December 2007

Conference Abstracts

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION 106TH ANNUAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 28-DECEMBER 2, 2007 WASHINGTON D.C.

Occupational Justice: Three-Tiered Empowerment Model for Disability Policy in Post-War Afghanistan

BARNEY, Karen F.

Twenty-five years of civil war and political upheaval in Afghanistan have produced hundreds of thousands of people with physical disabilities and related psychological symptoms. The overall aim of this U.S. State Department cultural exchange project has been to address these needs by empowering Afghan advocates for persons with disabilities to establish broad-based capacity and to build systems and policy foundations to promote occupational justice and provide services for persons with disabilities. This project has involved occupational scientists, disability advocates who teach disability studies, and numerous other professionals, including grass roots leaders of NGOs in Afghanistan and the U.S. After three attempts to send the team to Kabul, the first tier of the project had to be deferred due to U.S. State Department security concerns. Second, individuals were screened and selected to pursue disability awareness training in St. Louis from May 2-21, 2006. This group of eight professionals forms the core disability working committee and leadership for a permanent disability blueprint program for Afghanistan. The two-week training program provided a wide variety of topics, balanced with site visits of examples of models that promote inclusion, access, and occupational justice for persons with disabilities in the community. The Afghan participants were also linked with a mentor who will maintain an ongoing relationship and provide current resources to them. Finally, the Afghan America team forged through this experience will collaboratively support the establishment of a nation-wide resource center to support the work of these leaders regarding disability awareness and occupational justice.

Eating Aids: Using Indigenous Cognitive Illness Schemata (Cognitive Metaphors) in Hiv/Aids Prevention Messages in Nepal

BEINE, David K, *SIL International*

"Eating" is a foundational cognitive schema (metaphor) used widely in the Nepali language both at the lexical and conceptual levels; "eating" is used metaphorically to understand and communicate ideas regarding concepts from domains as disparate as corruption and emotion. Eating is also widely used metaphorically in Nepal to understand concepts related to illness. This paper will examine the Nepali eating schema used for illness and address the applications that this has for HIV/AIDS prevention messages in the tiny Himalayan country of Nepal.

Nationhood, Citizenship and Identity: Electing A Tibetan Democracy in Exile

BERNSTIEN, Alissa, *Stanford University*

Focusing on my fieldwork in the Tibetan refugee community in Dharamsala, India, my research examines the complex process of creating a democratic government in exile, and in particular, the issues arising when political leadership is provided by a revered spiritual leader. The formation of a democratic Tibetan government in exile is complicated for many reasons, beginning with the necessary transition from the traditional feudal theocracy that existed in Tibet prior to 1959, and followed by the difficulties in establishing a landless political community in a diaspora that is extremely widespread. More specifically, I examine how aspects of Tibetan identity formation, such as religion, their position as refugees, and feelings of nationhood and citizenship complicate Tibetan notions of and participation in the exile political community. Some key issues I examine include the ways Tibetans in Dharmsala in politics, for example, I question the motivations behind why Tibetans in exile vote, participate in protests, and create political NGOs. I also examine the discursive techniques surround the narrative construction of the Tibet democracy in exile, including what rhetoric is used to discuss the emerging democracy in Dharmsala, and how this rhetoric relates to a larger discourse of human rights.

Can A Plantation Be Fair?: Paradoxes and Possibilities in Fair Trade Darjeeling Tea Certification

BESKY, Sarah A, *University of Wisconsin*

In the Darjeeling district of Northeaster India, tow tea-growing communities are seeking fair trade certification. One community is Makaibari tea plantation, founded in 1856. The other, five miles away, is the CHAI small farmer cooperative, organized by farmers in 2006. Initially, it would seem that the cooperative would be far more congruent with fair trade's social and environmental justice aims than the plantation. This paper will explore how small farmers in a cooperative and plantation owners could both legitimately

seek certifications from transnational fair trade certification agencies. It will also explore how individuals embedded in fundamentally different land tenure systems operationalize "fairness" through transnational fair trade certification, local labor organization, and national legal codes. Tea is the only fair trade product grown on a plantation. All other fair trade producers operate on cooperatives. In India, fair trade tea production presents an additional paradox. Colonial labor policies inspired the Plantations Labour Act of 1951, which mandated that plantations provide workers housing, health care, food rations, and schooling for their children. Neither the Labour Act nor fair trade guarantees such aid to cooperative farmers. Today, plantation owners blame the Labour Act's "social costs" for the financial demise of many plantations and claim that the industry would be stronger if the act were repealed. Although they lament the "social costs" of the Labour Act, many of these plantation owners are seeking fair trade certification. What makes a plantation "fair?" Should all Indian plantations be fair trade certificated if they comply with labor laws?

Technicalities and Moralities of Governance: Hill Councils in India

BHAN, Mona, *Rutgers University*

This paper will explore the shifting meanings of governmentality vis-à-vis the Indian state as these are restructured and reinterpreted within the intersecting forces of classical nationalism and neoliberalism. By looking at contemporary substate formations such as the hill-councils along the borders of India (councils meant to decentralize political and economic power to local populations), my paper will foreground how social and political values such as decentralization, citizenship, and empowerment are mediated through local registers of rights, duties, and entitlements. I focus on how Brogpas, a minority ethnic community in the border region of Ladakh (Kashmir) offer an alternative narrative to justify access to political and economic resources. Rather than appropriating macro-ideals of decentralization and empowerment, Brogpas invoke their situated history of marginality and difference to assert their political subjectivities, while simultaneously constituting the state as intimate and proximate. In so doing, Brogpas attempt to lay claims to state power within the framework of rights and duties facilitated through a redefinition of state institutions in postcolonial India.

The Transformative Power of Impoverished Married Women's Work in Nepal: Challenging Caste and Gender Roles

BRUNSON, Jan M., *Brown University*

Feminist scholars have underscored the diversity of women's experiences within a single cultural context, and the danger of assuming that the dominant model of what it means to be a woman applies to disadvantaged groups. While the family remains the most fundamental social institution and locus of social reproduction, the definition and experience (and even the possibility) of marriage differs greatly among women. In the context of a semi-urban community in the Kathmandu Valley, in which arranged marriages and a patrilocal, multi-generational family system are the ideals, changes in the educational and economic opportunities for married women play out differently according to class. Among Nepali Hindu-caste women, poverty acts as a leveling mechanism amongst otherwise hierarchical caste groups. Poor women of all castes work outside the home in wage-paying positions in order to contribute to the family income. The mobility and interaction with others in public that occurs when working in this manner threatens the traditional gender roles of women, particularly those of high-caste women. As a result, there is evidence of a backlash against disadvantaged women who work outside the household in this semi-urban community. Yet as the educational and economic opportunities afforded to these women improve, one would expect the objections to fade, and perhaps, a greater participation of middle-class married women in wage-paying work. Through examining the local social and power structures in this community, it becomes apparent that local configurations disrupt the expected generalized effects of improved economies, access to education, and gender equality.

Buddhist Technologies of the Self and Sino-Tibetan Shangrilaism

DA COL, Giovanni

The Three Rivers Unesco Site and Kha ba dkar po, a Tibetan sacred mountain in Northswest Yunnan (China), attract today not only anthropologists but multifarious figures such as independent local scholars, "authentic" and "fake living Buddhas" (Tib. sprul ku rdzun) sponsoring temples using Chinese and foreign aids, "cultural associations" competing for expertise on the mountain cult, environmental NGOs and geographers mapping sacred sites. In this context, Buddhism is facing a process of modernist purifications, facilitated by a purposeful Chinese governmentality that transformed Tibetan Buddhism from a problem of national security into a technology of the self. This technology is aimed at changing their recipients' quality of life by encouraging people to adopt and maintain the State's own Buddhist "orientation", called "Shangrilaism", named and developed by the former governor of Diqing Tebetan Prefecture. "Shangrilaism" aims to show how Buddhist religious and lay debates are perfectly in line with the government's orientation. It is an invitation for the Tibetan's elite (lamas, NGO workers, local scholars and foundations) to develop their own anthropology of Buddhism and foster politically correct "academic" conferences where everyone should engage in harmonious debate. This paper aims to analyse the speeches and manifestos of Shangrilaism, reflecting on how Buddhism has been incorporated in the political by organising Buddhist tenets and the Communist Party's propaganda around the principle of a "construction of

an harmonious society" (goujian hexi shehui).

Anthropology Among the Peace Activists: Notes on an Anthropology of Peace in Kashmir

DUSCHINSKI, Haley, *Ohio University*

Since the onset of the Kashmir peace process in 2004, various Kashmiri community initiatives have emerged to strengthen civil society and establish the conditions necessary for a sustainable peace. Increasingly, nongovernmental organizations and grassroots agencies are using the language of human rights, justice, and accountability to make claims against the state and bring the truth about the past seventeen years of violence to light. This rapid proliferation of community actors is giving rise to significant shifts in the social landscape as new political legitimacies are introduced, new political arrangements are established, and new political hierarchies are entrenched. As a fieldworker doing research in the midst of this active period of post-conflict transition in Kashmir, I have been increasingly interrogating my own role as an anthropologist working among peace activists. This paper is designed as a consideration of the ways in which critical interpretive scholarship may open space for strategically exercising political commitments in relation to "what matters most" to post-conflict communities that aspire to a peaceful future. It is argued that a critical interpretive perspective may enable anthropologists to pursue forms of advocacy that run against the grain, by charting the moral uncertainties—blends of hope and apprehension—associated with movements towards peace, by tracking the topographies of power that emerge during such transformative periods, and by writing against the erasure of those marginalized groups with alternate views, not only of "what actually happened" in the past, but also of "what might happen" in the future.

The Cultural Politics of "Sustainable Development" Among Tibetans in the PRC

GOLDINGS, Ethan D., *Winrock International*

In this paper, I draw on three years work with a foreign NGO undertaking "sustainable development" projects among Tibetans in the PRC. I will argue that, in a curious inversion of the nested hierarchy of increasingly globalized economies, the international and even (to a large extent) the national attempts at "Development" in Tibetan communities inside the PRC have amounted to very little, and it is the local efforts that ultimately will have the greatest impact on changing the rules of the game. By resisting the forces that would missionize, set the agenda or remold their efforts, and by sticking closest to their distinctive cultural idioms, local actors can be most effective both in fundraising and in operationalizing their vision of Development with Tibetan characteristics. I will show how local NGOs, by sticking to principles of waiting for karma to ripen, action through inaction, belief in "Da digyiret." ("Everything's going to turn out alright."), both undo efforts by potent political powers to set priorities or dictate an M.O.,

and at the same time re-inscribe a unique cultural motif. In this light, I examine several cases with actual grantees.

The Global Dimensions of Race Discourse in Nepal

HANGEN, Susan, *Ramapo College*

Scholars have interpreted subaltern assertions of racial identities by employing the concept of strategic essentialism. Yet the concept remains under explored, particularly with regards to understanding what makes assertions of essentialist identities strategic or politically effective, and why particular forms of essentialist identities may be employed in particular contexts. This paper investigates these questions by examining the recent emergence of race as a form of identity in Nepal, analyzing the diverging ways that two political organizations there have employed racial discourse. The Mongol National Organization (MNO), a grassroots ethnic political party, uses the term Mongol to unite culturally and linguistically diverse ethnic groups. It seeks to gain political power and to end the dominance of high-caste Hindus, whom they call Aryans. The terms Mongol and Aryan originated in the 19th century ethnology and are commonly used in Nepali social science texts. The National Coalition Against Racial Discrimination (NCARD), an alliance of advocacy organizations, emerged in preparation for the 2001 United World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa. In line with the broad conceptualization of race employed in those meetings, NCARD uses the idea of racial discrimination to refer to a wide range of inequalities. By doing so, it positions itself to receive funds from international development organizations and foreign governments. For both organizations, ideas of race are linked to the circulation of race as a global language of identity. Yet the organizations draw on different strands of the global discourse on race to meet their own political objectives.

