

BIO NOTES AND ABSTRACTS
MULTIDISCIPLINARY TRAVELLING SEMINAR – EXPLORING MASCULINITIES

The Play of Masculinities in Religion and Violence

By Shail Mayaram

BIO:

Shail Mayaram is (from February 2002) Visiting Senior Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. She is the author of *Against History, Against State: Counterperspectives from the Margins* (New York: Columbia University Press, special series on History and Anthropology, edited by Nicholas Dirks, forthcoming); *Resisting Regimes: Myth, Memory and the Shaping of a Muslim Identity* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997); and has coauthored with Ashis Nandy, Shikha Trivedi, Achyut Yagnik, *Creating a Nationality: The Ramjanmabhumi Movement and the Fear of Self* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995). She is a member of the Subaltern Studies editorial collective and is presently editing, *Subaltern Studies* vol 12. She is currently engaged in a project on Communities in interaction: Discourses of Conflict, Conversion, and Coexistence. Cross-cultural Perspectives on Asiatic Cities, 2000-05, supported by the Ford Foundation.

ABSTRACT:

Among the critical questions of our times is the relation between religion and violence. A further question is whether masculinities and patriarchies have implications for contemporary inter-ethnic violence. An examination of these questions takes us on a journey through the historical process to the ways in which the feminine has been conceived in different religious traditions and through dramas of the relation between religion and politics. I will begin with laying out the field in terms of the play of masculinities in the religions of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism (homogenizing, for purposes of my argument, what are vastly heterogeneous universes of theory and practice) and move on to a discussion of pre-modern and modern masculinities in India, specifically the sources of violence in warrior ideologies that relate to ideas of honour/dishonour. I will attempt to demonstrate how genocidal violence occasioned by the partition of India and contemporary religious nationalism is the theatre of the logics implicit in certain assertions of masculinity as they are mirrored in current debates about history and identity in the public sphere.

Occupying Middle Spaces: The Stree Party Actor in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Marathi Theatre

BY Urmila Bhirdikar

BIO:

Lecturer at H V Desai College Pune. M Phil In English. Second post-graduate degree in Sociology. Published works include: 'Pitru-satta' a translation into Marathi of essays on patriarchy, 'Mahapur' a translation into English of a play by Satish Alekar, 'Satsar' a translation into English of two texts by Jotirao Phule (forthcoming), and 'My Life' by Alladiya Khan Sahab (translation and critical introduction in collaboration with Amlan Das Gupta), research and scripting for a video-documentary on Pandit Mallikarjun Mansur. Associated with Aalochana: Documentation and Research Centre on Women, Pune. Classical singer, training with Pt Rajshekhar Mansur for the last 10 years.

ABSTRACT:

The performance of Vishnudas Bhave's Seeta Swayamvarakhyana in 1843 marks the beginning of modern Marathi theatre. The royal patronage ending in a few years, Bhave turned commercial in 1853, and with this began the age of Company Natak, continuing to be the dominant theatrical mode until 1930s when it received a set back with the popularity and growth of the Cinema industry in Maharashtra. The practice of female impersonation adopted in the very first play continued and became the norm and the dominant practice alongside a much underrated presence of women actors. The stree party actor became the centre of theatrical activities with every theatrical phase producing its "Star Heroines".

In my paper I read into this history, focusing mainly on the post- 1880's Sangeet Natak This is replete with both success stories of the stree party actors and debates on allowing 'real women' to act on stage. The processes by which impersonation was conceived not only as a theatrical convention but also as a desirable mode of producing the images of womanhood reveal the masculinist discourse of the period in which gender

hierarchies are defined and prescribed. The genre evolved as an art form suitable for the consumption of an elite/ middle class and uppercaste audience. In this genre the impersonator functioned in a middle space, caught in the exploitative position and anxieties within the framework of male sexuality and simultaneously, because of the social and aesthetic sanction, the impersonator became the virtuoso artist and an effective agent of defining and determining the feminine. While impersonation operates here as a recuperative measure, it uses contradictory markers of femininity: the visual image of woman is excessive, often bordering on the image of a "seductive" woman, and at the same time her thematic and narrative location is that of the "respectable" woman.

