



Center for South Asia Studies NEWSLETTER

Interview: Prachi Deshpande, Department of History

Prachi Deshpande is Assistant Professor of History. This is her first semester teaching at Berkeley.

CSAS: How did you become interested in Maratha history as the primary focus of your work?

I grew up in a town called Panchgani, which is in the Western Ghats in Maharashtra, very close to Pune. It's a tourist town with lots of hill forts around, so when people came visiting, we would always take them to some of the big Maratha forts. I also grew up in a family in which history and politics were generally a prominent part of dinner conversations. Then I went to Ferguson College in Pune, at the height of the Hindu nationalist movement, in the 1990's. It was just impossible *not* to see the connections between history, Maratha history in particular, and the broader Hindu nationalist movement. I knew that I wanted to study history, but more than that, I was sure that I wanted to study history in order to understand why people from Maharashtra seemed to be so taken with Maratha history, a history which I had grown up fairly innocuously around, like the forts and other historical sites, when I was younger. I went to JNU (Jawaharlal Nehru University) in Delhi for

my Masters, and I worked on the figure of Savarkar, one of the principal Hindu nationalist ideologues. It was very interesting to go there and see that we had grown up in Maharashtra with an image of Savarkar as a masculine, nationalist hero, someone who wrote good poetry and suffered a lot in prison and so on. In Delhi, however, he was very much one of the extreme right-wing ideologues. Even though I didn't support his politics, it came as



quite a surprise to see how somebody could be remembered so differently in one region and so differently elsewhere. I became more interested in thinking about history, memory, the relationship between nation and region, and thinking about Marathi regional identity in particular. So when I came for my PhD to Tufts University, I planned to study the symbolism of Shivaji and the Marathas and its relationship to Marathi regional consciousness and Marathi history more generally.

CSAS: Much of your work focuses on the relationship between history and narrative. Can you tell us more about that relationship, particularly in relation to this remembered figure of Shivaji?

I started out by thinking I would work on political symbolism. I was interested in political rhetoric where, for instance, when one Marathi politician wants to abuse somebody in another party, he calls him Aurangzeb or he calls him Suryaji Pisal, or some of these so-called traitors to the Maratha cause. Everybody knows who these char-

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A View from the Chair

by Raka Ray

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

We have had a busy and rewarding fall at the Center for South Asia Studies and look forward to a spring semester full of ideas and events.

The fall semester began with a bang with talks to an overflowing crowd by veteran journalists P. Sainath and Alexander Cockburn. We also hosted former foreign minister Jaswant Singh (see this issue for details), and Professor Velchuru Narayana Rao who spoke on the modernity of Telugu literature. Professor Rao was here to promote and encourage our new Telugu Initiative through which the community is raising funds for the instruction and dissemination of Telugu language and literature. This is an exciting new Initiative and we hope to have Telugu at Berkeley by the fall of 2007.

CSAS enjoyed the privilege of hosting the "Edge of Desire" exhibit of contemporary Indian art at the Berkeley Art Museum. Our students participated in this highly successful exhibition as docents as well as performers for the opening reception. Professors Joanna Williams, Vasudha Dalmia and Sudipto Chatterjee took part in various panel discussions and events centered around the exhibit.

One of our core themes this year has been Indian Democracy. Sociologist Yogendra Yadav and writer Ramachandra Guha spoke at our day-long seminar titled *Democratic India: Social and Political Challenges in the 21st Century*, which was a collaboration with Australian National

University--we hope the first in a series of successful joint projects. In developing this theme, we are delighted to announce that in order to create an environment in which India's contemporary challenges can be addressed and alternative solutions discussed by policy makers, thought leaders, NGO activists, and scholars, we are launching a high-level annual series, the "FDRI/Berkeley Seminar Series on Indian Democracy," in collaboration with the Foundation for Democratic Reforms in India, in May of 2007. More details will be forthcoming soon.

We now have two fellowship programs endowed by the generosity of donors, the Abdul Qayum Foundation and the Amrit Kaur Ahluwalia Memorial Grant Program, which fund travel for students working on contemporary South Asia and Sikh Studies respectively. This has enabled our students to undertake much needed exploratory research for their dissertations.