Of Permits, Parcels, And Places: Himalayan Traders and Geographic Rememberings

HARRIS, Christina H, *CUNY Graduate Center*

Within transnational trading networks, logistical activities (such as securing transportation, obtaining permits, or clearing checkpoints) that serve to link producers with consumers are all too often taken for granted. By examining informal strategies that traders carry out in order to circumvent recent state-driven regulatory changes in the Himalayan region, this paper will consider the "border zone" as a region that simultaneously presents both barriers and opportunities for trade. I will look specifically at three ethnographic case studies concerning informal trade activities between Tibet (China) and India. The first involves competing geographic discourses between state media and local traders on how to name a recently re-opened Sino-Indian trade route. The second study examines the ways that traders on both sides of the border interpret or work around the "official" list of commodities allowed for import and export, and the third focuses on the swapping of license plates on cars, personal

identification cards, and labels inside of t-shirts in order to obscure geographic origins. By illuminating the importance of traders as an intermediary group possessing information on both production processes and consumption processes, we may get a better sense of how infrastructural and political transformations on a regional scale might be manifested through "everyday" sites of trading activity: the exchange of commodities, social networks, and the use of space.

The Impact of Hindu Beliefs of Ritual Pollution and Child Agency on the Mental Health of Maoist Child Soldiers in Nepal

KOHRT, Brandon and WORTHMAN, Carol M, *Emory University*

During the eleven-year conflict between the government of Nepal and the Communist party of Nepal-Maoists, armed forces on both sides recruited children into roles of soldiers, porters, sentries, spies, and messengers. After peace accords, many of these children have returned home. This pollution and child agency affected the re-integration and mental health status of child soldiers. After an in—depth qualitative phase to assess views, narrative focus groups, case studies, and child-led participatory study comparing psychological distress between one hundred child soldiers and one hundred community children who did not live with armed groups. The qualitative phase revealed that community members stigmatized child soldiers upon their return, not for perpetration of violence, but rather for children's violation of caste ritual purity while living with Maoists. Increased perceived agency incurred greater community stigma evidenced by qualitative community reports. In contrast, child soldiers, in the case-control study, who felt more control over their decisions perceived less stigma and experienced better mental health. This study reveals that cultural beliefs related to Hindu ritual purity contribute significantly to psychological distress in the reintegration process. The impact of expressed community stigma, however, is moderated by children's perceived level of agency. This study also illustrates the utility of combining large-scale qualitative studies of expressed versus felt cultural beliefs with quantitative psychological studies to identify risk factors for psychological distress.

Affected Subjects: Histrionics and the Liberal Speaking Subject in the Tibetan Diaspora

LEMPERT, Michael, *Georgetown University*

This paper considers a form of histrionic 'anger' used by Tibetan monks in India to inculcate moral discipline. Found in male-monastic socialization, especially in public reprimand and courtyard debate, this cultural category of affect elevates itself above vulgar, worldly aggression by its requirement of dissimulation. Like the normative ideal of 'sincerity', it presupposes an 'inner-outer' schematization of the speaking subject but asks that monks disjoin, not align, inner states from outer signs. I examine how this affective state manifests

in discursive interaction, and how the very problem of its recognizability taxes existing methods for the study of language and affectivity, especially in respect of levels of analysis and 'scale'. Relatively discrete, localizable affect indexicals are shown to combine to form larger scale text-metrical (poetic) structures in discourse, and these emergent, higher-order structures—structures that help make this category of histrionic anger apparent to interactants—crystallize with the aid of more durable, event-independent presuppositions and reflexive practices. Turning to its fate in India, I examine how this category of affect is undergoing reanalysis by Tibetans who aspire to modernity. Findings from two institutions, the largely monastic and self-consciously modernized "Institute of Buddhist Dialectics" (Dharamsala) and Sera Monastery (Byllakupe), reveal how Tibetans locally engage communicative ideals associated with the liberal subject, especially those of clarity, sincerity, autonomy, and civility. These ideals—conveyed across transnational networks involving human rights advocates, religious aid agencies, foreign Tibet activists, and others—set the terms for local affective reanalysis and change.

"The Right Dharma for Today": Ethical Practice, Religious Reform and the Buddhist "Art of Living" in Neoliberal Nepal

LEVE, Lauren G, *University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill*

Over the past quarter-century, Nepal had undergone a dramatic array of political, economic and socio-cultural shifts that have called into being new ways of living and inspired new forms of citizenship and subjectivity. This paper examines the contemporary Theravada Buddhist reform movement in Nepal as an innovative from of ethical practice that illuminates powerful and characteristic aspects of neoliberal globalism. Over the past ten years of ethnographic research in Nepal, I have heard it said innumerable times that (1) "Theravada Buddhism is the best dharma for today" and (2) it is "the demand of the age" that people internalize it and use it to govern their everyday lives. Focusing on the material, social, ritual, and interpretive changes that have taken place in Nepali Buddhists" lives since the nineteen-twenties and especially over the past two decades, this paper asks what practitioners mean when they affirm Theravada's moral utility, its transformative potential, and the value of applying it in daily life. Theravada knowledge practices embody techniques for self-formation and social reorientation that its adherents embrace as ideally suited to the changing and changed conditions of global modernity. Nepali Buddhists' practical explorations of what an important meditation teacher there calls "the art of living" constitute both a reflection of modern life in Nepal and—equally—a reflection on it.

The Anthropologist as Witness: Documenting Disappearances in Kashmir

Mathur, Shubh

This paper looks at the issues raised in the course of my research in Kashmir where Indian forces have fought pro-independence militants for seventeen years. My work has focused largely on documenting human rights abuses and the concerns of the 'de profundis' communities—the families of the disappeared, torture survivors, former prisoners, and other victims of human rights violations. It also seeks to explore the social meanings of the violence of counterinsurgency. Viewing this violence as socially meaningful action, I look at the accounts of torture and other forms of violence, as well as the dynamics of militarization, to read the implicit cultural ideas of nationhood, belonging and identity, and their enactment on the body and the physical environment. This research setting brings into sharp focus ethical and disciplinary issues concerning fieldwork and advocacy. My paper attempts to answer the following questions: what is the nature of the anthropologist's responsibility towards her subjects in situations of violence and suffering? Do the requirements of the discipline constrain the anthropologist to maintain the role of detached observer? Can the anthropologist serve as an advocate without losing academic credibility? Can such research challenge both national and global agendas of silencing and forgetting the voice of the victims and survivors of this violence? And finally, what contribution can an anthropological understanding of the violence of counterinsurgency make to larger debates on nationhood, sovereignty, human rights and justice?

ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 22-25, 2007 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Ethnic Corridors and Sino-Tibetan Relations: Interpretative Frameworks of 19th Century Kham

ATWILL, David, *Pennsylvania State University*

This paper seeks to reverse the traditional borderland lens of analysis by taking up David Ludden's recent call to depict "the world more realistically by locating research and teaching at intellectual intersections of mobility and territorialism, rather than working inside national boundaries or imagining a world without borders." This paper tackles two elements that highlight the manner in which borderlands in general, and the Sino-Tibetan border in particular, lay at these intersections. First it seeks to flesh out the concept of 'ethnic corridor' to reframe the manner in which frontiers and frontier society have typically been portrayed in the early modern era. Second, the study considers the terminology applied in the late imperial policy towards ethnic groups and those Han who interacted with the non-Han. Put in another way, the non-Han population's flair to transgress Qing and Han categories of ethnicity, law and governance reveals a distinctly non-Chinese pattern of culture – a pattern that shatters the false dualism of the standard Han-centric analyses that positions Han Chinese at the center of borderworld interactions. Working from this assumption, my paper proposes that the Sino-Tibetan borderworlds of nineteenth-century Yunnan cannot be properly contextualized without providing an ethno-historical context for the complex sequence of events that shaped nineteenth-century Chinese interactions with Kham. By looking at the manner in which the ethnically diverse populations along the Yunnan-Tibetan frontiers each negotiated these multi-ethnic and transregional events a pattern of overlapping transition zones emerges which facilitates a much clearer understanding of borderland interactions.

Daughters Empowered? Competing and Connecting Buddhist Ritual Traditions between Burma and Nepal

EMMRICH, Christoph, *University of Toronto at Mississauga*

Buddhist Newar parents have the option of having their pre- and adolescent daughters join either in a series of ritual events called "placing the bar" (barha tayegu) or in a religious practice, generally known as "the female seer" (rishini). The first seems to have been part of Newar ritual life for centuries, is mediated by the senior-most woman of the family and is connected to various religiously marked practices of gendering such as menstruation, marriage and familial seniority. The second was imported to Nepal by the reform-oriented nun Dhammavati from Burma where it represents the female pendant to temporary ordination for boys and is now being practiced in Theravada monasteries around the Kathmandu Valley, involving monastic routine, nun-laypeople interaction and a strong educational ethic. Nowadays, families tend to decide for this second option. This paper tries to compare two very different rituals, connected historically, structurally and ideologically, by looking at the practices of their import, the strategies of their institutionalization and the way the agents involved, - pertaining societies sharing Buddhist

traditions, Indo-Aryan scriptural languages and Tibeto-Burman vernaculars, - make sense of them. What makes this development crucial is that we have a case of both borrowing and competition within and across Tibeto-Burman Buddhist traditions. This may help articulate new rifts within regional Buddhist traditions, with rishini being part of an emancipatory agenda of Newar Buddhist women, while at the same time, with Theravada trying to establish itself among other Tibeto-Burman speaking groups in Nepal, setting up alternative networks.

Revolutionary Music in Tibet: Identity, Ideology, and Integration

FAMULARO, Julia, *Columbia University*

Following the Chinese annexation of Tibet in 1951, the Communists have evaluated and reevaluated the use of literature and art as an effective means of disseminating socialist thought while shaping the development of Tibetan culture. Mao Zedong considered cultural production during the old regime "desolate" because it catered to the tastes of the entrenched aristocracy and monastic system, rather than the masses.

Drawing upon Foucault's idea of discourse, one could argue that the Chinese Communist Party used its newfound authority in Tibet to construct its own "regime of truth": revolutionary music was but one tool employed by the CCP to promulgate "correct" ideas concerning the proper political ideology and future development of Tibet. Songs produced in Tibet were spread throughout the rest of China as evidence of Tibet's willing participation in and growing integration into the Chinese Motherland.

Three main categories of songs emerged in Tibet during the Cultural Revolution, which promoted unity among all ethnic nationalities, extolled the peaceful liberation of Tibet, and praised figures such as Chairman Mao, the CCP, the People's Liberation Army, and the masses. Composers often wove more than one of these thematic elements into a single song. Party officials in Tibet disseminated these songs through the use of radio broadcasts, mass singing rallies, and the cooption of Tibetan singers.

Following an analysis of the composition, production, and dissemination of these songs, Tibetan reactions to revolutionary music are discussed, as are the challenges of ascertaining how these songs affected the Tibetan population in the long-term.

Drung, Nung, and Northwest Yunnan as a Regional System (19th - 20th Centuries)

GROS, Stephane, *CRNS (Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique)*

The Sino-Tibetan margins constitute a frontier region continuously subjected to influences from both China and India, through Tibet. These margins were not clearly defined lines but zones of mutual interest, through which cultures interpenetrate in a dynamic manner. Local societies at the margin of cultural centers have often been approached through the angle of political integration and diffusion of cultural and religious patterns from political centers. But these societies have always participated actively to the production of differences and similarities, and to the establishment of boundaries in a dialectic process. This paper, using an ethno-historical approach, focuses on the Yunnan/Tibet/Burma conjunction, looking at this region as a contiguous regional system. Considering this region as a whole, grasping its cultural and ethnic diversity, my aim is to show some of the things that local people's cultures have in common. Based upon extensive fieldwork in Northwest Yunnan province and written documentation, this study takes at its centers the little studied groups such as the Drung and Nung living at the border of Burma and Tibet. It describes the importance of an encompassing exchange network, at the interethnic level, which reveals not only a social hierarchy between local groups, but also cultural values that are important for our understanding of some socio-cultural specificities of this area.

