



South Asia News



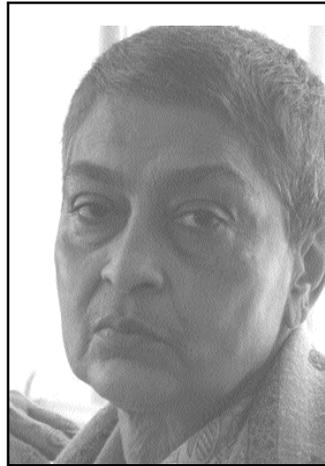
Center for South Asian Studies

University of Hawai'i

Spring 2003

Death of a Discipline: A Roundtable Discussion on the State of the Humanities

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak held the Citizen's Chair in the English Department in Spring 2003. Her appointment was co-sponsored by the Center for South Asian Studies, Rama Watumull Distinguished Visiting Indian Scholar Program. During the semester, Prof. Spivak was an active and vital part of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, where she taught a graduate seminar that was attended by students, faculty, and community members; gave public lectures on campus and in the community; and was very generous with her time in meeting with students, giving interviews, and participating in anti-war protests.



April 17; and participating in the book launch for her most recent publication, *Death of a Discipline*, on April 23; at the University of Hawai'i.

The following roundtable discussion took place a few days prior to professor Spivak's March 23 presentation at the Honolulu Academy of Arts, and not long before the United States went to war with Iraq. Present were Kapi'olani Community College religion instructor Eric Denton; Center for South Asian Studies director Monica Ghosh and journalist Stu Dawrs.

Stu Dawrs (SD): *What about "The Humanities in the 21st Century" concerns you?*

Gayatri Spivak (GS): My basic topic is why it is necessary to strengthen the teaching of the humanities in the United States. At a talk that I gave recently, I cited Dr. Martin Luther King's 1967 speech on Vietnam—"Beyond Vietnam"—where again and again what he says is "I have to imagine the humanity of those who are designated my enemies." And this ability to imagine is trained by the teaching in the humanities. Once we trivialize the teaching of the humanities, there is a huge cultural loss.

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Her organized activities included:
 Teaching a graduate course for the English Department on "Narratives of the Multiple Politics of Culture";
 Presenting a talk titled "Terror," on January 24, 2003, at the Art Auditorium of the University of Hawai'i;
 Presenting a talk titled, "The Humanities in the 21st Century," on March 23 at the Honolulu Academy of Arts;
 Participating in a panel discussion titled, "Two Worlds Meeting: Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Conversations on Indigenous Issues and Settler Viewpoints" on April 15 at the Kamakakuolani Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai'i. The panel discussant was Cristina Bacchilega (Chair, English Department).
 Delivering the keynote address for the annual College of Languages, Linguistics, and Literature Graduate Student Conference in April at the University of Hawai'i;
 Delivering the keynote address for the Annual Spring Symposium of the Center for South Asian Studies on "Film and Social Justice in South Asia," on

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Director's Note

Spring in Review

by Monica Ghosh

Aloha! In the Fall newsletter I asked the question "What's going on?" This Spring I'd like to ask the same question about the war on Iraq, even though I don't expect a credible answer anytime soon. However, I will at least venture to answer the same question at with regards to the activities and events of the Center for South Asian Studies at the University of Hawai'i this past semester.

As a big fan of UH volleyball, all semester long I was obsessed with trying to convince Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who was the Visiting Citizen's Chair and the Rama Watumull Visiting Distinguished Indian Scholar this semester, to accompany me to a game. Even though I was unsuccessful in convincing professor Spivak to go to a volleyball game, her presence in Honolulu for the Spring semester was a huge boost for the profile of South Asian Studies both on campus and in the community (the details of her activities are listed on page 1 of this newsletter).

Spring semester is always particularly busy because it's when the CSAS Spring Symposium takes place. This year's topic — Film and Social Justice in South Asia, along with the keynote addresses, graduate student and faculty participation — drew audiences from various disciplines and areas across campus, generating the kind of exchange that the Center constantly seeks to promote.

This semester the Colloquium Series was also rich with presenters. We were able to tap into the resources of the Rockefeller Fellowship on Gender and Globalization in Asia and the Pacific, which is managed by the office of Women's Research, to

bring scholars and faculty from the continent for a semester in Hawai'i. Some of the South Asian specialists participating in this program included Jyoti Puri (Simmons College), Lamiya Karim (Rice University) and Steve Derne (SUNY-Geneseo). We also benefited from having Satya Mohanty visit us from Cornell University for a week in March.

This year's Spring Symposium drew audiences from various disciplines and areas across campus, generating the kind of exchange that the Center constantly seeks to promote.

One of the new responsibilities of the Center is to administer the Watumull Scholarship for Study in India. This year we had an excellent pool of applicants from various disciplines and the review committee gave out five awards.

There'll be some continuity and some changes in the Fall. I'll continue as the Director, but Matt MacKenzie, Coordinator for the Center since Fall 2001, is moving up to Yellow Springs, Ohio, where he'll begin a tenure-track position teaching philosophy at Antioch College. We wish Matt all the

best in his career and send him off with much aloha. A new coordinator will be appointed soon.

