

BASAS Annual Conference, 19-21 April 2017  
University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University

Schedule at a glance

Wednesday 19 April

12.00-14.00: Check in, registration and coffee  
 14.00-15.30: First Session  
 15.30-16.00: Coffee Break  
 16.00-17.30: Second Session  
 17.45-18.45: BASAS Annual General meeting  
 19.00-20.30: Reception sponsored by the Asia Business Centre and Exhibition: *Threads of Empire*

Thursday 20 April

09.00-10.30: First Session  
 10.30-11.00: Coffee Break  
 11.00-12.30: Second Session  
 12.30-14.30: Lunch  
 12.30-13.30: Lunchtime Lecture by Erica Wald  
 13.30-14.30: Graduate and Early Career Session  
 14.30-16.00: Third Session  
 17.15-18.45: Keynote Lecture given by Urvashi Butalia (in city centre)  
 18.45-19.30: Drinks reception, sponsored by Taylor and Francis  
 20.00-23.00: Dinner at Cosmo

Friday 21 April

09.00-10.30: First Session  
 10.30-11.00: Coffee Break  
 11.00-12.30: Second Session

Panel schedule

**Conference location:** Engineering Science Learning Centre (ESLC), University Park, University of Nottingham (number 54 on the campus map).

<b>Day 1: 19/04/2017</b>	<b>14-00-15.30</b>	<b>16.00-17.30</b>
<b>Room B01</b>	Clientelistic politics across South Asia	Political spectacle in South Asia
<b>Room C01</b>	Education and cultural capital	The Certainty of Caste
<b>Room B08</b>	The state and political power in contemporary Pakistan	South Asia's socio-ecological apocalypse
<b>Room B07</b>	Bangladesh's journey from 'basket case' to 'new emerging economy'	International relations
<b>Room B02</b>	Nuclear policy and military intervention	Decolonisation from below: forgotten moments of labour politics
<b>Room B15</b>	Caste and Community part 1	Caste and Community part 2
<b>Room A09</b>	The legacy of Empire and anti-colonial nationalism (part 1)	The legacy of Empire and anti-colonial nationalism part 2
<b>Room B13</b>	Food and nutrition in colonial India	

**17.45-18.45: BASAS General meeting (Room A48, Sir Clive Granger Building, number 16 on the map)**

**19.00-20.30: Exhibition ‘Threads of Empire’ and Reception (Lakeside Arts)**

<b>Day 2, morning: 20/04/2017</b>	<b>09.00-10.30</b>	<b>11.00-12.30</b>
<b>Room B01</b>	Globe, nation, province and court	Dividing Cities
<b>Room C01</b>	Ethnicity and representation in Indian politics	The Decline and rise of political parties in India
<b>Room B08</b>	The kaleidoscope of memory and spatial imagination in Bhopal	Ageing, death, body and care: ethnographies of South Asia’s gerontological turn
<b>Room B07</b>	Dalit literature	Feminist political subjectivities in South Asia
<b>Room B02</b>	Contentious empowerment	Eighteenth-century legal cultures
<b>Room B15</b>	Law and legal reform	Arts, performance and material culture (part 2)
<b>Room A09</b>	Arts, performance and material culture (part 1)	Migration, belonging and displacement

**12.30-14.30: Lunch (Atrium)**

<b>Day 2, afternoon: 20/04/2017</b>	<b>12.30-13.30</b>	<b>13.30-14.30</b>	<b>14.30-16.00</b>
<b>Room B01</b>		GEC Session: Early Career Researchers: What’s Next?	Everyday politics in India
<b>Room C01</b>	SAS Meeting		Migrations of India: reciprocity and kinship in motion
<b>Room B08</b>		CSA Meeting	Kingship and ritual
<b>Room B07</b>			Politics of the female body
<b>Room B02</b>			Feminist politics and the political economy of development in India
<b>Room B15</b>			Nation building
<b>Lakeside Arts Centre</b>	Lunchtime Lecture by Erica Wald - The ‘Thin White Line’: European soldiers in colonial India’		

**16.00-17.15: travel to the city centre for the keynote (see map). This should take around 30-45 minutes.**

**17.15-18.45 Keynote Public Lecture given by Urvashi Butalia (Zubaan Books). The keynote is hosted by Nottingham Trent University at the Nottingham Conference Centre, Newton Building, Lecture Theatre 2 (the entrance is off Goldsmith Street)**

**Following the keynote lecture, reception sponsored by Taylor and Francis, publisher of *South Asian Studies* and *Contemporary South Asia*, and announcement of the BASAS paper prize winner.**

**20.00: Dinner at Cosmo - 29A Milton Street, Trinity Square, Nottingham, NG1 3EN**

<b>Day 3: 20/04/2017</b>	<b>09.00-10.30</b>	<b>11.00-12.30</b>
<b>Room B01</b>	Right-wing postcolonialism	Neo-Hindutva
<b>Room C01</b>	Women in South Asia	History and politics of labour and welfare in India
<b>Room B08</b>	Social policy, land and development	Religious practice and beliefs
<b>Room B07</b>	Social spaces	Urban space

### Full Schedule

**Conference location:** Engineering Science Learning Centre (ESLC), University Park, University of Nottingham (number 54 on the campus map).

**Wednesday 19 April 2017, 12.00-13.45: registrations and coffee**

**13.45: Conference Welcome to delegates**

**Wednesday 19 April 2017, 14.00-15.30**

<b>Room B01</b>	<b>Clientelistic politics across South Asia: towards a comparative analysis</b>
Andrew Wyatt, University of Bristol	Chair
Ward Berenschot and Sarthak Bagchi, Leiden University	Comparing clientelistic politics: brokers and mediators in Bihar and Gujarat
Julian Kuttig, Ghent University	Political Machines and Student Politics in provincial Bangladesh: Violent party labour in Rajshahi city
Anwasha Dutta Chowdhury, Ghent University	Ambiguous patronage and culture of fear – vote buying through terror in Assam
Nicholas Martin, University of Zurich	Corruption and factionalism in contemporary Punjab: an ethnographic account from rural Malwa

**Comparing clientelistic politics: brokers and mediators in Bihar and Gujarat.**  
***Dr. Ward Berenschot and Sarthak Bagchi, Leiden University***

Brokers or political fixers or *naya netas* are intermediaries who help particularly poorer citizens deal with state institutions, often in exchange for money and/or electoral support. As facilitators of clientelistic exchanges between politicians and voters, brokers, play an important role in both election campaigns as well as in everyday governance. A cognizance of their importance in India's 'patronage democracy' has led to a spurt in scholarly attention in recent years. Yet so far little comparative

research has been done in mapping the functions and role of brokers in different Indian states. Does the character of political brokers and their everyday mediation differ across Indian states? And if so, what impact does it have on governance and the nature of elections?

Using extensive fieldwork in both Bihar and Gujarat, this paper addresses these questions by comparing the functioning of prevalent brokers in terms of their organizational background, their relationship with voters, their capacity to get things done and their ability to influence voting behavior.

This paper argues that the state-dependent economy of Bihar makes it mandatory for brokers to be closely tied to political parties, while in Gujarat, a broader pool of resources allows brokers to maintain some level of independence. This autonomy also allows new brokers to emerge and constitute a competitive market for brokers in Gujarat.

### **Political Machines and Student Politics in provincial Bangladesh. Violent party labour in Rajshahi city.**

*Julian Kuttig, Ghent University*

Responding to the mostly Dhaka centred research on student politics in Bangladesh, this article wants to understand the role of patronage networks, political organisation, violence and student organisations in the provincial town of Rajshahi. I want to explore how student politics of one of the largest Universities in Bangladesh are shaped by and shape the political dynamics in the provincial town of Rajshahi. Student groups in Bangladesh have played an important role in the countries crucial struggles for independence and democracy. Today student organisations are closely affiliated to political parties and serve as their most important source for political party mobilisation in a party-political regime commonly referred to as ‘partyarchy’. Student organisations play also major part in instances of political violence. In this article I focus on how campus politics is integrated into the local political machine of a small provincial town. I suggest that controlling Rajshahi University provides a steady flow of party workers for the local political machine. Thus, the University campus becomes a space for the organisation of political and violent labour as well as an important source for revenue and the distribution of benefits for local bosses.

### **Ambiguous patronage and culture of fear – vote buying through terror in Assam.**

*Anwsha Dutta Chowdhury, Ghent University*

The history of the Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD) is synonymous with its ‘supreme’ and ‘dreaded’ leader Hagrama Mohillary. Mohillary led the rebel group Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) and after it’s disbanding became the chief of BPF (Bodoland People’s Front), a political party formed largely of ex-BLT cadres. Since the inception of BTAD in 2003, and its first elections in 2005, the BPF has been in power in BTAD, with Mr. Mohillary as its uncontested head. Yet another defined characteristic of Hagrama is the extreme form of organized violence he lets loose on his constituency, which, even if elsewhere, people on an individual level might fear the wrath of their political patron, this danger does not often pertain to the group (as the group would then form a vote bank which votes away from fear). This brings me to one of the key questions that this paper seeks to delve into – ‘what makes the electorate (in this context) vote towards the locust of fear?’.

The paper explores the role, a negative emotion like ‘fear’ plays in political participation, patronage practices and everyday politics in BTAD. I argue that the relationship between Hagrama and his voters is characterized not by a linear, interactive, exchange-oriented patronage but rather a form of ‘ambiguous’ patronage relationship. If I were to resort to the theory of protection in a Tillian sense to explain this phenomenon of patronage and voting (Tilly 1982), that could also be refuted in this case since breakout of periodic ethnic violence causing death and displacement has become a norm rather than exception in BTAD.

Using narratives (consisting of indigenous categories) collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, life histories and focused group discussion among others, I strive to unpack the disconnect between the existing clientelistic and patronage discourses revolving around caste, identity, mafia-like (gunda/maai-baap) politics and organized militancy around democratic processes

and propose the need for the formulation of a counter-discourse to explain political choice and participation within democratic landscapes like the north-east India that have been referred to as the space of death and continue to be characterized by a 'culture of fear'.

**Corruption and factionalism in contemporary Punjab: an ethnographic account from rural Malwa.**

*Dr. Nicholas Martin, University of Zurich*

Over the length of its current tenure, the Punjab's the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) has sought to become more socially inclusive party, more responsive to popular demands, and even to improve service delivery and eradicate corruption. However despite these lofty goals, it has also presided over what people refer to as a rule of thugs (*goonda raj*) and has managed to alienate large sectors of the population and, in the process, fuelled the rise of the anti-corruption Aam Admi Party in the state. In this paper based on ethnographic fieldwork in rural Malwa, I attempt to shed light on the roots of this contradiction. Is it simply the case, as ordinary people allege, that its claims are empty and that its members are merely interested in looting the state? Or, alternatively, is it the case that the party merely operates in accordance with the Punjab's allegedly time honoured tradition of rival factions competing to appropriate the spoils of power? I suggest instead that much of the corruption and violence observable at village level in Punjab has its roots in the antagonistic relationship between the Congress Party and the Shiromani Akali Dal. It is this antagonism that appears to fuel the Akali Dal's highly partisan form of government; and it is partisan government that appears to fuel the corruption and the village level factional conflict that is documented in this paper.

**Room C01**

**Education and cultural capital**

TBC

Chair

Garima Jaju, University of Oxford

The Cultural Production of an 'Employable Person': A Case of Madrasa Students in West Bengal, India

Nandini Hebbar N, Delhi School of Economics

'He gave us the college' : A Social History of Engineering Colleges in Tamil Nadu

Muntasir Sattar

How an Unemployed Educated Man Becomes 'Competent'

Sugandha Nagpal, University of East Anglia

The return migrant, migrant in waiting and the non-migrant: Diverse trajectories of social mobility

**The Cultural Production of an 'Employable Person': A Case of Madrasa Students in West Bengal, India.**

*Garima Jaju, University of Oxford*

Madrasas are increasingly being reformed across South Asia with the intended aim of 'social change' through mainstreaming its marginalized Muslim population. While the transformative change, as promised in policy and popular discourse, remains distant, a vernacular cultural variant of this 'change' is intimately felt in the changing subjectivities of the students. As future holders of degrees now recognized by the government, the students imagine themselves as "employable persons". In so doing, they challenge their long drawn marginal position in the economy and society as "unemployable persons". By separating "being employable" from being employed, the students are social agents innovatively responding to the broader socio-cultural and political economy, to achieve an elevated status for themselves, despite their likely unemployment and continued socio-economic marginality. Like Paul Willis' lads, the madrasa students fail in accessing social mobility, but even so reproduce their condition in an agentive manner, through contestation and 'partial penetration'.

**'He gave us the college' : A Social History of Engineering Colleges in Tamil Nadu**  
*Nandini Hebbar N, Delhi School of Economics*

In this paper, I attempt to put together a social history tracing the growth of engineering colleges as a social phenomena in Tamil Nadu. Arguing that the neoliberalist-fuelled IT boom was only a catalyst for a staggering 8000 pc rise in the number of engineering colleges in the State from seven in the 1980s to 571 now, in this paper I try to locate the roots of private engineering college in Dravidian politics, more specifically the politics of loyalty in the MGR regime, and notions of entrepreneurship, toil and philanthropy among the middle castes in Tamil Nadu. With this, I attempt to relate the rise of the backward classes not just to formal politics and informal economics, but to education and a host of affective processes (cinematic, mnemonic, emotive) that have gone hand in hand.

**How an Unemployed Educated Man Becomes 'Competent'**  
*Dr Muntasir Sattar*

This paper explores the education strategies of unemployed male university graduates in Lahore as ways to gain government employment. I explore how efforts to study for government exams illustrate transformative processes through which young men negotiate their citizenship or relationship to the state. I show how in their pursuit of government jobs, unemployed men in the cultivation of their subjectivities effectively draw lines that constitute divisions of class, that is, positioning themselves in another, higher social space. Through an ethnographic study of individual and group study in a hostel and sessions of a small private 'academy,' I show how these processes could be understood as an attempt to distinguish one's self as what Bourdieu (1984) may refer to a 'legitimate person'. I situate this in a larger field of relations of power, as well as in a political-economic context.

**The return migrant, migrant in waiting and the non-migrant: Diverse trajectories of social mobility**  
*Sugandha Nagpal, University of East Anglia*

This study provides an ethnographic account of Ravidassia families' negotiations with social mobility, as it is mediated by subjectivities of gender and class. It attempts to offer a nuanced understanding of the ways in which the normative construct of migration as the pathway to a 'better' life informs people's practices and discourses around education, employment, social identity and status. Historically, Ravidassias are an economically and politically mobile Dalit group in Punjab and have evolved a distinct caste identity through the religious Ravidassia movement. This study examines social mobility narratives of Ravidassia families who have remained, returned or are left behind in a Punjabi village with a strong culture of migration. In utilizing the lens of culture of migration this paper has a two-fold purpose. Firstly, it attempts to engage with the ways in which mobility imaginaries are internalized and reproduced through social norms, aspirations and processes of social becoming. Secondly, it probes the ways in which differential engagements with migration influences people's discourses and practices around social mobility.

**Room B08**

Muhammad Ali Jan,  
University of Oxford

**The State and Political Power in Contemporary Pakistan**

Chair

Johann Chacko, SOAS & Azeema Cheema, National Defense University	Stating Differences: Sectarian Sunni Messaging Strategies in Pakistan
Umair Javed, LSE	Profit, protest, and patronage: Bazaar-state relations in urban Punjab
Sameen Mohsin Ali, SOAS	'Wolves of the Ante-Chamber': Bureaucratic Politicisation & the Politics of Delivery in Punjab, Pakistan
Muhammad Ali Jan, University of Oxford	'Water is Life': Canal Irrigation and Political Power in Pakistani Punjab

**Stating Differences: Sectarian Sunni Messaging Strategies in Pakistan:**  
*Johann Chacko (SOAS) & Azeema Cheema (NDU)*

Sunni activists in Pakistan have built a powerful, though illiberal, social movement through targeted efforts to marginalise Muslim minority sects. We employ frame analysis (Snow & Benford 2000; Gamson 1992) to explore the everyday articulation and amplification of values and goals in public spaces using tweets, Facebook posts, press statements and posters of the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ) and affiliates from 2010 to the present. Our findings are that their diagnostic messaging relies on nationalist as well as theological master-frames, often through Billig's (1995) 'banal nationalism.' These nationalist narratives represent opponents as threats to justice, democracy, public order, sovereignty and integrity in Pakistan; subjects of widespread concern that we refer to as 'mass anxieties.' Frame alignment between (a)the nation-state's legitimacy, (b)sharpened sectarian identity, and (c)the movement's declarations of agency, simultaneously co-opts state authority and redefines national identity setting the stage for what Malik (2011) calls 'quasi-state' behaviour.

**Profit, protest, and patronage: Bazaar-state relations in urban Punjab:**  
*Umair Javed, LSE*

This paper studies bazaar-state interaction in urban Punjab and contributes to literature on the everyday state, informal politics, and elite power in the Global South (Auyero 2001, Jeffrey 2001, Akhtar 2008, Martin 2014, 2015). Drawing on 12 months of fieldwork in Lahore's retail and wholesale marketplaces, the paper demonstrates how the co-option and privatisation of the municipal governance apparatus by elite bazaar traders is central to the reproduction of their economic and political status. In the first instance, traders mobilize using market associations (*anjuman-i-tajran*) and local elite networks to subvert efforts to regulate and document commercial activity within the retail-wholesale sector. Subsequently, the personalized ties of 'corruption' and rent-seeking forged between traders, politicians, and state functionaries are further utilized to discipline and incorporate marginalized groups (informal laborers & unregistered street vendors) within a hierarchical system of patronage politics in urban Punjab. These processes of incorporation thus lie at the root of Pakistan's persistently autocratic political order, and continue to thrive alongside greater urbanisation and partial democratisation.

**'Wolves of the Ante-Chamber': Bureaucratic Politicisation & the Politics of Delivery in Punjab, Pakistan**  
*Sameen Mohsin Ali, SOAS*

This paper argues that understanding patterns of bureaucratic appointment allows for a deeper understanding of patterns of governance. Tracing the appointment of senior and mid-tier bureaucrats through legal, extra-legal, and illegal means, I provide an overview of the incentives (shaped by the interaction of formal and informal institutions) politicians and bureaucrats face, and the methods they use, to manipulate the appointment process in Pakistani Punjab. I show that different combinations of 'incentive structures' and 'appointment methods' produce different patronage bonds, which determine whether or not desired outcomes (electoral gain, bureaucratic efficiency, targeted service and resource

delivery) are achieved. Based on interviews and ethnographic observations, I find that those in a position to influence bureaucratic appointments are better able to bend outcomes to their personal or political advantage, not when they undertake 'illegal' appointments (which introduce higher personal and political costs), but when they exploit specific loopholes in existing appointment procedures.

**‘Water is Life’: Canal Irrigation and Political Power in Pakistani Punjab:**

*Muhammad Ali Jan, University of Oxford*

Perhaps no other resource has been more central to the process of state-making in the Punjab than water (Ali, 1988; Gilmartin, 1994). Yet as various scholars have highlighted, the creation of this highly centralized canal system with its disproportionate power to engineers and experts was paternalistic in its inception and never really sought to provide direct control over irrigation to its intended beneficiaries (Merrey, 1992; Bandaragoda, 1998). Basing itself on fieldwork in two villages in the central Punjab watercourse of the Bari Doab canal, this paper sheds light on the different processes and power relations through which the seemingly innocuous task of water-sharing (*warabandi*) takes place. It stresses the importance of bonded labour mobilized through vertical caste ties in the maintenance of watercourses, the declining availability of which has had important ramifications. Furthermore, it highlights the pervasive bureaucratic corruption on the watercourses but also the kinship, caste and factional rivalries that are crucial in making sense of it. Through a study of the different relations around this crucial resource the paper seeks to provide an understanding of how terms such as ‘state’ and ‘development’ are understood at the ground in contemporary Pakistani Punjab.

**Room B07**

**Bangladesh’s journey from ‘basket case’ to ‘New Emerging Economy’**

Palash Kamruzzaman,  
University of Bath

Chair

Papreen Nahar, Durham  
University

The childless women in Bangladesh: Scapegoat of global population policy,

Haseeb Mahmud, Heilbronn  
University

A Genealogy of Salafist Terrorist Groups of Bangladesh

Samuel Cooper, University of  
Bath, and Palash  
Kamruzzaman, University of  
Bath

Socioeconomic, political and environmental impacts embodied in trade in Bangladesh – an interdisciplinary comparison between sectors and regions

**The childless women in Bangladesh: Scapegoat of global population policy**

*Dr. Papreen Nahar, Department of Anthropology, Durham University, UK*

In Bangladesh the dominant state ideology is to control fertility and the issue of infertility remains neglected as a state health priority. The issue of infertility has never been included within the reproductive health interventions in Bangladesh. Whares, childlessness is about much more than medically defined infertility. Non-voluntary childless women faces socio-cultural, emotional and economic consequences in both rural and urban Bangladesh. Based on an ethnography, this paper argues, how a macro level global health policy influences micro level local health agenda and ultimately reinforces gender vulnerability. This paper contains, the reproductive health policy in Bangladesh takes a shape by the global/Western discourse of ‘population-control’ and ‘economization of fertility’. As a result infertile people remain systematically excluded within the reproductive health policy and programs. Eventually, a childless woman’s health and wellbeing shattered due to her infertility in a context where culturally motherhood is almost mandatory.