From Local to Global? Folklore, Patrimony and Authenticity in Tibetan Opera

HENRION-DOURCY, Isabelle, *Harvard University*

In this paper, I aim to examine the cultural, economic and political dynamics of Tibetan Opera as it has been practised in the People's Republic of China since the 1980s. Ache lhamo was until the 1950s the most prominent form of musical drama in Tibet. Its social anchor was both local and country-wide: although it was mainly performed by peasants at village festivals, it was also supported by the Tibetan government, which organized an annual festival including troupes from all over Tibet. At the end of the 1970s, the genre was revitalized following a 17-year-ban. Official troupes promoted a reformed type of opera, a form of subsidized folklore that was meant to somehow encapsulate Tibetan culture. However, part-time troupes continued to perform an unreformed style, meeting with strong appreciation at a grassroots level. By the 1990s, local fervour had gradually dwindled. Yet, recently, the increasing number of Chinese settlers has led to a revitalization and also a relativization of Tibetan culture within a multicultural environment. Debates are now raging for or against the candidacy of Tibetan Opera as Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO). By examining shifts in context, performance and sponsorship, I would like to reflect upon the ways in which folklore and preservation give rise to conflicting notions of authenticity, and how a tradition that seems to be disappearing locally may be re-emerging globally under the auspices of economic and tourism concerns.

Nature, Buddhism, and Society in Tamang Creation

HOLMBERG, David, *Cornell University*

This paper examines creation myths of the western Tamang of highland Nepal with particular attention to the place of Buddhism in these myths and their relation to high traditions of Buddhism found in Tibet and elsewhere in Asia. Tamang specialists must recite myths of creation on at least two separate occasions. These recitations are themselves viewed as productive acts setting the stage for a prosperous and orderly world. One recitation occurs preceding the performances of the socially extensive dance dramas known as chhe-chu or mhane shyapa and the other recitation occurs biannually in all Tamang houses on the occasion of the expulsion of the "winnowing-basket-evil" as well as in other communal ritual contexts. At an analytical level, the paper explores theories of myth and the problem of "naturalization" of social order in anthropological theory and the place of Buddhist authority in village life particularly as it relates to the relation between headmen and Buddhist lamas. Thus, through myth, the paper explores the socio-political correlates of Buddhism in a clan based society in village Nepal.

"The Right Dharma for Today": Newar Buddhism, Globalization, and the Theravada Turn

LEVE, Lauren, *University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill*

How is Newar Buddhism changing today? And what are the forces behind these transformations? Buddhist practice in Nepal has always taken place in a dynamic social and historical field that has been shaped by regional trends and events. Theravada Buddhism was reintroduced into the Kathmandu Valley in the first half of the twentieth century in part as a result of earlier transformations in Sri Lanka and India. Over the past sixty-some years it has played a key role in modernizing Buddhist practices and sensibilities within the Newar religious and cultural community. More recently, however, neo-liberal political and economic restructuring and associated social changes have begun to impact the ways that Theravada Buddhism is taught, practiced and understood. This paper explores the way that globalization is affecting Nepali Buddhists, Theravada Buddhism there and, by extension, the broader Newar socio-religious field within which it operates. Offering a comprehensive perspective on the changing world and a set of ethical prescriptions for self-formation and the everyday "art of living" within it, Theravada Buddhism makes unique sense to practitioners struggling to operate within the social, political and economic dislocations brought about by globalization in Kathmandu. For devotees, this means that it is "the right dharma for today."

Tibetan Buddhist Authority Structures in Amdo

NIETUPSKI, Paul, *John Carroll University*

Belmang Konchok Gyaltsan (1764-1853) was a recognized rebirth of a Buddhist lama and one of Amdo's many prolific writers. He was born and spent most of his life in Amdo, during the period of decline of Mongol power, and the gradual erosion of Manchu authority. He was educated by the leadings scholars of the day in Amdo and in Lhasa and wrote twelve volumes of works on philosophy, ethics, hagiography and history. He was well acquainted with the regional authority structures of the Tibetans, Mongols, Manchus and Chinese, as is demonstrated in his Elementary History of China, Tibet, the Monguors and Mongolia. This text is an Amdo Tibetan Buddhist perspective on the evolution of civilizations in Inner and East Asia. The relative authority of the regional powers present in Amdo is demonstrated in this and other of his writings.

In addition to being an exemplar of a Tibetan Buddhist religious authority, he was one of the many local Amdo Tibetan corporate estate owners, heir to his predecessor's accumulated wealth and a powerful local political figure. Amdo people believe that he was the second of five human lifetimes, as such he accumulated considerable wealth and regional political authority.

This paper explores the extent of regional authority of the local powers claimed in Belmang's "Elementary History" and other writings. It tests these claims against the lama's actual power in the Amdo community. Finally, Belmang's claims are evaluated in comparison to the regional authority of the Mongols, Manchus, Chinese and Muslims.

Ethnic Memory and Space: the Legend of Zhuge Liang on Sino-Tibetan Borderlands

PENG, Wenbin, *University of British Columbia, Canada*

In recent Western and Chinese scholarship of the "Tibetan-Yi Corridor", there has been an emergent interest in the mechanism of memory and forgetting and its relation to formations of ethnicities and frontier space on Sino-Tibetan frontiers. In Southwest China, perhaps no figure has been more important than Zhuge Liang, a famous strategist during the Three Kingdom Period (220-280 A.D.), whose military operation of "Nanzheng" (Southern Expedition) left many legends among ethnic minorities in the region, and the memories of which are often associated with origins of a multiplicity of place names and also with losses of people and territories in Han Chinese expansions in the southwestern region. However, in the socialist melodrama after 1949, Zhuge Liang has been championed as a figure of benevolence whose ethnic policy successfully transformed the historically volatile southwestern minority regions and brought them into the fold of the Chinese nation. Based on archives and oral interviews, this paper examines the twists and turns in official and indigenous interpretations of Zhuge Liang's legacies in the "Tibetan-Yi Corridor." It analyzes oral traditions of Zhuge Liang in the Tibetan border city of Kangding as well as in various Yi places. The paper intends to highlight individual and specific aspects related to construction of frontier space and memory in southwest China, which has so far, largely left out of Western and Chinese scholarly discussion of the "Tibetan-Yi Corridor".

Faultlines and Lines of Control: Islamist Charities, International Organizations, and the Pakistan Military in the Earthquake Relief and Reconstruction Project

ROBINSON, Cabeiri, *University of Washington*

This paper examines the roles of the Pakistan army and security services, international humanitarian organizations, and Islamist charities in providing relief and formulating a reconstruction policy in Azad Kashmir after the earthquake of October 2005. It describes the ways these state, international, and religious organizations have sought to provide relief in this disputed territory and high security zone, and it analyzes the junctures and disjunctures in the different moral languages used to describe social responsibility and political accountability after a natural disaster. The paper focuses particularly on the relief and reconstruction activities of three Islamist charities which are closely connected to jihadist militant groups involved in the armed conflict in Indian-administered regions of Jammu and Kashmir-- the Jamatud Dawa (connected to the Lashkar-e-Tayiba), the Al Rehmat Trust (connected to the Jaish-e-Mohammad), and Al Safa Foundation (connected to Al Badr). The paper concludes with a discussion of public evaluations of the relief and reconstruction work carried out by the national military, international humanitarian organizations, and religious charities in order to evaluate changes in the ways that Kashmiris imagine their relations with 'the state' in Azad Kashmir.

The local and the global in religious texts: Contact, Isolation and Change in the Himalayan Periphery of Tibetan Buddhism

SIHLÉ, Nicolas, *University of Virginia*

The myth of the absolute remoteness and isolation of the high Himalayan valleys has already been convincingly deconstructed. We still need however to come to terms, theoretically and methodologically, with phenomena of contact, isolation and change in such contexts. As a contribution to this endeavor, I propose in this paper to look at aspects of Tibetan Buddhism on the southwestern rim of the Tibetan cultural area, in Baragaon, a.k.a. Lower Mustang (northern Nepal), where a southwestern Tibetan dialect is spoken. Focusing on a small village-and-temple community of moderately literate tantric priests, this paper will raise the question: How can we approach the articulation between a local sociocultural universe and the larger world of Tibetan Buddhism (among other larger contexts, such as the Nepalese state for instance)? I will examine in particular a key element situated at this point of articulation: the local corpus of religious (written) texts, and notably tantric ritual manuals with their local appendices, annotations, transformations, and their specific social economy.

Amdo Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries as Political Centers in the Qing

TUTTLE, Gray, *Columbia University*

The emperors who ruled China and its neighboring regions from the thirteenth century onward often chose to recognize indigenous forms of rule at the frontiers of Chinese cultural and political domination. Though outside the mainstream, the policy of allowing Tibetan Buddhist lamas to rule ethnic Tibetans, Mongours, Muslims and even Chinese who happened to live in these territories seems to have been encouraged, at least during the Qing. My research examines a local practice not covered in detail in the grand statutes recorded in the Lifanyuan law books. Only in the twentieth century were the details of the local ruling monasteries on the frontiers of Chinese and Tibetan culture east of Qinghai Lake documented in a systematic way. Unlike the dominance of a single monastery like Labrang to the southeast, the region between Xining, Lanzhou and Labrang was characterized by a complex overlap of jurisdictions: small Chinese garrisons in the lower valleys, occasional dominance by armed Muslims, Mongour or Tibetan local headmen (tusi) often ruling in conjunction with a "mother" Tibetan Buddhist monastery and its many subordinate ("son") branches. I will examine the least understood element of these various authorities: the many lesser known monasteries that ruled with combined political and religious power. Their structures of power, ability to collect taxes, property holdings and ethnic compositions will be examined in light of the historic relevance these monasteries held for Chinese and Tibetan interactions from the late Ming into the twentieth century, with special attention to the Qing dynasty.

Buddhism, Rock, and "Righteous Power" in Contemporary Tibetan Music

VAN VLEET, Stacey, *Columbia University*

In a Lhasa suffused with Sino-centric modernity the relevance of Buddhism can no longer be taken for granted among Tibetans. The officially atheist Chinese state has attempted over the last fifty years to modernize and secularize Tibetan culture, with substantial impact on young Tibetans. Yet since the late nineties, a movement of self-consciously Tibetan and modern musicians in Lhasa, spearheaded by two rock bands, articulate Tibetan Buddhism as central to their image, identity and lyrical inspiration. They employ secular Tibetan folk instrumentation and melodies to make their rock, hip-hop and punk songs aesthetically familiar and "authentic" to their audience, but use Buddhist terminology and metaphors to create a lyrical message. Band members attempt to incorporate Buddhist principles into their daily lives and relationships with their audiences, reinterpreting Tibetan Buddhist values to provide a relevant ethical and cultural identity model or "righteous power" for Tibetan young people. I argue that the musicians' uses of Tibetan Buddhism revolve within the confines of state-defined apolitical Tibetan iden-

tity, but also attempt to reinvest this secularized identity with reimagined Buddhist ethics and worldview. Specifically, the existence of Buddhist themes in Tibetan rock reflects a preoccupation with materialism, alcoholism, and other perceived vices, as well as promoting family and educational values, environmental protection, and the law of karma. The song lyrics underscore a practical and situated intellectual engagement with local religious practices that differentiate them from Western psychological interpretations of Tibetan Buddhism or Chinese Buddhists' mystical expectations.

A Mellifluous Voice: The Life Work of Alag Tsetan Zhabdrung Jigme Rigpe Lodro.