As always, I would like to thank the members of the CSAS Executive Committee for all their contributions to the success of the Colloquium Series, the Spring Symposium, and generally promoting South Asian Studies on campus. This year I was very fortunate to have two extraordinary Library Studies interns who have assisted me in my work at the Library — they are Lisa Nguyen and Stu Dawrs.

It's been a great year and I have learned a lot in this position. I look forward to the work in the Fall, and wish everyone a wonderful summer.

Monisha Dasgupta

by Stu Dawrs

Monisha Dasgupta's academic career has by no means followed a standard trajectory. After finishing her undergraduate work in Calcutta with a B.S. in geography, she went to work as a journalist — only to discover that the profession's ideals didn't match its reality.

"I worked for the English-language daily *Telegraph* for four and a half years," she recalls. "This was the time when Punjab was going up in flames, with the Golden Temple and the aftermath of that. I was on the copy desk, where we would make decisions about what was front page news, and there was so much cynicism — it would depend on, you know: 'Oh, 50 people died: Page 4; OK, 100 people died, page 1, maybe the lead.' Those kind of determinations really upset me."

Rather than follow that path any further, she instead chose to pursue a graduate degree at Brandeis University. It was during this period that she began to define her present academic calling.

"I came to graduate school in 1991 to do women and development in South Asia, but it became something completely different because I got involved with South Asian Women For Action and quickly became a core member," she says. "Because I'm a political sociologist, before that my fieldwork had been on immigrant communities generally in the New York area. But while their stories were valid and interesting, they were all pretty much the same: There was no particular analysis of racism or anything like that, and I didn't want to deal with living in this sort of half world where people were constantly hankering for home and creating a very idealistic view of India, while at the same time wanting really to be mainstream Americans. That combination of nostalgia and also wanting to fit in here was just a bit too much — but getting involved with SAWA made me realize there was another story to tell."

Since then, Monisha has devoted her time to telling that other story, working on the often ignored issues of South Asian immigrant laborers

and domestic workers; domestic violence and violence against women; and gay, lesbian and transgender organizing.

"With the activist work, I realized people were contesting rigid, fixed notions of culture — for instance, a survivor of domestic violence is Indian, even though she's speaking out against her abuse ... because what happens is that women are often told 'how can you speak out against your husband?' or 'how can you give the community a bad name?' Culture is used to silence these women, so I was understanding that there was an intersection between culture and politics, and there were these different discourses of culture that were colliding against each other. So my primary question was to shift that cultural way of looking at the immigrant community and insisting that we look at the politics of culture."

Among other things, this has more recently led her to work in the political economy of migration and what brings immigrants to the U.S. "In talking about cultural politics, each of the organizations I was working with were talking about how being immigrants they could still claim rights, which were constantly being violated. Right now the book manuscript I'm working on is centrally focussed on the question of rights and the ways in which South Asian activists show us one way in which being immigrants you can still claim rights. So I'm increasingly being attracted to political economy kinds of approaches, but from a very feminist standpoint."

Several university presses have expressed interest in publishing the book, which she expects will be done at the end of summer, and is tentatively titled *Unruly Immigrants: Post-1965 South Asian Activism in the U.S.* Having arrived at the University of Hawai'i last fall, she is currently teaching in both the ethnic studies and women's studies department. She also serves on the UHPA Women's Committee and is active with the University Peace Initiative, among other organizations.



Book Review

"Ghost Dances that Effect Change"

by Jorge Fernandes, Ashwin Raj and Monica Ghosh

Reviewed: Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's *Death of a Discipline* (Columbia University Press, 2003)

D*Death of a Discipline* is a collection of Wellek Library Lectures in Critical Theory given by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak at the University of California, Irvine, under the auspices of the Critical Theory Institute in May 2000. The lectures are motivated by Spivak's disquiet with the publishing industry's increased marketing of "anthologies of world literature in translation" and with the academics "busy putting these together." As these literatures of the world travel across the globe through English translations and become institutionalized this question goes begging — who will teach these literatures? The natural place for training teachers of literature in translation may be comparative literature, but that, says Spivak, is not enough. Instead, in three chapters titled, "Crossing Borders," "Collectivities," and "Planetarity," she makes an urgent appeal for what she calls "a new comparative literature" as a way to keep the critical edge of the humanities from being appropriated and "determined by the market."

"Crossing Borders" takes its cue from Area Studies for developing a "new comparative literature" that is grounded in intensive language study and extends beyond Europe to include the languages of peoples and places in the global Southern Hemisphere, particularly the languages of indigenous peoples. The thrust of this recommen-

dation is that a new comparative literature must break out of the limitations of "self-contained areas" to include "movements between areas," which would include demographic shifts influenced by "diasporas, labor migrations, and movements of global capital." Spivak notes inherent limitations in Area Studies, that is based on a conservative agenda and driven by imperial motives, and calls for depoliticization of the discipline so as to become inclusionary in practice.

