

SAGAR

SOUTH ASIA GRADUATE RESEARCH JOURNAL



SPRING 1997

VOLUME 4

NUMBER 1

Editor

Matthew A. Cook
The University of Texas at Austin

Managing Editors

Sarah Houston Green
The University of Texas at Austin

Linta Varghese
The University of Texas at Austin

Editorial Advisory Board

Ali Asani, *Harvard University*
Manu Bhagavan, *The University of Texas at Austin*
Nicholas Dirks, *The University of Michigan at Ann Arbor*
Diana Eck, *Harvard University*
Wilhelm Halbfass, *The University of Pennsylvania*
Robert Hardgrave, *The University of Texas at Austin*
Barbara Harlow, *The University of Texas at Austin*
Atul Kohli, *Princeton University*
Wm. Roger Louis, *The University of Texas at Austin*
David Pinault, *Loyola University*
Gyan Prakash, *Princeton University*
Paula Richman, *Oberlin College*
Richard Salomon, *The University of Washington*
Gregory Schopen, *The University of Texas at Austin*
Cynthia Talbot, *The University of Texas at Austin*
Thomas Trautmann, *The University of Michigan at Ann Arbor*
Kamala Visweswaran, *The University of Texas at Austin*

Editorial Board

Richard Barnett, *The University of Virginia*
Nandi Bhatia, *The University of Texas at Austin*
Purnima Bose, *Indiana University*
Paul Courtright, *Emory University*
Chandra DeSilva, *Indiana State University*
Pauline Kolenda, *The University of Houston*
Gail Minault, *The University of Texas at Austin*
Nikhil Sinha, *The University of Texas at Austin*
Eleanor Zelliott, *Carleton College*

Editorial Committee

(All members from The University of Texas at Austin)
James Brow, Janice Leoshko, Sagaree Sengupta (Faculty Advisors);
Kamal Adhikary, Anne Alexander (Staff); Greg Weiner

Sagar

South Asia Graduate Research Journal

Sponsored by the
Center for Asian Studies
University of Texas at Austin

Volume 4, Number 1

Spring 1997

Sagar is published biannually in the spring and fall. The editor is responsible for the final selection of the content of the journal and reserves the right to reject any material deemed inappropriate for publication. Articles presented in the journal do not represent the views of either the Center for Asian Studies at the University of Texas at Austin or the *Sagar* editors. Responsibility for the opinions expressed and the accuracy of facts published in articles and reviews rests solely with the individual authors.

Requests for permission to reprint articles should be directed to the individual authors. All correspondence regarding subscriptions, advertising, or business should be addressed to *Sagar* care of the Center for Asian Studies, University of Texas, Campus Mail Code G9300, Austin, Texas 78712-1194.

Not printed with state funds.

Sagar does not discriminate on any basis prohibited by applicable law including, but not limited to, age, caste, creed, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Table of Contents

Volume 4 • Number 1 • Spring 1997

The Language Divide in Punjab AMITJIT SINGH	1
The Sublime and Picturesque in Colonial India: The Poems and Sketches of Reginald Heber GOEFFREY COOK	21
Ethnic and Religious Decoration of Personal Space: Examining Four Muslim Women's Student Apartments JEFFREY DIAMOND.....	36
Book Reviews	
R.H. Grove, <i>Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens, and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860</i>	53
SUVIR KAUL	
Arjun Appadurai, <i>Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization</i>	56
KRISTY BRIGHT	
Carol Breckenridge, ed., <i>Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in a South Asian World</i>	58
STAN FARYNA	
Graduate Student Profiles.....	60

Notes from the Editor

Submitting a paper for publication can be a harrowing experience. The staff at *Sagar* makes the publication process less intimidating: rather than accepting great papers and rejecting less-than-great ones, we make publication part of the learning experience by working with contributors to bring cutting-edge research on South Asia to the public.

I would like to thank not only *Sagar's* contributors, but also our editorial board and staff for their patience with changes in recent months. Foremost, Leah Young Renold (our past editor-in-chief) left to pursue full-time research in India. We will greatly miss both her direction and enthusiasm. All three articles in this edition came to us during her tenure. With Leah's departure, new faces and characters have been responsible for *Sagar*. Our new editorial staff is as follows:

Matthew A. Cook, Editor
University of Texas, Austin
Department of Asian Studies

Sarah Houston Green, Managing Editor
University of Texas, Austin
Department of Asian Studies

Linta Varghese, Managing Editor
University of Texas, Austin
Department of Anthropology

Both I and the *Sagar* staff look forward to producing a high quality journal and we greet the coming months' tasks with enthusiasm.

Matthew A. Cook
Editor

The Language Divide in Punjab

Atamjit Singh

This paper explores the collapsing of religious identities with linguistic identities in Punjab and advances that the development of Punjabi separatism gave rise to later Sikh militancy. The author also addresses the adverse impact of these political developments on Punjabi literary tradition.

The language divide in Punjab at the turn of the twentieth century presents a complex phenomenon. In the wake of the reorganization of Indian states along linguistic lines in the fifties, the Sikh community in Punjab demanded a Punjabi-speaking State, in which Punjabi would be the official language. Its recognition was unduly delayed due to opposition from Hindus living in the states now Haryana and Punjab. Prior to Independence, Punjabi Hindus used Urdu as the language of administration, commerce and journalism. Urdu was also the major language of literary expression in British Punjab while Punjabi was the spoken language. As Punjabi Hindus were mainly a mercantile urban middle class, they were enthusiastic users of Urdu. They were also struggling to procure political status for Hindi which would displace Urdu. In their eagerness to achieve this objective, they began declaring Hindi rather than Punjabi as their mother tongue in the censuses with the intention of gaining numerical precedence over Muslims and Urdu.¹ Like the Hindus, and swayed by their leaders, Punjabi Muslims--who mostly spoke regional varieties of Punjabi--fought to maintain Urdu's official status on the lower and middle rungs of civil administration and education.

After Independence, as a result of the partition of India, most of the Muslim population from Punjab migrated to Pakistan and similarly the entire Sikh population together with most of the Hindus from west Punjab migrated to the Indian Punjab. In the

Atamjit Singh is a lecturer in the Department of South and Southeast Asian Languages at the University of California, Berkeley.

¹ Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 287.

Sagar: South Asia Graduate Research Journal 4, No. 1 (Spring 1997): 1-20

© remains with the author.

Indian Punjab, language confrontation shifted from Urdu-Hindi to Hindi-Punjabi soon after the question of deciding the state language arose.² It was also accompanied by communal tensions between Hindus and Sikhs which had remained dormant during the British period since the struggle was primarily confined to the two major religious groups--Hindus and Muslims. As a tiny minority, the Sikhs previously had a deep and symbiotic relationship with the Hindu community at large. In fact, the two were tied to each other through a complex of laminated attitudes and reciprocities, besides the bonds of blood and bone.³ Since Hindus and Sikhs jointly constituted a minority against the Muslim majority in the British Punjab the Sikhs, by and large, threw in their lot with Hindus.

The emergence of Hindu and Muslim nationalism in Punjab led to a distortion of certain cultural processes, with the most potent expression showing in the identification of language with religion.⁴ In fact, this situation prevailed in all the provinces of North India in which the Hindu and Muslim populations were numerically balanced--albeit rather precariously. Prior to Partition, the Muslims had a slight majority over the Hindus in the united Punjab.⁵ The British rulers made Urdu a medium of school instruction and administration at the lower and middle levels with this in view. After the Muslims migrated to Pakistan, Urdu was displaced as a language of administration and education due to the disappearance of Muslims from the political scene. It should have been natural for Punjabi to take its place for the simple reason that it was the spoken language of the people. But this did not happen. A battle of succession started, the Hindus fighting for Hindi and the Sikhs for Punjabi.⁶ The Hindus as a majority identified themselves with Hindi, and Muslims in Pakistan abandoned Punjabi and made Urdu a communal badge of their ethnic identity. Even in British Punjab they were committed to Urdu since it was the language of their religious identity. In Indian Punjab, Hindus started cultivating Hindi with fanatic devotion and Punjabi became a symbol of the Sikhs' cultural and political identity. Under the impact of Arya Samaj, a Hindu reform organization, the Hindus had already adopted Hindi as communal symbol of Hindu

² Paul R. Brass, *The Politics of India since Independence*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 163.

³ Darshan Singh Maini, *Cry, The Beloved Punjab--A Harvest of Tragedy & Terrorism*, (New Delhi: Sidhartha Publications, 1987), 13.

⁴ Attar Singh, *Secularization of Modern Punjabi Poetry*, (Chandigarh: Punjab Prakashan, 1988), 135.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 136.

⁶ Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*, 288.

nationalism and Sikhs began constructing their minority identity through Punjabi language and literature under the influence of the Singh Sabha movement.⁷

In this paper, I will explain (1) how religion, politics and language were intermixed in Punjab, resulting in ongoing communal conflict between Hindus and Sikhs, giving birth to Sikh separatism. (2) I will also try to demonstrate that the religious symbols improvised and utilized by leaders of political parties to mobilize nationalist sentiments rarely appealed to minority communities and indigenous groups. Most of these minority groups later opted for demands of statehood autonomy with special status. (3) I will further try to show that such separatism, as developed in Punjab later, gave rise to Sikh militancy in the eighties as the minuscule leadership aspiring for power exploited the racial and ethnic sentiments in their own narrow political interests. The politics of evasion, intransigence and backsliding combined with the growth of both Hindu and Sikh fundamentalism made the situation still worse. (4) Another dimension of this conflict is its serious impact on the development of the modern Punjabi literary tradition. It limited the development of the tradition into a dialogue of the Sikh minority community with itself, curbing the tradition's potential for growth as a Punjabi secular tradition. This contributed to the growing insularity of this literature in the midst of India's cultural pluralism. (5) Considering that conflicts between the rights of ethnic and linguistic minorities to use and preserve their languages and the desire of centralized states to establish a national language in South and Southeast Asia have often been resolved in an atmosphere of liberal linguistic pluralism in which multiformity is largely preserved, I would like to suggest that India's lengthy tradition of multilingualism and societal bilingualism can offer a just and fair solution to the conflict.⁸

The Punjabi-Hindi conflict in the fifties and sixties, by and large, revolved around three issues.⁹ The first was the status of the Punjabi language. Hindus argued that Punjabi was not a full-fledged language. It was only a dialect of Hindi without a strong literary tradition and one that could not be raised to the status of a state language due to its backwardness. The second reason given was that Punjabi did not have a thoroughly developed script of its own. Finally, there was no specific area or region in Punjab where

⁷ Singh, 134.

⁸ Atul Kohli, *Democracy and Discontent--India's Growing Crisis of Governability*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 379.

⁹ Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*, 288.

it was being spoken, because Hindus, claiming Hindi as their mother tongue, lived all over Punjab. Hindus, therefore, argued against Punjabi not because they had convincing reasons, but because Hindi was the language of their religious discourse and a symbol of their political dominance. In their fight against Urdu they had already adopted Hindi as a symbol of their distinct socio-political identity.

If we try to understand this situation from a linguistic point of view, the Hindu argument does not remain tenable. According to research conducted by Grierson, Punjabi is a distinct language with both a standard literary form and a number of dialectical and subdialectal varieties.¹⁰ It has its own grammatical system and vocabulary which makes it a separate language. Although Grierson recognized its literary capabilities, he judged that it was not a very extensive regional literature.¹¹ This charge was later refuted by Punjabi scholars.¹² Most importantly, Grierson rejects the idea that Punjabi was just a dialect of Hindi and he draws a fairly sharp boundary between Punjabi and Western Hindi or Hindustani. In fact, the controversy between Punjabi and Hindi protagonists was rife at his time and this made him take a clear stand in regard to the Punjabi language's separate identity. While writing on the features of the Punjabi language, he concludes:

Even at the present day there is too great a tendency to look down upon Punjabi as a mere dialect of Hindustani (which it is not), and to deny its status as an independent language. Its claim mainly rests upon its phonetic system and on its store of words not found in Hindi; both of which characteristics are due to its old *lahanda* foundation. Some of the most common words do not occur in Hindustani.¹³

¹⁰ G. A. Grierson (ed.) *Linguistic Survey of India*, vol. ix, *Indo-Aryan Family, Central Group*, pt. 1: *Specimens of Western Hindi and Punjabi*. (Delhi: Moti Lal Benarsidass 1968), 607-618, 624.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 624.

¹² Dr. Mohan Singh Diwana, *History of Punjabi Literature*, (Amritsar: Kasturi Lal and Sons, 1951), 6.

¹³ Grierson, 617. The tone feature of Punjabi which has been worked out by Harjeet Singh Gill, *A Reference Grammar of Punjabi* (Patiala: Dept. of Linguistics, Punjabi University, 1969) also supports the view that it is quite distinct from Hindi though it has affinity with Hindi, the two being cognate languages of the Indo-Aryan family.

With the development of the sociolinguistic study of Indian languages, many linguists like Gumperz, Pandit, Srivastva, and Pattanayak¹⁴ have shifted their focus from distinguishing languages and dialects to the study of codes and their distances from one another in bilingual situations. Gumperz conducted a study examining the use of Hindi and Punjabi among the urban Punjabi community of Delhi. He found that speakers in various contexts use different codes of Punjabi. An educated speaker uses three linguistic codes. He may use a Hindi code while conversing with a Hindi speaker, a Hindi/English dominant Punjabi code while talking with an educated Punjabi speaker and a native regional variety code with an uneducated Punjabi speaker.¹⁵ The discussions by Grierson and Gumperz enable an objective observer to understand that certain arguments advanced by Hindi proponents against the status of Punjabi are incorrect. Saying that Punjabi is nothing more than a dialect of Hindi is contrary to linguistic facts. The area where Punjabi is spoken is fairly distinct. Both advocates of Punjabi and Hindi at one time were willing to accept, on the basis of the Sachar Formula or Regional Formula, that Hindi speaking areas could be differentiated from the rest of the Punjab. But Hindus argued that even the Punjabi-speaking region was bilingual.¹⁶ The pro-Punjabi reply to this was that the mother-tongue of the whole population of the Punjabi region was Punjabi. The only thing needed to settle this argument was to decide whether the so-called Punjabi region is inhabited by people of different religions speaking the same mother tongue or people

¹⁴ J.J. Gumperz, 'Hindi-Punjab Code Switching in Delhi,' in Anwar S. Dil (ed.), *Language in Social Groups: Essays by John J. Gumperz*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971), 205-219. P.B. Pandit, *India as a Sociolinguistic Area*, (Poona, University of Poona, 1972). R.N. Srivastva 'Linguistic Minorities and National Languages' in Florian Coulmas (ed.) *Linguistic Minorities and Literacy*, (Berlin: Mouton Publishers, 1984) attempts to study linguistic differences in terms of distances between various linguistic codes which are used by the speakers in a society in different social contexts. D. Pattanayak, *Multilingualism and Mother Tongue Education*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981) also has a similar approach in dealing with problems of mother tongue education in India. This is an approach developed primarily for the study of languages as social phenomena in the context of urban society.