This fall, South Asia at Berkeley has been enhanced by the addition of historian Prachi Deshpande (featured in this issue) and librarian Adnan Malik. Aftab Ahmad joins us as the new lecturer in Urdu. We wish them all the very best of luck and are delighted to have them join the community of South Asia scholars at Berkeley.

As always, we look forward to seeing you at our events and in the Center. Please check our website, <http://ias.berkeley.edu/southasia>, for lists of events, conferences and other South Asia related activities.

CSAS Hosts Colloquium on **Democratic India: Social and Political Challenges in the 21st Century**

September 15, 2006

Cosponsored by Australian National University



Yogendra Yadav



Robin Jeffrey of ANU

(L to R) Debjani Ganguly, Robin Jeffrey, Pradeep Chhibber, Ramachandra Guha, Amit Ahuja, Yogendra Yadav, Mark Koops Elson, Raka Ray, Irfan Nooruddin, Ambassador B.S. Prakash

Journalists Alexander Cockburn and P. Sainath Speak at Berkeley



Alexander Cockburn

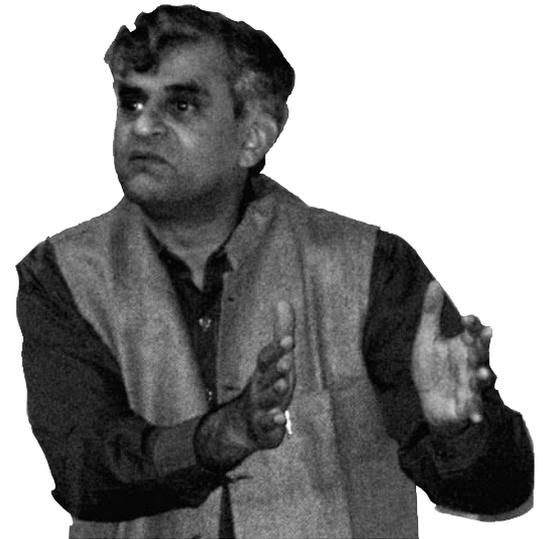
On Monday, September 2nd, journalists P. Sainath and Alexander Cockburn delivered lively and provocative speeches to a packed room in Dwinelle Hall. The event was sponsored by the Center for South Asia Studies and the Center for Middle East Studies and co-sponsored by AID, ASHA, ASAPA, FOSA and the Graduate School of Journalism.

Cockburn's speech ranged from the dangers of eating spinach to the weakness of the battered and withering "resistance" in this country, drawing a link between the two, located in fear. One has more chance of being killed by a descending piece of a spaceship than from eating spinach, he explained. Yet the news in this country thrives on such stories that concoct this fear. The title of the event, "Neoliberal Destructions," was unpacked, as Cockburn delineated the myriad ways in which neoliberalism has failed and continues to fail. The difference between the Right and Left, he explained, is that the Right believes neoliberalism can succeed free of bloodshed while the Left knows only war and bloodshed will propagate neoliberal ideals. Yet telling the difference between the Right and Left is near to impossible.

Alexander Cockburn is the co-editor of *CounterPunch* and a nationally syndicated author. He has established a reputation as one of the foremost reporters and commentators of the Left. The author of a bi-weekly column for *The Nation* called "Beat the Devil," Cockburn also writes a syndicated newspaper column that is distributed nationally by Creators Syndicate. In 1987, Cockburn authored a highly successful collection of essays, some autobiographical, entitled *Corruptions of Empire*, for which the *Times Literary Supplement* called him "the most gifted polemicist now writing in English." His diary of the late 1980s and early 1990s, *The Golden Age Is In Us*, drew enthusiastic reviews from many sources, such as *The New York Times*, in which Cockburn was described as "a warrior freethinker, armed with courage and gifted prose to cut down the hypocrisies of tyrants."

