at roadside Peer Baba mazars (a generic name for the grave-shrines of holy men), which attract citizens across otherwise diverging religions. Peer Baba mazars draw upon and adapt elements of the classical Islamic and Sufi tradition, such that an entombed and invisible Peer is believed to act as a mediator between the supplicant and Allah. However, the affiliation of the Peer with a silsila (spiritual order), that is pronounced at established Sufi shrines in north India, is either thin or absent at roadside mazars. By underscoring the individuality of the saint, his immanence and rootedness to the spot, these caretakers (khidmatgars) try to ensure their own authority. The local offerings of cash and kind made at the shrine, then, remain with the caretakers and, at some sites, with women-caretakers who cannot assume this role at the established mazars. The location of Peer Baba shrines along pavements and prominent roads and at street corners and roundabouts in the prime urban space of central New Delhi invites the attention and land-grab of caretakers, devotees and state functionaries. Here, caretakers turn narrators and adaptors of stories of resistance that relate recent and miraculous accounts of how Peer Babas foiled state-mandated plans aimed at the diminution or demolition of their shrines. The borrowing and play of intra- and interreligious hermeneutics, correspondences, translations and adaptations are investigated across an array of visual symbols, gestures, ritual objects (especially grave coverings - chadars) and interlinguistic usages that cut across singular faiths.

Munazir, Shahana

Ethical time of destiny: Islamic education and post-schooling life outcomes of Muslim girls in Contemporary India

Often relying on “kismat” or destiny to explain a good or bad life-outcome, invocation of this temporal ethic in India and much of South Asia is often accompanied by a usual sigh and shrug of shoulders, caste-aside as a form of a meaningless verbal hyperbole. In the context of young Muslim girls in Islamic schools in contemporary India, however, this might mean more than a simple shrug. Especially, in the wake of rising socio-political precarity within the Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJPs) nationalist discourse in India since 2014, the learning, embodying, and invoking of ethical time in the form of “kismat” opens doors for larger debates on Islam, ethics, temporality, and agency of Muslim women
in contemporary India that goes beyond tracing of teleological progression in girls’ lives from being “pious” to a “modern Muslim woman” in-between piety and non-piety. My work will explore how the Islamic ethic of Islamic predestination or the inevitability of the divine taught and embodied through the pedagogy of the Islamic schools intersect with how girls formulate their decision-making using destiny as an invocation of a “determined” future in their everyday life post-schooling. In particular, I explore how this intersection between time and ethics shape girls’ kinship relations of love, care, and health at home and political participation in the public space, as well as how such intersections shape alternate meanings of representation, lived risks, and marginality of such vulnerable populations.

Munz, Melina
Alternative Temporalities Of Experiences Of Leisure In Recent Indian Fiction

Leisure in recent Indian fiction in English is often represented in terms of an experiential mode based on a changed perception of time. This individual form of temporality experienced by a novel’s protagonists is linked to larger questions of time in modern Indian society. In my paper, I am going to argue that the individual temporality of leisure can be understood to be part of alternative and multiple temporalities that have a subversive potential vis-à-vis hegemonic norms of temporality, that is a historically grown concept of time that is influenced by the linearity of historicism, by a unified understanding of time as homogeneous, abstract and empty, by teleological narratives of colonial domination as well as the supposed acceleration and efficiency of globalised capitalism. I am going to analyse the representations of leisure in Upamanyu Chatterjee’s English, August (1988), Amit Chaudhuri’s A Strange and Sublime Address (1991) as well as Kiran Desai’s The Inheritance of Loss (2006). Although all three texts focus on questions of leisure, work and temporality, they represent three different approaches in commenting on an implied background of hegemonic temporality. The protagonists’ thoughts about time passing or plans for the future recede into the background, the experience is characterised by an awareness of the current moment through dense sensory impressions, by a nostalgic perspective on the past or even by a sense of being or lingering in a time without specific duration. Despite the differences in representation, the experiences are in all three novels frequently singled out as exceptional with reference to their plot and temporal structure.

Murphy, Anne
Journals And Magazines In The Formation Of The Modern Punjabi Literary Imaginary

From the formation of early journals in colonial India, such as Punjabi Darbar in Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) in 1928, Prīt Larī (founded by Gurbakhsh Singh in 1933), to more recent initiatives, such as Hūn, in the Indian Punjab, and Bārāh Māh, founded in 2018 in Lahore, literary magazines have served a foundational role in the articulation of modern Punjabi literary worlds across the borders that have divided Punjabis. This is so both for Punjabi speakers in India and Pakistan, as well as within the multiple Diasporic national settings where Punjabis write and publish. The literary journal Wata:no Dūr or “Far from the Homeland,” founded in the greater Vancouver, Canada area in 1973, was later revived as Watan, indicating both the acceptance of Canada as “home” – and the place of Punjabi in that homeland. This paper will assess the role of the modern Punjabi literary magazine in broad historical terms, to provide a sense of the genre as a whole, through key examples, and analysis of its role in promoting and disseminating modern Punjabi literary production in diverse national contexts.

Nag, Anugyan
Trans-Men Dancing As Goddesses: Breaking Boundaries Of Religion And Gender

Nightlong prayer meets (Jagrans, Mata-ki-Chowki) are a common phenomenon in northern India that grows increasingly grand, lavish and spectacular. These performances are elaborate mediatized spectacles with lights, cameras; smoke machines, sets, decorations, installations, live and DJ music among other elements. These sacred performances layer religious ritual and professional produc-
tion, placing religious practices and beliefs into the service of professional performance with entrepreneurs enmeshing ritual and performance. The performers are mostly trans-men (often from other religious backgrounds) impersonating female goddesses, dancing with elaborate and ornate costumes. These performances are a hybrid mix of Bollywood dance movements and a range of illicit choreographic vocabularies—adopting elements from folk dance, street performance, and cabaret. My paper investigates three aspects of this new and transgressive form of performance: First, the aesthetics and mediatized mounting of these performances; second, questions of gender and impersonation alongside the livelihoods of these performers; and third, the entrepreneurship and networked groups that organize, operate, and manage such events. These urban performative forms of devotion and entertainment, uncover issues of morality, illicit practices, censorship, and transgression.

Nair Ambujam, Meenakshi

*Negotiating Identities: The Subaltern In Scheduled Areas*

Subaltern Studies had much to do with challenging not only the opposition of the subaltern against the popular, but also demonstrating how populations relegated to the margins had constituted an ‘autonomous realm’ through the production of their histories. By doing so, the Subaltern School produced narratives that ruptured and complicated established histories that were inherently top-down. However, as critics of the Subaltern School have pointed out, one of the major lacunae has been the use of the category of the subaltern itself, often presenting a rather homogenized interpretation of the term. This paper seeks to problematize the category of the subaltern by focusing on how Dalits and Adivasis negotiate identities and relationships in Fifth Schedule Areas of India in their quest for land. Fifth Schedule Areas are specific territories of India which are marked as ‘tribal’ or ‘adivasi’, where as per the Constitution and state legislation, land cannot be sold, bought or transferred to non-tribals, which also includes Dalits. Drawing on 13 months of fieldwork in Telangana, I explore what it means to be Dalit in Adivasi spaces, how Dalits’ claims to land and forest rights tend to be—more often than not—denied in these regions, and how this affects overarching narratives of Dalit-Bahujan-Adivasi. Specifically, this paper asks, what quality does subalternity take in such spaces, and who becomes subaltern? While Spivak’s provocative article raised questions of ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’, who becomes subaltern in Scheduled Areas and who is conceived as being outside spaces of institutional and social power in the Gramscian sense of the term becomes important to revisit.

Nandi, Sugata

*Inscrutable Subalternity: Street Magicians Of Colonial India*

This paper seeks to introduce street magicians of colonial India as a significant new subject of subaltern history. It argues that British imperialists and Western supremacists manipulated their image to Orientalize India as an essentially magical hence pre-modern land and also to attribute inherent criminality to the subaltern. During colonial rule street magicians of India, ubiquitous, itinerant, nameless, and mired in poverty and illiteracy were made world famous. From early nineteenth century Europeans who had been to India wrote detailed anecdotes of their inexplicable tricks in newspapers, periodicals, popular literature, memoirs and travelogues in ever increasing numbers. Feats of a few such entertainers who performed in Britain, other European countries and the USA in early nineteenth century immensely aided their popularization. By the 1850s they had become stereotypes in the emerging English crime fiction and adventure stories. Modern magicians of the West tried to appropriate a few of their tricks. A popular belief that they had supernatural powers had gained ground. Their art appeared incomprehensible to western scientists and to many their tricks seemed superior to those of western magicians aided by latest technology. This drove the leading western magicians, often supported by influential European officials in India, scientists, journalists and amateur anthropologists, to debunk Indian magicians as frauds and their tricks as hoaxes. They highlighted their poverty and illiteracy to argue that they managed to intrigue Westerners with performances due to their innate deceitful and criminal character.
Narayana, Sukumar

Teaching Dalit Bahujan Utopias: Notes From The Classroom

The production of knowledge in India operates within a rarefied domain enclosed inside the structures of caste, class and gender. This has enabled the unabashed peddling of one-dimensional epistemology of glorifying the past, justifying the prevalent social hierarchies and manufacturing consent for the existing social order. Periodically, the status quo was interrogated and the resultant debates are secreted within the pages of history. Rarely if ever, these contestations become a part of the pedagogy thereby igniting a quest for a more emancipatory social apparatus. This is not surprising as the reproduction of the symbolic power needs to be closely guarded. The ancient world considered land as the paramount resource and wars were waged to capture more territories. For the industrialized societies, capital was the source of sustenance but in the modern era, privilege and power based on knowledge is the magic mantra, the currency of socio-economic relations. This paper revolves around the attempts made by the researcher to introduce a full fledged course on Dalit Bahujan Political Thought at the Masters level in Delhi University. This intervention was opposed by the entrenched academia hailing from the privileged castes who wished to perpetuate their Brahmanical utopias. The texts/readings prescribed for the course were sought to be banned by the higher authorities. The pantheon of thinkers who advocated an Indian version of liberation theology was never engaged with at an ideological level. The everyday engagements with the students who joined the course and their interactions in the classrooms provide a multi-layered understanding of negotiating utopias.

Nardi, Isabella

Kings, Icons, And Festivals: The Saptasvarupotsava Of 1739 As Represented In A Mural At The City Palace Of Kota

Before his death, Vitthalnath (1515–1585)–one of the preceptors of the Pushti Marg–distributes nine sacred icons (navnidhis) to his seven sons. This subdivision, which took place at Mount Govardhan in Braj, not only represents the foundational moment of the sect’s seven lineages, it also coincides with the first celebration of the Saptasvarupa Festival, which is a formal reunion of the most revered icons of the sampradaya.

In 1739, Maharao Durjan Sal–the Rajput ruler of Kota (r. 1723–1756)–becomes both promoter and sponsor of a re-enactment of the same festival. The solemn commemoration, which took place at the Shri Nathji temple of Nathdwara, is still remembered for its great significance in the history of the Pushti Marg community. The same celebration was also conceived, by some of the Rajput rulers of Rajasthan, as an opportunity to cement political relations.

This paper will examine a rare mural representing the festival. The painting, located in the Bada Mahal of the Kota City Palace, has been overlooked by previous research. The analysis will reveal its historical context as well as the identity of the rulers portrayed in the composition. It will also highlight some significant royal and devotional networks which are visually conveyed by including (or excluding) kings and icons.

This presentation will demonstrate that, among the Rajput kingdoms, the court of Kota was one of the most dynamic supporters of the Pushti Marg at the time. The contextualization of the mural will also provide an opportunity to reflect on the relevance of visual sources in the study of the Vallabha Sampradaya.

Nawaz, Sumaira

A Stranger’s Homecoming: Arzu’s Persian In Mir’s Urdu Poetry

Abdur Rasheed’s ground-breaking study of Mir’s Urdu poetry in light of Khan-e Arzu’s lexicon Chiragh-e Hedayat has opened up new avenues of looking at the relationship between Urdu and Persian (Rasheed 2008). It makes apparent Khan-e Arzu’s contribution as a bilingual poet and linguist in
showing how Persian writers smoothened this vernacular’s way within elite literary circles by the 18th century (Dudney 2013: nn). Khan-e Arzu’s lexicon Chiragh-e Hedayat is renowned for having included Persian words of Indic origin, and references to Indian poets of Persian language. His lexicon was intended to underpin Indo-Persian’s relevance within norms of the Persian cosmopolis, implying that “properly educated Indians had as much right as Iranian native speakers to innovate in Persian” (Dudney 2013: nn). It is an established view that Mir generously drew on Chiragh-e Hidayat in his autobiography Zikr-e Mir. Shamsur Rahman Faruqui, in his defence of Mir against critics who had thought of it as “unnecessary” and merely “ornamental,” commended his skill of “fitting” in words in Rekhta insofar they did not appear “added-on” (Faruqi 1991: 33). Rasheed’s research of Chiragh-e Hidayat’s spectre in Mir’s Urdu poetry further emphasises on Urdu’s ability to absorb Persian words and validate Arzu’s theory on their linguistic proximity. My paper is going to be an investigation of the impact of Mir’s lexical choices, becoming a commentary on Urdu’s construction as an elevated vernacular. Finally, I will focus on the ramifications of Urdu lexicography’s amnesia towards classical literature and poetry, which prevents us today from looking at the linguistic debates that framed the language.

Nayak, Bhabani Shankar

_Bhagavad Gita, Hindu Religious Ethics And Modes Of Capitalist Accumulation In India_

The paper attempts to understand and expand the idea of capitalist accumulation process from social structures of accumulation theory to religious structures of accumulation within the Indian context. It analyses the philosophical tenets of Hindu religious philosophy as outlined in the Bhagavad Gita. It argues that the ideological narratives within the Bhagavad Gita are concomitant with the logic of capitalism. It gives social and spiritual legitimacy to a specific form of production and accumulation processes by rationalizing and justifying socio-economic stratification based on eternal inequality. The paper aims to advance a new concept called “Hindu modes of accumulation” by advancing the theoretical understanding of the theological processes in the Hindu religion which reinforces capitalism and capitalist social relations in India. The paper focuses on the interface between cardinal principles of Hindu religion as outlined in the Bhagavad Gita and capitalist modes of social and economic processes in India.

Nayak, Suravee

_Land, Bargaining, And The Negotiating Lives: A Case Of Displacement In Talcher Coalfields Of Odisha, India_

Coal mining has been very central to both colonial and independent India’s economic activity. Given the widespread coal extraction in order to fuel rapid industrialization and energize the country, displacement is an inevitable consequence witnessed in rural India due to large scale land grab by the state under Coal Bearing Areas (CBA) Act of 1957 and Land Acquisition (LA) Act of 1894. A large body of literature has explored the impact of displacement on the rural households in coal-bearing areas (tribal and non-tribal areas). However, the present paper attempts to trace the different struggles of displaced across landed and landless Dalit households for their livelihoods after displacement, through long-term fieldwork during the year 2015 and 2018 in villages displaced for more than 10 years in a coal mining town of Odisha, namely, Talcher. The paper stresses the differentiated experiences among the people of Talcher evident from the sites of living and their labouring lives. Where the people belonging to land-owning households are able to reorganize their lives by securing permanent and temporary employment in the coal mines through various negotiations and blocking coal mines operation, the landless Dalits are forced to do casual labour and at times become coal collectors with little room for bargaining. The paper also shows that the landowning households resettle on either the land bought in nearby villages or quarters provided by the coal mines management, however, the landless Dalits are found to have been residing in an abandoned coal mining site.
Niebuhr, Uwe

*When The Borders Are Closed: René Nebesky-Wojkowitz’s Fieldwork In The Sikkimese Borderland*

The Czech-Austrian tibetologist and ethnologist René Nebesky-Wojkowitz undertook three research trips to the Sikkimese borderlands in the 1950s. His journeys served as the basis of more than 20 publications that he produced in his short but intense scientific career, before his unexpectedly early death in Vienna in 1959. His research interests covered a wide range of topics, such as early Tibetan beliefs, Buddhist demonology, religious dances, music, and traditional Himalayan medicine. Furthermore, he studied the Himalayan tribes in the surrounding areas of Kalimpong and at the borders of Nepal and Bhutan, especially the Lepcha people, but he also conducted research on the Sherpas, Bhutanese, Tamangs and Tibetans. Out of their ethnographical context he collected hundreds of objects for the Museum für Völkerkunde in Vienna, and supplemented them with photos, audio recordings and film. The paper critically explores, through selected examples, the extent to which René Nebesky-Wojkowitz was able to conduct authentic research on ethnic groups, despite the fact that the borders to their original ethnic core countries of Sikkim, Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet were initially impassable for him. Furthermore, I would like to address René Nebesky-Wojkowitz’s treatment of the concept of provenance and investigate his possible motivation behind his approach, in which he has deliberately or unconsciously omitted specific information, when contextualizing his museum objects.

Nielsen, Kenneth Bo

*After The Factory: Livelihoods And Political Organisation In Post-Dispossession Singur*

In 2006, news broke that the Indian car manufacturer Tata Motors would establish a new car factory in West Bengal. To make way for the factory, several thousand mostly small and marginal farmers were dispossessed of altogether 997 acres of farmland in the Singur area, located 45 km outside the state capital of Kolkata. The controversy that ensued as local landowners mobilised in defence of their farmland propelled the land acquisition in Singur to a matter of national and even global concern, as it evolved into one of India’s most talked-about new land wars. The movement of these so-called “unwilling farmers” eventually succeeded in shutting down the factory in 2008. While the movement thus achieved its one-point agenda, local life “after the factory” has been characterised mostly by half-hearted efforts at land restitution; the accelerating diversification of livelihoods away from agriculture; and the continued intervention of political forces trying to politicise the recent history of land dispossession and resistance in Singur in competing ways. In this paper, we survey the ways in which local livelihoods and forms of political organisation have evolved in Singur in the wake of dispossession. Both authors have done long-term fieldwork in the Singur area during 2007–2009, with repeated follow-up visits since. We base our analysis on ethnographic material collected during this period, as well as two surveys (covering around 225 households) conducted a decade apart (by Nielsen), in order to offer both qualitative and quantitative insights into post-dispossession transformations. This paper thus represents our first attempt at a longitudinal analysis of these processes.

Nile, Mrudul

*Negotiating Political Spaces*

Political Empowerment of the Dalit community still remains an utopia. Political structures are becoming more and more impenetrable and inaccessible in the rise of the new right. Power sharing in political sphere with the Dalits by the upper caste Hindu hegemonic rule has to be perceived in a more different way. Dr. Ambedkar’s idea of conversion to Buddhism has to be looked more as a political strategy than a religious endeavour, as he attempts to create a monolithic structure of identity that may emerge as a strong competitor to this hindu hegemonic rule. Buddhism incorporates Reason, Rationality and Reformation of the traditional society and thus poses a challenge to the ritualistic society based on ascription. This distinction gives a more scientific approach to buddhism as well as validates the strategic perspectives that may represent in the action of Ambedkar in 1956.
Nizarudeen, Umar

Lal Jose’s ‘41’: Sabarimala The Body As Degree Zero Of Difference

The court verdict on Sabarimala has put the body at the centre of contemporary debate in Kerala. Lal Jose’s 2019 movie ‘41’ deals with Sabarimala and the pilgrimage undertaken by a committed mainstream ‘caste’ Marxist to the shrine in order to reform an alcoholic colleague, who also happens to be Dalit. Made in the popular buddy movie format, the titular ‘41’ denotes the days of the abstemious vow undertaken. In this movie with a very obvious emancipatory sub text, gender is rendered oblivious by homosocial male bonding. The movie rearticulates the Kerala renaissance axiom that the body is the degree zero of difference and that the only difference is gender difference and everything else is imbued under the category of human. Thus the Dalit Marxist and his caste colleague coalesce into one single Advaitic universal whole. The hyper masculinity of the caste Marxist hero played by Biju Menon is foregrounded. Gender is precipitated as necessarily binary. While attempting to complicate issues of faith and belief, the movie stumbles upon the processual nature of the pilgrimage. Lal Jose, a director never averse to tackling mythical doxa pertaining to mainstream Kerala Marxist politics, attempts a delicate balance between the subaltern faithful and the rationalist elite. The hierarchical axiomatic claims of Brahmanism are reiterated with some allowances being made to indigenous humanism and secularism. A new vocabulary doesn’t emerge, the point implied being that primordial problems require primordial solutions. A lot of male bonding takes places over this road movie. Yet a lack of intersectionality haunts this quasi mythical fable.

Noor, Farha

Leisure And Resistance To Work Regimes In Satyajit Ray’s /Feluda/ Novels

This paper aims to read the contentions of a leisurely life and resistance to work regimes in the Feluda detective stories penned by Satyajit Ray. With its first appearance in the young adolescents’ literary magazine Sandesh in 1965, the series of detective stories under the eponymous title Feluda gained huge popularity and a significant place in Bengali literature that continues to remain unparalleled. Unlike other figures of Bengali detective fiction like the Holmesian Byomkesh Bakhshi, the Feluda stories epitomize a postcolonial Bengali bhadralok sensibility, forging rational thought, urbane cosmopolitanism and a longing to preserve the innocence of youth. Shirking office work, the protagonist represents a figure interested in knowledge, sensitivity and intelligence, in fact, a scholar of the world, ironically described in his business card as ‘Pradosh C Mitter, Private Detective’. The stories of his adventures are recounted by his accompanying young nephew, Topshe, who in many ways signifies Satyajit Ray’s ideal reader, the young male Bengali adolescent. The world of Feluda created by Ray is in stark contrast with the urban life of growing bureaucracy in Bengal of the 60’s. By reading these stories from a perspective of leisure as autonomy and opportunity to seek the higher truths in life, symbolised in the career of a private detective, this paper aims to understand negotiations of a life of the mind in a world that is fast-approaching global work regimes, especially in literature that romanticizes youth, is told in the voice of the young and is aimed at a readership of growing adolescents.

Nowakowska, Monika

Killing Brahmins And Drinking Wine – Grahaikatva-Nyāya From The Perspective Of Tv I.3.7

At least some secondary literature on Indian law (e.g. Keith, The Karma-Mīmāṃsā 1921: 105) illustrates the grahaikatva-nyāya with the reference to the prohibition of drinking liquor as discussed for example by Medhātithi ad MDhŚ V.90 (89). However, the inspiration for this discussion combining the prohibition of drinking liquor with that of killing Brahmins comes from Kumārila’s Tantravārttika, but not, as one would expect, from TV III.113–15, but from TV I.3.7. Thus, the linking of the two prohibitions appears to go back to Patañjali (cf. Olivelle, in: Hindu Law, 2018: 53), while the original context of the discussion is of dharma-mūlas. In the paper I trace the argumentation of the both relevant portions of TV with particular attention to the perspective of the two of its commentators, Pariśoṣamiśra,
and, especially, Someśvara, while establishing the relationship between the two portions of the TV in terms of supporting the view of Medhātithi. This philological and interpretative task is supplied with reference to some contemporary linguistic approaches to indexes of humanness and plural number (cf. Radden, in: Studies in Linguistic Motivation, 2004).

Nupur, Priyanka
Spheres Of Marginality In The Urban Space: Exploring Interconnections In A Global City
The anchor of the concept of marginalisation shifted from economic rationality to the socio-cultural realm by 1980s. The new social movements claimed that rather than class, marginalisation was rooted in the categories of identity, gender and sexuality. However, substantively speaking, the nature of marginalisation is not restricted to any one category. These different categories (class, identity, gender, and sexuality) are mostly overlapping and this complicates the nature of marginalisation. To study marginalisation in the contemporary world, we need more nuanced theoretical approaches that help to develop an intersectional conceptualisation of marginalisation. Nancy Fraser’s conception of social justice as participatory parity provides an important framework to approach this question. Through the case study of Delhi, this paper argues that marginalisation in urban space (especially in the global city) is constituted by the complex interplay of class and socio-cultural location of people. Engaging with the categories of caste and class of migrants in Delhi, the paper illustrates that although the dynamics of caste in cities experience various discontinuities in the spatial and temporal terms, it nevertheless becomes imbricated with class to produce new dynamics of marginalisation which impacts participatory parity in the city. The Global city, despite all its glamour and promises of economic advancement (irrespective of socio-cultural identities), continues to combine different categories of marginalisation to reproduce it in new and complicated forms.