¹⁵ Gumperz, 205-219.

¹⁶ Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*, 291.

of different religions and different mother tongues.¹⁷ The Hindu argument that Punjabi did not have Gurmukhi as its sole script and the script was not as fully developed as Devanagari was also not true. There is no denying that Punjabi was written in Gurmukhi, Persian characters and Devanagari; but it was Gurmukhi which was being used by both Hindus and Sikhs for writing their literature. Since the Sikh scriptures were written in Gurmukhi, the Sikhs naturally favored the use of this script for Punjabi.¹⁸ Hindus opposed Gurmukhi precisely for this reason and wanted to use Devanagari for the Punjabi language.¹⁹ The contention over the scripts in Punjab caused Gurmukhi to become the symbol of the separate identity of Sikhs. As a result it became a focal point on which the cultivation of the Punjabi language and pursuit of Sikh cultural aspirations rested.²⁰

The Hindi movement in nineteenth-century Punjab was led by Punjabi Hindus, themselves educated in English and Urdu.²¹ In its origin, the Hindi movement was purely a religio-political or sectarian movement promoted by the Arya Samaj to displace the official status of Urdu in the Persian script due to its association with Muslim communal identity and Hindi's with Hindu revivalism and religious reform. The push to replace Urdu was also associated with political aspirations. The Hindi-Urdu clash in British India erupted first in 1882, a year after the decision of the government to replace Urdu in Persian script with Hindi in Devanagari script in the province of Bihar. Urban Hindus in Punjab soon made the same demand.²² Both sides saw this as a manifestation of the Hindu-Muslim communal conflict. The Anjumun-e-Islamiya of Lahore protested against this demand, which it saw as delivering "a death-blow to the prospects of Mohammadans."²³ Lala Lajpat Rai, the famous Arya Samaj leader and Punjab politician who did not even know the Hindi alphabet, entered the political arena through this controversy. He came to believe that Hindi could be the foundation for the edifice of Indian nationalism. Through the Hindi-Urdu controversy, Lajpat Rai learned his first lesson of 'Hindu nationalism' and became

¹⁷ Ibid., 291.

¹⁸ Ibid., 291.

¹⁹ Ibid., 291.

²⁰ Singh, 65.

²¹ Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*, 287.

²² Ibid., 286.

²³ Lala Lajpat Rai, *Autobiographical Writings*. (ed.) V. C. Joshi. (Delhi: University Publishers 1965), 25-27, 79.

convinced that political solidarity demanded the spread of the Hindi language in Devanagari script.²⁴ Muslims retained political dominance and Urdu its official status in the Punjab until 1947, when India attained independence. The Simon Commission had earlier rejected the demand of making Hindi or Punjabi the medium of instruction at primary level in the schools of British Punjab. The promotion of Punjabi and Hindi was, however, overseen by denominational educational institutions run under the aegis of the Chief Khalsa Dewan and Arya Samaj respectively.

The real trouble started with the census operations of 1951 and 1961 when, after independence, the Hindus of Punjab decided to record their mother tongue as Hindi instead of Punjabi.²⁵ The Punjabi language became an instrument of political struggle. Punjabi Hindus took up the cause of Hindi with such great passion that they abjured their links with Punjabi as their mother tongue. As discussed, organized efforts to influence the censuses in favor of a language by associations and individuals belonging to religious communities was taking place even earlier. The major conflict during the 1911, 1921 and 1931 censuses was between the educated Muslims and Arya Samaj Hindus. Each urged their religious brethren to declare Urdu or Hindi, respectively, as their mother tongues. In this quarrel Hindustani--a common name used by the superintendents of the census operations for both Hindi and Urdu--was weakened since the use of Hindi and Urdu was insistently forced on the informants. By 1941 communal feelings surged so high and deceptions were so widespread that the mother tongue category was ordered not to be tabulated.²⁶ In 1951, instead of Hindi-Urdu, the conflict centered around Punjabi-Hindi. Hindus under the banner of Arya Samaj exhorted their co-religionists to record Hindi as their mother tongue. The Sikhs urged fellow-Sikhs to record their mother tongue as Punjabi. In the urban areas the census operations were being accompanied by the shouts of 'Har Har Mahadev' by Hindu groups and 'Sat Sri Akal' by Sikhs, charging the political atmosphere with intense

²⁴ Ibid., 287

²⁵ Paul R. Brass, *The Politics of India*, 163. Gopal Singh observes, "Hindus themselves are responsible for their alienation, insecurity and frustration. By disowning Punjabi as their mother tongue, they have become rootless, and have alienated themselves from culture, history and society of Punjab, thus leaving Sikhs to claim that Punjabi culture and Punjab history was theirs. They 'hang' in Punjab like a tree in the air, having no roots in the soil." (ed.) *Punjab Today* (New Delhi: Intellectual Publishing House, 1987), 27.

²⁶ Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*, 293.

emotion. In 1961, under the leadership of the Arya Samaj and Hindu militant organizations, such as Jan Sangh and Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh, Hindus launched a concerted campaign to declare their mother tongue as Hindi. The Sikhs were being advised similarly under the aegis of the Shromani Akali Dal to record Punjabi as their mother tongue. The vernacular papers of both groups, primarily published in Urdu, appealed to their respective communities to show loyalties to their own language. The Sikh newspapers also started expressing fear that the Sikh religion was in danger and that the mighty Hindu religion was going to devour all minority religions.²⁷ The Hindu newspapers started propagating the idea that Sikhs were traitors and that they wanted to set up their own independent state of Khalistan.²⁸ The atmosphere of mutual hatred and mistrust, fanned by intense communal sentiments, further complicated matters.

As a result of the 1961 census, the Hindi movement succeeded in reducing the declared number of Punjabi speakers to a minority in the state for the first time in the history of the census. The declared Hindi speakers grew from a small minority into a big majority in Punjab and Punjabi speakers, who never constituted less than 60% of the total population of the pre-Partition province, became 41% of the post-Partition Punjab state.²⁹ Sikhs became a small minority in political power sharing also. Sikhs were compromised by the fact that it was Hindus who controlled the economic and political power.³⁰ This also caused resentment among the Hindu population of what is now Haryana because they did not share equally in economic and political power with Punjabi

²⁷ The Akali leaders in the fifties emphasized again and again that "Panth was in danger." They accused the Hindu dominated Congress Party of being aggressively anti-minority, including the Muslim minority. The Akali leadership exhorted the Sikh masses to be aware of the sinister designs of the Hindu majority which was out to eradicate the minority religions. While making a demand for a Punjabi speaking state, Master Tara Singh would repeatedly say, "I may die but my Panth should live for ever." Sajal Basu says, "The primary motive for the demand of Punjabi Suba was, as Master Tara Singh held it, to protect the Sikh religion and improve the position of the Sikhs." *Regional Movements-Politics of Language, Ethnicity-Identity*, (New Delhi: Manohar Publications, 1992), 18.

²⁸ Baldev Raj Nayar, *Minority Politics in Punjab*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 187.

²⁹ Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*, 294.

³⁰ Singh, 134.

Hindus.³¹ Sikhs launched a movement for the linguistic reorganization of Punjab, as had been done in other parts of the country. In doing so, they could not hide their real intentions of forming a Sikh majority state within the Indian Union.³² The struggle for achieving respectable political status for Punjabi in the state of Punjab was intermixed with the urges and aspirations of the Sikh minority community which used language in its search for cultural and political fulfillment. During this period, Sikhs asserted themselves as a separate entity in competition with Hindus through the Punjabi language. Increasingly, in post-Partition Punjab the allegiance of particular groups has been in the arena of linguistic conflict, and language and script have been politically important markers of group identification.³³

Another aspect of this battle of languages in Punjab was that Punjabi literature produced in the early twentieth century did not grow as a secular Punjabi tradition representing the integral Punjabi consciousness. The Sikh community, mainly contributing to the development of twentieth-century Punjabi literature, started writing under the influence of Singh Sabha, a Sikh religio-social reform movement which devotes itself to revival. It largely spread through an assertion against others of the superiority of the Sikh sacred texts and history.³⁴ This dominant tendency stressed separatism more than participation in the multi-ethnic literary tradition handed down by Punjabi literature of medieval times. One far reaching effect was that the doors for the expansive instincts of the Punjabis were unlocked as never before. They colonized vast arable lands within Punjab and northwestern parts of Uttar Pradesh, joined the army in large numbers, built railroads, roads and bridges in India as well as abroad.³⁵

³¹ The consequence of the Haryana Movement was to emphasize the difference between Punjabi-speaking Hindus in the Jullunder division, who feared Sikh domination in a Punjabi Suba, and Hindi-speaking Hindus in Haryana, who were in majority in their region and did not fear Sikh domination, but rather saw that they could achieve greater political and economic prominence in a smaller and more homogeneous state. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*, 331

³² Brass states, "Nayar argues that in effect the Punjabi Suba movement was a demand for a state in which Sikhs would be dominant camouflaged as a demand for a Punjabi-speaking state." *Language, Religion and Politics*, 324.

³³ Brass, *The Politics of India*, 164.

³⁴ Singh, 60.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 102.

Only a couple of decades before British rule was established, Punjabis had enjoyed the pride of being the builders of secular Punjabi rule. The structure was established to an extent during the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and acknowledged by the poet Shah Muhammad in his *Jangnamah mabein Sikhan te Frangian* (a narrative describing wars between the British and the Sikhs). The poet praises Sikh rule and cites it as an example of secular rule where all religious communities--Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs--lived in peace and amity. The disintegration of this rule and subsequent annexation of Punjab by the British greatly wounded the self-esteem of the Sikh community. Furthermore the Sikhs enjoyed the reputation as protectors of the weak and meek; a tiny group (2% of the total population of India), they were in the habit of delegating to themselves roles and images larger than life.³⁶ Their reputation as the lions of the Punjab was supported by the wide respect and affection with which they were seen throughout India.

It goes without saying that many Punjabis were very enterprising, forward-looking and secular despite the fact that they were interlocked in conflict with each other on the basis of religious and linguistic identities beginning at the turn of the century. Caste was much less pernicious in the Punjab than elsewhere in India and functioned more as class did in European communities. Baldev Raj Nayar in his book *Minority Politics in Punjab* observes that there is a proliferation of caste groups in Punjab, but caste as a social phenomenon is not as strong in Punjab (except in the Haryana area) as it is in some other parts of India. In support of his argument he quotes a governmental report from the 1920s which reads:

It would be misleading to attach too great importance to the existence of caste in the Punjab. . . . Not only is it the case that the brahman has no practical pre-eminence among Hindus, but as between "caste" and "non-caste" Hindus the distinction is not so marked as to create the political problems found elsewhere in India The problem in truth, if one exists, is rather of classes socially depressed than of "out-castes" as such; while much remains to be done for the social uplift

³⁶ K. Nijhawan, "The Sikhs as Heroes," *The Tribune, Chandigarh*, 13 April, 1985.

of some of these classes, they hardly present a separate political problem.³⁷

In fact, communalism in Punjab as elsewhere in India was definitely promoted by the British as part of the colonial project, and some of the same tactics are being used by the post-colonial governments. Gyanendra Pandey in his book *Communalism and Nationalism in North India* states that ". . . communalism is a colonial construct that enabled state control in the guise of mediating religious divisions."³⁸ According to him, communalism is a form of colonialist knowledge. The paradox is that the nationalists have done more than any one else to propagate its use. In effect communalism as religious difference was constructed as "the other" of modernity and nationalism; therefore it was necessary for the emergence of India as a nation. Indian nationalist claims for the Hindu character of the Indian nation and of Hindu nationalism, occurred concurrently with the positioning of the Indian nation-state as the keeper of law and order, just as the colonial state had been.³⁹ The British utilized the religious differences of the three communities of Punjab to promote their 'divide and rule' policy. The successive Congress governments in the center after Independence have done everything to give religious shape to negotiations of economic, linguistic, and political issues in Punjab.⁴⁰

The congruence of religious with linguistic identities in Punjab at the beginning of this century affected the Punjabi language in two ways. First, the intense literary activity generated by the Sikh movement as it sought self-definition converged with the desire to acquire a proper status for Punjabi. Here a conscious shift in the choice of language as a literary medium is noticeable. In the nineteenth century, the language of medieval literary texts was Braj in Gurmukhi script, but Bhai Vir Singh chose spoken Punjabi as a medium for his writings.⁴¹ This change indicates a loss of interest in Braj bhasha which came to be considered more a part of Hindu literary and cultural heritage, though poetic narratives in the Gurmukhi variety of Braj centered around the life of Sikh Gurus.⁴² Conversely, Hindus began to lose interest in the

³⁷ Nayar, 209-210.

³⁸ Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990), 6.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Kohli, 365.

⁴¹ Singh, 59.

⁴² Ibid., 54.