Mumbai-based P. Sainath is Asia's leading development journalist, writing frequently about issues such as poverty and the effects of neoliberalism on India. Through his work on the livelihoods of India's rural poor, Sainath has changed the nature of the development debate in his own country and across the world. His landmark book, *Everybody Loves a Good Drought*, is a devastating portrait of Indian government economic policies gone awry. Sainath has won numerous awards for his reportage, including the European Commission's Natali Prize in 1994 for articles

related to development and poverty as well as working and living conditions of vulnerable social groups. In November 2001, he won the Boerma Journalism Prize from the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, the most important award in development journalism.



P. Sainath

Sainath's talk drew largely on stories and images from his experiences chronicling poor farmers in India's rural areas. He spoke on the alarmingly high suicide rate of farmers who cannot support their families and yet are subjected to ever-increasing interest rates drawing them further into debt. His face contorted in anger as he described the scene in one village where there were three weddings and a funeral on the same day: three weddings at the same time to save money, and the funeral of the patriarch who could not pay his debts and thus ended his own life. Since the relatives had already traveled far for the weddings, the festivities went on despite the patriarch's death. In his closing image, Sainath described a scene from Nero's Rome. Nero, he explained, threw lavish parties for the Roman elite. But, since there was no electricity, he had to come up with a creative way to light up the party. He placed human bodies on stakes and set fire to them, thus providing light for the party. Sainath ended with the question, *not* who were those people whose bodies were burned, but who were the people attending that party, able to sip more wine, and "pop another fig" into their mouths as bodies burned around them? He implied that it was all of us.

The journalists ended with a question/answer session. Both Sainath and Cockburn are visibly impassioned by their work, and hearing their words come off the page was a treat for everyone present.



Interview, cont'd (from p. 1)

acters are, so they know what particular abuse is being hurled, even though it's a euphemism. But these characters are also steeped in popular Marathi culture. It's not just in political rhetoric or in statues and in public parks that you see Maratha history; it is pervasive because we encounter it in different kinds of cultural narratives as well. Whether it was film or novels or plays, you found a lot of Maratha historical themes and characters. In trying to understand what this pervasiveness was, I wanted to see how it resonated within broader, cultural spheres as well. Hence, the focus on narrative to think about how one particular version of Marathi or Maratha history gets retold over and over again in different genres – whether scholarly history or novel or play – and endures. These narratives are also adapted to different Maratha characters, but are often similar and, over time, become familiar. Through different characters in plays, and novels and cinema, an underlying, broader story about Maratha morality and patriotism, and thereby a narrative about modern Maharashtra is being retold, so that when you actually see a figure of Bajji Rao Peshwa in front of the Shaniwar Wada in Pune, you know exactly who he is and what he stands for. You don't have to have that little plaque at the side telling you who he was and what he did. These narratives are certainly hotly contested in society, but also develop significant points of consensus over time. Shivaji is the most striking figure in this historical memory, but I have tried to show that he is not the only one; there are many other figures from Maratha history as well.

CSAS: *How much of your work focuses on big metropolitan centers like Bombay and Pune? Is there a difference in the way these figures are remembered in the villages in Maharashtra versus the big cities?*

A lot of my work focused on urban and semi-urban practices, since it also had to do with novels and plays. I tried to think about how these images traveled from the printed page onto a much more performative space where they interacted with larger groups of people, not just literate, middle-class audiences. There were a lot of oral narratives from pastoral, rural groups, especially those that were told about the Ramoshi brigand Umaji Naik, for instance, that are strikingly similar to elite narratives of Shivaji in invoking values of heroism, masculinity and nobility, or asserting rights over patrimonies. But despite middle class efforts from the nineteenth century onwards, they resisted assimilation into the silent narrative of the Indian nation-state or Maharashtra. There was a common pool of heroic actions and events that both elite and subaltern, or urban and rural invocations of Maratha history drew from, but the middle-class urban ones were overtly concerned, in the colonial political context, with underwriting abstract, modern categories of nation, region or caste, and with underscoring the historicity of the heroes and events.