Oberlin, Heike
The Interplay Of The Vernacular With Sanskrit In Subhadrādhanañjayam On The Kūt. iyāt. t. am Stage
Kūt.iyāt.t.am, “performing together / interplay”, is the name of the sole Sanskrit theatre with an unbroken tradition of at least a millennium. Its home is Kerala in the extreme Southwest of the Indian sub-continent. Kūt.iyāt.t.am combines the Sanskrit and the Prakrit dialects of the drama texts with the regional language Malayalam in a unique way. The Malayalam explanations of the Sanskrit and Prakrit dialogues and long insertions typical for Kūt.iyāt.t.am play an important role of and on stage. These elaborations are handed down in the actor families. If no jester Vidūs.aka is present, these additional Malayalam texts are not vocalised but translated word by word including grammatical information into the most sophisticated hand gesture language known in any theatre tradition. Furthermore: While reciting the prose and verses of the dialogues a simultaneous translation into hand gestures takes place. Once the Vidūs.aka appears on stage he takes over and translates and explains all scenes via voce into Malayalam. With special reference to Kulaśēkhara Varmman’s play Subhadrādhanañjayam (The wedding of Subhadrā and Arjuna) the lecture wants to 1) explain this basic technique of the interplay of Sanskrit, Prakrit and the vernacular Malayalam and 2) how, with the help of this technique, typical Kerala features melt with the Mahābhārata theme in Kūt.iyāt.t.am performances.

Odyuo, Iris
Crafting Of Ornaments And Its Accessories In Folk-Tales And Folk-Songs Among The Nagas
Nagas are an indigenous people, with their homeland stretching along the north eastern states of Indian States of Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and north western Myanmar (Burma). Every aspect of Naga life is interconnected with nature and its rituals, ceremonies and festivals. Nagas have an intimate relationship with nature in their social, cultural, religion, beliefs and practices and this find expression in their arts. Much of Naga art consist of perishable material and in the past, the constant threat from enemy attack, the fear of disastrous fires and the rituals and taboos surrounding
certain art, prevented the artists from devoting much of their time to produce lasting art forms but the arts flourished. The Nagas conversion to Christianity resulted in the gradual dissociation from some Naga tribal institutions such as headhunting, the morung (men’s ceremonial house) and feasts of merit which inspired many artistic expressions in woodwork, intricate textile designs, body tattoo, songs, dances, decorative ornaments and weapons, symbolizing personal achievements and valour. Folk-tales and folk-songs are the unwritten lives and wisdom of the Nagas. Every Naga tribe has its unique varieties of oral stories and songs through which they imparted accumulated knowledge from one generation to the next. This paper is an attempt to describe how the crafting of ornaments and its accessories are reflected in their folk-tales and folk-songs. Found with slight variations throughout the Naga areas, ornaments was the most prized item socially, economically, politically and ritually. Keywords: Nagas, Nature, Folk-tales, Folk-songs, Ornaments, Wisdom and Identity

Olivelle, Patrick

How To Change Law In Classical India Hermeneutics In The Service Of The Legal Profession

In his celebrated book The Concept of Law, H.L.A. Hart posits three secondary rules in a legal system: recognition, change, and adjudication. In this paper, I look at the second category: the means provided within the Indian legal system by which laws, in this case dharma, can be changed. The category of recognition provides us with means of knowing what the laws are. In modern systems, this is done through the passage of laws in a duly constituted legislature. The ancient Indian system did not have a provision for a legislative body. Instead, law as dharma was to be discovered rather than enacted: it was thought to be found in the Veda (vedamūlatva concept) and, secondarily, in the texts known as smṛtis. Law is thus eternal and, in theory, immutable; it cannot be changed. But, in spite of the theory, society and culture do change and demand laws that reflect those changes. The hermeneutical tradition of India provided means by which such change, foreclosed de jure, could be enacted de facto. This paper will analyze several of these techniques, including the yuga theory, the dharma of smaller social and geographical units (jātidharma, śrenidharma, deśadharma), and, quite interestingly, the opprobrium of the people (lokavidviṣṭa).

Ollett, Andrew

Introduction: Categories And Historical Overview

“Vernacular grammars” refers to grammars written in precolonial South Asia for languages other than Sanskrit and Tamil. This talk will give a brief overview of the history of the genre, starting from Prakrit grammar and proceeding to the cultivation of grammar in the Kannada, Telugu, and Malayalam-speaking countries. One question we will try to address is why vernacular grammars never took hold in regions where the vernacular was an “Indo-Aryan” language. This talk will also introduce some of the key concepts used to compare vernacular forms with forms of other languages (usually Sanskrit) and to think about language difference, loosely corresponding to “homophones,” “cognates,” “loanwords,” and so on. It will also thematize the close connections between vernacular grammar and vernacular poetics.

Ondračka, Lubomír

Vallālacarita And The Identity Of The Bengali Nāths

Vallālacarita is a Sanskrit text describing the reign of Vallālasena, ruler of Bengal in the 12th century. There are two versions of the text. The first one became immediately after its publication in 1890 the fundamental text for the identity of Bengali-speaking householder Nāths, because it contains the description of their alleged history. According to this work, the Nāths were originally high-caste Brahmans, but after some quarrel with the king, they were degraded and forced to hide their true identity. Consequently, they became a low-caste community. Since the end of the 19th century, the Nāths have used this text as the proof of their Brahmanical status. Today, every member of this caste knows
this story and proudly proclaims that he or she is, in fact, a Brahmin. The second version of this work (published in 1904) does not mention the Nāths at all. The editor of this text believed that this version was authentic, whereas the earlier published edition was forged. However, neither the editor, nor any other scholar, ever analysed both versions to prove which one is authentic. In my presentation, I will first briefly introduce both versions of the Vallālacarita and I will highlight the main discrepancies between them. Then, I will outline the story of how the text formed the identity of the Nāths during the 20th century, and I will document how important the work is for the contemporary debate on their caste status. Finally, I will demonstrate that the version of the text used by the Nāths is indeed forged, and I will ask what consequences this fact could have for the community’s identity.

Pai, Gita

An Anti-British Vision Of The Bhagavad Gita In Tamil Verse

C. Subramania Bharati (1882–1921) was a modern Tamil writer, fiery Indian nationalist, and passionate social reformer. Through the power of his ideals, Bharati envisioned independence for India dominated by colonial British rule. In his poetic imagination, the liberation of Indians would free them not only from foreign imperial control, but also from the country’s oppressive social customs. The charged political atmosphere in British-controlled Madras in south India after the controversial 1905 partition of Bengal provided the circumstances that compelled Bharati—a vociferous critic of government policies in India—to rely on Hindu religious texts to covertly hide his anti-colonial messages from prying British eyes. This paper explores how Bharati invoked the ancient past to articulate a modern possibility for a country in the throes of British sovereignty.

Pande, Vasudha

Changing Geographies And Imaginaries: Himalayas And Trans-Himalayas

The British Imperium mapped the Himalayan mountains through a massive cartographic exercise, and decided that these ranges formed a natural border for the Empire. Yet a close look at Himalayan histories shows that there was a close connect between the Central Himalayas (Uttarakhand, Western Nepal) and the trans-Himalayas (Western Tibet). This linkage was manifest in a ‘verticality’ that enabled mountain communities to optimise use of varied habitats across different altitudes through an annual cycle of movement across ecological zones, with the Tarai marshes (south) as the natural border. By connecting Kumaun to North India through railways and motorable roads across the Tarai, British rule eroded the northward orientation and brought to the fore narratives that focussed on the southern connection. In Kumauni literature, however, we discern a different imaginary which describes earlier (pre-colonial) journeys and geographies. In folk legends, journeys connect cultivators and herders across Himalayan and Trans-Himalayan landscapes. Stories about love and longing across diverse regions (valleys, pastures, high mountains and waterless expanses) are often connected through ascetics, the Naths. We also find a Sanskrit text, the Manaskhand, that constructs a sacred geography. Probably, composed by Dasnam Sanyasis, to exercise control over trade routes, it sanctifies the entire region, Kumaun to Kailash Manasarovar, through pilgrimage. Using these sources, the paper will try to map the imaginary of a mountain people, the Paharis of Kumaun.

Parciack, Ronie (and Mukhopadhyay, Rita)

The Play Of Inter-Semiotic Traffic At Roadside Peer Baba Shrines: Adapting A Sufi Tradition (New Delhi, India)

We explore the inter-semiotic associations and adapted narratives that are invoked at roadside Peer Baba mazars (a generic name for the grave-shrines of holy men), which attract citizens across otherwise diverging religions. Peer Baba mazars draw upon and adapt elements of the classical Islamic and Sufi tradition, such that an entombed and invisible Peer is believed to act as a mediator between the suppliant and Allah. However, the affiliation of the Peer with a silsila (spiritual order), that is
pronounced at established Sufi shrines in north India, is either thin or absent at roadside mazars. By underscoring the individuality of the saint, his immanence and rootedness to the spot, these caretakers (khidmatgars) try to ensure their own authority. The local offerings of cash and kind made at the shrine, then, remain with the caretakers and, at some sites, with women-caretakers who cannot assume this role at the established mazars. The location of Peer Baba shrines along pavements and prominent roads and at street corners and roundabouts in the prime urban space of central New Delhi invites the attention and land-grab of caretakers, devotees and state functionaries. Here, caretakers turn narrators and adaptors of stories of resistance that relate recent and miraculous accounts of how Peer Babas foiled state-mandated plans aimed at the diminution or demolition of their shrines. The borrowing and play of intra- and interreligious hermeneutics, correspondences, translations and adaptations are investigated across an array of visual symbols, gestures, ritual objects (especially grave coverings - chadars) and interlinguistic usages that cut across singular faiths.

Pastore, Rosina

*Telling Kṛṣṇa’s Tale: The Brajvilās By Brajvāsīdās*

This paper focuses on the Brajvilās, a Brajbhās.ā work composed by Brajvāsīdās in the second half of 18th century. The author belonged to Vallabha’s Puṣṭimarga and his Brajvilās constitutes a remarkable abridgment of Sūrdās’ Sūrsāgar. A considerable corpus of 18th-century compositions consists of digests or commentaries on previous texts, yet this kind of production stands for the great part unstudied. Such is the case of the Brajvilās as well, untranslated and largely neglected by scholarship up to date. Therefore, the purpose of the present study is firstly to trace its spread as a text and point out its structural characteristics. Secondly, the analysis of the inception of the work will allow to understand how Brajvāsīdās related to his sources, both Sanskrit and vernacular. The aim is to shed light on a composition which may have arguably played a significant role in the knowledge and popularization of the god Kṛṣṇa’s līlās after Sūrdās’ Sūrsāgar—in Vallabhite environment and beyond.

Patel, Priyesh

#Readytowait Or #Happytobleed? Critiquing The Sabarimala Debate Through Discourse Analysis

The Sabarimala case has been fought as much in the media as it has in the courts. Discourse analysis explores the use of language in reinforcing norms, legitimating social structures, and perpetuating interpretations of a phenomenon which supports certain interests (Taylor 2013). Taking inspiration from Abu-Lughod’s (2002) paper on the language employed by the Bush administration along democratic and civilisational lines to declare war in the middle-east and dichotomies such language entrenched, I shall interrogate the Sabarimala controversy to show how various stakeholders have created religious and secular dichotomies and dramatised the debate by shakily transitioning between religious and secular rationale to support their perspective on the validity of the verdict and the temple’s practice. My sources include media debates, newspaper articles, interviews, judicial documents and social media activity, from 2016 till present. I shall categorise arguments first into ‘for’ and ‘against’ the verdict and second, into ‘secular’ and ‘religious’ arguments used by stakeholders, allowing me to assess patterns, themes and their implications. ‘secular’ arguments were those articulated through the idiom of modern democratic constitutional discourse. ‘Religious’ arguments were those pertaining to the nature of the deity Ayyappa, contested interpretations of Hindu spirituality and whether the mandir can be deemed a ‘public space’. Discourse analysis helped me to assess how various arguments fare in isolation, away from melodramatic and dichotomous media discussions. Rather than critiquing the verdict or the practice, I critique the very nature of discourse around Sabarimala.
**Pauwels, Heidi**  
*The Benefits Of Marrying A Demoness: The Hidimbā Episode In A Fifteenth-Century Hindi Mahābhārata.*

One of the first extant complete Mahābhārata retellings in Classical Hindi is the Gwalior poet Vishnudās’ Pāndav-carit. This work was commissioned by the then-Tomar ruler Dungar Singh of Gwalior in 1435. The poet describes the Tomars as descendants of the epic heroes and explicitly compares his patron to Bhima. This raises the issue of how the story changes when retold for rulers claiming descent from the Pāndavas. This paper will focus on one of the episodes in which Bhima figures importantly in the Vana-parvan, namely the meeting with the man-eating demon Hidimba, killed by Bhima, and his sister Hidimbā, whom Bhima ends up marrying and fathering a son with, who in turn will be a great ally in the war. This paper compares Vishnudās’ version of the episode with that of the Sanskrit critical edition. Different Mahābhāratas give a different take on this encounter of the epic heroes with the demonic ‘other’ (Richman 2004). On the one hand, the problematic of the neglect of the noble husband of his demonic wife and son is understood as a caste issue by contemporary authors (Narain 2003). On the other, it has been argued that the Sanskrit version of the story reveals a demonic aspect of Bhima’s own nature (Gitomer 1991). There are several caste and tribal groups that see Bhima as “theirs”, in some cases through tracing their descent to Bhima’s wedding with Hidimbā (e.g., Channa 2005). This is all complicated by the fact that Hidimbā is worshiped as a goddess in her own right in the Himalaya, especially during the festival of Vijaya-dashamī (Halperin 2019). How to evaluate the fifteenth-century retelling against this background?

**Pecchia, Cristina**  
*The Transmission Of The Carakasamhitā In Colonial South Asia*

This paper will reflect on the history of transmission of the Carakasamhitā in colonial South Asia. Several printed books of the Carakasamhitā were published in the thirty years or so that followed Gangadhar Ray’s first printed edition from 1868. These printed books reveal important aspects of the 19th century Indian print industry and the wider cultural and political milieu in which it operated. My analysis will focus on the constellation of texts through which the Carakasamhitā appeared in printed books and its physical appearance (layout, text divisions, title pages). Furthermore, by examining a few sample texts in manuscripts and printed editions, I will offer data that allow us to characterize the activities of editors who in 19th century colonial South Asia philologically engaged with ancient Sanskrit texts.

**Perczel, Julia**  
*Doing It Right: Strange Alliances And Material Arrangements Of Honesty In Delhi, The Recycling Capital Of India*

This paper builds on twelve months of research in New Delhi, India, during which I was following the formal value chain of a Producers’ Responsibility Organisation (PRO), a for-profit company regularising e-waste recycling. The paper will describe the PRO’s value chain and its efforts to achieve an honestly environment-friendly operation by complying with the law. Also, it will trace how the smooth corporate-sector startup ends up creating links with the kinship-dominated computer scrap trade in a peripheral neighbourhood of the metropolis. The main focus of the paper is to explore how the demands of the right way to recycle creates entanglements across social hierarchies and between humans and material formations. It seeks to answer the following questions: What are the material arrangements through which the PRO can assert its self-legitimacy and do the right thing? What are the effects of these material arrangements of honesty? This inquiry will reveal Delhi as the site of strange associations and alliances: between paper documents and electronic discards; between kinship network and corporate sector efficiency; and between destruction and the creation of value. Besides its reputation as one of the most polluted cities in the world, Delhi is also the recycling cap-
ital of India and this booming sector reveals as much about people’s changing hopes and desires as about the emerging role of cities as ecological actors. My focus on the periphery as a site of potential for accumulating wealth and production of value from discards and second-hand material throws light on the intense ecological changes and their socio-material effects in urban India.

Peterson, Jonathan
Hermeneutics Of Exclusion: Ritual Branding And Scholastic Practice In Sixteenth Century Vedânta
Ritual branding of sectarian insignia on the body of an initiate or devotee (taptamudrâ) is a Pâñcarâtra practice that became important for Śrîvaisnavâ and Mâdhva Vaiṣṇava communities. Although the practice likely attracted criticism from an early period, it became a point of considerable controversy in the sixteenth century, when rivals from Smârta brahmanical communities attacked the practice with considerable force. This paper analyzes a body of anti-branding literature from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with an eye to understanding its prominent textual contours and what they may add to our understanding of early-modern Vedânta. The three main works I analyze are Bhâskara Dikṣitā’s “Taptamudrâvidrâvanam,” Bhaṭṭoji Dikṣitā’s “Tattvakaustubha,” and the same author’s “Tantrâdhikârinirnaya.” By situating these texts in a broader literature that includes Veṅkaṭanâtha’s “Saccaritraraksâ” and Vijayindra Tirthâ’s “Cakramimâṃsā,” this paper shows how issues of scriptural hermeneutics and bodily practice were leveraged by critics in order to articulate ideals of ritual and scholastic eligibility.

Philip, Jessy
Peasant Populism And Right Wing Politics: A Case Study From Gadwal, Telangana State Of South India
The contemporary expansion of right wing politics in India is often sought to be explained within the theoretical ambit of positions which lends conceptual primacy to the force of globalization. In contrast, based on ethnographic study of village and region of Gadwal district of Telangana state, this paper argues that the lurch towards the right-wing Hindutva by rural constituencies has to be located in the mediating structures of globalisation namely regional state, caste and provincial capital also. In order to illuminate political conditions favouring the growth of Hindu right wing, the paper focus on the political and economic relations between a repeasantizing group mostly belonging to backward castes beleaguered by globalisation of agriculture and a group of provincial capital from dominant castes. In order to gain access to non-commodified social provisions such subsidized fertilizer, seeds, credit which are important sources for repeasantization, peasants often enter into an alliance with provincial capital acting as gate keepers to the regional state. This alliance also enable peasants to keep down rural Dalit labour whose political subordination ensures some relief from rising input costs. This political alliance facilities a coming together of a discourse of agrarian populism and an ideology of religious sub-nationalism furthering the growth of right-wing politics. The paper tentatively points out that the recent turn to Hindu right-wing by farming communities in many states could be based on the religious and political connections forged between the peasants and provincial capital under neo-liberal economic and political conditions.

Phulera, Jyoti
Presence And Absence Of Females In The Silsilas: Tariqat And Female Agency In South Asian Sufism In The Delhi Sultanate
The paper seeks to study the curious case of simultaneous presence and absence of female participation in the organised Sufî spaces like the khanqah and its socio-cultural activities. Despite the language of patriarchy, in the ‘male’ sufî literature, women have historically enjoyed more space for expression of spirituality in the sufî circles than in the orthodox religion. Modern socio-anthropological studies on the sufî shrines have found inherent participation of womenfolk in devotional piety.
And yet, women were not to be part of either khanqahs or silsilas, and could not carry forward the wilayat of a Sufi saint. Situating the theme in its Islamic and Sufi context to look at precedents of active female piety, the paper progresses to study instances of female participation and the strategies of negotiation of space resorted to by women. This analysis begins with a study of the normative attitudes on gender present in this literature. The paper argues that these women were active religious participants who were engaged in redefining their religious agency both in the public and private lives, and who sought to define their sainthood through techniques which both transgressed the normative social roles set for them, and empowered them in the realm of religion. Here the paper indulges with those techniques like refusal to marry, practice of extraordinary piety, miracles, creation of a sacred body, piety within the family, etc, which were resorted to by these female saints to create a space for expression of their religiosity. In this regard the paper also discusses the influence of intellectual currents, like the ideology of Ibn Arabi and Shihabuddin Suhrawardi.

**Pillai, Sarath**  
*The Crisis Of Nationalism: Round Table Conference, Constitutional Patriotism, And The Possibility Of An All-India Federation*

This paper is a close-reading of the archive around the Round Table Conference (1930–32), the first all-India conference held in London to debate the constitutional future of India, in which representatives of both Indias—princely states and British provinces—sat together for the first time. The RTC, which took place in a moment of profound churning in domestic and global politics, marked the formal inauguration of the Indian federal project under the aegis of Indian princes, minorities, liberals, and other “non-national” groups. This paper reads the RTC archive along with more recent theoretical works on constitutional patriotism, political emotions, and intellectual history to show that “common patriotism” rather than nationalism was the common ground on which India’s federal future was conceived and debated. In so doing, the paper introduces constitutional patriotism as a political category and builds its co-constitutive relationship with the rise of federalist ideas in interwar India.

**Pillai, Sohini**  
*Rethinking Courtly Patronage Claims In Two Regional Mahābhāratas*

In the field of South Asian Studies, religious literature and courtly literature are frequently relegated to mutually exclusive worlds. This paper focuses on two Mahābhāratas that both revolve around the Hindu deity Krṣṇa: Villiputtūr’s fifteenth-century Tamil Pāratam and Sabalsiṃh Cauhān’s seventeenth-century Bhasha (Old Hindi) Mahābhārat. A closer look at each of these poems reveals that they are also both heavily inspired by seminal Vaisṇava bhakti compositions from their respective literary cultures. Much of the limited work that has been done on the Mahābhārata of Villi and Cauhān, however, has labeled these retellings as “courtly” based on multiple references to a chieftain named Ātkonṭān in the Tamil Pāratam and several lines praising a king named Mitrasen and the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in the Bhasha Mahābhārat. In fact, Villi’s Pāratam and Cauhān’s Mahābhārat are just two of many premodern regional Mahābhārata— including Peruntēvanār’s ninth-century Tamil Pāratavenpa, Pampa’s tenth-century Kannada Vikramārjunavijayam, Nannaya’s eleventh-century Telugu Mahābhāratamu, Viṣṇudās’ fifteenth-century Bhasha Pāṇḍavacarit, and Rāma Sarasvatī’s sixteenth-century Assamese Mahābhārata—— that have been categorized as works of courtly literature because they contain allusions to local patrons. In an attempt to complicate the court/temple divide that pervades contemporary scholarship on premodern South Asian literature, this paper carefully examines the implications of each of the courtly patronage claims in the Pāratam and the Mahābhārat within the larger narrative contexts of these two Krṣṇa-centric Mahābhāratas.
Ploberger, Florian

*Can Tibetan Herbs Be Replaced By European Herbs?*

This presentation seeks to explore potential boundaries that researchers might create or overcome when combining methods of textual analysis, ethnography, and clinical experience to address questions of Sowa Rigpa pharmacology in a European context. When does an analysis of Tibetan medical pharmacology benefit from using methods of different disciplines and when are they disadvantageous? Specifically, I will analyze potential ruptures of cross-disciplinary methods when addressing the question: “Can Tibetan herbs be replaced by European herbs?” On a practical level, when making Tibetan formulas in Europe, it should not only be possible and beneficial for patients and doctors to replace Tibetan herbs with European herbs, but also cost-effective. Replacement is a common solution, but difficult to understand and research, since ideas on what can be replaced with what and why differ considerably among texts, practitioners, and herb collectors. How can we deal with the problematic issues of replacement, combining methods from, for example, ethnographic, botanical, clinical, and philological methods? I will explore this question by presenting the example of the possible replacements of bitter, cooling Tibetan herbs that are used to treat mkhris pa-problems such as tig ta (Swertia chirata) or khur mang (Taraxacum officinale) with European herbs such as gentian (Gentiana lutea) or centaury (Centaurium erythraea). Which of these methods make sense when addressing questions of plant identification, sourcing and trade, as well as the process that is needed to be able to make a decision on suitable replacements?

Poddar, Sanjukta

*Offering Lessons In Cosmopolitanism In A Provincial City: The Case Of Adib (1909–1913)*

Most of the pioneering studies of regional public spheres of modern India have concentrated on individual languages even as they indicate the presence of immense linguistic diversity within regions across South Asia. Building on this assumption, this paper focuses on the multilingual world of periodicals in Allahabad, in particular on the short-lived but significant monthly, Adib (1909–1913) — one of the four prominent journals published by the Allahabad-based publishing house, the Indian Press. By comparing some representative articles from Adib (Urdu) with articles from better-known periodicals of the Indian Press stable such as Modern Review (English) Saraswati (Hindi), and Probashi (Bengali), I analyze some of the characteristics of this multilingual print culture. Specifically, I examine how multilingualism produced multivocality and revealed the contestations within the Allahabadi public sphere on the question of civic identity. In so doing, this paper asks three interrelated questions. One, how does Adib, an Urdu journal run by a Hindu publisher and by editors from different religions, position itself within the linguistic, literary, and socio-political field of production of Allahabad? Second, what is the valence of multilingualism vis-à-vis the formation of urban ethics and a purportedly cosmopolitan and/or “Ganga-Jamuni” worldview and what is Adib’s contribution to this conversation? Finally, what kind of impact did the presence of a flourishing print and public culture have on the identity of this provincial city (and by extension, on the Hindustani region) which may not be exhausted by the frameworks of nationalism or separatism?

