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The first issue of the MIFS newsletter was published in January 2008, almost three years ago, as part of the research group on “Sufism and History in the Indus Valley” at the Centre for Indian and South Asian Studies (CNRS-EHESS, Paris). We thought it was an opportune time, halfway through the project on Sehwan Sharif, to propose a mid-term review of the work completed on Muslim pilgrimages in South Asia. Michel Boivin and Rémy Delage therefore organized an international conference on “Shrines, Pilgrimages and Wanderers in Muslim South Asia” on 23-24 September 2010 at the EHESS, as well as two photo exhibitions on Sehwan (Sindh) by Omar Kasmani and Ahmedabad (Gujarat) by Sara Keller (pp. 5-6).

The present issue primarily focuses on the Qalandariyya, a particular branch of Sufism. Professor Ahmet Karamustafa, a recognized expert on this *tariqâ* from Washington University in St. Louis, was interviewed by Delphine Ortis (pp. 2-4). Recently, a new book on Qalandars by Kumkum Srivastava was published in India. It has been reviewed here by Alexandre Papas, who himself works on the Qalandariyya movement in Central Asia (p. 9). Mojan Membrado, a specialist of Persian literature and mystical texts, at the EPHE (Paris), also offered to write on this theme, more precisely on the translation of the first *ghazal* of the *Diwân-e Qalandar*, a work attributed to La’l Shahbâz Qalandar (pp. 7-8). Her comments on various excerpts of this *ghazal* shed light on this still unknown aspect of Qalandariyya poetry.

Finally, this issue concludes with a review of books and theses, as well as detailed agenda of events related to these themes. Special mention should be made of the M.A. Dissertation submitted at Karachi University by Sohail Bawani, a member of the MIFS. It raised the issue of interdisciplinarity in Social Sciences with a special focus on the Sehwan project. His work was quite useful for our group since some of his conclusions helped us to better implement our interdisciplinary approach.

Michel Boivin



In this issue

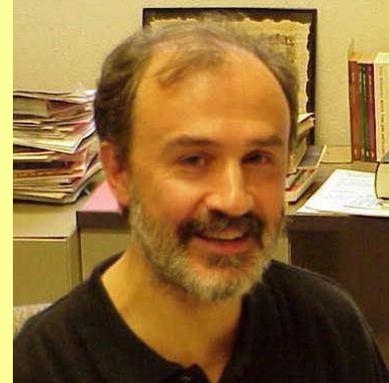
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Interview with Ahmet Karamustafa

Ahmet Karamustafa is Professor of History and Religious Studies at Washington University in St. Louis. He has written on various aspects of the social and intellectual history of pre-modern Islam and worked especially on Qalandars and other “deviant” Sufi movements.

During his visit to Paris in May 2010, Delphine Ortis, a MIFS member, interviewed him on his intellectual trajectory as well as his vision of the Qalandariyya, and the differentiation he makes between Sufism and the cult of saints.

Could you first tell us about your educational and professional training, and how you came to work in the field of “deviant” dervish groups and Sufism? What kind of research methodology did you develop?



I did my master's thesis at the institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University in Montreal on a subject that led me eventually to the dervishes. In the study of Turkish history, the views of a particular historian, Mehmet Fuad Köprülü, had become very prevalent. He was among the first to ask the question of continuity between pre-Islamic or not yet Islamised Turks. He had peculiar views about this continuity. He saw the deviant or antinomian dervishes as survivals of shamans within an Islamic garb. In order to test this view, I worked on the hagiography of a famous 13th century Sufi master, Hacı Bektaş. After my MA thesis, I decided to work on an early 16th century text in Ottoman Turkish because I wanted to gather more information about the dervishes. My analysis led me to write a more comprehensive though short history of these dervishes from the late 12th century through the 15th century. The thesis put forward in my PhD was drastically opposed to that of Köprülü. We don't really understand these dervishes if we cast them simply as “survivals” or as superficially Islamized types; rather we should take their religiosity and their Islam seriously and attempt to come up with an explanation. I tried to find in any kind of historical sources all available references to what I called 'dervish piety'. I sifted texts and synthesised the information I discovered in the light of what I knew about the historical context. I don't think any single explanation will hold across the board.

What do you consider to be the most striking attribute of the Qalandari path vis-à-vis other currents of piety and other deviant dervish groups?

To my mind the most important trait of the Qalandars was their persistent cultural and social ‘iconoclasm’ and ‘unconventionalism’. They were persistent in their criticism of respectable mystics and Sufis. The temperament that prevailed was that of the happy, merry and carefree. The Qalandars had liberated themselves from social custom, which pressed down on people. They were libertine in their ways and happy and content about that. They would do anything to set themselves apart from respectable people.

Why do you use the term ‘anarchistic’, that usually belongs to the domain of politics, to characterise a movement of piety?

I use the term anarchism primarily because I wanted my readers to feel the very clear sense of criticism and of standing against established authority that I saw in dervish piety. And this critical stance is what defines them more than any other characteristic. To be ‘anarchistic’ is clearly something that really matters to Qalandars. They are actually persistently needling the authorities. That's their function. Their agenda is that of reminding people that they have to see through the ways in which power and authority works in society.

Conferences in Paris

27 May 2010,
CEIAS-IISMM-EHESS

*Libertine Sufis and
Popular Islam: Some
Historical Observations
on Islamization*

28 May 2010
IISMM-EHESS

*Deciphering Early Sufi
Discourses in
Anatolian Turkish:
The Voice of
Kaygusuz Abdal*

Interview with Ahmet Karamustafa

Could you determine some reasons why the Qalandari movement was essentially developed in the Persian cultural sphere?

I really don't know. But let me mention another factor. I think the Qalandari movement, like 'dervish piety' in general, is noticeably more prominent in places and times where the prevalent Islamic religious culture was that of the Hanafi-school. This legal school provides a more open space, has a more permissive attitude towards overtly antisocial or unconventional behaviour. Now, from the 13th century onwards the Persian cultural sphere is dominated by the Hanafis. So, this is one possible explanation. But there are others which have to do with the local colouring and local flavour of 'Sufisms' in the different regions.

Are you able to observe significant differences between the Qalandars of the Turkish world and those of South Asia?