WILLOCK, Nicole, *Indiana University*

The monastic scholar Tsetan Zhabdrung Jigme Rigpe Lodro (1910-1985) is an exemplary figure of the turbulent history of 20th century Amdo. Born in Yadzi (Ch: Xunhua) in Qinghai Province of mixed Chinese and Tibetan ancestry, he identifies himself as of Tibetan ethnicity based on language, customs and birthplace. At age three he was recognized by Zhamar Pandita as the incarnation of Tsetan Zhabdrung. He subsequently went on to study with two prominent Amdo scholars, Jigme Damcho Gyatso and Yongdzin Lozang Paldan. His most famous work, A General Commentary on Poetics introduces the student to various forms of ornamentations based on the Indian scripture on poetics, the Kavyadarsa.

By using these traditional poetic techniques, he presents new Amdo nationalist themes to create a modern discourse treating such topics as the unification of Amdo minority groups and the usefulness of modern technology. His skill in poetics was also put to paper in his autobiography, where he expressed many of his life experiences through poetry, e.g. his twelve-year imprisonment during the Cultural Revolution. After his release he taught at the Northwest Nationalities College in Lanzhou, Gansu Province. At this time in a relatively relaxed political atmosphere his above mentioned works were published. He is thus credited as being one of the few monastically trained scholars to revive Tibetan studies within the People's Republic of China after the Cultural Revolution.

36TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON SOUTH ASIA
OCTOBER 11-14, 2007 MADISON, WISCONSIN

Food Security and Agro-biodiversity Nexus in Arun Valley of Eastern Nepal

ADHIKARI, Shyam, *Hiroshima University*

Traditionally Agro-biodiversity and food security are opposed to each other. This research document on agro-biodiversity and food security concludes that in the context of diverse socio-economic and geo-physical settings, the relationship between agro-biodiversity and food security differ. A study conducted in two Village Development Committees lying on the same water shed but spread from 300 msl to 1400 msl in Dhankuta district in Nepal revealed a mixed type of nexus amongst the variables of food security and agro-biodiversity. Households with acute food insecurity (landholders less than 0.25 hectare) were indifferent to the level of agro-biodiversity or crop diversity in their land and the same was applicable for those with food secure households (landholders above 0.75 hectare). However, in contrast, farmers with moderate food insecure households (those holding 0.25 - 0.75 ha) were concerned and had an interest in diverse crop varieties and crop species to minimize the risk of failure and to meet diverse household needs. Similarly, ethnic minorities like occupational caste groups also appeared to be indifferent to the number of crops and the same was also reflected amongst so called higher caste groups due to the availability of resources at their disposal. The research also found that minorities like indigenous caste groups (Majhi, Rai, Limbu) were more dependent on agro-biodiversity. In relation to addressing food insecurity amongst indigenous caste groups and those holding 0.25 - 0.75 ha land, the two bracket groups could be front runners in agro-biodiversity conservation. However, if the bracket group of those holding less than 0.25 ha land are to be involved in agro-biodiversity, immediate relief in the form of humanitarian assistance would be warranted.

Village tiger rangers in Nepal

ALLENDORF, Teri, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Maintaining populations of wild animals within national parks that are surrounded by inhabited landscapes often creates conflicts when park animals intrude into populated areas and ravage crops, kill livestock, or injure people. In villages surrounding national parks in Nepal, Bhim Gurung established an innovative community-based monitoring system that focuses on tigers outside of protected areas. He initiated this effort in October 1999 when he began recruiting a network of "Village Rangers" to monitor the distribution of tiger movement corridors and breeding habitat outside Nepal's protected areas. These rangers are from a variety of backgrounds including community leaders, farmers, herders and hunters. The objective of this presentation is to describe the village rangers, including their socio-economic status, their reasons for becoming rangers, and their experiences as tiger rangers. We suggest the Village Ranger network is

a form of citizen science that has the potential to contribute significantly to community support of tiger conservation on a landscape scale.

Decorating and Donating Indra: the centering of a peripheral Nepalese festival

BALTUTIS, Michael, *University of Iowa*

The South Asian festival of Indra (variously called the Indradhvajotthana, Indramaha, Indrotsava, or, in Nepal, the Indrajatra), from its textual inception in the first book of the Mahabharata through its current celebration in the Nepalese capital of Kathmandu, has had as its focal point a fifty-foot wooden pole (Skt. yashti; Nep. lingo), shorn of its branches and bark. Dragged from the forest and installed in the center of the city, this singular object – representing Indra, the king, Bhairav, the year, or all of the above – does not, however, stand alone. In two fundamental ways, by virtue of this object being made not to stand in a vacuum but rather carefully placed within a greater Sanskritic milieu, the festival in which it stands shows itself to be a ritual that is integral to the living religion of classical India. The two methods that allowed the integration of such a peripheral festival into the ritual mainstream were, first, the pole's production, namely, the particular ways that it was harvested and ornamented and, second, its use, namely, the consistent way that it was passed on from individual to individual(s).

The production of Indra's pole is, I will argue, a gradual but incomplete process resulting from the accumulation of its three sets of donated ornamentation. Thus, though the Nepalese pole is superficially adorned like a deity, its lack of the reception of either the "life-giving" pran pratistha rite or the dasa samskara rites of passage will necessitate its final visarjan at the confluence of the rivers bordering Kathmandu. At the same time, however, the series of narrative donations made both to and of the pole connects the festival to a small corpus of texts extolling the power of both the king and the goddess, thus displaying the permanence and stability attributed to such a ritually flexible object, as well as preparing the way for similar Nepalese variations.

Indian Labor Law and the Limits of Fair Trade in Darjeeling Tea Production

BESKY, Sarah, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

In the Darjeeling district of West Bengal in Northeastern India, two neighboring tea-growing communities are currently seeking fair trade certification. One of these communities is Makaibari tea estate, a plantation founded in 1856. The other, five miles away, is the Tazo CHAI small farmer cooperative, organized by farmers in August 2006. Despite their geographic proximity, the plantation and the cooperative operate on dissimilar systems of land tenure and social organization. At Makaibari, the owner sought certification; in the Tazo CHAI cooperative, the farmers first collectivized and then asked Darjeeling NGOs to help them gain fair trade

certification. Initially, it would seem that, compared to the plantation, the cooperative would be far more equitable and in congruence with fair trade's social and environmental justice aims. This paper will explore how small farmers in a cooperative and plantation owners could both legitimately seek certification from transnational fair trade certification agencies. It will also explore how individuals embedded in fundamentally different land tenure systems operationalize "fairness" through transnational fair trade certification, local labor organization, and Indian legal codes.

In the Darjeeling hills, tea is extensively cultivated on plantations, living reminders of colonialism. In other parts of the world, fair trade certifiers acknowledge the inequities of the plantation system. As a result, fair trade coffee, cocoa, and sugar (also former colonial crops) come primarily, if not exclusively, from small farmer cooperatives. Global agencies' willingness to certify Indian tea plantations raises the question: Can a plantation ever be "fair?"

The Indian tea industry complicates fair trade certification further. Colonial labor policies inspired the Plantations Labour Act of 1951, which mandated that plantations provide workers housing, health care, food rations, and education. Neither the Labour Act nor fair trade certification guarantees such aid to cooperative farmers. Today, plantation owners blame the Labour Act's "social costs" for the financial demise of many plantations and claim that the industry would be stronger if the act were repealed. Although they lament the "social costs" of the Labour Act, many of these plantation owners are seeking fair trade certification. In this paper, I will explore the tensions between the legal fairness presented in the Plantations Labour Act and the voluntary fairness of transnational fair trade certification. My ethnographic data suggest that Indian labor laws regulate fairness and social welfare far more strictly than fair trade certification alone, potentially causing us to ask: should all Indian plantations become "fair trade?"

Dialoguing with Local Spaces in a Global Context

BHARATHI, Manjula, *Tata Institute of Social Sciences*

This paper critically examines the changes brought about by international tourism, modernization initiatives and development interventions in the socio-cultural terrains and the lives of the people of Leh. It tries to look at the crisis of cultural confidence, combined with the increased economic uncertainty, crime rate and the spiral of insecurity (social, cultural, political and spiritual) in Leh, which global integration tends to generate.

This paper will also examine the impact of urbanisation and massive migration on the public and personal domains of women in Leh. Before the advent of international tourism and modernization initiatives, it was the shared understanding between the communities in their day to day life in a web of interdependent socio- economic relations, to an

extent, that defined and maintained their collective identity and security. This also allowed for the cohesive operation of socio- economic and political components in a well defined cultural and spiritual space. The development initiatives and interventions and the commercialization of tourism in tune with the design and pattern of a mega society have not taken these on board.

This paper thus tries to examine how practices and discourses, which are sometimes part of trans- national cultural global flows, affect the interpretation and evaluation of the ways of living among the indigenous people and influence further cultural production and ways of seeing. The analysis and critical understanding developed in this paper are based on two years of field work in Leh for facilitating people-centred initiatives.

Linking Community Forests, Land Use Dynamics, Equity, and Social Well-Being at Ecological and Administration Regions of Nepal by Using Remote Sensing and Geospatial Data

BHATTARAI, Keshav, *University of Central Missouri*

Community forestry involves a shift of forest management from government to local users, through the processes of institutional development. When implementing these processes there should be concern for the availability of resources, equity in their distribution, and production efficiency for the well-being of the society as a whole. Nepalese governmental policy of transferring forest management to local community users since the 1980s has shown mixed results. The majority of the literature reports that community forestry has proved to be more robust than the government management system. Some report that community forestry has been successful because it is in remote areas. Critics, on the other hand, argue that the robustness of community forestry withers as development proceeds, with the construction of roads and urban sprawl undermining its positive effects. Almost all the studies on community forestry have been local, with no studies examining the successes and failures at the regional or national scales. Without this macro scale analysis there can be no way to determine whether or not community forestry can contribute to national development, and whether or not there will be equity in product distribution over time and across national space. This paper examines the effect of community forestry on land use dynamics at both micro-and-macro-levels. It utilizes satellite images taken by Thematic Mapper (TM) in 1990 and Enhanced Thematic Mapper (ETM+) in 2000 and integrates these images with socioeconomic data corresponding to these years from published literature. Micro-level land use dynamics are based on three representative cases of Dolakha (Mountain Region), Ramechhap and Okhaldhunga (Hill Region), and Bara Parsa and Rautahat (Tarai Regions), and for macro-level analysis it aggregates image and socioeconomic data at the three ecological regional scales—Mountain, Hills, and Tarai. By analyzing land use dynamics this research es-

tablishes where successful management exists and where it does not. It also assesses the extent to which genuine "stakeholder" decision making versus Forest Department imposed rules produces better managed forests. This paper will help fill a void by using geospatial and social analysis at the macro scale to explain changes in Nepal's forest cover and to determine the sustainability of those changes.

Implications of Global Warming for Himalayan Resources and Communities

BROWER, Barbara, *Portland State University*

The prospect of global warming has developed from an uncomfortable and contested possibility to a scary certainty. Although the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report of February, 2007, leaves a small space for doubt about the anthropogenic component of climate change, the 1000 scientists of 99 participating countries document a body of evidence from many sources and all over the planet that leaves no room to question the reality of rapidly increasing heating of the surface of the earth. Most climate models identify low-latitude mountains, along with low-elevation coastal areas, as the environments most likely to bear the brunt of global warming's impacts. Melting glaciers in the highlands and rising seas in lowlands will entrain cascading environmental and human effects that are much harder to predict than the mere fact of global heating. In the case of the Himalaya and Tibetan Plateau, headwaters of all of the great rivers of Asia, the potential environmental and human impacts of global heating are huge—incalculably huge, given the great uncertainty underlying models of the effect of a warmer atmosphere on the monsoon, among other unknowns. Yet, as the IPCC Report also points out, any preparations for the consequences of climate change require advance planning premised on some sort of projections about likely effects. One place to start to assess the range of possibilities for climate-induced environmental change and cultural impacts is where environment most directly intersects with people, in resource-dependent communities of Nepal. This paper surveys what is known and what is surmised about global heating in the Himalaya, and undertakes to frame the questions that need to undergird the planning and management of resources to insure sustainable communities of the future.