Popp, Stephan

*Mughal Pañcatantra Adaptations*

This paper will focus on the “Ayyār-i dānish” (“The Knowledge Raider”), which Akbar’s historian and “PR expert” Abu l-Fazl wrote in order to modernize the “Anvār-i Suhailī” (“The Lights of Canopus”), which in turn is a 15th century adaptation of Kalīla va Dimna, the early 12th century Persian version of the Pañcatantra. Keeping with the spirit of the time, Abu l-Fazl took it up to rewrite the elegant but long-winding “Anvār-i Suhailī” in the short, accurate and still elegant way that he had designed under the orders of Akbar, not least to mark the claim to power of Akbar’s new empire with new rhetoric. This, however, sparked Akbar’s interest in the original, for which he had Mustafā Khāliqdad ʿAbbāsī translate the Pañcatantra directly from Sanskrit, and again into the new, elegant but short style that
he preferred as a representation of his reign. This lecture will put the Mughal adaptations of the Pañcatantra into its context and demonstrate its value as an example for the intellectual history of Akbar’s India.

**Prabhakaran, Sona**  
*When Death Beds Throbb With Life: Understanding The Materialities Of Liminal Deaths In Mariamman’s Temple*

Deification of death and funeral rituals are an integral part of Paadaikatiya Mariamman Temple in Tamil Nadu. The Temple, which stands on a cremation ground, stages a pseudo-funeral ritual for Goddess Mariamman where devotees perform their funeral rituals to express their gratitude to the Goddess for protecting them from death. This ritual, Paadai Kavadi, celebrated as the annual temple festival among the lower caste communities creates a space for liminal death where devotees are neither alive nor dead. When death and funeral rituals are actively integrated into this temple, the living corpse is not a polluting abject but a deified entity. The spatial configuration and the materialities of the temple, and the oral narratives on Goddess’s divinity play a crucial role to facilitate and validate the oscillation between structure and liminality during this festival. Initially established as a ‘sama-dhi’, and then as a ‘shrine’, the structure and the functionality of the present-day temple has been ‘sanskritised’ very selectively. This paper shall, therefore, attempt to understand how this temple and its rituals, as an emerging rural religiosity, confirms or exceeds the conceptual boundaries of Sankritisation. Furthermore, the paper shall evaluate how validating and performing a pseudo-funeral ritual within the temple premises attempts to re-define what constitutes as ‘sacred’ for the community that comprise this universe. Lastly, a temple where death is deified, where the Goddess belongs to the marginalised castes and having been situated amidst Brahmanical traditions, one then wonders if the Brahmins are a mere spectator when this ritual theatricality unfolds.

**Prakash, Amit**  
*Interrogating Marginalities As A Crisis Of The Liberal Script*

Liberalism, as a philosophical frame as well as praxis, has justifiably been lionised for expansion of liberty, equality, individual rights and democratic processes. These principles have acted as an anchor to inspire struggles for rights and justice across the world. However, such spatial and temporal expanse of the appeal of the liberal principles has created a new kind of challenge for liberalism. Such challenge is often seen as the contest of the liberal scripts by a variety of politico-social formations and processes. However, the paper will argue that the challenge to liberalism is less from other social forces and more from its inherent weaknesses, which in turn has been exacerbated by its stupendous successes. This weakness of the liberal script covers two primary aspects: (a) the inability to provide a sound conceptual basis for providing for social, economic and political diversity; and, (b) the difficulty of reconciling highly mobilised democratic expressions with the principles of liberalism. The impact of these two issues has been that in its struggle for liberty, rights and equality, the liberal scripts also creates vast socio-cultural and politico-economic bases for new kinds of marginalities, in addition to exacerbating the older and existing ones. This question about the mechanisms and processes through which the pursuit of liberal principles creates grounds for greater (or newer) forms of marginalities will be the prime focus of the paper with the help of select empirical examples from India.

**Prasad, Radhika**  
*‘sounding Out’ Tradition: The Formulation Of An Experimentalist Poetics In Agyeya’s Preface To The Doosra Saptak*

This paper seeks to analyse the notions of poetry, literary tradition, and modernity that Agyeya formulates in his 1949 preface to the Doosra Saptak, the second volume of experimentalist poetry which he edited as part of a larger series. Agyeya’s preface weaves together an eclectic selection of texts...
without any direct references: we find in his writing, on the one hand, the imprint of Sanskrit sources such as Bhattanayaka and Kalidasa, and on the other, western influences such as Viktor Shklovsky, TS Eliot, and Mikhail Bakhtin. While he cites Kalidasa’s attribution of constant renewal of language to poetry, he also draws on (as well as distorts) T.S. Eliot’s notion of tradition, turning it into something that the poet must spiritually engage with, even to the extent that she “sounds it out, breaks and distorts it, and internalises it.” Agyeya’s argument about the ubiquity of experimentation in poetry establishes both a continuity and a rupture with the Sanskrit literary tradition. This radical conception of literary tradition responds to a literary critical sphere which had subjected Hindi experimentalist poetry to intense criticism, and which insisted on a more obvious continuity with the existing tradition. However, to Agyeya experimentation remains instrumental in making poetry the only linguistic register which could reach out towards coherence in the face of modernity’s fragmentation of language. In this paper I read the preface simultaneously as a radical response to Hindi criticism, and an indicator of the Hindi literary sphere’s struggle with the questions posed to it by modernity.

Prasenan, Athira Sreedevi  
*Jathikkummi, The Song Of Caste: Knowledge, Sanskrit And Folk In Performance*

This paper addresses Pandit K P Karuppan’s Jathikkummi or the Caste-Song written c. 1905 as an attempt to question the logic of caste practices, interweaving the performative worlds and epistemic fields of vernacular folk and Sanskrit traditions. I read Jathikkummi as belonging to a genre of songs which converses with a dynamic corpus of existential and philosophical reflections of the early twentieth century Malayalam-speaking region in the south of India. It looks at the origins of the text and the biography of its writer as deeply connected in self-fashioning in the margins: Karuppan (1885–1938) was born into a caste of fishers in princely Cochin and entered the world of Sanskrit from the margins of caste-order. Jathikkummi, a free-wheeling translation of Manishapanchakam attributed to Adi Sankara, was written during his association with an upper caste centre for Sanskrit learning called Kodungallur gurukulam where he was taught in its ‘outskirts’. By borrowing the story of the Sankara-untouchable debate of Manishapanchakam, the song makes overtures to folk performative traditions like that of the pottan theyyam in British Malabar. Kummi, the preferred format of lower caste women’s songs, also helped the spread of its criticism of caste through women performers. But what makes Jathikkummi truly eclectic and feminine is its epistemic categories – yoga and jnana personified as yogappennu and jnanappennu – inspired from vernacular philosophic conversations on paths to liberation and knowledge. I argue that the reasons for the emergence of the song are embedded within the early modern history of Sanskrit learning accentuated by the changing socio-cultural milieu of Cochin.

Priyambada (Mahapatra), Pratichi  
*Slaves, Prostitutes, And Patronage: Female Dancers In Colonial Bombay Presidency*

My paper maps the shifting categories of female dancers in the colonial abolitionist discourses in the Bombay Presidency in the first half of the nineteenth century. Engaging with a set of colonial judicial records from the Bombay Presidency, writings of British abolitionists, and Parliamentary Papers on Indian slavery, this paper explores how the colonial state identified the “dancing girls” as “slaves” and “prostitutes” by the middle of the nineteenth century. Such legal categorization of dancers, I suggest, reflected larger colonial concerns of controlling certain ‘unruly’ native groups in order to contain the spread of venereal diseases in the Presidency. At the same time, I also explore, how the formation of such criminalized legal identities resulted in the decline of the dancers’ preexisting modes of livelihood enabling their social marginalization. In the wake of their declining patronage, the dancers, however, resisted through written petitions and appeals. This paper, therefore, argues that the intersection of the dancers’ negotiation with the colonial state vis-à-vis colonial attempts at controlling the dancers through legislations reflected larger changes within the interlinked systems of enslavement, performance, and sexual practices under British colonialism in the nineteenth-century Bombay Presidency.
Puri, Maria


Indian State has a history of military interventions at numerous, mainly peripheral locations. Most of the interventions are protracted and can be viewed as virtual civil wars. This paper would like to focus on the fallout of the Punjab insurgency (1970s – 1990s), and its decisive point, the military operation codenamed Operation Blue Star (June 1984), as viewed by a former militant, Sandip Kaur. Her Punjabi autobiography, Bikhra Painda/Broken Road (2008), written by somebody who is not a writer, represents a sub-category which ‘inhabits (…) margins of literary and autobiographical writing’ (Butalia 2017:20). Because of this, it offers a unique glimpse into the process of identity construction, both on the personal and the communal level, enacted against the larger backdrop of national games played out on the regional scene. With pan-national, official narrative superseding the regional in public discourse and history writing, the local, Punjabi and Sikh, narratives were censured else played down. If penned in Punjabi, they had no readership beyond narrowly defined linguistic boundaries unless translated into English or other vernacular language. This paper proposes to look at certain general issues attending the publication of autobiographical writings in translations: acknowledged/unacknowledged abridgements (Bachchan/Snell 1998/2017, Pritam/Gorowara 2015, Khaitan/Pande 2013), treatment of paratexts present in the original, public reaction to dissenting voices from the periphery, etc. while examining publisher’s expectations vis a vis a book like Sandip Kaur’s, a book viewed as a titillating market product authored by a genuine, one-time arms-bearing, female militant.

Raianu, Mircea

Intimacy And Militancy: Women Workers In India’s First Steel Plant, Ca. 1908–1958

This paper examines the deeply gendered nature of industrial labor at the Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) steel plant in Jamshedpur and its subsidiary coal and iron ore mines. Like in the Bombay textile mills and Calcutta jute mills, the other paradigmatic spaces of India’s industrialization of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, women formed a substantial part of the unskilled labor force. The juxtaposition of adivasi (tribal) women’s bodies with advanced machinery was an enduring trope in both managerial and social reform discourse, encompassing prurient fascination and paternalist regulation. Women’s subversive sexuality and overt political militancy destabilized labor control in Jamshedpur far more than canonical histories of trade unionism and working-class consciousness suggest. The paper uses the underexplored TISCO archives to recover women’s everyday experiences and struggles, building on an emerging historiography of ‘cooie’ labor in colonial India and comparable case studies elsewhere (such as Egypt). It focuses on a microhistory of the 1939 strike in the company’s Noamundi iron mine, sparked by illicit encounters between adivasi women and Bengali clerks. Successive attempts at governing sexuality on the shop floor gave way to a concerted strategy to retrench women workers by the early 1960s. Yet the ostensible modernity of industrialization continues to be enacted through gendered primitivism, from the (in)famous photograph of Nehru and Budhni Mejhan at the opening of the Panchet dam to contemporary conflicts over dispossession on eastern India’s mining frontier.

Rajak, Komal

Scrutinizing The Politics Of The Usages Of Term ‘Dalit’ In Anti-Caste Tradition: An Inquiry Through Nomenclatural Perspective

To explore the anti-caste deliberations, understanding the structural mechanism and discursive traditions of Dalit category is required. Identities are conscious constructions encoding both positive or negative agenda, and nomenclatures matter while dealing with the identity of marginalized section. ‘Dalit’ term is defined as an expression of the powerless and voiceless, representing those who have been ground down by privileged ones; hence it involves an inherent denial of dignity and conceptual hierarchy which by definition justifies the domination of privileged sections over the socio-political
spheres. Whereas, the very usage of term ‘Dalit’ is problematic, as it orients the whole social question in [re]iteration of the victimization of the concerned section, and ensures the impunity of privileged Varnas in Varnashram order of Hinduism. The ‘identity’ of victimhood cannot be constitutive of the anti-caste movement that emerges from it. Ambedkar underscored the objections raised by the people over the usages of ‘Dalit’ nomenclature for its contemptuousness and invoked to take advantage of crafting a new nomenclature. To scrutinize the anti-caste occurrence, bringing its originators and perpetrators into the discourse is indispensable which seems impossible in Dalit and non-Dalit binary. Caste relations required to be understood through locating the survivors and perpetrators on the matrix of prevalent social order which can be explored. My submission, here, does not imply that the term Dalit is derogatory but underline the fact that it sets free the culprits of atrocities against untouchable since it does not detect their ‘identity’ in the framework of Dalit

**Rajpopat, Rishi**

**Vernacular Grammarians Or Historical Linguists?**

Broadly speaking, one can argue that the grammars of Prakrit and Apabhramsa are not grammars at all: these texts are written in Sanskrit, are based on the Panini style of writing rules, and document the changes that took place in Sanskrit, thereby giving birth to its daughter languages. In that sense, they are actually the world’s oldest texts on historical linguistics. But on the other hand, it is possible to argue that, despite this awareness of the familial relationship of the vernaculars with Sanskrit, the grammarians documented the evolution of mainly those languages which emerged as literary vehicles, namely Maharashtri (Prakrit) and Nagara (Apabhramsa). Besides, they derive Apabhramsa not from Prakrit but from Sanskrit, thereby prioritizing language regularization over documentation of historical sound change. Let us consider the two main kinds of operations these grammars teach, namely phonological and morphological. It makes sense to use Sanskrit as the base to document the phonological changes leading to Prakrit - if not to Apabhramsa - which leads us to the conclusion that these texts are indeed documenting language change. Yet, it is surprising that they teach substitution of suffixes artificially created by Sanskrit grammarians to derive morphological forms of Prakrit and Apabhramsa, instead of demonstrating that certain inflections and conjugations have historically prevailed over others, which brings us to think that they were merely writing grammars heavily incumbent upon the Sanskrit grammatical style. This paper will seek to answer the question: what was the actual purpose of writing grammars that derive a newer layer of language from an older one?

**Ranjith, Anjana**

**Faith V/S Fundamental Right: The Politics Of Sabarimala Controversy**

The recent judgement of the Supreme Court lifting ban on the entry of women of menstrual age in Sabarimala has spurred various debates, violence and protests. It is a matter of faith versus fundamental right. What is important to note is that women’s entry was banned formally only in 1991 by the Kerala High Court. According to the judgement of the Supreme Court, this act of restricting women on the basis of their mensmenstrual status was against the very spirit of the constitution which guarantees equality to all its citizens. What guided this exclusion was the idea of pollution that stigmatized menstruation as impure that was sanctioned by the Hindu scriptures. As a result of this the practices that legitimise menstrual taboos, through the notions of “purity and pollution,” limit the ability of menstruating women to attain the freedom of movement, the right to education and the right of entry to places of worship, and eventually, their access to the public sphere is lost. The RSS had always found it difficult to make an entry into Kerala politics because of the unique historical context of the formation of the state and its politics. The recent problematizing of the issue by RSS shows its strategy to make Sabarimala a temple for Hindus only. Therefore the objectives of the paper are as follows: to make historical analysis of contesting perspectives on the identity of the deity worshipped in order to examine what practices existed in the past, and what changed and why it changed; To make a historical analysis of the practices that existed including restrictions on women entry in the light if gender equality; To analyse the problematizing of the issue by political parties.
Rao, Arjun

*Water Strategies Of Late Prehistoric Settlements In The Semi-Arid And Tropical Climates Of Southern India*

The author’s archaeological projects are focusing on two dynamic climatic regions of southern part of South Asia. The tropical Western Ghats with high precipitation (3200mm) and Semi-arid Deccan plateau with very low precipitation (400mm) have significant findings to tell us on two different levels of water collection strategies. High-elevated hills of Western Ghats along the western coast cause orographic rain shadow for the Deccan Plateau. This has made the two regions ecologically distinct. Iron Age (1200–300 BCE) societies flourished in both the climatic regions with similar cultural materials and practices with differential levels in establishing the settlements. One of the prominent differences among those settlements owing to landscapes and climate is ‘water’. Our findings demonstrate how possibly the Iron Age communities strategized water in the less and abundantly water available climatic regions. Human-made water pools of indifferent shallow depressions on the slopes of semi-arid granitic hillocks indicate at the collection of runoff water from springs or precipitation. With limited annual precipitation and seasonal water collection locations in the semiarid climate, water could have played its multiple roles as in food and tool processing activities beyond the ritual association. On the absence of tangible evidences for water collection in the Western Ghats, with abundant precipitation and wet landscape, water might have played a different role in the Iron Age societies resorting to ditching or worked on earthen bunding at valley gullies. Contextually appears that greater ecological concerns are probable in the tropical societies than in the arid conditions.

Rastelli, Marion

*Being Branded Or Not Being Branded? Branding As An Identity Marker In Śrīvais. n. avism*

The majority of the Śrīvaisnāvas today consider branding (tāpa) Viṣṇu’s insignia, usually discus and conch, on the upper arms to be an indispensable feature of self-identification. However, although there is evidence that South Indian Vaisnāvas underwent this kind of branding already in the 9th c. CE, the Pāñcarātra Saṃhitās – the main sources for the Śrīvaisnavīna ritual repertoire – provide ritual prescriptions for it not earlier than the 13th century CE. This indicates that the followers of the Pāñcarātra adopted this ritual only then. In around the same period, the Vaikhānasas, a community that places a strong emphasis on its Vedic affiliation and that also belongs to the Śrīvaisnavīna tradition, explicitly rejected branding, considering their identity marker to be the fact that they are not branded. The paper will explore Pāñcarātra and Vaikhānasa Saṃhitās as well as scholastic texts of Pāñcarātra and Vaikhānasa authors to search for possible reasons why and how being or not being branded became important features of self-identification for Śrīvaisnāvas from the 13th century onwards.

Ravishankar, Akshara

*Vernacular Commentary And The Bhagavad Gitā: Questions Of Transition And Circulation*

Scholarship on modern receptions of the Bhagavad Gītā in South Asia has tended to focus on its life in 19th and 20th century nationalisms and European representations. In this paper, I explore the early modern life of the Bhagavad Gītā as it was received through commentarial traditions, specifically in Hindi. I look at an 18th-century translation and commentary of the Gītā called the ‘Paramānanda Prabodha’ attributed to a little-known author named Ānandarāma. The text is a transcreation of a 14th-century Sanskrit commentary by Śrīdhara Svāmin, contains both prose and verse forms, and draws upon prior traditions of interpretation while making choices that enable it to speak to what were likely to have been non-specialist audiences. While examining this text in the context of patterns of transmission and circulation in its own time, I use this analysis to raise broader questions about how these processes of transmission and translation work. Renditions of the Gītā in the vernacular additionally reveal shifting audiences and modes of circulation, as well as developments in the functions of genres like the commentary and their role in mediating the received significance of, and constructions of meaning in, canonical texts like the Gītā. Through this paper, I suggest that attention
to early vernacular renditions of the Gitā may allow us to ask further questions relevant to later histories of reception. Were there modes of reading or circulation, rooted in the local and the vernacular, that persisted? Can such a focus provide tools to track either continuities or discontinuities into the modern period?

Rawat, Hansa
Mapping The Territorial Space In British India: Anglo-Nepalese War And The Formation Of Non-Regulation Province

The introduction of the Non-Regulation system after the occupation of the British Garhwal and Kumaon province brought changes in the structure of the existing geographical discourse. The Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814–16 impacted the geographical, commercial, and political nature of relations in the Himalayan region. By 1814, they had established their dominance in the entire Himalayan region and the Tarai area between Darjeeling and Shimla. In conclusion to the Anglo-Nepalese War, a part of the present-day Garhwal was annexed into the British territory and merged into the region of Kumaon under the commissionership of the Non-Regulation system which was known as Kumaon province. Soon Kumaon formed the northernmost frontier of the Ceded and Conquered Provinces in British India, that later became North-Western Provinces of India. Being the first mountainous possession of the East India Company and the sole channel of British trade with Tibet, it was accorded the special status of a Non-Regulation Province where Bengal regulations were not applied. This paper deals with the shaping of the territories of Garhwal and Kumaon of the Himalayan region under the colonial regime. It established new geographical knowledge which was ‘scientific’ and ‘modern’ in nature. The modern mapping techniques, surveying and mapping narrate the imperial stance on the construction of territorial space. Accordingly, it would be interesting to see how mapping becomes the defining instrument in the study of the history of the present-day Garhwal and Kumaon region.

Ray, Sugata
How To See Water In An Age Of Unusual Droughts: Ecological Aesthetics In The Little Ice Age, Mathura

The Little Ice Age (ca. 1550–1850), a climatic period marked by glacial expansion in Europe, brought droughts of unprecedented intensity to South Asia. In drought-ravaged north India, the beginnings of the Little Ice Age not only corresponded with the emergence of new techniques of riparian architecture in the pilgrimage center of Mathura that emphasized the materiality of flowing water but also saw the enunciation of a new theology of Krishna worship that centralized the veneration of the natural environment. Tracing the intersections among artistic practices, theological economies, and the ecocatastrophes of the Little Ice Age, my talk aims to generate an ideation of an eco art history that brings together the environmental and the aesthetic.

Reddington, Helena
Laughing In Malayalam: Satirical Retellings Of Stories From The Mahābhārata In The Tujjāl Genre Of Kerala

Tujjāl is a satirical performance tradition from Kerala attributed to the poet Kuṇčan Nambyār (1700–1770.) Nambyār is not only remembered as the creator of the Tujjāl performance genre and the poetry on which it is based, but perhaps more significantly, as the one of the most important classical poets of the Malayalam language. The vernacular poetry weaves Hindu religious narratives drawn from the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa epics, as well as Purāṇa literature, with humour and socio-political critique. I examine the ways in which Tullal poetry and performance reinterpret narratives from the Mahābhārata with particular attention paid to the lesser-known and rarely preformed Nājāyanī Caritam. I explore the ways in which Nambyār’s poetry imaginatively recasts episodes from the Mahābhārata epic as if they occurred in 18th century Kerala, incorporating dimension of local color and setting, yielding insights into society and politics in the region. Besides Tujjāl’s rich textual tradition,
I draw from fieldwork on the living performance tradition in Kerala. In particular, I explore how Tullal performers interpret Nambyār’s 18th century poetry for contemporary audiences. The performers enact a comedic rendering of narratives from the Mahābhārata in which even venerated figures are lampooned. Moreover, they have scope to improvise and actively incorporate the audience into the narrative. In this way, Nambyār’s original poems can be elaborated and interpreted in different ways. By comparing the 18th century poetry and the modern performance tradition, I aim to explore the ways in which religious narratives from the Mahābhārata are transmitted in new and changing contexts.

Remesh, Arun
Mathrubhumi Weekly And The Formation Of The Malayali Identity
Mathrubhumi Azchappathippu (Mathrubhumi Illustrated Weekly) is a Malayalam weekly published from Calicut in Kerala. It started publishing on 18th of January 1932 and is still in circulation. Kerala is a state in the southern part of India which was formed in 1956 on linguistics basis. In 1957 a Communist-led government assumed the office, one of the earliest elected Communist governments in the world. Kerala is one of the Indian state shaving higher rates of literacy. This paper looks at the formation of a literary public sphere in Malabar- northern Kerala which was under the Madras Presidency through the efforts the Communist party such as the formation of the reading rooms in the second half of the 1930s. The paper addresses the issues of caste, class and gender and how they affected the formation of the literary public sphere and the formation of the Malayali (one whose mother tongue is Malayalam) identity. The socio-economic and literary life in Malabar will be analysed with relation to the circulation of the Mathrubhumi Weekly. The major themes discussed in the literary public sphere will be analysed to find the politics of literature that is circulated or that acquired publicity and the historical and political roles played by the weekly in the formation of Kerala in 1956 on linguistics basis combining Malabar and the princely states of Travancore and Cochin. The circulation of novels and short stories in the weekly are analysed to find the politics of the magazine that shaped the Malayali subjectivity. The earlier issues of the magazine would be analysed to find the politics of the weekly and the representation of history through its means.