The case of music, however, was different. Theatre music in Maharashtra developed in a variety of forms, classical and semi-classical and non-classical. However, the classical forms were dominant. Reading this in the history of the late 19th and early 20th century musical practices it can be seen that the gender demarcation in music affected the development of theatre music.

In my presentation I will attempt to articulate and demonstrate with examples from recorded music how the femininity of 'feminine' forms was presented through 'masculine' 'gharanedar' forms.

Queering

Gender

BY SHALEEN RAKESH

BIO:

Shaleen Rakesh holds a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Mumbai. He is currently the Project Co-ordinator with the Naz Foundation(India) Trust. He is a Member, National Secretariat, 'Affordable Medicine and Treatment Campaign' for People Living with HIV/AIDS. He recently conducted a skills building workshop to train NGO's and CBO's in South Asia to work with MSM at the 6th ICAAP, Melbourne, Australia in October, 2001. He has extensive experience in training and advocacy on HIV/AIDS and MSM issues.

ABSTRACT:

The formation of gay/queer identities across the world (including India) has presented a unique opportunity to examine mainstream/popular culture through a gender lens in ways that offer fresh perspectives.

One of the first things people ask me as a gay activist is whether Indian society is homosocial or homophobic. The answer is its neither, or rather, it's both. We are tolerant with behavior and intolerant with identity. In fact, all identities besides the hetero-patriarchal in India are disadvantaged. Misogyny is as much an offshoot of this as homophobia is.

India is sexophobic before it is homophobic. Even within homophobia, there is a hierarchy that advantages men over women and divides on the basis of class and economic status. It creates a social climate in which some queers are more equal than others. It also serves to silently and conspiratorially reinstate the institutions that oppress us.

Many Indian gay men tend to stay 'in the closet' with not only their sexual identities but even their gender identities. Many never get the opportunity to experience, even lesser express, the complexity of their gender construct. This is a hugely missed opportunity. The opportunity to challenge polarized gender constructs. The opportunity to reinvent the definitions of man and woman. Finally, the opportunity to proudly acknowledge and display the androgynous in all of us.

Every form of oppression perpetuates the other. Its true, that for a majority of queer Indians, there are seemingly, other preoccupations, more important than sexual identity. The family structure, the middle-class morality, the culture of guilt and shame, the inevitability of marriage and procreation, to highlight a few.

In this context, it is also sometimes argued, whether making sexuality an 'identity issue' is more detrimental to the Indian social fabric than anything else. Many people are supposedly 'happy' with not making sexuality issues central to their life's journey. This rule, seems to me, works differently with straight men than with others. The heterosexual Indian male (consciously or subconsciously) subverts the affirmation and assertion of any identity that challenges popular Indian social hierarchy. Today, women and gay men are at the forefront of this challenge.

If Indian gay men were to mainstream their otherness, the entire society stands to benefit. Masculinity, as we understand it in its popular representations, is a highly fragile construct, highly guarded and fearful, requiring heavy duty daily maintenance. The paper will attempt to explore all these concerns.

Gendering Childhood: Masculinity and Reading

By Deeptha Achar

BIO: Deeptha Achar has worked on popular boys fiction of late nineteenth century Britain for her Ph.D dissertation. Her current research interests center around education and childhood in India. She teaches English at MS University, Baroda.

ABSTRACT:

The central premise of my paper is that a characterization of masculinity in identitarian terms rather than as a process would impoverish attempts to understand masculinity. My account of the gendering of childhood in mid-nineteenth century Britain would examine the historical and political context for the emergence of masculinity as a locus of interest and inquiry. Examining masculinity as it is played out in the genre of adventure, I attempt to show that reading is implicated in the construction of colonial boyhood. I argue that this was a process which involved questions of class and race as much as masculinity.