Indeed, I believe there are significant differences, even probably back in the 13th century. But I don't have enough evidence concerning the early centuries of Qalandari history to give you a satisfying answer. I believe things changed drastically after the 15th century with the formation of the large scale empires. And within that context, the subsequent history of the Qalandars is one in which they quite clearly continue to react to the prevalent Sufis. But they would not deal with the same Sufis; I mean the South-Asian Qalandars were dealing with Chishtis in particular, some Suhrawardis and some Naqshbandis later on. So I would say that, yes, definitely there are differences between South Asian and Anatolian Qalandars, but they have to do with the fact that they are essentially evolving in rather different cultural domains, and with the different political circumstances of the early modern era.

In your research on dervish masters, could you discern a particular link between 'Ali or the family of the Prophet and the Qalandar, as I think is the case for La'l Shahbâz Qalandar?

Such a link is the case for all the dervishes that I am familiar with. That is not particular to La'l Shahbâz Qalandar, I would say. It is quite clear

that the shaping of 'dervish piety' in general is clearly enveloped in a very special attachment to the family of the Prophet. Now, later on in Islamic history we have a tendency to associate this particular link only with the Shi'is. What we tend to forget is that especially until the 15th century, there is a lot of investment on the part of many Muslims into precisely this kind of attachment to what they consider to be the 'fountain head', the spring, the source of sanctity and sacredness in Islam. But certainly with the dervishes it is a clear move in their own minds and in the minds of their audiences to demonstrate their credentials as the true practitioners of Islam; to demonstrate that their close connection to the family of the Prophet is something that they are very clear about. This is one of the puzzles of the study of dervish piety. I still wouldn't see this as necessarily peculiar to the Qalandaris.

Two ideas you develop echo in particular with my ethnological work. Could you explain the idea of islamization, with regard to the interaction between Islam and local society?

Generally my sense is that, as historians, we really should be extremely close observers of the local scene in order to really understand the ways in which people see themselves as Muslims or are seen by others as Muslims. But as historians, we have serious limitations in doing that. We could still be much more focused on local forms of life and on local forms of piety. The problem is that there are very few historical studies along this line. A new publication of collected essays in seven volumes was just published, called 'A People's History of Christianity' (Horsley, Richard A., ed., 2005 *Christian Origins. A People's History of Christianity*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press). This is a history of Christianity written not from the perspective of the church or from that of the authorities, nor of the theologians or the elites, but as we can see that history through the eyes of the people. We don't have anything like that for Islam. With my research I contributed some things to such a project, but popular piety of the local type is really what needs our attention. What I mean by that is a sort of ethnographical history, we definitely need that focus.

Interview with Ahmet Karamustafa

Secondly, you insist on the distinction between Sufism and the cult of the saints at the beginning of Islam. Could you explain this idea, with regard to the origins of the cult of the saints?

On the one hand, we have a special mode of piety, a special form of religiosity, that developed among the urban middle class, an internalised form of piety that insisted on the need to explore within ourselves. But this can't be a popular form of religiosity.

On the other hand, we begin to see what we call the cult of saints, just like in Christianity. These are popular cults that have nothing to do with Sufism. A local warrior or learned scholar dies, is buried, and then becomes the symbol of a particular village or town. And they all become automatically saints or a member of the family of the Prophet, whatever the reasons that led to sanctity. And sanctity is not confined to Sufism. So the idea is basically that these are developing as two separate phenomena: one is Sufism, the other is the cult of saints. But both flow into one another in a spectacular way, especially from the 5th Islamic century onwards. Eventually, many of the popular saints attempted to be or simply were Sufis. Analytically these are separate developments but they become completely interlinked with one another. And Sufism benefits greatly from this linkage.

Publications

Sufism: The Formative Period. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press and Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

God's Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Islamic Later Middle Period, 1200-1550. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994. Paperback reprint: Oxford: Oneworld, 2006.

Vahidi's Menakib-i Hvoca-i Cihan ve Netice-i Can: Critical Edition and Historical Analysis. Sources of Oriental Languages and Literatures, 17; Turkish Sources, 15. Cambridge, Mass.: The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 1993.

Assistant Editor, *The History of Cartography*, Volume 2, Book 1, *Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies*. General editors J. B. Harley and David Woodward. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992 (awarded the R. R. Hawkins Award for Best Scholarly Book [1992] by the Association of American Publishers).

"Sufism," in *Voices of Islam*, ed. Vincent J. Cornell. Praeger, 2007.

"Sufism," in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 5. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans and Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2007

"Origins of Anatolian Sufism." In *Sufism and Sufis in Ottoman Society: Sources, Doctrine, Rituals, Turuq, Architecture, Literature and Fine Arts*, Modernism, 67-95. Edited by Ahmet Yasar Ocak. Ankara: Turkish Historical Society, 2005.

"Early Sufism in Eastern Anatolia." In *Persian Sufism: From its Origins to Rumi*, 175-98. Ed-ited by Leonard Lewisohn. London: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications, 1994.

"Antinomian Dervish as Model Saint." In *Modes de transmission de la culture religieuse en Is-lam*, 241-60. Edited by Hassan Elboudrari. Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1993.

Conference report

Shrines, Pilgrimages and Wanderers in Muslim South Asia

Nowadays scholarly research is influenced to a large extent by the sensationalist approaches of media reports. Far from contesting that South Asia can be considered as a hub of the most extreme forms of Islamism, we chose to focus on a largely underestimated factor: the resilience of popular forms of practicing Islam. For instance, the high attendance of pilgrimages (*ziyarat*) indicates that discourses and representations they produce are meaningful to local people. Therefore, popular pilgrimages play an important role in negotiating the multi levels of affiliations and belongings to a “community”, be it social class, caste, tribe or sect, and to a nation still under construction, without undermining processes of political instrumentalization. For these reasons, this international symposium proposed to draw up an inventory of various forms of religious circulation in, around (especially Central Asia) and beyond South Asia (transnational religious networks). It also aimed at exploring other forms of devotional practices than those produced within Sufism and which are found, for instance, in various branches of Shi'ism and types of wandering ascetics.

Since the 1970s, many academic studies have been devoted to Sufism, Sufi orders and the worship of saints in South Asia. However, such scholarship tends to reduce the worship of saints to Sufism only while it also incorporates other elements, such as Shia features which are part of its

system of rituals, practices and representations. For instance, South Asian Shias belonging to Ithna Asheri and Ismaili branches of Shi'ism also venerate shrines, tombs and mausoleums. If some of them are commonly devoted to Kerbala's tragedy and Husayn's martyrdom, other places where Ali has supposedly left his foot print (*mowla jo qadam*) are especially venerated by both Twelver Shias and Ismailis. Shia places of worship, as well as other places devoted to relics and footprint of the Prophet (*qadam-e rasul*), have been neglected in the field of Islamic studies of South Asia while they represent important links in the geography of Muslim pilgrimages in this region.