CSAS: *Your book, Creative Pasts: Historical Memory and Identity in Western India, 1700-1960, is coming out next*

year? Have you finished it?

Yes, it is in press right now. It's expected to be out in late May from Columbia University Press.

CSAS: *Please tell us about the book and the process of writing it, how it started out, and how it changed.*

It's been quite exhausting to write! I've revised it considerably from its dissertation form. My dissertation focused very much at the emergence of Marathi regional consciousness, through historical imagination. But in my book manuscript I focused much more on historical imagination and the emergence of modern Marathi historiography, the relationship of old pre-colonial narratives to colonial ones, the importance of print and of literary genres, and the emergence of an enduring historical memory. The best part of it has been that I've gotten back in touch with Marathi literature in a way that I wasn't when I was in college or doing my Master's. I now read a lot more Marathi, much more easily than I did before. It was exciting to write, I enjoyed it very much, but I'm glad the book is done.

CSAS: *You recently presented a paper in Syracuse titled, "Textual Travels: Historiography, Memory and the Archive in the Indian Memoir of 1857." What was the subject of that paper? Did it come out of the book or does it reflect your current research?*

The paper is about a travelogue or a memoir that a Marathi Brahmin man wrote in the late 19th century, about having got caught in the 1857 revolt in the North when he had gone there for a pilgrimage. He's there witnessing all these major events, staying with some of the major figures of the revolt, and when he comes back a historian asks him to write down his experiences, promising him some money. What I've done is look at this narrative: the experiences and the regional and patriotic imagination this man, Vishnubhat Godse, had, and the approach to this narrative in terms of genre, as a history, memoir, or travelogue. The text itself has a very interesting history. The modern historian who requisitioned it liked some parts and not others, and edited it in interesting ways. I looked at some of those edits to think about the differences in the two men's visions of history. In that sense a lot of it comes out of the book. But it's also a bridge, I'm hoping, into a new research project about the late 18th and early 19th centuries when Maratha people were traveling all across the subcontinent and coming into contact with other groups, linguistic, religious, and so on. I want to think about migration and pilgrimage networks, what it might tell us about the early modern period from a Maratha cultural point of view, because they're interacting with Tamils in Tanjavur, or in Orissa, or in Bundelkhand, with Mughal officials, and those of the successor states. I'm hoping that this text will lead me into an older world of migration and pilgrimage that I want to explore. And that's what I presented at Syracuse, a sort of initial, exploratory kind of paper.

Right now I'm trying to think about the early modern world before colonialism and what we might

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Interview, cont'd (from previous page)

say about sacred geographies, political geographies, about conceptions of homeland. I'm hoping that this project will also be historiographical, in helping us think about reading existing and familiar documents in different ways. But this is all right now very preliminary, and I think I'll give myself some time to think about how I want to go about it.

CSAS: How do you like Berkeley so far?

I'm delighted to be here. This place is great, the weather, the library, the large community of South Asians and South Asian-related events. It's very exciting. But I'm also a little overwhelmed because there's so much happening that I don't know what to go to and what to skip.

CSAS: What are you teaching now?

I'm teaching a 103, which is an introduction to historical thinking, a seminar that introduces undergraduates to historical thinking and historical writing. It's called "Nationalism and Colonialism in South Asia," and it introduces the students to some of the broad debates surrounding the colonial encounter, national expression, and nationalist thought in the subcontinent between the 19th and 20th centuries. In the spring, I'll be teaching the follow-up to the 103, which is the 101, where students write their own senior thesis research papers, and there we're going to think about history and memory in South Asia: the different ways in which the past is commemorated, remembered, forgotten in the subcontinent.

CSAS: How do your experiences at other institutions compare to Berkeley?

My first job, before Rutgers, was at Colorado State University in Fort Collins. The biggest difference here at Berkeley is in the size of the South Asia academic community and the library resources. A lot of Indian language materials are here, so it's very exciting. When I taught at Rutgers-Newark, one of the big attractions about teaching there, and also one of the biggest challenges, was the large number of recently immigrated South Asian students. I was able to engage with nationalist narratives and high school versions of history that these students had learned and brought with them, so I think I was able to teach South Asian history almost imagining that I was teaching somewhere in the subcontinent. I don't know what my experience will be like here, but I'm looking forward to teaching a lecture course. I have been very happy with the discussions in my seminar thus far.