CONSTRUCTING AND PERFORMING MASCULINITY

BY SHOHINI GHOSH

BIO:

Shohini Ghosh is Reader, Video and Television Production at AJK Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. As Visiting Associate Professor (1990-1996) at the Department of Communication, Cornell University, USA, she has taught courses on *Gender, Media and Representation and Video for Development and Social Intervention*. She has conducted training workshops on gender and the media for different organizations in India and Bangladesh including UNICEF, Dhaka. In 2001 she was a Globalization-MacArthur Scholar at the *Globalization Program* at the University of Chicago. In addition to her work on the media and popular culture, Ghosh works on issues of speech and censorship, sex work and sexuality.

ABSTRACT:

Through the use of films and visual representations, the presentation attempts to break the synonymity of masculinity and the male subject by discussing masculinity as both construction and performance. In this instance, masculinity will be displaced from the male body through an engagement with masculinities performed by the female body.

Female masculinity in Tamil folk Myth, The story of Alli, the Queen
By KANCHANA

BIO:

Secured Ph.D degree from Delhi University in Indian philosophy in 1990. Published articles in various journals on women's issues as well as philosophical issues. Currently working on the Tamil folk tale, "The story of Alli" Teaches philosophy in Daulat Ram College since 1979. Awarded post doctoral fellowships by the Commonwealth and Wellcome Institutes. Also working on the biography of the Tamil siddha and alchemist Ramdev alias Yakoob of 16th century.

ABSTRACT:

The paper deals with the construction of masculinity from the female point of view as found in Tamil folk legend of Alli, the invincible queen and her kingdom, Arjuna falls miserably in love with her, but Alli, refuses to marry him or any man, she establishes a female kingdom where all the portfolios are given to women, in a sense Alli is seen as combating the male world in a female form with "masculine" behaviour, this point will be highlighted in the paper.

Concerns and Insecurities

Growing up as a man in Keralam

By Santhosh Kumar, K.C.

BIO:

Completed B.Sc. from Sree Kerala Varma College, Thrissur in 1987 and since then working as an eco-political activist. From 89 to 96, was part of the media group called Alternate Communication Forum, New Delhi which made documentaries and feature film on socio-political issues. Past four years working as the Co Ordinator of Campus Circle which is part of SMILE network. Campus Circle work with youth in Keralam

ABSTRACT:

This personal account comes out of a struggle to understand Kerala society and its young men. It is also an attempt to understand, from where does violence against the other - towards both women and men - originate and in the end becomes self destructive originates. As an activist working with youth for the past few years in Keralam, I feel deeply concerned, anxious and sad about the way young men who are moulded by various social and political forces into violent selfish morons. Kerala is a glorified area for the progressive socio-political movements and achievements, in this paper I go down memory lane to understand those bits and pieces many in the audience will recognise as elements that shaped us. Definitely all these are related to one's own struggle for change in this time, era and place.

KING OF DREAMS
A DOCUMENTARY BY
AMAR KANWAR

BIO:

Amar Kanwar is an independent documentary film maker working from New Delhi for the last ten years. He has directed several documentaries for broadcast in this period and worked on issues of health, ecology, labour, politics and education.

His 'A season Outside' was awarded the Golden Gate Award at the 1999 San Francisco International Film Festival and the Golden Conch at the Mumbai International Documentary Film Festival. Recipient of a fellowship from the MacArthur Foundation in 1998, he used the fellowship to support this film.

Synopsis Most of life is like walking on a thin line, everything out of control and yet precariously one walks in a semblance of normalcy.