Informed by Derrida's *Politics of Friendship*, Spivak envisions collectivities not as fixed domains but fluid and open to exchanges. This fluidity permits the merging of the humanities and social sciences and resists becoming subservient to predatory capitalism. Spivak signals collectivity by evoking a ghost dance metaphor inspired by reading *Conrad's Heart of Darkness* and Woolf's *Room With a View* against Salih's *Season of Migration to the*

North and Devi's *Pterodactyl*, *Puran Sahay and Pirtha*. The ghost dance is choreographed through feminism as an example of collective formation and through a critique of the epistemic violence of Western feminism when it approaches women's issues in a "cut and paste" fashion, freely substituting one collectivity for another.

Spivak's invitation to think through collectivities, reading as a species of cultural instruction, is not without problems. In foregrounding cultural competence as a requisite for a robust reading, the



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Review, continued from page 4

new comparative literature is vulnerable to the very dangers of market determination that prompted its call. To avert this, Spivak defamiliarizes the globe, the abstract terrain of comparative literature, through the invocation of the planetary. The figure of the planet, as an underived intuition, embodies a radical alterity. Planetary opens the subject to a boundless field of difference that is not derived from the self. The movement away from controlled difference requires not only a reading that dis-figures "the undecidable figure

into a responsible literality," but forces an engagement with minoritarian literatures from Africa, Asia, South America, and the Pacific. Planetary-thought thus allow Spivak to open comparative literature to a vast literary field, while resisting the dangers of a facile multiculturalism.

This text challenges the death of a discipline in the wake of predatory capitalism and breaths hope for a future of comparative literature through pedagogical and theoretical insights that resist the appropriation of the subaltern by the dominant.

Roundtable, continued from page 1

SD: *It certainly seems like there's plenty of context for that given what's going on in the world today ...*

GS: That's exactly correct. You know, in another speech given that same month, Dr. King said, "Don't let anybody make you think that God chose America as His divine messianic force to be — a sort of policeman of the whole world. God has a way of standing before the nations with judgment, and it seems that I can hear God saying to America: 'You are too arrogant! If you don't change your ways, I will rise up and break the backbone of your power...'" Those two assertions can be connected. That's also what I'm going to talk about: The connection between humanities and the ethical base of political behavior.

SD: *Dr. King is an interesting example, given that so many people — including the current U.S. president — have appropriated his message in ways he would have strongly opposed.*

GS: That is also the thing about literary material: One of the things about the way Dr. King spoke is that those are highly rhetorical texts. "I have a dream": This particular bit can be picked up and uttered in a monumental voice to support all kinds of things about which Martin Luther King, if we pay attention to what he says, would be highly

dubious. Therefore one has to know how to read, how to look, how to listen — these are not things that just happen. There is a certain kind of romantic notion that we don't need any instruction in order to be able to exercise the imagination, but it's the same as the body: You have to exercise it in order to be able to use it.

Monica Ghosh (MG): *You've founded several schools in India?*

GS: "Founding" is such a big word: Yes, I did start them. Eleven: They are in small, aboriginal settlements. But you must realize when you say schools that it's not a huge thing, it's just one teacher, two teachers. But some of them have been going for 13 years and some are more recent. ...

MG: *One of the reasons you started these schools is for the communities to be able to advocate for themselves, yes? So they're learning in Bengali?*

GS: Well they have to in order to take the state exam. But the thing is, it's the same message that I have for my students at Columbia University in New York, what I began with: The ability to imagine the other—in the case of these folks, the ability to intuit the public sphere ... they're not dumb, but nobody ever gives their imagination that scope. To

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Watumull Scholarships

CSAS Awards Five Watumull Scholarships for Study in India

The purpose of the J. Watumull Scholarship for the Study of India is to promote understanding of India through scholarship support of University of Hawai'i students with a focused and well-developed proposal to study for a minimum of two months in India. The scholarship is generously supported by the Watumull Foundation.

The scholarship supports students in areas of study such as the visual and performing arts, history, philosophy, religion, and politics as well as any other field including the professional schools and community college programs. Students are expected to be enrolled in courses at a recognized Indian institution or to be conducting pre-approved independent study overseen by a faculty member at UH in cooperation with a scholar in India. Students may also choose to participate in an approved study abroad program sponsored by another U.S. institution.

This year the Center was pleased to be able to offer five scholarships instead of the usual three. This year's awards will go to David Falgout (Religion), Alexandria Ham (Philosophy), Matthew Lopresti (Philosophy), Jessica Schmidt (Political Science), and Isaac Souweine (Religion). For more information about the Watumull scholarship, please contact the Center at csas@hawaii.edu.