Braj classical literature of Punjab because it was transcribed in Gurmukhi, a script identified with Punjabi and the Sikh Gurus.⁴³ Under the influence of the Arya Samaj, Hindus had attuned themselves with the revival of Vedic religious tradition. This resulted in neglect of a significant part of the medieval Punjabi literary tradition which, though it had its roots outside Punjab, still found a hospitable ground to develop on Punjabi soil. The modern Punjabi language was unfortunately deprived of the richness of the pan-Indian experience of this literary tradition.⁴⁴

Another outcome is that the Qissa stream of the medieval Punjabi tradition, nurtured by the Muslim Punjabi poets in Persian script, was also ignored by the Sikh revivalist writers, and therefore could not contribute fully to the development of a modern Punjabi idiom due to its association with Muslim life and culture.⁴⁵ The modern literary scholars, imbued with Sikh religious fervor, repudiated Qissa poetry as qualitatively inferior and excluded it from their imaginative scope.⁴⁶ Hence the art of Qissa-writing was left to stagnate. The work of a few writers who adopted it in the present century, such as Dhani Ram Chatrik, was seen as second rate.⁴⁷ Urdu drifted away from Punjabi and became closer to Persian classicism and orthodox Islam. Since it became a badge of Muslim nationalism in Punjab, Qissa writing was disassociated with the land and the people of Punjab. This also inhibited the development of modern Punjabi registers.⁴⁸ The dismemberment of a common Punjabi literary culture through the rise of various religious nationalisms led to a shrinkage of historical and cultural perspective, obfuscating Punjabi literature's links with Indian literary classicism spreading over thousands of years and distant lands of Arabo-Persian writings.⁴⁹ Thus the beginnings of modern Punjabi literature witnessed the crumbling of the plural and multicultural constitution of the Punjabi literary tradition and the advancing of a singular, monolithic voice of a minority of Sikhs.⁵⁰ The linguistic idiom born out of this situation also testified to a near absence of spontaneous and vital dialogue with intellectual

⁴³ Ibid., 54.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 57.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 54.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 54.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 59.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 60.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 54.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 139.

and literary activity in other parts of the country.⁵¹ The Punjabi language, due to the inhibitive impact of the neo-religious Sikh literary movement, expressed secular ideas coming through the Western world at the start of the British period until the writings of Prof. Puran Singh, Dhani Ram Chatrik, Mohan Singh, Amrita Pritam, etc., appeared. The neo-Sikh movement together with the denial of Punjabi in educational and administrative affairs slowed the emergence of Punjabi culture's secular character.⁵²

As discussed above, the diminishing secular, open and generous tendencies in modern Punjabi literature were accelerated under the influence of Western literature. It is important to note that against the scenario created by Sikh literature in the spirit of revivalism, Punjabi language and literature strived to adopt secular themes. In the medieval period of Punjabi literary history, secular themes found their expression mainly in Qissa poetry. Punjabi poets in 1920s and 1930s were especially attracted to the idea of Punjabi nationalism. In this regard Attar Singh says,

. . . identification of renascent Punjabi language with an idea of the Punjab was only too natural as such an identity alone could impart to it a distinctive cultural personality especially when no other language could have acquired Punjabi personality as authentically and as effectively as Punjabi--the language of the soil.⁵³

Punjabi writing progressively aspired to project a common, composite Punjabi culture taken from social, political, and cultural elements. The national freedom movement, the influence of the Ghaddar Party in both India and the United States, the Akali protest movement against ritualism and priesthood in Sikh shrines, and the impact of the Western way of life in Punjab came together to shape a secular consciousness and sensibility. All these factors helped in creating a secular voice through the use of Punjabi in diverse forms of literary discourse as well as intellectual debate and discussion.

As seen above, during various census operations conducted by the British Government, the census superintendents promoted a composite all-India language called Hindustani, a blend of Hindi

⁵¹ Ibid., 140.

⁵² Ibid., 132.

⁵³ Ibid., 134.

and Urdu. Communal passions aroused by different religious groups of the province fighting for Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi during these periods eroded the effort. Even then an attempt to evolve an all-India linguistic idiom which could become an instrument of communication beyond the narrow considerations of different religious groups was made. This could not take shape due to the creation of "communal languages" in the colonial period. Peter van der Veer, referring to the work of David Lelyveld, laments the eclipse of a language called Hindustani, which could have had the potential of acquiring the role of a lingua franca in the post-Independence period.⁵⁴ This language was observed by John Gilchrist, a Scottish physician and indigo farmer. It was a unified language with three major dialects distinguished by the use of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, or ordinary Hindi words. Gilchrist was prepared to publish his lexicon of Hindustani in both the Arabic and Nagari (Sanskrit script) as well as in Roman transliteration.

The idea behind the project of Gilchrist was not to create an instrument of wider communication for the people of India. Lelyveld notes that this project, undertaken at the end of the eighteenth century, was very similar to language projects in England and France during the same period. The clientele in this case was not indigenous but were the officers of the East India Company. The project was also intended to establish further rapport between the rulers and the "natives."⁵⁵ During the latter half of the nineteenth century under British rule, this project was turned into linguistic surveys to identify spoken languages through which the foreign rulers could forge better ties with local people.⁵⁶ The purpose of this colonial survey was to find a suitable language to replace Persian as the official language. Gilchrist's Hindustani later became Urdu which, after standardization, was made the official language of a large part of North India, including Punjab. This arrangement continued to exist until India became independent. Urdu, Hindi and Hindustani are all literary languages constructed to suit the purposes of literate elites. It is by their scripts that Hindi and Urdu were identified. Through their written form they are tied to the idea of civilization, which is simultaneously that of religion. Peter van der Veer further states that the development of Hindi as the language of Hindus and Urdu

⁵⁴ David Lelyveld quoted in Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism-Hindus and Muslims in India*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 170.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 170.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 171.

as the language of Muslims is as fraught with contradictions as any other aspect of religious nationalism.⁵⁷ Lelyveld provides a fascinating story of the role played by All India Radio. In 1940, A.S. Bukhari, Director-General of All India Radio, appointed two well-known writers of Hindi and Urdu to prepare a lexicon for Hindustani news broadcasts. They were both to find the most common, precise and, if possible, neutral terms from either Hindi or Urdu to create a new Hindustani, a language of secular nationalism. It took five years to prepare and at that point was already a lost cause due to the chaos of Partition. With Partition, Urdu emerged as the official language of Pakistan and the Muslim minority within India. Hindi became the all-India language, a position it shared with English, and the main language of Hindu nationalism.

Interestingly, Punjabi did not receive a proper role or status even under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.⁵⁸ Though he was able to establish the myth of Punjabi secular rule, he never thought of granting official status to the Punjabi language, the spoken language of the people of Punjab. As a result, Persian continued to occupy the position of the administrative and judicial language. Since Persian had been and was the dominant language in Punjab, elites learned it to gain employment and favor with the ruling classes. Some Punjabi sayings ridicule the adoption of Persian. Two such adages '*asb aab kar moion puffra farsian ghar galle*' and '*parho farsian vecho tel*' express Punjabi attitudes toward slavishly adopting a foreign language.⁵⁹

The denial of Punjabi in administrative and educational domains at different points in the history of Punjab was lamented in the early thirties by the non-Sikh poet,⁶⁰ Feroze Din Sharaf.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 171.

⁵⁸ Singh, 50.

⁵⁹ These two sayings are very popular and express disdain towards educated people using Persian with their family members. The second saying ridicules the learning of Persian by common people. It states that by studying Persian one would find employment as an oil-seller, a low occupation in Punjabi villages.

⁶⁰ Feroz Din Sharaf was a popular Punjabi poet in pre-Partition Punjab who used to participate in Punjabi symposia held in different parts of the province. He was elevated to the position of a Cabinet Minister of Punjab, Pakistan soon after Partition. *Sharaf di Sari di Sari Kavita*, a collection of his poems, was published by the Department of Languages in the Punjab Government in 1979.

According to the poet, Punjabis are guilty of neglecting their mother tongue. Sharaf writes that mother Punjabi is wailing:

To those whom I have been lullabying to sleep, I
am now a stranger.

Though I am a queen of the land of five rivers, my
existence is reduced to a very low position.

Utterly neglected, I am sitting in a corner with my
fists closed.

I am a broken Rebecca cast away by its musician-
master.

O Sharaf! I am the speech of those, who never
cared to give me any regard.

The language divide in Punjab has another interesting aspect. The political history of the province has permanently scarred the memory of the people's collective consciousness. As we have seen during the linguistic reorganization of the Indian states in the fifties, the Shromani Akali Dal made a demand for a Punjabi Suba. Punjabi Hindus, though Punjabi-speaking, threw their support to the Hindi speakers of undivided Punjab. Under the influence of the Arya Samaj they declared Hindi as their language. Consequently, both Punjabi Sikhs and Hindus were deprived of a linguistic state of their own though they constituted a major linguistic group in India. Ironically, the battle between Punjabi and Hindi was carried on through Urdu in Persian script. The vernacular press from Jullundhar, published in Urdu, incited both Hindus and Sikhs to fight with each other on the language issue. The Punjabi suba movement and its campaign for a *maha* Punjab had major forums in *Prabhat* owned by Master Tara Singh and *Pratap* owned by Lala Jagat Narain. Both papers fueled animosity between the two communities, often pushing them to physical violence.⁶¹

The history of the Punjabi suba movement, therefore, throws adequate light on the importance and functions of language in the development of subjective group identities. In the case of Urdu, a self-conscious elite (supported by the socially mobilized segment of the Muslim community) sought to differentiate Urdu from Hindi in North India. In doing so, Urdu was used to transmit a sense of separateness to the unmobilized, largely rural Muslim population. Through this move, Urdu consciousness was made co-existent with Muslim identity. Language also plays a similar, although somewhat ambiguous, role among Sikh leaders. They

⁶¹ Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics*, 294.

take Gurmukhi as a badge of their separateness. This ambiguity, according Paul Brass, "has surrounded the language issue, because the rulers do not permit the Sikhs any more than the Muslims to make a demand based on religion, but only on language."⁶² The resulting consequence has been the infusion of religion with language identification in Punjab.

Though the government leaders did not want to accept such a demand on the basis of religion, a Punjabi suba was finally carved out in 1966. This was not on a purely linguistic but also, on a religious basis.⁶³ After two decades of struggle by the Sikhs, the linguistic division in Punjab was made on communal lines granting the Sikhs a Sikh-majority state excluding vast Punjabi speaking territories outside. The Sikhs themselves were an active party to this political arrangement first in 1956, when a compromise on Regional Formula was reached, and subsequently in 1966, when large chunks of Punjabi speaking areas, especially Kangra, were portioned off from the newly carved state. Territorially apart, vast sections of Punjabi speaking people within the new Punjab and many outside in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi were alienated from the Punjabi language. Speakers of Dogri and Kangri have now started seeking an independent identity for these two major Punjabi dialects. All these developments have adversely affected the growth of the composite personality and its reflection in the literary and cultural configurations in the past fifty years. As a consequence millions of Punjabis have remained outside the Punjabi mainstream in cultural estrangement.⁶⁴ The Punjabi identity is gradually veering to a posture of growing isolation from the national mainstream. Large segments of the population living in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, in spite of Punjabi being their language, give Telegu or Sanskrit as their second language.⁶⁵ Long outstanding issues such as the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab, the allocation of river waters and the inclusion of Punjabi speaking areas left out of new Punjab have languished until now.⁶⁶

Until the early eighties the Akalis continued their struggle for settlement of the pending issues, but their internal factionalism ensured a divided house. In general, Hindus did not have political trust in the Sikh community and most allied themselves with non-Punjabi Hindus. In order to wrest power, the Congress rule at the

⁶² Ibid., 325.

⁶³ Singh, 136.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 136.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 136.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 136.

center undertook a series of maneuvers which worsened the political situation in the state. Whereas the Akalis won Sikh support by raising pro-Sikh issues and unsettling post-Punjabi suba disputes, the Congress government at the center played communal games to achieve its narrow political ends.⁶⁷ Unfortunately for Punjab this situation continued for a long period, accentuating the political conflict and deepening the crisis. Atul Kohli, in his book *Democracy and Discontent* expresses that "though these issues were significant and controversial, still they were not that important to justify the loss of thousands of lives in the anarchy that followed." He further states that "we know that during 1982-84 the two sides were close to agreement on two occasions, but at the last minute Indira Gandhi and her advisers detected some hitches and recanted."⁶⁸ According to Kohli,

The most persuasive explanation for actions is not indecisiveness which would have been quite unlike her [Indira Gandhi] but rather her typical fear of losing power. A settlement would have meant a political victory for the Akalis and would have had adverse electoral consequences for her Congress. That certainly was true not only within Punjab but elsewhere in North India as well, especially in the state of Haryana, which stood to lose Chandigarh and irrigation waters in any negotiated settlement.⁶⁹

The continuing evasiveness, indifference and insensitivity to Punjab issues and Sikh sensibilities has given rise to militancy in Punjab which during the past two decades has been suppressed through the introduction of draconian laws, thus thwarting all channels of democratic expression. The repeated failure of negotiations between Indira Gandhi and the Akalis, and non-implementation of the agreement reached by Rajiv Gandhi with Sant Longowal allowed the ranks of the militants to swell since 1983-84.⁷⁰ In 1984, the storming of the Golden Temple by the Indian Armed Forces (part of Indira Gandhi's political plan to win back Hindu masses) followed by her assassination, led to a series of

⁶⁷ Kohli, 365.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 362.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 358.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 364.

horrendous events which deepened the Punjab tragedy. The pre-planned massacre of the Sikhs in Delhi and elsewhere greatly increased the alienation of the Sikh community making them feel like a humiliated minority whose future was dark and uncertain in their own country.⁷¹ They made supreme sacrifices in the fight for freedom against British colonial rule and had identified their destiny after Independence with India.⁷² Though the militancy in Punjab cannot be condoned, the deep gash inflicted on the Sikh psyche by the bloody drama hurt and anguished the community beyond measure. Again to quote Kohli,

The main political actors in Punjab all have tended to act on their short-term ambitions without much regard for the public good. Such an unrestrained power struggle, in turn, has been a crucial driving force behind the descent toward anarchy.⁷³

Police atrocities, fake encounters, and the abrogation of basic human rights in Punjab all further complicated the situation. The Anandpur resolution of 1973 which contained an economic agenda for Punjab and demands for looser state-center relations was rejected and dubbed a secessionist demand.⁷⁴ The Punjab crisis deepened further, when the language divide between the two major communities turned into a relationship of mutual distrust and hatred. The cumulative result was non-commitment by the successive governments at the center, repeated betrayals and non-implementation of agreements, police repression, etc. This also added some social-psychological dimensions, e.g., rural-urban and farmer-trader tensions. The strengthening of identities based on language and religion has become so overwhelming that the territorial issues seem irrelevant today. As Atul Kohli asserts:

Indira Gandhi's narrow partisan concerns were important causal ingredients in the Punjab's tragic turmoil. Many innocent lives would have been saved if Indira had put the larger concern for public good ahead of concern for her own and Congress's electoral fortunes. In retrospect,

⁷¹ Ibid, 374.