The tomb of La'l Shahbâz Qalandar, Sehwan Sharif
(by Omar Kasmani)

Another question relates to the study of religious forms of circulation. Only a few studies have incorporated the pilgrimage as a ritual but also as a social and circulatory process, in their conceptual and methodological framework. Firstly, there is a wide range of mobile actors from wandering ascetics such as *qalandar*, *faqîr* or *malang*, travellers, pilgrims and vagabonds enabling the researcher to explore relationships between peregrination and pilgrimage. Then it appears relevant to draw up a typology of religious forms of circulation ranging from ritual and political processions, pilgrimages and renunciation as a form of spiritual nomadism or peregrination. Secondly, pilgrimage can be globally apprehended as a circulatory process through its itineraries and flows, as well as the volume of migrations it induces. The pilgrimage not only participates, through its inscription in historical and contemporary circulatory regimes, to the making of regional or national identities. It also participates to the diffusion of new territorial representations, while facilitating the emergence of new spaces of identification. Our objective here was to show how the articulations

between place, pilgrimage and territory shape individual and collective identities and how spaces emerging out of the intense pilgrimage activity tend to reorganize the geography of Muslim pilgrimages at various scales.

Finally, the field of pilgrimage studies has recently seen new conceptual developments that reflect both the issues relating to social

sciences in general, and internal issues in the field studied. It is the case of the work developed by John Eade and Michael Sallnow who consider the pilgrimage and the shrines as an arena around which multiple discourses confront themselves and out of which new forms and representations of sociality and religiosity can emerge. Thus there is a need of approaching the shrine as articulating competitive discourses over the management of saints' power, charisma and mausoleums.

The organization of the symposium reflects the main issues that characterize the study of pilgrimages today and more generally, religious

Conference report

Shrines, Pilgrimages and Wanderers in Muslim South Asia

forms of circulation within contemporary Islam. It also strives to gather approaches from different disciplines, even if the pilgrimage has often become an anthropological object. During the meeting, the discussions also determined if there was specificities to Muslim pilgrimages in these regions, when in the Middle East, the sanctuary is characterized by “the absence of both images and relics”. In this two-day symposium, we intended to bring together leading experts on the field of Islam, religion and society in South and Central Asia, to revisit leading theories in social sciences regarding the study of pilgrimage in particular, but also of several forms of religious circulation.

The conference, which was an outcome of the activities of the research team “History and Sufism in the Indus Valley”, was co-organised by the Centre for South Asian Studies in Paris (CEIAS) and the CSH in New Delhi, and mainly funded by the CNRS (INSHS department), but also by the CEIAS and the CSH. With an attendance ranging from 40 to 50 persons, this gathering provided a unique opportunity to get together and exchange views and ideas on these various issues.

Thursday, 23 September 2010

9h-9h30: Welcoming of the participants

9h30-10h: Welcome address by Blandine Ripert, Director of CEIAS, EHESS-CNRS, and introduction by Michel Boivin (CNRS-CEIAS-MIFS) and Rémy Delage (CNRS-CEIAS-CSH-MIFS)

Session 1: Figures of wandering ascetics through history

During the first session, three contributors propose to analyze how the *qalandari* figure has been formed over time, using a large corpus of vernacular written sources mainly in Persian language, and how this movement relates to other mystical branches of South Asian Islam.

Chair: Catherine Servan Schreiber (CNRS-CEIAS)

10h-10h20: Alexandre Papas, CNRS-CETOBAC, ***Vagrancy and pilgrimage according to the Sufi Qalandari path***

10h20-10h40: Michel Boivin, CNRS-CEIAS-MIFS, ***Qalandar-s and Qalandarî-s: Antinomianism as a changing concept in the Indus Valley***

10h40-11h: Discussion and debate

11h-11h30: Coffee break

11h30-11h50: Mojan Membrado, INALCO, ***Is there a connection between the Qalandars and the Ahl-e Haqq order?***

11h50-12h30: Discussion and debate

Session 2: The saints' charisma and conflicting representations of sainthood

The four papers reflect the multiple meanings of rituals that are performed in and around Sufi shrines, and which ultimately reflect the continuing success of these pilgrimages. The tension between the expression of emotions and the involvement of institutions in mediating that expression is measured in different ways.

Chair: Françoise 'Nalini' Delvoye (EPHE)

14h-14h20: Delphine Ortis, EHESS-MIFS, ***How discourses construct figures of 'normalised holiness'***

14h20-14h40: Omar Kasmani, Free University of Berlin-MIFS, ***Rearranging Gender: The question of spiritual authority amongst two women intercessors of Sehwan Sharif***

14h40-15h: Discussion and debate

15h-15h30: Tea break

15h30-15h50: Mikko Viitamäki, University of Helsinki & Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (EPHE, Paris), ***Entertaining and ecstatic. Poetics and emotions in musical gatherings of a Sufi shrine***

15h50-16h10: Ute Falasch, Humboldt University (Berlin), ***Managing a shrine inhabited by a living saint- the dargâh of "Zinda" Shâh Madâr***

16h10-16h30: Discussion and debate

18h: Cocktail and exhibition

Friday, 24 September 2010

Session 3: Pilgrimages, the city and the making of ritual spaces

The question is here about how localities, towns or cities have been structured over time by the ritual activity generated by pilgrimages but also by various actors or social groups competing for exerting social power and religious authority locally.

Chair: Thierry Zarcone (CNRS-GSRL)

9h30-9h50: Rémy Delage, CNRS-CSH-MIFS, ***A sociological reading of ritual processions: the case study of Sehwan Sharif in Central Sindh (Pakistan)***

9h50-10h10: Yves Ubelmann, DAFA-MIFS, ***The shrine of La'l Shahbâz Qalandar and its urban surrounding: politics, urbanism and religion***

10h10-10h30: Discussion and debate

10h30-11h: Coffee break

11h-11h20: Muhammad Mubeen, CEIAS-EHESS, ***The shrine and the Chishtis of Pakpattan (Pakistan): A historical analysis***

11h20-12h: Jürgen Schaflechner, SAI (Heidelberg University), ***Moving through meaning: The pilgrimage of Hing Laj Devi in Pakistan***, followed by the screening of a 17mn documentary film "Agneyatirtha Hinglaj"

12h-12h30: Discussion and debate

Session 4: Pilgrimage politics and Sufi shrines policies

Pilgrimages can be envisaged as "places" of politics in that they articulate on the one hand social and ritual activity, and on the other, competing discourses, secular and religious, tinged with different ideologies, and matrix of issues of power and domination.