David C. Falgout, is a graduate student working on a Masters in Religion at UH Manoa. He has already completed a Masters in Philosophy at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

His undergraduate work was a double major in Philosophy and History at the University of South Alabama. All of these degrees have focused, in different ways, upon the study of India. David's Watumull project will be a study of Linga-puja in North India along the Ganges, culminating in a study of this practice in Varanasi. In Varanasi, he intends to document linga-puja through contact with the practicing family of a priest that leads a linga-puja in Wahiawa, Hawai'i, here on O'ahu. He has been studying the group in Wahiawa since September 2002 and hopes to use this study as the basis of his Masters thesis.

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Alexandria Ham received her B.A. in Philosophy, Religion and Psychology at the University of Iowa, and an M.A. in Comparative Philosophy, at the University of Hawai'i Manoa. Alexandria plans to continue her graduate work here

at UH Manoa in Indian Philosophy. She will be using the Watumull Scholarship this summer to study Sanskrit and Nyaya philosophy. She will spend the first half of the summer attending the Jnana Pravaha center for cultural studies in Varanasi, studying Sanskrit under R.S. Sharma. For the remainder of her stay she will be in Calcuta working with Nandita Bandyopadhyay on both Sanskrit and Nyaya philosophy.

Matthew Shelton Lopresti has been a doctoral student in Comparative Philosophy at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa since January

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2000. His emphasis in study is Indian Philosophy, Existentialism and Philosophy of Religion. This summer he will be participating in the American Institute of Indian Studies Advanced Summer Language Program in Pune, India where he will engage in a rigorous study of the Sanskrit language at Deccan College. In the fall, Matthew will travel to Bodh Gaya to teach a course in Buddhist Philosophy as part of the Buddhist Studies program of Antioch College.

Jessica Schmidt, is a Masters candidate in Political Science. Her project will involve field-work for a thesis that seeks alternative understandings of development. She will be spending about six months working for a number of non-profits in various villages within India and

Bangladesh, seeking to gain an understanding of how rights-talk is formulated at the village level, and how Indians are attempting to secure economic prosperity in ways that look remarkably different from western conceptions of development.

Isaac Souweine is a candidate for a Masters of Arts in Religious Studies at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa. As a recipient of the Watumull Scholarship, Isaac will pursue intensive language study in Hindi and Sanskrit at Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth in Pune, Maharashtra. Before joining the Religion Department, Isaac was an Asia Pacific Leadership Program fellow at the East West Center. Isaac has a B.A. (2002) in Religion from Columbia University (magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa).

Fall Courses

ART 492	Art of Ancient India	TR 9:00 - 10:15	N. Dowling
HNDI 101	Elementary Hindi	MWF 8:30 - 9:55	R. Sharma
HNDI 201	Intermediate Hindi	MWF 10:30 - 11:55	R. Sharma
HNDI 301	Third-Level Hindi	MWF 1:30 - 2:45	R. Sharma
IP 365	South Asian Lit. in Trans.	W 3:00 - 5:30	R. Sharma
SNSK 181	Intro to Sanskrit	TR 9:00 - 10:15	R. Sharma
SNSK 281	Intermediate Sanskrit	TR 11:00 - 12:15	R. Sharma
SNSK 381	Third-Level Sanskrit	TR 2:30 - 3:45	R. Sharma
HIST 241	Civilizations of Asia	MWF 12:30 - 1:20	J. Sharma
HIST 301	History of India and Pakistan	MWF 2:30 - 3:20	J. Sharma
PACE 412	Gandhi, King, and Nonviolence	TR 1:30 - 2:45	TBA
PHIL 350	Indian Philosophy	TR 12:00 - 1:15	V. Dalmiya
PHIL 750	Seminar in Indian Philosophy	W 3:30 - 6:00	R. Perrett
REL 202	Understanding Indian Religions	MWF 10:30 - 11:20	R. Lamb
REL 207	Understanding Buddhism	MWF 9:30 - 10:20	H. Baroni
THEA 763B	Sem. In Theatre: SE Asia and India	R 1:30 - 4:00	K. Pauka
ASAN 202	Intro to Asian Studies: S/SE Asia	MWF 12:30 - 1:20	B. Andaya
ASAN 312	Contemporary Asian Civilizations	TR 12:00 - 1:15	M. Sharma
ASAN 393I	Field Study-Asia: South Asia	TBA	R. Trimillos
ASAN 624	Culture and Colonialism	T 3:00 - 5:30	M. Sharma

Spring Symposium

Film And Social Justice In South Asia

The 20th Annual Center for South Asian Studies Spring Symposium opened on Wednesday, April 16 with an evening screening of Anand Patwardhan's award-winning documentary Jang aur Aman (War and Peace). It continued on Thursday April 17 with a daylong series of presentations and panel discussions. Below are the post-symposium comments of presenters Keya Ganguly and Priya Joshi.

'So far from hell, so close to America' (almost a Mexican proverb)

by Priya Joshi

University of California, Berkeley



Priya Joshi

My visit to the Center's spring symposium on Cinema and Social Justice began a few days before the symposium itself when, minutes after my arrival in paradise, I attended a public conversation between Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa, Director of the Center for Hawaiian Studies, and Gayatri Chakravorty

Spivak, Citizen's Chair at UH for the Spring term.