CSAS: Do you have graduate students yet that you're working with?

I will be working with grad students both in History and in the SSEAS department. There seem to be a lot of grad students who are interested in the kind of questions that I am, questions of representation, of nationalist narratives, of regional identity, of political possibilities. One of the big differences between other institutions I've taught at and

Berkeley is the conversations I'm having with grad students. I taught Masters courses earlier, but never really interacted with doctoral students, which is very exciting.

CSAS: It seems like your work could travel beyond the South Asian context. Are you interested in working with students who research the same kinds of issues you do, who ask the same questions you do, but in other, non-South Asian contexts?

I would like my work to definitely help us think about memory more generally than just illuminate my Marathi context, but it's also important that it do its job well in examining and explaining the Marathi and South Asian context itself. I wouldn't like to stretch it to the extent that it will lose its rootedness. But I'd love to work with students who are interested in practices, of commemoration, of heroic representation, and so on, but in alternative contexts and societies.

CSAS: If you could teach a class on any subject, what would it be?

I would like to teach a course on the social and cultural history of Indian music. I'm not sure how (continues next page)

ORIAS 2006 Summer Institute: *"Encountering Nature in World History"*

On July 24-28th, the Center for South Asia Studies co-sponsored the ORIAS 2006 Summer Institute: "Encountering Nature in World History." The Office of Resources for International and Area Studies (ORIAS) is a joint program of the Title VI Area Centers at UC Berkeley. Since its inception in 1996, the office has been dedicated to providing scholarly resources and supporting professional development for K-12 and community college teachers addressing international studies. Programs and materials are designed in collaboration with teachers and scholars to meet the challenge of creating a globally informed student body while addressing the curriculum standards for world history and the particular needs of California's diverse population. The annual summer conference combines lectures, discussion, resource review and curriculum development and is open and free to all interested educators.

CSAS provided these guest speakers for the institute:
Prof. Vijaya R Nagarajan
Lecture: "Rituals of Embedded Ecologies in India"
Theology & Religious Studies, University of San Francisco
Jacquelin Cochran
Lecture: "Equity & Rainwater Harvesting in India"
Doctoral Candidate, Energy & Resources Group, U. C. Berkeley

The lectures stimulated a great deal of discussion amongst the ORIAS participants and prompted conversations about the intersection of nature and history in an Indian context.

For more information on ORIAS, please visit the website at <http://ias.berkeley.edu/orias/>.

Interview, cont'd *(from previous page)*

I'd plan it, but it would be something that I would love to do, to think about performers and their backgrounds, intellectual and musicological debates over aesthetics and performance and their politics. I would also love to teach a course called "Mughals, Marathas, and Others," a history of the early modern period that brings in the popular stories surrounding these historical figures like Shivaji and Aurangzeb, but at the same time unpacks and critiques the divisive narratives that have encrusted around them. A course that taps into the drama of historical memory, but at the same time, alerts the students to its political potential and dangers. This one, actually, I probably will do at some point. I'd also love to think about a course on the history of South Asia through commodities: spices, fabrics, paper, opium, etc., or think about the history of post-colonial India through the lens of popular film and film music.

CSAS: *Do you play music?*

No, but I love Hindustani classical music. I recently found a music teacher here and started learning music after a very long time. Everybody sang in my family, so I did too as a kid, but I just started learning after a very long time. I am interested in the history of music, in thinking about and listening to Hindustani music or Marathi *natyasangeet*. And film music of course. Like everybody who grows up in the subcontinent, I am a total Hindi film song buff, but of a particular time-period, between, say, 1945 and 1970.