⁷² Ibid, 360.

⁷³ Ibid, 361.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 359.

therefore, there is little doubt that a more self-assured or more enlightened leader could have put the conflict in Punjab on a different track.⁷⁵

The language problem exists in all South Asian countries, particularly in those countries which were ruled by the British. In other parts of India, linguistic conflict has been strong and persistent, but nowhere else has a situation like that in Punjab developed. Tensions increased when linguistic issues were confounded by the politics of communalism and culminated with violence. The state terrorism inflicted on the masses has so affected the psyche that it will take some time to heal the minds of the people. India, like many other South Asian countries, has a language policy which can tackle the Punjab problem without any difficulty. It requires tolerance and a change of consciousness. The cultural diversity and multiplicity of languages, if taken as a positive value and recognized as integral to cultural continuance, has precedents in governmental policy decisions. There is a need to give linguistic minorities a role in the policies that will determine the fate of their language. There is a need to start rethinking the language policy of the Federal Government in regards to Punjab.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 362.

The Sublime and Picturesque in Colonial India: The Poems and Sketches of Reginald Heber

Geoffrey Cook

This paper comparatively studies the visual and the textual to examine Reginald Heber, the second Anglican Bishop of Calcutta, and his vision of "India." More specifically, it focuses on drawing parallels between Heber's poem "An Evening Walk in Bengal" and his engravings to reflect on the union of aesthetic forms in South Asia.

Our task is done! on Ganga's breast
The sun is sinking down to rest;
And moored beneath the tamarind bough,
Our bark has found its harbour now.¹
--Reginald Heber

The second Anglican bishop of Calcutta, Reginald Heber (1783-1826), was a polymath of many vocations and talents, including a Church of England prelate, a poet, a scholar and an amateur visual artist. This study seeks to comparatively examine the visual and poetic languages of Reginald's Calcutta and to arrive at an understanding of the historical environment of Georgian India. To quote the contemporary art scholar of Modernism, Wendy Steiner:

... the ultimate triumph of art in overcoming the death of history and time is the unification of the senses and the arts that appeal to them.²

Bishop Heber is a particularly well suited object for this type of study because the poem and the etchings under observation were concurrently created during his episcopal visitations and

Geoffrey Cook is a research associate at the International Institute of India Studies--Canada.

¹ Reginald Heber, *The Poetical Works* (Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1841), 279.

² Wendy Steiner, *The Colors of Rhetoric* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 72.

recorded in the prose of his *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India* (1828). Due to this book's popularity, a parallel publication of Heber's *A Series of Engravings from the Drawings of Reginald Heber* (1829) was subsequently printed from which the visual examples are drawn. The images are also illustrative of the previous *Narrative*.

Heber gained great stature as a poet during his lifetime. His reputation endured for three generations after his death. The modern editor of Heber's early poems writes: "If he had applied himself [to poetry] he might still be an important literary figure for us today."³ Yet he wrote few poems while in India.⁴ Among the scattered pieces of his episcopate is an extended and strikingly Romantic Orientalist poem, "An Evening Walk in Bengal" (see appendix), which shall be the literary focus of this study.

Were it not for the Bishop of Calcutta's literary and historical importance, his drawings might not have survived.⁵ Yet they best expose his psychological processes since they were done with no pretense for future publication and, therefore, are of extreme value to our scheme of understanding. Further, as illustrations, they lend *Narrative* closure. As Steiner further emphasizes:

Illustrations . . . associate the physical structure of the book with another kind of space, the building, which is literally an enclosed world cut off from that of nature⁶

³ Reginald Heber, *Palestine, Europe, Passage to the Red Sea* (New York: Garland, 1978), vii-viii.

⁴ George Smith, *Bishop Heber: Poet and Chief Missionary to the East: Second Lord Bishop* (London: J. Murray, 1895), 80.

⁵ In Geoffrey Cook's "From Many a Palmy Plain: Reginald Heber's Drawings," *Indo-British Review: A Journal of History* (forthcoming), the author notes, as a visual artist, that the female breasts and the male proportions [in an example which is not reproduced in this paper] are less than accurate and are amateurish. Further, his bovine musculature on figure 2 is far from accurate. The quality of his representations rarely rise above the sketch as can be seen in "Climbing the Himalayas" [Figure 6]. It is sufficient to note here that what His Lordship is concerned with is to depict the exotic at a very superficial level--much as an amateur photographer still does today while away from home.

⁶ Steiner, 144.

The attempt here to overreach the boundaries between the arts is an attempt to mark the boundaries between art and life,⁷ and to close it off and to "tame" it (life) from the vicissitudes of nature.

It should be kept in mind that the arts approach each other and appropriate features which they lack alone to reveal norms for their period.⁸ This was most true for Reginald Heber who (as he expressed himself in his visual and poetic opera plus his discursive prose) saw India as an ancient and decaying land of pomp and dark mysteries.⁹ As illustrated in Figure 1 and lines 50-59 of an "Evening Walk in Bengal:"

A truce to thought--the jackal's cry
 Responds like sylvan revelry;
 And through the trees yon failing ray
 Will scantily serve to guide our way
 Yet mark, as fade the upper skies,
 Each thicket opes ten thousand eyes.
 Before, besides us, and above,
 The fire fly lights of love,
 Retreating, chasing, soaring
 The darkness of the copse exploring.¹⁰

Heber's vision was an Orientalist one, and the arrival of India into the consciousness of Europe coincided with the birth of Romanticism.¹¹ The Orient, thereby, became the purest form of Romanticism¹² as we can see in Heber's description of nature in lines 27-41:

Come on! Yet pause! Behold us now
 Beneath the bamboo's arched bough,
 Where gemming oft that sacred gloom
 Glows the geranium's scarlet bloom,
 And winds our path through many a bower

⁷ Ibid., 5, 144.

⁸ Ibid., 12, 18.

⁹ G.T. Garatt cited in Raymond Schwab, *Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 197.

¹⁰ Heber, *The Poetical Works*, 280.

¹¹ Schwab, 4, 225. In fact Sir William Jones (1746-1794), the Indologist, is considered the father of Romantic poetry.

¹² Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979).

Of fragrant tree and giant flower;
 The ceiba's crimson pomp displayed
 O'er the broad plantains humbler shade;
 While o'er the brake, so wild and fair
 The betel waves his crest in air.
 With pendant train and rushing wings
 Aloft the gorgeous peacock springs;
 And he the bird of hundred dyes
 Whose plumes the dames of Ava prize.¹³

A similar view of the natural, albeit more in the rustic rather than wild aspect, is displayed in Figure 2. Heber writes about these Tibetan *gaurs* at Barrackpor in his journal: ". . . In the park several uncommon animals are kept: Among them the ghyal an animal [of which] I had not . . . read any account . . ." ¹⁴ Observe that the bovine musculature in Figure 2 is far from anatomically accurate. Note that what encourages Dr. Heber to sketch this subject is its *exotic* quality.¹⁵

What we are viewing and hearing are examples of the picturesque, an aesthetic concept which arose in the eighteenth century as a signifier of beautiful scenes. The bishop is most conscious of the picturesque, for he writes: ". . . we are all much impressed with . . . scene, dress, words and posture not our own, but all *picturesque* and striking . . ." ¹⁶ This is especially portrayed in "Gothic Gateway at Ghazipoor" [Figure 4] which will be discussed in fuller complexity below.

Sara Suleri has demonstrated that the picturesque is a claustrophobic, closed off space, for it forces cultural confrontation into a still life that is anecdotal rather than historical. The Colonial function here is to make culture into memorabilia for metropolitan consumption. The traveler, most especially Heber, perceives himself in terms of a pilgrim and a penitent.¹⁷ The Right Reverend Heber's eye is continually searching for phenomena which he can frame into memorabilia, if not for general metropolitan

¹³ Heber, *The Poetical Works*, 279-280.

¹⁴ Reginald Heber, *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India*, Vol. I (London: J. Murray, 1844), 34-35. Italics mine.

¹⁵ Practical concerns, also, play into the Bishop's fascination, for he completes his comments on these bovines with (ibid.): "It should . . . be a great improvement on the common Indian breed of horned cattle . . ."

¹⁶ Ibid., 176.

¹⁷ Sara Suleri, *The Rhetoric of English India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 75, 82, 89, 103.

comprehension, at least for his wife and English family as he expresses in "Lines Addressed to Mrs. Heber" written during the same episcopal visitations that this paper discusses:

That course, nor Delhi's kindly gates.
Nor wild Malwah detain;
For sweet the bliss us both awaits
By yonder western main.¹⁸

In Figure 3 what impels Mr. Heber to sketch this Palace at Banswara is the picturesque appearing out of the sublime (something I shall say more about later):

I was so much *surprised* to find in such a situation
so large and handsome a place of which I *knew*
nothing before except as one of those states noted
in India for the wildness and poverty of their
inhabitants¹⁹

India, as expressed in lines 42-49 of "An Evening Walk in Bengal," was alien to the British:

So rich a shade, so green a sod
Our English fairies never trod!
Yet who in Indian bowers has stood,
But thought on England's 'good green wood!'

¹⁸ Heber, *The Poetical Works*, 278.

¹⁹ Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, 78 (Italics mine). In the passage (ibid.) immediately previous to the one quoted from the Bishop's text, His Lordship describes the actual entrance into Banswara and its palace: "At last, our path still winding through the wood, but under the shade of taller and wider spreading trees, and over a soil obviously less burnt and barren we came to a beautiful pool with some ruined temples, and a stately flight of steps leading to it, overhung by palms, peepuls and tamarinds; and beyond it, on the crown of a woody hill, the towers of a large castle. This was the palace of Banswara . . ." The Bishop as an artist is best at portraying buildings free of human representation. This aspect of our missionary's art relates to Wendy Steiner's comments that the illustration possesses the facets of the building--a space cut off from nature. Here the building, illustrated by Reginald Heber, is victorious over the forest (jungle) which is continually trying to engulf it back into itself. The Bishop's crude style does represent an early nineteenth-century statement of man's civilization conquering the very viscidities of tropical nature.

And bless'd beneath the palmy shade,
 Her hazel and her hawthorn glade,
 And breath'd a prayer, (how oft in vain!)
 To gaze upon her oaks again?²⁰

Therefore, the picturesque became a pliant and pervasive part of the British repertoire--especially for a traveler such as the prelate. According to Dane Kennedy, "the picturesque was an interpretive mechanism that allowed the British to infuse an unfamiliar geography with meaning" which helped them to communicate much of what they saw as visual pictures.²¹

His Lordship was deeply involved in the Romantic awareness and elucidation of the past.²² This is seen in Figure 4, the "Gothic Gateway at Ghazipoor." In Dr. Heber's description (August/September, 1823) of this structure,²³ besides a visionary fascination with the (European) Medieval Gothic, the Romantic prescience of decay catches his eye. Here the Right Reverend equates this type of architecture to an "Eastern Gothic" making this Indian building meaningful for his Colonial mind in terms of his own (English) cultural heritage.

On the contrary, in "An Evening Walk in Bengal" the terrible in nature is portrayed in the passage of the snake's haunt (lines 21-26):

²⁰ Heber, *The Poetical Works*, 280.

²¹ Dane Kennedy, *The Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 40. Kennedy, further notes (*ibid.*, 44) that the professional artists who turned the drawings of travellers and administrators, etc. into etchings and lithographs often emphasized the picturesque even more than the originals they were working from. This is something to recall when we attempt to evaluate these cultural artifacts. How much were the Bishop's, and how much were the idealization of artists' in London. Without having examined the original drawings, I must leave this to speculation.

²² For a deeper discussion of this tendency among Colonial artists see Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters* (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 1977), 115, 123, 144.

²³ Heber, *Narrative of a Journey*, 153 ends his description of this structure: "The building is in a rapid state of decay, though it still might be restored, and, as a curious and beautiful object, is really worth restoring . . ." presenting an interesting architectural judgement that is based on his cross cultural identifications of much of the Indian environment with the European Gothic which was being popularized through contemporary Romantic literature and thought.

Midst Nature's embers, parched and dry,
 Where o'er tower in ruin laid,
 The peepul spreads its haunted shade;
 Or round a tomb his scales to wreath
 Fit warder in the gate of Death.²⁴

So, from the picturesque we have been led into its opposite, the sublime, which involves the conflicting feelings of fear and rapture as in lines 11-18:

Come walk with me the jungle through
 If yonder hunter told us true,
 Far off, desert dank and rude,
 The tiger holds its solitude;
 Nor (taught by recent harm to shun
 The thunders of the English gun)
 A dreadful guest but rarely seen,
 returns to scare the village green.²⁵

For the British, India's essence was wilderness and disorderly jungle which engulfs human habitation. Note the trees growing out of the roof on the house in Figure 5.

Even more dramatic is Figure 6 drawn during the Himalayan portion of his journeys. Heber records in his journal: "Everything around us was so wild and magnificent that men appeared as nothing, and I felt myself as if climbing the steps of the altar of God's heaven."²⁶ The strong perpendicular frame, drafted within an almost miniature portrait, so popular among the European bourgeois of the nineteenth century, gives the extreme wildness of this illustration a feeling of enclosure.

Further, note how both the majority of our picturesque and sublime examples have been expressed in the panoramic, or as in the poem (lines 73-76):

Enough, enough, the rustling trees
 Announce a shower upon the breeze,
 Assume a deeper, ruddier dye;
 The flashes of the summer sky

²⁴ Heber, *The Poetical Works*, 279.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Heber quoted in Dane Kennedy, (ed.), *The Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 45.

Assume a deeper, ruddier dye.²⁷

Further note in our visual examples how the human has been marginalized to the periphery as insignificant to the picturesque and sublime of nature. This can be seen in Figure 7 and lines 60-61 of the poem:

While to this cooler air confest,
The broad Dhatura bares her breast,
Of fragrant scent and virgin white,
A pearl around the locks of night!
Still as we pass, in softened hum
Along the breezy alleys come
The village song, the horn, the drum.²⁸

But the aesthetics of the sublime became problematic creating an inner need for a "tamed" landscape within the psyche of the British.²⁹ Figure 8 shows how the neat Neo-Classical lines of Europe have been transported to an India with the "jungle" held at bay as in lines 81-84:

But oh! with thankful hearts confess
E'en here there may be happiness;
And He, the bounteous Sire, has given
His peace on earth--his hope of heaven!³⁰

Martin Heidegger argues that art has a *thingly* nature. This *thingly* element is the substructure to art, and poetry--a subcategory within art--has more of the *thinking* aspect within it.³¹ Yet "language is not an object, not a substance, but rather a value . . ." ³² So visual art as *thingly* is a physical object, and can objectify historically whereas the poetic as reflective thinking validates the historic.