Chair: Alka Patel (University of California, Irvine)

14h-14h20: Kashif Sherwani, EHESS, ***Maududi on Shrines and Sufism or the building of a new Islamic orthodoxy***



The conference room at the EHESS in Paris

14h20-14h40: Alix Philippon, University of Provence, ***An ambiguous and contentious politicization of Sufi shrines and pilgrimages in Pakistan***

14h40-15h: Discussion and debate

15h-15h30: Tea break

15h30-15h50: Mauro Valdinoci, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (Italy), ***Dead saints or living souls? Contested pilgrimages to Sufi shrines in Hyderabad (India)***

15h50-16h10: Uzma Rehman, University of Copenhagen, ***Spiritual power and 'Threshold' identities: the mazars of Saiyid Pir Waris Shah and Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai***

16h10-16h30: Discussion and debate

Keynote address

16h30-17h: Pnina Werbner, Keele University (UK), ***Transnationalism and regional cults: the dialectics of Sufism in the plurivocal Muslim world***



Coffee break

The red between black and white

Special photo exhibition

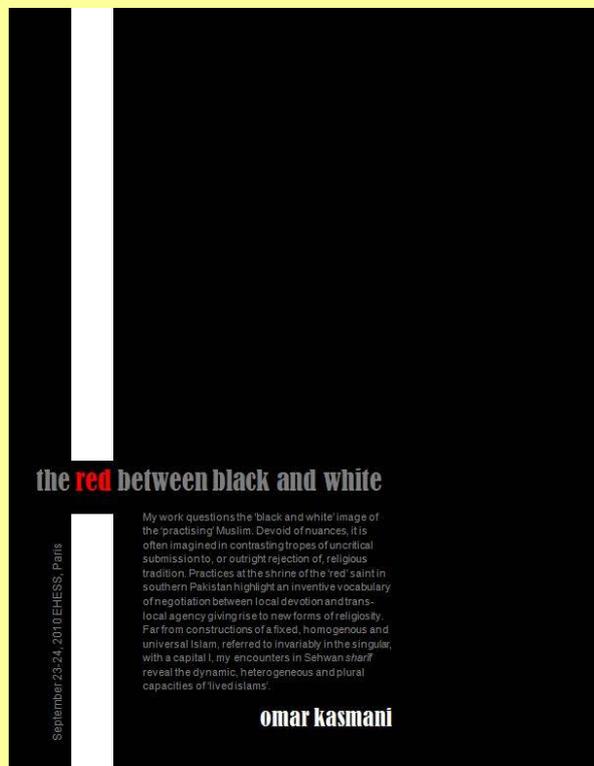
Omar Kasmani, a PhD student in Social Anthropology at Freie Universität (Berlin), is also an artist and photographer. We are very thankful to him that he accepted to contribute while featuring a photo exhibition: "The red between black and white" (see posters).

He chose images capturing the various aspects of Sehwan Sharif in Sindh, including people (*faqirs*, ascetics, women and eunuchs), events (*urs*, *muharram*), as well as ritual practices (*dhammâl*, *charagi*, *ghusl*) and ceremonies (*nawchandi*, *rajabi*). Around 30 photographs, mixing coloured images with black and white photos, were displayed in the main hall of the EHESS during the conference and for several weeks afterwards.

The artist's statement is:

"My work questions the 'black and white' images of the 'practising' Muslim. Devoid of nuances, it is often imagined in contrasting tropes of uncritical submission to, or outright rejection of, religious tradition. Practices at the shrine of the 'red' saint in southern Pakistan highlight an inventive vocabulary of negotiation between local devotion and translocal agency giving rise to new forms of religiosity. Far from constructions of a fixed, homogenous and universal Islam, referred to invariably in the singular, with the capital I, my encounters in Sehwan *sharif* reveal the dynamic, heterogenous and plural capacities of 'lived islams'."

Omar Kasmani (right) introducing the photo exhibition



Excerpts from a ghazal

The *Diwân-e Qalandar* attributed to La'l Shahbâz Qalandar, introduced by Mojan Membrado

Very little is known about the origin of the *Diwân-e qalandar* attributed to Sufi Saint La'l Shahbâz Qalandar who died in 1274 in Sehwan Sharif, in Sindh. The edition we used was compiled by Illahi Bakhsh and published at Sukkur in 1998. Unfortunately, the editor does not say a word on how this poetry came to him. He mentions that he was helped by scholars and mystics in translating Persian poetry into Sindhi language. He was mainly supported by the “*gâdî nashîn* of Sehwan of Sehwan Sharif”, Sayed Sadiq Ali Shah Sabzwari¹.

The book appears to be a collection of poems stemming from popular oral tradition. It informs us on some features of the faith that prevailed in the context where it was collected. We chose to study an excerpt in order to identify some of these features.

The first poem of *Diwân-e Qalandar* is comprised of 26 pages (pp. 2-28) in the *tarji'band* style. *Tarji'band* is a poetic style in which all the sections of a poem are related to each other by the same couplet which appears systematically at the end of each section. This couplet – called *tarji'* (in Arabic) or *bargardân* (in Persian) – is:

حیدریم قلندر مستم
بنده مرتضی علی هستم

“*Heydariyam, qalandaram, mastam / bandeh-ye Morteza 'Ali hastam*”: “I am a Heydari, I am a Qalandar, I am intoxicated/ I am submissive to Morteza 'Ali” (passim).

Heydari means “relating to *Heydar*”, “a follower of *Heydar*”. *Heydar* (“lion” in Arabic) is one of the nicknames of Ali. *Morteza* (“adequate”, “desirable”) in the second distich is another of his nicknames. Broadly speaking, *Heydari* refers to those who venerate Ali; but in its specific sense it is a reference to the *Heydari* order of dervishes². This couplet is recited in *sama'* gatherings (prayer assemblies accompanied with music, song and dance).

From a literary point of view the poem presents

¹ *Diwân-e qalandar*, ed. by Illahi Bakhsh, Sukkur, p. VI.

