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## The Newsletter of the American Institute of Indian Studies

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*Patrick Weston enjoys a motorcycle ride in Pushkar with his friend Sadique*

### **Qawwals of Ajmer** by Patrick Weston

The Qawwals are hereditary servants of the shrine of the founder of the Chishti order in India, Muinuddin Chishti (died 1236), as well as professional musicians. Qawwali, or 'utterance' is the world famous devotional song essential to the act of *zikr* (remembrance of God, the Prophet, the Saint) as practiced by the Chishtis, a Sufi order with a powerful role in South Asian Islam. The shrine complex in Ajmer is renowned as a sanctuary for the poor and desperate and functions as a center for community service. The

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**The American Institute of Indian Studies is pleased to announce that the following scholars and artists have been awarded fellowships to carry out their projects in India in 2008-2009:**

**Glenn Ames**, a professor in the Department of History at the University of Toledo, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out his project, "Slavery, Servitude and Manumission: The Structure and Role of Unfree Labor in Portuguese India, 1640-1700."

**Simone Barretta**, a graduate student in the Department of South Asia Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, "Contestation and Appropriation in the Tantric Shaivism of Medieval Kashmir."

**Bernard Bate**, an assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology at Yale University, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out his project, "Speaking the Public Sphere: Tamil Oratory and Linguistic Modernity." Professor Bate's fellowship is being funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

**Sarah Besky**, a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, "Distinguishing Darjeeling: An Ethnographic Study of Tea Brokerage in Kolkata."

**Anuj Bhuwania**, a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at Columbia University, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, "Everyday Policing and its Publics in Contemporary India."

**Lisa Bjorkman**, a graduate student in the Department of Political Science at the New School University, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, "Water, Power and Citizenship in Mumbai." Ms Bjorkman is the seventh recipient of the Priscilla M. Boughton-Stanley Kochanek Graduate Fellowship in Indian Studies.

**Allison Busch**, an assistant professor in the Department of Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out her project, "The Poetry of History: Responses to Mughal Power in Early Modern Hindi Literature." Professor Busch's fellowship is being funded by the National Endowment for

the Humanities.

**Bradley Chase**, an archaeologist, was awarded a senior short-term fellowship to carry out his project, "Investigating the Economic Organization of the Indus Civilization in Gujarat."

**Prachi Deshpande**, an assistant professor in the Department of History at the University of California, Berkeley, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out her project, "Itinerant Geographies: Maratha Migration, Homeland and Expansion, 1750-1900." Professor Deshpande's fellowship is being funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

**Sara Dickey**, a professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Bowdoin College, was awarded a senior short-term fellowship to carry out her project, "Cinema, Consumption, and Class in Neoliberal India: Producing the Media of Tamil Cinema."

**David DiValerio**, a graduate student in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Virginia, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, "Overturning Norms: A New Approach to Buddhist 'Madmen.'"

**Eric Eide**, a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at the University of Michigan, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, "Industrial Upgrading in India's Information Technology Enabled Service Industry."

**Maura Finkelstein**, a graduate student in the Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology at Stanford University, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, "Spinning Histories of the Future: Memory, Materiality and the Making of Mill Lands in Central Mumbai."

**Michele Friedner**, a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, "Focus on Which Family?: Deaf Identity and Social Movements in India."

**Durba Ghosh**, an assistant professor in the Department of History at Cornell University, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out his project, "Revolutionaries and Freedom Fighters: Nationalism in Bengal in the 20th Century."

**Akhil Gupta**, a professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out his project, "Refashioning Selves, Reimagining Futures: Media and Mobility in Call Centers."

**Trisha Gupta**, a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology at Columbia University, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, "A Historic Capital for A Historic Nation: Siting Urban Heritage in Post-Colonial Delhi."

**Ehud Halperin**, a graduate student in the Department of Religion at Columbia University, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, "Hadimba Becoming Herself: A Himalayan Goddess in Change."

**John Hawley**, a professor in the Department of Religion at Columbia University, was awarded a senior short-term fellowship to carry out his project, "The Bhakti Movement: Excavations in a Master Narrative."

**Tiffany Hodge**, a graduate student in the Graduate Division of Religion at Emory University, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, "Piety in Practice: Seeking Out Religious Authority in Rural West Bengal."

**Risha Lee**, a graduate student in the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, "Tamil Merchant Temples in India and China."