My own research on social justice has focused on its representation in popular culture; Professor Kame'eleihiwa's remarks on Hawai'i's history of occupation and the colonization of its economic and human resources by the United States were a powerful reminder that here, in Hawai'i, one is witness daily to an erasure of identity and rights, to the persistent refusal of a people's desire for self-representation and self-governance by that massive occupying force called the United States which denies Hawai'i so many basic freedoms in the name of liberty.



Priya Joshi, Kazi Ashraf and Gayatri Spivak

Inaugurated by this conversation, the visit to Manoa was a moving combination of ceremony and hospitality that confronted in an immediate sense the reality of social injustice. In many ways, Mahatma Gandhi's legacy lives powerfully in the dewy grasses of Manoa: there is a revolution brewing here, and one day it will be successful. Not with guns and arms, but with roses and love. "We are descended from the gods," Professor Kame'eleihiwa reminded her audience that evening amidst the taro farm and the stars that bless the Hawai'ian Studies Center. And the gods she invoked were the gods of the wind and earth, of flowers and sea, sun and moon. The visit to Manoa reminded me that these gods shall prevail. That Hawai'i's struggle can and will soon enchant others, and that the scholarly preoccupations of our conference are reflected in the work and struggles of our host.

To them I offer Gandhi's words, "Satyamev jayete," echoed by Che Guevarra ("venceremos") and Martin Luther King, Jr. ("we shall overcome").

Aloha. You are not alone.



Keya Ganguly

Keya Ganguly
Cultural Studies &
Comparative Literature,
University of Minnesota

I found the symposium on South Asian films to be a great idea, creatively put together by everyone involved in the CSAS, but it was especially important to have the energy of Monica and Matt behind it. I was very happy to be invited and found the collective conversation among participants and attendees to be thought-provoking and invigorating. Despite the emergence of serious work on the media by scholars of South Asia, it is still quite rare for people to engage the subject of the cinema theoretically and conceptually — in terms of its formative role in cultural politics (given that postcolonial studies continues to be tied mostly to literary and historical analysis). So I was especially happy that the U. of Hawai'i provided a venue for such an engagement and I enjoyed the experience — both inside and outside the meeting rooms.



Keya Ganguly, Kazi Ashraf, S. Charusheela, Jyoti Puri (front, left to right); Priya Joshi, Monica Ghosh, Gayatri Spivak, S. Krishna, Rohit Dalvi and Matt MacKenzie (rear)

Symposium Program

Wednesday, 4/16/03

Jang aur Aman (War and Peace)

Screening of the award-winning documentary by **Anand Patwardhan**
4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, 4/17/03

Session I

8:30 Opening reception



9:00 - 9:10 a.m.
Introduction: **Monica Ghosh**
(CSAs Director)

9:10 - 9:30 a.m.

Opening remarks

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

(Citizens' Chair, UH English Department)

9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Priya Joshi (UC Berkeley)

'Police and Thieves'

10:45 - 11:45 a.m.

Keya Ganguly (University of Minnesota)

'The Avant-Garde and Enlightenment:
Secularism vs. Decadence in Satyajit Ray's
Devi'



Session II

2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Panel and Discussion:

S. Krishna (Political Science)

'Intimations of Modernity: Railway as
Metaphor in Partition Literatures'

Jyoti Puri (Women's Studies)

'Where is the Fire in Monsoon Wedding?'

R. Dalvi (Philosophy)

'Phir bhi Dil hai Hindustani: Nationalism
and Social Justice in Hindi Film Music'

3:45 - 5:30 p.m.

Roundtable: Keya Ganguly, Priya Joshi,
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and S.
Charusheela

Faculty Notes

Kazi Ashraf (Architecture) chaired the Kenneth F. Brown Architecture Design Award that identifies and gives a prize of \$25,000 to the most important architectural project in the last two years in the Asia Pacific region. This is the fourth cycle of the Award sponsored by the UH School of Architecture. Paper "Placing Architecture, Presenting Architecture" was invited for presentation at the IASTE conference in Hong Kong in December. Publication "Sherebanglanagar: Louis Kahn and the Making of a Capital Complex," published from Dhaka, on the national capital complex in Dhaka, Bangladesh designed by the late Philadelphia-based architect Louis Kahn.

Arindam Chakrabarti (Philosophy) delivered the Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Oration at Indian Institute of Management, Kolkata, on 5th January 2003. Invited as the Distinguished Visitor at Haverford College, PA, he gave one public lecture and one workshop with the Philosophy students on April 3,4. Invited by Girish Karnad, at the Nehru Centre, London, he spoke about "Aesthetics of Disgust." In March, he presented a keynote address titled "Fun" at the UH Philosophy Graduate Student Conference. On April 8, 9 and

10 Arindam presented four invited lectures at the Philosophy, Religion and Logic Departments of Jagellonian University, Krakow, Poland on different topics on Classical Indian and Contemporary Western Epistemology. Arindam is about to leave for India for a one year sabbatical, the last part of which he has been invited to spend as a Visiting Professor at Trinity College Cambridge, UK. Arindam is working on two books: One on "Ethics of Speech and Debate" and another one on "Moral Psychology of Emotions."