## **A Genealogy of Salafist Terrorist Groups of Bangladesh**

*Haseeb Mahmud, Heilbronn University, Germany*

Although Islamic terrorism is not new in Bangladesh, the affiliation and connection of local terrorist groups with international terrorist groups is a relatively new phenomenon into the scene. In the last three years, several secular bloggers, political activists, religious converts, foreign nationals, non-Muslims have been brutally murdered by Islamic extremists operating in Bangladesh. Some of these murders were acknowledged in official media channels of Al-Qaeda (AQ) and ISIS. In addition to these murders, AQ (claimed to be operating under the name Ansar Bangla Team) and the local outfit of ISIS (labelled as neo-JMB by law enforcement agencies) disseminating propaganda materials through their official channels for member recruitment and support development. Both of the groups are distributing translated original documents of their parent organisation. In this paper I analyse the theological root of modern day Islamic terrorism in Bangladesh. From the historical records it is evident that the ideological root of Salafist/Wahhabist organizations currently operating in Bangladesh is dated back to British colonial period. The Salafist/Wahhabist version of Islam was introduced by Shah Waliullah Dehlawi (1703-1762). After his death, his son Shah Abdul Aziz (1746-1824) continued his fathers legacy. He was the first Muslim scholar in British India to introduce the concept of *Dar-ul-harb*. The key figure after Shah Abbul Aziz is Syed Ahmed Barailvi (1786 – 1831), who fought Shikh armed forces in Balakot. He was the first person to combine religion, military and politics under a common religious understanding. Syed Nissar Ali Titumir (1782 – 1831) from Bengal took *baiyah* from Barailvi and introduced Wahhabist version of the Islam in Bengal. Later, Haji Shariatullah (1781 – 1840) and his son Munsinuddin Ahmad Dudu Miyan (1819 – 1862) continued his theological legacy. The current day Ismalic militant group once led by Abdur Rahman (JMB) started their operations in late 1980s after taking *baiyah* from one of the descendants of Barelvi. The other militant groups use the early as well as relatively recent (e.g. Syed Qutb, Abu A'la Moududi) Wahhabi scholars/political preachers in their propaganda materials. However, even though different groups follow the same Salafi-Wahhabi doctrine, they belong to different positions in the domain. At the end, the paper will recommend a new framework of analysing extremist religious groups and their ideological stands so that the law enforcement agencies as well as analysts can better assess the future threats and design their policy prescriptions in a more efficient way.

## **Socioeconomic, political and environmental impacts embodied in trade in Bangladesh – an interdisciplinary comparison between sectors and regions.**

*Dr Samuel Cooper, Department of Chemical Engineering, University of Bath, and, Dr Palash Kamruzzaman, PoLIS, University of Bath*

The Greenhouse Gas (GHG) footprint of many high income nations - i.e. the GHG that their consumption of goods and services results in - is higher than the GHG that is actually emitted within their territory. However, the production of these goods also results in benefits such as employment and value added (including remuneration and taxes). When devising interventions that affect this trade, it is important that the tradeoffs involved are understood. This study uses novel techniques based upon multi-regional input-output analysis to provide quantitative analysis of the impacts embodied in trade flows. This is supplemented with insights from qualitative analysis of the political considerations that affect the development of trade, taking the Bangladeshi textiles industry as a case study. Trends are identified, indicating sectors in which there is likely to be scope for improvement in GHG emissions while minimising the negative effect on other benefits. These are contrasted to the areas in which activity is being encouraged and possible reasons for differences are explored.

**Room B02****Nuclear Policy and military intervention**

Katharine Adeney, University of Nottingham

Chair

Ann Mary George, University of Leicester

Indian response to China's hypersonic missile vehicle programme: Cold War in the East?

Francesca Silvestri, University of Nottingham

US nuclear policy towards India

Md. Jobair Alam, Macquarie University

Constitutional Change and Security Force Dynamics in South and Southeast Asia: An Example from Myanmar

**Indian response to China's hypersonic missile vehicle programme: Cold War in the East?**

*Ann Mary George, University of Leicester*

China and India have always tried to contain and balance each other. This competitive relationship is still visible in China foiling India's bid to NSG membership, India's statements on the South China Sea, and in their race for military modernization.

As part of this competitive relationship, India has closely watched China's tests of its hypersonic vehicle (seven times since January 2014). This missile delivery vehicle can carry both conventional and nuclear warheads. It is believed to be uninterceptable, using today's missile defence technologies.

Neither the Indian government nor military have made any statements on these tests. However, India continues its Russia-aided BrahMos missile programme, hoping to achieve hypersonic flight. India also plans to sell the BrahMos to Vietnam. My paper argues that India's response to China's hypersonic tests is not easy to interpret: it could be part of a balanced assessment of the situation; it might be through lack of assessment, or a desire to avoid statements that would be interpreted as acts of aggression.

**US nuclear policy towards India.**

*Francesca Silvestri, University of Nottingham*

This paper seeks to analyse the evolution of US foreign policy towards India when President Clinton was in power (1993-2001). The majority of the existing literature on the transformation of US-India relations tends to focus on the George W. Bush period (2001-2008) and on his decision to begin civil nuclear cooperation with India, while limited attention has been paid to his predecessor. This lack of attention to the Clinton period makes it more difficult to have a thorough understanding of the change in US foreign policy towards India and of its drivers. By using US official documents, this paper wants to fill this gap in the literature and to offer a more accurate account of the origins of the shift in US policy.

**Constitutional Change and Security Force Dynamics in South and Southeast Asia: An Example from Myanmar**

*Md Jobair Alam, Macquarie University*

Achieving civilian control of security forces through constitutional reform has been a major challenge for emerging democracies in South and Southeast Asia. Often governments seeking to establish civilian control have been faced with the threat of coups. A case study of Myanmar (Burma), where the security forces have moved towards becoming more integrated under the latest constitution of civilian-led regimes is undertaken. This paper asks: (i) how did the institutionalization of security forces under civilian-led constitutions occur; and (ii) how might civilian control be sustained over time? It is argued that security forces agree to the constitutional

changes mainly as a result of informal bargaining. Concessions by civilians result from their relative weaker unity compared to the security forces. The final provisions are shaped by the heritage of authoritarianism coupled with threat environments. In conclusion this paper suggests a model for achieving constitutionally-enshrined civilian supremacy and democratic development for an ethnically divided Myanmar.

### **Room B15**

### **Caste and Community Part 1**

Nicole Thiara, Nottingham  
Trent University

Chair

Anwasha Roy, Kings College  
London

The Bengal Famine of 1943: From Community to Communal

Aftab Alam, University of  
Delhi

Changing Contours of Indian Politics: Triumphant Hindutva and Spectre of Caste

Balmurli Natrajan, William  
Paterson University of New  
Jersey

Castes Without Casteism? The Real Beef with Caste and 'Culture'

### **The Bengal Famine of 1943: From Community to Communal.**

*Dr. Anwasha Roy, Kings College London*

The Paper discusses the Bengal Famine of 1943 and the possibilities it created for community based mobilizations. Briefly touching on the nature of dislocation in Bengal, the main focus of the paper is an analysis of the relief/rehabilitation process, to show how communal politics inserted itself deep into the relief process. This precluded the scope for the development of non-communal politics, in spite of serious attempts made in this direction by the Communists. Hence the famine became the most crucial juncture in the 1940s, which consolidated community based mobilizations, not only by organized political parties, but also by various smaller volunteer Hindu organizations. This was also the time, when these volunteer groups were able to consolidate their slogan of 'Hindu unity' amongst the Depressed Classes. This alienated the famine affected lower-caste non-Muslim peasantry in rural Bengal from its organised leadership and made the *Sangathan* work of the Mahasabha and other Hindu volunteer groups more effective. The paper uses new materials from relatively underexplored archives in West Bengal to provide a nuanced understanding of hunger, caste politics and communal mobilizations in Bengal, during the crucial years of 1943-45.

### **Changing Contours of Indian Politics: Triumphant Hindutva and Spectre of Caste**

*Dr. Aftab Alam, University of Delhi*

Of late, with the rise of Hindutva, Indian politics has thrown some challenging questions for the survival of democracy. At the same time, caste has further consolidated with new forms and expressions. Even more important is to witness and analyse the process of formation of a 'modern' political identity category. Identity politics gets transformed and finds new expressions and meanings. Rohith's involvement in Ambedkarite politics and radical Dalit imagination/consciousness posed a threat to right-wing Hindu/Hindutva politics.

Paper argues that radical Dalit politics is the direct opposite of Hindutva. The former in its Ambedkarite form stands for rational humanism, universal liberation, dignity and modernity, the latter's motivating force is communal hatred, and its organising principle is religion based, patriarchal and violent nationalism and caste superiority.

Focusing on Rohith Vemula's case, it critically examines the political struggles over the meaning of Hinduism and caste discrimination. The paper reflects upon the processes, idioms, cultural past/resource, and subaltern (lower castes) historical figures through which Dalits seek to advance their symbolic value and how it counters the dangers of Hindutva politics. Paper argues that

'modernity' in India is being experienced, contested and negotiated in its own typical ways given the complex nature of its society.

**Castes Without Casteism? The Real Beef with Caste and 'Culture'.**  
*Balmurli Natrajan, William Paterson University of New Jersey*

How does caste survive in India despite the decline of the 'traditional' caste system and the growing illegitimacy of caste in 'modern' India? Could caste become depoliticized even when resistance to violence against Dalits grows in India today? This paper argues that there is an increasing tendency in public discourse to construct caste simply as cultural difference, and caste identity as cultural or ethnic identity (what I call the culturalization of caste). This normalizes a story of castes without casteism where one may be concerned about 'casteism' even while tolerating it. Such a discourse obfuscates the difference between casteism and anti-casteism. 'Culture' is made to do the work of enabling the durability of casteism and legitimacy of castes under new forms of capitalism and multicultural democracy in India. Key moments in the culturalization of caste that will be analysed include the so-called 'beef wars', forms of discrimination in housing and jobs, and attempts by Hindu nationalists to rethink caste.

**Room A09**

**The legacy of Empire and anti-colonial nationalism part 1**

Stephen Legg, University of Nottingham

Chair

Sarbani Bandyopadhyay, St. Xavier's College

The Different Lives of Caste: Bengali Dalit Narratives on the Past and the Present,

Ria Kapoor, University of Oxford

Why not a refugee?

Patrick Clibbens, Somerville College, Oxford

Rejuvenating the Nation: Sexology, 'Traditional' Medicine and Nationalism in the Career of M.A. Ansari (1880-1936)

**The Different Lives of Caste: Bengali Dalit Narratives on the Past and the Present.**  
*Sarbani Bandyopadhyay, St Xavier's College*

Dalit narratives from most regions of India mark the past as oppressive and humiliating as against a relatively better present. As against this portrayal I submit that for Bengali Dalits, in particular, east Bengali Dalit refugees the contrary is the case. Through ethnography of Partition memories and refugee-hood I show a case of reversed temporality where Bengali Dalits imagine the past as comparatively free. For them the past was a time of relatively greater political assertion, dignity and freedom. Partition of 1947 spelt for them un-freedom and a new violence. The complex engagements of Bengali Dalits with the 'past' and the 'present', with nostalgia, aspirations and political possibilities aid in reconceptualising 'freedom', the Partition question, the 'past' and the 'present'. These re-conceptualisations become critical for illustrating not only a contemporary unfolding of the caste question in West Bengal but also in demonstrating the characteristic life caste has led in Bengal.

**Why not a refugee?**

*Ria Kapoor, University of Oxford*

This paper will examine the aftereffects of Empire in determining newly Independent India's decision to remain outside of the International Refugee Organisation (and subsequently the UNHCR), despite a commitment to and active participation in the Human Rights Council. An examination of refugee and migration policies applicable under the British Raj explains concerns as to who should be allowed within India's borders as an inheritance of empire. India's history of an anomalous position in the League of nations juxtaposed ideas of self-determination with longer traditions of empire, leading to an acceptance of the primacy of the idea of an international order based on nation states. The Nehruvian desire to alter the nature of the universalism of the World Order of the UN to move away from imperialism and power blocs was contemporary to defining the new nation state and those who belonged in it. The figure of the refugee makes evident the contradictions of the universal (in this case human rights), national, and imperial as embodied in the person of the individual.

**Rejuvenating the Nation: Sexology, 'Traditional' Medicine and Nationalism in the Career of M.A. Ansari (1880-1936)**

*Dr Patrick Clibbens, Somerville College Oxford*

This paper investigates the relationships between European sexology, Indian and Islamic ideas about healing, and Indian nationalist politics in early twentieth-century north India by tracing the medical work, travel and correspondence of Dr M.A. Ansari – the leading Indian nationalist and pan-Islamist politician. Between 1926 and 1935, Ansari operated on over 600 people, giving them vasectomies or grafting parts of the testes of humans, monkeys, rams, goats or bulls. He believed his procedures could improve potency and induce 'hyper-masculinity', expressed sexually and in capacity for work, courage and even pugnacity. In his writings, Ansari compared and combined hormonal conceptions of virility developed by western surgeons and sexologists with ideas drawn from Islamic medicine and with Ayurvedic and Unani prescriptions which used testes or other glands. For Ansari, this combination of sexual regeneration and 'moral and spiritual renaissance' was a tool for rejuvenating the nation.

**Room B13**

Taylor C. Sherman, LSE

Ashok Malhotra, Queen's University Belfast

Ashutosh Kumar, University of Leeds

Catriona Ellis, University of Edinburgh

**Food and nutrition in colonial India**

Chair

Robert McCarrison: Rats, Race and Class in the Colonial Imaginary

Food and Health of Indentured workers from India to the Sugar Colonies, 1830-1920

Feeding the schoolchild in colonial South India

**Robert McCarrison: Rats, Race and Class in the Colonial Imaginary.**

*Dr Ashok Malhotra, Queens University Belfast*

This paper argues that Robert McCarrison's reputation as the founding father of nutritional research in India was largely established through a set of experiments he performed at his laboratories in Coonoor, Tamil Nadu (1925-27), in which he fed different groups of rats, diets which supposedly corresponded to the different "races" of India and to working-class Britons. I demonstrate how McCarrison's research was underscored by speciesism, a process denigrating those belonging to a different class or race by correlating them to animals. I further argue that these experiments were crucial in attracting funding and attention from the colonial state principally because they tapped into martial race theories that were in existence in colonial India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries, as well as contemporary British anxieties about the deleterious effects of modernisation on working-class Britons.

### **Food and Health of Indentured workers from India to the Sugar Colonies, 1830-1920.**

*Dr Ashutosh Kumar, University of Leeds*

This paper investigates into the relationship between food and health of indentured emigrants by focusing on both the explicit and implicit moral functions of foods in colonial health regimes in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century India. It investigates into the medical and dietary practices for indentured labourers going to various sugar islands (c.1830-c.1920) for plantation work. It looks into the colonial intervention into the Indian indigenous healing practices and hence seeks to particularise both the provisions of medical facilities and the “ingestion of experience” on board the ships, which became contestation between the Indian healing practices and a new European medical practices. It focuses on the incompatibility between the conventional healing habits of Indian emigrants and the European healing methods on the ‘labour ships’, which was unusual in a diverse Indian society, thus creating discontent among the emigrants on the ship during the voyage to the various islands. Hence, this paper examines into the idea of ‘nutritious food’ versus ‘habitual food’ in the context of Indian indentured workers going to overseas plantations.

### **Feeding the schoolchild in colonial India**

*Catriona Ellis, University of Edinburgh*

In 1925 the Madras Municipal Corporation introduced a scheme to provide free midday meals for poor schoolchildren in the city. These meals were designed to improve both the physical health of schoolchildren and contribute to their educational attainment. The paper examines the advice of nutritional experts such as WR Aykroyd and the new scientific emphasis on diet and malnutrition in South India. It then considers the debates between elected councillors in the Corporation regarding the particular nutritional needs of the Indian schoolchild and the cost and organisation of provision. These negotiations contributed to wider debates about nutrition, age and race, and reflected changing discourses surrounding the relationship between the state, experts and parents. Although the scheme was limited in funds and in scale, I suggest that the political commitment to feeding hungry children set a significant precedent for the schemes which emerged in Tamil Nadu in the 1960s.

## **15.30-16.00 Coffee Break, Atrium**

**Wednesday 19 April 2017, 16.00-17.30**

### **Room B01**

Simona Vittorini, SOAS

Simona Vittorini, SOAS

Sruthi Muraleedharan, SOAS

Jean-Thomas Martelli, King's  
College London

### **Political Spectacle in South Asia**

Chair

Modi à la Mode. Narendra Modi's fashion and the performance of populist leadership

Performing ‘Demonetization’: symbolic field of ‘currency notes’ and ‘citizen queues’

“Sadhus in a Secular Uniform”: Indian Marxism and the Practice of Declassing in an Elite Campus

**Modi à la Mode. Narendra Modi's fashion and the performance of populist leadership.**

*Simona Vittorini, SOAS*

In light of the often complex and contested nature of populism (Moffitt and Tormey, 2013; Taggart, 2000:1), in this paper I consider whether alternative analytical approaches of this phenomenon are useful to provide satisfactory understanding of India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi's politics in contemporary India. Here I use an interpretation of populism as a political style whereby populism is something that is performed and enacted (Moffitt and Tormey, 2013). By studying one aspect of Modi's style of self-presentation – costume – I develop an examination of Modi's performance of three key aspects of contemporary populism: identification with the people, anti-elitist discourse, and the presentation of the leader as saviour. Through these analytical lenses, the paper argues that Modi's populist leadership is articulated emphatically by his use of fashion, ornamentation and his style of self-presentation more broadly.

**Performing 'Demonetization': symbolic field of 'currency notes' and 'citizen queues'**  
*Sruthi Muraleedharan (SOAS)*

This paper aims at analyzing the Modi government's decision to demonetize currency notes of 100rs and 500rs announced on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016. The announcement made by Narendra Modi on national television aimed at fighting black money and corruption. However, it also represented a new phase in symbolic politics entailed within Moditva, outside of the deeply entrenched Hindu cultural symbolic field. Moving beyond the cow or the national flag, this paper aims at untangling the 'secular' symbolic politico-economic field. The first section will discuss how the symbolic repertoire of 'Demonetization' transforms and shifts the narrative of development which has hitherto been embedded in powerful cultural framework under Modi. The second section will then deconstruct the nature of subjectivities that gets constructed around the currency of 2000 rs notes through the narrative of 'minor inconvenience' in the form of 'citizens' queues in front of banks and ATMs to access their own cash.

**"Sadhus in a Secular Uniform": Indian Marxism and the Practice of Declassing in an Elite Campus**  
*Jean-Thomas Martelli (King's College London)*

This contribution looks at the way left activism is practiced and performed in a residential elite university of India's capital, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). Basing my argument on ethnographic evidence, my claim is that discourses and behaviors of *declassing*, understood as trajectories of social "downlift," enable activists to acknowledge, embody and represent the deprived sections of the Indian population thus creating a political space for a Marxist critique of mainstream politics and society. The contribution addresses an academic lacuna in Indian political science; while scholarship on Marxism places stress on the economic sphere, it forgets to scrutinize the subjective routine and aspirations of Indian communist politicians and activists. Consequently, I focus on them; I present their demanding commitments as life changing experiences burdened with doubts, material constraints and moral rewards in a transitioning period of their life. I engage here with concrete cultural practices of Marxism rather than conceptual notions of Marxist political economy.

**Room C01**

**The certainty of Caste**

Marianne Keppens

Chair

Marianne Keppens, Ghent University

Evidence for the Caste System? The Language and Archaeology of the Indo-Aryans

Jakob De Roover, Ghent University

Cast Out of Caste: On the Excommunication of the Untouchables

Sarika Rao, Ghent University

What Do Translations Do? A Case from India

Prakash Shah, Queen Mary, University of London      Certainty of caste: The UK debate

**Evidence for the Caste System? The Language and Archaeology of the Indo-Aryans.**  
*Marianne Keppens, Ghent University, Belgium*

In introductions to the history of India, the caste system is generally presented as a result of an Aryan invasion of, or immigration into, the Subcontinent. In the standard version of this account, an Indo-Aryan speaking people with a Vedic civilization came to India, settled there and imposed their religion, language and social structure on the indigenous population. This social structure was, or evolved into, the caste system. In this paper, I examine the linguistic and archaeological evidence available to support this account. Instead of proving the account of the caste system, the latter actually functions as the explanation for the linguistic and archaeological facts. This explanation presupposes that a weaker and inferior indigenous population populated India before the coming of the Aryans. The next step is to find out where this idea comes from. This brings us to the framework through which Europeans reflected about their experience of India.

