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Conversations: Searching for the Sacred in South Asia

Conference Schedule

A Postgraduate Symposium on Religion in South Asia
30th September 2022 - 1st October 2022
Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge

Steering committee:

Hina Khalid (Cambridge)	Namrata Narula (Cambridge)
Nirali Patel (Cambridge)	Tilak Parekh (Cambridge)
Hershini Soneji (Cambridge)	Imran Visram (Oxford)

Steering committee advisor: Dr Ankur Barua (Cambridge)

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9:20 - 9:30 AM	Opening Remarks	Panel 3: Identities Inscribed: a panel exploring the foundations, formulations, and fragmentations of identities across religion, region, caste and others.	
Panel 1: Sacred Spatialities: a panel exploring the plurivocal character of place and space, with their capacities to curate, construct, and contest conceptions of the sacred.		2:45 - 3:10 PM	"A Crimson Stroke: Exploring Shaheed Sarmad" Parul Behl (South Asian University)
9:30 - 9:55 AM	"Visualisation of Ardas (or Sikh Prayer) at Central Sikh Museum: Oil Canvases of Sikh History Paintings" Sayana Gupta (Jawaharlal Nehru University)	3:10 - 3:35 PM	"Bhakti Movement: An Impact on the Dichotomy of Hinduism" Saheba Saxena (University of Lincoln)
9:55 - 10:20 AM	"Finding Rama in the Murals of the Sitarama Temple at Galta" Prerana Khandelwal (Jawaharlal Nehru University)	3:35 - 4:00 PM	"'A League of Muslim Nations': Pakistan's Vision for the Imagined Muslim World in the Mid-Twentieth Century" Alizeh Tariq Paracha (University of Oxford)
10:20 - 10:45 AM	"The Deification of a Plant: Understanding the Human-Nature Relationship in Ancient India" Sreekala MV (Jawaharlal Nehru University)	4:00 - 4:20 PM	Break
10:45 - 11:00 AM	Break	4:20 - 4:45 PM	"Shifting the Sasana: Sinhala Nationalist Constructions of Buddhism in the Last Decade" Neal Apel (University of Queensland)
11:00 - 11:25 AM	"Folk-God in the Museum: Space, Aesthetics, and Masculinity" Anju ML (Jawaharlal Nehru University)	4:45 - 5:10 PM	"Tracing Anti-Caste Strands in the Social History of Indian Christians" Sumit Samos (University of Oxford)
11:25 - 11:50 AM	"Yantra – A Multi-Faceted Tool for Meditation, Ritual and Devotional Practice" Sandra Hill (Prince's Foundation School of Traditional Arts)	5:10 - 5:30 PM	Break
11:50 - 12:05 PM	Break	Panel 4: Aesthetic Articulations: a panel exploring the expressions and enactments of religious belonging across myriad forms of art and textual material, and the generative possibilities latent in the narrative form.	
Panel 2: Ritual Rootings and Re-Imaginations: a panel exploring the ways that individuals and communities are situated within certain socio-ritual lifeworlds, and the inner dynamism of these worlds vis-à-vis present-day challenges.		5:30 - 5:55 PM	"Problematics of Religion in Representation" Siddhanta Goswami (English and Foreign Languages University)
12:05 - 12:30 PM	"The Evolving Tradition of Kalamezhuthupattu: Understanding Rights, Rites, and Rituals" Vishnu PV (Jawaharlal Nehru University)	5:55 - 6:20 PM	"Awadhi Noblewomen, Ritual Innovation and a Dream: Exploring the Possibilities of a Story as Historical Evidence" Tanya Burman (Ambedkar University)
12:30 - 12:55 PM	"The Public Life of Religion in Puran Dhaka" Alif Shahed (University of Toronto)	6:20 - 6:45 PM	"Unlikely Avatars: The Case of the Buddha Avatars of Vishnu in Hindu Dasavatara Pantheon" Akash Kumar Sahu (Jawaharlal Nehru University)
12:55 - 1:20 PM	"Articulations of Koya Religious Identity: A Comparison of Two Jataras" Elvin Xing Yifu (Australian National University)	6:45 - 7:10 PM	"Experiencing Religious-Secular Identity: Approaches in Contemporary Video and Installation Art in Bangladesh" Priyanka Hutschenreiter (SOAS)
1:20 - 2:15 PM	Lunch	7:10 - 7:15 PM	Closing Remarks
2:15 - 2:40 PM	"Pūjā During the Pandemic: Challenges and Continuities" Sreya Ghatak (Presidency University)		