² This is more than a supposition, as we will see further (section 30, p. 20), the author affirms bearing a “*Heydari axe*” (*tabar-e Heydari*). *Axe* is an element of dervishes panoply. On *Heydari* order, see among others Mehmed Fuad Köprülü, Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı and Ahmet Yashar Ocak.

a myriad of spelling errors and inconsistencies in the poetry rhythm. As to its structure, it contains 40 sections. Each section is composed of 4 distiches and ends with the *tarji'* couplet as mentioned before. In the first section the author says that since he has felt Ali's love he has become a Qalandar and a Heydari (*kamar andar qalandari bastam / az del-e pâk Heydari hastam*). In the second section Ali is recognized as a *vali* (a friend of God and His representative)¹ and in the third section as a theophany, *mazhar allâh* – the manifestation of God in the human body.

اسد الله هم يد الله است
ولی الله مظهر الله است
حجت الله قدرت الله است
بی نظیر او ذات الله است

“*Asad allâh ham yad allâh ast / Vali allâh, mazhar allah ast / Hojjat allâh qodrat allâh ast / Bi nazir ou zât-e allâh ast*”: “He is the God's lion, God's hand / God's friend and representative, God's manifestation / He is the proof of God and God's power / There is nothing similar to him, he is God's essence” (p. 2).

Considering Ali as the essence of God is an affirmation which transforms this poem to a highly antinomian text; as, for all Muslims God's, essence is unique and imperceptible, nothing could be compared to it.

However, as shown in sections 4 and 5, those who scan this poem are indeed Muslims: in section 4 there are multiple references to the verses of the Koran and in section 5 a reference to the prophet of Islam who according to the author, approves of what is said in this poem about the status of Ali.

Section 6 refers to Noseyr (or Nosayr), a figure well-known to all “extremist” Shi'i orders. As we know, Noseyri is the name of a Shi'i order which is established in Syria, Lebanon and Turkey, also known as Alawis. But the reference made to Noseyr and his followers (Noseyri) is not necessarily understood in relation to this order. According to a myth widespread in certain Shi'i communities, Noseyr was a slave of Ali and recognized the latter as God. As, according to Islamic belief, regarding a human being as God is heresy, Ali killed him. Then he remembered the

¹ For more details on the meaning and the impact of this codified status in shi'ism see Amir-Moezzi, “Notes à propos de la Walâya Imamite (Aspects de l'imâmologie Duodécimaine, X).” *Journal of American Oriental Society*, 2002, 122(4), 722-741.

Excerpts from a ghazal

The Diwân-e Qalandar attributed to La'l Shahbâz
Qalandar, introduced by Mojan Membrado

promise he had made to Noseyr's old mother who had asked him to protect his son and bring him back to her alive, so Ali restored Noseyr back to life. Once Noseyr was raised from his death, he told Ali: "if I had any doubt about your divinity, now that you brought me back to life I am more than sure that you are God". Ali killed him again and this scenario repeated seven times. Then God ordered Ali to let Noseyr be: "I am the creator of the universe and I am God for all the creation, but I give permission to Noseyr and his followers to recognize you as God"¹. In this poem we read "*man Ali dânam, Ali gooyam / chon Noseyri keh bandeh-ye ouyam*": "I know Ali, I call Ali / like a Noseyri I am Ali's slave" (p.6). Moreover in section 34 the name Noseyri is given to the faith described in the poem. "*Chon Noseyri keh nâm dâram man / Ali vali allâh âshkâram man*": "As my name is Noseyri / the fact that Ali is a *vali* of God is obvious to me (or: As a Noseyri that I am / I claim obviously that Ali is the *vali* of God)" (p. 24).

Sections 7 and 8 are dedicated to Ali. In section 9 we read "*Sarvar-e harkeh Morteza bâshad / Peyrov-e din-e Mostafâ bâshad*": "whoever takes Ali for his lord / Is a follower of the religion of the Prophet" (p. 6); and in the section 12 it is said that whoever is not a follower of Heydar (*Heydari*) is a non-believer, "*Gheyr-e Heydari ham agar dâni / kâfari o yahûdi o nasrânî*": "If you believe in anything else but Heydar / You are a non-believer, a Jew, a Christian" (p. 8). We see here that in the author's view any belief other than in Ali is considered useless.

Pages 10 to 20 (sections 13-28) are a praise to the 'Fourteen Immaculate' -Mohammad, Ali, Fâtemeh and their descendants the Shi'i imams. This part testifies the Duodeciman Shi'i feature of the author's faith. In section 21, relating to Imam Kâzem, the seventh imam for duociman Shi'ies, there is a sudden aggressiveness. The author insults the enemies of this imam. It might be intended for the Shi'ites who do not recognize Kâzem as the seventh imam, e.g. the ismailians. "*Doshman-e oust kâfar-e motlaq / beshno khâreji sag o ahmaq*": "His [Kâzem's] enemy is an absolute non-believer / Listen you outsider!, you dog, you imbecile" (p. 14).

Some military features and a warrior spirit are observed in sections 30, 31 (pp. 20-21). "[...] *Tabar-e Heydarist dar datam / Qâtel-e ân jami' man hastam* [...]": "I am bearing a *Heydari* axe /

¹ For the full version of this story see Hâjj Ne'matollâh Jeyhûnâbâdi, *Shâhnâme-ye Haqiqat*, Tehran, 1984.

I am the killer of them all [all the enemies]". The aggressiveness toward enemies mentioned in section 21 recurs in section 33, where the outsiders are addressed as dogs, idiots and imbeciles. Section 35 (p. 24) curses ibn Moljam (The assassin of Ali), ibn Ziyâd (the Governor of Kufa and one of the leaders of the army of Yazid during the battle of Karbala where Hosayn the third imam was martyred), ibn Khattâb ('Omar, the second Caliph), Shemr (The assassin of Hoseyn).

Some parts of the poem are expressed enigmatically, using numbers instead of names. For example, in section 36 we read: "*Yek sad o si o yek monâfeq dân / Si sad o dah ou movâfeq dân / shesh sad o shast o yek motâbeq dân / Yek sad o bist o haft fâseq dân*": "Consider the 131 as a hypocrite / Recognize 310 as an allies / 631 is adopted / 127 should be considered sinful" (p. 24). These numbers might be the names converted by the *abjad*¹ system.

