

**RELIGION IN THE MAKING OF A REGION:
Perspectives from Gujarat**

Wolfson College, University of Oxford, 16-17 July 2010

Religion is being varyingly discussed as a source of radicalisation, as also human development and well being. Certainly, it continues to be an important factor in South Asian societies and polities. Our workshop will explore its multidimensional influence in the making of a region- Gujarat, western India. A hub of Indian Ocean trade networks for centuries, Gujarat has seen rich interaction between Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Parsis and Christians and their sectarian traditions. This complex history is being erased today, as neo-liberal growth is accompanied by increasing violence against religious minorities under a Hindu nationalist government. We aim to produce a unique narrative by delving into several thematic areas, viz. religion and politics from the late Mughal period to contemporary times, religious communities and the making of the region, caste and community today, religion as faith and religion as identity, religion in the economy and development, and religion on the margins. Our aim is not to reify religion, but to highlight its role in the producing, sustaining and sometimes endangering of Gujarat.

This event is generously supported by Oxford Development Studies, the Oxford Department of International Development, the Political Studies Association (UK), the Asian Studies Centre at St Antony's College and the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Oxford University

Publication partner- South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies, Routledge, Editor: Ian Copland

Registration is essential. If you would like to attend, please contact the workshop organiser- Dr Nikita Sud at nikita.sud@qeh.ox.ac.uk by **25 June 2010**.

Charges for day delegates: £38, additional charge for workshop dinner on July 16: £30

Accommodation can be arranged in Wolfson College on a Bed and Breakfast basis for £50/person. Bookings can be made through events@wolfson.ox.ac.uk

Programme

Friday, 16 July

1.45: Welcome and introduction, Haldane Room

2.00-3.30: Session 1, Haldane Room

Chair: Dr Shabnum Tejani, SOAS

- a) Samira Sheikh, Department of History, Vanderbilt University
Taming the Goddess: Religion and Governance in Late Mughal Gujarat
- b) Teena Purohit, Department of Religion, Boston University
Epistemic Shifts: Gujarati Islam in the Early Modern and Colonial Periods

3.30-4.00: Coffee break

4.00-5.30: Session 2, Haldane Room

Chair: Ornit Shani, Haifa University

- c) Suchitra Sheth, Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology, Ahmedabad
The Tangled Web of Religious, Caste, Community and Gender Identities: Partition and Gujarat
- d) Farhana Ibrahim, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
Following the goddess: religion and the unmasking of a region

5.30-6.00: Coffee break

6.00-7.30: Session 3, Haldane Room

Chair: Harald Tambs-Lyche, University of Picardie-Jules Verne

- e) Edward Simpson, Department of Anthropology, SOAS
Popular Hinduism and the earthquake in Kutch
- f) Carolyn Heitmeyer, Department of Anthropology, University of Sussex
Religion as practice, religion as identity: Sufi dargahs in contemporary Gujarat

7.30: Drinks- Private Dining Room

8.30: Dinner- Buttery

Saturday, 17 July

9-10.30: Session 4, Haldane Room

Chair: Nikita Sud, University of Oxford

- g) Vinayak Chaturvedi, Department of History, University of California at Irvine
From Peasant Pasts to Hindutva Futures: Religion and Identity in Postcolonial Gujarat
- h) Radhika Desai, Department of Political Studies, University of Manitoba
Gujarat's Hindutva of Development

10.30-11.00: Coffee break

11-12.30: Session 5, Haldane Room

Chair: Rachel Dwyer, SOAS

- i) David Hardiman, Department of History, University of Warwick
Christian Faith Healing in Southern Gujarat
- j) Rohit Barot, Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Bristol
Migration, Diaspora and the Swaminarayan Movement in the new Millennium

12.30-1.30: Lunch- Buttery

1.30-2.30: Concluding Discussion led by Session Chairs, Haldane Room