²⁷ Heber, *The Poetical Works*, 281.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 280.

²⁹ Kennedy, 44.

³⁰ Heber, *The Poetical Works*, 281.

³¹ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 19-20, 99-100, 197.

³² Frederic Jameson, *The Prisonhouse of Language* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 35.

Further, whereas language creates identity, pictures emphasize the failure of language to achieve reality.³³ My examination of Heber's poetry and art (backed up by his prose) shows a historical consistency and solidarity within Romantic Orientalism of which he was a central child and to which he was a substantial contributor. The creative work of such an important administrator within the colonial project, especially within the subdivision of the missionary project, reveals much about his and the projects' psychological motivations and perceptions of reality which I have discussed in greater detail elsewhere (see note at the bottom of page 1). For the artist *must* be sensitive to the relation between the subject and actual reality. All art is *never* unrelated to empirical reality, yet the arts can only be iconic of such reality.³⁴ Thus, observation of the arts can be used as a tool to help better understand the psychological processes of history.

This article has investigated how an European elite, Reginald Heber, during the third decade of the nineteenth century approached the environment in which he found himself through the picturesque and the sublime: two concepts that were imported from Western Europe and superimposed upon a South Asian setting. In a sense the picturesque was applied to the Indian environment to "tame" it into acceptable patterns to the European mind while the sublime was racially coded and emphasized the Other's untouchability through landscape:³⁵ "Despite all the *revolutionary* rhetoric which was invested in the term, the sublime has, in what we call the politics of historical formation, served conservative purposes."³⁶

Bishop Heber, although a man of his age, possessed an intense personal spiritual awareness towards his own person and his responsibilities; and he expressed these in uniquely Romantic Orientalist terms (lines 71-72):

I know that soul-entrancing swell,
It is--it must be--Philomel!³⁷

³³ Steiner, 107, 142.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 8, 13.

³⁵ Sulieri, 44.

³⁶ Donald E. Peace, quoted in Salieri, 28.

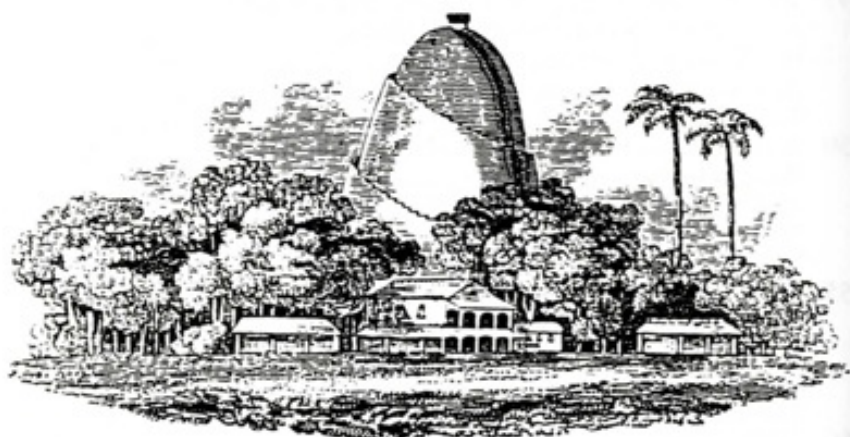
³⁷ Heber, *The Poetical Works*, 281.

AN EVENING WALK IN BENGAL

- Our task is done! on Gunga's breast
 The sun is sinking down to rest;
 And, moored beneath the tamarind bough,
 Our bark has found its harbour now.
- 5 With furled sail and painted side
 Behold the tiny frigate ride.
 Upon her deck, 'mid charcoal gleams,
 The Moslem's savoury supper steams;
 While all apart, beneath the wood,
- 10 The Hindoo cooks his simpler food.

- Come walk with me the jungle through.
 If yonder hunter told us true,
 Far off, in desert dank and rude,
 The tiger holds its solitude;
- 15 Nor (taught by recent harm to shun
 The thunders of the English gun)
 A dreadful guest but rarely seen,
 Returns to scare the village green.
 Come boldly on! no venom'd snake
- 20 Can shelter in so cool a brake.
 Child of the Sun! he loves to lie
 'Midst Nature's embers, parch'd and dry,
 Where o'er some tower in ruin laid,
 The peepul spreads its haunted shade;
- 25 Or round a tomb his scales to wreath
 Fit warder in the gate of Death.
 Come on! yet pause! Behold us now
 Beneath the bamboo's arched bough,
 Where, gemming oft that sacred gloom
- 30 Glows the geranium's scarlet bloom
 And winds our path through many a bower
 Of fragrant tree and giant flower;
 The ceiba's crimson pomp displayed
 O'er the broad plantain's humbler shade,
- 35 And dusk anana's prickly glade;
 While o'er the brake, so wild and fair
 The betel waves his crest in air.
 With pendant train and rushing wings
 Aloft the gorgeous peacock springs;
- 40 And he, the bird of hundred dyes

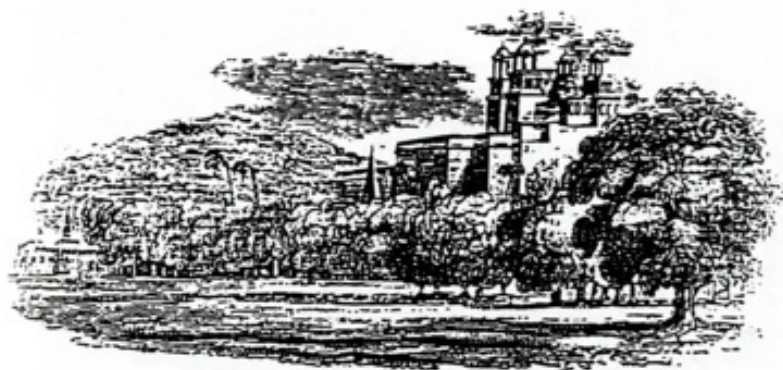
- Whose plumes the dames of Ava prize.
 So rich a shade, so green a sod
 Our English fairies never trod!
 Yet who in Indian bowers has stood,
 45 But thought on England's "good green wood!"
 And bless'd, beneath the palmy shade,
 Her hazel and her hawthorn glade,
 And breath'd a prayer, (how oft in vain!)
 To gaze upon her oaks again?
 50 A truce to thought,--the jackall's cry
 Resounds like sylvan revelry;
 And through the trees yon failing ray
 Will scanty serve to guide our way.
 Yet mark, as fade the upper skies,
 55 Each thicket opes ten thousand eyes.
 Before, beside us, and above,
 The fire-fly lights his lamp of love,
 Retreating, chasing, sinking, soaring
 The darkness of the copse exploring,
 60 While to this cooler air confest,
 The broad Dhatura bares her breast,
 Of fragrant scent and virgin white,
 A pearl around the locks of night!
 Still as we pass, in softened hum
 65 Along the breezy alleys come
 The village song, the horn, the drum.
 Still as we pass, from bush and briar,
 The shrill Cigala strikes his lyre;
 And, what is she whose liquid strain
 70 Thrills through yon copse of sugar-cane?
 I know that soul-entrancing swell,
 It is--it must be--Philomel!
 Enough, enough, the rustling trees
 Announce a shower upon the breeze,
 75 The flashes of the summer sky
 Assume a deeper, ruddier dye;
 Yon lamp that trembles on the stream,
 From forth our cabin sheds its beam;
 And we must early sleep, to find
 80 Betimes the morning's healthy wind.
 But oh! with thankful hearts confess
 E'en here there may be happiness;
 And He, the bounteous Sire, has given
 His peace on earth,--his hope of Heaven!



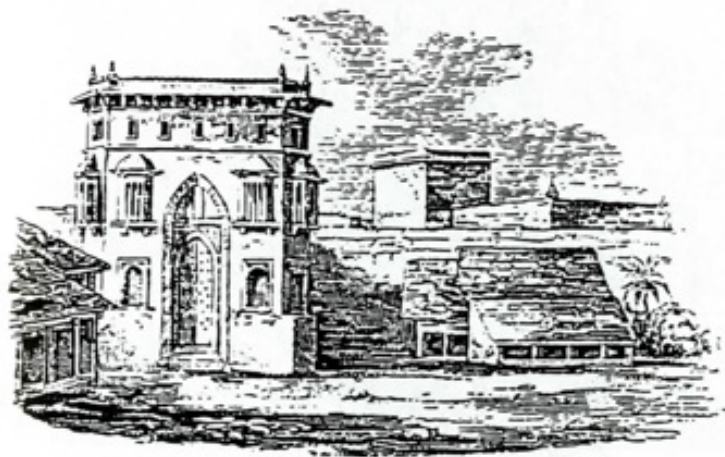
GRANARY BUILT AT PATNA AFTER
THE GREAT FAMINE OF 1777
FIGURE 1



THIBETAN GHYALS IN BARRACKPORE PARK
FIGURE 2



PALACE OF THE MAHARAWAL OF BANSWARA
FIGURE 3



GOTHIC GATEWAY AT GHAZIPOOR
FIGURE 4



THE EKKA CONVEYANCE, MONGHYR
FIGURE 5



CLIMBING THE HIMALAYAS
FIGURE 6



ON THE LEFT BANK OF THE HOOGLI
FIGURE 7



ON THE GANGES IN BAHAR
FIGURE 8

Ethnic and Religious Decoration of Personal Space: Examining Four Muslim Women's Student Apartments

Jeffrey Diamond

Places of residence reflect the people who occupy them. This paper explores the constitution of religious identity created through material objects and decorations. Further, the project argues that the nature of religious and ethnic identities are indistinguishable in residential settings.

Living spaces offer a view into the lifestyle, customs, and practices of individuals. Exploring this concept in relation to Muslims reveals the importance that religious belief and practice plays in their lives. Examining Muslims' living spaces helps us understand various social norms, responsibilities, gender relations, and religious beliefs of different Muslim groups. For example, in Islam the "nature" of the dwelling (*dar* in Arabic) as it relates to religion is addressed.¹ The connection between material culture and the spiritual sphere is also reflected in the way contemporary Muslims define their living space. This paper addresses how four female Muslim students in the United States utilize decor to define their personal domestic spaces.² As Muslims, these students create and decorate spaces designed to appeal both to their ethno-religious backgrounds as well as to those unfamiliar with them. These spaces also act as mechanisms for reminding and fortifying

Jeffrey Diamond will be a graduate student in history at the School of Oriental and African Languages, University of London.

¹ *Dar* is the word for dwelling in Arabic. According to the Encyclopedia of Islam, *dar* is "a space surrounded by walls, buildings, or tents," in B.Lewis, Ch. Pellat, and J. Schacht, (eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (London: Lu Zac & Co., 1960), 113-115.

² The study took place November, 1995 at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA. I am grateful to the four women for providing me the opportunity to view and discuss their apartments. I also want to thank Shafqat for reading over parts of this paper and verifying my analysis of her living space.

Sagar: South Asia Graduate Research Journal 4, No. 1 (Spring 1997): 36-52

© remains with the author.

students' cultural and religious identities in both active and visual ways. With the relationship between identity, space, and material culture in mind, I open with a broad discussion of domestic space. This section is designed to acquaint the reader with general issues concerning the construction of personal space by Muslims. I then examine the construction of personal space by four Muslim students and conclude by discussing the relationship between identity and personal aesthetics in these four cases.

Muslim Houses in Perspective

A recent and insightful work that deals with domestic space in Islam is *The Other Sides of Paradise* by Juan Campo.³ This book begins by relating domestic terms as metaphors to early Islamic text and thought. It uses references from the Qur'an and Hadith (traditions of the Prophet) to define preferences for domestic privacy, hospitality, and ritual activities, among other activities. According to Campo, the Prophet Muhammad's house/mosque in Medina is used as a model for Muslims' dwellings. He also informs us that Muslims call the Ka'ba in Mecca and Sufi and Shi'a spiritual places by names that coincide with the concept of the "house." Campo follows these observations with a case study describing how the *ahl al-balad* Muslims of Cairo use domestic space.⁴

Campo's analysis focuses on how the *Baladi* construct domestic space through three distinct aspects of their lives: interior display, activities, and speech. Examples of the latter two categories include life cycle activities, marriages, death, and ceremonies such as animal sacrifices designed to ensure a home's sacrality. Most relevant for the purposes of this paper is interior display, ranging from amulets hung on walls as protective devices to Muslim pilgrimage murals. The amulets contain Qur'anic

³ Juan Campo, *The Other Sides of Paradise: Explorations into the Religious Meanings of Domestic Space in Islam* (Charleston: University of South Carolina Press, 1991).

⁴ The *Baladi* can be defined as a social group situated between the Western-influenced upper classes and the newly urbanized peasant classes. Campo thinks the *Baladi* are similar to Muslims around the world. He believes that Muslims don't define their dwellings through local culture as much as from specific religious examples, especially Muhammad. Yet, Earl Waugh claims that Egyptian Copts (Christians) use their domestic space in a similar way to Egyptian Muslims (Waugh, Earl. "The Other Sides of Paradise . . .," *History of Religions* 33(1): 95.

verses or God's names in calligraphy. These are often placed in significant places for public viewing. The display of pilgrimage murals bestows a sense of the sacred on the house through the honor and blessing of a Haji's successful completion of the pilgrimage. While these particular murals are specific to Egypt, such decorations may be present in other Muslim homes around the world.

Campo's discussion of the religious and social significance of the home to a Muslim is particularly relevant for the topic under consideration in this paper. Muslim students choose the arrangement and decoration of their home. These choices reflect decisions that are influenced implicitly and explicitly by culture and religion, as well as family customs. However, particularly important in understanding the construction of personal space is that the four female students discussed in this paper live in a predominately non-Muslim setting. This context has ramifications on the design and layout for their apartments.