**Karline McLain**, an assistant professor in the Department of Religion at Bucknell University, was awarded a senior short-term fellowship to carry out her project, "Envisioning Hinduism: Beyond Raja Ravi Varma's Visual Canon."

**Lisa Mitchell**, an assistant professor in the Department of South Asia Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out her project, "A

Social History of the Indian Railway Station as Public Space."

**Sudeshna Mitra**, a graduate student in the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cornell University, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out her project, "Reshaping Urban India for the IT Sector: Case Study Kolkata, Hyderabad."

**Janaki Patrik**, a dancer, was awarded a performing/creative arts fellowship to carry out her project, "Study of Syllabi and Curricula in Teaching Kathak: Study of Contemporary Kathak Choreography in Performance."

**Gregory Possehl**, a professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, was awarded a senior short-term fellowship to carry out his project, "The Biography of Charles Masson."

**Ramnarayan Rawat**, a teaching fellow in the Department of South Asian Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out his project, "The Dalit Public Sphere."

**Rashmi Sadana**, a lecturer in the Department of Anthropology at Columbia University, was awarded a senior fellowship to carry out her project, "The Delhi Metro: An Ethnography of the 'New' India."

**Jennifer Saunders**, an assistant professor in the Department of Religion at Denison University, was awarded a senior short-term fellowship to carry out her project, "Living Bhajans: Transmission, Migration, and Gender."

**Juned Noor Shaikh**, a graduate student in the Department of History at the University of Washington, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, "Dalits and the City: Work, Identity and Cultural Politics of Untouchables in Mumbai, 1898-1988."

**Aradhana Sharma**, an assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology at Wesleyan University, was awarded a senior short-term fellowship to carry out her project, "The Cultural Life of the Common Man: Imagining Statehood, Citizenship and Democracy in India."

**Pushkar Sohoni**, a graduate student in the Department of History of Art at the University of Pennsylvania, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, "Between Greater Kingdoms: Ahmadnagar and the Centrality of Boundaries."

**Valerie Stoker**, an assistant professor in the Department of Religion at Wright State University, was awarded a senior short-term fellowship to carry out her project, "Polemics and Patronage: Vyasa's Gurur as Krishnadevaraya's Guru."

**Daniel Malinowski Stuart**, a graduate student in the Group in Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, was

awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, "Text, Path, and Practice: Meditation Theory and Community Imperatives in Indian Buddhism."

**Aaron Ullrey**, a graduate student in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, was awarded a junior fellowship to carry out his project, "Tantric Transmissions."

**Vazira Zamindar**, an assistant professor in the Department of History at Brown University, was awarded a senior short-term fellowship to carry out her project, "Ruined Histories: Archaeology, Islam and the Making of Gandhara Art in Modern South Asia."

### Summer 2008 language programs

There were a total of 145 students participating in twelve intensive summer language programs operated by the AIIS in 2008. This represents a 22% increase over the number of students who participated in the summer 2007 programs. The summer 2008 programs were: Bengali in Kolkata (7 students); Gujarati in Ahmedabad (4 students); Hindi in Jaipur (54 students); Kashmiri in New Delhi (1 student); Malayalam in Thiruvananthapuram (5 students); Marathi in Pune (3 students); Pali/Prakrit in Pune (2 students); Punjabi in Chandigarh (13 students); Sanskrit in Pune (8 students); Tamil in Madurai (7 students); Telugu in Visakhapatnam (1 student); Urdu in Lucknow (41 students). Fifty-five of the students studying Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu on the AIIS summer language program were funded by grants from the Critical Languages Scholarship program, operated by the United States State Department and administered by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers.

Some highlights of the language programs included a new calligraphy class for the Urdu program started by Mr. Syed Azim Haider Jafari, a well known calligrapher. Around 20 students availed themselves of the opportunity of learning the beauty of Nastalik script. Mr. Sharad Pandey, a famous astrologer in Lucknow, also spoke to the Urdu students about the importance of astrology and its relevance in India. On 5 August 2008 students attended a function at Lucknow University for the inauguration of a newly written book on a famous Urdu poet. A Qawwali program was organized at the Urdu program center that evening and students sang and clapped to music created by the famous Qawwal of Lucknow Janab Dilkash Warsi. The Hindi program students went to Pushkar as part of their summer camp. *Dainik Bhaskar*, a leading Hindi newspaper covered their visit and reported about American students' interest in the camel decoration ritual. Hindi students also took a field trip to Amer Fort, Jaigarh and Nahargarh forts. There was another field trip for the elementary Hindi students to Sanganeer, which is known for block and screen printing, for hand made papers, blue pottery and some other industries. Hindi students also heard talks by a panwala (one who sells betel leaf and betel nuts) a shopkeeper, and a snake charmer, Mr. Sahibnath Saperia.