**Cast Out of Caste: On the Excommunication of the Untouchables.**  
*Jakob De Roover, Ghent University, Belgium*

If there is one property of the caste system that shows its immorality, it must be the existence of ‘the Untouchables’. These are said to be descendants of people who violated the rules of their caste and were therefore expelled from the system. Hence, modern authors long called them ‘the outcastes’ or ‘the casteless’. Empirically, however, there is little evidence for the existence of such a distinct class. The many *jatis* classified as ‘Untouchables’ are anything but casteless: they maintain a strict hierarchy and are among the most avid practitioners of ‘untouchability’. How did the idea emerge that such a class exists? My hypothesis is that it originates in the way early modern Europeans modelled their understanding of ‘Hinduism’ on the biblical account of the Jewish nation. The caste system became the equivalent of the Covenant and certain Indian practices were mapped onto the Jewish practice of *herem* or excommunication.

**What Do Translations Do? A Case from India.**  
*Sarika Rao, Ghent University, Belgium*

For more than four decades now, the ideological commitments of the academic study of non-western cultures have been under scrutiny. This article will examine translation work done in one such field of study, namely Indology, in this light. There is no dearth of studies disclosing the ideological, colonial, and religious backgrounds that shaped the academic study of India in the western world. But what are the implications for the status of the vast body of translations produced by Indology? How far do dominant ideas and beliefs about the caste system influence the translation and interpretation of Sanskrit texts? This article will try to show that when translating Sanskrit texts into English, Indologists present the ideological commitments of their discipline and domain of study as though these constitute linguistic facts.

**Certainty of caste: The UK debate.**  
*Prakash Shah, Queen Mary, University of London, UK*

For the last decade or so it has been claimed that the caste system of India has been transplanted to UK soil too and is practiced by upper caste South Asians. This claim rests on the certainty of the existence of the caste system and its basic immorality. An examination of claims about the caste system in Britain reveals multiple anomalies. In other words, anomalies continue to be generated whenever claims are made about caste discrimination practices among British South Asians. This paper examines some of these claims, made with respect the passage of the clause on caste



discrimination in the UK's Equality Act as well as the case law on caste discrimination. In so doing, it exposes the anomalous treatment of caste and the impact that has on knowledge claims made about the caste system.

<b>Room B08</b>	<b>South Asia socio-ecological apocalypse</b>
Pritam Singh, Oxford Brookes University	Chair
Nadia Singh, Oxford Brookes University	Sustainability of Green Energy Imperatives in South Asia: A Case Study of Punjab, India
Geeta Sinha, Oxford Brookes University	Mining led Industrialization and Patriarchy: the relationships and interactions of tribal women in Odisha, India
Raj Kamal Singh Mann, Oxford Brookes University	Exploring change in the net food status of South Asian countries: 1961-2013

**Sustainability of green energy imperatives in South Asia: A case study of Punjab, India.**  
*Nadia Singh, Oxford Brookes University*

South Asian countries are currently facing a profound crisis in the energy sector. They are highly import dependent and vulnerable to changes in international oil markets. These countries are also plagued with extensive energy poverty. In addition this region is a major casualty of the ill effects of climate change. These factors have led to a pressing need to implement green energy solutions in the region. A number of bioenergy projects are currently being experimented with; however, there has been little research on the sustainability of these imperatives.

This study explores the sustainability of bioenergy initiatives through an in-depth case study of Punjab, India. This region is being touted as a “green power” economy, for a leading role in the bioenergy sector in India. The key results from this research reveal that in order to be a sustainable energy alternative, bioenergy policies need to be people-centric, responsive to the needs of local communities, and cognizant of the inherent socio-economic and ecological embeddedness of these initiatives.

**Exploring change in the net food status of South Asian countries: 1961-2013.**  
*Rajkamal Singh Mann, Oxford Brookes University*

South Asia is home to 1.74 billion people which forms approximately 24% of the global population and is growing at an annual growth rate of 1.33%. Although South Asia has 43.26% of its land as arable land to feed its population, still 5 of the 8 South Asian countries namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal are on the list of Low Income Food Deficit Countries (LIFDCs) issued by the FAO. The inclusion of these countries in the LIFDCs list by FAO indicates that these countries are already deficient in food. With the growing population of these countries, the food deficiency is expected to stay. The study compares and contrasts how the net food status of the South Asian countries (cereals, pulses, oilseeds, dairy products+eggs, fruits & vegetables, meat and sugar) has evolved over the time.

**Mining led Industrialization and Patriarchy: the relationships and interactions of tribal women in India:**  
*Geeta Sinha, Oxford Brookes University*

The path to development of Indian economy is perceived through large-scale industrialization. This approach, designed to eradicate poverty and debt, paradoxically targeted the elite and urban sections of India with only residual benefits for rural and tribal population. The current industrialization

process violates environmental and institutional regulations of the government, leading to deforestation, mining and displacement by its own institutional set ups. It also contributes to strengthening patriarchal relations among the tribal communities, a phenomenon which is less noticed. This paper analyses the encounters and social structural changes through mining induced displacement where the position of women in tribal societies is threatened. Largely due to the fact that employment in mining industry is predominantly male, tribal women are not only rendered unemployed, but they are also getting marginalised within the communities and losing access to livelihoods due to changes in the land use patterns, displacement and deforestation. Mining led industrialisation is thus breaking the matrilineal control within the tribal communities. This paper demonstrates how mining led industrialization is weakening women's matrilineal control and power and strengthening the patriarchal hold within some tribal societies in India.

**Keywords:** Industrialization, Mining, Patriarchy, Women, Displacement, Tribal, Odisha

### **Room B07**

### **International relations in South Asia**

Francesca Silvestri, University of Nottingham

Chair

Filippo Boni, University of Nottingham

The domestic and international implications of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

Asad Abbas

Why CPEC will hinder Pakistan's development in the long run

Ludovica Marchi, LSE

Inspiring Security Cooperation: The EU, ARF, ASEAN And Myanmar

### **The domestic and international implications of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.**

*Filippo Boni, University of Nottingham*

After the announcement in April 2015, the CPEC has been at the centre of the political debates in Pakistan regarding the benefits that the USD 46 billion investment is going to bring to the country. Organised around semi-structured interviews conducted during fieldwork in Pakistan, this paper provides an assessment of the first two years of the CPEC by focusing on to two main aspects: first, the impact on centre-state relations and on the political economy of Pakistan; second, the implications that the CPEC has for the regional scenario, including Pakistan's ties with India, Iran and Afghanistan. The analysis presented in this paper argues that on the internal front, the benefits of the Chinese investments are yet to be seen. Doubts persist about the financing of the projects and about the feasibility of shipping oil and gas from the port of Gwadar to China's westernmost region, Xinjiang. On the international front, instead, the impact of the CPEC is more visible. In contrast to some claims that see Pakistan as internationally isolated, this paper argues that the CPEC is helping reshaping the regional scenario, which now sees a growing US-India entente on one side, and the China-Pakistan partnership on the other. In addition, the CPEC has allowed Pakistan to reconsider its ties with Russia and Iran.

### **Why CPEC will hinder Pakistan's growth in the long run.**

*Asad Abbasi*

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is expected to bring economic revolution to Pakistan. All political parties, in government or in opposition, have favoured the fifty billion dollar project; Pakistan Army has vowed to protect it. These hopes, I argue, are not ground in economic theory. No country, except South Korea, ever developed primarily on Foreign Direct Investment. In fact, the most likely scenario for Pakistan, due to its low education and weak institutions, is increase in inequality that will hamper long term sustainability of economy. In the paper, I suggest a better alternative, rise in tax rates, which does make economic sense but will not find consensus with the

political elites. CPEC, in retrospect, is another example of a program which will enable political elites to delay difficult choices for yet another generation and, thus, delay development.

**Keywords :** CPEC, Economic Theory, Development

### **Inspiring Security Cooperation: The EU, ARF, ASEAN And Myanmar :**

*Dr. Ludovica Marchi, LSE*

This paper regards the European Union's endeavours at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) to motivate ASEAN and Myanmar to connect with multilateral security cooperation. It discusses two assumptions: the EU made efforts to inspire ASEAN to undertake responsibilities; and the EU tried to encourage Myanmar to engage in security cooperation. It employs an approach underpinned by Checkel's (1999) social theory, March and Olsen's logic and observations provided by interviewees (Southeast Asia and Brussels, 2013-2016). It relates to the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis that hit Myanmar in 2008 causing thousands of deaths as the context of this case study. The paper investigates several questions: has ASEAN responded to the EU's invitation to dare shouldering responsibilities? Has Myanmar coped with the EU's encouragement to join security cooperation? And, lastly, has any lesson derived from the Myanmar's Nargis incident concerning the European Union's foreign and security policy?

#### **Room B15**

Kathryn Lum, Nottingham  
Trent University

Vanya V Bhargav, University  
of Oxford

Rudabeh Shahid, Durham  
University

Abdul Qadar, EHESS, Paris

#### **Caste and Community Part 2**

Chair

Lala Lajpat Rai: Between Conservative and Progressive'

Social Capital Formation in the Bengali-speaking Muslim  
Communities in Three Indian Border States

Islam, Hierarchy, social identity, Punjabi village

### **Lala Lajpat Rai: Between Conservative and Progressive.**

*Vanya V Bhargav, University of Oxford*

My paper entitled 'Lala Lajpat Rai: Between Conservative and Progressive' analyses the Hindu revivalism of Lajpat Rai through the under-studied category of conservatism. The paper defines Indian conservatism as entailing an attachment to the hierarchical social order and an opposition to major, disruptive change towards a more egalitarian order. It then argues that since Lajpat Rai's revivalism often deeply challenged the caste hierarchy, his attachment to Hindu tradition did not always translate into conservatism. At the same time, it argues that sometimes Lajpat Rai's cultural nationalism led him to justify caste hierarchy in way that can be considered conservative. By revealing that Lajpat Rai could express conservative views the paper challenges the dichotomy made in the historiography between the conservative orthodox Hindu and the 'radical' Hindu revivalist. Moreover, by highlighting his oscillation between conservatism and progressivism, it reveals the lack of a clear-cut distinction between the two in the early twentieth century.

### **Social Capital Formation in the Bengali-speaking Muslim Communities in Three Indian Border States.**

*Rudabeh Shahid, Durham University*

This paper explores the reasons behind the formation of social capital among the Bengali-speaking Muslim communities in Eastern and North Eastern India. While the communities speak the same language and are followers of the same religion, the study shows how the same kind of ethnic identity

is mobilized differently depending on the formation of social capital, thereby leading to the disparate political constructions in three Indian border states. I argue that the relative sizes of the Bengali-speaking Muslim population in each state, individual characteristic of people living in those states, and certain aspects of the civil society of the region, determine the type of social capital that they possess. The findings point out that the cultural differences that are seen from an ethnographer's viewpoint, mainly based on language and religion, are not the sole criteria for the surfacing of political or social divisions.

**Islam, Hierarchy, social identity, Punjabi village.**

*Abdul Qadar, EHESS Paris*

This paper aims to shed light upon some of the basic elements of social organization of a Punjabi village. Islam has not been scrutinized under theological shades, but my reflections mainly stem from cultural and social dimensions of everyday life in a Punjabi village. The paper questions the easily agreed separation of caste in Hindu religious context and biradry or qaum in Islamic socio-religious context. This paper juxtaposes both the equality and hierarchy in a mutual interplay when hierarchy is legitimized under the religious and spiritual guises. The paper also establishes a link between the village of study as unit of data with general pattern of some biradries (fraternity) as spiritually elevated from rest of the biradries as a case in point. So, the paper makes an important effort to highlight largely ill-conceived understanding of equality in Islam and the socio-cultural hierarchy it results in.

**Room A09**

**The legacy of empire and anti-colonial nationalism Part 2**

Stephen Legg, University of Nottingham

Chair

Sudipa Topdar, Illinois State University

Native Children and the Politics of Imperial Schoolbooks in Late Colonial India

Maximilian Drephal, The University of Sheffield

Financing the diplomacy of the Raj: fiscal colonialism, subsidies and the Indian Empire

Ibtisam Ahmed, University of Nottingham

Language in the British Raj – The Pursuit and Legacy of a Linguistic Utopia

**Native Children and the Politics of Imperial Schoolbooks in Late Colonial India.**

*Sudipa Topdar, Illinois State University*

This paper discusses the mandatory schoolbooks that Indian children read in classrooms as part of the British colonial agenda to create future imperial citizens. Colonial authorities created this material and then mandated its use specifically to shape how native children thought of India as their homeland and the British Empire's role in it. These schoolbook narratives provide evidence about how colonial authorities tried to shape young minds and forestall burgeoning Indian nationalism in the next generation. The paper explores a range of school textbooks written by British administrators for Indian children from the primary to Matriculation (high school) level that reveals pedagogical processes that aimed at building colonial subjecthood, morality, and obedience to the British Crown. It also discusses the emergence of a parallel intellectual economy of subversive schoolbooks, written by Indian nationalists, which presented a historical conception of India thereby forcefully challenging the official pedagogical narrative.

**Financing the diplomacy of the Raj: fiscal colonialism, subsidies and the Indian Empire.**  
*Maximilian Drephal, University of Sheffield*

The paper studies the financial structures underlying and maintaining the diplomatic relations of the colonial Government of India. The financial framework of the colonial state, which funded the bureaucratic structures of colonial governance in India, also funded the Government of India's international – or in contemporary language: external – relations. In Afghanistan, the British Legation in Kabul was funded through Indian accounts from 1922. In addition to funding structures of its international representation, the Government of India acquired a position of imperial overrule by means of annual 'subsidies'. Prior to 1919, Afghan rulers received annual payments in exchange for Afghanistan's international sovereignty. The paper looks at comparative examples, such as Nepal, and considers the payment of colonial stipends in the wider framework of India's colonial economy, which funded and constituted a central element in the apparatus of colonial power.

**Language in the British Raj – The Pursuit and Legacy of a Linguistic Utopia.**  
*Ibtisam Ahmed, University of Nottingham*

Language is a powerful tool in political ideologies. As David Sisk considers in *Transformations of Language in Modern Dystopias*, language can potentially be used to shape the perceptions and thoughts of its users. Therefore, the control of linguistics in political history is an important area of research.

The British Raj included a strong ideological justification of civilising the local population in attempting to create a utopian good life. As part of this thrust towards achieving perfectibility, imperial officials shaped the use of language in order to fit in with a British model of acceptability. Using critical utopian theory as my basis, I analyse how language was influenced by imperial policy and consider the ongoing impact this has left behind in the following areas: the prominence of English, especially in education; the preference for written languages and the loss of oral traditions; and the weakening of indigenous and "non-traditional" linguistics.

**Room B02**

**Decolonisation from Below: Forgotten moments of labour politics on the eve of independence**

Diego Maiorano, University of Nottingham Chair

Perna Agarwal, King's College London

'Decolonisation from the Docks: Calcutta Port strike of 1947 and the resilience of labour solidarities

Naina Manjrekar, SOAS

Decolonisation from the Seas: The 1946 naval mutiny that shook the Raj

Zaen Alkazi, SOAS

Decolonisation from the Mills: The many meanings of labour militancy in 1946

**Decolonisation from the Docks: Calcutta Port strike of 1947 and the resilience of labour solidarities.**

*Perna Agarwal, Kings College London*

The post-war situation at the Calcutta Port was part of a national picture of seething anti-colonial popular and also labour discontent. In August 1946, the city was engulfed in one of the deadliest episodes of communal riots in its history. Yet, that atmosphere of communal strife failed to be an obstacle for tens of thousands of Hindu and Muslim workers at the Port as they launched their two and a half month long strike in February 1947.

The strike was not a result of some sort of mass schizophrenia. It also cannot be understood within the narrow framework of an industrial conflict. Rather, through a detailed reconstruction of the strike as an event, this paper will explore it as one of those rarely visible moments that provide us with evidence of the new hopes, different aspirations and solid determination with which the labouring population sought to define de-colonisation.

**Decolonisation from the Seas: The 1946 naval mutiny that shook the Raj.**

*Naina Manjrekar, SOAS*

In February 1946, a mutiny broke out in the Royal Indian Navy which Clement Attlee, then British Prime Minister, reportedly claimed decided the course of decolonisation in India. Twenty thousand sailors refused to obey the admiralty, setting up a strike committee as an alternate centre of command. They demanded the investigation of a racist commanding officer, the release of all political prisoners, and the end of British assistance to Dutch repression of the Indonesian anticolonial movement. They also called on the populace to demonstrate their support, spurring a wave of industrial unrest and “disobedience” in the armed forces and making the subcontinent “ungovernable”. Yet in studies of these years, the focus has been largely on the “transfer of power” through cabinet missions. This paper argues that it was the events that unfolded outside the viceregal anterooms, in the streets of Bombay, which played a decisive role in the final days.

**Decolonisation from the Mills: The many meanings of labour militancy in 1946.**

*Zaen Alkazi, SOAS*

Colonial officials, labour leaders and labour historians construct strikes as moments of class consciousness and working class solidarity. They see these moments as necessarily having a radical politics, often disconnected from larger processes taking place on city and nation-wide levels. This paper seeks to deconstruct three moments of strike action on the eve of Indian independence. I argue that a close reading of these moments suggests that the construction of the strike as a moment of class unity needs to be historicised. These moments can have caste or religious politics that arise out of, and generate tensions between, workers. Such a reading implies that the strike can be written into histories not currently seen as belonging to the domain of “labour politics” and unpacked as sites allowing for the development of multiple postcolonial possibilities.

**Wednesday 19 April 2017, 17.45-18.45**

**BASAS General meeting (Room A48, Sir Clive Cranger Building, number 16 on the map)**

**Wednesday 19 April 2017, 19.00-20.30**

**Exhibition, Lakeside Arts Centre: Threads of Empire: Rule and Resistance in Colonial India c. 1740-1840.**

**Reception sponsored by the Asia Business Centre**

**Thursday 20 April 2017, 09.00-10.30**

**Room B01**

**Globe, Nation, Province, Court**

Stephen Legg, University of Nottingham

Chair

Yasmin Khan, University of Oxford

Global Displacement in the 1940s & the Place of Partition

Jesús F. Cháirez –Garza, University of Leeds	Stone Instead of bread: Untouchability, Ambedkar and the Promise of Pakistan
Oliver Godsmark, University of Sheffield	Partition, Linguistic Reorganisation and Provincialisation
Hannah Fitzpatrick, University of Aberdeen	Terms of Reference: The Space of the Courtroom in the Lahore Boundary Commission Hearings, July 1947

### **Global Displacement in the 1940s & the Place of Partition**

*Yasmin Khan (University of Oxford)*

The 1940s was the decade with the most recorded human displacement in world history. Partition had many unique features but it was also part of a global phenomenon in the 1940s, when many millions of people were displaced by war and state creation in Europe, China and the Middle East. Ideas about the ‘exchange of population’ marked the thinking of many statesmen as a ‘solution’ to constitutional and social issues as new nationalisms emerged at the end of empire. This paper is a tentative attempt to consider Partition from a different spatial dimension by thinking about its place in global history, and situating the South Asian refugee within the wider histories of refugee narratives.

### **Stone Instead of bread: Untouchability, Ambedkar and the Promise of Pakistan**

*Jesús F. Cháirez –Garza (University of Leeds)*

This paper examines the political views of Ambedkar about Partition and Pakistan. By examining his writings before and after 1947, I argue that Ambedkar saw in Partition one of the greatest political blows against Dalits in the history of India. First, Ambedkar believed that the division and demarcation of a Hindu and a Muslim territory left Dalits without a historical and political space to call their own. Second, Ambedkar saw in Partition the loss of two great political allies, the Muslim League and the colonial government. Ambedkar feared that without the colonial protection and the political support of Muslims, the faith of Dalits in India would suffer as they would live in a perpetual ‘Hindu Raj’ where the power of the Hindu majority would be fixed and political alliances would be useless. By focusing on Ambedkar and the Dalit question, this paper aims to shed light on unexplored fields by traditional partition studies.

### **Partition, Linguistic Reorganisation and Provincialisation**

*Oliver Godsmark (University of Sheffield)*

This paper re-examines partition as just one (albeit paradigmatic) example of demands for regional autonomy and provincialisation in South Asia, by addressing its manifest parallels and connections with coterminous calls for the linguistic reorganisation of provincial administrative boundaries in western India. It demonstrates that both Pakistan and linguistic reorganisation were demarcated on the basis of a specific ‘community’ constituting a majority of the population in a particular patch of sub-national territory. In turn, this informed common notions of provincial democratic majoritarianism, through which it was envisaged provincial governments would provide jobs, funds and services in a way that served the interests of the province’s majority community. By extending the ‘coalface’ across both time and space in this way, the paper provides both a more all-encompassing perspective on the various ‘vocabularies of freedom’ that were in contemporary circulation, whilst simultaneously avoiding a straightforward teleological approach that suggests partition’s inevitability.