King of Dreams took about two years to make and was a big risk and experiment for me. How do you make a film about sex, about physical penetration, about desire and obsession? I did not want to spill people's guts out, enter real lives and open wounds... no pity, no guilt, no autobiographical wallowing, no dramatic untold story...and yet this also has to be a story about love and power, gentleness and brutality, pain and justice.

How to represent on film secret moments and scattered thoughts of different individuals and experiences? Each thought with its own picture, each picture with its own offspring, seemingly unconnected vectors but also making sense when together...just like in real life. Is it possible to construct on film multiple territories for diverse audiences?

Several intimate zones were entered and exited in the search for the one thin line that ran through many different identities... trying to create a simple story where we all can find the spaces that are hidden within us.

MAJMA & WHEN FOUR FRIENDS MEET
TWO DOCUMENTARIES
BY RAHUL ROY

BIO:

Rahul Roy did his masters in Film and TV production from the Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi in 1987 and since then has been an independent documentary film maker. Over the years his films like Dharmayuddha, Nasoor, Invisible Hands Unheard Voices, Khel, When Four Friends Meet... and Majma have focused on issues related to communalism and gender. Currently he is working on a series of documentaries on the theme of masculinities under a fellowship awarded by the MacArthur Foundation. Besides making documentaries he has been writing and conducting workshops on masculinities in the South Asian region.

MAJMA (PERFORMANCE), 54 minutes, 2001: Aslam sells medicines for sexual problems on the pavements of Meena Bazaar in near Jama Masjid in Delhi... Khalifa Barkat presides over an akhara in the adjacent park and puts a group of young men through the moral and physical grind of wrestling... Through the park and the market pass hundreds of men every day... Majma explores the instability and insecurity of working class lives and its impact on male sexuality and gender relations.

Majma has been made under a fellowship from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

FESTIVALS:

- Yamagata International Documentary festival, Japan in Oct, 2001
- International Documentary Film Festival (I DFA), Amsterdam in Nov, 2001
- Munich International Documentary Film Festival, May, 2001
- Cracow International Film Festival, Poland, 2001
- Goettingen International Ethnographic Film Festival, Germany, 2001

WHEN FOUR FRIENDS MEET...
43 Minutes, 2000

When four friends meet... they share with the camera their secrets... sex and girls; youthful dreams and failures; frustrations and triumphs.

Bunty, Kamal, Sanjay and Sanju, best of friends and residents of Jehangirpuri, a working class colony on the outskirts of Delhi are young and trying to make their lives in an environment which is changing rapidly... girls seem to be very bold... stable jobs are not easy to come by... sex is a strange mix of guilt and pleasure... families are claustrophobic... and the blur of television the only sounding board...

The documentary is part of a South Asia based project under which four films have been made in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal exploring masculinities. The films are being extensively used by groups in south Asia working on gender issues to generate a discussion on masculinities.

FESTIVALS:

- Special Screening at the United Nations, New York
- Munich International Documentary Film Festival
- Hawaii International Film Festival
- North-South International Film Festival, Geneva
- Hot Springs International Documentary Film Festival, USA
- Goettingen Ethnographic International Film Festival, Germany

**THE VIRGIN AND THE PROSTITUTE: AMBIVALENT MASCULINITY IN THE LIFE OF SUFI BABA
BY DEEPAK MEHTA**

BIO:

Deepak Mehta teaches at the Department of Sociology, Delhi University. He completed his PHD from Delhi University in 1991. In 1998 he was awarded the Charles Wallace Fellowship for post doctoral work. He was a visiting research fellow at the Queens' University, Belfast, Ireland. He has also been a visiting Assistant Professor at the Department of Anthropology, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA. In 1997 his book *Work, Ritual, Biography: A Muslim Community in North India* was published by OUP. His other publications include:

1. *The semiotics of weaving*, 1992
2. *Circumcision, Body and Community*, 1996
3. *Writing the Riot*
4. *Circumcision, Body and Community*, in T.N.Madan edited *Muslim Societies in India*
5. *Circumcision, Body Masculinity: The ritual wound and collective violence*, in Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele and Pamela Reynolds (eds) : *Violence and Subjectivity and Community*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