S. Charusheela (Women's Studies) presented the paper "Interrogating the Walras-Saussure Connection" for the History of Economics Society at the Allied Social Sciences Association Conference in Washington DC this January. She also attended the American Comparative Literature Association Conference, *Crossing Over*, at San Marcos CA this April, where she presented "Marginalia to Capitalism" (for Panel, "Can We Talk? Interdisciplinarity, Culture, and the Global Economy"). Charu has spent the past year finalizing the volume (co-edited with Eiman Zein-Elabdin, Franklin and Marshall College) *Postcolonialism*

meets Economics, forthcoming from Routledge. She also finalized the articles "Feminism, Postcolonial Thought, and Economics," (with Eiman Zein-Elabdin, Franklin & Marshall College, for publication in M. Ferber and J. Nelson eds. *Feminist Economics Today: Beyond Economic Man*, University of Chicago Press, Forthcoming 2003) and "Empowering Work? Bargaining Models Reconsidered" (in D. Barker and E. Kuiper eds. *Toward a Feminist Philosophy of Economics*. London: Routledge, 2003). Charu has just been elected to the board of the International Association for Feminist Economics, and plans to attend the IAFFE summer conference at the Centre for Gender and Development Studies, The University of the West Indies, Barbados. She is also working with colleagues in the Association for Economic and Social Analysis to organize *Rethinking Marxism's* 5th International Gala Conference, "Marxism And The World Stage" (6-9 November 2003, University Of Massachusetts At Amherst, <http://www.marxismandtheworldstage.org>).

Monica Ghosh (South Asia Librarian, CSAS Director) organized a panel titled, "The

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Big Picture: How Films and Religion Influence Popular and Official Views in and of South and Southeast Asia," with Professors Timothy Barnard, and Goh Beng-Lan (National University Singapore), Payal Banerjee (Syracuse University), and Yati Barnard (University of Hawai'i). Presented a paper titled, "Mohammed Rafi Rocks and Amir Khan Swings Over on a Two-Way Street," at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies in New York City, March 29, 2003.

Peter Hoffenberg (History) gave a paper on "John Lockwood Kipling, W. H. Griggs and The Journal of Indian Art and Industry" at the "How Empire Mattered: Imperial Structures and Globalization in the Era of British Imperialism" conference in Berkeley on April 4-5, 2003. He has also submitted an essay on *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry* for a special issue of Victorian Periodical Review on 19th-century South Asian publications. That essay is entitled: "Promoting Traditional Indian Art at Home and Abroad: The Journal of Indian Art and Industry, 1884-1917." "Photography and Architecture at the Calcutta International Exhibition, 1883-84" forthcoming in *Traces of India*:

Photography, Architecture, and the Politics of Representation, published this May by the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

That publication accompanies a traveling exhibition of photographs from 19th- and 20th-century India. Hoffenberg is also serving as the Chair of the History Department's South Asian history search committee and continues to research his biography of John Lockwood Kipling, artist, art-school administrator, journalist and father of Rudyard.

S. Shankar's (English) anthology *Crossing into America: The New Literature of Immigration* (New Press, 2003) has just appeared in print and has been favorably reviewed in such places as the San Francisco Chronicle and San Antonio Express-News. His literary note on R.K. Narayan appeared in *Tin House* 4.2 earlier in the spring. His article "Midnight's Orphans: A Postcolonialism Worth Its Name" has been accepted for a forthcoming issue of *Cultural Critique*. During the spring semester, he gave invited presentations at University of Western Ontario, Columbia University, University of Texas at San Antonio, University of Texas at Austin, and Seattle University.

Lee Siegel's (Religion) *Love and other Games of Chance: A*

Novelty was published by Viking Penguin (February 2003). *L'Amour dans une Langue Morte*, a French translation of his novel *Love in a Dead Language*, was published by Editions Philippe Picquier in France (April 2003). He was elected to represent the United States as a novelist at Internationales Literaturfestival in Berlin (September 2003).

Rohit Dalvi (Philosophy) presented "Death of a Dervish" at *Cross-Currents: New Intersections in Comparative Philosophy*, UH Manoa. He also presented "Phir bhi Dil hai Hindustani: Nationalism and Social Justice in Hindi Film Music" at the CSAS Spring Symposium. Rohit successfully defended his dissertation proposal this semester and plans to spend the summer writing.

Himaneer Gupta (Political Science) presented a colloquium, "Can (We Let) the Indian Immigrant Bourgeoisie Speak? Some Thoughts on Doing Collaborative Research," for the Center for South Asian Studies on Feb. 6. She gave the following papers at the International Studies Association annual meeting, Feb. 26-March 1, in

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Portland, Ore.: "Ayodhya's past and India's national 'present'" and "No place to call home: Hindu nationalism and overseas Indians." She also presented the paper, "Subtleties of culture and imperialism in Moulin Rouge" at the Association of Asian American Studies annual meeting, May 8-11, in San Francisco.