### **Terms of Reference: The Space of the Courtroom in the Lahore Boundary Commission Hearings, July 1947**

*Hannah Fitzpatrick (University of Aberdeen)*

This paper will examine in detail the space of the Lahore courtroom during the ten days of hearings that took place between 21-31 July 1947, teasing out the ways in which ‘geography’ was put to work

in order to explore the contradictions and limits of geographical knowledge in the context of partition. The paper locates the geographical techniques and data, mobilised by the competing parties, within the important, and often neglected, space of the courtroom. The courtroom functioned as a 'venue', in David Livingstone's terms, for the production of and debate around the legal, political and geographical knowledges that framed the partition process, and therefore provides a new avenue for a critical spatial analysis of the partition of British India.

### **Room C01**

### **Ethnicity and Representation in Indian Politics**

Sarthak Bagchi, University of Leiden

Chair

Katharine Adeney, University of Nottingham

India: The world's largest (ethnic) democracy?

Andrew Wyatt, University of Bristol) & C. Manikandan, Pondicherry University

Caste and Political Recruitment in India

Rochana Bajpai, SOAS and Adnan Farooqui, Jamia Millia Islamia

Paradoxes of Muslim representation: Asaduddin Owaisi and the changing politics of the AIMIM

### **India: The world's largest (ethnic) democracy?**

*Katharine Adeney (Nottingham)*

India is often cited as being the world's largest democracy. It scores well on international democracy ranking measures such as Freedom House or Polity IV. Turnout rates have risen and much of the electorate has become savvier in using the political system to achieve benefits for their group. This political empowerment has resulted in the proliferation of parties at the centre and the state level. However, these positive developments should not conceal the fact that India's democracy has not had an unblemished record, especially in its 'peripheral' regions. In addition, since the election of Narendra Modi, many academics and activists have raised concerns about Hindu Majoritarianism. But how do we understand this phenomenon within the wider literature on the quality of democracy? One way of doing so would be to see whether India fits the concept of an ethnic democracy, defined by Sammy Smooha as a country which combines 'viable democratic institutions with institutionalized ethnic dominance'. To do so requires the development of a triangulated methodology – including different features of a political and social system. This paper first sets out the concept of an 'ethnic democracy' and then proceeds to discuss the methodology of testing it, before making a preliminary sketch of its application to the Indian case.

### **Caste and Political Recruitment in India**

*Andrew Wyatt (University of Bristol) & C. Manikandan (Pondicherry University)*

Political recruitment is an important function carried about by political parties. While most parties have formal rules for deciding to legislative nominations it is well known that 'informal' considerations also influence decisions. One important consideration for many political parties in India is the caste background of candidates. This paper investigates how caste is factored into the process of political recruitment of candidates for assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. We conclude that caste-based recruitment is influenced by the existence of kinship networks, the electoral system, the party system and the efforts made by caste groups to mobilise between elections.



## **Paradoxes of Muslim representation: Asaduddin Owaisi and the changing politics of the AIMIM.**

*Rochana Bajpai (SOAS) and Adnan Farooqui (Jamia Millia Islamia)*

This paper focuses on the emergence of the All India Majlis-e-Muttahadil Muslimeen (MIM) as a claimant for Muslim votes across India. The expansion of the MIM's influence, a party that describes itself as the protector of minority interests, especially those of Muslims, has occurred in the same period as the ascendancy of the Hindu nationalist BJP at the national level in India. This presents an apparent paradox: how has a largely Muslim party gained ground at the same time as a decline in Muslim representation in the Lok Sabha and the rise to power of the anti-Muslim BJP? To some extent, this is the product of polarization between religious communities that has accompanied the rise of the BJP and increasing fears and insecurity among Muslims. However, other factors are at play too, including a shift in the MIM's political strategy under the leadership of Asad Owaisi. This paper attempts to assess the nature of this shift in ideological and electoral terms, underscoring the role played by Asadudin Owaisi, the AIMIM supremo.

### **Room B08**

### **The kaleidoscope of memory and spatial imagination in Bhopal**

Simon Leese, SOAS

Chair

Simon Leese, SOAS

Bhopal in geographies of Arabic knowledge production in the 19th century

David Landau, SOAS

Changing City and Unstable Terrain in Manzoor Ahtesham's Bhopal

Pawas Bisht, Keele University

Re-imagining Bhopal: Art & Activism in the Shadow of Disaster

### **Bhopal in geographies of Arabic knowledge production in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.**

*Simon Leese, SOAS*

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the intellectual and printing networks of Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān connected Bhopal to other spaces in India and abroad. In his encyclopaedia of Arabic knowledge *Abjad al-ʿulūm*, printed in Bhopal in 1878, he incorporated these spaces into his epistemological map, dedicating sections to scholars from India, Yemen, and the Hijaz. His connections were also a major facet of Bhopal's diplomatic image in the wider Islamic world. In a work on lexicography printed in Constantinople in 1882, the famous journalist and litterateur Aḥmad Fāris Shidyāq praised Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān and his Arabic writings, before going on to praise Shāhjahān Begum herself as a generous patron in the "East and West". This paper will examine these real connections between Bhopal and other spaces, and how understandings and experiences of Arabic cosmopolitanism changed in an era of new imperialisms and reconfigured patterns of cultural circulation.

### **Changing City and Unstable Terrain in Manzoor Ahtesham's Bhopal.**

*David Landau, SOAS*

The writing of Manzoor Ahtesham (b 1948-), a Bhopali native who writes about the city, offers a unique vantage point of the upheavals experienced in Bhopal since independence. Ahtesham traces the changing fortunes of Muslims as they become a minority in the city and different trajectories of relationships between Muslims and Hindus as the communal discourse is influenced by the rise of Hindutva. Ahtesham's novels bring together different layers of Bhopal's recent history linking feudal, independence struggle and disillusionment narratives together. The changing contours of Bhopal's streets and neighbourhoods figure prominently and serve as an external reminder of the changing social hierarchies. This paper will delineate the way in which social tensions seep into friendships and family relations leaving no space untouched by political changes.

**Re-imagining Bhopal: Art & Activism in the Shadow of Disaster.**  
*Dr Pawas Bisht, Keele University*

The longevity of the movement for justice in Bhopal, its continuing vitality, and ability to wage a multi-scalar struggle derive significantly from collaborations between activists and artists. This paper examines the dynamics of the relationship between activism and art by focusing on a key moment of transformation in the movement's discourse and identity: the reframing of Bhopal as an *ongoing global environmental* disaster in the late 1990s.

The account traces the mechanics of key visual & literary representations involved in this reframing, in particular, their powerful mobilisation of 'toxic discourse', as well as the challenges encountered at the local level linked to survivors' alienation from such representations & production practices. The paper identifies a set of more recent art-activism initiatives addressing these tensions by employing new, more harmonious strategies of connecting scales & audiences. Overall, the paper examines these engagements with Bhopal as attempts at evolving ethically sound ways of representing disaster in the post-colonial context.

**Room B07**

**Dalit Literature**

Nicole Thiara, Nottingham  
Trent University

Chair

Daniel Bilton, Nottingham  
Trent University

Tamil Dalit Literature and the Representation of Political History

Gopika Jadeja, Kings College  
London

Literature, Participation and Citizenship: the Dalit Literary Sphere in Gujarat

Lissa Lincoln, American  
University of Paris

"Poetry": Writing Resistance

K. Deepanjan, JNU

Culture and Identity Formation: Dalit Intellectual Traditions in Contemporary South India

**Tamil Dalit Literature and the Representation of Political History.**

*Daniel Bilton, Nottingham Trent University*

This paper will explore the relationship between Dalit literature and the representation of political history. By focusing on Tamil Dalit literature, this paper will draw connections between the political activism of the Dalit movement in Tamil Nadu during the 1990's and the emergence of Dalit literature in the state. As Dalit literature is one based on political activism, one would assume that the political activity surrounding the writer would have some visible presence within the final text. This paper will suggest that political history is not represented in the literature and wishes to uncover why this is not the case. Through the analysis of key Tamil texts such as Bama's *Sangati* and Cho. Dharman's *Koogai*, this paper will suggest reasons such as trauma and the focusing on the creation of 'good' literature as possible reasons for this lack of political representation.

**Literature, Participation and Citizenship: the Dalit Literary Sphere in Gujarat.**

*Gopika Jadeja, Kings College London*

Around the world today governments and regimes are creating what Gyan Pandey calls a 'monolingual order', which does not recognise any other idea of nation and sovereignty except the one it ascribes to. This alienates and denies participation in the nation to marginalised communities excluding them from cultural citizenship leading to contestations of identity within the nation. I examine this through a study of the literary sphere in the western Indian state of Gujarat. I suggest that

interactions in the literary sphere reveal, and become a site for, contestations of identity and of idea of the nation.

I present dalit literature in Gujarat as a challenge to the creation of monolithic and exclusive Gujarati *asmita* (identity and pride) suggesting a plurality of identities and what it means to be 'Gujarati'. I achieve this by juxtaposing the dalit literary sphere against the Gujarati literary sphere (the mainstream and established). Through the interactions between the two distinct literary spheres over issues like the call by Dalit writers to strike Umashankar Joshi's play 'Dhed na Dhed Bhangi' (Bhangi: untouchable amongst untouchables) off the university syllabus, I examine the exclusion of dalits from the public sphere and thus from cultural citizenship.

I draw from dalit periodicals and archival material from the dalit movements – literary and political – in Gujarat. Through my study of the dalit literary sphere in Gujarat I examine the role it plays in the assertion of a plurality of identities challenging the monolingual order of the region and by extension the nation, in particular the nation of 'Hindutva'.

### **“Poetry”: Writing Resistance**

*Lissa Lincoln, American University of Paris*

Literature, in all its genres, has always played a powerful role in the representation (and denunciation) of systematized oppression and injustice. Black American women writers have a long history of negotiating/ interrogating race, gender, sexuality, and class through life-stories, poetry and autobiography. Indeed, these literary voices were essential in the struggles of various women-of-colour feminists to dislodge white, middle-class women from the center of feminist thought. Dalit feminist writing has often been compared to autobiographical, or testimonio genres; these, too, narratives in which the political is merged with the personal, the aesthetic, and the affective, highlighting the struggle for life and dignity of those subject to the interlocking systems of oppression which are caste and gender. Through an examination and comparison of these 'creative acts of resistance', as represented by writers such as Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Audre Lorde on the one hand, and Bama, Baby Kamble and Urmila Pawar, on the other, and drawing from the theoretical writings of Sharmila Rege, John Beverly and Etienne Balibar, this paper will explore how Dalit feminist writing might be considered a tool of revolt and resistance more effective in destabilizing oppressive norms, and conveying social change, than other, more theoretical discourses or directly political forms.

### **Culture and Identity Formation: Dalit Intellectual Traditions in Contemporary South India.**

*K. Deepanjan, JNU*

The intellectual awakening in colonial South Asia led to the emergence of diverse ideologies which was firmly rooted in cultural struggles. Most of the indigenous intellectual traditions were heterogeneous and emerged as responses to the process of acculturation that was happening with the progression of colonial hegemonisation. One such was the Dalit movement, whose cultural-ideological origins can be traced to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century; it emerged as an important political force in south India during the 1920's and its impact is intensely felt in the post-colonial political discourse. This paper attempts to draw an intellectual history of the Dalit movement focusing on the Tamil speaking region of south India. Despite having a long and rich history of the movement TamilNadu has hardly found space in academic researches. This paper would trace the cultural interventions of the early Dalit intellectuals, the evolution of the movement, the later Dalit associations and its ideologues and how these ideas continue to impact the contemporary political sphere of TamilNadu.

**Room B02****Contentious empowerment? Women, neoliberal development and politics in South Asia**

Naomi Hossain, IDS,  
University of Sussex

Chair

Jayanthi Lingham, SOAS

Deconstructing empowerment in a “victor’s peace”: women’s working lives in Jaffna district, Sri Lanka

Tahrat N. Shahid, University  
of Oxford

When the Politics of Religion and Development Clash: The National Women Development Policy in Bangladesh

Sohela Nazneen, IDS,  
University of Sussex

Beyond Political Inclusion: Negotiating Gender Equity in Bangladesh

Deepta Chopra, IDS,  
University of Sussex

Paid work, Unpaid Care Work and Women’s Empowerment: the case of India and Nepal

**Deconstructing empowerment in a “victor’s peace”: women’s working lives in Jaffna district, Sri Lanka.**

*Jayanthi Lingham, SOAS*

This paper examines shifting gender relations and discourses of empowerment in the post-war transition in Jaffna district, in Sri Lanka’s Northern Province. It presents empirical data from 2014-15 fieldwork with Tamil women, part of the community of “losers”. It argues that post-war livelihoods interventions are expanding a gendered “coping” economy: they offer opportunities for economic survival but place the onus of challenging oppression on the most disempowered; meanwhile, issues of marginalisation are reframed, not as political or collective but as private problems with individual solutions. Simultaneously, in the defeated nation, in an environment of unresolved loss, women are experiencing a hardening of violent gender norms. These realities contrast with state discourses of peace and reconciliation and capitalist claims of empowerment. The paper explores tensions between the economic need to belong, the political desire to resist and the social contradictions of a gender backlash in a supposed transition towards peace.

**When the Politics of Religion and Development Clash.**

*The National Women Development Policy in Bangladesh Tahrat N. Shahid, University of Oxford*

Inheritance rights are among the most contentious areas of family law in countries where family matters for Muslims are guided by Islamic principles. The National Women Development Policy (NWDP) of Bangladesh includes a clause said to be promoting equal inheritance rights between men and women, and religious right wing opposition to this clause has long stifled the policy from implementation. And yet the clause does not exist in the policy, and the policy itself has no binding legal authority. This study analyses why this imaginary clause has posed such obstacles relative to many of the NWDP’s real directives on women’s economic empowerment. Using systematic process analysis and data from government documents, expert interviews, and newspaper archives, I compare the political discourse around protecting women’s rights in the law versus economic development policies to reveal why the latter has been so much more successful in enhancing women’s empowerment than the former.

**Beyond Political Inclusion: Negotiating Gender Equity in Bangladesh**

*Sohela Nazneen, University of Sussex*

What drives gender transformative policy changes in Bangladesh? How do women rights groups mobilize to promote their rights in informalized, clientelist context where they have very little to offer to the ruling elites? Bangladesh presents an interesting paradox when it comes to women’s political empowerment. Since 1991, female prime ministers have governed Bangladesh (albeit a brief

interregnum in 2006-08) and women's presence in politics has increased at the national and local levels because of gender quotas. But securing the highest political office and increased numerical presence has not led to gender equity concerns taking a center stage in mainstream politics. Yet, Bangladesh has made significant gains in social and human development indicators and enacted gender transformative policies. This paper takes the adoption of a law on domestic violence in Bangladesh to explore the role played by the anti domestic violence policy coalition and their negotiations with the ruling coalition. It explores how women's rights group navigate clientelist politics and use party ideologies on gender to frame their demands; how women's informal networks are used to influence political and policy actors; what role international feminist networks play in shaping the discursive field; and the compromises that these strategies entail.

**Paid work, Unpaid Care Work and Women's Empowerment: the case of India and Nepal**  
*Deepta Chopra, University of Sussex.*

Employment and work surveys in India and Nepal including the CENSUS and the NSSO over the years have shown a high concentration of women workers in certain occupations which are characterized as flexible, requiring low skill and are low paid both in urban and rural areas. The research on 'Balancing unpaid care work and paid work' in India and Nepal attempts to examine the multiple reasons that could explain this concentration of women in certain occupations, and how women in low income families organise their paid work and their unpaid care work. The research is based on fieldwork with women and their families in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in India, and Jumla and Surkhet districts in Nepal. This paper presents some of the findings of this research, with a view to assess the validity of the proposition of paid work leading to economic empowerment for women. In doing so, this paper provides a glimpse into the patterns of 'work' in low income families in India and Nepal, and juxtaposes the much acclaimed goal of women's economic empowerment through entry into the labor market, with their and their families' lived realities and needs.

**Room B15**

TBC

Morten Koch Andersen,  
 Danish Institute Against  
 Torture

Mansoor Ahmed, EHESS-  
 Paris.

Sabera Kara, University of  
 Warwick

Tahrat N. Shahid, University  
 of Oxford

**Law and Legal Reform**

Chair

For the betterment of the Country: Stickiness and Slipperiness of  
 Law

Tracing the legacy of Council of Islamic Ideology in initial years  
 of Pakistan 1947-1973

Muslim Women and Legal Reform: Personal Laws and Women's  
 Rights in Twentieth Century South Asia

When the Politics of Religion and Development Clash: The  
 National Women Development Policy in Bangladesh

**For the betterment of the Country: Stickiness and Slipperiness of Law.**

*Morten Koch Andersen, Danish Institute Against Torture*

Law is a short term for a complex aggregation of principles, rules and practices backed by political power and legitimacy. Exploring how rule of law unfolds in Bangladesh, I argue that law in practice is the dual realization of an oppressive exercise that by articulation attaches itself to the individual, either as *stickiness* or *slipperiness of law*.

Stickiness of law is the articulation of accusations by authorities in the encounter with law enforcement. Slipperiness relates to the ways in which legal procedures can be circumvented, ignored and bypassed to escape the same articulation.

It is the everyday use, transforming law from principle to practice, that makes, defines and delimits stickiness and slipperiness. Though law in practice is an instrument of subjugation, it, in principle, does not dismiss the potential for social change.

### **Tracing the legacy of Council of Islamic Ideology in initial years of Pakistan 1947-1973**

*Mansoor Ahmed, EHESS, Paris*

Council of Islamic Ideology is a permanent constitutional institution in Pakistan to advise the Parliament and the President on the laws that are inconsistent with Quran and Sunnah and to percolate them in the filter of Islam. Since its creation in 1973 it has emerged as very intriguing institution which served as refuge for both the government in the time of crises to obscure the unresolved issues and simultaneously as platform for religious pressure group to introduce more 'Islamic legislations', resultantly it has been playing a significant role in the Islamisation of laws. This study will attempt to go further deep in its origins by analyzing its predecessor institutions: Commission setup by the 1956 Constitution and Advisory Council established by the 1962 Constitution, to understand its legacy. By analyzing the debates of first Constituent Assembly, the relevant sections of the 1956, 1962 Constitution and the Reports of the respective institutions, I will attempt to trace the origins of the legacy of the Council in these institutions. My study will reveal that it was the consistent demand of Ulema in the first Constituent Assembly (1947-1954) to establish an institution with 'veto power' as safeguard to forbid future legislatures from promulgating any laws that could be repugnant law to Islam and to review the inherited laws that culminated in the establishment of Commission (1956) and Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology (1962). This study will argue that although these institutions were established as compromise between the Ulema and the government as advisory bodies but still they played cognitive role in the future legislation of the country.

### **Muslim Women and Legal Reform: Personal Laws and Women's Rights in Twentieth Century South Asia.**

*Sabera Kara, University of Warwick*

Indian Muslim reformers of the early twentieth century campaigned for the legislative enactment of Muslim personal laws based on the justification that they granted greater rights to Muslim women in India. Yet during the mid-twentieth century the independent Indian state enacted laws that further advanced Hindu women's rights. In such a climate of legal reform and gender justice why have Muslim personal laws remained unchanged since the 1930s? The reform of Muslim personal laws to advance Muslim women's rights, and the enactment of a uniform civil code, have been much debated throughout the twentieth century, and continues to be an issue in contemporary India. Through an exploration of newspaper sources, government records and legal cases, this paper argues that Muslim personal laws have remained unreformed because their enactment was initially sought to consolidate a uniform minority identity, and its reform implies the raising of women's rights above minority rights.

### **When the Politics of Religion and Development Clash: The National Women Development Policy in Bangladesh**

*Tahrat N. Shahid, University of Oxford*

Inheritance rights are among the most contentious areas of family law in countries where family matters for Muslims are guided by Islamic principles. The National Women Development Policy (NWDP) of Bangladesh includes a clause said to be promoting equal inheritance rights between men and women, and religious right wing opposition to this clause has long stifled the policy from implementation. And yet the clause does not exist in the policy, and the policy itself has no binding legal authority. This study analyses why this imaginary clause has posed such obstacles relative to many of the NWDP's real directives on women's economic empowerment. Using systematic process analysis and data from government documents, expert interviews, and newspaper archives, I compare

the political discourse around protecting women's rights in the law versus economic development policies to reveal why the latter has been so much more successful in enhancing women's empowerment than the former.