**SHIFTING WORK/SWITCHING GENDER: Masculinity, effeminacy and work
By Dr. Radhika Chopra**

BIO:

Dr. Radhika Chopra teaches at the Department of Sociology, University of Delhi. She has written extensively in the area of gender studies with a focus on masculinities. Some of her publications include:

- *Retrieving the Father: Gender Studies, "Father Love" and the Discourse of Motherhood*, In Liddle, J. and Wright, C. (Eds) *Journal of the Womens' Studies International Forum, UK*. Special Issue. Vol. 24, No.314, 2001, pp.445- 455.
- "Encountering Masculinity: A Methodologica Dilemma" In Chopra, R., Osella, C. and Osella, F., (eds). *South Asian Masculinities: Change and Continuity*, New Delhi: Kali.(Forthcoming).

Her recent seminar papers include:

- "Knowing Men: An Ethnographer's Dilemma"
One-Day Panel on 'South Asian Masculinities'
16th. European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, University

of Edinburgh.

- "Father Love and Mother Care"

Department of Women's Studies, University of Warwick.

"Growing up Male: Ethnography from a North Indian Village"

South Asia Seminar Series, University of Manchester.

- "Retrieving the Father: Motherhood, Gender Studies and "Father Love".

Women's Studies Network Conference on Women and the Millennium:

Gender, Culture and Globalisation, University of Warwick

ABSTRACT:

Masculinity as an object of sociological and anthropological study has a relatively recent history. One area where "masculinity as object" appears, but is not necessarily addressed, is in ethnographies of work and the gendered division of labour. However, even in the literature on work masculinity has often appeared as a phantom presence, expressive of power. This "appearance" is peculiarly disembodied, and tells us very little of how the work contexts are experiential locations for men. Conversely, there is more attention paid to women's labour in the gender literature on work. The phenomenological contexts of work, the power relations imbued in and through work, the embodied nature of particular categories of work that "produce" tropes of femininity or within which the idea of female-ness reside have been well explored for women. Changes in the gendered character of labour markets over periods of time have documented the entry of women into "male" oriented occupations and the responses and perceptions to these shifts.

How have men perceived shifting labour relations? How has the fact of structural adjustments within global and local economies affected the working lives of male workers? Similarly, when men have "entered" occupations that are defined by their feminine orientations (as nurses, strippers, hairdressers or domestic labour, for example) how have such shifts been experienced? Have shifting patterns of work re-worked gender relations?

In this paper I seek to explore some of these issues to understand how such movements and transitions offer insights into the construction of masculinities. I draw on the emerging literature on masculinities which argues that work and its performance embodies masculinity and further contends that for men "work" is central in producing gendered identities.

I will address this growing literature on men's work and the division of labour in framing male gendered identities. While much of this work is located within contexts of post-industrial, post-capitalist societies of the "west" it has nevertheless generated a set of issues related to the performance of work by the "opposite" gender. Thus the question of male nurses, or male strippers among others, produce questions of the performance of masculinity and the establishment or loss of gender identities. Equally relations between workers raises the issue of maintaining boundaries and a gendered sense of self.

In the second part of the paper, I will move away from the post-capitalist western orientation within the literature, into a non-western ethnographic location. In this section I will look at the way in which male migrants, moving into village economies of the north Indian state of Panjab, perform work that in local and village cultural classificatory systems are oriented toward the feminine. The ethnographic description is important for framing the questions I seek to explore though the course of the paper - mainly - how does the experiential context of work rework gender boundaries. How is the performance of women's work by men perceived and experienced by different men (employers and migrants) and women, who often work alongside migrant men. I will outline in some detail the acts of work performed by migrants, and their location within cognitive categories, as well as the sense of transgressions that migrants-as-workers and migrants-as-men convey to Panjabi village folk.