CSAS: *It seems that you're also a fan of knitting.*

Yes, other than music, my other big passion is knitting. I've

been knitting since I was a kid. I stayed with it through my dissertation research, when I couldn't bear to read another word, in order to relax, because I'd been staring at micro-films or small type for hours and hours, I found that it was incredibly productive to take a couple of hours off and knit something. After coming to the U.S. I discovered a great variety of patterns and yarns, and then I never looked back. I enjoy it very much. The Bay Area has a lot of wonderful yarn stores, which I'm looking forward to exploring now that I'm here.

Dr. Ved Prakash Vatuk Wins Award

Berkeley based Indian folklorist and renowned Hindi poet Dr. Ved Prakash Vatuk has been selected by the U.P. Government's Hindi Sansthan to receive this year's Jaishankar Prasad Award. This award is given for the best epic of the year. Dr. Vatuk has been given this honor for his epic poem, Bahubali. The award carries a citation and a cash prize of Rs. 25000. The award ceremony was held on Hindi Diwas, September 14, 2006.

The story of Bahubali is based on the ancient myth of Adi Tirthankar Rishabhdev's sons, Bharat and Bahubali, and their struggle for absolute power. Its main themes are anti-war and a search for genuine peace.

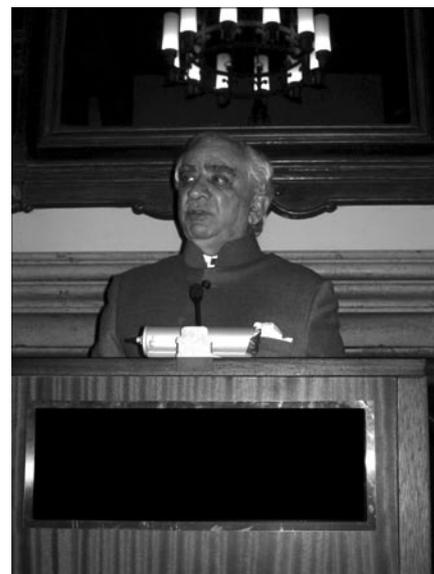
Hindi Sansthan previously honored Dr. Vatuk with its Pravasi Bhartiya Hindi Sahitya Bhushan Samman, an honor given to a Hindi writer residing outside India. He was the first one to receive that award in 1996, the year this award was initiated.

Dr. Vatuk has published 23 volumes of poetry in Hindi and English, in addition to his academic works. He has also translated Shrimad Bhagvat Gita into Hindi verse.

Protest Erupts at CSAS Event

On October 26th, 2006, CSAS hosted Jaswant Singh, leader of the opposition in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of India's Parliament) and former Minister of External Affairs and of Finance. What began as a usual CSAS lecture, titled "India and China: the Asian Two," quickly erupted into a dramatic, heated event. The lecture was held in the Great Hall of the International House and was preceded by a small reception with Mr. Singh. The chair of CSAS, Raka Ray, finished introducing the speaker, and just as he was uttering the first words of his speech, about 60 protestors stormed into the room, some chanting Sikh religious slogans. Others shouted, "You cannot apologize for genocide" referring to the role of the BJP in Gujarat in 2002. While this was going on, the members of the audience who had come to hear Jaswant Singh speak yelled back at the protestors, telling them to be quiet and to let him give his lecture. Finally Raka Ray presented a compromise that was accepted by both sides: the leader of the protestors, Prabhsharandeeep Singh, US president of the youth wing of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), was allowed to read a statement he had prepared, under the condition that the

protestors then sit quietly, listen to the speech, and wait until the question and answer session to speak up again. After the statement, which referred less to Gujarat and more to the rights of Sikhs in the Punjab, was read, the protestors were, outside of a few ringing cell phones, quiet as promised. Jaswant Singh then spoke briefly about India and China. Though everyone present, including the speaker himself, was eager to go forward with the question/answer session, believing that it would be the most fruitful segment of the evening, the police forced an ending to the event after Singh's fielding of only one question.



FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Shalini Ayyagari (Graduate Student, Music) is currently in Rajasthan, India on a Fulbright IIE fellowship and an ARSC (Association for Recorded Sound Collections) Research Grant conducting dissertation fieldwork. She's working with the Manganiar, a group of hereditary caste musicians located in the desert region of Western Rajasthan. Her research examines and interrogates the new and innovative ways in which these musicians are etching out a living for themselves in an area changing rapidly by cultural tourism, small-scale development projects, ecological affects, and increasing globalization.

Huma Dar (Graduate Student, SSEAS) presented a paper titled, "The Mother and the Tawa'if: Questioning Indian Nationalism in Guru Dutt's *Pyaasa* (1957)" in a panel called Reframing Devadasis and Courtesans: Sexuality, Religiosity, and Histories of the Nation at the 35th Annual South Asia Conference at Madison, WI. She also gave a talk on live television in April at India Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in New Delhi, India, on South Asian Women Across and Beyond Borders, to be used in the Women's Studies Curriculum. Dar was an invited participant at the Prime Minister's High Level Committee special roundtable consultation on Muslims in India: a Gender Perspective in New Delhi. She is currently working on an article tentatively titled "Can a Muslim be an Indian and not a Traitor or a Terrorist?" to be published by Routledge in 2007 in *Shared Idioms, Sacred Symbols*, edited by Professor Kelly Pemberton. Dar is also working on the translations of two Urdu poems to be published by Penguin in 2006, in an anthology on Lucknow, edited by Professor Veena Oldenburg.

Munis D. Faruqui (SSEAS) has completed his first year at Berkeley. Munis received a Bernadotte Schmitt Grant from the American Historical Association and an American Institute of Indian Studies Faculty Research Grant this past year. He is really looking forward to the possibility of being in India in the fall of 2007. In addition to completing a number of encyclopedia pieces and book reviews, he has also recently finished a piece that focuses on Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah I (the founder of Hyderabad) and the formation of Hyderabad. He continues to work on his monograph on the Mughal Empire while also enjoying teaching classes on "Islam in S. Asia," "Mughal India," and "Hindu-Muslim Religious Nationalism."

Jinah Kim (Art History) finished her dissertation, "Unorthodox Practice: Rethinking the Cult of Illustrated Buddhist Books in South Asia" in summer 2006, and joined Vanderbilt University as an Assistant Professor of South Asian art.

Ben Oppenheim (Graduate Student, Political Science) was in Nepal in late August doing research on the internal displacement problem and peace process.

Ananya Roy (Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, International & Area Studies and Associate Professor, City and Regional Planning) was the recipient of the 2006 Distinguished Teaching Award, the highest teaching honor UC Berkeley bestows on its faculty. She was also honored by the Graduate Assembly as the recipient of the 2006 Distinguished Faculty Mentorship Award, an award that recognizes the mentorship of graduate students. In her role as Associate Dean of IAS, Ananya Roy will lead a "Global Studies" curriculum initiative affiliated with the newly established Blum Center for Developing Economies. Roy is currently completing two book projects: *The Practice of International Health* (co-edited with Daniel Perlman; to be published by Oxford University Press in 2007) and *Poverty Truths: Discipline and Development in the New Global Order* (to be published by Routledge, also in 2007). In 2005-2006, the latter was awarded a National Science Foundation research grant.

Michael J. Slouber (Graduate Student, SSEAS) was awarded a FLAS fellowship to study classical Newari in Kathmandu during the summer of 2006. He is currently preparing a critical edition of three chapters of the *Kriyakalagunottara* for his MA project. The chapters deal with the origin, mantras, and visualization of a little known figure named Khadgaravana, a provocative mix of the epic Ravana and Siva in the form of Bhairava.

Ram Karan Sharma (SSEAS) attended and presented the keynote address at the International Conference on Commentaries held under the auspices of the French Institute in Pondicherry. He also attended the Thirteenth World Sanskrit Conference held in Edinburgh, Scotland in July and presented the keynote address as well as a paper on the "Invisible in Panini." Last year Sharma received two prestigious awards: the Birla Foundation's Vaacaspati Award for his Sanskrit poetry selection *Gaganavaanii* and the KK Handique Memorial Award for his services to Sanskrit studies. His Sanskrit poetry selection *Kavita* came out last year.