<b>Room A09</b>	<b>Arts, performance and material culture (part 1)</b>
Humaira Saeed, Nottingham Trent University	Chair
Daniela De Simone, The British Museum	Living on the Edge: The Nilgiri Mountains Culture of South India
Nikita Kaul, Delhi School of Economics	Craft and its Discourse: Walnut Carving in Kashmir
Sonika Jain	Exploring the Issues of Caregiving of an Elderly Parent by an Adult Working Daughter through a Discussion of Contemporary Hindi Film Piku (2015)
Amir Parpia,	Gināns and their effect on the Khojā beliefs, identity and worldview – a historical and contemporary analysis

**Living on the Edge: The Nilgiri Mountains Culture of South India.**  
*Daniela De Simone, The British Museum*

The unique material culture of the Nilgiri Mountains of South India, made up of grave goods excavated at burial sites located on or near hilltops, reveals interactions and trade exchanges within the Indian subcontinent and across the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean and Southeast Asia. The complex material assemblage raises questions about how the pre-modern inhabitants of the Nilgiri Mountains perceived themselves in relation to their (supposed) remoteness, and how remoteness defined their interactions with the wider world. This paper will discuss the first results of an on-going research on the British Museum's collection of Nilgiri artefacts that includes male and female as well as animal terracotta figurines mounted on lids that cover multi-storied, globular vessels used as urns; exquisite high-tin bronze bowls that are often incised with lotus flowers and scrolls; gold jewellery attesting to the use of advanced goldsmithing techniques, such as repoussé and filigree; and uncommonly designed iron tools and weapons.

**Craft and its Discourse: Walnut Carving in Kashmir.**  
*Nikita Kaul, Delhi School of Economics*

This paper is based on my ethnography of walnut carving work in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir. The craft of walnut carving is produced physically in a karkhana (workshop) through labour that artisans put in. It is here that the craft takes a tangible form. But, it is also produced and circulated through a discourse that renders and promulgates craft as heritage. This discourse is reiterated in different spaces where historicity and materiality of craft is used to claim its authenticity along with metaphors of hands, traditional tools for production and poverty of artisans. It is circulated through a consciousness evoking moralistic language that plays varied roles depending on the institution that it emanates from. The state institution (specifically Jammu and Kashmir Directorate of Handicraft) uses this discourse in their speeches during events to artisanal or non-artisanal audiences. Artisans or traders use this discourse in their conversation with their customers to sell craft products. In this paper, I discuss how and when did this discourse on craft develop in India? How does it play-out in the craft of walnut carving and what does it reflect about the relationship between artisans, state and craft buyers.

## **Exploring the Issues of Caregiving of an Elderly Parent by an Adult Working Daughter through a Discussion of Contemporary Hindi Film *Piku* (2015).**

*Sonika Jain*

The paper will probe into the challenges and pleasures of caregiving through a discussion of a difficult but compassionate relationship between the male protagonist, an elderly, retired father Bhashkor (care-recipient) and his adult working daughter Piku (caregiver) in the film *Piku*. Unlike her cinematic contemporaries, the female protagonist doesn't face patriarchal opposition though she constantly navigates through everyday domestic problems and limiting circumstances due to caregiving. Unlike most Hindi film characters, Piku balances her multiple roles and adapts to unfolding events in her life instead of facing drastic obstacles or grappling with sudden turn of events. Unlike most mainstream narratives, the film explores the interactions and relationships among characters, focusing on life as a journey rather than a destination. Without being melodramatic, the film revives the forgotten pre-1990s characters such as the extended family and paid helpers who shape domestic spaces, familial relations, and social structures in the Indian context. *Piku* sketches the female and male protagonists in a uniquely complex rather than a stereotypical manner. Unlike most characters, the romance remains unpredictable and understated. The characters are simultaneously vulnerable and strong, and traditional and modern. Further, the paper will locate the film within the broader post-1990s changes that influence the Hindi film narrative.

## **Gināns and their effect on the Khojā beliefs, identity and worldview – a historical and contemporary analysis.**

*Amir Ali*

Gināns are arguably one of the most significant relics of the Satpanthī past of the Khojā Ismā'īlī community. The community views the gināns as a wonderful tradition and believes that they are a commentary of the Qur'ān. The paper will endeavour to understand the connection between the Satpanthī Khojā identity and the ginān literature and the manner in which the gināns have impacted the Khojā beliefs, identity and worldview. The paper will look at some key events of the recent history of the Khojās, particularly the nineteenth and the twentieth century, which witnessed a dynamic process of re-articulation of Khoja identity, and will endeavour to explore the interconnections between this process of re-articulation of identity and the ginānic tradition. Furthermore, the paper will also try to understand the manner in which ritualised recitation of the gināns effects the community today. For this purpose, the paper will endeavour to locate the ginān within the broader theoretical framework of rituals and its effects on the process of community building and its ability to impact and instigate human emotions.

**10.30-11.00: Coffee Break, Atrium**

**Thursday 20 April 2017, 11.00-12.30**

### **Room B01**

Jesús F. Cháirez –Garza

William Gould, University of Leeds

Stephen Legg, University of Nottingham

Anjali Bhardwaj-Datta, University of Cambridge

Urvashi Butalia, Zubaan Books

### **Dividing Cities**

Chair

Rethinking the Politics of Scale in 1940s Uttar Pradesh: P.D. Tandon, Hindu Mobilisation and Militarism

The Pre-Partitioned City? Re-Constructing Hindu-Muslim Spaces of 1940s Delhi

Genealogy of a Partition City: War, Migration, and Urban Space in Delhi

Commentary



## **Rethinking the Politics of Scale in 1940s Uttar Pradesh: P.D. Tandon, Hindu Mobilisation and Militarism.**

*William Gould (University of Leeds)*

There are two broad trends in historical scholarship on partition: On the one hand, older work traced high politics, and the 'end-game' of Empire. On the other, more recent and extensive histories recover partition experiences, refugee politics and everyday violence. Uttar Pradesh and its urban centres were not in partition's immediate hinterland but were pivotal, this paper argues, at an alternative scale of political mobilisation around volunteer movements. Taking P.D. Tandon's Hind Rakshak Dal as its central case study, it argues that early 1940s militaristic and drilling organisations were ideologically pivotal to the meaning of 'Pakistan' in UP. These movements were also shaped, crucially, by the early 1940s conditions of international conflict. The paper draws some new conclusions about the significance of these movements' ideologies of violence to India's long partition.

## **The Pre-Partitioned City? Re-Constructing Hindu-Muslim Spaces of 1940s Delhi:**

*Stephen Legg (University of Nottingham)*

Delhi is one of the totemic cities of Partition literature, a witness of horrific communal violence that quickly became what Pandey (2001) termed "refugeeistan". Whilst it's geographies of location (proximity to the new border) and urbanism (the capital) partly explain these two experiences of partition, they are both national-level explanations and do not delve in to the local histories and geographies behind Delhi's response to partition and its internal partitioning. This paper will explore the way in which the RSS and Muslim National Guard had been working hard to penetrate the city in the 1940s. This built on longer standing communal geographies of the city that had, with varying levels of success, used processions, riots, voluntary association drilling and membership to make 1940s Delhi into a pre-partitioned city.

## **Genealogy of a Partition City: War, Migration, and Urban Space in Delhi:**

*Anjali Bhardwaj-Datta (University of Cambridge)*

This paper makes interventions in our understanding of the histories of Partition; rather than treating 1947 as a Great Divide, it will argue that processes that were set in motion during the World Wars, persisted through the post-colonial period, and proved critical in determining the shape of contemporary urbanism. While, the post-partition Indian state, obsessed with planning capital spaces, used rehabilitation as an instrument of gaining control over the city, this paper will argue, it was during the 1940s, and more so during the Second World War, that we can trace the genealogy of post-colonial urban governance. It will assess migration, spatial changes, and political economy of land during the Second World War, which in many ways resonated with how the city later responded to partition.

### **Room C01**

Andrew Wyatt, University of Bristol

Dishil Shrimankar University of Nottingham

Rekha Dewakar, University of Sussex

### **The Decline and Rise of Political Parties in India**

Chair

'Party organisation and polity-wide parties at the state-level in India'

Evaluating Duverger's Law in India: A comparison of national and state assembly elections, 1989 – 2016

Arjan H. Schakel and Wilfried Swenden	The decline of the Congress Party: toward an understanding and explanation of the when, where and how?
Miriam Wenner, University of Zurich	Supporting poor parties? “Anti-political” visions and social movements in Darjeeling

**‘Party organisation and polity-wide parties at the state-level in India’.**  
*Dishil Shrimankar (Nottingham)*

Much of the recent scholarship on the decline of polity-wide parties in India has either focused on the importance of regionally-based cleavages or on political and economic decentralisation. I argue that political and economic decentralization and the presence of distinct sub-national cleavages are necessary, but not sufficient, conditions to explain the decline of polity-wide parties. I argue that the key explanation behind their decline is the lack of autonomy within these polity-wide parties. In other words, polity-wide parties decline at the sub-national level when they have not given autonomy to their regional branches. In contrast to much of the comparative politics literature, I argue that autonomy for the regional branches of polity wide parties impedes the growth of regionally based parties. Empirically, it uses Gujarat and Maharashtra, to present findings from a unique data set on the internal organisation of the Congress Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to confirm the main theoretical argument.

**Evaluating Duverger’s Law in India: A comparison of national and state assembly elections, 1989 – 2016**  
*Rekha Dewakar (Sussex)*

According to Duverger’s Law, single-member plurality electoral system (SMPS) favours a two party system. The most appropriate test of this law is at the district level, since its underlying mechanical and psychological effects are most visible at this level. India follows SMPS for both national and state assembly elections, and therefore one should witness a two-party competition at the district level in these elections. While scholars have previously examined the applicability of Duverger’s Law in India, these studies focus either on the national or the state assembly elections. This paper, in contrast, will undertake a comparative analysis of the national and the state assembly elections held during the period 1989 – 2016 to evaluate the applicability of Duverger’s Law in India. It will also provide explanations for the empirical results, including any significant differences observed in the number of parties competing at the district level in the national and the state assembly elections.

**The decline of the Congress Party: toward an understanding and explanation of the when, where and how?**  
*Arjan H. Schakel (Maastricht University) and Wilfried Swenden (University of Edinburgh)*

This paper seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding and explanation of the factors which led to the gradual decline of the Congress Party, until recently the pre-eminent party in Indian politics. Based on a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators, we consider the influence of factors external and internal to the party on its electoral performance across space and time. We first seek to map and account for how and why its decline links with variations in the religious, territorial and linguistic diversity of India and the nature of party competition across the Indian states. Next we consider how its gradual decline at the national level has been preceded by a loss of support at the state level in state assembly elections. Finally we consider the influence of electoral rules on the irreversibility of electoral decline once the party's electoral support had sunk below a certain threshold. In terms of factors internal to the party organisation, we look at the relationship between the central party organisation and the state party branches, patterns of internal party decision-making linked to candidate selection and programme and the representativeness of the party's electorate for the diversity of India as a whole.

**Supporting poor parties? “Anti-political” visions and social movements in Darjeeling.**  
*Miriam Wenner, Zurich University*

Studies on motivations for party-political support in South Asia have paid little attention to the question of why people vote for poor minority parties that can provide neither patronage nor protection. Drawing on ethnographic data from Darjeeling I argue that here the existence of a broad social movement demanding regional autonomy in form of a Union State “Gorkhaland” is an essential element in explaining support to poor parties. While the regional ruling party draws on the statehood demand to complement its rule through money and muscle, many people believe that only a united movement led by an honest and genuine person can achieve “Gorkhaland”. Although this ideal of a virtuous movement gets intermingled with the practical needs of party politics, it still motivates support to poor but presuming “honest” leaders and continues to inspire a powerful anti-political vision with the potential for political change.

<b>Room B08</b>	<b>Ageing, death, body, care: ethnographies of South Asia’s gerontological turn</b>
Tom Widger & Mihirini Sirisena	Chair
Penny Vera-Sanso, Birkbeck College	Discourses on Ageing and Later Life and the Realities of Ageing in Poverty
Mihirini Sirisena, University of Edinburgh	Duty to care: Analysis of Sri Lanka’s Protection of the Rights of Elders Act
Tharindi Udalagama, University of Durham	A Life of Piety: Aging and dying in a rural Sinhala Village
Tom Widger, University of Durham	An appropriate sacrifice? Perfections of generosity and the politics of elder charity in Sri Lanka’s gerontological turn

**Discourses on Ageing and Later Life and the Realities of Ageing in Poverty:**  
*Penny Vera-Sanso Birkbeck College*

The paper examines the construction of ageing and later life in a range of fields (gerontology, law and policy, film and advertising) and compares these to the realities of later life amongst urban and rural poor. It does so by comparing the depictions of ageing and intergenerational relations embedded in these fields to ethnographic work undertaken in rural and urban Tamil Nadu. The ethnographic work is supported by innovative research methods that demonstrates the generalisability of the Tamil ethnography.

**Duty to care: Analysis of Sri Lanka’s Protection of the Rights of Elders Act.**  
*Mihirini Sirisena, University of Edinburgh*

With claims that Sri Lanka’s population is aging faster than any other nation in South Asia, ageing has grasped the attention of researchers, activists and policy makers in recent times as one of the key societal challenges facing the country. ‘Care’ is one of the primary themes dominating these discussions. Traditionally, the children are considered responsible for the care of their elderly parents. Yet, the prevalence of over 300 elders’ homes in the country demonstrate that children at times fails to provide a network of care for its elders. One of the interventions the Sri Lankan government pursued as a response to this is the sanctioning of Protection of the Rights of Elders Act of 2000. The act which was amended in 2011 reaffirms that it is the duty of the children to care for their elders and puts measures in place to intervene on behalf of elders/ their carer who are not receiving supporting funds from their children. Based on secondary research, this paper analyses at the Act, its implications of such an enforcement on elders’ relationship with their children and broader impact of turning morals into a law.

**A Life of Piety: Aging and dying in a rural Sinhala Village:**  
*Tharindi Udalagama University of Durham*

The changing demographics of aging in Sri Lanka have led some academics to speak of a ‘gerontological turn’. Yet, in Sri Lanka, the state has been slow to respond in terms of social and welfare policies to counter the problem of an aging population. I draw on 14 months of ethnographic research in a rural village in North Central Sri Lanka to explore the relationship between aging, care and death. I describe how elder’s in the village had a special status, they were emblems of piety and charity. Their lives were given value among their kin as well as the villagers by how piously they have lived and the care they received was considered to make caregivers pious and receivers of merit. I will first discuss how elders are positioned and cared for among kin and then bring in examples of various communal events organized in the village that instilled care for the elders as a form of charity. The elder’s themselves believe that they should engage in religious activities and be an example of the true Buddhist way of life to be treated with respect among their kin as well as in the village. In preparation for death in this life, they believe that they should accumulate merit as much as they can to secure a good birth in the next. Therefore this paper discusses how aging, care and death can be understood in relation to the Buddhist pious way of life.

**An appropriate sacrifice? Perfections of generosity and the politics of elder charity in Sri Lanka’s gerontological turn.**  
*Tom Widger University of Durham*

Every day of the year, Buddhist elders homes in Sri Lanka receive meal donations from well-wishers in the community. Although considered a laudable practice among givers and receivers alike, some argue that the labelling of these gifts as ‘dāna,’ a religious gift, as opposed to just ‘food,’ inappropriately elevates recipients to the level of Buddhist monks. Underpinning this is a concern that Sri Lanka’s rapidly ageing population is creating a new category of person: the welfare-dependent elder. Debates over how such charity is to be defined – as a gift that evokes the logics of dāna or merely a humanitarian concern for the old and frail – illuminates the struggles of a society seeking to reconcile itself with a future defined by an ageing population.

**Room B07**

**Feminist political subjectivities in South Asia**

Carole Spary, University of Nottingham

Chair

Annie Devenish, University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)

‘Mine has been an eventful life’: Negotiating power, voice and subjectivity, in the writing of Indian feminist histories

Carole Spary, University of Nottingham

What’s in a memoir? Women MPs’ representations of the Indian parliament

K. Kalpana, IIT Madras

Discussant

**‘Mine has been an eventful life’: Negotiating power, voice and subjectivity, in the writing of Indian feminist histories”**

*Dr Annie Devenish (University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa),*

Existing analysis and scholarship on women in politics in India has been limited by the way in which agency is often subsumed by women’s powerful political families, their embeddedness in a warrior goddess culture, or by the way in which their careers are framed within the mission of social reform. This is exacerbated by the challenge of locating archival and other documentary material on such individuals, especially if they operated outside or on the fringes of formal and institutionalised sites of power. This paper reflects on some of the theoretical and methodological approaches the author found

useful in overcoming these challenges, researching and writing about a generation of Indian woman nationalists and feminists who straddled the transition from colonial state to independence. In particular, it explores the possibilities of using transnationalism, life histories and embodiment to negotiate power, voice and subjectivity in a study of this generation's political careers. Tracing the movement of such individuals not merely within the confines of a developing Indian nationalism, but equally within emerging transnational networks has been a valuable supplementary approach in this regard, enabling the scholar to locate identities and belonging beyond the barriers of nation state and community, - as this generation learnt from, and made connections, with other activists in the global south. Equally importantly, such networks also helped this generation to differentiate and redefine their gender politics in relation to their western sisters. As works of fact and fiction, the published life histories of this generation provide access to the voice of these historical subjects, and when critically read, can offer insight into how these subjects sought to construct their political identity in the public eye, and contextualise this identity within their personal histories. Finally, the theoretical approach of embodiment opens a whole new politics of the body, enabling the scholar to explore the meaning of the exercise of choice and freedom, not merely as abstract political rights, but as tangible to the physical sense of self. Combined, these alternative theoretical and methodological approaches facilitate a richer, more nuanced and complex process of Indian feminist history writing that has much to offer to the study of women and politics in India.

**‘What’s in a memoir? Women MPs’ representations of the Indian parliament’**  
*Dr Carole Spary (Nottingham)*

This paper explores how women parliamentarians have documented their experiences of the national parliament of India primarily in memoirs and autobiographies, such as how they recounted their experiences and what significance the parliament, presumably a key site for performing political representation, played in their political careers. It discusses women MPs’ opinions of parliament as a political institution, their first experiences of parliament, their work in parliament and relationship with parliamentary colleagues, how they relate to it as a site for performing representation, and how they view and evaluate their own embodied performances of representation in parliament. In doing so, the paper reflects on the author’s experiences of archival research on women MPs, including the limited availability of sources available to understand women MPs experiences of parliament, as opposed to other areas of their political careers such as elections, and the importance of documenting women’s political careers. In doing so, the paper acknowledges the relative absence of such sources and asks why are some women MPs remembered and not others, despite long parliamentary careers? How does this affect public narratives of women MPs in the present? What does it mean to document the history of woman parliamentarians and how should we go about it? Spurred on by recent public feminist historiographical initiatives, it ends by outlining a prospective biographical project on a late woman parliamentarian whose career was closely tied to a number of significant developments in Indian politics, and deserves to be more widely acknowledged and remembered.

**Room B02**

**Eighteenth century legal cultures**

Onni Gust, University of Nottingham

Chair

Christopher Fleming, University of Oxford

“Śāstra Meets Law: Property and Ownership in Anglo-Hindu Law”

Akhila Mathew, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Dakans, Law and the State: A Study of Witchcraft Petitions in Eighteenth century Jodhpur

Erica Mukherjee, Stony Brook University

The Impermanent Settlement: Bengal's Riparian Environment, 1793-1845

### **Critical Legal Sub-Ethics in Modern Indian *Mahābhārata* Fiction.**

*Christopher Fleming, University of Oxford*

An exciting and overlooked trend in Indian publishing is the explosion of English language novels by Indian authors such as Ashwin Sanghi, Chitra Divakaruni and Anand Neelakantan that reimagine tales from the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyana* as murder mysteries, romances, historical thrillers and the like. Some scholars have been keen to link this emergent genre of 'epic fiction' with broader trends of Hindu nationalism (*Hindutva*) in modern India. This paper attends to the ethical implications and progressive possibilities opened up by *Mahābhārata* genre fiction by combining two separate scholarly traditions: narrative sub-ethics and critical legal studies. Narrative ethicists such as Emily Hudson have revealed how Buddhist and Hindu narrative can shape and structure readers' moral vision. Critical legal theorists such as Duncan Kennedy have sought to interrogate the implicit race and class and gender inequalities embedded in ostensibly egalitarian legal systems. By combining narrative sub-ethics with critical legal studies I demonstrate how three novels - Chitra Divakaruni's 'The Palace of Illusions,' Anand Neelakantan's 'Ajaya: of the Dice,' and Ashwin Sanghi's 'The Krishna Key' prompt the reader to reflect on the ethical complexities of the often contentious interaction between traditional Hindu culture and modern - secular - Indian law.