In the final section of the paper, I question the completeness of these transgressive reversals implicit in the performance of work, and ask if the challenge to "hegemonic" structures of gender is simultaneously "limited" by strategies deployed to *reaffirm* the divisions of gender, labour and work and gender identities. Engagement with work and its performance constitutes a dialectic that dislocates while simultaneously affirming and consolidating gendered and gendering tropes.

Retrieving the Father

By Dr. Radhika Chopra

ABSTRACT:

In this paper, I seek to examine the concept of “**father love**” to address the issue of muting the figure of the nurturing father within the gendered discourse of childcare. I re-examine “classic” ethnographies within the discipline of anthropology and then move to explore the concept as represented and elaborated within popular films which have global and local contexts. Issues of fathering and father care developed through visual media and child care practices, I argue, enable a reinscription of fathering and masculinity. It is through such reinscription that “phallogentric” masculinity is challenged and by an emergent alternative and the relation between women and mothering is redrawn. I also show that the shift is not one that seeks to reestablish “paternity” as a legalistic right, but rather, to claim and entitlement to parenting and in the process create a nurturing masculinity and retrieve the father.

**Lathee hee mard ki pehchan hai*:
Men, Masculinity and Domestic Violence
By NATA DUVUURY**

BIO:

Dr. Nata Duvvury, the Director of the Social Conflict and Transformation Team at the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), specializes in research on gender in development, with focuses on macroeconomics, credit, and social welfare. Currently, her work focuses on domestic violence and includes the design and direction of a large research project in India. The first phase of the project included a multi-site survey of nearly 10,000 households and an examination of institutional records and responses to violence. A second phase of the project, which is now underway, includes an exploration of the links between masculinity and violence, an evaluation of women-initiated community level responses, and the development of a media campaign. Dr. Duvvury is an economist by training with a Ph.D. from Jawaharlal Nehru University

ABSTRACT:

Internationally there is growing recognition that if we are have meaningful efforts to end violence against women it is imperative to involve men in such efforts. Men should not viewed as only perpetrators but as critical allies in developing and sustaining efforts responding to the enormous impacts of gender violence on women, men, families, communities and society at large.

International Center for Research on Women has undertaken a fairly comprehensive research program on domestic violence in India in order to provide empirical estimates of the prevalence of domestic violence, deepen the understanding of the factors associated with violence, identify patterns and trends in domestic violence, and document and distill lessons from the range of on-going efforts.

The research established that domestic violence is high (nearly 50% of women surveyed reported experiencing physical and psychological violence in their marriages), universal (women of all ages, education levels, and regions reported experiencing violence) and normative (nearly 58% said that it is normal part of the marriage). More disturbingly, the research highlighted that domestic violence is not private but is well known to natal and marital families as well as neighbours.

This acceptability of domestic violence needs to be challenged – by giving voice to women to raise the issue in public/community forums and by engaging men directly in dialogue on this issue. Thus ICRW it was imperative to understand men’s own attitudes to violence and their norms of masculinity to begin exploring the linkages between masculinity and domestic violence.

In the current research focusing on men we find that there is a high level of reporting by men of the violence they have perpetrated on their wives. Nearly 72% of the men reported that they engaged in behaviors of emotional violence, 40% in control behaviors, 40% behaviors of physical violence and 50% behaviors of sexual violence in the last 12 months. The violence reported by these men was not single isolated incidents but were repeated occurrences. Further a significant proportion of the men engaged in multiple forms of violence.

What is men's understanding of their own manhood or of ideal masculinity that may explain this high level of reporting of violence being perpetrated by them? Clearly men did not perceive themselves as being "violent". What do men see as essential characteristics of masculinity? How do they understand power and control? Are there and differences between men who reported violence and men who did not report violence? These are some of the issues that will be explored in this presentation.