### AIIS Lecture Series in Collaboration with India International Centre

The AIIS initiated a lecture series for its fellows in collaboration with the India International Centre in Delhi. The first lecture, by junior fellow George Fiske of Columbia University, took place on 7 November 2008. He spoke on the topic, "The Ghaznavids Between Iran and India: Institutional and Cultural aspects of India's first Sultanate (994-1186 A.D)." In his talk, Mr. Fiske noted that the Ghaznavids raided northwest India at the start of the tenth century and maintained a capital in Lahore until the end of the twelfth. They are typically viewed as the ultimate Islamic Turkic warriors who initiated a wave of fanaticism and repression in India. His lecture, based on primary sources and the latest international scholarship, aimed at a more nuanced and realistic picture. Mr. Fiske addressed some of the economic motives for Ghaznavid



raids in light of the silver crisis of medieval Central Asia and Iran. Additionally, Ghaznavid religious motivations and the "politics of plunder" were placed in the wider Indian context so that we can assess their place among Indian kings and the history of Islam in India. Dr. Ramnarayan Rawat of the University of Pennsylvania, an AIIS senior AIIS fellow, introduced the lecture. Professor Farhat Hassan of the Department of History at Delhi University chaired the event, which concluded with lively questions from the audience.



*George Fiske speaks at the India International Centre*

The second lecture took place on 1 December 2008 when AIIS senior fellow, Professor Lisa Mitchell of the University of Pennsylvania delivered her talk entitled, "Making of a Mother Tongue: Rethinking Histories of Language and Ethnicity in Southern India." Southern India has become famous as a place where people have appeared to feel so passionately about language that they have been willing to sacrifice their lives in its name by fasting to death, dying as martyrs in police confrontations, consuming poison, and self-immolating themselves. Professor Mitchell's research project used Telugu literary histories, travel narratives, lexicons, grammars, and textbooks, as well as archival and ethnographic research, to demonstrate that the relationship to language in southern India that emerged in the early twentieth century differs dramatically from the relationships to language that existed in earlier centuries. She argued that late nineteenth-century reconfigurations of literary production, history writing, geographic imagination, grammatical and lexical categorization, and pedagogical practice--all newly organized around languages--enabled new expressions of linguistic community and identity to be imagined, and ultimately, to appear completely natural. She further demonstrated the ways in which diverse personal experiences and memories have been subsumed within dominant public narratives of linguistic community and statehood. Professor Shaheed Amin of the Department of History, Delhi University chaired the talk.

#### **AIIS Research Centers Receive Two Grants**

In June 2008, the AIIS was informed that the U.S. Ambassadors Fund has selected the Center for South Asian Art and Archaeology (which was created in order to establish a separate Indian identity the Center for Art and Archaeology) as a recipient of an award of \$93,914 for Documentation of Indo-Islamic Built Heritage in the Haryana and Punjab Regions to begin in September 2008 for a year. This is a continuation and expansion of work begun under the direction of Professor Catherine Asher in the summer of 2007. It will substantially widen the range of material in the CA&A archive and help retrieve a legacy that was divided in 1947. The Center for Art and Archaeology has already committed to continuation of work on this project during the summer of 2008 under a grant of \$25,128 from the Council of American Overseas

Research Centers. The Archives and Research Center for Ethnomusicology has been invited by the Ford Foundation to offer a major workshop on Intellectual Property Rights for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the summer of 2009. This workshop will be supported by a grant of \$45,000.