Clare Talwalker (IAS) has enjoyed her first year as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the International and Area Studies Teaching Program, where she has taught "Cultures and Capitalisms" as well as "Popular Cultures in South Asia." She recently completed an essay entitled "Precious Publics: 'Kin Fetishism', the spaces of modern Marathi, and Postcolonial Writings on the Indian 'Outside'" and is beginning work on another article on the autobiography form as used by Marathi Dalit writers in postindependence India. In the summer and fall of 2007, she plans to do preliminary research for her next project on domestic middle class tourism in a seaside fishing village-cum-resort hub north of Mumbai.

Recent CSAS Events

September 7

- *At Empire's End: The Nizam and Hyderabad in the 18th Century*
Munis Faruqi, Assistant Professor of South and Southeast Asian Studies

September 10

- Baul Music and Lecture.
Sudipto Chatterjee, Assistant Professor of Theater, Dance and Performance Studies

September 1 - November 1

- Art Exhibition: *Rajasthan: A Portrait of a Region*
Raphael Shevelev, Photographer

September 15

- *Democratic India: Social and Political Challenges in the 21st Century*
Keynotes: Ramachandra Guha, Author and Columnist
Yogendra Yadav, Director, Lokniti-Institute for Comparative Democracy, Delhi

September 16

- Artists' Panel: *The Edge of Desire: Recent Art in India*
Lawrence Cohen, Vasudha Dalmia, Atul Dodiya, Nalini Malani, Chaitanya Sambrani

September 17

- *Folk and Fine Arts Flux in India Today*
Joanna Williams, Professor of Art History

September 22-23

- *Asia by Means of Performance: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on Asian Performance*

October 2

- *Neoliberal Destructions*
P. Sainath, Award-winning Journalist and Political Commentator
Alexander Cockburn, Journalist, *Counterpunch* and *The Nation*

October 5

- CSAS Annual Reception

October 11

- *Mutiny: Asians Storm British Music*. Film screening and talk
Vivek Bald, Documentary Filmmaker

October 12

- *The Flight of the 'Brahmadaitya': Ghosts and their Advocates in Colonial Bengal*
Tithi Bhattacharya, Assistant Professor of History, Purdue University

October 26

- *India and China: The Asian Two*
Jaswant Singh, Leader of the Opposition, Rajya Sabha (Upper House of India's Parliament) and former Minister of External Affairs and of Finance

November 8

- *Why is the West Losing the War on Terror?*
Hamid Mir, Pakistani Journalist

November 9

- *Making Theater with Ratan Thiyam, Chorus Repertory Theatre*
Ratan Thiyam, Director of Chorus Repertory Theatre
Interviewed by Sudipto Chatterjee

November 13

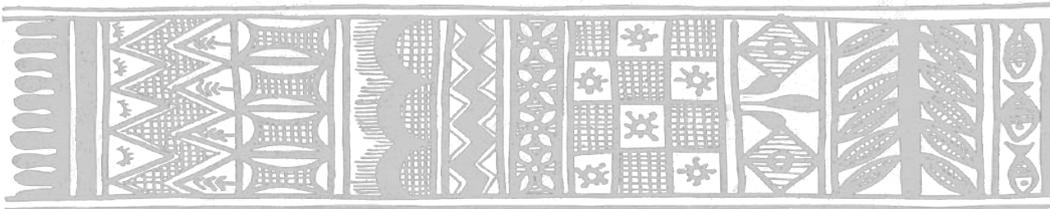
- *When was India Modern? Premodern Modernities in Telugu Literature*
Dr. Velcheru Narayana Rao, Krishnadevaraya Professor of Languages and Cultures of Asia, University of Wisconsin

November 16

- *Recognition and History in Malaysia's Plantations*
Andrew Willford, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Asian Studies, Cornell University

December 7

- *Science & Spirituality: A Conversation*
Panel discussion with Mani Bhaumik, Physicist, and Charles Townes, Nobel Laureate, Physicist



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