Modernizing Ayurvedic Medicine in Nepal: Regulation, Controversy and Healthcare Impact

CAMERON, Mary, *Florida Atlantic University*

With biomedicine securely situated within health care development in Nepal, traditional medicines such as Ayurveda await an uneasy future. Of the several traditional medical systems in South Asia, Ayurveda enjoys broad popularity throughout the region, exhibiting a culturally relevant theoretical paradigm, a formalized system of training, a recorded materia medica, and a clinical tradition with a diverse range of therapeutic treatments. Its rural and lay variant incorpo-

rates extensive knowledge of medicinal plants though lacking in formal knowledge of Ayurvedic theory. Biomedicine is impacting Ayurvedic practice as it imports with it modern ideologies of formal education-based legitimacy, "rational" organization of its practitioners, and controlled regulation of drugs. Recently Nepal's Ministry of Health has implemented legislation that requires Ayurvedic medical practitioners to register and that limits the preparation of plant-based medications to only those registered. Regarded as having a potentially disastrous impact on their profession, urban-based and non formally trained traditional practitioners strongly resist the fifty-year age and three-generation registration requirements for those not holding medical degrees or certification in Ayurveda. Drawing on recent research in Kathmandu, Nepal, this paper summarizes the role of Ayurvedic medicine in Nepal's plural medical system, analyzes the politics and ideology behind the legislation, describes how the traditional healers have responded to the new regulatory policy, and suggests the impact such legislation may have on health care.

From Uttauli to Boodhee: Representation of Women in Nepali Proverbs

CAVALLARO, Joanne, *College of St. Catherine*

This paper investigates the representation of women in common Nepali proverbs. As Parajuli (1984) notes, proverbs can provide insights into the ways a particular group constructs meaning in its social traditions, day-to-day life and customs, including gendered meanings. This is especially true for a community that shares and depends upon oral traditions to carry on its culture. Proverbs often serve either explanatory or admonitory functions – explaining how the world works and how we should act in the world. Using feminist critiques of language (see Cameron 1990 among others), critical discourse analysis (Fairclough and Chiakari 2004) and linguistic identity theory (Joseph 2002), we analyze the ways in which common Nepali proverbs delineate roles and construct identities for women throughout their life spans (girlhood, motherhood, daughter-in-law, old woman). Through these proverbs, among other practices, roles for women come to be naturalized rather than socially constructed. ***Through our analysis, we deconstruct the cultural models present in Nepali proverbs about women and their "proper" relationships with others, models that reflect, refract and reinforce the hierarchical relationship between men and women. In proverbs, women are valued for their role in birthing and raising sons; other possible roles are not only devalued but also rendered invisible, except when proverbs warn against women's inherent weaknesses that can bring dishonor to the family – either as a wayward young girl (uttauli), an incompetent daughter-in-law, or a doddering old woman (boodhee), all of which are subjects of numerous proverbs. The relationship between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law is especially interesting, for the cultural model constructed through these proverbs place it as always and necessarily mediated through the son/husband. As we will show, however, resistance to this and other socially constructed roles for women is also present.

"Tea leaves and witches: A sociological analysis of witch hunts in the tea plantations of Bengal. (1980-2005)"

CHAUDHURI, Soma, *Vanderbilt University*

In the tea plantations of north Bengal, India, behind the colonial planters' bungalows are labor lines where the tea leaf picking community lives. The tea leaf pickers are a group of tribal migrant laborers brought to this area in the 1860s when the first plantation was set up. It is among this community that witch hunts take place. Tribals have a distinct religious affiliation from the rest of India. For centuries, tribals have practiced their own religion, and belief in the witch and witchcraft is an important component of it. Witch hunts are common phenomena among the tribals, and it is particularly interesting to study the factors responsible. In this paper, using both archival sources and qualitative in-depth interviews, I try to analyze, using sociological theories of deviance and gender, what causes witch hunts to persist in these communities.

Lost in Translation? Knowing, Naming, and Legitimating Amchi Medicine in Nepal

CRAIG, Sienna, *Dartmouth College*

For nearly a decade, Nepal's amchi, practitioners of Tibet's "science of healing", have been struggling for recognition and legitimization by the Nepali state. As part of this effort, they have formed national and district-level professional associations, organized national and regional conferences, collaborated with state agencies to standardize and certify amchi education, and lobbied for a 'place at the table' within the Ministry of Health and other government offices. These efforts have produced some positive results, but the net effect has still been one of misunderstanding, marginalization, or offers to be subsumed under the auspices of state-sponsored Ayurveda – a reality that amchis are reticent to accept and that further implicates their struggle in contemporary janajati politics. Nepal's amchi have also been simultaneously engaged in the non-governmental sector, particularly in their capacity as "indigenous experts" of Nepal's high mountain flora and fauna. To this end, amchis' ethno-botanical expertise and the positions of respect most of them occupy within their communities has propelled them to leadership positions in a variety of integrated conservation and development programs (ICDPs). Yet amchis' expertise as local health care providers has often been viewed as secondary in the process. Today, Nepal's amchi are continuing to work betwixt and between the health and environmental sectors, attempting to build meaningful bridges between them in an effort to defend and transform their 'traditional' medical system. This paper examines points of convergence and dissonance therein.

Visualizing Cause and Cure: Etiologies of Human Formation and Embodiment in the Illustrations of Desi Sangye Gyatso's Blue Beryl Treatise

DACHILLE, Rae, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

This paper will examine corporeal and gendered representations of the human body within the medical paintings of the Blue Beryl Treatise. This is a seventeenth century medical text composed by Desi Sangye Gyatso, regent to the Fifth Dalai Lama, as a commentary on the rGyud bZhi (the Four Tantras), the primary authoritative source for Tibetan medical theory and practice. The creation of this set of seventy-nine paintings was overseen by Gyatso as an illustrated compendium to his commentary as well as an educational tool for medical students and perhaps even a mnemonic device for the extensive memorization process integral to medical education.

As an act of visual translation, this paper will select key moments within the narrative realities of the paintings to examine the way in which they account for order as well as disorder in structuring the etiology of human formation and embodiment. Although in recent decades scholars have forged inroads in the study of Tibetan medicine within the fields of medical anthropology, Tibetology, gender studies, and the History of Science, few studies have attempted to frame these paintings within a larger discourse of visual culture aimed at understanding social and soteriological systems of relationship.

In pointing to the different kinds of bodies represented in these medical paintings, their classification and treatment, I will explore subtleties in the relationship of art, science and religion to interrogate the boundary of sacred and secular worldviews in seventeenth century Tibet.

Democratic challenges and peaceful transition from armed conflict: Nepalese Experience

DAHAL, Hom Raj, *Nepali Congress Democratic*

I. Universal Challenges to Democracy The world is yet to become a democratic zone in its entirety. There are some pockets in the world where autocracy of varied forms still remain, suppressing the legitimate democratic voices and aspirations of the people. It is also true that the newly established or restored democracies are not completely free from challenges of reversal or destabilization as we have witnessed in Nepal and the world at large.

II. Ups and Downs in Nepal The country was pushed to a dark era of autocracy for thirty years until it was overthrown again by an overwhelming force of people's movement in 1989/90. The newly restored democracy performed well for few years. However, as we went on with our efforts for consolidating democratic practices, we encountered the birth of Maoist insurgency in 1996. The King dismissed the elected Government from power on October 4, 2002 and claimed the state sovereignty.

III. Violence to Non- Violence With the mass movement led by the SPA and joined by the Maoists in 2006, the king was finally forced to hand over the state power he had unconstitutionally grabbed to the people's representatives. He restored the House of Representatives through royal proclamations of 12th and 14th April 2006.

IV. Post Conflict Challenges The historic May 18 parliamentary proclamation was a significant step forward in safeguarding, and consolidating the gains of the people's movement. With the constitution to be framed by the Constituent Assembly (CA), the people of Nepal will be able to define their destiny as well as that of their country. The fate of the monarchy will similarly be decided by the very first session of the Constituent Assembly by a simple majority.

In the last two years Nepal's political course has made a journey from an unfortunate absolute monarchy to a promising full-fledged democracy. We are passing through a critical phase of transition towards permanent peace and stability; full-fledged and inclusive democracy; and sustainable development and economic recovery. However, challenges abound. Rehabilitation, reintegration and reconstruction are the major challenges we face in the post-conflict Nepal.

On Forced Marriages, Gendering(s), and Deviant Sexualities: Kashmir & Kashmiris in Indian Discourses

DAR, Huma, *University of California-Berkeley*

At the moment of independence in August 1947, India was concurrently partitioned into Muslim-majority Pakistan and secular India. Kashmir, as the only Muslim-majority state in India, is imagined to be a "rejoinder" to the two-nation theory, and thus bears the sign of India's secularism. This paper traces the trajectory of a contradictory double movement of disjuncture and unification, disavowal and assimilation, rejection and desire that suffuses the dialectical relationship between Kashmiri/Kashmir and the "impossibly united" Indian nation through an exploration of its cinematic imagination. I will demonstrate that this double movement is always already predicated upon a "gendered" and "sexualized" Kashmir, populated or "vacationed upon" initially, in the Nehruvian fantasy, only by the "real citizens" of the nation-state (read: urbanites from Bombay or Delhi). A few Kashmiri pundits also figure in, but mostly to act as foil for the normative Indian subjects, and all of them completely displacing the Kashmiri Muslim women and men, who at 96% of the Valley's population are conspicuous only because of their absence. Kashmiri Muslims initially absent from the national cinematic imaginary of India finally do get inserted, therein starting in the early 1990s, but then only as crisis of terror: the "terrorist-abnormal" who is bound to be "disciplined and punished" by the biopolitics of Indian nationalism. As in the case of the US "War on Terror" this hyper-masculinist nationalism is intent on being more masculine than the terrorist, and does this by mapping a certain

queerness onto the body of the terrorist, thereby normalizing him into docility, as simply abnormal, as a sexual-deviant, and moves the locus of trouble in Kashmir from actual political grievances to the pathologized body of the individual terrorist. It also simultaneously articulates a deep-seated homophobia/Islamophobia, the yearning to discipline the queers/Kashmiri Muslims in the body of the nation, and the desire to exile the same. The complicated dual articulation of simultaneously claiming Kashmir and of rejecting the Kashmiri Muslims, and its particular trajectory based on the biopolitics of Indian nationalism is especially significant given the role that the "idea" of Kashmir performs in the "imagining" of the Indian nation as secular.

Recruiting Rebels: Indoctrination and Political Education in Nepal

ECK, Kristine, *Uppsala University*

In 1996 the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) launched a guerilla-based armed rebellion against the government of Nepal. Grounded in long-standing grievances regarding economic, social, and geographical marginalization, the CPN-M garnered widespread support throughout the rural areas of the country. The result was an exponential growth of the organization and a resultant escalation of armed violence. This paper explores how the CPN-M was able to attract and mobilize potential rebel and militia supporters. It argues that while structural variables like social and economic inequalities provided an important context in which the Maoists operated, the mechanism for the CPN-M's successful recruitment strategy lay in its focus on indoctrination and political education. The sectors of society to whom the Maoists appealed were largely ignored by traditional political parties, making them especially receptive to Maoist political discourse. By linking villagers' dissatisfaction with their daily lives to larger problems in the political system, the CPN-M was able to exploit these grievances for the purposes of rebel recruitment. The importance of indoctrination was central to the CPN-M strategy and superseded even military training and arms acquisition as the focus for its efforts in expanding the organization. The case of Nepal hence highlights a hitherto overlooked aspect of rebel mobilization: the importance of local political education and indoctrination.