Rhoads, Elizabeth (and Das, Ritanjan)
God, State And The City: Negotiating Urban Development Around Religious Properties In Calcutta And Rangoon
In 2006, news broke that the Indian car manufacturer Tata Motors would establish a new car factory in West Bengal. To make way for the factory, several thousand mostly small and marginal farmers were dispossessed of altogether 997 acres of farmland in the Singur area, located 45 km outside the state capital of Kolkata. The controversy that ensued as local landowners mobilised in defence of their farmland propellep the land acquisition in Singur to a matter of national and even global concern, as it evolved into one of India’s most talked-about new land wars. The movement of these so-called “unwilling farmers” eventually succeeded in shutting down the factory in 2008. While the movement thus achieved its one-point agenda, local life “after the factory” has been characterised mostly by half-hearted efforts at land restitution; the accelerating diversification of livelihoods away from agriculture; and the continued intervention of political forces trying to politicise the recent history of land dispossession and resistance in Singur in competing ways. In this paper, we survey the ways in which local livelihoods and forms of political organisation have evolved in Singur in the wake of dispossession. Both authors have done long-term fieldwork in the Singur area during 2007–2009, with repeated follow-up visits since. We base our analysis on ethnographic material collected during this period, as well as two surveys (covering around 225 households) conducted a decade apart (by Nielsen), in order to offer both qualitative and quantitative insights into post-dispossession transformations. This paper thus represents our first attempt at a longitudinal analysis of these processes.'
land and dispossession. However, a critical dimension of the land question, something with current and historic relevance, is rarely at the forefront. This is the question of land owned by God, i.e. religious land/properties, and the state’s handling of such properties in the context of urban development. There are serious ongoing debates, particularly in India, about whether religious properties - as collective cultural assets and part of a larger heritage - can be considered private or public places, and the legal-political ramifications of such decisions (the long tussle to bring the Nataraja temple under state administration in Tamil Nadu, the current case of Sabrimala in Kerala, and the Ayodhya dispute in Uttar Pradesh). What we propose in this paper is a novel approach of placing this debate in the urbanisation domain. Using a comparative study between two cities with an integrated colonial past – Calcutta and Rangoon – we explore how a state (and its agencies) approaches Hindu (debuter) and Islamic (waqf) religious properties when they stand in the way of urban regeneration? There are numerous, and openly visible instances of urban development bypassing such properties (roads/flyovers being redesigned to avoid acquiring religious land), often succumbing to powerful religious and political networks. But how a state negotiates with a wide array of conflicting imperatives – development priorities, religious sentiments, legality, and local political dynamics – has not been studied before. This paper represents our first attempt at a longitudinal analysis of these processes.

Rinehart, Robin

*The Mahābhārata In The Dasam Granth: Kings And Sacrifices In Giān Prabodh*

The Dasam Granth, an 18th century Brajbhāsā anthology attributed to the 10th Sikh guru, Guru Gobind Singh (1666–1708), includes the composition Giān Prabodh, which opens with verses praising an ineffable, attributeless lord, and then shifts to a conversation between an ātma and paramātma. The ātma asks about various types of dharma, providing the occasion for describing events from the Mahābhārata, including the frame story of its narration to the king Janamejaya. The paramātma narrates Parikṣit’s death and Janamejaya’s effort to avenge him with a snake sacrifice. Janamejaya halts the snake sacrifice at Āstīka’s intervention and summons the sage Vyāsa, but then goes to battle to win the two daughters of a king of Kāśī, wedding them both and bearing two sons. He fathers another son with one of his wives’ maidservant. Later, he massacres Brahmans who have laughed at one of his wives, and is cursed with leprosy. It is in seeking a cure for his leprosy that he hears the story of the Mahābhārata, condensed into 27 quatrains in Giān Prabodh. Janamejaya laughs at the ending, and dies, his leprosy uncured. His sons struggle and fight one another, and Giān Prabodh ends with a story of the origin of the Rājpūts, and the goddess Caṇḍi conducting a demon sacrifice. The Mahābhārata’s frame story is here embedded within another frame story—that of the paramātma’s conversation—which itself occurs within a composition praising a formless god. This presentation will analyze this particular retelling of the Mahābhārata in the context of the Dasam Granth’s overall exploration of the ruler’s dharma and the Sikh doctrine of mīrī-pīrī or temporal and spiritual leadership.

Ripamonti, Denise

*Debating Land And Development At The Margins: Political Discourse, State-Society Relations, And The Maoist Conflict In India*

This paper investigates the construction of dominant discourses on land and development in the context of the Indian state’s response to the Maoist conflict after the neoliberal turn of India’s economy in 1991. In particular, it explores the discursive processes lying at the basis of a counterinsurgency policy paradigm which, over the years, has consolidated the conflation of development and security priorities of the Indian state in territories under Maoist influence. In an attempt to contextualise the institutionalisation of this policy approach within its historical and socio-political processes, the paper focuses on a discourse analysis of parliamentary activities, official documents, media and civil society reports which have shaped the political debate on key development policies/schemes formulated by
the Indian state to respond to the Maoist insurgency post-1991. In particular, the analysis uncovers the political-discursive strategies enacted to normalise state practices in relation to land claims/rights and socio-economic development of marginal communities in Maoist affected areas. Grounded at the intersection of discourse theory and critical security/conflict studies, the paper argues that the formation of hegemonic narratives on development and economic growth in the current political debate on the Maoist movement is based on discursive processes aimed at creating political imaginaries which ultimately define state’s legitimacy and regulate political communities on the margins in conflict-ridden societies.

Rokicka, Weronika

*Lessons From The Ussr: Bengali Travel Writings On Russia In The 1930s*

This paper will look into travel literature as a medium of knowledge transfer from Europe to India by examining selected travel writings by Bengalis on Soviet Russia in the 1930s. In 1930 Rabindranath Tagore undertook the historic journey to USSR and his *Rāśiyā rīspī (Letters from Russia)*, full of praise for the achievements of the newly transformed state, were published soon afterwards amid criticism from the British government and some of Tagore’s Western friends. Letters highlighted common socio-economic challenges of Russia and India as well as presented to Indian readers recent successes of the Soviet Union. Having Letters from Russia as a starting point this paper will focus on travel accounts of two less-known Bengali writers. Saumyendranath Tagore, grand-nephew of Rabindranath and one of pioneers of communism in South Asia, travelled to Russia in the late 1920s and penned two books on his experience *Biplabī Ruśiyā (Revolutionary Russia, later published as Sobhiyēt Ripā-blik)* and *Yātrī (Traveller)*. Nityanarayan Bandyopadhyay (Banerji) wrote his travel account in two language versions, English and Bengali, *Russia Today* (1934) and *Rāśiyā bhaman* (Travel to Russia, 1935; it is not a mere translation). Both authors wrote explicitly with the aim of sharing knowledge about the Soviet system and covered such diverse issues as the condition of peasants and factory workers, education, healthcare, industrial development, gender equality, religious life and more.

Rousseleau, Raphaël

*Forest King In The Mirror Of Courtly Culture*

In this paper, I intend to show that some long-standing derogatory clichés about adivasi can be traced from the depiction of “forest kings” in precolonial sources. Drawing notably from translations of Bana’s *Kâdambarî* and following medieval sources like Somadeva’s *Kathasaritasgara* and Dandin’s *Dasakumaracarita*, I will show that the Forest dwellers (sabara, nishada) are depicted not so much in contrast with Brahmanic ideals than in relation to courtly culture (relying on Daud Ali 2006). Thus, they appear as inverted reflections of the perfect prince ideals; in short, as rude, violent incarnations of Indian ‘savagery’.

Roy Chowdhury, Arnab

*‘Silence Of The Lambs’: Rohingya Refugee Policy, Politics And Trope In Contemporary India*

To escape persecution and violence, the Rohingya Muslims have been fleeing Myanmar, especially for the last two decades. Many of them have entered India since 2012. Official statistics put the number of Rohingyas in India at about 40000. India has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Status Convention or the 1967 Refugee Status Protocol but, until the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came into power, it had adopted a policy of tactical but somewhat humane negligence towards these refugees. After it came to power in 2014, the BJP has been increasing state surveillance, intimidation, and harassments. Since 2017, the government has been proactively trying to deport these ‘illegal infiltrators’ in the name of a national ‘security threat’. A Rohingya makeshift settlement was situated on the margins of Southeast Delhi. This camp was burnt to ashes in 2018. A right-wing youth leader claimed on Twitter to have torched it, but the government did not act against him. My ethnographic observation and interviews
of the Rohingyas in Delhi after the arson show looming, palpable liminality, precarity, and a threat of violence that is corporeal, structural, and inter-subjective, have engulfed refugee lives. A few civil society organisations like Zakat foundation and Rohingya Human Rights Initiative are working with these hapless people amidst decreasing state support. I argue that the religious-nationalist state in India is bringing about its original fiction of ‘exclusivist’ sovereignty by creating a symbolic non-Hindu, non-citizen ‘other’, by deploying the ‘Rohingya’ trope. That shows that refugees and the stateless are the central ‘political figures’ of our conservative-nationalist times.

Roy, Arjab
Death Of An Adivasi: Interpreting And Understanding Bikram Hembrom’s Death
This paper’s objective is to contribute towards the idea of ‘Adivasi Studies’ as proposed by Prathamama Banerjee (2016). Banerjee lays out its potential with the necessity of multilingual interdisciplinary interactions seeking to recover “the deep historicality of peoples now called tribes” (21). This paper focuses on an episode of death in a Bengali short story titled “Bikram Hembrom” (1965) written by Dr. Balaichand Mukhopadhyay (pseudonym: Banaphool) with the plot set immediately after India’s independence in 1947 around Santhal Pargana near Birbhum District of West Bengal. The paper reads the Santhal protagonist who is the erstwhile Honourary Magistrate of Santhal Pargana, Bikram Hembrom’s death as a socially transformative moment in post-independence India. It interprets Bikram Hembrom’s death as an indication of individual and collective acculturation of indigenous members from their ‘home’ towards the modern new ‘world’. Bikram’s subjective experiences in the context of the social formations of his time that extends from colonial to postcolonial India are relevant while highlighting the significance of the forest in the story. The paper explores the crucial role of Forest Acts in understanding the changes that Nehruvian India promise. The paper argues that the independent Indian state sought to efface the differences and autonomy of indigenous communities thereby integrating and subsuming them within a broader national identity.

Roy, Baijayanti
Knowledge Of India As “Political Science” In Nazi Germany
This paper examines how knowledge of contemporary India was deployed in “politically useful” ways in two academic institutions of Nazi Germany, namely the Deutsche Auslandswissenschaftliches Institut or the DAWI (German Institute for Study of Foreign Countries) and the Auslandswissenschaftliches Fakultät or AF (Foreign Studies department), both affiliated to the University of Berlin. These closely connected institutes were established in 1940 with the purpose of fulfilling the “cultural political” aims of the Third Reich. In case of India, such aims included collecting information about India as well as conducting anti-British and pro-National Socialist propaganda. Both the institutes were closely monitored by the SS. The appointment of Indologist Ludwig Alsdorf (a member of the NSDAP whose academic works found favour among the ruling elite) in 1941 as a lecturer for Indian Studies at the AF was a reflection of the Nazi regime’s interest in training students who could conduct National Socialist cultural politics concerning India. This paper examines the roles of Alsdorf and a few of his colleagues who used their knowledge of India to further certain objectives of Nazi Germany through these organisations. The paper also looks at publications that formed the teaching curriculum on India in these institutes. These included books and articles written by the aforementioned academics, as well as “politicised” reports on India published in German newspapers, sometimes written by the same scholars, anonymously or under pseudonyms.

Roy, Naba Gopal
The Interdisciplinary Corpus Of Kamasutra In ‘Vidya Sundar’ Pala And ‘Chaushathi-Rati Bandha
The Kamasutra of Vatsyayana and many other similar texts were written in India and the tradition filtered down to Bengali and Oriya literature as well. Sexual activity was there very much, such as ‘Vidya Sundar’ pala and ‘Chaushathi-Rati Bandha’ Translation and Transcription from Palm-Leaf of
those texts similarly done previously. The main aim of this paper is to see how translation intercedes in the emplacement of cultures. For my purpose, I shall take up an illustrated poetical composition of unknown/unpublished and also published palm-leaf manuscript called ‘Chausath-Rati Bandha’ by the Odia poet Gopala Bhanja, and his translations/adaptations in particular that text regularized by a set of erotica theme and factors like erotica-literature in the form of vernacular or local “Kamasutra” in connection with the approach of Bengali tradition of ‘Vidya Sundar’ pala. In medieval Bengali-Odia literature, there was a hidden tradition of erotica on the basis of Kamasutra. I shall endeavor to explain that those palas long illustrated and non-illustrated poem were patterned after the composition of Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra, and some relevant later works of other vernacular Kāma-sūtras. However, my curiosity is not so much with retracing conventions of similarities and differences between the two texts so as to agree on the question to evoke the classical Indian heritage or to attempt poetical innovations through the use of Kamasutra of Vastyana’s sources. As a medieval poet working in the besides two states on political regime but in a specific erotica matrix were engaged in the formation of regional cultural identity through the subjects of an ancient legacy.

Ruia, Aditya

Ambivalent Authority: Manoraths As History In The Depiction Of Power Dynamics At Theudaipur Court (1921–1930)

Through an analysis of three images of the Vallabha Sampradaya, this paper will demonstrate the importance of this sect and its visual sources in our understanding of the internal politics at the court of Udaipur. The study will concentrate on three manorath paintings which will be considered as pictorial history by connecting them with actual visits of rulers to the Nathdwara temple. The examination will also suggest shifting power equations at the court of Udaipur at the time of Bhupal Singh (1884 – 1955 C. E.), He was appointed as the de-facto ruler of Udaipur in 1921 by the colonial government during the life time of his father, Fateh Singh (1849 – 1930 C. E.), who continued to remain the titular Maharana. This investigation will also highlight the importance of the officiating Goswamis (priests) in legitimizing royal power. The paintings that will be considered for analysis are two manoraths in the collection of the City Palace of Udaipur – one by artist Sukhdev (2011.18.0061) and the other by Laxmilal Goud (2011.18.0062) – depicting Maharana Fateh Singh along with Bavji (heir apparent) Bhupal Singh. A third image, from a private collection, also depicts a visit but uses a different iconography to convey a shift in power. This study will lead us to understand how such images were used by Bhupal Singh to shape and legitimize his position. This statement will be further strengthened by colonial accounts and the daily court records at Udaipur, such as the haqiqat - bahidas of Maharana Fateh Singh.

Sabu, Sherin

Bleeding Kin: Menstrual Care Work And Women’s Relationships

This paper proposes that Malayali women form a particular kind of ‘kinship’ among themselves, which is derivative of their experiences, knowledge, feelings and, strategies, surrounding menstruation, which I refer to as menstrual kinship. The paper explains in detail how the defining feature of this kinship is a certain type of ‘care work’ that is carried out by women in the intimate sphere that they share among themselves. Also, in a male-dominant ‘sex-gender system’, men generally do not witness, perform or grasp the intricacies of this work. However, while menstrual care work in the past was mediated by gender, caste and culture, modern menstrual kin, although socially constituted and relationship-driven are capable of acting autonomously. This autonomy is informed by contemporary processes of individualization where women are also bound by their self-directed choices regarding which relationships to enter into and whom to care for. Consequently, menstrual care work, which was exclusively shared by consanguineal and affinal female kin till the second half of the 19th century is now extended to and sometimes even shifted to women outside the family, owing to the social, cultural, historical and demographic changes. Along these lines, this paper explicates the ways in which mothers, daughters, sisters, friends, colleagues, lovers and sometimes even strangers, show
within the scope of an extended ‘kinship’ that grows beyond the traditional ties of kinship and is integral to the lives of women as menstrual caregivers and takers. To elaborate on these points, this paper looks at the domain of menstrual care work across and within three generations of women in Kerala.

Saha, Shandip
Retrieving Gopīnāth From The Margins Of Puṣṭi Mārga History
This paper proposes to examine the long-neglected figure of Vallabhācārya’s eldest son and successor, Gopināth (1512–1543) and his place in the history of the Puṣṭi Mārga. The important and influential seventeenth century sectarian history known as the Caurāsī Vaśīvan ki Vārtā (CVV) acknowledges Gopināth as playing an important role in growing the institutional base of the Puṣṭi Mārga after the demise of his father. His condemnation, however, as an unfit successor to Vallabhācārya in the commentary to the CVV by the seventeenth century theologian, Harirāy (1590?-1715) lead to the near neglect of Gopināth in modern sectarian and academic histories. This paper will examine the controversies within the early history of the Puṣṭi Mārga that led to the marginalization of Gopināth and the elevation of his younger brother, Viṭṭhalnāth (1515–1585), to the status of Vallabha’s only legitimate successor. This, in turn, will be used as the historical context against which to to understand how current theologians within the community have sought to grapple with Gopināth’s legacy to the Puṣṭi Mārga and have tried to rehabilitate his image as they seek to raise awareness among a new generation of devotees about the history of their community. In doing so, this paper will use the current debates about Gopināth’s legacy to better understand the concerns that are shaping the religious discourse of the Puṣṭi Mārga today.

Salgado, Nirmala
Agency, Resistance, And Communal Practice Among Sri Lankan Bhikkhunis.
In 1998, monastics from Dambulla, Sri Lanka inaugurated higher ordinations (upasampadās) of nuns (bhikkhunīs), aiming among other things, to contest the power and authority of conservative monastics, and state officials who maintained that a Theravāda bhikkhunī upasampadā was impossible. Additionally, they insisted that the Dambulla bhikkhunī upasampadās were, unlike others being conferred on Sri Lankan nuns, exclusively Theravāda. Their claim paved the way for the inception of distinct Sri Lankan bhikkhunī lineages and a long-term tension among them, centering on disputing the character of Theravāda orthodoxy. Dambulla bhikkhunīs had been required to refrain from participating in important rituals with other Sri Lankan bhikkhunīs ordained elsewhere, thus perpetuating a debate about how Theravāda orthodoxy was authorized and defined among bhikkhunīs themselves. However, in recent years, this tension has dissipated as Dambulla monastics have begun to work together with bhikkhunīs from another ordination lineage. How and why this has happened is the subject of this paper. Focusing on recent conversations with monastics, this paper discusses how senior bhikkhunīs of different ordination lineages have begun to work together with bhikkhunīs from another ordination lineage. This paper argues that a notion of nuns’ agency needs to go beyond the trope of resistance and engage how nuns prioritize the cultivation of a communal form of life as they respond to contingencies that are intrinsic to life itself.

Samarendra, Padmanabh
Marginalisation Through Empowerment: The Policy Of Reservation For The Scheduled Castes In India
The constitution of India has reserved 15% of the vacancies in state-supported organizations for the members of scheduled castes. Outlining the eligibility, ‘The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950’, mentions: ‘no person who professes a religion different from Hinduism shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste’. Subsequently, two amendments were made, in 1956 and 1990, making Sikhs and Buddhists also eligible. However, Muslims and Christians are still ineligible to be
considered as members of a scheduled caste. The presence of caste among Muslims and Christians is recorded in numerous academic researches. The reports prepared by the state - the Sachar Committee Report (2006) and the Ranganath Misra Commission Report (2007) - also attest to the same fact. And yet, the laws of scheduled castes' reservation appear to discriminate on the ground of religion: providing benefits, for instance, to the members of the Hindu barber caste while denying the same to those of Muslim barber caste. How does a policy of reservation, framed ostensibly to empower, actually operate to exclude and marginalise certain communities? This paper would argue that the exclusion of Muslims and Christians ensues from the assumption that caste exists only among the Hindus. The assumption, produced initially under the influence of Orientalism, was subsequently re-formulated with the help of Anthropology in the course of the Census operations in colonial India. Its presence in the constitution reveals continuing colonial linkages and puts under doubt the liberal claim of equality of religion.

Santiago, Amitha

*In Search Of The Unexpected: The Supreme Court, Menstruating Women And Untouchability*

This paper begins at Hannah Arendt’s bidding to bring forth the ‘unexpected’. Communities, religious sites and ideologies of difference are the breeding ground for this ‘unexpected’. Sabarimala’s community of believers disallowing menstruating women from temple entry has been held by the majority bench of the Supreme Court as amounting to discrimination/untouchability. This paper takes as its point of entry the event of two women entering the temple premises (Bindu and Kanakadurga) in the aftermath of the Supreme Court’s verdict allowing women entry. The purification rituals conducted by the temple priests is central to this paper’s analysis. It explores the allegation of untouchability that has been pursued against the temple authorities to show the enchanted subject hood of the temple authorities, who cleansed the temple once the two women had left its premises. It pursues the stories of the two women who were ostracized by their communities on returning from Sabarimala. The discriminations against them since their entry into the temple premises will be examined viz-a-viz the text of the verdict that explores the question of untouchability as not restricted to a particular caste/community or class alone. The paper attempts to understand the nature of discriminatory practices launched on the bodies of women in the preservation of male virtue/celibacy. It hopes to expose how discrimination is narrativized/ spatialized and stylized through participant religious practices. Rituals and rites of purification associated with women’s bodies will be examined to raise the question regarding the recognition of gender discrimination as untouchability within religious practices.

Sarkar, Judhajit


The aim of this paper is to offer a comparative analysis of the ‘paratexts’ (introductions, afterwards, authorial ‘statements’ etc.), which supplemented the major anthologies of poetic experimentalism in Bangla and Hindi literary cultures. The diverse and often disparate trends that began to appear within multiple South Asian literatures from the late 1920s, gaining momentum particularly in the following decades, are broadly classified as “modernism”, at the cost of undermining the specific contingencies which obtained in individual literary environments. Given this proclivity, it may be useful to juxtapose some of the foundational texts, from two adjacent literary cultures, which aimed to articulate the originary impulse, intellectual necessity and aesthetic objectives of these trends in their immediate cultural contexts. The principal focus of this analysis will be the prefaces to the three anthologies of ‘modern Bangla poetry’ edited by Rabindranath Tagore, Hiren Mukherjee & Abu Sayeed Ayub and Buddhadeva Bose respectively, and the forewords to the first three Saptak anthologies by Agyeya as well as the individual ‘statements’ by the poets included in each volume. A major thrust of this comparison will be to look at the specific editorial policies, as reflected in the choice of poets, space given
to them to articulate their own aesthetic visions, and the internal organization of the volumes, and to situate these at the intersection of both domestic and global intellectual currents that allegedly went into making literary modernism an “international” movement.

Sarma, Ira
‘First Hand: Exclusion’ – The Graphic Adaption Of The ‘India Exclusion Report

The graphic anthology ‘First Hand: Exclusion’ (2018) is an adaptation of one of the ‘India Exclusion Reports’ (IXR), published annually by the Centre for Equity Studies (CES) in New Delhi. In the Reports experts from different fields present us with detailed academic studies on the mechanisms and consequences of exclusion in contemporary India with regard to a variety of public goods, highlighting selected vulnerable groups like single women, survivors of ethnic or communal violence, or the urban poor. ‘First Hand’ takes up the issues presented in the IXR 2015 in eight graphic narratives created by diverse writers/artists; each narrative is supplemented by a brief summary of the report’s findings. The anthology is in line with the recent trend of turning reports into graphic narratives in order to make the information and data more accessible to a general public. ‘First Hand’, however, stands out because it not only turns words into images but also fact into fiction. In this paper I want to look at the multiple processes at work when the Report’s raw information is interpreted by a new team of narrators. How does a change of mode (verbal into visual), genre (report into story, poem, or infographics), medium (digital into print) and, in two cases, language (English into Hindi) impact upon the message conveyed? To what extent does ‘First Hand’ add new information and new perspectives to the IXR’s findings? Does the anthology help to tap into a new audience? Answers to these questions will allow us to assess the gains and losses that occur when re-reading a fact-bound report through visual adaptation.

Sartor, Giovanni (and Van Berkel, Kees)
Using Formal Argumentation To Clarify Structures Of Legal Reasoning

This talk introduces formal theories of argumentation and shows how such theories can be applied to the analysis of legal and normative reasoning in different traditions. We introduce the notions of “argument”, relations of conflict and support and methods for assessing the dialectical status of arguments and defended claims. Furthermore, we provide formal definitions of these notions. We will especially point out the advantages of using such framework for a better understanding of textual sources. For instance, we will show how the application of argumentation theory reveals the hidden assumptions, implicit preferences and implied consequences of the analysed discourses. In this way, formal argumentation can support a rational reconstruction and reflective criticism of complex dialectical interactions. Last, we will show how formal argumentation can handle complex sets of rules and exceptions, the connection between rules and values, and the reasoned choice between alternative interpretations. Throughout the talk, we will exemplify the use of our framework via applying it to the analysis of debates in contemporary law as well as South Asian thought.

Saul, Jeremy
Hanuman In A Woman’s Body: Reconfiguring Female Domesticity As Public Performance

Marwari merchants, who live throughout India but trace descent to Rajasthan, are famous for their patronage of Hanuman, a personification of chaste masculinity. They are also noted for their conservative views, favoring the seclusion of women in accord with “Rajasthani tradition.” And yet, gender norms in Marwari society have recently been shifting towards women’s public visibility in line with pan-Indian government policy. Consider, then, a female Jain Marwari medium named Manju Baisa and her entourage in Delhi, who have built a prosperous nationwide devotional network centered on urban Jains. In the company of female relatives at lavish public devotional events, Manju Baisa channels Babosa, her husband’s boy-ancestor, who brings great miracles and is frequently lauded as
an avatar of Hanuman himself. Hanuman's presence is apparent when the medium channels Babosa; she puffs up her cheeks like the muzzle of a monkey to show that his power has entered her. How do we theorize a Marwari woman publicly manifesting Hanuman's divine power? One model could be any of Hanuman's exorcism shrines, where women's bodies are typically the locus of ritual attention, since they are regarded as being most vulnerable to spirit attack, especially connected to husbands' ancestors. At Mehandipur, the most famous such shrine, devotees explain that the god is a child form of Hanuman, so he is not constrained by gender segregation and can enter women's bodies to battle spirits. Similarly, Babosa is a desexualized juvenile version of Hanuman, allowing the medium to embody him. Thus, we see an instance where a Marwari woman has arguably reconfigured female domesticity as public performance.