The identity of the author is acknowledged in the sections 38 and 40. "[...] *manam Shahbâz bandeh-ye dargâhash* [...]": "I am Shahbâz the slave of his threshold" (section 38, p. 26); "[...] *manam 'Othmân Marvandi bandeh-ye dargâhash* [...]": "I am Othmân Marvandi², the slave of his threshold" (section 40, p. 28). However, comparing the literary quality of this text to some other poems attributed to Othman Marvandi, one can conclude whether this text is his or not, and whether it has been distorted by oral transmission.

The study of this kind of dervish popular literature is nevertheless interesting because it informs us about a form of dervish piety and perhaps also be the manner in which Marvandi's ideas were understood among popular layers of society.

¹ The *Abjad* numerals are a decimal numeral system in which the 28 letters of the Arabic alphabet are assigned numerical values. The *Abjad* numbers are used to assign numerical values to Arabic words for purposes of numerology. For example the word "Allâh" الله has a numeric value of 66 (1+30+30+5).

² Sheykh Othmân Marvandi (d. 1274) known as "La'l Shahbâz Qalandar" is a Muslim mystic of the Indian subcontinent. His other nicknames are "Seyf al-lesân", "Shams al-din", "Makhdoom", "Mahdi" and more but he generally used "Othmân" or "Shahbâz" as his pen name. According to some sources he was a Qâderi dervish. Other sources designate him as the founder of the Qalandari Shahbâzi order (See for example: 'Affân Saljouq, *Bâ la' Shahbâz beraqsim*, Heydarâbâd: Khâneh-ye Farhang-e Iran).

Special book review

The Wandering Sufis. Qalandars and Their Path.

Kumkum Srivastava, *The Wandering Sufis. Qalandars and Their Path*, Bhopal-New Delhi: Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya-Aryan Books International, 2009, xviii-267 p.

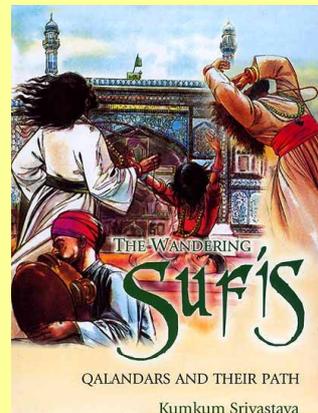
Despite its flashy comics-style cover design, this book is a scholarly piece. Composed of six chapters and two appendices, Srivastava's monograph deals with Qalandars in general and Delhi region's Qalandari shrines in particular.

The first chapter ("Sufism: Concept, Nature and Origin") presents an overview on the *tasawwuf* based on classical works by Gardet, Anawati, Nicholson, Schimmel, etc. Given the already existing literature on this topic, the section does not seem very useful and could have been replaced by one focusing on Indian Sufism. The second chapter ("Sufi orders") presents again, apparently, a general introduction to *turûq*. In fact, Srivastava's description is deeply influenced by the Indian context: for instance, the classification of orders in *bashara* (ba shar') and *beshara* (bî shar') sects, or the concept of *piri-muridi* are typically Indian and not necessarily relevant to other Islamic areas. Yet, the author rightly insists on the importance of *siilsila*, *khanqâh*, and the worship of saints as key features. The third chapter ("Antinomian cults with specific reference to the Qalandars and the Qalandariya path") is well-documented and provides the reader with various names and practices of Qalandari groups and leaders, especially but not exclusively in medieval India. The relations of the Qalandars with other religious orders are also mentioned.

The second part of the book is definitely more original as it focuses on two Qalandari *dargahs*, located in Delhi region, which have not been studied in detail. Chapter 4 ("The shrine of Hazrat Sheikh Abu Bakr Tusi Haydari Qalandari, the Matkey Shah of Purana Qila, Mathura Road, Delhi") details not only the architecture, organization, and history of the sacred site, but also the biography of the thirteenth-century Iranian saint Abu Bakr Tusi. Chapter 5 ("The shrine of Hazrat Sharfuddin Bu Ali Shah Qalandar of Panipat (Haryana), one of the two-and-a-half Qalandars") describes the mausoleum of the famous medieval saint Bu Ali Shah. A large part of the section is devoted to the life and sayings of the great Qalandari poet. The reader will find numerous anecdotes and quotations. Worth noting also are the illustrations in these two chapters. On the basis of the two case studies, the book's last section discusses at length the "Organization and practices of the shrines". Among the main features that both *dargahs* share is important to emphasize: 1) the different roles of the *khuddâm*; 2) the *qawwâlî* performances; 3) the variety of rituals.

At the end of her book, Kumkum Srivastava offers two valuable appendices: the Urdu text and English translation of Qalandari poetry and prose, and of *qawwâlî* songs. To sum up, this monograph represents a valiant effort at providing an introduction to the Qalandariyya Sufi path. This is not so frequent in India's Islamic studies.

Alexandre Papas (CNRS, Paris)



Other recent publications on Sufism in South Asia

Samina Quraeshi, *Sacred Spaces. A Journey with the Sufis of the Indus*, Peabody Museum Press, Harvard, 2010.

Raziuddin Aquil, *Sufism, Culture, and Politics: Afghans and Islam in Medieval North India*, OUP, USA, 2009.

Thierry V. Zarcone, *Sufi Pilgrims from Central Asia and India in Jerusalem*, Kyoto, Kyoto University, 2009.

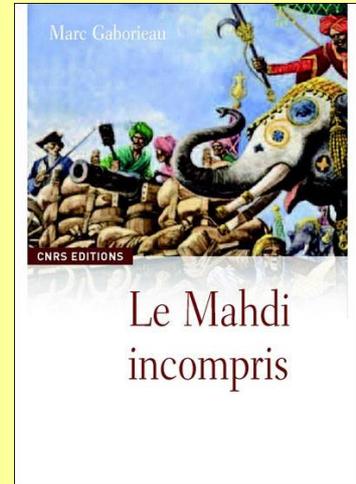
Robert Rozeenal, *Islamic Sufism Unbound Politics and Piety in Twenty-First Century Pakistan*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2007.

Nile Green, *Indian Sufism Since the Seventeenth Century. Saints, Books and Empires in the Muslim Deccan*, Routledge, UK, 2006.