9:25 - 9:45 AM	Arrival and Refreshments
9:45 - 9:50 AM	Opening Remarks
Panel 1: Embodied Entanglements: a panel exploring the manifold ways that the material world is inhabited and invested with meaning, from the vantage points of ritual specificities, community building, sacred spaces, and contemporary crises.	
9:50 - 10:10 AM	"The Body Through a Buddhist Lens: Photographic Portraits as Icons and Lineage Records in Tibetan Buddhist Communities" Cody Fuller (University of Oxford)
10:10 - 10:30 AM	"Footprints of Ashura: Creating the Sacred in the City" Fizza Joffrey (University of Oxford)
10:30 - 10:50 AM	"Stories of Survival: Muhajir Shi'as and Community Building in Post-Partition Karachi" Sana Rizvi (University of Oxford)
10:50 - 11:05 AM	Break
11:05 - 11:25 AM	"Religious and magical elements in leftist performativity: the citizenship protests in West Bengal" Riccardo Jaede (LSE)
11:25 - 11:45 AM	"Crisis as Opportunity: The Politics of 'Seva' and the Hindu Nationalist Response to Covid-19 Pandemic in Kerala, South India" Dayal Paleri (University of Edinburgh)
11:45 - 12:00 PM	Break
Panel 2: Literary Landscapes: a panel exploring the variegated expressions of identities across literary worlds, and the aperture into cultural dynamics that such worlds afford.	
12:00 - 12:20 PM	"Dhairyam Avalabyatām": On the Preclusion of the Tragic Vighnesh Hampapura (University of Oxford)
12:20 - 12:40 PM	"A Phenomenology of Religious Transformation: Reading the Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra alongside Being and Time" Aamir Kaderbhai (University of Oxford)
12:40 - 1:00 PM	"Human Rights & Minority Religious Discourses in World Literature: Nadeem Aslam's Secularist Ethics" Sauleha Kamal (University of York)
1:00 - 2:15 PM	Lunch

Panel 3: Sacred Secularities: a panel exploring the subtle entwinements of the sacred and the spiritual, and how these entwinements are re-imagined through conversations and contestations between 'tradition' and 'modernity'.	
2:15 - 2:35 PM	"Rewriting Nawab Wajid Ali Shah in Shia Memory, 1970-present" Naveen Farhan (University of Oxford)
2:35 - 2:55 PM	"Bonbibbi Survives? The Sacred Goddess of the Sundarbans" Amrita Dasgupta (SOAS)
2:55 - 3:10 PM	"The (Secular?) Expressions of Religiosity by Apolitical Actors" Taarika Singh (SOAS)
3:15 - 3:35 PM	"A Comparative Study of the Views of Muḥammad 'Abduh and Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Kḥān on Issues of Modernity" Aslan Uddin (University of Cambridge)
3:35 - 3:45 PM	Break
3:45 - 4:05 PM	"Jinnah, Iqbal and the Two-Nation Theory: Evaluating The Role of Islam in 21st Century Pakistan" Mohammed Yusuf Asghar (Cambridge Muslim College)
4:05 - 4:25 PM	"How Colonialism Affects Sikh Identity: Issues Regarding Terminology" Vishal Sangu (University of Wolverhampton)
4:25 - 4:45 PM	"Communalism in British India: The Role of Caste in Shaping Hindu-Sikh Relations in Colonial Punjab c. 1849-1925" Pritam Singh (LSE)
4:45 - 5:05 PM	Break
Panel 4: Beyond Borders: a panel exploring the ways that South Asia 'spills over' beyond itself, and shapes identities, imaginaries, and institutions outside its geographic bounds.	
5:05 - 5:25 PM	"The Center Cannot Hold: Orientalism as Spiritual Yearning in Modernity" Spencer Pennington (University of California)
5:25 - 5:45 PM	"Soul Searching Through the Academy: Text, Tradition, and Qualitative Methods in Nepal" Florence Harry (University of Cambridge)
5:45 - 5:50 PM	Closing Remarks