Studies that examine Muslims living outside their ethnic region reflect how Muslims strive to retain religious and ethnic customs in their notions of the home. During the 1980s, Linda Donley researched Shi'a Gujarati Muslims living in Lamu, Kenya.⁵ Donley specifically examines the relationship between a home, its occupants, its domestic spaces, and its objects used for ritual and casual activities. According to her, the areas near the front of the house are associated with community space and impurity. Shops often are in the lower front part of the house. Donley also observes the influence of Hindu cultural influences in this part of the house. For example, there are Hindu motifs such as lotus flowers on doors to the house. The frequency of motifs vary from the occasional use by Sunni Muslims, to more elaborate use by *Shi'a Bhoras* (a Shi'a group that follows the Seventh *Imam*). All Muslims have Qur'anic inscriptions carved on their door lintels for protection and the doors faced Mecca.⁶

As one moves further inside the house, space becomes more personal and was used for ritual and important family activities. The front of the house is followed by the kitchen which is accessible only to family members and a few friends. Because

⁵ Linda Wiley Donley, "Symbolic Meaning within the Traditional Hindu and Muslim Houses of Gujarat (India) and Lamu (Kenya)," in Durrans, Brian and T. Richard Blurton, eds., *The Cultural Heritage of the Indian Village* (London: The British Museum, 1991).

⁶ For the Shi'a Bohra, their doors face Mecca as if they were in India. The Sunni houses have doors that face Mecca from their actual locale. Donley, 80.

these Muslims do not view cooking as ritual, menstruating women cook and kitchens are located near potentially dirty bathrooms. The bathroom is also located near bedrooms for ablutions after sexual intercourse and cleansing oneself before prayer. As one moves into the innermost parts of the house, families utilize spaces for activities grouped with impurity, birth, death, and sex. These intimate spaces are also the location of the *mihrab* or prayer niche. This section of the house becomes a metaphor for a social system that they attempt to retain abroad.

While studying Sikhs living in the United States and Canada,⁷ Christine Cartwright has also observed that there exist particular preferences for the creation of domestic space:

Selection, arrangement, and use of artifacts and spaces in the home are dominated by cultural and individual attitudes . . . concerns which related to the community often seem to reflect values, symbols, and social ideas which the occupants of the house think as their own.⁸

She concludes that these houses have a arrangement adopted from a South Asian context. For example, these Sikhs use their front rooms for receiving guests and did not want to appear "strange" to their Christian American and Canadian neighbors. However, at the same time, they want their spaces to exhibit their unique cultural character.

Cartwright observes that the three types of rooms, "for information, socializing and eating, for private sleeping, grooming, study, and reflection, and for prayer," reflect a movement toward a more religious and personal area.⁹ As one moves to each section, less "Western" style design and a more Sikh Punjabi character becomes apparent. For instance, the living room would have "Western-style portraits" of the family. Then, as one moved to the dining and sleeping areas, one would find more Sikh art which ranged from pictures of Guru Nanak (the founder of Sikhism) to the Golden Temple. The living and dining rooms also are more adaptable for South Asian audiences--furniture is easily moved for

⁷ Although not Muslim, the Sikh example provides information about South Asian homes. See Christine A. Cartwright, "Indian Sikh Homes Out of North American Houses: Mental Culture in Material Translation," *New York Folklore* 7(1-2): 97-111.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 99.

activities. Cartwright concludes that the houses in the study have the ability to display a unique identity within the larger American and Canadian contexts. Cleanliness, cooking, and connectivity between personal and communal activities are important everywhere in the house. Cartwright comments that even with attempts to appeal to the "mainstream" in which they found themselves, the "non-verbal translation of culture from performative to material and spatial terms does credit to the heritage behind it."¹⁰

Shalom Staub's study of Middle Eastern restaurants in Brooklyn, New York, like those of Donely and Cartwright, reflects points about the varying levels of personal expression and space.¹¹ According to Staub, Brooklyn restaurant owners (who are Arab-American) want to appeal to their non-Arab customers so they consciously do not present a distinct Yemeni culture, but a unified and generic Arab culture in their business spaces. Yet, as one moves into more private areas, like the kitchen, Yemenis prepare food according to local customs, and regional Yemeni clothing replaces standard restaurant uniforms. The workers in the kitchen also play Yemeni music, as opposed to the Egyptian and Syrian music played out in the dining room explaining that, "They (the customers) would say that Yemeni music would sound too plain."¹² Moving further inside these restaurants, one finds that only workers and a few kin and co-villagers from Yemen would enter the back rooms and basement. These rooms have snapshots of their families and villages in Yemen. These back rooms are for eating Yemeni food, prayer, and observing Muslim rituals such as fasting during *Ramadan* (while they feed people in the front dining room). These back rooms also serve to allow "multiplicity of other identifications: as kin and villager . . . as Yemeni, as Muslim, as Arab."¹³ In contrast, the front is a less personal space and designed to be more inviting to non-Arab customers.

While student apartments are not as complicated as a family's dwelling or restaurant, they can be successfully compared to larger households or businesses. For example, students consciously and unconsciously use religious meanings in defining their space--I agree with Campo who argues that to an extent

¹⁰ Ibid., 110.

¹¹ Shalom Staub, "The Near East Restaurant: A Study of the Spatial Manifestation of the Folklore of Ethnicity," *New York Folklore* 7(1-2): 112- 127 .

¹² Ibid., 120.

¹³ Ibid., 125.

religion shapes the way in which Muslims define space. Ethnicity is also another factor in the creation of space--a factor that often intermingles with religious identity, beliefs, practice, and dress. In addition, each student's personal domestic space while growing up also influences the design for their own apartments. Interior display, the first aspect of Campo's analysis, offers unique ways for each woman to openly and subtly display her identity.

As Cartwright, Donley, and Staub illustrate, Muslims living in the United States seek to create a space that appeals both to themselves as well as those who may not understand their religion and culture. Sikh living rooms in the United States and Canada, restaurant dining rooms in Brooklyn, and student apartments are similar as they are all used by different ethnic and religious groups. However, the students also decorate their apartments in a way that personalizes it as their own living space. They often only have one or two rooms in which they live and work, as well as entertain guests. Other factors such as personal taste, interest in various ethnic groups, and personal experience also influence this complex mix.

Student and Environmental Background

This section of my paper examines four Muslim women.¹⁴ Nabeela is an immigrant; Fatima and Najma are international students living in the United States; and Shafqat is a child of immigrants. Three of these women are South Asians. Shafqat is a Pakistani-American who is ethnically Punjabi. Nabeela is a Bangladeshi-American who has lived in Saudi-Arabia for most of her life, but has been in the United States since she began high school. Both Shafqat and Nabeela are Sunni Muslims who read the Qur'an and occasionally pray. Najma has a unique background: She is a Gujarati Shi'a (Twelver) born in Kenya, but has lived in Paris. She does not read the Qur'an, but knows both French and English fluently. Fatima is a Bosnian Sunni Muslim who has recently entered the United States as a student. Her grandfather is an *imam* and a *hajji* (a pilgrim to Mecca). Fatima can read the Qur'an. She states "if I can't do it [pray] during the day, I try to make it up at night."

All women discussed in this paper are members of the campus group Muslim Women's Forum. At the time of this study,

¹⁴ The information about each student's background was obtained from interviews I conducted. I define the students as Muslim because they all consider themselves as such.

they were students at the University of Pennsylvania, a private university in West Philadelphia. There are variations in the types of student apartments: Nabeela and Fatima live on-campus with their own rooms that were a part of a larger apartment; Shafqat and Najma live off-campus, in a studio and one-bedroom apartment respectively.

Methodology

The women and their apartments can be studied utilizing different forms of analysis, and several of these have been included in my categories of observation. These categories form a basic framework of my analysis of each woman's apartment. A brief overview offers a basic outline of certain categories explored; they do not include all the categories or questions that followed initial observation and conversation.

WALLS

"Walls" are the first category of analysis addressed. I looked for the variety of posters, craft-work, and other objects that were hung or placed on walls. With each object, I ascertained and asked about any personal ethnic and/or ethnic-religious connection it may have. All four women place "ethnic" posters and crafts on their walls. "Ethnic" refers to the ethnic group of which each woman was a member (i.e., Bengali, Punjabi, etc.), or to a group for which subjects hold interest from contact and/or study.

FLOORS, FURNITURE (GENERAL), AND BEDS

This category involves examining the layout of the apartment. I was interested in how and where the women interacted in their apartments. In particular, I considered where each woman prayed, entertained guests, how space was utilized for work and personal activities, and what was displayed on the floor and bed and whether it was decorative, functional, or both.

SHELVES AND OTHER AREAS OF DISPLAY

I observed what each woman displays on shelves, desk tops, table tops, and other similar surfaces. Common items on display are family pictures, pictures of friends, and general ethnic-religious objects. I was also sensitive toward important objects kept on the

shelves. Books for class are common features on shelves, as are religious objects such as a Qur'an.

CLOSETS AND DRAWERS--A MORE PERSONAL SPACE

I observed and inquired about belongings in closets. If a closet was closed, I asked about objects inside and requested to view them briefly. For instance, I wished to know if they had "ethnic" dresses for important religious holidays and events. I also noted other items not openly displayed.

SOME QUESTIONS AND PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

In addition, I asked the four students to compare their apartments to their family homes, how they interacted with people in their apartments, and how they felt about their apartments. Finally, it should be noted that I personally know all three South Asian women, while Fatima was a recent acquaintance.

Analysis and Evaluation

The work of Campo, Donley, Cartwright, and Staub offer several ways to examine the students' apartments. Campo's emphasis on decoration forms one basis for perspectives in this paper. The other three studies provide information about relationships between decoration, domestic space, and individuals. These investigations help us understand two important trends exhibited in the students' apartments: First, that ethnic identity plays a large part in decoration choice and activities within the apartment, and second, all four students have interest in cultures of which they were not members--an interest displayed through decoration.

ETHNIC IDENTITY, RELIGIOUS IDENTITY?

Attempts to distinguish between ethnic objects and religious objects is a difficult task. It is incorrect to state that an object void of ethnic connotations is Islamic or Muslim. It is also difficult to say when an object or practice is not Muslim.¹⁵ Islam

¹⁵ Mark Woodward makes the point that he (a non-Muslim) cannot make a decision of who/what is Muslim because of the theological issues involved. Muslims themselves differ on the question of what is "Muslim," and simply relying on the Qur'an as a basis for a decision regarding this issue can be a mistake. See Mark Woodward, "The *Slametan*: Textual

as practiced is a combination of local, regional, and universal ideals.¹⁶ Islam adapted to specific ethnic situations as it expanded beyond Arabia, and continues to adapt as it spreads today.¹⁷ Thus, local ethnic culture has always influenced the practice of Islam, and this is reflected in the apartments analyzed in this paper. All the women discussed in this paper have notions of Islam that are somewhat broad and, in their views, ethnic culture is defined through interpretation and practice. Accordingly, distinctions by the women between local/general and religious/ethnic meanings are unclear at best. The following sections aim to illustrate this point.

ETHNIC-RELIGIOUS DISPLAY

Ethnicity and religion play an important part in the construction of each woman's personal identity, and is reflected in all their living spaces. Ethnic identity, following Staub, can be understood as "a statement of relations, the recognition and articulation of cultural similarities and differences in any culturally-plural setting."¹⁸ A meaningful way to explore ethnic and religious identity is through symbols; indeed, ethnic-religious decor provides important symbols for us to examine. National and

Knowledge and Ritual Performance in Central Javanese Islam," *History of Religions* 28(1): 62.

¹⁶ An interesting method of approaching Islam is offered again by Woodward in his article *The Slametan*, 87-88. He analyzes Islam using four different levels. These include Universalist Islam (Qur'an, Hadith, and required rituals), Essentialist Islam (not required but practiced--including the Prophet's birthday), Received Islam (how the above two are practiced locally), and Local Islam (local traditions-interpreted through religion and culture, and shaped by both). This paper takes into account the importance of different levels of practice.

¹⁷ A good example of the adoption of a former religious practice that became an important Muslim practice is found in Iran. There, *sofreh* votive rituals from Zoroastrian religious traditions are used by Muslims, but with different religious and gender connotations. See Laal Jamzadeh, and Margaret Mills "Iranian *Sofreh*: From Collective to Female Ritual," in C.W. Bynum, S. Harrell, and, Richman, eds. *Gender and Religion: On the Complexity of Symbols* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986). Another example involves African-American converts to Sunni Islam. Personal research reveals the influence African-American Baptist culture has had on the interpretation and practice of Islam. For example, the use of gospel music to Allah instead of Jesus in Philadelphia, 1995.

¹⁸ Staub, 115.

regional links are prominent when one evaluates the objects in each woman's apartment. These connections are two significant ways in which the women express their ethnic and religious identities.

Links to their parent's original countries are important facets of ethnic decoration. This is particularly true for Nabeela and Shafqat. Nabeela displays a poster from "a tourist shop in Dakka," that contains scenes of the city. It serves to remind her of Bangladesh and also presents a glimpse of the country for non-Bangladeshis. Other items linked to her Bangladeshi heritage are a block print cloth bedspread and a jute prayer rug by her bed. Shafqat displays many items from Pakistan, her parents' country of origin. She has a small Pakistani flag that hangs from her closet door which serves to remind her of both her South Asian Muslim background and nationality. She also has a number of Pakistani items such as marble objects, carved wood containers, and a thin rug with geometric designs by her bed. Shafqat rarely specifies which region of Pakistan these items came from because they were brought from Pakistan for her by others. The one region she does mention is Punjab, and specifically the city of Multan.

Fatima has a keen interest in her national identity. She associates being Bosnian Muslim with "Turkish" culture (Ottoman-Turkish may be more correct), and she discussed Turkish-Bosnian culture at great length. For instance, I found myself in a conversation with her about "Turkish" clothing when I inquired about any ethnic-Bosnian dress. Much of this Turkish-Bosnian culture is not in plain sight because Fatima states she "didn't bring much" from Bosnia. She does however display pictures of Sarajevo and other Bosnian cities. With further questioning, I found several items in her closet, such as a veil, that she considers Turkish.