* ***It is the stick which provides man with an identity***

Masculinity in Hindi Cinema: Notes towards a Tentative Genealogy

Jatin Wagle

BIO:

Jatin Wagle teaches at the department of English, SIES College, Mumbai and has been engaged in doctoral research on Adorno's writings on culture. He has worked as the assistant editor of *New Quest*, and his areas of interest are Cultural, Translation and Masculinity Studies and Aesthetics

ABSTRACT:

Many recent genealogies of postcolonial Hindi cinema appear to phrase it in terms of the problematic of the nation using Gramscian categories viz. the national-popular. In such histories the postcolonial hero emerges as the central actor on the national-social scene, and his negotiations with his psycho-social dilemmas seem to constitute the discourse of the nation as well as the dominant paradigms of masculinity.

Three broad phases are discussed in some of these genealogies based on the narrative of the postcolonial nation. The first phase of Hindi cinema of the 50s and 60s, seen as that of the emergence of the national-modern, can also be viewed in terms of the manifestation of the postcolonial-masculine. In the films of this period the postcolonial dilemma of tradition and modernity that the masculinity navigates is rendered moral or quasi-moral. The fabric underlying such predicament is the theme of the movement from the countryside to the metropolis and in some cases, the reverse movement of the mofussil gentleman from the city or the township to the village. These movements between the pastoral-rural and the commercial-metropolitan delineate the choices that the masculine self needs to make vis-à-vis his social environment. The masculinity that emerges from the resolution of such crises is an upper caste masculinity of restraint and denial.

The second phase of the cinema of the 70s and 80s has been characterised as the 'political' period, the stage of the crisis of the national-modern. The disenchantment with the highbrow modern-moral-masculine is articulated through the surfacing of a lumpen-masculine. The urban criminal or aggressive masculinity is represented against a backdrop of social conflict of class/caste or ethnic/religious identities, and the underbelly of the metropolis is explored through an embattled masculinity. Hence, the masculinity that comes to the fore in this phase is that of transgression and excess.

The third phase, i.e. the cinema of the 90s, understood in terms of the emergence of the global-modern, can be viewed as a moment that sought to resolve the crisis of the national-modern. The consumerist-masculine that surfaces at this stage is a global performer with a national-traditional feminine other. NRI-masculine can be seen as the product of a process that has been described as the 'Bollywoodisation' of Hindi cinema. Thus, the moral/political dilemmas of the earlier ages appear to have been dissolved in a marketplace that prettifies the metropolis and renders the masculine guiltless.

Broadening the links between Gender and Poverty with a Masculinities Perspective

Ranjani K.Murthy and Sabrina Sunderraj¹

ABSTRACT:

¹ Paper prepared for the Traveling Seminar on Masculinities organized by AAKAR in Trivandrum. The authors would like to acknowledge that this paper has benefited from a larger study they are doing which has been initiated by UNICEF-Regional Office of South Asia on *Regional Mapping of Initiatives in Gender and Masculinities*

Issues of poverty have always received attention from international agencies and national governments since the 1950s. There are two major changes in the discourses around poverty now when compared to the 1950s. The main strategy advocated for poverty reduction in the 1950s was land reforms, while now economic growth supplemented with targeted self-employment and wage employment programmes are seen as the panacea to poverty. Yet another difference is the attention paid to gender issues within poverty debates. It is now well recognized that women and girls bear disproportionate burden of poverty, face poverty in gender specific ways, and (being more concerned with family welfare) play a key role in poverty reduction. However, the gender and poverty debates and agendas have predominantly focused on the impact of social construction of femininities on women's poverty. The links between gender, masculinities and poverty of women and men have not received the attention they deserve. This paper argues that attention to this aspect is equally important to understand poverty of women, of men and of households, and to evolve effective strategies for action. It also points to several ways in which issues of masculinities can be integrated within poverty reduction strategies in the context of South Asia.