Sax, William

*Understanding The Divine Kingdoms Of The Western Himalaya: Anthropology, Theology, And The Ontological Turn.*

Proponents of the so-called “ontological turn” in anthropology suggest that anthropologists should (finally!) take local beliefs seriously. This becomes particularly difficult with regard to religion, as it obliges the anthropologist to make a theological judgement to the effect that local gods, demons, and other non-visible beings are “real”. This leads in turn to theoretical and methodological problems regarding agency, intentionality, and the connections (or lack of them) between various ontological “worlds”. Based on twenty rears of research on West Himalayan “divine kingdoms” ruled by local deities through their human oracles, I attempt to respond to these problems with a model of “multiple worlds” that calls into question rigid distinctions between theology, anthropology, psychology/psychiatry and history.

Schleiter, Markus

*Music Videos And South Asian Indigeneities – Post/Coloniality, Media Infrastructures And Social Critique By An Ethnography Of Popular Santali Songs*

In the last two decades, music videos produced for South Asian indigenous audiences have become increasingly widely circulated. Drawing on popular Santali songs as an example, I will show how colonial and present-day representations converge in such music videos to contribute to ideas of what it means to be indigenous. Firstly, visual traits identified in colonial ethnographies as specific to particular indigenous communities serve as markers of indigenous belonging in the videos. Secondly, the current trend of consuming indigenous music videos via streaming and social media platforms (especially YouTube) represents one of a series of media vernacularizations in India, which began with the rise of vernacular music distributed on audio cassettes in the 1980s, continued with the boom of regional language newspaper editions, and more recently has come to include the adaptation and appropriation of content from more mainstream films and TV-series for local audiences. Thirdly, the production practices of a pan-Indian social field of cultural production – with close links to the trends of Bollywood cinema – have played a key role in the development of techniques for customizing film content for indigenous audiences. I will then argue that indigenous filmmakers are contributing to the creation of a specifically South Asian form of indigenous belonging in which concepts of culture rooted in colonial ethnography have a prime position and interconnect with local concepts. Moreover, filmmakers from the Santali film industry see themselves as cultural critics at the forefront of an – often progressive and liberal – transformation of indigenous society.

Schlemmer, Grégoire

*Impact Of The Nepal-Indian Border On The “Rai” Ethnic Movement*

Following the conquest of (the lands that would become) eastern Nepal in the second half of the 18th century, many (people, of this population group that would become the) Rai fled further east
to (these lands that would become part of) India. This population movement continued throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The so-called Rai are then separated by a national border. We propose to examine some of the effects of this separation on Rai ethno-cultural and political movement. More precisely, we will document the impact of movements developed on the Indian side on similar but later movement on the Nepalese side, and the actual tendency of progressive divergences.

Schnieder-Krüger, Anna

Who Owns Jnu?

Army tanks, flower pots, mass movements – the campus of JNU in New-Delhi has gone through many transformations in the past years. This paper discusses JNU as a symbolic battlefield of the ongoing fight about spaces, bodies and memories. In the aftermath of February 2016, JNU affiliates gained much attention as they were labeled as ‘anti-nationals’ by the media and government, turning them into supposed enemies of the nation. Subsequently, a multidimensional fight over who determines the narratives that establish JNU’s ownership is simmering in the physical, structural and representational spaces of the campus. Through bureaucratic regulations, physical and structural changes, effective fear tactics and division of space, the administration attempts to change and control the political spaces within the university. Simultaneous to the cordonning off of physical spaces, the spaces for freedom of speech are shrinking. Parts of the protest have thus shifted to the digital realm. Presuming that since 2016 the image of JNU changed from “excellence” to “terrorism” in the broader public, the paper focuses on the everyday practices that students currently use to fight back the imposed narratives. Using empirical data mainly from participant observation, students’ initiatives, like a self-operated tea-corner or the digital archiving of posters, are discussed within a framework of the theory of space. The paper traces the students’ usage of transmedia memory practices and performative resistance in order to occupy and remember a nostalgia as a promise to keep the mythos of JNU alive in the future.

Schröer, Frederik

Emotions In Exile: Insights Of A History Of Emotions Of The Tibetan Diaspora In India

We have failed to give the emotions the attention they deserve,” states the 1962 Report of the Committee on Emotional Integration of the Indian Ministry of Education (1962: 1), and goes on to remind its readers of the central role of emotions in nation building. Emotions have been a driving force and key concern in the political, social, and religious history of twentieth-century South Asia. Casting a fresh glance beyond the well-trodden paths of national histories, this paper proposes a new perspective on the role of emotions in South Asia by focusing on the history of the Tibetan diaspora in India. Using the concept of feeling community, it probes how the larger processes of nation building or the Nehruvian “emotional integration” were refracted against vernacular emotional and religious concepts and cosmologies in the formation of the Tibetan community in exile. Special attention will be paid to the role of “negative” emotions such as suffering as both meaning-makings and practices in community formation. The context of the Tibetan diaspora will highlight how the religious valence of these emotions was renegotiated in the encounter with South Asian modernity. Special attention will be paid to their complex temporal structuring in the relations between exile and homeland, tradition and modernity. Through perspectives on the role of emotions in diasporic practices of belonging in emplacement, protest, and education, the importance of the history of emotions for South Asian studies in general and studies of migration and diaspora in particular will be shown.

Schuler, Barbara

Honour, Emotions, And Communities In Early Modern Tamil-Speaking South India

The early modern period in Tamil-speaking South India (16th–18th c.) witnessed huge changes: transformations in knowledge about markets and political etiquette, the emerging of various local power
holders and political adventurers, European and Mughal influence. The period experienced caste dynamics, and a new landscape of literary genres appeared, in which history was given shape in various historiographical modes, including ballads, dramas and chronicles, allowing hitherto invisible social groups to become visible. In traditional India, virtually all aspects of human practices were treated systematically in treatises, from thievery to kingship to emotions. There was a great deal of normative control of cultural practices; constructing traditional normative social attributions and standardized social categories of difference was the rule. This had an influence on models of honour and their accompanying emotional styles. In times when new social and political contexts were emerging, it led to changes. I will limit myself here to two honour-sensitive social communities. I propose that from 1600 onwards, the dominant function of honour experienced a shift, a shift that can be associated with these two communities. Based on the dominant literary genres of the time, I shall offer ample details of situated honour and its related emotions, and of the fluid boundaries in the new literary genres, where gender specific emotions compete strongly in contrast to the clearly demarcated boundaries for emotions in normative orders and theoretical models. Conceptual symmetry with the English term ‘emotion’ is not assumed.

Schwaderer, Isabella

*India, Dance And Religion: Trajectories Of Discourse Between Academic Knowledge And Racist Theories 1936–38*

The Menaka Indian Ballett toured Germany and Europe from 1936–1938 giving up to 300 concerts in Germany alone. The representations of Classical Hindustani Music and Dance were enthusiastically applauded by the German public and commented in countless reviews in daily newspapers. From today’s perspective, an affirmative reading of these texts as direct representations of performative events is unacceptable. In any case, however, they provide information about the manifold popular-scientific discourses on topics about India, whereby racial-theoretical references are taken for granted, as are discussions about racist aspects in art (“völkische Kunst”). The descriptions of Menaka’s Indian ballet undoubtedly served primarily as cultural self-assurance for the Germans under the auspices of National Socialism. In this contribution, those aspects will be enhanced that fit into the context of India as a projection surface for the quest for racial and spiritual origin on the one hand, and the transformation potential of ecstatic experience in art on the other. Subsequently, a contextualization will be undertaken into the religious renewal movements of this period with their political and ideological implications.

Segura-Garcia, Teresa

*From Baroda To “Free America”: Maharaja Sayaji Rao Iii Of Baroda’s Engagement With Anticolonialism Through The United States*

The paper examines the role of a hitherto unacknowledged actor in the anticolonial links between India and the United States in the early twentieth century: Maharaja Sayaji Rao III of Baroda (r. 1875–1939), ruler of the leading state of western India. As the Maharaja’s discontent with British rule in India grew, he developed a fascination with the history and politics of the United States, praising the country as an emerging world power ready to challenge British supremacy. From 1905 to 1934, the Maharaja toured the land he called “Free America” on four occasions. The Maharaja used his visits to obtain first-hand knowledge on subjects as diverse as agricultural development and child-rearing practices — knowledge he then adapted to Baroda through social reform, allowing him to establish Baroda as a state that was ‘modern’ while bypassing European modernity. As the British Resident in Baroda bemoaned what he referred to as the Maharaja’s “American tradition”, his tours acquired another worrying anticolonial slant: he established links with diasporic Indians in the US at a time of growing British paranoia about global anticolonial networks. Through an examination of the Maharaja’s US tours, the paper argues that the ruler deployed them on several levels: to escape from British
interventionism at his court; to carve out a place for himself within the anticolonial movement; and to give his state a global presence. In this way, the paper provides a layered perspective on the global character of the Indian anticolonial movement, while expanding the study of those who participated in it on a world stage to Indian rulers.

Sehgal, Shaina  
*Impact Of Historic And Strategic State Policy On Recent Coconut Trade At The Nicobar Islands*

This paper discusses the archipelago’s protracted recovery in coconut-based exports after the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and Tsunami, based on data collected during ethnographic fieldwork in 2014–18 among producers and traders of coconut-based products at Little Nicobar and Great Nicobar Islands. We discuss the decline and recovery of the islands’ primary economic activity – cultivation, processing and exporting the Coconut (Cocos nucifera) – through analyses of exports and imports at the four revenue ports of the Nicobar archipelago between 2003 and 2017. However, experiences in these activities differ in terms of nature of participation, stability and success. At Great Nicobar Island, Coconut plantations have been increasingly leased to contractors, with cultivators lobbying for better prices. There is also a clear chasm along ethnic lines, between the production and trade practices of Nicobarese tribe and the mainland communities first settled by the Indian State 1969. This geopolitically motivated resettlement of mainlanders in 1969–79 followed the declaration of the archipelago as a tribal reserve under the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, (ANPATR) 1956. We therefore argue that the differential economic opportunities and outcomes for the people of Nicobar today are shaped by historic and strategic State action in the post-independence period, such as the ANPATR and resettlement of 60s-70s. This case highlights the complex outcomes of State policy for environmental, social and developmental outcomes.

Sehrawat, Samiksha  
*Credentialism And Culturalism: Colonial Legacies For South Asian Medical Professional Project(S)*

This paper explores the historical trajectory of the contemporary South Asian medical profession and the legacy of colonialism in shaping its tendency to privilege credentialism, and to value both profit motive and state support over a commitment to an ethical professional code. Roger Jeffery has shown the preponderant role played by the colonial state in the setting up of professional bodies to regulate education standards, while Rama Baru has pointed to the centrality of private fees in sustaining biomedical practice, even of those employed by the colonial state. This colonial legacy has embedded both state dependence and a pursuit of profit motive in the contemporary South Asian health sector. This paper explores the South Asian medical profession through the conceptual framework of the ‘professional project’. South Asian medical professionals experienced professional marginalization arising from British doctors’ strategies of occupational closure on the grounds of ethnicity, qualifications and surgical skill. To counter this marginalization, South Asian medical professionals employed countervailing strategies that have led to the privileging of western standards in medical education and practice. The dilution of professional commitment to ethics can be understood by examining the deployment of what Didier Fassin has called ‘practical culturalism’. Culturalism is used by South Asian medical professionals to transfer the onus of ethically dubious behaviour and health inequalities onto patients, reproducing colonial discourses characterizing South Asian patients as irrational and socially regressive.

Selvaraj, Mani Sudhir  
*Structural Violence Against Dalit And Tribal Christians In India*

Using a unique case study of violence against Christians in India, this paper seeks to resurrect Galtung’s typology of violence to analyze contemporary communal conflicts in India. Galtung suggests that violence evolves from its cultural forms to its structural and ultimately, to direct violence.
This paper considers the structural examples of violence against Christians in India, such as the denial of state resources to Dalit and Tribal Christians and the implementation of anti-conversion laws in several states in the country. Considering that conservative estimates suggest that up to 80 per cent of Christians in India hail from the margins of Hinduism (Dalit or Tribal), this paper finds that the denial of state resources to these groups because of their faith deprives them of their constitutionally guaranteed freedom of religion; amounting to structural violence. Using the southern Indian state of Karnataka as a case study, this paper will further explore how the structural violence links to cultural (justifications) and direct forms of violence. In demonstrating these links, this paper shows how the 2008 Church Attacks in Dakshin Kannada defied Galtung’s assumption that cultural violence leads to structural and ultimately, direct violence. In this case, we instead observe a flow from cultural to direct and eventually to structural violence in the form of the Karnataka Dharma Swatantrya Bill.

Sen, Samita (and Graner, Elvira)
Governing Marriage In India: (Re-)Negotiating Lakshman Rekha

While common across the world, in India child marriages are of high political concern, due to the country’s particular demographic profile. Being home to the largest group of girl brides worldwide, the state maintained that it is primarily a “cultural practice”, and thus kept turning a blind eye over the past decades. Yet, besides addressing it as a crucial obstacle for development goals, more recent discourses even depict it as a violation of human rights. This paper will outline the core features that define child marriage in India, and the government’s recent attempt(s) to re-define this core aspect of “Lakshman Rekha”. It will briefly summarise the legal reform processes, sketching the long and tedious way to finally pass the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act in 2006. It will portray the core aspects of child marriage in India, such as low annual rates of decline, along with vast regional and social disparities. These will be illustrated by a current project from West Bengal. Based on Fukuyama’s (2013) ideas of governance as “a government’s ability to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services” it will then address child marriage from a broader angle of exclusion and lack of citizenship.

Sengupta, Sohini
‘We Celebrate The Birth Of Girls’. Narratives Of Past And Adivasi Women In Twenty First Century East Central India

Representations of adivasi women rest on confusing contradictions. Attributed with autonomy and sexual freedom, viewed as the antithesis of Hindu upper caste counterparts, marked by backwardness, adivasi women have been subjects of state interventions around property, environment, maternity, poverty, health, sexual violence, witch-hunt. While adivasi movements are re-framing some of these debates, the role of gender in the politics of indigeneity is a less explored area of scholarship. Adivasi women’s experiences, framed by the anxieties of the Hindu society, have been marginal and subordinate to the emerging politics of belonging. Do adivasi women suffer exceptionally from the ‘penalties of difference’ (Okin)? Drawing insight from the critical debate between feminist theory and multiculturalism and adivasi women’s narratives from East Central India, this article explores and discusses the contentions between assumption of emancipation in colonial and post-independent modernity and distinctive ways of being adivasi. Centering women’s narratives about labouring, property, kinship, friendship, marriage, dancing, love and death, enables the articulation of the historical, ambiguous and situated experiences of being adivasi that takes place through negotiations by women over the meanings about their past and present. Adivasi women’s evaluative-narratives enrich understanding of adivasi lives and selfhood encapsulated by political, economic and symbolic domination of forest dwelling communities in India. This is especially significant for our times when rights of women are propagandized by political projects that have nothing to do with adivasi rights or feminism.
Shah, Gulbahar (and Gul, Ambreen)
Sufi Shrines Of Kashmir: Analysing The Impact Of Socioeconomic And Political Transformation On The Relationship Between The Shrines And The People.

The dissemination of Islam was considerably peaceful in Kashmir. Propagated by Sufi saints, Islam emerged as a rebellion against the caste system of the society. By the 14th century Kashmir came to be dominated by the Muslim rulers. The relationship between the shrines dedicated to the Sufi saints and the Kashmiri people has been one of veneration and succour during the difficult times. However, the priestly class associated with the shrines tended to have a relationship bordering on exploitative with the Muslim population of Kashmir. Receiving land grants and endowments from almost all rulers of Kashmir, the priestly class of the valley enjoyed a privileged status. The changing socioeconomic conditions after 1947, especially because of extensive land reforms, and political changes brought about by three decades old insurgency eroded the power of the priestly class significantly. This change also transformed the relationship of Kashmiri Muslim population with the shrines, with considerable inroads made by the Wahabi ideology into the valley. The resentment against the priestly class was extended to these hitherto much loved and respected shrines. This research analyses the dynamic nature of this relationship through an ethnographic survey to understand the reasons for the people of Kashmir to continue or discontinue the shrine worship. The religious aspect of the veneration of shrines and saints is explained through socioeconomic and political reality prevailing in Kashmir.

Shahita, Mrittika
The Untold History Of The Displaced Bengalis Of Burma

Indian, to be specific, Bengali migration to Burma (present Myanmar) had been occurring since ancient period and initiated by various reasons. Advent of British colonialism established this migration as a policy befitting their particular political and economic goals. As a result, many people from Bengal, who received western education were encouraged to explore career opportunities in Burma. According to 1931 census, the percentage of Bengali population in Burma was 2.57. However, it was seldom a peaceful co-existence. Local inhabitants were raged because of the competitive and limited job markets. Birth of Burmese nationalism in the first half of the twentieth century had deepened this problem and their shattered relation seemed irreparable when Burma emerged as a separate colony of the British Empire in 1937. The next year experienced violent anti-Indian riot that took several lives, including a family member of mine from Chittagong. After this, Governmental measures had been taken to restrict Indian immigration to keep the Burmese colony stable. Advent of WWII turned the situation even more complicated and forced Indians to leave Burma. Before the fall of Rangoon in the hand of the Japanese in 1942 more than 1,00,000 Indians left Burma. Bengalis, mostly returned through sea or Arakan-Chittagong road facing inexplicable hardship. These displaced people never returned to Burma and restarted their wheel of life leaving behind the bittersweet past. I believe, an investigative research on this displaced people is indispensable and long due. It will also definitely shed light to the current tussle between Myanmar and Bangladesh regarding Rohingya crisis.

Shaikh, Mujibur
Hindu Right And Indian Muslims: Interrogation Of Their Adversarial Relations And Its Impact On Minority Rights

This paper examines the adversarial relations between India’s present Hindu Right regime and its impact on Indian Muslims; and how this is determining the present discourse of minority rights in India. While the present regime makes effort to demonstrate its commitment to Constitution through elaborate rituals and regular invocation of Ambedkar, the factis- in all of its policies it meticulously follows its anti- minority agenda. This has been evident in its campaign for NRCs and citizenship bill, and several other initiatives. While the regime appeals for the respect of rule of law when it favors it as was the case in Ayodhya verdict; it looks the other way when the Court pronouncements are running
against its majoritarian ideology as was the case with the suggestion of the Court to form a separate law on lynching, for instance. By doing this, the Hindu Right regime advances its majoritarian ideology with in the framework of a secular and multi-cultural Constitution. In this paper, I build on a critical narrative on these developments- mainly focussing on the issue of NRC, Citizenship Debate and Ayodhya verdict. These initiatives by the Hindu Right regime, I argue, is deliberate, and driven carefully keeping its long term ideological agenda. One reason why these efforts are advanced so conveniently is because there is not adequate legal and constitutional scrutiny. I argue this will adversely impact the minority rights discourse in a fashion that it will seen nothing but a mere extension of majoritarian ideology. The standing of minority rights on its own will challenged and seen as an aberration.

Shakthi, S.

Business As Usual In A City Under Water: Natural Disasters, Urban Modernity And Chennai’s Information Technology Industry

The city of Chennai has witnessed profound changes to its built environment since the liberalisation of the Indian economy. The growth of the information technology (IT) industry, in particular, has resulted in rapid urban development to accommodate its expansion, facilitated by extensive state support. These changes are perhaps epitomised by the construction of Rajiv Gandhi Salai, a 40-kilometre, six-lane ‘IT Corridor’ traversing former marshlands at the southern end of the city, where most major IT companies operate out of sprawling, self-contained office complexes and IT parks. In late 2015, Chennai was hit by severe flooding that brought the city to a virtual standstill, while leaving hundreds of people dead and hundreds of thousands displaced. This paper analyses the consequences of this crisis for an industry that functions as a symbol of modernity in this postcolonial city. Based on nine months of ethnographic field work before, during and after the floods, it interrogates the effects of poorly-planned development over a low-lying swamp for Chennai’s IT industry and its middle-class, upwardly mobile employees. It examines the material and discursive cracks in the smooth transnational flows that the sector relies on, as companies scrambled to stay productive through an extreme climatic event, worsened by the ‘planned informality’ (Roy 2009) of the post-liberalisation urban landscape. Using an interdisciplinary approach that draws from the sociology of globalisation and urban geography, it further unpacks the complex transnational circuits of power that impact the situated realities of this urban Indian profession.

Shanthamurthy, Shubha

Siddharāma Turns His Coat: The Changing Religious Affiliation Of A Śaiva Yogin In Premodern Deccan

Siddharāma, founder of the Mallikārjuna temple in Sonnalige, Karnataka, is a much contested figure in the Śaiva community of premodern Deccan between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. He is attested in more than twenty inscriptions, is mentioned in several hagiographical texts in Telugu and Kannada, and is the protagonist of a medium length Kannada kāvya. In his earliest configuration, Siddharāma appears as a Śaiva yogin initiated into the Lākula order in Śrīśailam by Śiva himself, and is marked with Lākula sectarian insignia such as the vajrakunḍala, nāgājina cloak and the lākula staff. After founding the Mallikārjuna temple he undertakes extensive public works, builds up Sonnalige into a major pilgrimage centre, and becomes a well known historical figure. In a subsequent recasting by later sectarian groups he is ridiculed as having a forehead-eye and performing dark magic. He is defeated by the saint Allama, ritually initiated into the Vīraśaiva sect by the saint Cennabasava and given new sectarian insignia such as the iṣṭaliṅga. Having become a Vīraśaiva, he is later acknowledged as a guru of the tradition. The co-option of this well-known historical figure of great spiritual authority by different sectarian groups at different points in time, which is effected by bestowing, denigrating and rebestowing various sectarian insignia upon him, is a fascinating perspective on the changing dynamics within the Śaiva community in premodern Deccan. We can trace the rise and fall of different sectarian groups among the Śaivas of Deccan by the insignia that Siddharāma bears in different texts of this period.
Sharma, Chinmay
The Spectre Of The Original: Sanskrit Mahabharata In Modern Re-Tellings Of The Mahabharata

“I have come to prefer the world tellings to the usual terms versions or variants because the latter terms can and typically do imply that there is an invariant, an original or Ur-text-usually Vālmiki’s Sanskrit Rāmāyan, the earliest and most prestigious of them all. But… it is not always Vālmiki’s narrative that is carried from one language to another” (Ramanujan 1999: 134). Building on Ramanujan’s argument with reference to the Mahabharata, this paper argues that the Sanskrit Original and its putative author, Veda Vyasa, are an important presence for modern re-tellings, even if the modern re-tellings do not actually adapt the Sanskrit text. This essay surveys Mahabharata re-tellings in Hindi and English produced after 1947 spanning television, theatre, poetry and prose, to analyse why and how different modern re-tellings of the Mahabharata chose to invoke the Sanskrit Original, mapping the relational citation matrices between Mahabharata re-tellings. Complicating the relationship between the idea of the Sanskrit, ‘Original’ text and Mahabharata re-tellings, I argue that invoking the Sanskrit original is a clear invocation and re-production of Brahmanical legitimization of culture. However, this invocation is mediated by the form and intent of the re-telling itself. As a result, the essay goes on to argue, not only do the re-tellings narrate the Mahabharata for a new audience, but also re-produce the Sanskrit Mahabharata as a ‘spectral original’, leading to a discursive position that acknowledges other Mahabharata re-tellings, but also foregrounds the Sanskrit narrative as ‘first among equals’.