### **The American Institute of Indian Studies Language Programs in India Summer 2009 and Academic Year 2009-2010**

The American Institute of Indian Studies welcomes applications for its summer 2009, academic year 2009-2010, and the new fall semester 2009 language programs in India. Programs to be offered include: Hindi (Jaipur), Bengali (Kolkata), Tamil (Madurai), Marathi (Pune), Urdu (Lucknow), Punjabi (Mohali), Telugu (Visakhapatnam), Malayalam (Thiruvananthapuram) and, Sanskrit (Pune) and Pali/Prakrit (Pune). We will offer other Indian languages upon request. All academic year applicants should have the equivalent of two years of prior language study. For Sanskrit and regular summer Hindi, we require the equivalent of two years of prior study; for summer Bengali, Tamil and Urdu we require the equivalent of one year of prior study. The equivalent of one year of prior study is required for the summer second-year Hindi program. We can offer courses at all levels, including beginning, in other Indian languages for the summer. Academic year students are eligible to apply for an AIIS fellowship funded by the U.S. Department of Education which would cover all expenses for the program. Summer students should apply for FLAS from their home institutions (graduate students). A number of grants will be available to summer students in Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu through the Critical Languages Scholarship program, funded by the U.S. State Department. AIIS will have some financial aid available for other summer students. AIIS is also offering a fall semester program for the first time. Instruction in Hindi and Urdu will be offered at any level for the fall semester, but for other languages students should have the equivalent of two years of prior language study. Students will need to provide their own funding for the fall semester program. The application deadline is January 31, 2009. Applications can be downloaded from the AIIS web site at [www.indiastudies.org](http://www.indiastudies.org). More information about the language programs can also be found at that site. Questions should be directed to [aiis@uchicago.edu](mailto:aiis@uchicago.edu) or 773-702-8638.

### **AIIS Welcomes Two New Member Institutions in 2008**

The Trustees of the American Institute of Indian Studies, at their annual board meeting in April 2008, voted to admit two new member institutions: the University of California, Irvine and the University of California, Santa Cruz. AIIS now has a record number of 60 member institutions.

The University of California, Irvine has been increasing the number of faculty members with a teaching and/or research interest in India for the past few years. The number of graduate students working on India in departments such as Anthropology, Comparative Literature, Economics, History and Sociology, has also been growing. The UCI Center for Asian Studies, the Samuel M. Jordan Center for Persian Studies and Culture, and the International Center for Writing and Translation have sponsored programs related to South Asia while the South Asia Forum organizes lectures and workshops on South Asia, among other activities. Starting in 2009, the *Journal of Asian Studies* will also be based at UCI.

The University of California, Santa Cruz has important resources available to students and faculty with an interest in India. These include the Satyajit Ray Film and Study Collection at the McHenry Library, the Ali Akbar Khan Endowment, and the Talat and Kamil Hasan Endowed Chair in Classical Indian Music. Course offerings include instruction in Hindi/Urdu. Students also have an opportunity to spend their junior year in Delhi or Hyderabad through the University of California Education Abroad Program.

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community of Qawwals of Ajmer, hereditary performers who maintain and adapt their craft for contemporary needs, are central actors in the life of the Chishti order. The Qawwals serve the Shrine of Muinuddin and the Sufi organization, but may not necessarily be devotees of the Saint. Recently, access to recording technology and the international success of Qawwali stars (the Sabri Brothers, Aziz Mian, and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan) have altered the expectations of the Qawwal apprentices. My project is an action-centered case study of a community of marginalized craftsmen enmeshed in local circumstances, yet also involved in a global movement. My research explored the day-to-day strategies these performers employed in dealing with shrine management, music industry professionals, government representatives and Sufi practitioners. How do the Qawwals perceive their own role in the creation of a meaningful message that can be heard as musical, Sufi, Muslim, South Asian, or a combination of these?

The period of integration that followed settling into Ajmer yielded an unexpectedly sincere friendship with one of the Qawwals of Ajmer, Sadique Hussein Niyazi, of the party of Shahi Qawwal Asrar Hussein, his uncle. In addition to becoming a good friend, he was a tireless 'key informant.' This fruitful period comprised the 'Urs extravaganza (the anniversary of the Saint's death, which attracts pilgrims, devotees and performers from around the globe), the celebrations of Khwaja-sahib's birth, and the 'Urs melas of some of his venerable descendants. I trained in harmonium (the keyboard instrument most frequently used in Qawwali study and performance) and voice in the family's townhouse 'Zeba Cottage,' conducted many unstructured interviews, and made the bulk of my digital recordings.

My first challenge was translating into Urdu the consent script required by my home institution, the University of Wisconsin, Madison, for all researchers in the social and behavioral sciences who work with human subjects. I had attempted a rough translation, but upon consultation with a couple of Qawwali performers, some of the text seemed obscure or difficult to translate. Working for several days on translation both linguistic and cultural, my friend and I arrived at a text that made sense to both of us, and most importantly, made my presence and research among the

Qawwals of Ajmer seem relatively comprehensible and justified.