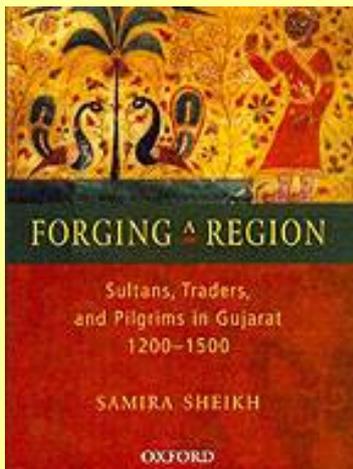
What is new? Recent publications

Marc Gaborieau, *Le mahdi incompris. Sayyid Ahmed Barelwī (1786-1831) et le millénarisme en Inde*, Paris, CNRS Editions, 2010, 339 p.

Sayyid Ahmed Barelwi is a well known figure of Islamic revival in South Asia, usually associated with the last phase of the expansion of British colonization at the beginning of the 19th century. His career is both a religious one, as well as a military one. He headed the last resistance against the Western expansion of the British Empire in India. But his fame is due to the different roles he played among his Muslim followers. Finally, the two careers merged through his death as a martyr on the battlefield at Balakot in 1831. During his lifetime, he, himself proclaimed to be the khalifa of Khorasan but after his death, some of his disciples venerated him as the Mahdi, the Muslim saviour who will come for the Day of Judgement. Mainly based on colonial sources, the book does not attempt to explain why Sayyid Ahmed Barelwi was a “misunderstood Mahdi”. Nonetheless, a step forward was achieved since in a previous publication, Gaborieau called him the “forgotten Mahdi”.



MB



Samira Sheikh, *Forging a Region: Sultans, Traders, and Pilgrims in Gujarat 1200-1500*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2010, 265 p.

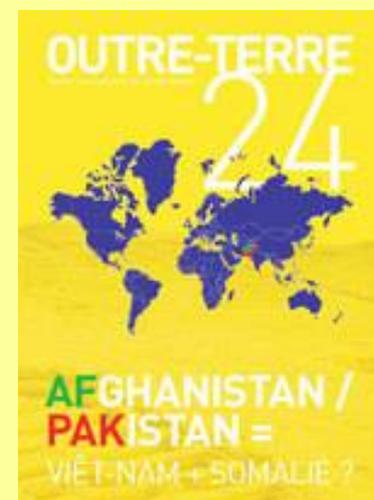
As a historian of Medieval India, Samira Sheikh publishes a slightly revised version of the Ph. D. she prepared at Oxford University some years ago. The book is most useful since it provides both a broad synthesis of the formative period of Gujarati identity, as well as a very comprehensive analysis of the interaction between the different strata which gave birth to the pre-modern state, namely the Sultanate. Moreover, the issues addressed by Sheikh obviously concern a large part of North India. For example, she gives valuable arguments regarding the processes of formation of groups like the Rajputs. Last but not the least, Sheikh is well aware of the most recent trends in the history of India, in other words the post-colonial studies, and she is thus able to provide a balanced understanding on how pre-modern Gujarat provided the essential features on which modern Gujarat was to be built.

MB

***Outre Terre. Revue Européenne de Géopolitique*, n°24, Afghanistan/Pakistan = Viêt-Nam + Somalie?, Paris Académie Européenne de Géopolitique, 2010, 445 p.**

A dense issue of a journal specialized in “geopolitics”, *Outre Terre*, is devoted to Afghanistan and Pakistan, a theme reminiscent of the concept of “Af-Pak” coined by the US army. The editor nonetheless asserts in the first paper on the Durand line that it would be more relevant to use “Pakaf” (p. 9). The reader should, however, not stop at the enigmatic equation which works as a title. The volume gives a valuable insight into the different provinces of Pakistan, and the different features – cultural and others – of each of them. With numerous coloured maps, excellent articles are side by side with other more superficial papers. But although the papers based on factual analysis are numerous, there are also salient studies by confirmed scholars like Mariam Abou Zahab or Ahmed Rashid. The balance between such studies and factual reports is nonetheless not always convincing.

MB



What is new?

PhD dissertations

Integrating Interdisciplinarity in research and teaching/learning at higher educational level in Pakistan: exploring the case of Sehwan Interdisciplinary Project (SIP), MA thesis, 122 p.

This qualitative case study seeks to explore ways of integrating interdisciplinarity at the higher educational level in Pakistan, with special reference to illustrate viable moves for policy and practices in the area of research and teaching/learning. With this aim, this research provides an in-depth analysis of the Sehwan Interdisciplinary Project (SIP) as a case in action of integrating interdisciplinarity to draw key empirical insights for theory and practice in Pakistani academia. The research focuses on examining the meaning, nature, processes and challenges of integrating interdisciplinarity in the Sehwan Interdisciplinary Project (SIP) through its team members.

The research finds that interdisciplinarity is an evolving process than a fixed construct: from its multi/pluridisciplinary phase to its full-grown interdisciplinary stage. The nature of interdisciplinarity within the SIP is a sort of disciplinary enrichment. In this case, each discipline explores and extracts from plurality of disciplinary sources to address the research problematic. In this regard, SIP had gone through a number of processes, procedures and related challenges to integrate such dynamics at the level of meaning and nature into the Project.

Lastly, while analyzing the following recommendations from SIP team members, the research provides useful insights for integrating interdisciplinarity at the higher educational level in Pakistan: (a) rethinking the conception of knowledge in the Pakistani academia; (b) seeking national interdisciplinary research initiatives, knowledge production and dissemination practices; (c) harnessing interdisciplinary research in social sciences by seeking cross cultural/institutional collaborations; (d) developing intra-disciplinary/departmental synergies through creating new objects of inquiries; and (e) institutionalizing interdisciplinarity at macro and micro levels in higher education.

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knowledge process
interdisciplinarity
multi/pluridisciplinary
integration
procedures
challenges
social sciences
teaching/learning
research
higher education
policy and practice

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representation
historiography
Sindh

The Issue of Hur: Representation in the Historiography of Sindh, MA thesis, 73 p.

This thesis aimed at understanding how certain narratives about the Hurs of Sindh generated by British colonial administrators have become dominant tropes of the Hur identity and representation. However, the present study sought to question established assumptions and argue that the British construction of Hur identity has also been accepted uncritically by Sindhi historians, writers, nationalist as well as scholars trained in western academic discourses. Two novel are presented here – one by H. T Lambrick *The Terrorist* (1972) and another by Muhammad Usman Deplai, *Sanghar* (1963) – in order to show how both authors have articulated the Hur identity in a particular way and how these writings became later standard texts to write fictional and non-fictional narratives of the Hurs. The thesis also argues that some trends that have emerged recently to salvage the Hur history and re-write it from a Sindhi nationalist perspective, should also be subjected to critical questioning. Different genres of writing are discussed here to show that within Sindh different scholars and literary traditions exist, that are embedded in modernism, nationalism, and the Marxist tradition, and take different positions on modernity, development and social change. The thesis is concluded with the argument that the issue of Hur representation needs to be studied within the broader perspective of representation and history of Sindh, by bringing in oral narratives, public memory, Subaltern Hur voice and by critically examining dominant and alternative Hur narratives.