### ***Dakans, Law and the State: A Study of Witchcraft Petitions in Eighteenth century Jodhpur***

*Akhila Mathew, JNU*

Through a study of petitions in the *Jodhpur Sanad Parwana Bahis* on women accused of witchcraft, this paper will investigate the experience of the '*dakans*' (witches) in eighteenth century Jodhpur. This will entail an analysis of the social and economic repercussions of being an accused witch in the caste based society of Rajasthan. Further, this will explore the competing narratives of the accusers and the accused, through which the label of a *dakan* is created and contested. This paper will also examine the responses of the *jati panchayats* (caste councils) and *Shri Huzur* (Central Court) to such petitions. Through this, it will explore the collaboration and conflict between *jati panchayats* and the state while dispensing justice in 18<sup>th</sup> century Jodhpur.

### **The Impermanent Settlement: Bengal's Riparian Environment, 1793-1845.**

*Erica Mukherjee, Stony Brook University*

As part of their ongoing attempts to understand and control the Bengali environment, the East India Company (EIC) drafted the Permanent Settlement of 1793, a legal regime designed to stabilize property ownership and incentivize landowning zamindars to improve the agricultural productivity of their land by fixing their revenue obligations in perpetuity. The EIC imposed this stable legal fiction over the unstable riparian landscape of Bengal. As accretion and erosion continued to alter the size of zamindari holdings, the EIC bureaucracy was overwhelmed with petitions demanding reassessment of the Permanent Settlement in light of the impermanency of the soil. Official letters by EIC collectors, commissioners, and the Board of Revenue demonstrate their institutional inability to harness the material and managerial technologies needed to bring stability to the landscape or flexibility to the legal regime.

#### **Room B15**

#### **Arts, performance and material culture (part 2)**

Humaira Saeed, Nottingham  
Trent University

Chair

Aishika Chakraborty, Jadavpur  
University

Nationalism off-stage: Performing Resistance with Tagore

Rose Hussey, University of  
Edinburgh

Abanindranath Tagore and Mughal Art: Redressing the Void

Anaïs Da Fonseca, SOAS

Cherial Paintings from Telangana India: The institutionalisation of  
a tradition

Divya Rao, University of  
Warwick

Accessing Basavanna's Anti-Caste Vacanas through Ramanujan:  
A Marriage of Poetry, Music, and Translation

### **Nation Re-Choreographed: Performing Resistance with Tagore.**

*Aishika Chakraborty, Jadavpur University*

Revolving round the twin axes of gender and nation, this paper seeks to introduce a new discourse of performance within and against the hagiographic narrative of Indian classical dance tradition. I take Tagore as the entry-point to initiate this counter-hegemonic dialogue on performance and see how he choreographed an oeuvre of resistance to challenge the set-phrase of nationalist representational paradigm. How did he step out of the inviolable *Natyashastra* and break the frozen lines of sculpture in creating a structure-defying free-style? Did the transgressive dancing bodies, fleshed out in his avant-garde dance-dramas, disrupt the stereotypes performed by the nation? Did his transcultural kinesthetic deauthenticate the pure and specific diction that the nation was staging at this historic moment of nationalism? Was his dance a deliberate escape from the backstage of power-politics? Or was it a medium of his resistance? This paper looks for an answer.

Keywords: Dance, Tagore, Gender, Nationalism,

### **Abanindranath Tagore and Mughal Art: Redressing the Void.**

*Rose Hussey, University of Edinburgh*

Abanindranath Tagore's engagement with Mughal art and history is almost exclusively considered to be superficial and purely aesthetic. It is often deemed a 'phase' of his *oeuvre*, epitomised in the Shah Jahan Trilogy, 1901 to 1905. Furthermore, there is a general lack of in-depth critical discussion of Mughal paintings beyond this series. This paper attempts to redress the void of scholarship through challenging exclusivist approaches to Tagore and by taking a deeper look at the contemporary perceptions of the Mughal Empire. Through an investigation into works, including but not exclusive to the Shah Jahan Trilogy, this paper hopes to show that not only were Tagore's Mughal references more extensive than is generally believed, but they also prove a certain level of independence from his mentor E. B. Havell and the Orientalists.

### **Cherial Paintings from Telangana India: The institutionalisation of a tradition**

*Anaïs Da Fonseca, SOAS London*

In the Southern Indian state of Telangana, storytellers narrate genealogies of the local castes using a scroll painting on cloth as a visual aid to their performance. In the 1980s, the All Indian Handloom and Handicraft Board developed an interest in these paintings as part of an initiative for the sustainability of Indian handicrafts. The paintings then acquired their name Cherial. The Board's intervention increased the visibility of the paintings, hence relegating the performances to a secondary position. The emphasis on the material culture of this tradition permitted their entry to museums and the market, and initiated what I call the institutionalization of Cherial paintings. In this paper, I investigate the institutionalization of Cherial paintings through the paintings and their painters. I argue that the intervention of museum institutions into the tradition resulted in framing Cherial painting into specific fixed features, hence challenging the very adaptive nature of the craft.

**Accessing Basavanna's\* Anti-Caste *Vacanas* through Ramanujan: A Marriage of Poetry, Music, and Translation.**  
*Divya Rao, University of Warwick*

It has been contended that poetry *is* music. While translation of poetry is nothing new, it has been argued that music cannot be translated. Peter Dayan, a Professor of Word and Music Studies, asks, "If poetry is music, and music cannot be translated, how does the translator cope with the music in poetry?"

My paper situates Dayan's question within A. K. Ramanujan's translations of Basavanna's *Vacana Sahitya* (a form of rhythmic writing in Kannada), in his influential text, *Speaking of Siva* (1973). I argue that Ramanujan attempts to offset the futility of translating music by using a referent to music (say an instrument), and marries this with the philosophy espoused by Basavanna to illustrate that the music of the *vacana* is not so much external as it is internal – the poet-saint is the musician as well as the instrument.

A 12th century philosopher, statesman, and poet from Karnataka whose *vacanas* (literally, "what is said", but loosely understood as "poems set to music") established some of the earliest precedents of an anti-caste, gender-equality advocating reform movement in India.

**Room A09**

**Migration, belonging and displacement**

Susan Thomas, American University

Chair

Adnan Khan, University of Malakand

Migration, Traditions and transformation among the Pakhtuns of Pakistan

Sarah Gandee, University of Leeds

Demarcating borders, defining citizens: Partition, displacement, and 'criminal tribe refugees' in East Punjab, 1947-55

Bitopi Dutta, Dublin City University

Gendered Impact of Development Induced Displacement in tribe societies: The case of North East India

Kavita Bhanot

Reading the Whiteness of British Asian Literature

**Migration, Traditions and transformation among the Pakhtuns of Pakistan.**

*Dr. Adnan Khan, University of Malakand*

From colonial times until this day, Pakhtuns of Pakistan as well as the neighbouring Afghanistan have been stereotyped in different ways. This stereotypical representation further gave rise to fixed and static ideas about the Pakhtun code of life, *pakhtunwali*, which is linked to honour and governs their lives. After the events of 9/11, different interpretations of *pakhtunwali* emerged, when the US invaded Afghanistan to bring to justice the perpetrators. The presence of Osama was linked to hospitality and asylum under *pakhtunwali*.

Challenging the existing stereotypical representations, this paper argues that, like all other aspects of social life, *pakhtunwali* is constantly in a flux. Based on extensive fieldwork, in a small Pakistani village located outside the tribal areas close to the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, using anthropological methods of participant observation, interviews, focus group discussions and case studies, this paper explains the way of life of contemporary Pakhtuns.

The paper argues that because of changing migration and extension of state's laws, the socio-economic and religio-political conditions have changed and Pakhtun society has transformed. The transformation has been overlooked by academicians and researchers working on Pakistan and



Afghanistan. The paper further explains how the current literature fails to depict the real image of the Pakhtuns.

**Demarcating borders, defining citizens: Partition, displacement, and ‘criminal tribe refugees’ in East Punjab, 1947-55.**

*Sarah Gandee, University of Leeds*

Amongst the millions displaced in the bifurcated Punjab during partition were tens of thousands of individuals belonging to the ‘criminal tribes’. Overlooked in both partition scholarship and histories of the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA), this period of cross-border movement and resettlement is vital. It reveals why the legal category of the ‘criminal tribe’ was reinscribed in post-1947 Punjab, even as legislatively it was being dismantled. Despite the relaxation of its punitive provisions in the preceding years, the CTA was revived in the aftermath of partition. Communities and individuals long-exempted were again restricted in their movements and placed under police surveillance. Policies for their resettlement were additionally shaped by their association with criminality. This paper argues that amidst the remaking of national, communal and individual identities in the wake of partition, the ‘criminal tribes’ became more conclusively wedded to notions of criminality and mobility within the imagination of the state.

**Gendered Impact of Development Induced Displacement in tribe societies: The case of North East India.**

*Bitopi Dutta, Dublin City University*

Development Induced Displacement (DID) has been an issue of intense debate in India. While existing scholarships have studied the general impact of DID on subaltern groups, the politics of displacement in reordering gender relations in tribe societies remains insufficiently researched. This paper will do a gender analysis of displacement in tribe societies in North East India by focusing on how the acquisition of Common Property Resources (CPRs) under the Land law of India has devastating consequences for the tribal women since CPRs forms the basis of their high status, identity and autonomy. This argument will be placed in the context of the collapse of the gender friendly traditional structure of these tribe societies due to displacement. DID in this sense will not only be understood as only physical displacement, but also as social and cultural displacement.

**Key words:** tribal, women, displacement, Common Property Resources, North East India

**Reading the Whiteness of British Asian Literature’**

*Kavita Bhanot*

Recent commodified British Asian literary production, while read as belonging to a tradition of self-assertion; ‘writing back’, is an example of the ways in which the state/market have co-opted resistance while appearing inclusive, through multicultural and diversity discourse. While packaged forms of ‘identity’ and ‘difference’ are used to sell these texts, ideologically, the texts reject ‘identity’ as constructed. The texts reflect the state’s integrationist/ assimilationist policies, being founded on the assumption that ‘identity’ needs to be left behind (while a normalized invisible whiteness/Britishness, as ‘non-identity’ should be embraced.) The inability of academics, reviewers, readers, to ‘see’ the location of these texts in whiteness, reveals an internalized normative liberal historicist racism - these texts reflect and confirm their own assumptions. This is explored and argued through a presentation of popular readings of Sathnam Sanghera’s popular memoir *The Boy with Top-Knot*, and a close reading of the text itself.

**12.30-14.30: Lunch, Atrium**

**12.30-13.30: Lunchtime Lecture, Lakeside Arts**

**Erica Wald, ‘The ‘Thin White Line’: European soldiers in colonial India’**

**13.30-14.30 Graduate and Early career Event: ‘Early career Researchers. What’s Next? Room B01**

Chair: Katharine Adeney, University of Nottingham

Presentations and discussion: Dr Jesus Chairez-Garza, Dr Annie Devenish, Dr Oliver Godsmark, Dr Lipika Kamra

**Thursday 20 April 2017, 14.30-16.00**

**Room B01**

**Everyday Politics in India**

Rochana Bajpai, SOAS

Chair

Diego Maiorano University of Nottingham, Suruchi Thapar-Björkert & Hans Blomkvist, University of Uppsala

Poor People’s Politics in Rural India

Vidya Sagar Pancholi, University of Sheffield

The impact of state sponsored slum redevelopment schemes on existing local power dynamics: a case study of a fringe sub-city to Mumbai

Hugo Gorringe, University of Edinburgh

‘In the last elections we are so backward we didn’t even get money to vote’: Money and Elections in South India

Glyn Williams, University of Sheffield, et al.

Enacting Gender-Sensitive, Participatory Slum Upgrade: Lessons from the implementation of BSUP and RAY in Trivandrum, Kerala

**Poor People’s Politics in Rural India**

*Diego Maiorano (Nottingham), Suruchi Thapar-Björkert (Uppsala) & Hans Blomkvist (Uppsala)*

Poor people’s politics are traditionally theorized either as resistance or as little more than a set of coping strategies. Recent scholarship has, however, tried to go beyond this dichotomy and has documented a wide variety of political acts constituted by ‘a mix of resistance to, support of, compliance with, and modification and evasions of existing norms that underpin power relations’ (Kerkvliet 2009). In other words, recent scholarship has highlighted how poor people’s politics is negotiation, rather than mere resistance to or a way to cope with the unequal social order. This paper builds on this scholarship and conceptualises poor people’s politics as a form of negotiation. In doing so, it tries to fill what, at first glance, looks like an insurmountable dichotomy between the elite’s and the poor’s politics: while certainly speaking different languages and adopting different forms, both politics are, essentially, negotiations for a better access to power (both material and symbolic) and resources.

On the basis of ethnographic work in rural Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, this paper will make two arguments. First, if we understand poor people’s politics as a form of negotiation, it becomes important to also relate to the other actor(s) at the negotiating table – the elites. Elites have been seen as playing predominantly the role of the oppressors that try in all possible ways to keep oppressing the oppressed. Instead, the role of the elites as a negotiating actor can go much beyond a fixed positionality of oppressors and can actually promote progressive social change. Second, the paper critically evaluates the usefulness of the Marxian conceptualisation of ‘classes of labour’ (Bernstein 2014; Lerche 2010), which does not adequately address the internal differentiation of the poor. The paper argues that the poor are not united in their struggle against domination, because, on the one hand, it is not necessarily in their interest to do so; and, on the other hand, because the ideology – or system of beliefs – that underpins their subalternity is at the same time rejected and accepted.

## **The impact of state sponsored slum redevelopment schemes on existing local power dynamics: a case study of a fringe sub-city to Mumbai**

*Vidya Sagar Pancholi (University of Sheffield)*

The relationship between slums and informal settlements and the day-to-day politics of informally securing rights to basic services and housing has been a subject of wider debate in the post-colonial literature and within its critique (see for instance; Chatterjee 2004, Benjamin 2008, Roy 2009 amongst others). In the context of these debates, the paper highlights a need of unpacking the term, 'informal politics' in such a way that it allows insights from the peripheries of the metropolitan cities. Despite being the key sites of urbanisation in India, urban peripheries have often not been foregrounded in the academic debates (Harriss 2011). The paper explores the impact of the recent state sponsored slum redevelopment scheme on the existing local networks of power that exist around housing and urban land in the periphery of Mumbai. The discourse propagated by the state around slums in Mumbai, has changed over the years from eradication to resettlement and to redevelopment largely due to a particular history of civic mobilisation around housing for the poor (Anand and Rademacher 2011; Mukhija 2003). Taking an interpretivist position and a grounded theory approach, I establish that such has however not been the case with Mumbai's peripheries. In the case of Kalyan-Dombivli, a 1.5 million fringe sub-city to Mumbai, political networks related to housing for the poor operate around the poor's voting practices, political parties, ethnicity & caste, and linkages of the politicians with the lower rungs of the bureaucracy. The state sponsored scheme on housing, that promises almost free houses to the 'qualified' slum dwellers (according to the state's criteria), offers opportunities of political influence which are differentially used by the aforementioned key actors. Ethnicity and caste of the poor plays a particularly dominant role in the timely construction of the scheme houses, largely due to their ability to mobilise collectively against the coercive practices of the state. The paper, therefore, highlights differential changes in the state-society relations that have been brought by the state sponsored slum redevelopment scheme.

## **'In the last elections we are so backward we didn't even get money to vote': Money and Elections in South India.**

*Hugo Gorringe (Edinburgh)*

According to the Acting Principal Officer in the US Consulate in Chennai: "Bribes from political parties to voters, in the form of cash, goods, or services, are a regular feature of elections in South India. Poor voters expect bribes from political candidates, and candidates find various ways to satisfy voter expectations". Elections in the state routinely give rise to accusations of money and muscle power, and a common refrain from the losing side is that they were outspent. The routinized aspects of attempted vote-buying are seen in the title quote, in which a rural woman bemoans the fact that politicians did not bother to distribute cash in her locality. Whilst there is little evidence that such expenditure determines electoral outcomes, there is ample evidence that cash transactions have become a banal feature of Tamil elections. This paper will draw out the processes, meanings and practices of vote-buying in the Tamil context to elucidate the interplay between cash and votes.

## **Enacting Gender-Sensitive, Participatory Slum Upgrade: Lessons from the implementation of BSUP and RAY in Trivandrum, Kerala.**

*Glyn Williams (Sheffield) J Devika (CDS), Berit Aasen (Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research), Umesh Omanakuttan (CDS) and Jagajeevan. J (independent researcher),*

India's recent national urban development policy has aimed to produce 'slum free cities', with significant investment in housing upgrading programmes (BSUP, and RAY) being deliberately linked to a wider urban reform agenda. This agenda's partiality, and its unequal resource allocation within and between cities (Mahadevia 2011), has prompted criticism that it is promoting forms of city management that have further acerbated urban exclusion, despite its participatory rhetoric (Banerjee-Guha 2009, Harriss, 2010). Kerala should provide an interesting counterpoint to these existing critiques: its decisions to manage slum upgrade programmes through its State Poverty Eradication Mission, and to use NGOs rather than private contractors to deliver new housing, indicate the scope

that exists for local (State/Municipal) reimagining of national policy. Using primary data from two housing projects that were intended to demonstrate increasing levels of female-centred community participation in planning and delivery, this paper uncovers the changing relationships between slum citizens and the state that this potentially inclusive form of slum upgrade brought about. Contrasting the planned physical and governance changes intended by those shaping the scheme at a city level, with beneficiaries' aspirations for and lived experiences of these projects, it highlights the ongoing difficulties in using housing projects to deliver progressive urban change.

### **Room C01**

### **Migrations of India: Reciprocity and Kinship in Motion**

Susan Thomas and Nishaant Choksi

Chair

Susan Thomas, American University

Social networks, reciprocity, and student migration

E. Gabriel Dattatreyan Goldsmiths College, University of London

Pan Africanist solidarity and a negotiation of reciprocal exchange: The case of African Kitchens in Delhi, India

Nishaant Choksi, Kyoto University

Marks that bind: graphic production in the narration of kinship and migration among the Santals of eastern India

William Gould, University of Leeds

Discussant

### **Social networks, reciprocity, and student migration**

*Susan Thomas, American University*

In the United States, the migrations of students across national borders are rarely addressed beyond the analytical concerns of the international education field. As the transience and ambivalence that accompany student migrants' trajectories unsettle the common conceptual distinctions drawn between anthropological categories of migrant experiences, this population is particularly under-studied in the anthropology of migration. However, I suggest that the movements of students offer productive tensions for theorizing the cultural practices of migration. Examining the migratory lives of middle class youth from India pursuing their education in the United States, this paper theorizes connections between migrant social networks and anthropological notions of reciprocity. Specifically, I argue that Indian student migrants' practices of sociality produce and disrupt multiple webs of social attachments hinging on competitiveness, expectations of reciprocal exchange, and sacrifice.

### **Pan Africanist solidarity and a negotiation of reciprocal exchange: The case of African Kitchens in Delhi, India**

*E. Gabriel Dattatreyan, University of Goldsmith*

This paper engages with the phenomena of African Kitchens in Delhi. African Kitchens are illegal establishments set up in residential apartments in the urban villages of Delhi to provide transnationals, refugees, and diaspora from several different nations in sub-Saharan Africa a safe place to congregate, eat, drink, and pass time. The social spaces of the kitchen offer an opportunity to theorize the discourse of solidarity and its relationship to precarious networks of transnational exchange. I argue that evocations of solidarity based on a sense of shared Africanness expressed within the kitchens pave the way for economic and social exchange and reciprocity across linguistic, regional, and religious difference found within the Pan-African communities of Delhi.

## **Marks that bind: graphic production in the narration of kinship and migration among the Santals of eastern India.**

*Nishaant Choksi, Kyoto University*

The concept of *adivasi* (original inhabitant) appears to imply an originary connection with the land. However, many *adivasi* communities in South Asia, such as the Santal, one of the largest, and spread over India, Bangladesh, and Nepal, narrate their history as one of constant and continuous migration. This paper seeks to understand Santal history from the point of view of migration, and show how kinship structures are reinforced through both the retellings of migration narratives and the production of ritualized graphic marks, called *khond ol*. It will then discuss contemporary Santali politics, and the creation of a new script for the Santali language called *Ol-Chiki*. The paper argues that the focus on script as a unifier of the Santali community derives in part from the practice of using visible marks as a way of marking and mapping kinship ties through cycles of movement and settlement.