Regional cultural decoration was also important for these women. Fatima displays a general interest in Western Europe that she developed while in Bosnia. For example, she has a Monet poster on her wall, along with other general items. Shafqat and Nabeela have tapestries, carpets, and craft work from South-Asia in general. For these two women, South Asian items tend to blend with the items from their specific nationalities. For instance, Shafqat has pillow covers from India. She believes, "whatever is culturally closest to me is important," as long as it does not have "Hindu connotations . . . like a Krishna figurine." Nonetheless, she recognizes both Hindu and Muslim influences in her "culture." Nabeela also owns a variety of items she describes as "South Asian." Interestingly many of the items openly displayed are not Bangladeshi, but "Indian." For instance, she hangs a stitched, cloth tapestry with four pockets on her wall. She uses it as

a CD holder. Nabeela's regional emphasis is embedded in the belief that Bangladesh forms part of a larger South Asian cultural area.

This South Asian interest does have its limits. Like Shafqat, Nabeela does not want to associate with specifically "Hindu" decoration from South-Asia. However, Nabeela separates Hindu culture in a more active way.¹⁹ The emphasis on this separation is a result of interactions with Hindu-dominated South-Asia society which made her question her presumptions on ethnic-religious activities and decoration. In some cases, Nabeela may have successfully found South Asian Muslim objects. For example, she has a paper-mache bell from Kashmir. With Kashmir's large Muslim population, Nabeela assumes the bell has a Muslim-cultural connection. Yet, such an assumption is unclear with the Indian-made CD holder. Shafqat and Nabeela interpret their importance under a Muslim framework. With these ideas in mind, one sees that Nabeela and Shafqat switch between national and regional identities often causing distinctions to be murky at best.

Najma has a unique identity as a Gujarati Muslim whose family has not lived in India for generations. She does not have any items that she identifies as Gujarati. She refers to South-Asian items as generally "Indian." For example, she identifies a cloth shower curtain on her wall as "Indian." When asked where it was from, Najma's first response was "Urban-Outfitters" (a local store that sells clothes and home furnishings). She also owns an Indian block print tapestry purchased at Urban-Outfitters. Najma makes the connection to Urban-Outfitters rather than the country where the two textiles are produced. She purchased the textiles merely because she likes them. However, Najma may have liked the two items because they was "Indian."

Through the material objects, the women exhibit the diversity of their ethnic backgrounds. Fatima and Najma come from complex environments as international students who previously lived in multicultural settings abroad. These diverse settings may explain why Fatima and Najma display fewer objects from their ethnic-religious background. According to Fatima and Najma, their families did not have many objects displayed on walls that could be called Bosnian (Turkish) Muslim or Gujarati-Muslim respectively. Najma's family in Paris did not construct a clear

¹⁹ For example, Nabeela told me that she does not like or have incense because she believes that it is a Hindu custom. Shafqat uses incense regularly and does not view it as a Hindu custom. She says that "they even have it in Mecca."

Gujarati or Indian identity. Her apartment has few items that she claims (or wants to claim) as Gujarati or Indian. Fatima's life is more complicated because she has lived in Sarajevo for the past few years while it was under Serbian attack. However, her family's main form of decoration was Arabic calligraphy. As a result, she wants calligraphy for her room in Philadelphia. In contrast to Najma and Fatima, Shafqat and Nabeela come from homes where ethnic-religious identity is well represented in decor and their choice of decoration.

The women further illustrate that there are no clear boundaries between national and regional identities. Nationality itself is quite unclear. For example, Shafqat maintains national Pakistani identity via contacts with Pakistani-Americans from all regions of Pakistan because ethnic and regional variation is less evident among Pakistanis in the US. Simultaneously, Shafqat asserts a pan-South Asian identity, as long as it does not interfere with her Muslim beliefs. Nabeela maintains both Bangladeshi and South Asian ethnic ties through the decor displayed in her room. Shafqat and Nabeela's decor illustrates that a "culturally plural setting" (to quote Staub) influences their construction of ethnic identity. With a dearth of South Asian Muslim communities in the general population of the area, they look toward a larger South Asian identity.

RELIGIOUS-ETHNIC

For purposes of this paper, I conflate Muslim and ethnic items. I place an emphasis on religion in this section while continuing to integrate these two categories. This general category is perhaps overly-emphasized, but is adopted from a body of research emphasizing Universal Muslim objects.²⁰ How these particular items are used and interpreted in local ethnic contexts also help interrogate the concept of ethnicity. The four women all have religious-ethnic items, but they also express difficulty in separating the two.

Items with specific religious meaning include the Qur'an, of which each woman owns at least one. Shafqat, Nabeela, and Fatima all keep their Qur'ans on a high shelf, as Shafqat states that a Qur'an should not "be near your feet." Shafqat also has a special cover for her Qur'an. She and Nabeela both own a Yusuf Ali version in Arabic and English. One of Shafqat's most important possessions is a "baby Qur'an" kept on her dresser.

²⁰ The notions about Universalist or Normative Islam adapted from Woodward (see footnote 16) are a part of this section.

Shafqat keeps the baby Qur'an to display its religious significance; the print in this baby Qur'an is too small to read. Fatima has several Qur'ans. She purchased one Qur'an in July 1995 (Arabic and English translation) at an Islamic fair on Penn's Landing, Philadelphia; one was given to her by an American friend (only in English); and her primary Qur'an is in both Serbo-Croatian and Arabic. Najma keeps her Qur'ans on a lower shelf, lying on top of other books. She has an English translation of the Qur'an for a class, along with the Yusuf Ali translated version of the Qur'an in Arabic and English.

Quotes from the Qur'an also have Muslim links. Yet, a *sura* (chapter) displayed in a special way may have ties to a particular country where it was made. Fatima, Nabeela, and Shafqat all have *suras* and *ayas* (verses) of the Qur'an displayed on stickers, mirrors, wood, and/or stitch work. Nabeela had the *aya* "If you believe, you will conquer" stitched in calligraphy on cloth that she brought from Saudi Arabia. She defines this article as ethnically Saudi Arabian, but also includes it in the more general category Muslim. Fatima has several different displays. She said "we [Muslims] can't have pictures of humans, so we have . . . calligraphy." Calligraphy (in Arabic) is her major association of art with Islam. Thus, items she considers Muslim include a carved wood block, shaped in the form of a candle (to represent the light of God) engraved with the words Allah and Muhammad in calligraphy. She also has *Sura Ihlas* quoted in English, and has asked Nabeela to bring back calligraphy from Saudi Arabia for her. Shafqat has *ayas* on a sticker and one on a mirror by her bookshelf. She also has a *sura* for protection on the window of her car.

Culture clearly plays a part in defining the religious meaning of particular items. *Suras*, and their display (as well as those of *ayas*) often have links to particular ethnic groups. Even with the Qur'an, one of the most significant Muslim objects, ethnic identity becomes a factor in deciding which translation to use. Najma, Shafqat, and Nabeela all have a version of the Qur'an that was translated into English by a South Asian translator. This "South Asian" version of the Qur'an by Yusuf Ali is widespread among the South Asian-American Muslim community. The commentaries which accompany the *ayas* provide an uniquely South Asian interpretation. Fatima's most important Qur'an is the version in her native Serbo-Croatian. Thus in the case of these four students, their Qur'ans and translations reflect cultural links to regional or local ethnic groups.

The above discussion illustrates that the construction of what is local, regional, and Muslim is complex. Najma perhaps

represents this dilemma best. When asked why she considers her home to be Muslim, Najma responded "Muslim! I guess I have a Qur'an . . . shawls, and my bookshelf has Islamic art, but that could be considered Middle Eastern too." Najma identifies several items when asked what is Muslim, but each also has ethnic connotations. All four women have difficulty distinguishing ethnicity from religion, even as Nabeela tries to separate South Asian Muslim cultures from Hindu cultures.

INTEREST IN DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS

Each woman expresses interest in several different cultures through the decoration of her apartment. Interests stem from both academic studies and cultural interaction. The multicultural settings in which each woman lived prior to their stay in Philadelphia influenced their interest in varied ethnicities as well. Religious links also helped them develop interests in other ethnic groups. Interests were formed both prior to and during their residence in Philadelphia. Najma provides an excellent example, as she has traveled and lived in different areas of the world. Najma visited Ethiopia as a volunteer and worked with local villagers who made her a stitched piece of cloth that resembles a hat. She has a painting from Jamaica and several French impressionist paintings on her walls. Nabeela lived in Saudi Arabia most of her life, and some Saudi culture is present in her apartment. For example, she hangs a Saudi veil from one of her shelves. Shafqat also has posters from local galleries on campus depicting different ethnic groups. These posters have no direct connection to her Pakistani-Muslim identity. One poster, in particular, was from an exhibit of Native-American carpets.

Several women also display items from Muslim ethnic groups of which they were not members. A poster in Shafqat's apartment has a "Muslim" connection as it was for an exhibit of Palestinian (along with Israeli) artists. Shafqat's interest in Muslim culture is exhibited in her calendar in which different Muslim ethnic groups and their art are featured every two months. Besides owning the same calendar, Nabeela also has several items traceable to other Muslim ethnic groups. Such items include the Saudi veil, along with calligraphy from Saudi Arabia, that she views as Muslim and Saudi Arabian.

There are further reasons the women discussed here are interested in other groups as displayed in their apartments. For example, they may have found the object aesthetically pleasing. Fatima hangs a tapestry purchased at Urban-Outfitters which she thinks was made in India and shows little interest in any Muslim

connections it may have had; instead she was just fond of it. The influence of a multicultural setting is enormous; the appearance of multiple ethnic groups and their art has had a keen effect on all of the women. The interest in Muslim ethnic groups reflects the power of Islam to incorporate various groups from different parts of the world.

Concluding Thoughts

What conclusions can we discern about these four women's identities? All four have unique decorative styles that display their identity. Shafqat and Nabeela appear very certain about their identity as South Asian Muslims: both display crafts from South Asia, along with *suras* and other items that specifically link them to being Muslim and South Asian. Najma's identity is a combination of the cultural roots and places where she lived (not all of them Muslim). Consequently, she has an eclectic mix of items in view, including Italian ceramics and Indian tapestries. As with the Punjabi Sikhs in Cartwright's study, Najma, Nabeela, and Shafqat all display their ethnic Muslim identities within the larger context of American identity.

However, Fatima's case is rather different. She appears less personal with her presentation, and openly concerned with appealing to others. She was a new student at the time of this study, and did not want to appear too different from other people. Fatima said she is "flexible," and even moved to another apartment because she smokes and the people in the old apartment did not smoke. Her feeling can best be summarized by her "flexibility" with guests and suite-mates. Fatima stated that she feels her carpet is dirty because people walk on it with their shoes; but, she is not comfortable asking guests to take off their shoes because she does not want to leave a bad impression. While Fatima is adapting to her new surroundings in the United States, her room does not reflect the strong connections between decor and identity that Shafqat's or Nabeela's rooms illustrate for us. Fatima would argue, however, that she did attempt to overcome some of her timidity and find some decorations that she considered Muslim (such as the wood-carved candle with Arabic inscription).

A comparison of Fatima, Nabeela, Najma, and Shafqat suggests several reasons for Fatima's timidity. Unlike Fatima, Nabeela is not a first year student and has lived in dorms for many years. Nabeela's two suite-mates are her friends. These friends have their own ethnic identity displayed in their rooms and the suite's common room (unique to Nabeela's situation). Nabeela's contribution to the common room includes a Bangladeshi block

print table cloth as well as a sofa cover. Najma, a third year student who interacts with many kinds of people, is also bolder in displaying her identity. Najma presents most of her decor in the entrance room to the apartment. She does have some decor in her bedroom, including an Indian tapestry. Shafqat is a person who eagerly conveys her personality and identity in person as well as through her apartment. She uses the space of her large efficiency to its fullest extent, even displaying two posters of European artists in her bathroom. An interesting item Shafqat has in her bathroom is a *lota* (watering can), used to both water plants and cleanse the body. She kindly asks people to take off their shoes when they enter her apartment. Shafqat, along with Najma and Nabeela do not limit their decoration to the bedroom area. They display ethnic-religious and other decoration for all visitors to see (including places such as the bathroom).

In discussions, each woman indicated a link between her apartment's decoration and her family's houses. Fatima's interest in Arabic calligraphy stems from her natal house, where they have "lots of calligraphy." Her own room in Sarajevo had Bosnian paintings, but she could not bring them with her to the United States. She even likes to sit on the floor as her grandparents typically do in Bosnia. However, she finds this act more comfortable than "cultural." Shafqat states that overall her apartment is similar to her family's house. Those similarities include certain decor aspects, such as the three rugs she brought from her house. She also insists on the importance of cleanliness and not wearing shoes inside the apartment. Fatima and Nabeela subtly indicate similar links. Najma simply states that her family's Parisian house was "oriental" (referring to her conceptions of the Middle East) in interior design.

According to Staub, the interactions between different groups is an important factor in the definition of ethnicity. The four women discussed in this paper define their ethnic-religious identity through interactions with people they consider similar and different to themselves. Nabeela attempts to distinguish between Islam and Hinduism in South Asian culture. However she still maintains a South Asian identity that includes most other South Asians. Yet, interactions also have positive consequences. Fatima and Najma's varied identities are an outcome of their diverse backgrounds and residence in multicultural settings prior to arrival in the United States. The decoration of their rooms illustrates this point well. In addition, for all four women, an overall Muslim connection provides a basis for identity as the sharing of decoration is present. For instance, Nabeela will be purchasing Saudi calligraphy for Fatima.

Decoration has provided an engaging method to approach the way these four Muslim students construct their ethnic-religious identities. However, these women also seek to create an area that reflects personal tastes. A variety of aspects influences the choice of decoration amongst these four women. The articulation of space for a Muslim is complex and involves underlying factors that cause her to utilize space in a certain way. These factors, which illustrate the diverse nature of Islam, include ethnicity, personal attitude, and multicultural settings. There are no spaces which are simply "Islamic" or "Muslim," but a variety of Muslim spaces are prevalent throughout the world. The women in this paper provide us with a glimpse into their own personal spaces as Muslim students in the United States.

Book Reviews

Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens, and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860, R.H. Grove. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Pp. 540.

Environmentalists have been among the wide variety of contemporary critical theorists who have, in different ways, questioned the continued viability of the relations established between human beings and nature over the last four hundred years. We are concerned that the exploitative practices characteristic of modernity have led us to a crisis of global proportions, that the Earth can simply not support all the demands made upon it by humans. We have also, in casting about for answers to the question, "how did we get here?" asked what role European colonial expansion played in creating and perpetuating the global imbalances that exacerbate environmental crises, particularly in the "third world." Along with histories of past or impending ecological devastation, activists and academics have also written accounts of the origins and development of environmentalist concerns. In the case of India, these have been primarily social histories of state-sponsored land, water and forest management, and of the more or less organized efforts of local people to resist or adapt these policies to their own benefit. Vandana Shiva's polemical work is well known in this context, as are the more historical inquiries of Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha.