I became acquainted with the family of Qawwals who have been affiliated with the Dargah at Ajmer for centuries, became a familiar guest in their home, engaged in unstructured interviews regarding their lives and livelihoods, and made some recordings in their rooms. I attended Qawwali performances at the Dargah, often late into the night, so my life in India was unusually nocturnal. The Dargah continues to attract visiting *pirs* (spiritual guides) and followers—and often visiting Qawwali parties in frequently large numbers. I met and interviewed several *Khaddims* (shrine administrators) and others at the Dargah. The negotiations between the *Khaddims*, the resident Qawwals, and the visiting Qawwali parties, is very calm and friendly on the surface. But away from the public gaze I discovered intense and complicated competition. The need for the nearly 5,000 *khaddims* employed at the Dargah to stand for election has made the politics of heredity, spiritual descent, and economic advantage salient and much-discussed. I found an initial focus on my key informant's own fledgling 'party'—a group of three brothers and a first cousin who perform on ordinary nights after the evening *Namaz* (required daily prayer of which there are five) and at the fringes of the main event on Thursdays or other special nights when a visiting party is performing. Their piety mixed with self-promotion is exactly the confluence of spiritual and commercial concern that I was looking for.

I began accumulating kinship records and life history interviews with a younger member of the Shahi Chadqi Awal party, who are the hereditary family Qawwali performers at the Dargah Sharif in Ajmer. I had been taking harmonium and voice lessons in elementary Hindustani music as it relates to Qawwali, and had been using these rather informal lessons as good opportunities for long unstructured interviews about Qawwali training and performance. I became more well-known at the Dargah and my presence there less of a point of interest to most people attending. This was a relief as it helped me tremendously to be inconspicuous at times. I usually met the Qawwals in the break between the Maghrib and Isha *Namaz* prayers. I got some clear information about their income, about their relationship with the Dargah administration, and about the careers most of them have outside of

Qawwali, but there were many gaps and many contradictory statements.

I began giving guitar lessons to a young member of the Qawwal family. Not only did this enhance the reciprocity in our relationship, it informed me greatly about what interests some of the young people have outside of Qawwali and classical music.

The celebration of Jashn-e-Eid at the Dargah was a good chance to witness types of performance and recitation at the shrine other than Qawwali. The presence on several nights of visiting (sometimes better known) Qawwali parties gave me some valuable insights into the level of competition and cooperation at play between various groups.

The 'Urs festival is observed for six days during the month of Rajab, but tends to engulf the weeks surrounding it in a frenzy of preparation and lingering activity for the million-plus pilgrims, visitors, devotees and performers who converge on Ajmer. There were two major celebrations of the birth of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti as well during this time (the birth date is disputed). Add in the smaller 'Urs of Sarwa Sharif, the Dargah in the nearby village dedicated to Muinuddin's son Khwaja Fakhruddin, and you have four major *mehfil* events in one month's time.

I made a large number of Qawwali recordings: inside the Mehfil Khana of the Dargah, reserved for use on special occasions, mainly the 'Urs, in the courtyards just outside the gates of the mazar, (mausoleum) of Khwaja Sahib, and in private gatherings called loosely 'programs' sponsored by wealthy Chishti followers from overseas, especially Manchester, UK, where Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti has a large following among the Gujarati NRI community. Several film crews and a video camera for cable television had positioned equipment between the Qawwals and the durbar area where the divan (Khwaja Sahib's metaphorical, nominal 'son') presides over the *sama* (spiritual concert). The quality of the digital recordings varies depending on the equipment I was using and where I was sitting during the performance; in many cases I had to keep the recorder near me as the special *sama* events with Qawwali parties from all over India can be incredibly tightly packed and even hazardous to delicate equipment. Although I knew that microphone placement is everything,

in sacred spaces you can't always arrange things the way you yourself want them to be as I had to be sensitive to the earnest pilgrims who travel thousands of miles, at great expense.

The month of Ramadan brought with it a sharp decline in Qawwali performance both in and out of the Mehfil Khana as Ajmer's Muslim community turned its attention to prayer and fasting. It was a good opportunity for me to learn a lot of first-hand experience of everyday Muslim life in India. It was my great privilege to take iftar (meal to break the fast at sunset) at the Dargah, in the Shah Jahani Masjid, in the company of my Qawwal friends, and also in the *hujras* of some of the important *khaddims* of the shrine complex. I did observe the fast several times, though I found it very hard to give up caffeine without getting a debilitating headache. I certainly gained respect for those who forego even water during these hot, sweltering days.