### **Room B08**

### **Kingship and ritual**

Ibtisam Ahmed, University of Nottingham

Chair

Aashique Ahmed Iqbal, University of Oxford

Of Princes and Planes: Aviation in the Indian States 1933-48

Priya Atwal, University of Oxford

The Punjabi Maharajah at the Court of the British Queen: The Re-making of Royalty in an Imperial Context

Paolo Eugenio Rosati, La Sapienza, Rome

Blood, Desire and Kingship: King Naraka and the State Formation Process in Ancient Assam

### **Of Princes and Planes: Aviation in the Indian States 1933-48**

*Aashique Ahmed Iqbal, University of Oxford*

India's semi-autonomous princely states invested extensively in the paraphernalia of modernity to legitimate themselves in the face of colonial and nationalist claims that monarchical rule was anachronistic. This paper focuses on the aviation in three Indian states; Mysore, Jodhpur and Hyderabad. Mysore was the site of the Hindustan Aircraft Factory and Jodhpur pioneered aviation legislation in the Indian states. Hyderabad established its own airline and aircraft played an important role in its bid for independence. I argue that while the Indian states drew on aviation to buttress their sovereignty, the methods they adopted and the goals they pursued could vary widely. Furthermore I show that attempts by the independent Indian state to regulate and eventually absorb princely aviation point to the emergence of radically new notions of sovereignty in the post-colonial context.

### **The Punjabi Maharajah at the Court of the British Queen: The Re-making of Royalty in an Imperial Context**

*Priya Atwal, University of Oxford*

The rapid development of British imperialism across South Asia in the nineteenth century arguably brought British and Indian monarchs closer together than ever before. This paper seeks to critically explore the early courtly encounters between Maharajah Duleep Singh and Queen Victoria during the mid-1850s. It focuses on asking the following questions: what were the implications of Victoria's interest in deposed Indian princes such as Duleep Singh? How and why was such a novel figure incorporated into the British royal court? On what terms did the Queen and the Maharajah relate to, or understand one another? Utilising this fascinating case study of an Anglo-Punjabi royal friendship, I aim to highlight how the evolution of monarchical rule and royal culture in Britain and India was a conjoined transitional process, and that the involvement of royalty in imperial affairs extended far beyond a superficial role as mere 'ornamental' window-dressing.

**Blood, Desire and Kingship: King Naraka and the State Formation Process in Ancient Assam.**  
*Paolo Eugenio Rosati, La Sapienza, Rome*

The name Naraka was documented in the epigraphic records and in the Epic–Puranic literature either as the son of Viṣṇu and Pṛthvī (Earth) or as the founder of the Kāmarūpa kingdom, after he defeated the local Kirāta tribes.

According to the *Kālikāpurāṇa* (tenth–eleventh century), the conquest of Assam headed by Naraka mirrored from the one hand, one of the Aryan migration waves that afflicted also the North-eastern India; from the other hand, it reflected the absorption and adaptation of tribal goddesses and rituals within the Brahmanic religiosity. Hence, Kāmākhyā the foremost deity of Assam is still today worshipped through her non-anthropomorphic symbol—a *yoni* (vulva) stone inside her sanctum—a trait of tribal cults. Furthermore, she is worshipped through (public) blood sacrifices and (secret) sexual rites, both practices inherited from tribal world.

Thence, this paper aims to demonstrate the cross-cultural roots of the Assamese kingship through the inter- and intra- textual evidences and the ethnographic data collected during a field-work period in Assam.

**Room B07**

**Politics of the female body, reproductive rights and its health consequences amongst South Asian Women**

Maya Unnithan, University of Sussex

Chair

Papreen Nahar, University of Manchester

Moral Dilemmas of IVF use: Experience of Bangladeshi Childless Women

Sayani Mitra, University of Goettingen

Reproductive disruptions and the transforming spatio-temporalities of the surrogate bodies in India

Reetika Revathy Subramanian, University of Cambridge

Contested Realities and Health Consequences: A study on the effects of Khatna on Dawoodi Bohra women in India

Nishtha Lamba, University of Cambridge

Psychological Impact of Commercial Surrogacy among South Asian Women, Nishtha Lamba

**Moral Dilemmas of IVF use: Experience of Bangladeshi Childless Women.**

*Papreen Nahar, University of Manchester*

Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ARTs) are generally only available in the private sector in Bangladesh, a resource-poor, predominantly Muslim country. ARTs are therefore utilised by a handful of rich couples. An ethnography which employed ‘life-history’ among the non-voluntary childless women in Bangladesh indicate that the moral dilemmas of couples using ARTs stem mainly from two grounds, one originating from Islamic religious belief regarding sexual mores and the other from the cultural stigma linked with ARTs. The third party involvement in ARTs and particularly gamete donation and surrogacy is considered un-Islamic. However, expression of this religiosity on ART exists more within an individual level rather than state level. On the other hand, culturally becoming mother following intervention of ARTs is considered ‘faulty’ since the motherhood was achieved through ‘artificial means’. This paper intends to explore the use of ARTs within the local moral world of Bangladesh.

## **Reproductive disruptions and the transforming spatio-temporalities of the surrogate bodies in India.**

*Sayani Mitra, University of Goettingen.*

This paper attempts to capture the differential access to reproductive care and technologies for women while acting as surrogates in contrast to when they are not, by drawing on ethnographic research conducted at fertility clinics in New Delhi and Kolkata (India) between 2014 -15. The arrangement of commercial surrogacy in India allows the surrogates access to spaces i.e. super specialised fertility clinics, the waiting rooms, surrogacy hostels, cars - which they could seldom have availed. However, during moments of reproductive disruptions, like that of miscarriages, foetal reductions, abortions etc., the surrogates experience an immediate powerlessness and loss of access to both immediate and long-term healthcare. These reproductive disruptions bring forth the situatedness of the surrogates within a particular class and lay bare a stark contrast in the nature of reproductive health services that can be accessed by the same set of women within different spatiotemporal settings.

## **Contested Realities and Health Consequences: A study on the effects of Khatna on Dawoodi Bohra women in India.**

*Reetika Revathy Subramanian, University of Cambridge*

Anchored in the politics of female body, this paper looks at the lived experiences and health effects of khatna, the practice of female circumcision on women from the Dawoodi Bohra community in India. As a cultural rite of passage, the women are circumcised at the age of six, which involves either pricking or removal of the clitoral head. In most cases, the women are circumcised in unhygienic, unsterilized conditions by untrained midwives using blades and knives. As a result, women complain about pain during menstruation and intercourse, loss of sexual desire, amongst other experiences. Thus, through life history interviews with community women and semi-structured interviews with community activists challenging the practice, medical practitioners and religious heads, the paper addresses the inter-relationship between the cultural practice and its consequences on the reproductive health of the women.

## **Psychological Impact of Commercial Surrogacy among South Asian Women.**

*Nishtha Lamba, University of Cambridge*

It has been argued that cross-border surrogacy with its legal, political, ethical, religious and procedural challenges put the well-being of the surrogates at serious risk. However, despite repeated concerns the potential psychological harm caused due to surrogacy has never been studied before in the global south. This paper is based on a longitudinal and cross-sectional study, which assesses the anxiety, depression and stress levels (at two-time points: during pregnancy and after delivery) and maternal-fetal bonding experiences (during pregnancy) of Indian surrogates and general expectant mothers. It was found that while surrogates experience similar levels of anxiety, stress and bonding with the fetus as compared to general expectant mothers, they suffer from a higher level of depression than the comparison group. Upon further exploration, it was found that lower support during pregnancy and social stigma associated with surrogacy was predictive of higher depression in surrogates.

### **Room B02**

Carole Spary, University of Nottingham

K. Kalpana, IIT Madras

### **Feminist politics and political economy of development in India**

Chair

Organizing Women: The Dilemmas of State-sponsored Developmentalism

Binitha V Thampi, IIT Madras	Feminist Labour Politics in the Neo-liberal Era: A case of Munnar Tea Plantation Labour Struggle
Lipika Kamra, Georgetown University-Qatar	Women, Counterinsurgency, and Statemaking in Rural Eastern India

### **Organizing Women: The Dilemmas of State-sponsored Developmentalism.**

*K. Kalpana, IIT Madras*

Paper abstract: Drawing on the case of the microcredit/finance phenomenon that has grown exponentially in India since the early 1990s, this paper argues that the proliferation of state-sponsored, anti-poverty and women-targeted development interventions has collectivized women across the country and that women are using these institutional spaces to press claims for development resources upon the state. India's microfinance-based Self Help Groups (SHGs) have brought rural women into direct, multiple interfaces with the rural development bureaucracy and the nationalized banking sector, in larger numbers than ever before in the history of post-independence India.

In this paper, I ask what women have *to do* and *to be* to 'earn' their right to institutional (low-cost) credit and anti-poverty assistance from state-owned banks in an emergent neo-liberal India. What subjectivities or forms of self-identification are cultivated through women's participation in microfinance projects? Do microfinance programmes that target women of working poor households and communities advance the cause of organizing women *as workers* in diverse sectors? Or do they complicate it in unexpected ways? How does the ubiquitous presence of state institutions in the microfinance terrain in India shape other forms of mobilization and claims making (besides microcredit) on the part of rural women?

### **Feminist Labour Politics in the Neo-liberal Era: A case of Munnar Tea Plantation Labour Struggle.**

*Binitha V Thampi, IIT Madras*

A recent labour protest in 2015 by around 5000 women workers belong to Kannan Devan Hills Tea Plantations, in Munnar of Kerala state, India has received wider attention from civil society including the media. After around three weeks of struggle both by stopping the plucking of tea leaves and blocking the main roads, the government of Kerala intervened and assured to increase the minimum wages that the protesters demanded for. Women raised severe criticisms against their organised trade unions that they failed to represent their collective interest. As a result, they registered their own trade union namely, "*Pempilai orumai*" (Women's Collective). As a response to the global crisis in the tea market, there was a significant shift in the management structure of the tea plantations in 2004 from Tata tea, a multi-national Indian company to the workers' cooperative – Kannan Devan Hills Plantations – by allowing the workers as shareholders of the company. It is in this backdrop this paper analyses the factors that led to the struggle in the specific context of Munnar Tea Plantations and the real impact of the protest on the labour rights and working conditions in the neo-liberal era. It argues that the change in the management structure in the form of a workers' cooperative was a neo-liberal management strategy to protect the interest of the capital rather than that of the labour in an environment where the organised labour politics is getting weakened.

### **Women, Counterinsurgency, and Statemaking in Rural Eastern India**

*Lipika Kamra, Georgetown University-Qatar.*

This paper examines the gendered politics of India's statemaking processes in the context of counterinsurgency operations. After failing to counter the Maoist insurgency solely by military means, in 2009, the Indian state introduced special rural development programmes to wean civilian populations away from Maoist rebels. In my fieldsites in the West Midnapore district of West Bengal, these programmes primarily targeted poor rural women. Through women, state officials hoped to reach every household and build a new peacetime order. Women, even those who were earlier associated with the Maoist movement, now enthusiastically participated in the new development



programmes to make new claims on the state's development machinery. Through an exploration of the relationship between women and actors who represent the state, I argue that development in the context of counterinsurgency ended up not as a top-down imposition but, paradoxically, as an opportunity for women to transform their lives.

### **Room B15**

Elena Valdameri

Amar Sohal, University of Oxford

Elena Valdameri, University of Milan

Catharina Hänsel, SOAS

### **Nation building**

Chair

The Great Indian Experiment: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the National Idea

“Gopal Krishna Gokhale: creating citizens in colonial India (1890-1915)”,

Capitalist Planning? The “Bombay Plan” and the Leftist Critique in the Indian National Movement, 1927-1945

### **The Great Indian Experiment: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the National Idea** *Amar Sohal, University of Oxford*

Treating Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars as mere local agitators confronting the colonial state in the North-West Frontier, historians have argued that their alliance with Gandhi and the Congress was a thing of opportunism. This paper, taking the Fakh-e-Afghan seriously as a political thinker, challenges that assumption. It will contend that while his political language of honour and obligation had an undoubtedly Pathan derivation, it simultaneously transcended the ethnos by universalising these values. This uninhibited connectivity between the local, national, and global in his thought, led Ghaffar Khan to a very civic idea of India. A nation marked by a consensual commitment to social democracy more than any blood and soil affiliation, it consequently promised to be a laboratory capable of finding solutions to the problems of the world. The attempt to transform Indian diversity into Indian nationality was an experiment with ramifications for peace and plurality everywhere.

### **“Gopal Krishna Gokhale: creating citizens in colonial India (1890-1915)”.** *Elena Valdameri, University of Milan*

With my paper, I will try to explore the concept of citizenship defined by Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915), leader and ideologist of the Indian National Congress. To this end, I will analyse some crucial aspects of Gokhale's political thought, taking into account both its domestic roots and foreign influences. Moreover, I will consider the activities of the ‘Servants of India Society’, an educational institution founded by Gokhale in Pune in 1905 with the main aim to create the ideal Indian citizen. More specifically, my paper will look at the associational life of the members of the society, its educational policies and its interrelation with other similar institutions: such elements will be useful to better understand how the concept of citizenship percolated into the grassroots level and was put in practice in a colonial context. Ultimately, also the response of the colonial British administration to Gokhale's Society will be investigated.

### **Capitalist Planning? The “Bombay Plan” and the Leftist Critique in the Indian National Movement, 1927-1945** *Catharina Hänsel, SOAS*

The 1930s and 1940s were crucial in shaping Indian economic thought, which was not only influenced by the emerging *economic nationalism*, but also by global trends to strengthen state control

over the economy by pushing towards centralized plans. This was the ideological context within which two major interest groups sought to gain control over the Indian national movement in order to form economic policy for an independent India: businessmen and Leftist parties. Through looking at the businessmen's "Bombay Plan" and the Royists' "People's Plan" it will be discussed how their ideas used the planning framework in order to gain influence over the movement and whether they were successful or not. It should become clear that compared to the Leftist group, businessmen were much more capable to form a homogenous class and shape Indian economic thought.

**16.00-17.15: travel to the city centre for the keynote (see map). This should take around 30-45 minutes.**

**17.15-18.45 Keynote Public Lecture given by Urvashi Butalia (Zubaan Books). The keynote is hosted by Nottingham Trent University at the Newton Building, Lecture Theatre 2 (the entrance is off Goldsmith Street)**

**Following the keynote lecture, reception sponsored by Taylor and Francis, publisher of *South Asian Studies* and *Contemporary South Asia*, and announcement of the BASAS paper prize winner.**

**20.00: Dinner at Cosmo - 29A Milton Street, Trinity Square, Nottingham, NG1 3EN  
Friday 21 April 2017, 09.00-10.30**

<b>Room B01</b>	<b>Right-wing Postcolonialism</b>
Deborah Sutton, Lancaster University	Chair
Shalini Sharma, Keele University	'Hindutva and Postcolonialism'
Deborah Sutton, Lancaster University	'What does Hindutva see in Postcolonialism?: Historicism and Politics in South Asia'
Edward Anderson, University of Cambridge	Discussant

**'Hindutva and Postcolonialism'.  
*Shalini Sharma, Keele University***

One of the main strands of postcolonialism adopted by the Hindutva apologists is the idea of the colonial construction of caste and communalism. While not thoroughly disputing the benefits and ongoing influence of this approach, it is worth revisiting the genealogy of this approach, the assumptions that permeated it and the methodology it has fostered. This revisit would take us to the anthropological 'turn' of the late 50s, the importance of Sociology as a discipline, and its effects on the practice of history, and the dominance of synchronic rather than diachronic history. I would propose to do this by charting the intellectual journey of Bernard Cohn, his influence and that of his students on South Asian history both to understand the strengths of this historical approach and also its vulnerability to criticism.

**'What does Hindutva see in Postcolonialism?: Historicism and Politics in South Asia'  
*Deborah Sutton, Lancaster University***

This paper explores the exploitation of ideas associated with postcolonialism by politics broadly associated with Hindutva. The paper will pull together three threads: the intellectual cosmologies of

‘postcolonialism’, the tension between scholarly and popular histories and the systematic attacks being carried out by the Indian government against universities. I want to examine the populist appeal of scholarly work that has been particularly concerned with, firstly, the relationship between modernity and colonialism and, secondly, with the ideas (better known in the parlance of postcolonial thought as ‘knowledges’) constitutive of the colonial intervention. Did the dominant intellectual currents of postcolonialism contain within themselves the condition of their appropriation? Are the digital, post-factual politics of affect hastening the end of our scepticism towards empiricism?

### **Room C01**

### **Women in South Asia**

Carole Spary, University of Nottingham

Chair

Shruti Amar, Kings College London

Beyond the Curtain: Women and Folklore in Indian Fiction in English

Gemma Scott, Keele University

‘Women will have to fight this battle’: Political prisoners under India’s Emergency, 1975-1977

Sreenanti Banerjee, Birkbeck College

Emergency and the Postcolonial Biopolitics of Family Planning

### **Beyond the Curtain: Women and Folklore in Indian Fiction in English.**

*Shruti Amar, Kings College London*

Finding a personal voice in male-dominated galaxies of possibilities is at the centre of the South Asian folkloric discourse and in many ways questions deep patriarchal traditions that subjugate women in multiple ways. In the Sanskrit classics, women are often shown chaste and monogamous in their relationship with men and any transgression of the moral order is adequately punished. In folktales, songs or proverbs, though, as A.K.Ramanujan has shown, women are neither reprimanded nor questioned for their polygamous relations. The Indian novelists writing in English draws on this alternative tradition to portray a new femininity. Tracing the appropriation of women-centric folklore in the novels such as *Kanthapura* (1938), *Cradle of the Clouds* (1951) and *Flame of the Forest* (1955), the paper interrogates the representation of the female voices in the texts.

### **‘Women will have to fight this battle’: Political prisoners under India’s Emergency, 1975-1977**

*Gemma Scott, Keele University*

During India’s infamous period of Emergency, Indira Gandhi’s government criminalized opposition and detained large numbers of opposition party members and dissenters. Existing scholarship on this policy and the Emergency more broadly pays very little attention to women’s experiences. This paper draws on a unique collection of letters sent to and from female political prisoners in Maharashtra to explore their experiences of preventive detention under the regime. It demonstrates that state authorities did detain women during this period, a fact which is not recognized by the Commission of Inquiry set up to investigate the regime’s suspension of fundamental rights. Further, it charts the myriad of ways in which these female prisoners actively engaged in opposition to the Emergency. The paper also challenges the notion that the prison as an entirely repressive space, as these women’s narratives show that it was home to lively cultures of resistance and an active gendered consciousness.

### **Emergency and the Postcolonial Biopolitics of Family Planning.**

*Sreenanti Banerjee, Birbeck University*

This paper aims to engage in a feminist inquiry of a particular phase in Indian history, namely from the legalisation of abortion under ‘specific circumstances’ in 1971 leading upto the period of internal

‘emergency’ from 1975 to 1977. The dominant representation of this emergency has primarily been in terms of depicting it on one hand as a solely ‘repressive state apparatus’ which either practiced ‘Caesarism’ with a socialist ‘rhetoric’ (Partha Chatterjee) or ‘eugenics’ in its call for family planning (Asha Nadkarni) or was a regressive ‘forcible deal’ which had nothing to do with the supposedly ‘progressive’ spirit of diminishing the national birth rate (Emma Tarlo), and, on the other hand as a solely ‘productive state apparatus’ for its established role in the introduction of Women’s Studies as an academic discipline in India (Mary E. John). Contrary to this existing literature which retains the binary of repression and production as mutually exclusive categories, through a reading of the ‘Towards Equality’ Report in conjunction with the parliament debates on abortion and the literature on the relationship between family planning and Amartya Sen’s Capabilities Approach, firstly, I aim to argue how the period of emergency should be read as an era of what Michel Foucault has denoted as Biopolitics, where the individual woman as the object of family planning strategies was *simultaneously* established as human capital, as a rights bearing subject and as a ‘living being’ whose health must be an object of state governance. Secondly, as opposed to the Eurocentric usage of biopolitics where there is a *complete* economisation of the political subject, my effort will be to illustrate how in India the biopolitics of family planning was conceived such that there was a *political necessity* to ensure that the ‘full translation’ of women into specs of human capital is left incomplete. Thirdly, I would wish to demonstrate how one of the primary reasons as to why this biopolitics of family planning was unsuccessful in India was because the sterilisation programmes resulted in a complete individuated economisation of the female body along with a growing sense of emasculation amongst men owing to increasing numbers of state-sponsored vasectomy, thereby causing a disruption and a resultant non-optimisation of the heteronormative familial structure.