Richard Grove addresses similar questions, and his book is a magisterial history of environmental ideas, of the development of the "global environmental consciousness which emerged in the context of European colonial expansion." He argues a powerful thesis: The colonial experience--"the destructive social and ecological conditions of colonial rule"--was central to the formation of western environmental attitudes and natural sciences, as was the diffusion of "indigenous, and particularly Indian, environmental philosophy and knowledge into western thought and epistemology after the late fifteenth century." In Grove's account, the origins of modern conservationism lie in the European realization of the drastic impact their mercantile and colonial practices had on tropical, particularly island, environments, as also in their contact with local "classifications and interpretations of the natural world and its symbolism." Indigenous systems of natural knowledge taught colonial surgeons and botanists many of the taxonomies that were important to scientific knowledge in the early modern period.

Similarly, by the mid-seventeenth century, a number of colonial operations had begun to suggest a contradiction between the high short-term profits demanded by colonial capitalist practices (particularly plantation economies) and the fragility of overexploited environments. Colonial administrators responded with policies of land management that took a longer-term, conservationist view. As has been documented in a number of cases, such intervention also allowed the colonial state to define and establish its social and political authority over both local people and western merchants and planters. As warfare and the expansion of fleets demanded sustainable sources of good wood, forest management practices (some co-opted from those already put into effect by local rulers) were instituted. As with the enclosure of common land in eighteenth-century England, the development of colonial forestry had great social consequences for those people who lived off the land, whose traditional economic and forest-utilization arrangements were disrupted in the process.

While Grove writes primarily of developments in the colonial period, he is aware that ecological transformation was often effected by pre-colonial states and populations, particularly as agriculture developed. In a chapter on "Edens, islands and early empires" he sifts historical evidence of environmental degradation and conservationist responses that go back several thousand years, and plausibly suggests that archetypal Garden of Eden myths may have originated in the desiccation of lush natural landscapes of the fifth to fourth millennia B.C. that resulted from climatic changes but also from deforestation and soil erosion caused by early urban societies. Indeed, one feature of Grove's method is that he takes seriously evidence from literary, mythic and religious texts in order to understand the complex relations between the evolution of human societies and their natural environment. Closer to our time and place, Grove argues against any understanding of the pre-British period in India as an "ecological and pre-capitalist golden age of common property rights and sustainable resource use." He suggests instead that transitions in the nonarable Indian environment can be traced earlier, and that processes of forest annexation and management (including the forcible removal of peasants) were also initiated by the successor states to the Mughal empire.

There is much else of consequence in Grove's book that cannot be discussed here. He writes of the importance of isolated island environments like St. Helena and Mauritius to the symbolic and economic discourses of colonialism, and of the fact that colonial political control allowed scientists and administrators (and he provides detailed intellectual and professional biographies of

some of these figures) to use these colonies to experiment with botanical gardens, social forestry and water management. Throughout the early modern period, as Europeans expanded their control over the globe, they came into contact with local systems of knowledge, and from this forced interaction came the modern forms of the natural sciences and conservationism. To take only a single, potentially revisionary instance, Grove shows how, in south-west India, Portuguese and Dutch physicians assimilated local practices and knowledge and transformed the European *materia medica*. Of particular interest is the fact that the medico-botanical insights they gained came not so much from Arabic or Brahminical systems of knowledge as from the practices of local, lower-caste herbalists and doctors. Grove's book is thus rich in information and implication for students of colonial discourses, who will recognize the non-Brahmin epistemologies in the construction of key systems of modern knowledge.

Suvir Kaul

Stanford University

Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization, Arjun Appadurai. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996. Pp. 229.

In *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Arjun Appadurai builds on the seminal texts of global cultural studies, for example Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1989), Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983) and Homi Bhabha's *Nation and Narration* (1990). He offers a fresh and prescient look at the condition of the cultural in these "resolutely global" times. Stepping beyond parameters of literary criticism and comparative politics, Appadurai scrutinizes the formation (and deformation) of nations and nationalisms through the "lens of the imaginary," arguing that the "work of the imagination" is more effectual than state bureaucracies, postcolonial polities or new market colonies for understanding the organization and definition of modern subjectivities. In a time when the nation-state has entered a "terminal crisis," he argues, "we can certainly expect that the materials for a post-national imaginary must be around us already" (p. 21).

Where are these materials? Not in land, language, religion, history or blood, but in mass media and migration. Writing against primordialist arguments that locate national cultural differences as isomorphic and territorial, Appadurai stresses the role of electronic media as an increasingly disjunctive and transnational arbiter of new cultural spaces he calls "diasporic public spheres." These spheres include: the newly democratic South Africa; diasporic conversations about racial justice in Africa, the United States and the Caribbean; the emergence of "global Hinduism;" environmentalist activist movements; women's issues and human rights; as well as transnational separatist movements among Sikhs, Kurds and Sri Lankan Tamils. Appadurai cites these cases as proof that the "era in which we could assume that viable public spheres were typically, exclusively, or necessarily national could be at an end" (p. 22). It is precisely within this "altogether new condition of neighborliness"--a topography of global cultural flows categorized by Appadurai as ethnoscapas, mediascapas, technoscapas, finanscapas and ideoscapas (p. 33)--that a new ethnography may emerge.

Appadurai combines the volatility of Lila Abu-Lughod's writing against culture with poetics and politics of James Clifford and George Marcus' writing culture to argue that only "cosmopolitan ethnography" can resist the "inert, local substance" of anthropology's previous point of leverage: "sightings of the savage" (p. 65). Working toward a reflexive and

historical critique of locality vis-à-vis anthropology, Appadurai assembles a dizzying catalogue of near-and-dear ethnographic signposts--symbol and sign, rite de passage, consumption and gift-giving, *la longue duree*, cultural reproduction, memory, habitus, the body, ethnicity, imagined community. This catalogue is not precisely what Appadurai argues for as the "human version" of the chaos theory--his "fractal metaphor" for a new ethnography (p. 46). The full-caliber of his argument comes not simply from occasional asides to Saussurian linguistics or the Frankfurt School, but rather is found in those chapters where the analyst becomes the anecdote. In chapters 1, 3, 5 and 6 Appadurai cleverly subjects himself, as well as fables of the everyday (i.e., cricket, census-taking, swimming-in-grits, Mira Nair's films), in an animated and admirably transgressive format. Here we see film, fictive, autobiographical and ethnographic voices distilled as a fitting referent to his central argument: the work of the imagination is, and should be, both "the stuff" and voice of ethnography.

While it is not precisely clear why Appadurai describes fantasy and imagination as contrary in the first chapter (the two are more analogous than opposed to this reviewer) and while the terms "cannibalize" (p. 39), "postblur blur" (p. 51) and "cosmopolitanism" (p. 49 and p. 64) remain similarly mysterious, he vigilantly and creatively maintains theoretical continuity throughout his wide-ranging text. Also, while many of the book's individual chapters have been previously published, Appadurai does add new insights to the original publications. For example, chapter one is entirely new and makes an excellent introduction to the book's theme of crises of locality and modernity. Rather than arguing for an end-of-anthropology, it is a clarion call for savants of the cultural to wake up and smell the global. In addressing the question "what is the nature of locality as a lived experience in a globalized, deterritorialized world?" Appadurai critically expands upon earlier public dialogues with Sherry Ortner found in *Comparative Studies of Society and History* vis-à-vis the crisis of place in anthropology. Significantly, Appadurai argues that a fresh approach to the role of the imagination in social life makes room for new critiques of the naturalization and fetishization of culture, allowing for more "dimensional," less "substantial" and not so "resolutely localizing" (p. 55) global cultural studies.

Kristy Bright

University of California, Santa Cruz

Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in a South Asian World, Carol Breckenridge, ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995. Pp. 261.

Carol Breckenridge, in *Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in a South Asian World*, presents thoughtful voices that address the embattled arena of twentieth-century Indian culture. It consists of a variety of essays that fuse together a series of lively debates involving actors and interests in recent discourse on public culture. According to Breckenridge and Arjun Appadurai, such discourse in the context of late twentieth-century India creates a "contested terrain" (p. 6):

The actors and interests in the [public culture] contest are a variety of producers of culture and their audiences; the materials in the contest are the many cultural modalities--sport, television, cinema, travel, radio, and museums . . . and the methods, increasingly shared by all parties, involve the mass media and related mechanical modes of reproduction. What is at stake in the contest is, of course, no less than the consciousness of the emergent Indian public (p. 6).

Narrowing *Consuming Modernity's* insights merely to the "consciousness of the emergent Indian public" (p. 6) would be a mistake. The text acknowledges (with enthusiasm I might add) that the perspectives it provides are not simply valid in local contexts, but also have global implications.

The two sections of essays in *Consuming Modernity* examine the *genealogy* of complex Indian historical processes. Together they focus on social and political interests that struggle to use modernity and its products in a competitive, shifting, and evolving market of public culture.

In the first section, Arjun Appadurai, David Lelyveld, Barbara Ramusack, and Frank Conlon focus on the historical past and its relation to modernity in contemporary India. Frank Conlon's argument that the development of a restaurant culture in Bombay is a response to the social and economic pressures of work, leisure, status, taste, demand, and opportunity is particularly fascinating. His discussion of restaurant-goers as both the audience and shapers of public culture adds a new patina to the economic philosophy of preferences and needs.

In section two, Sara Dickey, Rosie Thomas, Phillip Zarrilli, and Paul Greenough discuss the historical present. Particularly noteworthy, is Sara Dickey's contribution "Consuming Utopia: Film Watching in Tamil Nadu" which is a rich description of urban poor and how they access the luxuries of public culture through the fantasies of middle and upper-class movie makers. Her ideas, which reflect the influence of Adorno and the Frankfurt school, address both the appeal and significance of Tamil films as commodities. This analysis is made particularly poignant by the fact it does not treat these films as sterile commodities of mass production, but rather as mechanisms for evoking particular forms of aesthetic experiences.

If *Consuming Modernity* lacks anything, it is a forceful discussion of the Frankfurt School's idea of *bad taste* and how it effects Indian public life. Cross-culturally, this phenomena is aimed at lowering the standard of consumers' appetites through mass media and its products. A thoughtful examination of this process in the context of South Asia, which contains a potentially deep analysis of brutish manners and violence, would augment this fine text. Despite this small demerit, *Consuming Modernity* is a rich text that contains insights for specialists and generalists alike. It is an important contribution to contemporary debates on public culture, and as such, should not be overlooked.

Stan Faryna

Catholic University

Graduate Student Profiles

Occasionally we spotlight several graduate students in this section. The purpose is to advertise student research and fields of study and to allow others doing similar work the opportunity to contact these students. If you would like your profile to appear in our next publication, please send the following information:

NAME
MAILING ADDRESS
EMAIL
PHONE
DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION
MINOR FIELD
MAJOR FIELD
AREA OF FOCUS
MASTER'S TOPIC
DISSERTATION TOPIC

BRIGHT, KRISTY. University of California at Santa Cruz,
Anthropology
Address: bright@sirius.com
2916 Hillegass Ave.
Berkeley, CA 95705
Phone: (510) 848-2070
Major: Cultural Anthropology
Area of Focus: Medical Anthropology, Transnationalism
Dissertation Topic: Turning Leaves: Politics of Change in Unani
Medicine in India

DIAMOND, JEFFREY. School of Oriental and African Studies,
University of London
Address: jdiamond@midway.uchicago.edu
17 Northcote Drive
Melville, NY 11747
Major: North Indian Cultures and Languages
Area of Focus: South Asian social history--gender studies and
family history, with particular reference to North India and
Pakistan.

FARYNA, STAN. Catholic University

Address: sfaryna@aol.com

3002 S. Manchester St.

Fallschurch, VA 22035

Phone: N/A

Major: Philosophy

Area of Focus: Ethnicity, Politics, Diaspora

Dissertation Topic: Black and Right: An Ethnography of Black Conservatives in America.

RANA, JUNAID. University Texas, Austin, Anthropology

Address: junaidr@mail.utexas.edu

Department of Anthropology

University of Texas at Austin

Austin, TX 78713

Phone: (512) 471-0586

Major: Social Anthropology

Area of Focus: South Asia, Middle East, Religious Ideology, Diaspora, Ethnicity

Master's Topic: Political Community of Immigrants in the United States

SUBMISSION AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Submissions

Submissions should be no more than 6,250 words (approximately 25 double-spaced pages) on any topic dealing with South Asia. Please include full footnotes and bibliographies according to the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th ed.; do not use parenthetical references. Contributors are encouraged to submit their articles either on diskettes or by email. Printed or typewritten articles are also accepted; 8.5" by 11" paper is preferred. Authors must include their names, addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, email addresses, titles, universities and year in graduate school (if appropriate). All relevant information must be provided in order for submission to be considered. Authors shall retain copyright if their article is selected for publication. However, by submitting an article, authors grant *Sagar* permission to publish it. Contributors should refrain from seeking other avenues of publication until *Sagar's* selection process is complete.

Illustrations and photographs should be submitted unattached; all accompanying captions should be type-written on a separate page (do not write on the pictures). Tables may be included in the body of the text.

Books for review and correspondence concerning reviews should be sent to the editor.

Sagar will accept submissions year-round. Authors will receive notification of acceptance in March for the spring issue and October for the fall issue.

Subscriptions

An individual annual subscription for bound copies is twenty-five U.S. dollars. Institutional subscriptions are thirty U.S. dollars. For overseas subscriptions, add five U.S. dollars per order. Please make checks payable to *Center for Asian Studies*.

A subscription to the electronic version is free. A Discussion Group is also available to all of our electronic subscribers. Comments will be limited to criticism and analysis of articles presented in the journal. Send an email message with a blank subject line and this body:

subscribe sagar-journal

subscribe sagar-journal-discussion

to majordomo@uts.cc.utexas.edu and you will receive a message informing you of your subscription and further instructions.

Sagar is also available on the World Wide Web at the following URL:
<http://asnic.utexas.edu/asnic/sagar/sagar.main.html>