Scholarship and Identity Politics among Dalits in Nepal

FOLMAR, Steve, *Wake Forest University*

In challenging, "the popular belief that castes that are considered impure according to the Brahmannical hierarchy, nevertheless participate willingly in their own degradation," (Gupta 410, see also Moffat 1979) Gupta points out the complicity of academics, notably anthropologists, in propagating a portrait of an Indian social hierarchy in which each caste "knew its place" and upheld that order for the good of the whole society. Left out of anthropological accounts, until recently, was the recognition of the opposite perspective, that caste hierarchy was contested by all, in particular, the low castes. The near absence of scholarly analysis of the Dalit jats of Nepal exposes academics to a parallel critique of their role in the political context of Nepal, where Dalit issues remain in the nearly invisible undercurrent of contemporary identity politics. This paper is a two-part examination of micro-level identity politics as they relate to the Dalit jats, Kami, Sarki and Damai. The first part of the paper exams the political "maps" sketched out by academic scholars upon which Dalit landmarks are notably absent. Two trends that need to be addressed now are the lack of attention to Dalits and the failure to treat each group separately. The second portion of the paper attempts to fill in some of the uncharted area with a depiction of the various strategies employed by Dalits to negotiate the political landscape. Several dimensions of Dalit identity strategies are examined including inter- and intra-jat processes, the politics of inclusion and exclusion and the politics of anonymity. Manipulation of jat identity employs strategies making use of origin stories and manipulating inter-caste boundaries as well as elaborating within-jat structures. Specific techniques involve alternately asserting and obscuring identity via shifting use of last-name identification, assuming higher jat status, the use of powerful social positions to override inter-jat restrictions and laying claim to resources normally withheld from Dalits. The observations made in this paper are based mainly on findings from fieldwork that extends over more than a quarter of a century.

Ethnic/Caste and Regional Politics

GURUNG, Savitree Thapa, *Tribhuvan University*

Ethnic/caste and regional politics are a quite recent phenomenon in Nepal. The mobilization is a result of long and cumulative exclusion of these societies. The only regional party that participated in general election of 1959 was the Terai Congress. Each of its 21 candidates lost the election. The party acquired only two percent of the total vote.

The political parties were initially focused on the abolition of century old Rana's dictatorial family rule. During the period ethnic/caste and regional politics did not become salient. When the Rana regime ended, the politics was centered on the establishment of a parliamentary system in Nepal. It came into practice only after ten years. However, King Mahendra dismissed the Parliament. Nepal went through another phase in the guise of a party-less Panchayat system, which was the brainchild of the then King Mahendra. It lasted for thirty years from 1960 to 1990. The ethnic/caste and regional politics did not rise during the period because of ban on party politics. Around 1989 the Nepal Sadbhawana Parisad emerged as a civil organization focusing on the Madhesi people's rights. It later emerged as a political party. The Maoist party also raised different issues of indigenous nationalities, Dalit, Madhesi and women from 1996.

After 1990 some ethnic/caste parties evolved. Few minority parties were established. Two Dalit parties even took part in the 1991 general election. Two ethnic parties were denied registration because of ethnic ground. The major political parties dominated the politics. However many groups in the form of civil society organizations of ethnic/caste and regional groups (e.g. Mongol National Organization, Tharu Mutkti Morcha, etc.) are moving strongly for their rights. It seems the society is moving more towards caste/ethnic and regional politics than the traditional politics of focusing only on ideology, programs and policies.

The demands for federalism, right to self-determination, proportional representation, and inclusive democracy, all show a vast shift in politics. Nepal will not have the same politics which have been observed up until now. These demands for the right to land and natural resources can lead to more caste/ethnic and regional parties, although the Constitution does not allow these kinds of political parties and politics in Nepal.

Understanding the pharmaceutical industry in Nepal: Methodological issues and early research findings

HARPER, Ian (et al), *University of Edinburgh*

The pharmaceutical industry is a central facet of modernity in Nepal, yet has been generally overlooked as a research object by social scientists. Presenting initial findings from a collaborative project "Tracing Pharmaceuticals in South Asia" this paper develops a picture of Nepal's nascent pharmaceutical industry. The innovative methodology of tracing single products – rifampicin for TB treatment, oxytocin for the augmentation of labour, and fluoxetine for mental health conditions – provides a mechanism for charting the relations and institutions – "assemblages" – involved in this industry. Each drug's history and development, production and distribution provides a window onto different assemblages and relationships; from the companies themselves and production and marketing issues; to their associations and distribution chains; to their uses by health workers and others; to the relations between India and Nepal, regulatory mechanisms and government; and through other developmental discursive formations for their use (programmes in mental health, tuberculosis control and maternal child health and the development of protocols for use, for example), each of which illuminates different assemblages of trans-national, bilateral, national, INGO, and NGO relations – in short a particular history of globalisation and Nepal's place within it.

Buddhist desana and the Moral World

HASKETT, Chris, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

The present-day debate over creation versus evolution displays the tremendous emotional and political power that religious and other descriptions of the past, particularly of origins, can marshal. We can see some surprising similarities in confessory formulae in Buddhist Mahayana literature of ancient India. My paper explores how Buddhist desana facilitated an understanding of personal individual pre-history and moral evolution. I will explain the explicitly moral content of the desana framework which asserts that the present world and the individual beings in it are not the creation of God, but of individual papa, or sin. The relevance of desana for the history of Mahayana is that desana formed not only a notion of moral person, but also a moral world in which Buddhas and bodhisattvas had the power to remedy the pitiable state of beings in the throes of their accumulated sin. Acceptance of this worldview constituted entrance into the Mahayana world, and consequent allegiance to the Mahayana.

Northeast India's frequent breakdowns: State making and the crisis of legitimacy

HASSAN, Mohammad, *London School of Economics*

This paper, based on my doctoral research, tries to unravel the drivers of the protracted ethnic and secessionist conflicts, and the resultant disorder that have marred the Northeastern region of India - made up of seven sub-national States. These conflicts have mostly been explained using the grievance narrative – referring to the alienation of communities in the region due to post-colonial nation making and because of people's poor access to power, resources and opportunities. But such explanations fail to account for the large variance in violence levels within the region. A rather more fruitful line of inquiry is provided by a state-society reading of the political history of the North East that points to conflicts there being accompanied by a contested and weak authority of government agencies and the fragmentation of society. Unpacking this causal connection requires me to delve into history to study the process of state making – how state leaders in colonial and post colonial times established bureaucratic apparatuses and constructed and mobilised collective identities to gain the legitimacy to rule and order people's lives – through focusing on the cases of Mizoram and Manipur, and their divergent success with mitigating conflicts.

I will demonstrate that in Mizoram the process of state making was such that it consolidated the public legitimacy and authority of state leaders among all sections of society and strengthened the institutional capability of government agencies to provide services, manage group contestations and avoid breakdown. In Manipur it was, on the whole, traditional centres of power – made up of tribal chieftains and ethnic associations - that with their narrow constituencies and appeals, gained in authority. Persistence of traditional power centres and the accompanying fragmentation of authority structure in the State have resulted in the weak legitimacy of the government and poor capability of its agencies to provide services and establish order. The crucial difference between Manipur and Mizoram then, and which impacts on the persistence or absence of conflicts, I argue, is the

centrality of the state in the lives of people. These findings have implications both for future research – what could be constraining growth and improved state effectiveness in the region despite attempt by central leaders to shore up local institutional capability - and for policy intervention – how to enhance the ability of public agencies in the region to enable long-term stability through, among other things, equitable growth?

Standardization Beyond Form: Socialization, Institutions, and the Semiotics of Nepali Sign Language

HOFFMANN, Erika, *University of Michigan*

This paper will explore how the infinite multiplicity of semiotic meanings that can inhere in sign forms relates to the standardization project being undertaken by Kathmandu's deaf schools and associations. By virtue of their deafness, students in these institutions are marked as deviant in the broader cultural perspective. To combat this, and ideally make their students more able to participate in Nepal's national market, leaders of Nepal's deaf communities have attempted to standardize Nepali Sign Language in such a way as to forge semiotic links between it and Nepali nationalism, in order to encourage official recognition and governmental support of deaf institutional goals. This pursuit has primarily entailed the promotion of lexical items from which semiotic associations with markers of Nepali patriotism (as it has been defined by the state) can be derived. Despite the fact that Nepal is very diverse linguistically, socially, and religiously, this has led to a frequent choice of signs that can index an upper-caste, Hindu identity. However, associations between the standard sign forms promoted in the deaf schools and this particular construction of "Nepali-ness" are not inherent. Deaf students, coming from a variety of social backgrounds (including Buddhist, low-caste, and rural) may, and do, interpret the social significance of the standard signs differently. For, it cannot be assumed that individuals will notice the same kinds of indexical connections or read them in the same ways; the interpretations of linguistic forms drawn on to construct these indexes and other sign relationships are not fixed or inherent. Therefore, in order to standardize the semiotic interpretation of the sign forms, along with the forms themselves, teachers in deaf schools attempt to socialize their students to interpret them in particular ways. Through detailed analysis of classroom interactions in Nepal's deaf associations and schools this paper will examine how this particular kind of standardization is attempted and contested. In so doing, I highlight the relationship between the formal and ideological thrusts of standardization, along with the relative roles of linguistic and non-linguistic semiosis in linking communicative practice and social meaning.

Re-examining the Fit Between Global Health Policies and Local Realities

JUSTICE, Judith, *University of California-San Francisco*

This presentation focuses on the culmination of long-term research on the relationship between global health policies, national priorities, and local needs and resources in developing countries. Focusing on Nepal as a case study, monitoring of the health policy process began in the late 1970s and was published as a book, Policies, Plans and People: Foreign Aid and Health Development. The international priority in the 1970s was examined from its antecedents in international health policy centers in Geneva and Washington to its outcomes in remote Nepali villages. Since this initial research was conducted, many changes have taken place in the international and national health arena, including major shifts in priorities and the addition of new actors at the global level. Using the Nepal data from the late 1970s as a baseline, a re-study was designed to investigate changes taking place at the global and local level, including the international donor community, national government, and delivery of services at the local level, to understand the impact, over a twenty-five year period, of the shift in priorities and other changes on the availability and access to health care at the community level. For example, since the 1980s child health has been one of the global priorities and therefore this study included an examination of reproductive and child health initiatives in Nepal. Child health interventions have been stated to be among the most successful and cost-effective. And yet, reports indicate serious problems in sustaining earlier achievements and limited capacity to implement newly introduced programs. What can we learn from an examination of policy and implementation processes to prevent a repetition of this cycle of short-term success often followed by disappointing long-term results? The findings of this long-term research enhance our understanding of factors contributing to effective implementation, at the same time as examining barriers to sustainability of achievements. The lessons learned can be applied to future policy formulation and program implementation. This multi-level analysis of the health policy process from the global level to implementation in local communities provides an update on health and development in Nepal, in addition to its relevance to other countries and global health policies.

Naga Movement in South East-Himalayan Region

KUINAHMEI, Robert Tiba, *Assam University*

This paper attempts to examine the Naga movement which maintains that their rights were in existence before the Nation-States of India and Myanmar came into being and can continue to exist independently. The Nagas belong to the old Mongoloid race and are scattered in the South East Himalayan region. They are found in Nagaland, Asom, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur states in India, and Burma (Myanmar). The Naga National Council (NNC), the foundation for Naga

Nationalism, was laid in the 1st half of the last century (20th century). It was in the 1940's that the Nagas categorically rejected the foreign domination and with the zeal of neophyte and self determination sought the power and freedom to define themselves as distinct people-culturally, racially and linguistically and to shape their own political future.

The nation-states of India and Myanmar argue that the Naga territory had always been geographically part of their countries and was inherited by them from the British. No other interpretative framework is convincing enough to justify the assertion of sovereignty over Nagaland. This philosophy structurally implies premises that are almost racist and colonial. Since India's Independence, there have been so many constitutional developments ranging from "Akbar Hydari Nine Point Agreement", "Sixteenth Point Agreement", "1964 Ceasefire" to the "August 1997 Ceasefire." To the Nagas, the paradox, however, was that new legislations sought to alter the 'behaviour' of tribal communities within the ambit of the Indian Constitution. To the tribal, this is a manipulation, which was invariably done in the garb of developing them and eventually facilitating their integration into the so-called "main stream".