Because I found out I had to leave earlier than planned due to the unexpectedly imminent birth of my child, I had to schedule, in a short period of time, several structured interviews with a few of the key players who had eluded me until then. I enlisted Sadique's help and harvested a wealth of good data in a period of weeks, including a long and surprisingly warm interview with the notoriously irascible Shahi Qawwal Asrar Hussein.

Ahead lies a further period of intense writing, editing, and preparation of audio recordings. Thanks to satellite technology and camaraderie, I am still in touch with my subjects/ collaborators/friends in the holy city of Ajmer. There is a lot more ground to cover than even a long dissertation will contain; In the future I would like to pursue a post-doctoral project on Sufism in the South Asian Diaspora. I feel that the support of AIIS has been well used to bring an intimate ethnographic voice to the continuing study of Sufism, the Chishti tariqa, and the life of India's musical *gharnas* in the context of a frequently embattled Islam. It has been a pleasure and a privilege.

Patrick Weston is a Ph.D. candidate from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He was an AIIS junior fellow from December 2007 to November 2008. He had also previously participated in the AIIS summer Hindi program.



## News from recent AIIS fellows

**Melanie Dean**, a graduate student in the Department of South Asia Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, recently completed an AIIS junior fellowship, researching the topic, “The Power of the Gaze: The Evil Eye and Visual Culture in Tamil Nadu.” She investigated the ways in which kan drishti, an ancient belief, is being negotiated in a liberalized economic space in Tamil Nadu by addressing the following questions: 1) Is conspicuous consumption being mediated by concerns about the deleterious effects of the gaze? If so, how and for whom?; 2) Are increasingly visible disparities in wealth leading to an increase in concerns about kan drishti?; 3) How is the evil eye adapting in a social and economic space that is becoming increasingly global inflected? The research, which took place in Madurai, consisted of three parts: 1) Determining the spatial and temporal organization of the evil eye in physical and ritual spaces in Madurai; 2) Interviewing home owners, shop keepers, and those involved in the production of evil eye prophylactics and rituals; and 3) Collecting circulating public culture about the evil eye.

Ms Dean’s interview subjects included manthiravaathi (black magic practitioners), Muslim bay and maami who exorcised the evil eye, joosiyar, (astrologers), kuri solravanga and koodaangi (types of fortune-tellers), advertising executives and architects. In addition to interviews, she also engaged in participant observation, mostly of residents’ day-to-day activities. She also observed the monthly meeting of the local mahalir kalanjiyam (ladies’ association), such special functions as the kaathu kuththu (ear-piercing ceremony), puuppu niiraaddu vizhaa (coming of age ceremony for girls), weddings and religious festivals and rituals, such as those where the puusaari (priests) or Muslim baay perform rituals to rid individuals of the evil eye. She also observed astrologers and black magic practitioners who diagnose evil eye attacks and prescribe antidotes. Another component of the project were visual surveys conducted in different parts of Madurai. The goal was to note where concerns about the evil eye seemed most prevalent, and how buildings and the organization of the physical space reflected those concerns. She created detailed maps of Ambedkar Colony and greater Meenakshipuram, and the adjacent LIC Colony and Customs Colony, noting the types of house, caste of the

residents, class, religion and type of drishti prophylaxes in use, if any. Also noted were local businesses and places of worship. Ms Dean took hundreds of photographs and also made some audio recordings of her interviews with research subjects. The project also included reviewing published materials such as Tamil-language dailies and weekly magazines as well as collecting clips from a number of Tamil television serials and DVDs of films.

Among the outcomes of the research was the conclusion that concerns about kan drishti were indeed mediating acts of conspicuous consumption among individuals in Ambedkar Colony and beyond. One working hypothesis—that more upwardly mobile and well-to-do individuals would be more concerned with the envious gazes of others—had to be modified. While well educated wealthier individuals were more likely to deny believing in kan drishti, they were also more likely to deploy drishti prophylaxes on their homes, businesses and vehicles. Poorer and less well educated people were more likely to admit believing in drishti, but were less likely to deploy prophylaxes on their property; they were more likely to deploy them on their persons and on children and to avail themselves of drishti dispersive rituals at temples and mosques. Ms Dean also discovered that increasingly visible disparities in wealth were leading to an increase in concerns about kan drishti among individuals within the same caste or class group. Upwardly mobile individuals within a particular family expressed the most fear over the envy of their own relations and individuals who are considered part of their own group, rather than of strangers. Another finding was that kan drishti was adapting in an economic space that is being increasingly globally inflected. The drishti prophylaxes were themselves becoming emblems of conspicuous consumption. Her research also revealed how cultural configurations of space and the body, and local understandings about the gaze, intersect and how this affects the ways in which commodities are, or are not, displayed, consumed, and viewed by others.