Sharma, Leena
Construction Of The ‘Hijra/Kinnar’ (Eunuch) Identity As/In A Transgressing Body

Based on the historical/state archives and oral personal narratives from Hijra Gharanas in Rajasthan and Gujarat, the paper contextualises socio-political formation of the Hijra body facilitated by the historical construction of the transgressing Indian state post-colonially. Hijra Gharanas interestingly were induced not during Colonial era but when British decamped from the Indian Territory, i.e.post-colonially (when the administrative power came to be exercised by Congress Government merging all Princely states to Indian Subcontinent). Kinnars were detached from palaces to respective Havelis handed by Kings who were no more the administrative units of power. The occupational identity of Hijras is associated with ‘Bazaar-Basti Maangna’ (asking alms from the market and township to survive) in areas that were bestowed to them by kings, ‘before the dissolution of their rule’. The Gharanas are located marginally (geographically and based on sexual preferences) except some very wealthy ones thus inducing ‘a discourse’ in the course of power. The paper attempts to link both Pre-Colonial legacy and local histories and/or voices to study ‘construction of the marginal (Hijra/Kinnar) identity’, i.e. Kinnar as a metonymy of a transgressing body (the state as a body that is adept to adaptation and the physical body of a hijra that gets transformed from a gay/transvestite to a hijra novice and to retain this position, a transsexual with a castrated penis). The paper also examines how Hijra Gharanas are both ‘marginal’ and ‘mainstream’ following hijra’s societal locations interfacing between multiple dimensions of history, memory and gendered identity concerning the state and law.

Sharma, Ridhima
Revisiting The Cow Protection Discourse: Gender, Caste And Labour At A Gaushala In A North Indian Town

The initial political and analytical impulse for this paper comes from a familiar and oft-encountered place—one of discomfort, with historical and contemporary ways of framing and interpreting the ‘cow protection movement’ or gau raksha in India. I argue that the dominant mode of analysing cow-politics in India, in its overwhelming association of the cow with Hindu nationalism both in symbolic and material terms, pays necessary but disproportionate emphasis on a certain kind of hyper-visible, spectacular violence. This informs the construction of a purported linear and teleological
‘movement’ in the name of the cow as if all heightened, finite episodes of cow-related violence, their varied textures notwithstanding, add up to produce a coherent ‘cow protection movement’. Making a departure from the commonly deployed method of analysing spectacular modes of violence such as cow-related ‘riots’ and ‘lynchings’, this paper uses an ethnographic engagement with the space of a VHP-run gaushala or cow-shelter to understand the gendered and caste-marked routinised practices of labour to explore the gaushala as a space and place, and the manner in which it shapes what has come to be unproblematically called as the ‘cow protection movement’

Sheemar, Tara

*Women As Religious Masters: Kālarātri And Her Band Of Witches*

The paper will investigate the depiction of Tantra or magico-ritual practice specifically by women in the narratives of the Kathāsaritsāgara, a Sanskrit text composed in the Early Medieval period. The practices are placed in the history of religious development in Kashmir where there was existence of a wide variety of cults and religious systems. Buddhism had flourished there, and by the eleventh century the Śaiva schools had gained great prominence especially a wide range of Tantric cults. The adepts and exegetes of these schools were a prominent part of the society of Kashmir; yet, the culture represented in the sophisticated works of these authors was considered scandalous at the level of practice and attempted to be repressed. In these religious systems women were given the authority to become priestesses and teachers who initiated disciples into spiritual practices and managed their own respective institutions. With this understanding the paper investigates the specific representation of the Tantric practices by women in the Kathāsaritsāgara, specifically focusing on the depiction of the ‘witch’ Kālarātri as the leader of a band of ‘witches.’ The paper directly addresses the questions raised by the panel abstract regarding the role of women as religious teachers and leaders by examining the depiction of women in similar roles in the historical background. It is possible that practices in pre-modern South Asia were extremely varied in space and time, contrary to the suggestion and/or perception that they did not assume leadership as spiritual or religious masters. This also might explain the acceptance, even if contentious, of women in such roles.

Sheth, Ayesha

*Deśī Rāgas In Courtly Texts : The Case Of A Sixteenth Century Rāgamālā Treatise.*

Present-day scholarship understands rāga as having musical, visual, and aesthetic embodiments that together constitute its performance. Saṅgītaśāstras, technical texts on music, written in the early second millennium have attributed to rāga gender, sartorial characteristics, seasons, mood etc. in poetic verse. In the fifteenth century these descriptors gave rise to a new genre of miniature painting — the rāgamālā — which became an integral part of courtly musicological connoisseurship. I focus on a late sixteenth-century rāgamālā text to examine how regional aesthetic idioms were ‘performed’ within courtly registers. I employ a capacious understanding of ‘performance’ to include visual forms such as the rāgamālā painting, in addition to music and dance. Around 1570 CE, the scholar Ksemakarna composed a Sanskrit rāgamālā text at the court of Raja Ram Chand at Rewa. Titled ‘Rāgamālā’, Ksemakarna’s text presented a system of rāga visualisation distinctly different from other extant systems, namely that of Hanuman, Kallinatha and Somesvara. In addition to an alternate visualisation, the ‘Rāgamālā’ offered an arrangement of eighty four melodic modes (one male rāga accompanied by five female rāginīs and eight male sons or rāgaputras) in contrast to the prevalent system of thirty-six (one male rāga accompanied by five female rāginīs). My essay uses specific examples from the ‘Rāgamālā’ to carry out a two-part analysis. First, to examine the ways in which ‘local’ aesthetic idioms were incorporated to fit the dominant structure of rāgamālā visualisations. Second, to examine how textual knowledge was interpreted to produce locally legible ‘performances’ of the rāga.
Shrestha, Bal Gopal
*Transformation And Invention: Newar Religion, Ritual, Feasts And Festivals In Sikkim*

The Newars of the Kathmandu Valley are among other migrants into Sikkim from Nepal, Nepal’s immediate neighbour to the east. Mainly followers of the Hindu and Buddhist religions, the Newars have a culture rich in rituals, and a long literary tradition in their language, Nepalbhasa. However, as a migrant community, the Newars in Sikkim have lost much of their traditional culture, including their language. Surviving feasts and festivals have witnessed numerous changes and are not celebrated according to the Newar tradition. Recently they have begun to reclaim their identity and revive or reinvent their rituals and traditions, feasts and festivals, language and culture in the diaspora. In this paper, I will examine the religion and rituals practised by the Newars in Sikkim. The ritual calendar of the Newars in Sikkim will be focussed on and compared with that of Nepal in order to assess (a) how the Newars in Sikkim failed to maintain Newar culture and traditions in their original form and (b) which changes and influences the Sikkimese Newars have undergone. Many Newar feasts and festivals have disappeared, but the Newars in Sikkim are now enthusiastically attempting to reinstate them. Interestingly, families standing in regular contact with their relatives in Nepal and who visit Nepal regularly comply with the entire festival cycle as the Newars do in Nepal. In addition, in the past few decades, cross border contacts between the Newars of Sikkim and Nepal have hugely been increased. I will discuss how this phenomenon has facilitated reinforcing and reinventing their rituals and festivals in the diaspora.

Sidorova, Svetlana
*At The Margins Of The Empire Making Project: Masters, Servants And Household In Colonial India*

This paper is based on the analysis of the account books of Lord Richard Wellesley, Governor-General of Bengal (1798–1805) and the architect of the British Indian Empire. These books by means of figures and expenditure items tell a detailed story about the British household in India, about dozens of servants, material objects, activities and expenses that formed and maintained the everyday routine and regularity of colonial life. It ran on the background of the great historical processes the main subjects of which were the British civil and military officers as representatives of the conquering nation and the conquered native population regarded by the formers as taxpayers and producers of colonial goods. However in the private space of British homes in India the same actors played different roles of householders and household servants. It was this particular location where the colonial encounter acquired extremely tight and intimate character. The paper focuses on a group of domestic workers hidden behind the bungalows’ doors, often invisible and silent in historical retrospective, who ensured uninterrupted functioning of the colonial houses and secured the permanent daily life circle. Thereby they turned the British households in a locus of stability, conservatism and in some sense of marginality because lacking in dynamism this structure could hardly be considered as a motivity of colonial project. Instead it created a widespread institutional matrix for its sustainability and longevity to which Indian servants contributed a lot.

Sievers, Gianni
*Wit, Wisdom And Music In Print: An Urdu Magazine On The Performing Arts In Colonial India*

The role of print culture on the dissemination of knowledge, the formation of a public sphere, and the shaping of identities in colonial South Asia is a growing field of study. Likewise, cultural historians of the region are increasingly engaging with links between the formation of “classical” performance traditions, social reform movements and nationalism. However, we still know relatively little about the ways in which music and dance featured in vernacular magazines in colonial India. In this paper, I join recent studies that begin to shed new light on the diversity and proliferation of debates about music and nationalism in Indian languages by focusing on “The Music Gazette of India,” a subscription-based Urdu newspaper from the 1910s. This magazine focused on music-related issues
ranging from discussions about newly invented instruments and recording devices to noteworthy performances, changes in pedagogical concepts, and the relationship between music and the nation (qaum). Recurring elements of the magazine were cartoons in the style of the well-known Avadh Punch and op-eds by Urdu writers such as Abdul Halim Sharar (1860–1926). What were the themes and positions voiced in it? Who was the target audience? How did humor and sarcasm fit into debates about music, the nation and progress? How were women portrayed and what was the role ascribed to religion? By making use of both its articles as well as its illustrations and cartoons as historical sources, I aim to show how this monthly magazine fostered exchanges about music and culture among the Urdu-speaking public sphere of colonial northern India, the diversity and richness of which have largely been forgotten.

Sihra, Jusmeet Singh  
**How Are Urban Dalits Segregated? Evidence From Ulajhpur, Rajasthan**  
While the anonymity of urban spaces was supposed to conceal caste identity, Dalits (ex-untouchables) continue to be socio-spatially segregated in urban spaces in India. What makes this phenomenon even more puzzling is that caste has no clear visible markers, unlike race, or religion to a lesser extent. In my project I ask: what are the mechanisms of segregation of Dalits in Indian urban spaces? The study proposes a fine-grained analysis, using mixed-methods - ethnography, a census survey of 697 households of a predominantly Dalit neighbourhood and geo-localised cartography - to understand nuanced patterns of segregation of various Dalit castes in a city. This methodology highlights both micro and macro patterns, unlike previous works that focus on aggregate data at spatial level (ward) or use generic caste categories (such as Scheduled Castes). The study shows that (1) Caste, class and urban space interact to produce patterns of segregation; (2) Urban segregation involves not only upper castes and lower castes, but also lower castes among themselves; (3) Main roads are an important axis of segregation: the closer one is to a main road, the higher the caste and class; (4) There is little to no spatial mobility of Dalits who are confined away from main roads. The article contributes to the theory of segregation by conceptualizing caste-based segregation. Using theories of citadel, enclave and ghetto, it introduces a new typology of “Outer Road Citadels”, “Inner Road Ghetto” and “Core Ghetto” shedding light on spatial discrimination of castes in cities.

Singh, Priya  
**Gender-Specific Barriers To Social Protection For Home-Based Women Beedi Workers In India**  
In India, out of the total women employment in the labour market, 95.1% work in the informal economy. After handloom, it is beedi industry which employs majority of women as homeworkers. The home-based labour works outside the regulative control of the state and receives low or no work-related social benefits. Class, caste, religion and ethnicity are factors regulating the wellbeing of informal workers and play a decisive role in effectively being able to get the right to work and to access social protection. These inequalities are intensified when they intersect with the factor of gender, especially when women pursue home-based work. This paper examines how do the home-based women beedi workers deal with their health security needs? By dealing I focus on utilisation of employer provided or state provided benefits or on their own? This study employed qualitative approach through in-depth interview and group discussion with the female beedi workers. The study findings highlight that women workers do not receive any benefits from the employer as the employers do not provide identification card to the female beedi worker making them devoid of the work-related social security. Home-based workers face structural barriers to access social protection programs. Their lack of awareness makes them vulnerable to exploitation by the stakeholders engaged in the public provision schemes. Thus, to deal with their needs the workers take loans from someone in their social network which potentially leads to a vicious cycle of income deficiencies and the debt trap for the whole family. This paper points out the barriers women workers face while accessing the programs.
Singh, Twisha
*Subverting The ‘Domestic’: A Gendered Analysis Of Socio-Cultural Labor Of Female Stage Actresses In Colonial Calcutta, 1870–1920*

The socio-economic environment in Calcutta during late 19th century oscillated between two viewpoints; one concerning that the actresses induction would elevate existing theatre to higher art forms and the other that ‘loose’ women will besmirch the sanctity of theatre. The first generation of actresses in colonial Calcutta came from the background of sex-work. Within such social concerns; actress's position on the basis of the economic ability and creative labour has been rendered a back seat. Biographers of these actresses have echoed time and again that these actresses did not have their own say and a lot of ‘temptations’ came their way that lead to them invariably leaving acting. Professional mobility among the stage actresses is an intrinsic part of my project in order to argue for creative labor that impacted political, economic and socio-cultural facets of an actress's life within the theatrical dynamics. There has been a lot of attention meted out to the respectability aspect of theatre actresses by invisibilizing their personal and social life; further undermining their struggle for survival, contestations and negotiations with normative societal structures. Their talents and creative labor were not recognized to the fullest either due to imbued socio-economic gender based division at the workplace or due to coming from depraved occupational backgrounds, that rendered them more susceptible to economic exploitation. By analyzing biographies and personal papers, I would like to argue, that these actresses were able to negotiate some sort of fractured economic independence due to their creative labor however, their location was always outside the ‘domestic’.

Slathia, Marvi
*Princely Ruled Jammu And Kashmir, Its Development And Reforms During Colonial And Post Colonial Times*

Beginning with an analysis of the evolution of the princely states in India and the political relationship maintained with them by the British colonial government, this study will focus on the doctrine of Paramountcy as developed and applied by the Britishers in India. The present paper will deal with the question of state subject-hood, a legal document to make an individual a bonafide citizen, during the period of the last Dogra ruler. It also tries to engage a debate on the significance of special identity certificate earlier known as “State Subject”, which has been recently revoked by Union government, which was providing a unique identity to the residents of J&K. It will focus on various movements which led to inclusion of the hereditary state subject laws in erstwhile princely ruled J&K and later by retaining the same laws of hereditary by the constitutionally elected government post colonialism and its abolition after remain in vogue for over seventy years. The paper will also delve in detail about various social, political, religious or other reforms in education, science beside others introduced by the rulers of Princely state of J&K, influenced by the discourse of modernity. It will also ponder over the fact that whether the socio-economic conditions of the state of Jammu and Kashmir were responsible for bringing such reforms or were influenced by the British colonialism’s reform agenda.

Sojkova, Barbora
*The Corporeal Relationship Between Men And Cattle In The Vedic Prose*

This paper explores the interconnectedness of nature and culture in the Vedic literature, using a case study on the relationship of men and cattle in the Brāhmaṇas. The main goal of the paper is to explore how the Vedic prose mythologise the dependency of humans on cattle and how the Vedic ritual and mythology mirror the nomadic way of life. Firstly, I will present the core narrative: the Brāhmaṇa passage stating that a hide which now covers the body of a cow was originally the skin of a man. This passage, found in the Jaiminiya and Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, is introduced within the discussion of two rituals: viśvajit, the soma sacrifice and dikṣā, the consecration of a sacrificer. In this paper, I will explore the ritual context and argue that this myth is crucial for our understanding of the relationship
between humans and animals in ancient India. I will argue that both the ritual actions of viśvajit and dīksa and the mythical narrative serve to remind the sacrificer of his relatedness to cattle. Secondly, I will discuss the Vedic “relational ontology”, i.e. the symbolic relationship between animals and humans in the middle Vedic thought, more broadly. Based on a number of prose passages about the evolution of animals and the reciprocal relationship between humans and other beings in this world and the next, I will suggest that unlike the ancient Greeks, the Vedic people did not perceive animal and human as opposing categories. I will argue that even though the Brāhmaṇa texts classify animals into categories (e.g. wild vs. domestic), these categories are porous. I will argue that this reflects the permeability of the categories of nature and culture.

Sonpimple, Rahul

Leadership In Dalit Movement: Analyzing Post-Ambedkar Dalit Leadership In Maharashtra

The post-Ambedkar period is marked with the emergence as well as breakdown of the Dalit movement and leadership in Maharashtra. Although, the loss of its leader- Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, affected the nature and direction of the Dalit movement, the post-Ambedkar period of the Dalit movement has also seen new developments not only in the nature of the movement but also in its leadership. However, very little attention has been paid to the modern Dalit movement and its leadership. Moreover, leadership from oppressed sections of the society has been mostly understood through the dominant theoretical approaches. Nevertheless, with the development of new theoretical approaches in social sciences and the growth in knowledge about different marginalized sections, leadership theories and literature have undergone inevitable changes. In this context, the present paper will first discuss the various dynamics within leadership approaches and lay down the context for understanding and analyzing the post-Ambedkar Dalit leadership. The present paper is divided into two major sections. The first section discusses the brief history of Dalit leadership in post-Ambedkar period. The second section maps the socio-political and historical background of emergence of Dalit leaders, their role and contribution in the Dalit movement in post Ambedkar time. Subsequently, the third section will analyze Dalit leadership in post Ambedkar period from a perspective from below. The fourth section- Beyond Normative Analysis, moves beyond the dominant academic understanding on Dalit leadership and proposes the ‘follower-leade

Sooraj S S (and Kavya, Krishna K. R.)

Intersection Of Caste And Gender In The Sabarimala Issue: Problematizing The ‘Hindu Devotee

In September 2018, the Supreme Court of India ruled that pilgrims irrespective of gender can enter and worship in the Sabarimala Temple. It upheld the Right to Equality under Article 14 and the Right to Freedom of Religion under Article 25 of the Indian Constitution by quashing the Kerala High Court’s ruling of 1991 which banned women of menstruating age (between 10–50) from entering the temple. In this context the paper will map the arguments of three groups which emerged supporting/opposing the Supreme Court verdict -- the ruling Left government, the Right-wing groups (like BJP, RSS) and the Dalit groups-- and examine their positions with respect to gender equality and religious belief. The paper argues that the law and the mainstream discourse on the Sabarimala issue centres around the confidence about a unified subject-‘the Hindu Devotee’. The Dalit intervention and the bringing in of the caste question especially by the Malayaraya and Pulaya communities problematize and collapse the entire discursive structure centred on a unified ‘Hindu devotee’ devoid of caste. Thus the paper further argues the ban on women’s entry into Sabarimala as a larger upper-caste Hindutva project and the Dalit involvement as crucial; as the whole debate on belief cannot but centre around the question of gender and caste patriarchy which are inseparably intersecting in the Indian context.
Spang, Christian W.

*India Within Karl Haushofer’s Writing And Thinking*

Karl Haushofer (1869–1946) is well-known, some would say “notorious,” as the “father of German geopolitics.” As such he has influenced the early Hitler as well as the Fuehrer’s foreign minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, with regard to geopolitical thinking in general and the potential role of Japan as an ally. It is little known, though, that Haushofer extensively traveled in Ceylon and India on his way to his post as military observer to Japan. Ten weeks in Ceylon and the British Raj convinced Haushofer that all countries affected by the Monsoon (from India to Japan) constituted a geopolitical unit. Following World War I, he called for German cooperation with these countries against the colonial powers. After Haushofer established the Zeitschrift für Geopolitik (Journal for Geopolitics) in 1924, he published monthly reports about the Indo-Pacific Space until 1941, i.e., he not only remained interested in India but continued to see events in South Asia and the Indian Ocean as somehow connected to developments in China, Japan, the Southeast Asian colonies as well as in the Pacific. At Munich University, Haushofer supervised Ph. D. candidates working on India, and at the German Academy, he introduced and sometimes chaired the Indische Ausschuss (India Committee), which provided various Indian academics with scholarships to study in Berlin, Munich, and various other universities. He thus helped to intensify direct academic connections between Germany and India. With this kind of activities as a background, he corresponded with various Indian scholars such as Virendranath Chattopadhyaya (1880–1937), Benoy K. Sarkar (1887–1949) and Taraknath Das (1884–1958).

Sperner, Philipp

*“Social Prosperity” Through Literature: Ramchandra Shukla, Literary Theory And The Construction Of A Democratic Nation State*

When the leading Hindi critics and authors of the late 19th and early 20th century discussed the role of Hindi Literature for the construction of a national community, they participated in a project of restructuring the underlying social epistemology. Literature was thus not simply a tool to ‘arouse a feeling of national unity and belonging’ (as it was put so often at the time) but a method to ‘create’ the kind of sentimentality and conception of personhood that would allow the perceptibility of such feelings in the first place. As such, these questions about the role of literature directly influenced the specific entanglement between democracy and nationalism in 20th-century India. The writings of ‘Acharya’ Ramchandra Shukla, a central figure of Hindi literary criticism, provide a particularly fruitful ground for an analysis of these shifts and entanglements. For him, certain forms of literature could facilitate an awareness of the radically different other as an object of love, care and devotion and thus bear the potential for an increased social prosperity (lok-maṅgal). In order to define this “Indian notion of responsibility” (Milind Wakankar), Shukla developed a decidedly modern and “rationalized” understanding of the Bhakti tradition as an anti-individualistic form of interiority. It is this concept of an anti-individualistic interiority, I argue, that reveals the deep ambivalence between democracy and nationalism in Shukla’s thought; between a more radically open notion of transformation and literary potentiality on the one hand and a more narrowly targeted and even parochial notion of a national social transformation as the duty of literature on the other.

Spina, Daniela

*Starting At The End: Translation In Goan Literary History*

Translation played a key role in the history of Goan literature written in Portuguese. We could say that Indo-Portuguese literature begins and ends with a translation. According to the most important works on the literary history of Goa, the documents that prove the emergence of a Latin literacy in the 17th century were translations of Catholic texts from Portuguese into Konkani, the vernacular language of Goa, made for evangelical and didactic purposes. Between the 19th and 20th century, translations also worked in the opposite direction: intellectuals from the Hindu community of Goa start to translate texts from Marathi literature into Portuguese, to spread them among Catholic Goans. Even
more peculiar is the case of Adeodato Barreto, a young Goan Catholic poet, who in the 1930s begins to translate into Portuguese philosophical texts from the Vedic literary tradition, to make Catholic Goans aware of their Hindu cultural roots. It is no less important to mention that Adeodato Barreto had become familiar with that literary tradition by reading translations made by French Indologists. After the end of Portuguese colonialism in India, in 1961, the Portuguese language began to fade, leaving room for Konkani, Marathi and, above all, English, that became the main literary language. From that moment until now, the most successful works of Indo-Portuguese literature, published during colonialism, have been translated into English. In light of these different cases of translation, is it possible to consider translation as a key-concept for writing a new history of Goa’s multilingual literature? This is the question this paper will try to answer.

**Spina, Nanette**

*Women’s Religious And Ritual Leadership: Om Shakti In India Communicating Innovation In Contemporary Hindu Tradition*

The Adhiparasakthi tradition also known as Om Sakti, is an India-based goddess tradition focused on achieving both spiritual and humanitarian aims including positive social change. This contemporary guru-led movement, under the leadership of Indian guru, Bangaru Adigalar represents a contemporary current within modern Hinduism that demonstrates women in leadership positions transnationally. The organization’s mission objectives expressly focus on cultivating spiritual and psychological well-being, a practical dedication to improving conditions within human society, and a commitment to the educational and spiritual elevation of women. Central to this tradition is the guru’s directive communicated through arulvākku which has implemented an innovative structure of authority instantiating women’s leadership and ritual performance within the tradition. The directive encouraging women to hold positions of leadership has been instrumental in shaping this tradition. The utterance of arulvākku or gift of divine speech is generally understood by devotees as a source of guidance and healing from the goddess. These developments have been embraced and have helped expand the purview of women’s religious expression and agency. This paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork in 2017 and 2019 at the Adhiparasakthi temple in Melmaruvathur, Tamil Nadu, India, the primary temple to the goddess in the organization’s founding location. This paper examines the ways in which a priority consideration for humanitarian equity promoted within the Adhiparasakthi organization has both modified and challenged traditional views of gender and religious authority from within a religious framework.