Matthew Lopresti (Philosophy) presented "Pragmatics of Praxis: Yoga and Christianity in Pascal's Wager," at *Cross-Currents: New Intersections in Comparative Philosophy* at UH this March. This summer he will be participating in the American Institute of Indian Studies Advanced Summer Language Program in Pune, India where he will engage in a rigorous study of the Sanskrit language at Deccan College. In the fall, Matthew will travel to Bodh Gaya to teach a course in Buddhist Philosophy as part of the Buddhist Studies program of Antioch College.

Matthew MacKenzie (Philosophy) presented "Does Self-Awareness Require a Self?" at California State University, San Bernardino, in February. He presented "No-Self, Egoism, and Altruism," at Antioch College in April. After defending his dissertation in August, he will take up a position as Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

Spring Colloquia Presentations

"Terror"

Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak
Visiting Citizens' Chair, UH Manoa
January 24, 2003

"Can (We Let) the Indian Immigrant Bourgeoisie Speak? Some Thoughts on the Politics of Doing Collaborative Research"

Himanee Gupta
Political Science, UH Manoa
February 6, 2003

"Cultural Studies and Colonial Governmentality: Law and the Cultural Political Economy of India"

Ritu Birla
History, University of Toronto
February 18, 2003

"LGBTHQK Sexualities in Urban India and the Limits of the Globalization Paradigm"

Jyoti Puri
Sociology and Women's Studies
Simmons College
February 27, 2003

Spring Colloquia Presentations

“The ‘Inadvertant’ Killing of Mansa: Narratives of a Colonial Homicide in Eighteenth Century British-India

Sudipto Sen
History, Syracuse University
March 12, 2003

“Getting Real: The Place of Identity Politics Today”

A roundtable discussion featuring Satya P.
Mohanty, with Cynthia Franklin and Candace
Fujikane

March 17, 2003

“How Do Texts Reflect Reality? Theories of Reference and the 19th Century Indian Novel”

Satya P. Mohanty
English, Cornell University
March 18, 2003

“Imperial Jazz”

Timothy Brennan
English and Cultural Studies & Comparative
Literature, University of Minnesota
April 21, 2003

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an extent, I try to develop the same kind of thing there, because their other is the public sphere, whereas the "other" of the New York student is "the enemy" if you like, or the understanding that you can't just do good and really *do* good, you know what I mean?

MG: *You just returned from a trip to Calcutta. As both a New Yorker and a NRI, a non-resident Indian, what sort of news do you have about the war that Bush is talking about? I'm really interested in what people outside the U.S. are thinking. ...*

GS: Well, one of the things about the sub-continent as you well know is that it's not centralized. So it's extremely difficult to summarize: Unless you are a *New York Times* correspondent, who will say anything, it's difficult to say "Indians think." And I was only there for three days. But nonetheless I'll say it: There is alarm all around. ... Not just middle class families but in terms of labor export, many non-middle class families also have members in the United States, so there is a cultural feeling that is different from what it was in my youth. But nonetheless, there is real opposition of Bush. I'll tell you why I was surprised: Because of the anti-Muslim sentiments in India; again, I didn't go anywhere besides Calcutta, but I did not hear in Calcutta anywhere, anything about Islam, Muslims or the fact that Saddam Hussein is Muslim; the Muslim world or Al-Qaeda and etc. This is quite significant, I think.

I had to give a talk the last day and I was only there for two nights and two-and-a-half days, and therefore I was not doing a field trip. But I had innumerable conversations—on the street, at the shops—and I

Roundtable, continued from page 13

did not hear at any point—not from the street people, not from the middle class, not from my upper-middle-class relatives—not a one of them spoke about anything like that. It was like in the days of Vietnam: You never heard anyone support this kind of American incursion into Asia—it didn't matter what your politics were. In the same way there was not one voice—I'm sure there were voices somewhere, I'm just one person and I was there for two days so I'm giving a very subjective and impressionistic account, but I did talk to an awful lot of people, and many who are normally very anti-Muslim, and not one saw this as a Muslim or a terrorist type issue. They saw it solely as American aggression in taking control of other places.

Eric Denton (ED): *You said you were going to talk about the trivialization of the humanities—do you feel like the humanities are being actively and consciously trivialized?*

GS: Yes. Well consciously it's not so much against the humanities as for a certain type of rationalization. I've been teaching fulltime in the United States in English departments for 38 years, so therefore if there is a certain trend to watch, I'm a trendwatcher: The rationalization of universities is in a sense the shrinking of the humanities. And even within the humanities ... I don't know every school but at my own for instance, the desire to have the humanities be economically viable means you're taking students who can pay full tuition but you're doing little more than that. The whole thing is judged in terms of cost effectiveness. And young people don't want to go into a field where there is no future; I do think there is a certain kind of trivialization. Also, the way in which humanities try to justify themselves in terms of mak-

ing the language of criticism sort of pseudo-scientific or pseudo-legalistic: I don't think we are ready to say, "we are in fact not what you want us to be." Basic training in the humanities is training the imagination into an uncoercive rearrangement of desires. Sorry, but it's not like getting a grant for some sort of esoteric experiment—it's not like that. I therefore think that the humanities should stop pretending that they can compete with the business school. That's not why they should be encouraged; they should be encouraged because there are certain things one pays for even if ... well, it's something that's not often heard in our world because even something like "sustainable development" is really about how far you can go in cost efficiency; it's not to sustain the environment, that word "sustain" is a joke. But on the other hand one has to be critical and the humanities can develop. And you know, I know this is not going to happen: What I'm saying is a completely impractical thing, but I have to say it, because I think it is right.