**Julie Hughes**, a graduate student in the Department of History at the University of Texas, carried out her AIIS junior fellowship from September 2007 to July 2008, conducting research for her project entitled, “Hunting

Grounds: Landscape and Princely Pursuits in Colonial India.” She studied the royal hunting grounds or shikargah of North India’s princely states from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, focusing on the elite interactions with and uses of landscapes. She notes that in pursuit of power, profit and renown, India’s princes carefully managed their hunting grounds as multi-faceted and vital landscapes, employing them variously as sites of diplomatic and political maneuverings, as valuable storehouses of timber, and as prime areas for the public assertion of legitimacy and virility through the slaying of tigers and other game.

She began her research at the National Archives of India (NAI) and the Alkazi Collection of Photography (ACP). At the NAI, she traced records relating to the Arms Act rules from the 1880s through the 1930s, particularly looking at instances where the rulers of Orchha, Mewar or Bikaner requested permission to purchase arms or ammunition of prohibited bores for their personal use as sporting weapons. The Maharana of Mewar in particular had a long history of this and she also found similar requests originating from Orchha. The documents showed that rulers often facilitated their nobles’ sport by obtaining rifles for them, while Foreign and Political Department papers showed that conflicts also arose between rulers and nobles, and that hunting rights and access to hunting grounds were an important part of the relationship between a ruler and his nobles. Those conflicts arose when princes incorporated new lands into their existing shikargahs, or altered the rules determining which animals could be shot without special permission. Ms Hughes also looked at Foreign and Political Department and Central India Agency records relating to the 1904 flooding of Orchha’s Kharkigarh Island tiger reserve by the United Provinces P.W.D. in favor of a canal scheme. The Maharaja’s twelve-year quest to obtain compensation for the loss of Kharkigarh, in particular his bid to be granted a replacement tiger jungle, provides a window on the significance of hunting grounds, as well as on the unique nature of princely sportsmanship and how and why it differed from British standards.

Ms Hughes then moved to Bikaner to work at the Rajasthan State Archives, where she looked at Bikaner State files relating to the visits of British VIPs. She found evidence of a link between Maharaja Ganga Singh’s modernizing efforts—in large part aimed at improving the landscape of

Bikaner to make it more prosperous and attractive—and his hunting. In particular the Pilap Bund was originally conceived as an irrigation work but soon doubled as a wildfowling site. By tracing additions and improvements to the Pilap Bund and by tracking vice-regal and other visits made to the site, she hoped to gain insights into the relationship between sport, the landscape, and good governance in princely eyes. She also visited the Gajner Wildlife Preserve and the Gajner Palace, a favorite site of Maharaja Ganga Singh for duck and sand grouse shoots. While there, she photographed the old chital enclosure, the wild boar feeding tower and several of the shooting butts. Other records consulted in Bikaner were Forest Department papers concerning Mewar from 1934-1945. Those documents gave detailed information about the granting of hunting licenses to nobles, encroachment on state shikargahs by herders, woodcutters and hunters, and the negative reactions to the Mewar Game and Fish Preservation Act of 1942.

Ms Hughes later moved on to Udaipur and the Pratap Shodh Pratisthan (PSP), which contains records from several of the Mewar noble families, especially from the Sardargarh thikana. Among the numerous unlabeled bundles of papers at the PSP, she found personal correspondence, invoices and Revenue Department records relating to the Sardargarh nobles’ hunting activities and their hunting grounds at Jetpura—including accusations made by local landholders regarding the shikargah’s expansion at their expense, and incursions made into the area by neighboring nobles for the purpose of hunting. She also visited hunting grounds at Nahar Magra and south of Lake Pichola. At Lalitbagh in Nahar Magra, she was shown a site which apparently was used to feed and possibly raise wild boar transferred to the area from Jaisamand. Also at Nahar Magra, she was able to photograph and enter an especially fine royal hunting tower. South of Lake Pichola, she visited the Khas Odi which was restored by Maharana Fateh Singh in the late 1800s and used extensively for staging wild animal fights and as a site from which wild boar were fed every night.