**Srinivasan, Geetha and Srinivasan, Sharada**

*Intertwinings Of The Aniconic And Iconic: Insights From Himalayan Pilgrimages Of Amarnath, Kailash And Vaishno Devi*

This illustrated paper explores the role of the nature-worship and aniconic worship in major mountain pilgrimages in the Himalayas undertaken by the authors to Amarnath, Kailash-Manasarovar and Vaishno Devi in the 80’s before they became more motorable. The Amarnath cave, Mahashakti peethas houses an ice stalactite described as a Swayambhu or natural Shiva lingam which is open to pilgrims for a few days annually during Shravana Purnima and was visited by the authors in 1987. In 1986 Geetha Srinivasan undertook the month long pilgrimage to Kailash Manasarovar in Tibet when it has just been opened by the Chinese to Indians, travelling on yaks and trekking. The Kailas Parbat or mountain which resembles a lingam and the Manasarovar lake, the vestiges of the Tethys sea is held sacred by both Hindus and Tibetan Buddhists, whom she observed making the parikrama or circumambulation through saashtangadandapradakshina, alternately walking and prostrating themselves. The importance of aniconic worship was observed in 1977 at Vaishno Devi where the goddess is represented by rock formations. The paper touches upon how such aniconic worship was integrated into, and co-existed with more formalised iconic or canonical worship, through the routes of the sacred geographies along the pilgrimage and through the body of myth and lore which motivated the pilgrims.
Srinivasan, Perundevi

**Tracing Bhānumatī Through The Tamil Folklore And The Field**

My paper explores the narratives and practices related to Periyānṭacchī (“She, of the big universe”) in Dharmapuri region of Tamilnadu, locating her in the folklore of the Mahābhārata. Identified with Duryodhana’s wife Bhānumati or Peruntiruvāl, the goddess is celebrated biennially by scores of families, belonging to Vanniya Kavundar caste, as their clan deity. I analyze the local narratives of the episodes of Arjuna’s encounter with a hunter couple and Śiva’s granting the pāśupata boon to him, forming part of the play “Arjuna’s Tapas” (“Arjuna’s Penance”), which have contributed to the making of Duryodhana’s wife into a goddess.

Strube, Julian

**Tantra In Modern Bengal From The Perspective Of A Global Religious History**

In the early twentieth century, the editions and translations by “Arthur Avalon” made a certain understanding of Tantra known to a global readership and almost single-handedly established Tantra as a respected subject of academic enquiry. Until recently, it had been assumed that Arthur Avalon was the pseudonym of John Woodroffe (1865–1936), a British Judge at the Calcutta High Court. While earlier studies have shown that Arthur Avalon should, in fact, be regarded as the collaboration between Woodroffe and learned Bengalis, little effort has been made to understand the work and background of those Indian co-workers. This paper will demonstrate that those individuals were more than “co-workers” indeed: The understanding of Tantra that was communicated through the work of Arthur Avalon was the direct outcome of a specific historical development in nineteenth-century Bengal, which significantly predated Woodroffe’s involvement. As early as in 1880, Bengali intellectuals, some of whom would later work with Woodroffe, reached out to the Theosophical Society in order to transform the overwhelmingly negative perceptions of Tantra. In this paper, their efforts will be contextualized in the period from the 1880s and 1890s. The focus will rest, first, on the relationship between nationalism and Tantra; and second, on the question of “Hindu revival” that was debated against the background of “tradition” vs. “modernity,” and the role of modern science in particular. Theosophy will be located within that intellectual landscape and positioned towards “orthodox” Hindu sabhas, reformers such as the Brahmos and Aryas, and Bengali adherents of Spiritualism.

Sudyka, Lidia

**From The Fields To The Throne: Keladi-Ikkeri Rulers And The Culture Of Nature**

The substantive aim of this paper is to address attitudes towards environment and biotic resources, characteristic of the rule of the Keladi-Ikkeri Nāyakas and expressed in the Śivatattvaratnākara. After the decline of Vijayanagara power, some nāyakas established their own kingdoms. That is the case of the Keladi-Ikkeri Nāyakas (c. 1499–1763 C.E.), who, first, were intermediaries between the Vijayanagara king and the people of their locality and later became independent rulers of the western strip of Karnataka. Even during the heyday of the Keladi-Ikkeri kingdom, all the three consecutive capitals of the state—Keladi, Ikkeri and Bidnur—were far from being huge urban centres and perhaps contact with nature and close observation of wild life and domestic animals as well as local flora was a matter of everyday life. The Śivatattvaratnākara is an encyclopaedic work in Sanskrit authored by Keladi-Ikkeri king Basavarāja (r.1697–1714). Although it relays heavily on earlier sources, there are passages in it which concern the particular territory which the Ikkeri ruler was responsible for. They are present mainly in book 5 of the Śivatattvaratnākara. Among the passages analysed there will be:-the description of Malnad (malladeśa),-the dynastic myth and history of the Keladi-Ikkeri Nāyakas,-the passage concerning the qualities of a king, which should be learnt from certain animals. Also some excerpts from book 6, dealing with horticulture, will be taken into consideration. Indeed, the richness and diversity of regional ecosystem translates into the complexity of the inner landscapes of mind and these traits, invented or inherited, can be seen in the Śivatattvaratnākara.
Suri, Ratan (and Khan, Aasim/ Webb, Martin)

**Politics Of Jaankaari: Mediation And Marginalisation In Digital Delhi**

Working in collaboration with community-based advocates aiming to help people file social protection claims online, we investigate how marginalization is experienced in a rapidly digitalising urban India. In rethinking the politics of digitalisation, this paper investigates how marginality is produced and resisted in processes that mediate between digital infrastructure and socio-economic realities. Our focus is on the welfare schemes aimed at the ‘economically weaker sections’ that require citizens to make welfare claims online. Drawing on fieldwork and survey conducted in the East-Delhi neighbourhood of Trilokpuri, we find that a majority of those seeking support for accessing digital services online belonged to the Dalit and ‘backward classes’ among minority communities, with women’s participation crucial in the process of accessing social protection online. Although caste and gender are rarely accounted for in the discourse of digitalization, we also found these to be significant factors in how marginalization is experienced and contested on ground. Further, we draw a contrast from private provision for information and documentation (cyber-cafés and pay-per-use internet), and voluntary digital advocacy, to show potential for leadership roles emerging within these communities. In evaluating these effects and processes of mediation, we show that while digitalization can be a site for exploitation, lending themselves to governmentalities that can deepen social divides, mediation effects can also reduce marginalization, build communal solidarities and limit commercial exploitation.

Suzuki, Maya

**Diluted Dalit Rights And Justice In The Post-Mandal Era**

The long debates about Dalits and Dalit movements have centered on the ideas and ideologies of equality, dignity, justice, and rights, all mutually linked and each a set of irreplaceable values underlying universal fundamental rights. In the context of Dalit movements, the intense argument on rights and justice was sparked after the post-Mandal when reservation policy was gradually extended to lower caste communities (Other Backward Classes, OBCs) in an administrative term. It led to widespread anti-reservation protest by upper castes. What is worse, it led to nationwide caste-driven violence in the 1990s. In contemporary Indian society, the notions of equality, dignity, justice, and rights are not merely symbolic. They understood as a substantial and realizable entitlement through collective action. It is noteworthy that a new manifestation of inequality and injustice among Dalits has been observed. For instance, public litigation activities have been observed increasingly among Dalits since the 1990s in the judicial sphere. This paper represents an attempt to highlight the awareness of justice, rights, and “Dalit-ness” from interviews with the Balmiki community (known as the sweeper caste and economically and politically vulnerable and socially long-marginalized groups, among the lowest castes in the caste hierarchy). The interview research conducted by the author will shed light on a particular way in which upwardly-mobile Dalits including activists/non-activists experience their Dalit-ness and how they regard tension between their caste identity and new status.

Thacker, Smit

**Śvāminārāyaṇa-Siddhānta-Sudhā: Informing The Practice Of The Śvāminārāyaṇa Mantra**

The nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of the Śvāminārāyaṇa Sampradāya, a bhakti-driven sectarian community founded by Sahajānand Svāmi (1781–1830 CE). One of the earliest factors facilitating its formulation was the chant of the mantra ‘śvāminārāyaṇa’. Imparted by Sahajānand Svāmi, this mantra became an identification mark for the sectarian community and its founder. Sahajānand Svāmi, revered as the incarnation of God by his followers, came to be recognized as ‘Bhagavāna Śvāminārāyaṇa’. Subsequently, the mantra shaped a new identity for his followers, who then referred to themselves as belonging to the Śvāminārāyaṇa Sampradāya. Today we come across many branches of the Śvāminārāyaṇa Sampradāya, developing from certain theological differenc-
es. One fundamental difference is the interpretation of the mantra ‘svāminārāyaṇa’. The Bocāsanvāsi Akṣara-Puruṣottama Svāminārāyaṇa Sanstā (BAPS) interprets the mantra as the representation of ‘svāmi’ (the ideal devotee) and ‘Nārāyaṇa’ (the Supreme Being). Svāminārāyaṇa-Siddhānta-Sudhā, a topical exposition that systematizes the fundamental principles of the BAPS community, presents this interpretation in light of the Vedāntic canon by analyzing the mantra’s etymology and validating this interpretation through aphorisms from the Prasthāntrayi. This paper shall demonstrate how through such an exegetical understanding of the mantra, a ‘re-formation’ is created within the community. By systematising the interpretation in such a way, the text situates the BAPS community both within Vedānta traditions, as well as distinct from other Svāminārāyaṇa branches, thus facilitating a deeper connection to the mantra for the community.

Thakur, Vikramaditya

After Displacement: Vernacular Modernity In The Quest For Viable Resettlement In Rural Western India

The existing literature on forced displacement due to industrial projects in general and dams in particular is either silent about what happens after displacement or, when it does touch on resettlement, it is to highlight its complete failure where the fabric of socio-economic life of the displaced groups is irreparably damaged. Even when the affected groups do organize themselves, it is to oppose their forced displacement and it is this opposition that holds the key to preventing their impoverishment that ensues in the wake of project getting completed. This paper instead shows how peasant groups in Maharashtra, India have successfully mobilized for framing and implementation of resettlement policies linked to large dams in a struggle that spans half and century and remains active in the present.

Thaler, Marleen

Kuṇḍalini Rising. The Initial Theosophic Examination Of The Tantric Concept Of Kuṇḍalini.

In the course of the past decades, kuṇḍalini has pervaded popular culture and alternative religion. However, its popular construction arose from a multi-layered process of re-interpretation, originating in its initial exposure by non-Indian actors. Commonly, Sir John Woodroffe is credited with the dissemination of this Tantric concept among devotees of European and American alternative religions. Yet, Woodroffe had built upon earlier discussions on the part of the Theosophical Society. Especially the (early) 1880s witnessed a vital discourse on Tantra and some of its central components, such as kuṇḍalini. In an Orientalist manner, members of the Theosophical Society aimed to appropriate Tantric concepts, in order to integrate them in their spiritual repertoire, whereby the mysterious kuṇḍalini energy was one among many Tantric concepts that had aroused the Society’s interest. In the course of time, kuṇḍalini became a substantial content within their religious program. As one of the earliest English references to kuṇḍalini, the seminal text The Dream of Ravan constitutes the starting point of that discourse and triggered ensuing Theosophical concepts. Among the members of the Theosophical Society, the journal The Theosophist was the foremost medium of communication, wherefore its contributions provide valuable insights into that vivid discussion. The aim of this paper is the exposition of pre-Woodroffean sources and interpretations of the “serpent power” within the Theosophical Society. A special focus shall be placed upon the early and widely unexplored Theosophical publication The Dream of Ravan and its involvement in subsequent discussion on Tantra and kuṇḍalini.

Thelen, Elizabeth

Divine Signs: Seals Of Deities And Saints In Rajasthan From The 17th–19th Centuries

Most seals found on documents from the Mughal and early colonial period belong to emperors, nobles, and state officials. However, seals were also used by other actors and in other settings. On the one hand, their use spread to prominent members of the public, such as religious specialists; on the
other hand, seals of deities and holy men also came into use. In this paper, I focus on the form and use of the seals of Govinddevji, an incarnation of Krishna installed in a temple in Jaipur, and of Khwaja Mu’in al-Din Chishti, a Sufi saint whose tomb-shrine is in Ajmer. The visual vocabulary of these two seals are divergent and draw on different idioms: Govinddevji’s seal is a fairly simple square containing only the name of the deity, while Khwaja Mu’in al-Din Chishti’s large round seal mirrors elements of Mughal imperial genealogical seals. Reading the divergent appearances of these seals and their context on and between documents, I reflect on several shared questions: What visual and historical referents inform the understanding of these seals? How did these seals relate to the religious specialists and institutions that were associated with these holy figures and any seals thereof? What did it mean for a saint or deity to have a seal? These reflections suggest the importance of seals in invoking and mediating power and authority both within and beyond this world.

Thévoz, Samuel
‘The Delights Of Samādhi:’ Alexandra David-Neel, Haṭha Yoga And Occult South Asia

In the 1930s, Alexandra David-Neel (1868–1969) became famous worldwide for expounding the ‘secret teachings’ and ‘psychical training’ of Tibetan Tantric practitioners. Yet David-Neel’s interest in Eastern techniques of liberation dates back from her early contact with occult South Asia in the 1890s in the circles of the Theosophical Society in Europe and India. David-Neel developed a personal interest in meditation probably through Annie Besant, and remained overly wary of bodily practices as a declared Buddhist herself. Nevertheless, in 1893 in her very first published article in Le Lotus bleu, while polemically discussing the Secret Doctrine and Esoteric Buddhism, David-Neel made significant reference to the commented edition and translation of Svātmārāma’s Haṭhayogapradīpikā (HYP) published that same year by the Bombay Theosophical Publication Fund. David-Neel’s early reading of the HYP then developed into scholarly studies on ‘physical training,’ motivated her extensive field surveys, and sustained her vision of yoga up to her latest books. In focusing on the South Asian prequel of David-Neel’s engagement with occult Asia, the aim of this paper is threefold: 1) to clarify David-Neel’s ties with the esotericist milieus in Europe and their lasting impact on her later works; 2) to highlight David-Neel’s rendition of the HYP and its pivotal role in her trajectory as a para-scholarly influential authority on occult phenomena in South Asia; 3) to reassess the key function of David-Neel’s early discovery of ‘physical yoga’ from a transcultural perspective, in particular in view of her assimilation of Indian concepts such as samādhi in her ethics and poetics in the long run.

Topdar, Sudipa
‘Confessions’ Of A Student-Terrorist: Contesting Education Late Colonial India

Contemporary debates over the crackdown on Indian universities triggered by the politics of saffronization throw into sharp focus issues of state engagement and education. These debates recall similar structural processes of ideological domination from late nineteenth-century colonial India. As a means to civilize natives, channel youth energies in socially productive ways, and implement models of responsible masculine behavior, colonial education aimed to be a stabilizing institution. However, by 1870s, the pitfalls of colonial education were exposed when significant numbers of school and college students engaged in acts of violence against the British colonial regime. Educational focus shifted in two particular aspects: first, an increased government censorship of curriculum to articulate political authority; and second, the criminalization of student rebels to eliminate the scope for sedition. I unpack an adolescent student-terrorist’s ‘confessions’ made to the police in 1911 after his arrest. His recruitment, among many others, highlights the widespread appeal among Indian nationalists of using youth as a main agent of a terror-based approach to nationalism. The threat of students’ politicization was potent because it highlighted the engagement of the state’s own employee, the government teacher, in anticolonial activism. A teacher who exercised deep influence over his students’ minds and bodies was alarming both for the education department and the colonial police. Using wayward youth as a lens of analysis, I probe the intersections of colonial education as welfare, assertions of youth as political subjects, and the student as a criminal in late colonial India.
Tribedy, Elora

Non-Mobility And Material Attachments In Early Medieval Indian Buddhism: Cases From Eastern India

Pilgrimage can be interpreted as a means of reliving the idea of ‘self’ in an already instructed, preached or experienced space. The cyclic actions (journey back and forth) involved in the process of pilgrimage can be inferred as generating a state of elation, excitement, and gratification. Religious souvenirs can be considered of particular importance in extending the experience of such sacred moments. Religious souvenirs may also carry specific meaning and purpose for people being unable to visit (or revisit) the site of personal or religious importance. The present paper talks about the production and circulation of objects and specimens which can be interpreted as religious souvenirs from a few Buddhist pilgrimages and monastic sites of Bihar and Odisha state, situated in the eastern part of India dated from the 7th to 13th-century C.E. Examining religious souvenirs from these sites, the present speaker wishes to focus on two important yet less-highlighted themes in early Medieval Buddhism of Eastern India, firstly, the involvement of the non-monastic population in major and minor Buddhist pilgrimage and monastic sites, and secondly non-mobility to connectivity of Buddhist population inhabiting the interior landscape of Eastern India. Apart from eight great sites of Buddhist pilgrimage and oversees pilgrim network, there was a considerable amount of inland and regional religious journey connecting a range of Buddhist monasteries of this region. These religious souvenirs, made, bought or brought from a sacred site, were associated with the bodily and mental experience of holding, possessing and owning. Reflection on these can help us in understanding aspect

Tschacher, Torsten

A Muslim Pagoda In South India: Community, Aesthetics, And Religion At The Nagore Dargah

The Nagore Dargah, tomb-shrine of the 16th-century Muslim saint Shah al-Hamid in the town of Nagore in south-eastern India, is one of the most important as well as impressive Muslim pilgrimage sites in southern India and Sri Lanka. Particularly striking are the five soaring minarets surrounding the shrine, build during the 17th and 18th century under the patronage of Muslim and Hindu donors. The peculiar style of these minarets inspired Muslim architects in Southeast Asia and possibly also in Yemen to model minarets constructed along the same lines. But while the impact of the architectural style of the Nagore Dargah in the Indian Ocean region has been at least preliminarily mapped, another question still remains to be answered: how did this peculiar style come into being? In this paper, I will suggest that an impressionistic observation made more than a century ago, likening the Nagore Dargah’s minarets to Chinese pagodas, may have been closer to the mark than the observer realized. As I hope to show, the Chinese impact on this particular Muslim shrine suggests continuities in the aesthetic traditions of the local Muslim community in Nagore, a mercantile community with long historical contacts with Southeast Asia and China, which may have converted from Buddhism to Islam. The minarets of the Nagore Dargah thus would simultaneously act as symbols of the continuity of the community’s identity and of its embracing of Islam.

Tschurenev, Jana

Spiritual Motherhood: ‘social Work’ And ‘social Service’ In The Early Twentieth Century Bombay Presidency

The paper analyses the emergence of a new female-gendered professional field in early 20th century Western India: social work. The ideal social worker was an educated woman, who held a primary degree in teaching or medicine. Her professional profile was framed in the context of urban poverty and social welfare. The social workers’ responsibility was to care for industrial workers and their children. They visited living quarters, compiled data, and supervised crèches for the safe-keeping of working mothers’ infants. It was often female activists, organized in the Seva Sadan Society (1910), the National Council of Women in India (1925), or the All India Women’s Conference (1927), who promoted the development of social work. Many of them were in conversation with women’s organizations abroad,
and observed the contemporary developments in Europe, and the US. These female activists argued that women’s inherent nurturing qualities could be transferred to the public domain. Particularly young widows, who did not have children of their own, became primary candidates for ‘social service’ – they could invest their ‘spiritual motherhood’ for the benefit of the emerging Indian nation. Social work displays an interesting ambiguity: on the one hand, it required professional training, and scientific expertise. On the other hand, it was not primarily framed as paid labor – the social worker was a ‘sevika’, a volunteer, who dedicated her unpaid services to the good of India’s poor women and children. Shifting care work to the public domain, the paper argues, did not necessarily imply its transformation into salaried labor. It was still considered ‘labor of love.

Uma, Saumya

Gender At The Cross Roads Of Freedom Of Religion: Examining The Sabarimala Judgment And Beyond

The Indian judiciary’s attempt to strike a balance between protecting core religious practices and beliefs with liberal ideas of sex equality and civil rights is best represented by the Sabarimala judgment’s chequered history. The majority judgment of the supreme court of India, delivered in September 2018, struck down the practice of barring entry of women in the menstrual age of 10–50 into the temple as unconstitutional. It declared the practice to be violative of the right to life with dignity, equality and non-discrimination, as well as freedom of religion of women, guaranteed by the Indian constitution. In November 2019, the supreme court passed an order on petitions that sought a review of the 2018 judgment. The order did not refer to the correctness of the 2018 judgment (errors apparent on the face of the record, as is usually the ground for allowing a review petition); nor did the order stay the 2018 judgment. Strangely, it referred some “questions” to a larger (seven judge) bench of the supreme court that is yet to be constituted, based on issues that may arise in other cases pending before the court, that raise a similar issue. Subsequent to the review order, women who attempted to enter and pray at the temple were prevented from doing so. In December 2019, they petitioned the supreme court for enforcement of its own judgment, but the court refused to pass any orders, referring to the “age old practice going on for thousands of years” and that it was an “emotive issue”.

Upadhyay, Vishi

Telhara Circuit In Historical Records (A Cluster Of Ancient Buddhist Sites)

Telhara is a small village in the Hilsa subdivision of the Nalanda Dist. in Bihar. Telhara and its vicinity areas yield a cluster of ancient Buddhist sites and find in historical records which reflects the importance of these site in past time. Telhara was visited by the Chinese traveller, Heun Tsang in the 7th Century AD, and it was mentioned as Teleadaka in his account. In course of excavation at the site a good number of Pala sculpture have been discovered including both Buddhist & Brahmanical deities. The site, is also mentioned in the Ain-i-Akbari as Tiladah and is shown as one of the 46 mahals of Sarkar Bihar. Buchanan mentioned this village as an important state of Bihar. The account in Minhaj’s Tabqat-i-Nasiri also tells about this site. About 4 k.m. of Ongari, there remains of large village called Biswak & Biswa. Like Telhara, this place is also mentioned as a pargana, which according to the Ain-i-Akbar. Islampur and Mubarakpur are other important sites in ancient records. All these sites make circuit and Telhara might have been focused on the centre and famous for specialized studies. Discussion about these sites in historical records, specially Telhara.

Valanciunas, Deimantas

‘O Stree Kal Aanaa’: Monstrous Feminine In Contemporary Indian Horror Cinema

This paper discusses two recent Hindi films released in 2018: ‘Pari’ by Prosit Roy and ‘stree’ by Amar Kaushik. Both films belong to somewhat different modulations of the horror genre (‘Pari’ represents the folk horror while ‘stree’ – horror comedy) yet they both dwell on different versions of the ‘monstrous feminine’ ( Creed 1998); ‘Pari’ on the Islamicate monstrous creature of ifrit and ‘stree’ on chudail.
Chudail is a female ghost, popular in North Indian folk tradition: a bloodthirsty fiend disguised as a beautiful young woman who seduces men into having a sexual intercourse and then draining them off of their blood. And even though this dangerous, monstrous female fiend is not a new character in Hindi horror cinema and has appeared in many films since the 1980s, it still tended to be confined to the low budget and B-grade circles, used by the filmmakers primarily for the sexual exploitation purposes. The recent trends in cinema, however, demonstrate that the monstrous feminine character has gradually been invested with more critical meaning and there is a significant shift in representing and constructing female subjectivity in this cinematic sub-genre. Therefore, by analysing the two films ‘Pari’ and ‘stree’, this paper argues that the horror genre functions as a certain critical platform where indigenous folk narratives are employed to address and discuss contemporary national and socio-cultural anxieties - the issues of reproduction, pregnancy, abortion, female liberty and masculine anxiety among others.

Vandenhelsken, Mélanie
Ancestral Territories, Political Borders, And The Limbu’s Sense Of Community In Sikkim
For Limbu in Sikkim, the differentiation with ‘Limbu from Nepal’ is a stake for accessing political representation. Simultaneously, ‘recognition’, in various senses of the term, is interpreted as entailing cultural uniformity among all Limbu, or at least, all Limbu living in Sikkim. These political injunctions permeate discourses about cultural practices, and influence meanings and content of ritual performances in particular. This paper will discuss social and political bordering in death rituals, and their discursive context, performed by Limbu in Sikkim. It is based on an approach of rituals as not only representing social processes, but also enabling renegotiation of power relations (Ortner, High Religion, 1989; Rao, Ritual in Society, 2006). Rituals are here also approached as one of the planes of experience where representations and meanings of the border are constructed. I will firstly examine the territories revealed through various performances of Limbu death rituals, both visible landscapes and the ancestral territory, accessible only to shamans and dead people’s ‘souls’. I will secondly discuss bordering of the territory and of the community in the discursive context of the ritual. This aims at highlighting forms of territorial classifications and the role of ritual performances and interpretations, also informed by the socio-political context, in shaping them.

Van Berkel, Kees (and Sartor, Giovanni)
Using Formal Argumentation To Clarify Structures Of Legal Reasoning
This talk introduces formal theories of argumentation and shows how such theories can be applied to the analysis of legal and normative reasoning in different traditions. We introduce the notions of “argument”, relations of conflict and support and methods for assessing the dialectical status of arguments and defended claims. Furthermore, we provide formal definitions of these notions. We will especially point out the advantages of using such framework for a better understanding of textual sources. For instance, we will show how the application of argumentation theory reveals the hidden assumptions, implicit preferences and implied consequences of the analysed discourses. In this way, formal argumentation can support a rational reconstruction and reflective criticism of complex dialectical interactions. Last, we will show how formal argumentation can handle complex sets of rules and exceptions, the connection between rules and values, and the reasoned choice between alternative interpretations. Throughout the talk, we will exemplify the use of our framework via applying it to the analysis of debates in contemporary law as well as South Asian thought.