#### **Room B08**

#### **Social policy, land and development**

Diego Maiorano, University of Nottingham

Chair

Taisha Grace Antony, Institute of South Asian Studies, Singapore

The New Child Labour Law In India: Some Limits to Legal Solutions To A Structural Problem

Devanshi Chanchani, University of East Anglia

Decentralisation, citizen participation and ICDS governance: A comparative study from Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh

Mamata Pradhan, University of East Anglia

Gendered pattern of product choices in Public Distribution System in India-Bihar, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Odisha

Chiara Arnavas, LSE

“Inshallah, there will be change” Populist Politics of Dispossession in India

#### **The New Child Labour Law In India: Some Limits To Legal Solutions To A Structural Problem.**

*Taisha Grace Antony, Institute of South Asian Studies, Singapore*

The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Amendment Bill of 2012 was passed in Lok Sabha on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016 amidst deep controversies surrounding the Bill. The new Child Labour Amendment Act of 2016 aims at amending the existing Child Labour Act of 1986, which prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 in certain types of occupations and regulates the working conditions in several others. The new Act seeks to forbid employment of children below 14 years in all occupations except where they help their families in their free time, as well as outlaw the employment of those between the age groups of 15 and 18 in certain hazardous occupations. This paper explores how, on one hand, the amended Act balances the need for basic income with the need for an extra income, while on the other hand, it underestimates the adverse consequences of child labour for poverty alleviation in India.

## **Decentralisation, citizen participation and ICDS governance: A comparative study from Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.**

*Devanshi Chanchani, University of East Anglia*

From an implementation analysis of India's flagship Integrated Child Development Services programme, this paper argues that the nature of local politics and implementation mechanisms bear critically on programme governance. Processes of decentralisation and devolution create power dynamisms that enhance service quality and accountability. Formal spaces for citizen engagement, decentralized mechanisms of delivery and competitive panchayat politics improve programme accountability in Chhattisgarh. While competition for economic participation makes the ICDS a subject of political rivalries in Chhattisgarh, in Uttar Pradesh, centralization of power with service providers and weak panchayats erode both demand for the programme and service accountability. Although decentralized models of service delivery and active panchayat politics create dynamisms that enhance ICDS accountability in Chhattisgarh, they also contribute to unfair targeting of service providers and unequal service distribution.

## **Gendered pattern of product choices in Public Distribution System in India-Bihar, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Odisha.**

*Mamata Pradhan, University of East Anglia*

Of late there has been an increasing demand to add pulses and other food items such as coarse cereals and animal source foods (ASF) for example eggs to the basket of subsidized goods in the Public Distribution System (PDS) in India. Traditionally PDS has predominantly supplied subsidized fine cereals rice and wheat to India's populations, of late at differential prices based on economic status of the household. The motivation behind the expansion of the portfolio of the PDS is that it would foster dietary diversity and improved nutrition, especially among the poor. This in principle could be the right motivation but there exist several countervailing factors some related to the delivery systems and the problems there in and others related to preferences of the potential beneficiaries. From the results of primary survey and semi-structured in-depth interviews, in the three Indian states of Bihar, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Odisha, I examine the demand pattern of the product choices through the gendered lens from PDS. Results reinforce the importance of spatial, cultural and social heterogeneity. Revealed needs and preferences underline the roles of extant heterogeneity based on characteristics as well as actual or perceived experiences with the PDS. The findings have possible policy implications suggesting changes in the PDS food system to better align with the demand and thereby improve the outcomes.

## **"Inshallah, there will be change" Populist Politics of Dispossession in India.**

*Chiara Arnavas, LSE*

This paper rethinks populist politics from the shadow-land of semi-legal activities in the real estate market in India. This is the arena of the syndicates, organizations portrayed by Indian media, political debates and contemporary cinema as formed by Muslim mercenaries threatening constructors and imposing prices on land and building materials.

Based on my ethnography in the periphery of Kolkata, this paper explores the effects of land acquisitions and peasants' dispossessions at the hand of West Bengal government led by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, in connection to the central government.

Existing literature focused on spectacular resistance to land acquisitions or to the complete marginalization of dispossessed farmers. Moving away from dramatic portrays of peasant resistance, I trace the behind-the-scenes negotiations through which populist rhetoric and politics, centered on the support of Muslim minorities, foster a speculative land market and informalized labour relations that ultimately stigmatize Muslim dispossessed communities as immoral criminals.

**Room B07**

Erica Wald

Erica Wald, Goldsmith  
University, LondonRaphael Susewind, King's  
College LondonBecca Savory Fuller,  
University of Exeter**Social Spaces**

Chair

Creating Social Spaces : the Life and Afterlife of the Bombay  
Theatre, 1770-1856Rifah-e-Aam Club, Lucknow: Public sphere and public space in  
urban IndiaPlaying at the borders between public and private: Performance  
and protest in contemporary India**Creating Social Spaces : the Life and Afterlife of the Bombay Theatre, 1770-1856.***Dr Erica Wald, Goldsmith University, London*

Built by public subscription in 1770, and in operation until 1830, the Bombay Theatre represents a curious colonial social space. Ticket sales show a broad range of Bombay 'society' – from wealthy Parsi merchants and European surgeons to less-well-to-do European ensigns actively sought out the entertainment it promised on a regular basis. An even broader swathe of society was involved in its day-to-day operation – specialist costume makers, carpenters and financiers. When the Theatre finally shut its doors in 1830 (to be re-opened later in the century) it remained the subject of debates on social spaces in Bombay. This paper will explore emerging ideas about appropriate, or 'respectable' sociability and leisure in the nineteenth century through a focus on the Theatre and Bombay theatre-goers.

**Rifah-e-Aam Club, Lucknow: Public sphere and public space in urban India.***Dr. Raphael Susewind, Kings College London*

Today, the Rifah-e-Aam Club in Lucknow is the place where the neighbourhood of Wazirganj casts its votes at election times and celebrates its marriages, where political rallies take place and Ifthar dinners are arranged, where local goons and policemen play Badminton and young men spend their evenings in 'timepass'. But the same picturesque if increasingly decrepit structure from the local past also carries much larger memories: in the late 19th century, this happened to be the very place where Lucknow's civil society emerged, where nationalist demands flourished a few decades later – both the Khilafat conference and the first meeting of the Progressive Writers Association happened here – and where India's postcolonial politics of class, caste and community play out today. It is therefore through the prism of this building, its entangled histories and contemporary uses that this paper explores the changing composition of North India's urban public sphere and its complex entanglement with public space. In Richard Sennett's seminal definition 'a city is a human settlement in which strangers are likely to meet' (Sennett 1974). Who these strangers are and how they meet may change over time – but they need a distinct kind of locale. This can be the Habermasian salon of European enlightenment, but it can as easily be a contemporary bookstore (Urla 2001), a town plaza (Low 2000), 'Adda, Calcutta' (Chakrabarty 1999) – or indeed the 'Club for the public good' in Wazirganj. Against mainstream emphases on the public's fragmentation, I thus highlight how it can all come together, aided in memory and practice by iconic infrastructure.

**Playing at the borders between public and private: Performance and protest in contemporary India.***Becca Savory Fuller, University of Exeter*

In the changing landscape of contemporary globalising India, as protest movements have entered the new public spaces of online digital media, new forms of performative protest are emerging. Mobilising dispersed participants through social media, these performance actions have sought to question and challenge conservative social norms relating to gendered bodies, identity, social rights

and citizenship, by playing at the borders between the private and the public. This paper examines recent case studies of Indian protest actions in which bodies have become the performative sites for such activism. I argue that these cases represent an extension of what Judith Butler (2015) has termed ‘concerted bodily enactment,’ and ‘plural performativity’: By deploying concerted assembly via the public spaces of digital media, these performance render private, personal embodied actions into public, concerted and political ones.

### **10.30-11.00: Coffee Break, Atrium**

**Friday 21 April 2017, 11.00-12.30**

<b>Room B01</b>	<b>Neo-Hindutva: Emergent forms and spaces of Hindu nationalism</b>
Edward Anderson, University of Cambridge	Chair
Eviane Cheng Leidig, University of Oslo	Neo-Hindutva: Emergent forms and spaces of Hindu nationalism
Priya Swamy, Tilburg University	Introducing Dutch Hindutva: Narrating ‘Hinduness’ through Surinamese colonial legacies
Arkotong Longkumer, University of Edinburgh	The fractured landscape of Northeast India: Hindutva and territoriality

#### **‘Neo-Hindutva: Emergent forms and spaces of Hindu nationalism’.** *Eviane Cheng Leidig, University of Oslo*

‘From neo-Hindutva to the populist radical right: exploring diaspora support for Brexit and Trump’ In many ways, Modi’s success in 2014 foreshadowed the current emergence of a populist radical right revolt in the West. Whilst many commentators have discussed these exclusive forms of nationalism, very little attention has been devoted towards exploring the role of the Hindu diaspora as a mediator of transnational ideological formations concerning anti-Muslim anxiety. This paper thus draws upon and expands the concept of neo-Hindutva to include its manifested support for populist radical right movements and politicians in the UK and US. It analyses the global circulation of Islamophobia and negative representation of Muslims as a political discourse promoted by pro-Brexit and Trump Hindu supporters. The result is a tendency to reject multiculturalism as a policy failure, whilst simultaneously exploiting multicultural rhetoric in order to construct the model minority myth. Ultimately, this paper aims to develop a new vocabulary towards understanding how diasporic Hindu identities are subsumed into exclusivist national political agendas under the banner of multiculturalism in Western societies.

#### **Introducing Dutch Hindutva: Narrating ‘Hinduness’ through Surinamese colonial legacies** *Priya Swamy (Tilburg)*

This paper explores how ‘Dutch Hindutva’ is constructed in a predominantly Surinamese Hindu diasporic community. Building upon the discussions of ‘Neo-Hindutva’ in the UK (Anderson 2015) and ‘Yankee Hindutva’ (Prashad 2001) in the US, this article asks how Dutch Hindutva discourse obfuscates the relationship between Hindu-ness and India by appealing to the legacy of colonial rule in Suriname. I argue that narratives of collective suffering and the realities of twice migration from India and Suriname have strengthened the notion of protecting one’s religion and culture against defamation. On the other hand, they have also worked to delink Hindutva discourse from the Indian subcontinent and make it an extension of the struggle against the aftermath of Dutch colonial rule. I

illustrate this by presenting two case studies: the first is a large RSS summer camp in the Southeast of Amsterdam and the second is the ongoing social movement ‘Holi is Not a Houseparty’, which was set up to protest the perceived cultural appropriation of the religious holiday *Holi* by European dance festivals. Although these two case studies qualify as political Hindu organisations for different reasons, both frame their narratives of what it means to be Hindu in the experiences of their indentured ancestors in Suriname, alongside the need to protect their ‘ancient and unchanging’ religious identity. This article is based on ethnographic research that foregrounds the voices of my first and second-generation Surinamese Hindu respondents, and it also examines grey literature produced by both groups.

**The fractured landscape of Northeast India: Hindutva and territoriality**  
*Arkotong Longkumer (Edinburgh)*

This paper examines the way in which the Hindu-right view the Northeast of India as part of *Punyabhumi* Bharat (pious land). It will examine the construction of the notion of *Bharatvarsh* and how ‘place-making’ (Basso 1996) plays a role in imagining the Northeast. If the key is to argue, and to demonstrate, that the Northeast has been part of *Bharatvarsh* since time immemorial, they have to go some way to establishing these connections by ‘doing history’ that constructs a sense of place amidst the chaotic territorial politics the region is embroiled in.

<b>Room C01</b>	<b>History and Politics of Labour and Welfare in India</b>
Karuna Dietrich Wielenga and Louise Tillin	Chair
Karuna Dietrich Wielenga, University of Oxford	Law and labour politics in early independent India: The emergence of a formal-informal divide
Louise Tillin, King’s College London	Planning for Social Policy in Post-War Independent India
Jon Wilson, King’s College London	The labour camp as a model for Indian welfare - from Famine Relief to MGNREGA

**Law and labour politics in early independent India: The emergence of a formal-informal divide**  
*Karuna Dietrich Wielenga, University of Oxford*

In this paper I propose to look at the politics around a cluster of labour legislations that came into being around the time of independence in India. My focus is on labour in several industries/services that came to occupy that sector of the economy that today would be termed the ‘informal’ or the ‘unorganised’ (such as handlooms, beedi (cigarette) manufacturing, processing of cashew/ arecanuts, work in hotels). I use an inductive approach, examining closely the actions and discourse of trade unions, legislators, employer associations and the institutions of the state, before, during and after the passing of these laws, to draw broader conclusions on the nature of regulatory regimes that came to be put in place by the state.

**Planning for Social Policy in Post-War Independent India**  
*Louise Tillin, King’s India Institute, King’s College London*

The immediate years following India’s Independence are often assumed to have been a bleak period for institutionalising social and economic rights. Scholars have focused on the relegation of social and economic rights to the non-justiciable directive principles of the Indian constitution, and the elevation of procedural commitments to democracy over more radical forms of social and economic change. However even as the Constituent Assembly was sitting, new legislation was enacted that introduced



contributory social insurance – sickness and maternity - for industrial workers. Drawing on a range of archival sources, this paper will examine the framing of India’s new social insurance regime in the tailwinds of international developments in social policy in the 1940s and in the political economic climate of post-war, newly independent India. Furthermore, it will consider the longer term ramifications of decisions made in this period for the development of social policy in India over the longer term.

**The labour camp as a model for Indian welfare - from Famine Relief to MGNREGA**

*Jon Wilson, King’s College London*

This paper examines the imperial-era famine relief camp as an enduring institutional form which has had powerfully influenced anti-poverty strategies throughout twentieth century India. In the famines of the 1890s and early twentieth century, famine camps employed up to 4 million people on local public works projects, far more than industrial factories at the same time. The paper argues that the direct employment of labour proliferated as the imperial regime saw it as the safest way to alleviate extreme distress without creating interests that might undermine state power; but that it was shaped by Indian critics of the inadequacy of famine relief. It then traces debates about the government’s direct employment of labour in the immediate post-war period, tracing its endurance as an anti-poverty strategy and transformation into rural employment guarantee programmes. The argument stresses the distance between ideological debates and institutional forms, showing how the same practical structures can be put into place to meet very different political aims.

**Room B08**

**Religious practice and beliefs**

Filippo Boni, University of Nottingham

Chair

Fakhar Bilal, Royal Holloway University of London

Growth of Deobandi Madrasas in Pakistan

Mujeeb Ahmad

South Asian Muftis on Western Civilization: An Analytical Study of their Fatawa

Muhammad Shakeel Ahmad

Religion, Democracy and Electoral Politics in Hybrid Regimes: A case of Pakistan

**Growth of Deobandi Madrasas in Pakistan.**

*Fakhar Bilal, Royal Holloway University*

For much of Islamic history the transmission of the central texts of Islam, (the Quran and the Hadiths) and the skills needed to make them socially useful was undertaken primarily in the households of *ulama* (learned men). In the classical Islamic era the process did come to be formalised for some in the madrasa or college. Such colleges slowly spread throughout the Islamic world. By the twentieth century in South Asia, for instance, there were at most a few hundreds of them.

Since independence in 1947 the number of madrasas has exploded. My focus is on Pakistan where the number has gone from 189 in 1947 to c. 10,000 in 2002. A large majority of these new foundations, namely over 7,000, have been of the reforming Deobandi tradition. This raises the issue of how a reforming tradition, opposed to many expressions of Sufism, was able to expand in a region in which Islamic mysticism was very strong. It is an issue which gains extra interest when we note that the dominant religious presence amongst jihadi Muslims of the NW Frontier has been Deobandi.

My concern is to study how two Deobandi madrasas came to be established in the city of Multan in the southern Punjab. I am concerned to consult sources in madrasa archives and libraries and in private libraries of leading families in the city. These I hope will show me who were the people who

supported the development of Deobandi madrasas as well as the forces of social and economic change which favoured them. I shall also be concerned to analyse the entrance and alumni records of the madrasas to see what social and economic groups sought this education. All the time I shall be alert to evidence of tension between the Deobandi reformers and the intensely Sufi environment in which they moved.

### **South Asian Muftis on Western Civilization: An Analytical Study of their Fatawa.**

*Mujeeb Ahmad*

In South Asia, the dominant school of Muslim Law is *Hanafi*. In the *fatawa* literature, the *muftis* described the West and Western Civilization as an enemy and antithesis of Islamic Civilization. Little attention has been paid to explore and investigate the roots and causes of the *ulama*'s reaction towards different facets and impact of Western Civilization. To analyze this issue, it seems pertinent to examine their response to Western Civilization in the light of *fatawa* literature.

This study will focus on the analysis of the *muftis*' perceptions of the Western Culture and Civilization introduced by the British in India. In this study, an attempt will be made to review the *fatawa* literature of some selected *muftis*, dealing with the question of response and observations about the Western Culture and Civilization and to explore the roots and causes of anti-Western sentiments in South Asia. (Keywords: *Hanafi, fatawa, West, Civilization, South Asia*)

### **Religion, Democracy and Electoral Politics in Hybrid Regimes: A case of Pakistan.**

*Dr. Muhammad Shakeel Ahmad*

Electoral politics in Pakistan reflect hybrid electoral culture due to religion and democracy as two deviating, collaborative and mixed modes of production. These modes of production have created structural stratification in electoral culture. Underlying forces in structural formation of hybrid electoral culture, there is need to explore hybridity of electoral culture within the frameworks of different theoretical approaches. How does religion as a mode of production come to power and reflect in national narratives of Pakistan? And why does democracy collaborate, resist and adjust in religio-garrison power basis? These two questions further led a single question, how do religion and democracy being a mode of production shape electoral choices in hybrid regimes, particularly in Pakistan? This paper is an attempt to explore this question considering a relationship of religion as dominant and democracy as non-dominant factor.

#### **Room B07**

TBC

Shreyashi Dasgupta,  
University of Cambridge

Sumrin Kalia, LSE

Aysha Iqbal Viswamohan, IIT  
Madras and Sayanty  
Chatterjee, IIT Madras

#### **Urban space**

Chair

Ad-hoc Verticality: (In)formal Housing, Governance and the  
Planning of Contemporary Dhaka

Determinants of Civic Engagement among Youth of the Mega-  
City Karachi

Transgression, Morality and Gender Dynamics: Representation of  
Small Towns in Popular Hindi Cinema in the Globalized Age

### **Ad-hoc Verticality: (In)formal Housing, Governance and the Planning of Contemporary Dhaka. *Shreyashi Dasgupta, University of Cambridge***

The past two decades have witnessed “globally circulatory imaginaries” of the cities in the Global South. The politics behind socio-spatial urban transformations have revived the interest in the

informal city. This research uses Ananya Roy and Nezar AlSayyad's framework of "Urban Informality" to elaborate on the new forms of planning and urban governance in South Asian cities. Based on empirical examples from Dhaka, this paper highlights the rise of low-income, *pucca*, vertical „mess“ housing as a distinct urban form that is deeply intertwined with the landscape of the city. These mess houses usually differ in shape, size and form and can be three to six storied vertical structures that are built, managed, owned, inhabited and governed by different stakeholders. This paper attempts to conceptualise the practice of vertical informality as an emerging urban paradigm from the cities of the Global South. It argues that the practice of informality can also exist outside of slums and hence there is a need to understand and question the contradictory nature of the formal realm.

### **Inequality and Spatial Disparities in Wellbeing; The Case of Karachi.**

*Sumrin Kalia, LSE*

Income inequality and disparities in wellbeing are not only unjust but it is also bad for growth. Global and national inequalities have received considerable attention; however local inequalities, within cities are of equal concern. More than two third of the world's population lives in cities that are more unequal today than 20 years ago. Disparities within cities may be socially destabilizing if there are conflicting political interests and discontent regarding economic welfare. This paper is an attempt to gauge the extent of inequality in Pakistan's largest metropolitan Karachi. Home to more than 22 million people Karachi is Pakistan's economic hub and the most politically sensitive city. This paper measures inequality in Karachi using household income. It further develops an index using various dimensions of wellbeing and presents a spatial analysis of wellbeing in towns and districts of Karachi. It is seen that Karachi displays high levels of income inequality. The cantonments and towns near the center of the city exhibit high wellbeing whereas towns in the periphery of the city show low levels of wellbeing. Overall, the city has high spatial disparity of wellbeing across its towns. These findings have important policy implications, as these disparities have the potential to deepen the lines of segregation and separation, and can result in exclusion and social polarization.

### **Transgression, Morality and Gender Dynamics: Representation of Small Towns in Popular Hindi Cinema in the Globalized Age.**

*Aysha Iqbal Viswamohan & Sayanty Chatterjee, IIT Madras*

Amidst the economically and culturally diverse territorial spaces in India, the category of small town is what primarily constitutes the major Indian demography. This study is premised on the understanding of the small town as the microcosm and representative of the nation itself, in a post-liberalized and globalized age. Small towns are largely inhabited by the middle class population and middle class being the custodian of values and morals, these townships are conceptualized as the repository of Indian social codes and customs. With the advent of globalization, the constant negotiations between global and the local, between traditional values and new-world order ensues a far more complicated ambivalence in the individual belonging to those spaces. The focus would lie in the exploration of larger questions pertaining to 'transgressing' individual, aspiration for social mobility and gender dynamics in small towns as represented in the contemporary Hindi cinema. With the analysis of select Bollywood films, this paper would engage with the representation of individual identity as well as the characteristics depiction of the space, i.e., Indian small town.