Her next stop was Bhopal. At the Old Secretariat branch of the archives section of the Directorate of Archaeology, Archives and Museums (DAAM) she found a complete list of Gwalior shooting grounds which will complement her use of the Maharaja of Bikaner’s shooting diary to

determine if certain tigers were shot in Gwalior or Udaipur. She visited libraries at the Banganga Marg branch of DAAM and the State Museum to look through gazetteers for Sagar District, Tikamgarh (another name for Orchha) and Jhansi District. At Orchha, she found a hunting lodge designed and built by Maharaja Pratap Singh in about 1895. A chatra stood on the grounds, decorated with painted hunting scenes reminiscent of the style found in the nearby Orchha fort—likely from the seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

Ms Hughes finished her research in Lucknow at the United Provinces State Archives, examining documents relating to Orchha's Kharkigarh Island and involving the acquisition of land in Jhansi by the Maharaja's brother-in-law for use as a hunting ground, and back in Delhi, where she consulted the proceedings of the Committee of Princes for 1917 and 1918, dealing with the restrictions on ruling chiefs and notables owning land in British territory.

During her eleven-month fellowship period, Ms Hughes collected a vast amount of information on hunting and the nuances brought to its meaning by the particulars of landscape and place, the former term indicating the importance of the environmental setting, while the latter accesses the historical, political and social significances of a given hunting ground. Her basic premise is that the location of a kill—its history as a glorious battle ground, as the exact spot where an illustrious ancestor slew a man-eater, or the site's ability to impress state guests—mattered as much as the species or quality of the prey. Although she had originally thought to examine a number of states, she ultimately decided to just focus on three: Mewar, Orchha, and Bikaner. Orchha under Maharaja Pratap Singh scraped by with few tigers and inferior jungles, and had a somewhat adversarial relationship with the British; in Maharana Fateh Singh's period, Mewar had ample game and a reputation for traditionalism coupled with hostility towards outside influences; Bikaner was considered a progressive state in Maharaja Ganga Singh's day, and had excellent stocks of wildfowl but no big game to speak of.

Standard interpretations of princely hunting are based on an outmoded vision of the states as entirely subordinate to the Government of India, and the presumption that whatever a prince did was in reaction to some British impetus. In line

with this, the primary rationale of hunting in the states had been identified as the provision of trophies to government VIPs, with the expectation that concessions ranging from reduced postal rates to an improved shot at honors like the Star of India would follow.

However, Ms Hughes' approach complicates this picture by including a perspective that will allow a different set of motivations to surface, including the princes' keen interest in dynastic history, their conception of a royally appropriate sportsmanship, and their ongoing efforts to bolster their powers and reputations in the colonial context. When the Maharaja of Orchha spent twelve years pressing the United Provinces government to replace his favorite tiger ground, lately flooded by the P.W.D. in favor of a canal scheme, he was as concerned with the history of the location and its possible substitutes—like the ruined Dhamoni Fort and its dense forests, alienated from his house nearly 300 years before—as with their shooting prospects. In fact, he had been trying for years to obtain annual shooting rights in British territory, reflecting his belief in the superior prospects available there, but also hinting at an underlying political purpose. Coming to power in middle age as the posthumously adopted son of the previous ruler, Maharana Fateh Singh restored a series of royal shooting towers throughout Mewar and carefully preserved wild boar—the hunting of which was a widely acknowledged measure of Rajput masculinity. He sought to build on and eclipse—or more accurately to embody—the memory of his celebrated and indisputably royal forebears who had hunted in an eloquently regal style from those same locations, and in whose day untold numbers of impressively large and heroic boar were thought to have inhabited the region. And when the Maharaja of Bikaner shot sand grouse by the hundreds at his newly established irrigation tank at Pilap, he was drawing attention to his efforts to transform his desert state into a modern and productive oasis, replete with prosperous farmers and well watered fields.

While Orchha and Mewar valued their hunting grounds for politically and culturally advantageous associations with a heroic past that could be accessed and internalized through continued or renewed activity on the site, Bikaner hoped to create a similar place from scratch, imbued not only with the memories of sporting successes, but also with a lasting image of enlightened and benevolent rule.



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