The bulk of the writings on Naga movement are often superseded by the term "Insurgency" rather than "National Movement". The "Naga Movement" with a very visible leadership has largely obscured the fact that Naga society at the initial stage of the movement was largely illiterate. My primary interest in assessing this study is to retrieve the history of a Naga Movement which has been constituted at present with emphasis to formal events like Indo-Naga political talk, cease-fire, negotiation agreements et al. Aspects which are easily amendable to verification and objectification, but which it must be stressed, remains only a partial account, endowed with a false sense-totality. While these accounts are undoubtedly a part of the history of Naga Movement, they remain just partial accounts.

The Chakka Jam, Development and the Limits of Law in Contemporary Nepal

LAKIER, Geneviève, *Harvard University*

In the aftermath of a traffic accident on a highway in Nepal, a pedestrian dies. Local residents—school children maybe, or kin of the deceased, or residents organized by a political leader—block the road, either with tree trunks or with their bodies, demanding justice, the incarceration of the driver, and monetary compensation to the family of the killed. This is, as it is called in Nepal, a chakka jam. In this paper I interrogate what such a commonplace, minor impediment in the everyday public order of the roads reveals about the authority of the law in the peripheries of state power, and the alternative means by which "justice" is achieved. Both a defiance of the (procedural) process of bureaucratic power but also a means of demanding the attention of an otherwise unreachable police, the practice of chakka jam makes

visible, this paper will argue, the complex relationship that exists between the legal and the extralegal orders of morality, power and virtue in contemporary Nepal and the enduring, if often reactionary, force of the crowd in domesticating and mitigating the risks brought about by the open road, and (more generally) by the development project which built it.

Democratization from Non-Democratic Moves: The Maoist Insurgency, the Royal Coup, and Political Reforms in Nepal

LAWOTI, Mahendra, *Western Michigan University*

This paper examines the ironical contribution of non-democratic activities, the Maoist insurgency and the royal coup, on democratization in Nepal. Despite the socio-economic and cultural inequality, Nepal's democratic polity did not initiate reforms during the 1990s. The non-democratic activities occurred in this context. Both hurt the electoral democracy Nepal had adopted in 1990. The Maoist insurgency, among other things, undermined the freedom of speech and association and halted the electoral process. The royal coup formally ended democracy in early 2005.

The Maoist insurgency, which began in 1996, raised many issues that the mainstream political parties ignored. Ethnic/caste, and gender exclusion and widespread socio-economic inequalities were increasingly recognized. The society and polity was forced to acknowledge the issues and introduce minor reforms.

However, the major political parties did not introduce major reforms till 2002. Despite controlling more than two thirds of the Parliament, which was necessary for amending the Constitution, the political parties steadfastly refused to amend a single article of the Constitution during their reign to address cultural discrimination. Some discriminatory articles have been eliminated with the reinstatement of the Parliament in April 2006. Others may be addressed in the forthcoming Constitution. The political parties reluctantly agreed to the reforms after the King became active to attract people in their movement against the monarchy. After the dismissal of the elected government in 2002, the mainstream political parties agreed to declare the state as secular and agreed to amend the various articles of the 1990 Constitution. However, they still resisted the call to elect a Constituent Assembly to draft a new Constitution. When the king formally ended democracy in 2005, the political parties even agreed to that proposal.

I argue in this paper that when non-democratic movements/activities occur but do not last long, it could force the 'democrats' to adopt reform agendas. However, the non-democratic moves should perhaps not endure for a long period.

In this paper, first I will look at the discrimination and inequalities that existed during the 1990s. I will also look at the demands of discriminated groups and various proposals for addressing inequalities. Then I will analyze political reforms both before and after 1996 and 2002. It will help to

establish the role of non-democratic moves in the political reforms.

"Nepal Mandala" as Newar Autonomy

MAHARJAN, Pancha Narayan, *Center for Nepal and Asian Studies*

Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-culture, multi-lingual, and multi-religious nation. According to the national census, the total population of Brahmin and Chhetri was 12.7 and 17.3 percent respectively. The remaining population consists of other marginalized ethnic groups and scheduled caste groups. The government recognized 59 ethnic groups in the country, as identified by the National Committee for Development of Nationalities. Out of 59, Newar is one of the major ethnic groups, which constitutes 5.5 percent of total population of the country. All these groups have their own social costume, language, religion, and culture, but have been discriminated against by the state since the Shah dynasty came into power.

Nepalese people had enjoyed autonomous rule during the Lichhavi and Malla periods. Sometimes they had revolted for their independence during that period. In a way, demand of ethnic autonomy by the indigenous communities and the Maoists at present is not surprising. It is a result due to the suppression, domination, marginalization, and exploitation of the 300 year long Shah Dynasty. Therefore, the political scenario indicates that if the nation will not go for national autonomy on the basis of ethnic/regional, peace will be impossible.

My paper will focus on Newar Autonomy (Nepa Mandala) as a case study under the structure of ethnic autonomy and will try to answer the questions of its applicability in a heterogeneous society.

Changing Concept of Home among the Tribes of North-East India

NAGARAJU, Nagalapalli, *Rajiv Gandhi University*

Arunachal Pradesh is part of an increasingly visible North-east India. A rugged and hilly terrain, the state has an area of 83,743 km2 and a population (both tribal and non-tribal) of 1,091,117 spread over sixteen districts. The Tani group along with some other minor tribes constitutes 36% of the tribal population. Forming part of the central Arunachal, this group, with a common ancestor called Abotani and several other shared characteristics, is considered a representative one for the communities undergoing change in the state, and broadly in the tribal world of North-East India. With modernity engulfing their lives, the Tani group of tribes of the state is interestingly poised; past modes of life are fast receding and new modes are still struggling to settle down. Debates, mostly internal, are raging about the fall out of this change. One of the significant images of this change, and an important indicator, is the changing concept of home. From fuzzy notions which very often covered the whole hill in-

habited by the community (For example Dafla Hills or Abor hills, to indicate the settlements of Nyshi or Adi communities), home, with growing urbanization, increasing individuation and internal displacement, has come to mean rather a restricted, physical, concrete structure catering to individual comforts and even fantasies. With various technologies and gadgetry making quiet entry, the cultural norms, which broadly define the space called home, are either ignored or followed in token terms. Narratives of self representation which have come to appear in print only recently talk about this complex change in terms of nostalgia, of loss and, alas, as an inevitability. Whereas the traditional oral narratives told, among others, by the 'Nyabu' (the priest) give the features of traditional home which is not only a hut, a 'chang-ghar', but the whole hill-space inhabited by the tribe including the large trees which are supposed to be the homes of their ancestors. Groves and riverbanks, strange though it may seem, form part of this home. These narratives, however, are fast receding, cleared off their traditional space by the modernist incursions. This paper will take up select narratives, oral and written, and other related images of home to study the conceptual shift in tribal home .The nature and implications of this shift, it will be argued, are felt at the community as well as national level.

Beyond Religious, Tribal, and Gendered Ideologies: Pukhtuns and Peasant Politics in Pakistan

RAJPUT, Ashok, *University of Utah*

The Pukhtun society and culture are extensively studied by Pakistani and non-Pakistani anthropologists, historians and other scholars. In recent years, the popular press has solely focused on the role of Islamic fundamentalist movement among the Pukhtuns. However, the peasant uprisings and the subsequent intertwined relationships between socialist, nationalist and religious politics among the largely feudal and tribal culture of Pukhtuns has been overlooked. This paper explores the Hashtnagar peasant movement of 1970s. The Hashtnagar movement was a series of spontaneous responses of landless peasants, tenants, and agricultural laborers to the oppression of landowners in the fertile region of North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. The movement took its name after the villages of Hashtnagar, north of Peshawar city, where the peasants first resisted the landowners. The movement was spearheaded by the agricultural laborers and farmers' party called Pakistan Mazdoor Kisan Party (Pakistan Worker-Peasant Party). The news reports of Mazdoor Kisan Party called "khabarnama," or the "circular", recorded the movement's struggle. The cyclostyled reports meant to be circulated only among the underground members of the party reveal events in detail and provide most of the data for this paper. The opportunity to both explore and present views of Pukhtun peasantry involved in the political uprising will allow for an expanded picture of contemporary Pukhtun society and culture in Pakistan. An understanding of Pukhtun social structure can be developed that is less

weighted towards information culled from the mainstream media, British colonial narratives, or provided by the more often interviewed upper class landed gentry.

Governance regimes, rule enforcement, and forest conditions – A study of forest resources in Chitwan, Nepal

REGMI, Ashok Raj, *Indiana University*

Forest resources of Chitwan are managed under two distinct governance regimes. National forests and parks which constitute nearly 85% of the District's forest area are administered directly through government agencies and the remaining 15% is managed as community forests. Geographically, these two categories of forests are located both in the hills as well as in the plains and are associated with different forest conditions. Given these distinctions we ask what can best explain the variations. Is it the governance regime, geography, or the differences in the abilities of actors to monitor and enforce their rules that results in superior or inferior forest conditions?

Analysis is based on empirical data on Nepal generated by the International Forestry Resources and Institutions (IFRI) research program at Indiana University, and my field work in 2003. IFRI is a multilevel, multi country, extended time line study of forests and the institutions that govern, manage, and use them. Assessments of forest conditions are not only based on the IFRI database, but also on the analyses of remotely sensed images. Three satellite images (MSS 1976, TM 1989, and ETM 2000) are used to assess forest cover changes over a 24 year period.

Developing International Development: DDT and U.S. Environmental and Social Engineering in the Rapti Valley of Nepal, 1952-1965

ROBERTSON, Thomas, *Worcester Polytechnic Institute*

Based on recent archival and field research, this paper is an environmental, political, and cultural history of the Rapti Valley Development Project (RVDP), the first major American development project in Nepal in the 1950s. The first of many U.S.- assisted malaria eradication and resettlement projects in the Tarai, the RVDP is especially interesting because it was both an environmental engineering and a social engineering project. Devoting nearly two million dollars to the project, an enormous sum for those days in a small country like Nepal, the U.S. built a 52-mile road, and established a sawmill, several demonstration farms, and over 50 farmers cooperatives. It ran programs to make the valley a site of improved farming techniques and modern health and living practices. Strikingly, the U.S. also worked—unsuccessfully it turned out—to make the Rapti Valley a site of relatively equitable land holdings, in the hope that it would show the world that the U.S. could address unequal class relations in rural societies.

In the paper, I tease out the American ideas of nature, disease, frontiers, poverty, farmers, technology, and development that informed the RVDP, and I contrast them with the ideas and practices of the various Nepalis involved with the RVDP. I trace the origins of the RVDP in American history and examine how it fit into larger Cold War strategy. But most importantly, I contrast the American ideas informing the RVDP with the experiences of variously situated Nepal actors—elites who worked for the RVDP, migrants from the hills, and the indigenous Tharu, who already lived in the resettlement area.

This paper will show the unusual role that international development—and American development efforts in particular—have played in this small Himalayan nation. Because politics kept Nepal closed to the world until the 1950s, and because poverty and geography have kept it isolated since then, official international efforts to spur economic development and social reform have played a more substantial role in Nepal than in most other countries. Arguably, "development," as a set of institutions and policies, has provided the main point of contact between the outside world and ordinary Nepalis. Evaluating how and for whom development "works" are crucial questions for historians of Nepal's recent past.

Engaged Ethnography: Creating an Uprising in an University Town

SHAH, Vishnu Bahadur and SHAH, Saubhagya, *Tribhuvan University*

In April 2006 Nepal went through a great political change. Over the past few years there had been a triangular contest between the Kings the seven parliamentary parties and the CPN Maoist. In November, 2005 however the parliamentary parties and CPN Maoists signed a formal pact in New Delhi to fight against the Royal regime. They declared a national strike from 6th April which lasted for 19 days and ended the royal regime and brought the political parties into power again.