Van Overberghe, Tine (and De Clercq, Eva / Winant, Simon)
Jain Mahābhārata In Classical Hindi: Bulākīdās’ Pāṇḍavpurāṇ
Episodes from the Mahābhārata can be found from the earliest strata of Jain literature. Over the centuries, Jain poets adapted the epic in compositions in various literary languages, both classical
and vernacular, including Classical Hindi. Scholarship (e.g., Cort 2013, Clines 2018, Plau 2018, Bangha 2013) has only started to disclose the vast corpus of high quality Jain literature in Classical Hindi, and its significance for North Indian literary culture. This paper represents the first attempt at exploring the Pāṇḍavapurāṇa of Bulākīdās (17th c.), a self-proclaimed bhasā of the Sanskrit Pāṇḍavapurāṇa, composed just a century earlier by Śubhacandra (1552). By conducting a close reading of one selected episode, we will examine the modifications made by the poet to conform his work to the requirements of contemporary Classical Hindi literature (e.g. Plau 2018 on Rāmcand Bālak’s adaptation of Raviśeṇa’s Jain Rāmāyaṇa), and the extent in which he stays true to Śubhacandra’s Pāṇḍavapurāṇa in Sanskrit.

Varma, Nitin

Ayahs And Mehterannies: The Making Of Female Domestic Labour In Colonial India

The paper historically situates the emergence of two prominent categories of waged female domestic labour in colonial India—these are the Ayah (care worker with tasks to attend the mistres and take care of infants and children) and the Mehterannie (manual worker with sweeping and scavenging tasks). The attempt to bring together these categories in a single analytical frame aims at probing the nature and extent of distinction between care work and manual work in the performance of everyday domestic labour in colonial households. Through a closer examination of life trajectories of female domestics and prescriptive literature on childcare and household management, the paper argues that such distinctions were more ideological than historical, showing overlaps, traffic and mutual constitution of these seemingly disparate categories. A major pursuit here is to foreground the prominence of caste (and to an extent religion) in the making of these categories and performance of domestic labour. While thus initiating a conversation between caste and labour, the paper does not suggest that caste was an unchanging institution, which uniformly informed and determined the practice of labour, but rather demonstrates how it was employed and negotiated in specific historical contexts. Most importantly, this raises the question of colonial power relations’ intersection with prevalent social hierarchies, and their encounter at the site of the colonial household.

Vekemans, Tine

Memory, Archive, And (Non)Fiction: Mixing Methods To Trace British East-African Jain Heritage

When discussing the experience of being Jain in Great Britain today, it is common for respondents to point out an unspecified ‘difference in doing things’ between families that migrated to the UK from India and those that came to Britain from the British East-African ex-colonies in the 1970s. Previous research on South Asians in Colonial British Africa primarily focused on their economic position, and hardly dealt with religious aspects at all. The Remember Africa research project seeks to shed more light on the specificities of East-African Jain religious heritage, and its continued development and relevance in Britain from the 1970s onwards. The proposed paper presents the methodological conundrums of this research project. By advocating a multidisciplinary mixed-method approach to make the most of the available sources, it prompts a critical re-examination of the role and limitations of the researcher. In this case, the latter functions as a historian probing archives of socio-religious organizations in East-Africa, an anthropologist conducting participative observation and collecting testimonies, memories, and stories, and an analyst looking at multi-medial remembrance projects that have been undertaken within the British East-African Jain community in recent years. The case of British East-African Jain heritage poignantly demonstrates the necessity of mixed-method research in South Asian religious studies. Additionally, this paper seeks to contribute to academic debate on the benefits and pitfalls of combining methods, the integration of potentially contradictory sources, and the balance between methodological rigor and pragmatic flexibility in research.
Invocations of the divine have been associated with the written expression of legal and political authority in Marathi-speaking western India since at least the twelfth century. Indeed, the donkey curse, inscribed on stone pillars to protect royal donations to Brahman settlements, was an early vehicle of vernacular writing in the region. Curses took on a new function in Marathi documentation of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, reinforcing the authority of legal decisions rendered by local assemblies. At the same time, the taking of oaths and especially the undergoing of ordeals became central to the public and collective adjudication of disputes over property. Hence in early modern western India, ‘rational’ elements of judicial procedure – those cognizable through more or less rule-bound human deliberation – were supplemented by appeals to the less predictable decision-making capacity of otherworldly authorities. In this paper, I will investigate another iteration of these ‘signs of power’ by exploring the role of oaths in Marathi documentation produced in the very different context of intergovernmental negotiation. In the eighteenth century, much of western and central India was controlled by far-flung Maratha states whose relations were carefully managed through the circulation of letters, treaties, and memoria. One of the most efficacious tools in the diplomat’s repertoire was the oath-producing letter, or shapathpurvaka patra; however, even less freighted diplomatic correspondence was routinely littered with oaths and promises consisting of highly regular terms and phrases. Sacred objects, such as holy basil, Qur’ans, and Bibles, were also

The life of subaltern Punjabi poet Lal Singh Dil is a chronicle of depravation, displacement, struggle and broken dreams that echoes the plight of several marginalised identities. His poetic aesthetic is woven by a mix of Punjabi folk, its culture, casteist subjugation, extreme-left movements, systemic and upper caste atrocities and contemporary history. So far there have been two translations if ‘Dil’s poetry from Punjabi to English-1:- “Poet of the Revolution: The Memoirs and Poems of Lal Singh Dil” translated by Nirupama Dutt, New Delhi, Penguin Viking, 1998;2:- “Lal Singh Dil: Selected Poems” translated by T C Ghai, Delhi, L G Publishers, 2017)Our presentation will focus on three important issues:(1) Socio-political landscape of Punjab after the 1947 partition and the question of Dalit identity in this space.(2) An exploration of the vivid and multifaceted life and works of Lal Singh Dil by analysing the major theme of identity politics/ struggle for self-respect in Dil’s autobiography.(3) Examining the English translations of Dil’s memoir and poetry and the politics around translation. Our analysis of these translations will focus on:1. Selection criteria for the translated pieces and identifying cases of Under-translation/Over-translation2. The target audience of the translator,3. Translation of cultural vocabulary, folk life and related political discourses.4. An attempt to examine the overt and covert political associations and the nature of conflicts in these translations

If South Asia scholars have often examined the causes and immediate consequences of displacement, few have examined the longer-term processes through which people rearrange their personal, professional and social lives after an episode of violence. How do people move on with their lives after experiencing displacement? How, in the process, are new spaces, societies, and subjectivities made? In this presentation, I propose to address these questions through a focus on practices. Studying practices of adjustment and reorientation, in an ethnographic way, will enable research to explore how people respond to displacement while they (re)shape their lives under changing conditions. I have developed this focus on post-displacement adjustment practices during my research in Gujarat and among overseas Gujaratis in the period 2010–2018. As a result of the anti-Muslim pogroms of Gujarat in 2002, an estimated 200,000 refugees fled their homes; in the fifteen years thereafter, when
cities and towns were reorganised along religious lines in response to the violence, many more people left their homes in order to seek safe residence with members of their “own” community. Not only spaces changed in this period: aspirations, relations, and mobility patterns also changed. In order to understand these longer-term consequences, which developed relatively slowly and implicitly, the research needed to move beyond the established vocabulary of “reconstruction”, “relief”, “representation” and “(in)justice”. It instead focused on everyday social and economic practices to explore ethnographically how Gujarati Muslims have (re)shaped their lives in the post-2002 con

von Stockhausen, Alban (and Wettstein, Marion)
Political Borders And The Transformations Of Kirat Rai Mythology
Kirat Rai mythology largely ignores the segregation of local cultures along political borders of nation-states and citizenship. In contrary, most mythologies seem to seamlessly integrate neighbouring regions and communities into their local narratives even if fundamental differences in language, religion or cultural practices would strongly support a more distinct differentiation. The paper analyses selected examples of mythological narratives as pronounced by local ritual specialists of the Dumi Rai. Highlighted are elements that refer to specific social and political relations with neighbouring groups of the Rai within Nepal and across the Indian border. Built on the findings of this analysis, the question is raised how these local narratives are transformed when communicated through large contemporary political and social organisations. Is it in these adapted narratives that the concepts and social consequences of political borders become introduced and relevant?

Vuille, Rosine
Borrowing Or Transcreating? On Agha Shahid Ali’s Ghazals And Their Multilingual Intertexts
More and more writers navigate several linguistic and cultural universes; the frames of reference for their work expand accordingly. In such cases, intertextuality (or Genette’s notion of palimpseste) functions not only at a monolingual level but also across languages and across cultures, creating an extremely complex multilingual literary universe. The work of the Kashmiri American poet Agha Shahid Ali (1949–2001) offers an excellent illustration of this phenomenon of dense and multilingual intertextuality. Ali was born in Delhi in 1949. He grew up mainly in Srinagar, speaking Urdu, Kashmiri and English. In 1976, he settled in the USA where he taught Creative Writing. English was his language of writing, thinking and teaching. However, through his readings and his own linguistic background, he was familiar with the literatures of several continents. His poetry attests his multiple interests, the breadth of his readings and his sources of influence. In his work, pop culture meets the masters of the Urdu ghazal, allusions to Sufism can rhyme with images from urban life in New York and Hindu mythology dialogues with contemporary American poets. But beyond implicit and explicit references, Ali also translates parts of poems by Urdu poets like Ghalib or Ahmed Faraz and elaborates on them. In this paper, I propose to examine Ali’s poetry, more specifically his ghazals, through an analysis of his use of borrowed verses and of his transcreation of existing poems. After a general introduction to Ali’s work and literary universe, I will look more closely at three of his ghazals, which are expansions or rewritings of poems by (respectively) Ghalib, Faraz and Wisława Szymborska.

Walter, Anna-Maria
Love At Second Sight - The Touristification Of Landscape And Heritage Of Gilgit Baltistan
Touristic advertisements, development reports, and government sources in Pakistan readily use Gilgit-Baltistan’s natural beauty, above all lavish shots of mountain peaks, to showcase the country’s hospitality and global appeal. Since the public sphere is full of promotional material for the region, local populations have also started posing in front of newly discovered sights for photos to upload on Facebook and WhatsApp. Through visual examples I will show how consumption and engagement with social media feeds back on people’s (self-)perception of their natural and cultural environment. Popular representations of the region’s landscape even serve as form of self-othering: looking at
Gilgit-Baltistan’s assets through the eyes of outsiders lets many young people appreciate things they previously took for granted or even saw as obstacles, such as remote valleys, steep slopes or gravel roads. Moreover, by actively contributing to public discourse, locals reclaim the represented and disseminated imagination of their homeland.

Webb, Martin (and Khan, Aasim / Suri, Ratan)

*Politics Of Jaankaari: Mediation And Marginalisation In Digital Delhi*

Working in collaboration with community-based advocates aiming to help people file social protection claims online, we investigate how marginalization is experienced in a rapidly digitalising urban India. In rethinking the politics of digitalisation, this paper investigates how marginality is produced and resisted in processes that mediate between digital infrastructure and socio-economic realities. Our focus is on the welfare schemes aimed at the ‘economically weaker sections’ that require citizens to make welfare claims online. Drawing on fieldwork and survey conducted in the East-Delhi neighbourhood of Trilokpuri, we find that a majority of those seeking support for accessing digital services online belonged to the Dalit and ‘backward classes’ among minority communities, with women’s participation crucial in the process of accessing social protection online. Although caste and gender are rarely accounted for in the discourse of digitalization, we also found these to be significant factors in how marginalization is experienced and contested on ground. Further, we draw a contrast from private provision for information and documentation (cyber-cafés and pay-per-use internet), and voluntary digital advocacy, to show potential for leadership roles emerging within these communities. In evaluating these effects and processes of mediation, we show that while digitalization can be a site for exploitation, lending themselves to governmentalities that can deepen social divides, mediation effects can also reduce marginalization, build communal solidarities and limit commercial exploitation.

Werner, Hanna

*The Eternal Subaltern? History, Power, And The Ambivalent Role Of Identity Politics*

More than any other ‘school’, the Subaltern Studies Collective has emphasized the importance of writing a ‘history from below’, of looking at the margins rather than the elites to understand the complex dynamics of postcolonial societies. The Marxist approach predominant in the first two volumes edited by the Collective soon came to be replaced by a (western educated) postcolonial scholarship informed by a Foucauldian reading of power/knowledge. This shift was criticized by many for its focus on western discourse creating a new ‘orientalism’ and leading to a loss of empirical significance for India. Whether such criticism is justified in individual cases or not, what remains crucial for social theory today is the positioning of the subaltern subject. Depending on the theoretical point of departure, such positioning entails very different consequences regarding the role and agency of the defined subaltern. Proponents of identity politics have emphasized the importance of strategic essentialism, of using cultural difference in order to fight against marginalization caused by the very same. These strategic essentialisms, however, often fall short of the original anti-essentialist agenda of the Collective. The essentialisation of cultural difference, whether for strategic purposes or not, always entails the risk of reducing historical subjects to mere objects of their own identity politics. The main aim of this paper, thus, is to recall the anti-essentialist agenda of Subaltern Studies, the lacing of critical historiography with ethnographic rigor, and not least to resume the conversation with (Marxist) identity critics that has been lost somewhere along the way.

Wessler, Heinz Werner

*Between Empathy And Representation : On The Discourse On A Common Binary In Dalit/Adivasi Hindi Literature*

In recent decades, Dalit and Adivasi literature – written by author coming from a low caste and tribal background – have emerged as important Hindi genres. Dalit and Adivasis form the economically
most marginalized groups in India. Their short stories, poems and essays, as well as autobiographical texts, are regularly published in important Hindi literary journals. Recently, the perhaps most prominent Hindi literary journal “Hans” has brought out another Dalit literature special edition (November 2019). Some samples have begun to appear in the syllabi of educational institutions, indicating an ongoing process of mainstreaming a new voice in Hindi. The notorious social discrimination and economic marginalization of Adivasis and Dalits continues, but literature has become an important tool of expression. The position of empathy as a continuous feature of both societies and literature has been criticized in contemporary literary theory. The critique has emphasized how important cultural reactions to “internal views” of others are in determining the acceptability or desirability of empathy. Furthermore, empathy, with its origins in the Victorian novel, is intrinsically linked to colonial power-relations. Dalit and to some extent even Adivasi authors mostly insist vehemently on the categorical difference between anubhūti (“experience”) and sahānubhūti (“empathy”) in the discourse on Dalit and Adivasi literature. In my paper, I will try to explore this binary and its meanings in contemporary literary discourse.

Wettstein, Marion (and von Stockhausen, Alban)
**Political Borders And The Transformations Of Kirat Rai Mythology**
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Wigh, Sonia
**Sexual Or Social Maladies? Translating Sexual Medicine In Early Modern North India**
This paper looks at how sexual medical knowledge is translated from Indic to Persian sources and how that effects the transformation of societal norms through a detailed analysis of ‘medico-erotological’ texts composed between sixteenth and eighteenth century. Texts such as Laẓẓat al-nisāʿ (The pleasures of women) have sections on masculine health that are linked to the production, retention, and internalised flow of semen, while the chapter on feminine health focuses on receiving the semen and utilizing its full potential by conceiving a child, especially one which would bring merit to the family’s name. Irrespective of the origin and provenance of the text, most Islamic texts recognized that intercourse was a legitimate activity and acknowledged the need for ‘sexual fulfillment’. The sections dealing with the classification of men and women are followed by the ideal pairing and their outcomes in terms of producing offspring’s. We have to acknowledge that in this period, the concept of childbirth and the complications attached to it were still shrouded with some level of mystery. Thus, these medical manuals had a wider reach and relevance to the lives of those who commissioned, collected, and read these texts. Can it be argued that although these texts were primarily written for the medical practitioner, the secondary audience was the elite nobility? The paper also looks at how these texts fit into the imperial edifice of the state and the institutions that underpin the system of governance- the nobility, and the lynchpin- the king.
Wille, Boris
Trans-Local Infrastructure And The Spatiality Of Political Protest In The Maldivian Hub-City Male

The connectivity of South Asian islands and littorals manifests in trans-local infrastructures. In the island nation of the Maldives the capital Male’ occupies a pivotal role in this because it acts as a hub in terms of maritime as well as airborne transport; it caters for most trans-national organisations and businesses; it accommodates most trans-regional facilities in higher education, research, health, religion and media; and it houses most national institutions of the state like ministries, authorities, the parliament and the presidents office. The concentration of these infrastructures on a single densely populated small island presents a particular spatial configuration that enables transmutations of assets between various networks that in turn allow for the accumulation or contestation of power.

In this paper I scrutinise how the trans-local infrastructures in Male’ were target and means in the dispute between two factions during the political crisis of 2012. I focus on the spatial practices of a protest movement that had formed as a response to the controversial change of the Maldivian government in February of that year. I show how the protestors disrupted the functionality of trans-local infrastructures by blocking and occupying urban spaces, and how they established linkages to broader spatial, social and political realms by staging demonstrations at particular urban sites. I argue that the movement’s spatial appropriation of trans-local infrastructures reveals the intertwinements of power and connectivity in an archipelagic society. Finally, I reflect on how the anthropology of spacial practices enables the study of littoral societies’ relationships.

Winant, Simon (and De Clercq, Eva / Van Overberghe, Tine)
Jain Mahābhāratas In Classical Hindi: Bulākīdās’ Pāṇḍavpurāṇ

Episodes from the Mahābhārata can be found from the earliest strata of Jain literature. Over the centuries, Jain poets adapted the epic in compositions in various literary languages, both classical and vernacular, including Classical Hindi. Scholarship (e.g., Cort 2013, Clines 2018, Plau 2018, Bangha 2013) has only started to disclose the vast corpus of high quality Jain literature in Classical Hindi, and its significance for North Indian literary culture. This paper represents the first attempt at exploring the Pāṇḍavpurāṇ of Bulākīdās (17th c.), a self-proclaimed bhāṣā of the Sanskrit Pāṇḍavapurāṇa, composed just a century earlier by Śubhacandra (1552). By conducting a close reading of one selected episode, we will examine the modifications made by the poet to conform his work to the requirements of contemporary Classical Hindi literature (e.g. Plau 2018 on Rāmcand Bālak’s adaptation of Raviśeṇa’s Jain Rāmāyanā), and the extent in which he stays true to Śubhacandra’s Pāṇḍavapurāṇa in Sanskrit.

Wittich, Agi
Women’s Body, Lineage, And Yoga: Geeta iyengar’s Yoga (R)Evolution

Recent studies indicate that women form the majority of yoga practitioners in recent years. However, until the popularization of yoga in the early twentieth century in India women were discouraged and excluded from it. In the contemporary Iyengar yoga tradition, not only that women were included from its start, but it was shaped and evolved in order to accommodate women’s needs. This was done since the Iyengar yoga tradition viewed classical yoga tradition’s practices as male-centered, and therefore as unfitting for women. The inadequacy of the classical practices became explicitly visible when the Iyengar yoga tradition addressed women’s changing physiology, such as menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause. The focus of the lecture is the female agents who shaped, implemented, and transmitted women-oriented yoga practices in the Iyengar tradition. It will draw on the finding of my Ph. D. research, of the Iyengar yoga tradition’s revolutionary endeavor to intentionally modify classical yoga tradition’s practices and key concepts in order to include women and meet their needs, during the period 1935–2018. The prevalence of women-oriented Iyengar yoga practices is evident. These unique modifications for women are presented in the Iyengar yoga teacher-training courses and form part of the curriculum and teacher assessments. Such modified practices can be found in
all Iyengar yoga classes with female participants. Moreover, there are special instructions for women in all the Iyengar literature, and ten designated books of modified yoga practices for women. The development of these altered yoga practices is chiefly accredited to the founder of the tradition,

**Wojcik, Agnieszka**  
*The Dance Chapter Of Tulaja’s Saṅgītasārāmṛta As An Encounter Of Sanskrit And Local Tradition*  
Thanjavur under the reign of the Maratha dynasty (from XVII to XIX century) became an important centre of music and dance in South India. The Martha rulers of Thanjavur were outstanding patrons of arts, praised and solicited by the artists of their time. It was on the Maratha court where, under the patronage of the king Serfoji II (1798–1832), flourished the South Indian dance sadir. The rulers also contributed themselves to arts and science as scholars and authors. One of these contributions is Saṅgītasārāmṛta (“The Essence of Saṅgīta”), a Sanskrit treatise on music and dance authored by the king Tulaja I (1728–1736). Thought Saṅgītasārāmṛta focuses primarily on the theory of music, the text contains a chapter on dance. As a treatise on saṅgīta, Saṅgītasārāmṛta belongs to the tradition of Bharata’s Nāṭyaśāstra, and at the same time it constitutes a rare and valuable written record of local dance forms performed at the Thanjavur court. The paper will look at the way the dance chapter of Saṅgītasārāmṛta combines Sanskrit and local (desi) tradition, placing the text in the context of the tradition of patronage of the rajas of Thanjavur.

**Zia, Mariam**  
*Salman Rushdie’s Adaptations Of The Dastan Genre*  
Hailed as “the iliad and Odyssey of medieval Persia”, Hamzanama or The Adventures of Amir Hamza-Lord of the Auspicious Planetary Conjunction is an ahistorical and areligious narrative built around the life and times of Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib, the uncle of Prophet Muhammad who lived in Arabia (566–625 C.E.). The first historical references to stories venerating Hamza date back to the times of the Prophet. However, through centuries of being adapted into narrative traditions and art forms, especially through the Indo-Persian oral storytelling genre known as dastan, history and fact have been subsumed into the fantastical. This paper studies Salman Rushdie’s adaptations of stories from the Hamzanama and The Arabian Nights and discusses how this ‘plagiarism’ that lends flamboyance to his narratives remains mysteriously hidden from scholarship. Focussing specifically on Haroun and The Sea of Stories (1990) and Two Years, Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights (2015) the paper foregrounds Rushdie’s relationship with his “Eastern literary ancestors” and analyses how Rushdie adapts and appropriates characters and stories from the dastan tradition into his works of fiction complete with their intact histories and cultural realities to tell brilliantly ‘new’ stories.

**Zingel, Wolfgang-Peter**  
*Overcoming Scarcity? On The Political Economy Of Water In South Asia*  
South Asia, especially its western part, is facing an increasing scarcity, with water availability already less than 1,000 m³ per head and year. Conflicts over water are increasing on all levels, threatening not only the fragile peace between SA’s major countries, but also the coherence of these countries. Any attempt of governments to increase water supply give reason to political agitation on territorial and ethnic lines. This not only concerns quantity, quality, seasonality and the use of water’s kinetic power but also the amount of water still held by aquifers. It is a matter of sustainability of flows and stocks. It is also a matter of politics in times of increasing chauvinism across the political spectrum. Although water distribution is not a exactly a zero sum game, with increasing population numbers and wants the availability per person is going down, affecting all uses. Whereas international agreements like the Indus Water Treaty concentrate on the distribution of trans-border flows, the amount of water crossing borders and arriving downstream is becoming less at an alarming rate. A reason often overlooked is the fact that agricultural market and price policy has been counter-productive,
as farmers are allowed, if not encouraged, to grow water hungry plants at locations with high potential evapotranspiration, often with antiquated irrigation techniques. On top of it, governments have been using irrigation projects to award land to favourite groups and thus change demography and, thus, aggravating social and political tensions. The paper will analyse claims on water, government policies, the ongoing discussion in SA and choices for policy makers.

Zykov-Genke, Anton
Standartisation Or Vernacularisation? Parsi Newspapers And Journals In The 19th Century

The current scholarship believes that the contemporary vernacular language of Indian Zoroastrians, known as Parsi Gujarati, was coined within just three decades of the mid-19th century as a result of work by the “Parsi authors… [who] engrafted on the literary Gujarati of the 1850s, with which they were familiar, English words and derivatives of Gujarati words that only their inadequate knowledge of the language could devise”. My paper intends to test this statement while making use of the materials from Gujarati literary journals and newspapers published and edited by Parsis starting from 1820s, such as Rāst Goftār, Jam-e Jamshed or, most notably, Pārsī Prakāś. The proposed presentation will endeavour to understand the extent to which the development of Gujarati-language publications influenced the standardisation of the Parsi vernacular language via imposing “pure” or shudh Gujarati conventions on the Parsi speech. Simultaneously it will inquire if this process vice versa contributed to the creation of a specific Parsi language/dialect? The paper will further attempt to bring into discussion the Persian (including pre-Islamic) genres and canons employed by Gujarati-language Parsi press. It will elaborate on the subsequent impact these literary patterns and frameworks had in shaping the perception of Parsi Gujarati by the community itself as well as outside scholars.