Basic training in the humanities is training the imagination into an uncoercive rearrangement of desires.

ED: *The core changes that have been going on to the general education requirements at UH seem to reflect this: A lot of the rationale used to justify the changes is based on the idea that UH needs to be run more as a business than a university: To streamline and to be able to compete with Hawai'i Pacific University, which very consciously runs itself as a for-profit business. A lot of the core changes have to do with humanities requirements — they've eliminated the need to take a lot of humanities courses, and more and more the question being asked is, "Do you make your own money? Do you make the money back?"*

GS: You see: Human beings don't matter. I'm so glad you brought this up. This is what's called rationalization: Can you imagine that to be rational is to be this way? You cut out everything and that's why

when people even speak in favor of the humanities people think they're only talking about what is irrational. George Fletcher has written a fine book about how politics can be and the law can learn from literature—he talks about romanticism ... but what does he call it? Irrationalism! We're not irrational: The way in which we make reason flower is by allowing it to live in its habitat, within the imagination and *with* imagination. The more you rationalize it in terms of "does it pay for itself," the more you shoot yourself in the foot because you're going to bring up a generation of culturally deprived children.

ED: *I teach at a state-funded school where the previous governor did his best to slaughter higher education by cutting funding repeatedly. The new governor has just cut funding — we're surviving on less than nothing at the university and the colleges, so it's not surprising that the pressure coming down on the administration is, "Well, we're not going to pay for you so you've got to pay for yourself." So, I guess it wouldn't be shocking to me if the dance program at Kapio 'lani Community College were to be threatened with cuts. It would be depressing to me, but not shocking. Is there hope at a private institution like Columbia, where I assume the budget isn't being cut every year?*

GS: I don't believe so. Having money does not mean that you do not say ... I mean, you know that rich people are very careful about saving money. Isn't that true?

MG: *Stu and I were talking the other day about how private patrons of the arts increasingly influence what does and doesn't get seen — since the funding is not so much from federal money any more as from private donors, those donors can now dictate what gets to be seen. And it's not always a generosity that's open — it's a very dictated generosity; it's very specific.*

GS: Absolutely. And I'm not suggesting — you know, I taught at state schools before I came to

Columbia, at the University of Texas; at the University of Iowa; Pittsburgh, which is half state. But I have to admit that it would be disingenuous to equate a community college with a large, powerful Ivy League college — I cannot say it's the same. But when it comes to the question of the trivialization of the humanities — not just the decimation of the humanities — that in fact happens even more profoundly when you have a very strong hand in business, in international affairs, in area studies, in the school of public affairs. The humanities become unimportant. And within the humanities there is this kind of traditional celebration of a sort of 1950s, Cold War separation ... that's what I'm saying: Our own students — I get the students from the core in my classes, and my god all they know is that the writer does not mean what he or she writes. They are being taught intentional fallacy in the worst kind of minimalist fashion: The complicated relationship between aesthetics and politics is reduced to, "The writer doesn't mean what he or she writes." So that is also trivialization: We can't just look at decimation — and I believe that the problem with decimation is obviously much worse at community colleges than at schools with money. And the "star system" in schools with money is also something that is quite scary. Especially since the big humanities stars are generally hand-in-hand with the sort of culturalism of the international civil society moral entrepreneurs. It's the kind of human rights that is philanthropy without democracy: No social contract, no anything. That's also something into which the humanities go; that is also a kind of trivialization. Do you know what I'm saying? So it's a bigger picture than just cost cutting, although cost cutting is a very important part of it.

When I give this talk at the Academy of Arts, do you think anyone is going to do anything more than applaud and go and it will remain business as usual? Do you think anything will change? I sort of don't think so. On the other hand, do you think I could say anything else?

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Contributions of articles, book reviews and commentaries are welcome. Please send them to us at csas@hawaii.edu

We also thank those who have supported the Center with monetary contributions in recent years. These funds provide a flexible resource to supplement our (rapidly declining) university operating budget and permits us to augment our South Asia activities.

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Professor Keya Ganguly of the University of Minnesota's Department of Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature presented "The Avant-Garde and Enlightenment: Secularism vs. Decadence in Satyajit Ray's *Devi*" as part of the Center's 20th annual Spring Symposium. Please see page 8 for more on the symposium.

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