This paper is an attempt to examine the role of a university community in the 19 days-long mass movement. The political victory was achieved not by a single person or party's actions but due to the combined efforts of various sectors, classes and professions. This paper focuses on the political contribution made by student groups in mobilizing the university town of Kirtipur against the royal government by examining the mobilization methods, organization structure and protest techniques. This paper also highlights the relationships of the student organization with political parties, local residents and the media. The available accounts, reports and renderings of the April uprising in Nepal so far have been mostly of journalistic nature and present a rather simplistic generalization of the complex political changes. This paper is an engaged ethnography of the Kirtipur events that is nuanced and grounded and shows the multiple positions, intentions and complexities of political action.

The ethnographic material will be examined in light the history of student politics in Nepal and the general literature on social movements and activism. Along with the ethnographic details of the 19 days of uprising, this paper will forward a few arguments. First, that Tribhuvan University students played a vital role in motivating and mobilizing the general mass comprised of various classes and caste in Kirtipur town. Second, that the cultural aspect of protest and mobilization was as important as the political ideology in defeating the royal government. Third, that the various cultural, literary, artistic and musical resources were effectively used by the activists to mobilize the general public to participate in the movement. And finally, that given the current political trend we argue that students' politics will remain an important components of Nepali politics in the future as well.

In search of pragmatism within politics: Capitalists and Communism in Nepal

SHAKYA, Mallika and SHAKYA, Sueev, *London School of Economics*

On the one hand, capitalists are said to be at the forefront of economic and social change; and on the other hand, they are ridiculed as shortsighted profit-seekers who lack taste for idealism and empathy for broader society. The paradox of Nepali capitalists' willing embrace of globalisation and their rigid resistance of the political struggle against totalitarianism is indeed striking. Equally striking is the inherent contradiction with which they quietly despise consumers' liberation while warmly welcoming the boom of consumerism – which is a fruit of consumer liberation. An even bigger paradox, probably, is that, during the political upheavals of 1990 and 2006, as many small and big capitalists in Nepal have come out to the street to bite the bullet, as have Nepalis from any other walks of life.

All political regimes in Nepal have worked with the capitalists, to a greater or lesser degree, and with differing results. This paper attempts to bring capitalists' perspective into central focus in the ongoing debate about political and structural change in Nepal. It first analyses the criticism and suspicion political cadre and political thinkers hold against capitalists. These are then contextualised into capitalists' own priorities, understandings and convictions. Thirdly, it examines how half a century's history of Nepal shows that capitalistic pursuits are well embedded into broader social quests for socialism, communism and ethnic activism. Finally, it analyses, why, despite the contradiction in the perspectives, and head-on clashes that emerge at times that bring to surface the tip of the iceberg of mutual suspicion and resistance, it is worth engaging with a conundrum relating to capitalism, communism, federalism and ethnicism in Nepal.

This paper reconstructs Nepal's modern history spanning a decade and a half, during which capitalism flourished in Nepal both during the rules of pluralistic socialism and plu-ralistic communism. It then turns to an examination of the way in which capitalism –in a greater or lesser improvised form – might still be contained within the dimensions of communism as well as federalism being added to the scene of Nepali State politics.

Community Forestry in Nepal at a Crossroads: where do we go from here?

SHRESTHA, Kaji Narayan, *University of Minnesota*

On the surface, community forestry in Nepal is quite a successful program. More than 16,000 user groups are managing more than one million hectares of forests. These changes in forest management have reduced forest degradation rates from 3.9% per year to almost 0.3%. User groups are also taking initiatives for community development. Nevertheless, community forests are being handed over without following proper processes, and this has created problems like elite control of forest resources and the marginalization of the poor, of disadvantaged ethnic groups, and of women. Because forestry resources are very valuable, four forces are contending for control, power, and authority over them: local elites, the forest bureaucracy, local government institutions, and forest user groups. Three kinds of decentralization are occurring and affecting the competitive strengths of these four sets of actors: devolution of decision-making to district and field level forest bureaucrats, decentralization of power to local government institutions and those who control them, and granting of limited forest management decision making power to user groups. The government bureaucracy receives its power and authority through the State, while local government officials gain authority by being elected by the people. Thus, user groups may be losers in this game, unless they are empowered by their own constituency. The only power and authority forest user groups receive is from the Federation of Community Forestry User Groups of Nepal (FECOFUN), an alliance of community forest user groups, which lobbies on behalf of their member groups and maintains high standards of governance. Despite FECOFUN's efforts, I will argue that the current arrangements favor groups other than the forest user groups and that this will lead to the destruction of forest resources. Only when forest users have the authority to manage forests will Nepal's forests be well managed, will they be able to fulfill local people's needs, and will grassroots community development be initiated.

Community Forestry and the Changing Context of Smallholding in Lamjung District, Nepal

SHRESTHA, Milan, *University of Georgia*

Developed and promoted as the main strategy of national forestry policy, the Community Forestry (CF) Program in Nepal has both conservation and livelihood implications. Laws and regulations are in place to achieve two 'intertwined' goals: (1) conserve ecosystem and genetic resources by pro-

tecting forest resources from degradation, and (2) regulate the forest users' groups to meet the basic needs for forest products on a sustainable basis. While the program has long been cited as 'a successful model of forest conservation,' its efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the livelihood goal have come under scrutiny in recent years. Some critiques have even questioned the rhetoric of 'community participation,' incentive structures and property rights, heterogeneity and equity issues. These critiques are also contentious and hence, are open for debates. Nevertheless, these reiterate the fact that better understanding of the human dimensions part is crucial for the success of such conservation initiatives.

This paper presents the case example of Lamjung district of Nepal, which is partly based on my dissertation research conducted in 2004 to 2005. Specifically, by placing the analysis within the historical changes in smallholding, it discusses the impact of community forestry, as perceived by smallholders, on the agriculture-forest-livestock interrelationships. Aside from examining the patterns of forest cover change for the last forty years, it provides insights on how community forestry changed the dynamics of smallholding in Lamjung and what are the specific feedbacks.

In doing so, it puts forward a counterpoint to the dominant tendency that often blames subsistence agriculture for deforestation, as though the relationships between forest and agriculture always are linear—the same tendency that presents land-cover changes from forest to agriculture as irreversible phenomena. For smallholders in Lamjung, the meaning of forest conservation or community forestry is connected to their concept of forest-agriculture-livestock interdependence, in which the outcomes of one component constantly affect the other two. It does not necessarily mean their interests conflict with the community forestry goals; it only means that the success of community forestry cannot be ensured without understanding the concept of interdependence or interconnectedness. It also attempts to address the question of whether the existing CF governance structure and focus can ensure the sustained benefits of forests in the forest-dependent communities of Lamjung.

Quality of life among elders in Nepal

SHRESTHA, Srijana, *Pennsylvania State University*

Narratives within the field of gerontology often focus on the drastic increase in the number of people living into old age. The population growth has placed the needs of this population in the forefront of both international and domestic policy of countries around the world (United Nation, 2002). The structure of the aging population is especially stark in developing countries. The combination of large number of older people surviving into old age and lack of resources, pose unique challenges to researchers who are committed to understanding and addressing the needs of elderly living in developing countries. Unlike developed countries, where the state has programs designed to meet increasing needs of their elderly population, government spending on elderly care is non-existent or inadequate in developing countries.

One of the responses, within gerontology, to population increase and its impact on health care and social spending has been to focus on positive aging, which examines old age as encompassing a potential for growth, and positive contributions to society. This approach emerged as a critique of the medical model that paralleled aging and old age to decline, decay and dependency. Positive aging research with its focus on successful aging and its universal domains (low probability of disease and disease-related disability, high cognitive and physical functional capacity, and active engagement with life) provides a framework that is prescriptive, not only descriptive. First, the terms used to define positive aspects of aging have been accused of imposing a "Western template" of what it means to age well, as a universal concept (Thomas & Chamber, 1989; Torres, 2004). Similar arguments have also been put forth within feminist literature (Cruikshank, 2003). It is argued that the concepts of positive aging are based on a competitive and business model where a white, male, middle-class and Western approach to living is emphasized and universalized as a singular notion of aging in a positive manner. The different processes through which the experience of getting old, constructed by race, ethnicity, class and gender, thus, is not included in the definition of successful aging (Cruikshank, 2003).

The proposed paper will examine how what constitutes positive aging is constructed by an elderly sample in Nepal. The focal argument of the paper will be to explore how age, class, caste and gender politics influences quality of life as experienced by the elderly.

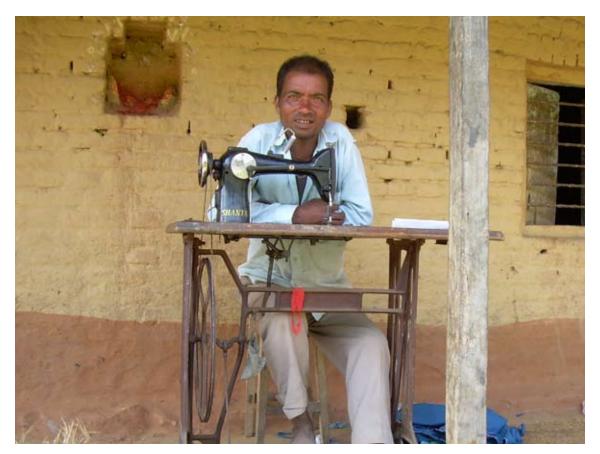## Shifting Community Forestry Policy and Tensions between Users, Government

THOMS, Christopher, *Colby College*

When exogenous actors such as bilateral aid projects and government agencies interact with local groups to facilitate local resource management, there are multiple potential points of tension between competing policy interpretations and ways of knowing. Shifts in Nepal's community forest policy illustrate this potential for tension and conflict. In particular, a policy requiring expert forest inventories in community forests effectively constrains community forest user groups. Some forest officials interpret and implement onerous policies, like detailed inventories, to regain authority and power lost through forest devolution, while forest user groups push to expand their own authority over forests. Bilateral donor projects providing aid to community forestry play a complicated, dual role of supporting the government but promoting community rights. In this paper I explore the impacts of such conflicting agendas and roles on the success of community forestry in Nepal.

How to perpetuate conflict: Law and exception in the Indian Northeast

VAJPEYI, Ananya, *Columbia University*

This paper looks at the Indian Northeast – an area comprising seven states that border China, Bhutan, Myanmar and Bangladesh – as a zone of permanent exception to the rule of law, placed under the regime of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) for the last several decades. With the AFSPA in place, the Northeast is effectively under the control of the security forces, both army as well as paramilitaries, and thus outside the scope of mainstream Indian democracy. Ever since the late 1950s, the AFSPA has been enforced for two reasons: internal threats to national security from rebel groups operating in the region, especially in the states of Manipur, Nagaland and Assam; and external threats to the stability of the region from neighboring nations, especially China and Bangladesh. At present, a renewed program of counter-insurgency has intensified the presence and penetration of the armed forces in the Northeast, the draconian nature of their powers, and the impunity with which they can operate, allowing them to detain, arrest, and kill citizens with practically no checks from the executive, the judiciary, elected governments at the local or national level, civil society or international humanitarian organizations. How is this persistent state of emergency, prevailing over almost 10% of India's landmass and almost 4% of the country's population, systematically undermining Indian rule of law, constitutionally guaranteed freedoms, electoral democracy, representative government, federal state structure, equal citizenship, civil liberties, human rights, and, eventually, the very integrity of the Indian nation that the AFSPA was designed to safe-guard? How does the Indian state withstand such an enormous and long-running bracketing of its legitimacy without falling apart? What has become of the call to repeal the AFSPA, to either reintegrate the Northeast into the Indian body politic, or excise it altogether into several independent nations, or quasi-independent entities? How can the basic dignity and legal entitlements of citizens be ensured in the interim, while a political solution to their independentist claims still remains to be found? This paper argues that while exceptionalism is supposed to help tide over a crisis situation, it in fact constitutes and entrenches the crisis, and escalates rather than contains the threat to the security, stability and growth of the Northeast. It is within the rule of law and not in the space of exception that political conflict can and should be resolved.

A man of Damai (Tailor) caste   PHOTO: SAMBRIDDHI KHAREL