What is new?

PhD and MA dissertations

A Social and Cultural Geography of Tamil Hinduism. The Cult of Murugan in South India and in the Diaspora, PhD thesis, 479 p.

Murugan is one of the gods of the Hindu pantheon, whose religious figure has been present in the South of India for at least two thousand years. Its worship is strongly associated with the cultural identity of Tamil Nadu (the « Tamil country » in the South of India), the cardinal points of which are marked by the presence of its six largest pilgrimage centres. This symbolic and geographic interaction between the temples of Murugan, the territory and the religious circulations dates back at least to the Middle Ages. It is to be found today at the local level too, either of a village or an urban area; it is to be found at the international scale of the diaspora as well, which is reinventing the geography of worship by giving it a transnational configuration. For all cases under study, the survey shows that in relation to the other gods of the Hindu pantheon, the definition of this Hindu deity has endowed it with particular symbolic characteristics, which trigger and direct human actions that are printed in the geographic space, such as the construction of temples or the devotional pilgrimages towards its sacred places. Thus the situation of its temple on the hill that overlooks the Mailam village (Tamil Nadu) depends as much on Murugan's thousand-year-old association with peaks as on its position in relation to the places of worship of other deities. This happens to be the case in a local geography where deities, social groups and the relating spaces are both classified and classifying. In Mauritius, the famous processions for Murugan and the over representation of its temples suggest a context of assertion of the Tamil community against the Hindu majority originating from the North. It also confirms the degree of significance of the places and circulations associated to this worship, to the point of producing territorial acts.

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Keywords

India, Tamil Nadu, Mauritius, Hinduism, temple, place, circulation, territory, scale, pantheon, caste, ethnicity, diaspora, Murugan

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Keywords

Hinglaj Devi, Avar,
Karni Mata, Carani
Sagati, Lhatri
Community,
Brahmankatriya,
Parashurama,
Mythology, Caran
Community, Cultural
Memory

Die Göttin Hinglāj Eine Untersuchung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung ihrer Bedeutung für die jāti der Brahmakṣatriya, Institut für Neuere Südasiastudien der Universität Heidelberg, MA thesis, 106 p.

Indological and Anthropological studies have for long ignored the shrine of Hinglāj Devi, or Nānī Mā as she is also called, in Baluchistan. This Magister-thesis explores the narratives of this particular religious place and argues that its remote position and ancient history have, over the years, led to multiple and often overlapping mytho-historical oral traditions and writings. Such myths, often reflecting the socio-political changes of the area, are found among various religious communities and thus thwart a conventional segregation of religious taxonomies at the shrine. Due to such overlapping discourses the heuristic value of the concept of "Syncretism" is discussed and scrutinized for its usage within this case study.

The second part of the book focuses on the history and the symbolic interpretation of the shrine among one particular group, the Brahmakṣatriya/Khatrī caste of West Rajasthan. One of their main texts, the "Brahmakṣatriyotpatti Evaṃ Maṃ Himṅulāj" is given in translation from Hindi, to show how the goddess as a religious symbol, along with the power of a sanskritic-brahmanic discourse, are used to justify the caste's claim to be of Kṣatriya origin.

5-7 November 2010

Chiang Mai, Thailand
 Conference
 Asian Borderlands: Enclosure, Interaction and Transformation
 2nd Conference of the Asian Borderlands Research Network
 RCSD, Chiang Mai University
 Convenors:
 Dr. Chayan Vaddhanaphuti, Chiang Mai University
 Dr. Erik de Maaker, Leiden University
 Dr. Mandy Sadan, School of Oriental and African Studies
 Prof. Willem van Schendel, University of Amsterdam

24 November 2010

Istanbul, Turkey
 Workshop
 The Social Production of Culture in Nineteenth Century South Asia: British Colonization, Popular Culture and the New Elites in Sindh
 Islam Arastirmalari Merkezi (ISAM)

27 November 2010

Karachi, Pakistan
 Conference
 Third International Conference on the Cultural and Historical Legacy of Pakistan
 Cultural Diversity and Processes of Patromialization
 Organized by MIFS and AFK

1-4 December 2010

Nicosia, North Cyprus
 International Conference
 Islamic Civilization in the Mediterranean
 IRCICA and the Institute for Islamic Research and Intercultural Dialogue, Near East University (Nicosia/Lefkoşe)

6 December 2010

Saint Andrews, Scotland
 Workshop
 Saints and Holy Figures Portraits and Their Sacred Function in Saint Veneration
 Department of Social Anthropology, University of St-Andrews
 Convenors:
 Pedram Khosronejad, University of St-Andrews, Scotland
 Thierry Zarcone, CNRS-GSRL, Paris

7-9 December 2010

New Delhi, India
 Conference
 The Politics of Ethnicity on the Margins of the State: Janjatis/Adivasis in India and Nepal
 India International Centre, Delhi
 With the support of CSH (New Delhi), ICSSR (New Delhi), CNRS (Paris), MSH (Paris)
 Convenors:
 Marine Carrin, CNRS, Toulouse
 Gérard Toffin, CNRS, Paris

20-22 December 2010

Bangalore, India
 Conference
 Asian Culture Industries: A Comparative Study of India, Japan and South Korea
 Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore
 Japan Foundation

2-4 February 2011

New Delhi, India
 Conference
 Christianity in History: Encounters, Engagements and Experiences in India and South Asia
 Institute for Religion and Society in Asia (IRSA), Oxford, UK
 Centre for Historical Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi

31 March-3 April 2011

Honolulu, Hawaii
 Conference
 ICAS Conference
 Association for Asian Studies (AAS)
 International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS)
www.asian-studies.org

30 June-3 July 2011

Thimphu, Bhutan
 Conference
 Mountains in the Religions of South and Southeast Asia: Place, Culture, and Power
 4th Conference of the SSEASR
 South & Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion
<http://www.sseasr.org>

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