MY MASCULINITY-LIFE AND EXPERIENCES

By Sadanandan C

BIO:

Born at Alleppey district in Kerala in 1964. Writing and directing plays in Malayalam. Making video films, paintings and involving with human rights activism in Kerala.

ABSTRACT:

The experience of power comes to life at different stages and levels of life, with variations in intensity. I enjoyed the privilege of boyhood. The beginning of teenage exposes boys to various experiences and jokes tinted with sex by adults. This kind of teasing has got all the characteristics of heterosexuality. In fact, these attitudes were violence based on gender difference. The gender difference between man and man cannot be defined under a common title. So as far as man is concerned the gender difference is between man and man and woman and man

The family system in which every member has to suffer under the tyranny of father figure and however great it might be must be questioned. The fascism is not only the State but also the people around us with power.

Awareness of sexuality begins in adolescent boys by realizing themselves as sex objects of adult men. Adult men say male sex should be technique to conquer women. So male sexuality is win over women.

My generation has not taken initiative for a political renaissance in Kerala. But the issues and conflicts of women, Adivasi, Dalit, working class and environment have been increasing. At the same time conservative right, left and communal parties don't bother about these conflicts at all in Kerala.

Masculinity: (Some Thoughts)

By Maithreyi Krishnaraj

BIO:

Dr. Maithreyi Krishnaraj has been teaching and doing research in women studies for the last twenty five years, in India and abroad. She has published many books and has been active in the women's movement. Her work spans a number of areas, largely interdisciplinary. Feminism, feminist theory, philosophy and development issues. She has an MA in economics from Delhi School of economics; diverted to education (MS in education from New York with a special interest in personality theories); taught for a few years, classes in economics, later in college of education finally securely planted herself in 1975 in women studies at SNDT women's University earning a Ph.D. in sociology. She retired as Professor and Director of the Research Centre of Women's Studies, S.N.D.T University. Presently engaged in research projects and some teaching. She is the series editor for 'Theorising Feminism in the Indian Context' and guest edits the Review of Women Studies for the Economic and Political Weekly.

ABSTRACT:

We think of masculinity and femininity as inextricably linked with being male and female. Maleness and femaleness we attribute to 'biology' while the sense of being man or woman we have been arguing is social and cultural. According to psychologists, sexual identities are made up of three kinds of directional tendencies:

1. sexual orientation (gay, straight or bisexual)
2. style of behaviour (tom boy woman or gentle home maker; macho man or new man)
3. Core gender identity

In most of us all three point in the same direction. The core gender identity is located in the brain, between the ears, not between the legs. A tiny structure inside the hypothalamus influences whether one feels like a male or female. It is larger in males and in women who 'feel' like men (though they have a female body); smaller in women and in men (with male body) who feel like women. This finding only pushes the question further of what determines 'core' identity. Most genetic females feel 'female' while genetic males 'feel' male. Yet chromosomes are unlikely to carry specialised gender genes that rigidly fix the direction because if it were so, transsexuality would run in families. Exposure to high levels of male hormones during fetal stage makes females behave tomboyishly but they still 'feel' female.

The message is that our core gender identity is resistant to 'biology' and is open to social manipulation. Gender awareness as opposed to sexual orientation begins very early and by the age of two, is already settled. Seeking answers in biology is a doomed quest for what emerges is the disturbing insight into how open to social manipulation we are. Scientific research concentrates on freak cases- ambiguous anatomy cross dressing, disturbed gender identity etc.

Granted that core gender identity is fixed early, we have a range of behaviour, traits, etc that vary across cultures. What is 'manly' in one may not be so in others but yet there are broad agreements on some characteristics. Masculine and feminine are variously conceived of as either

- i) polar attributes, mutually exclusive
- ii) as complementary
- iii) as fragmented which need fusion for a whole personality

The emphasis on difference obscures a whole range of behaviours, characteristics which are human and same for both men and women. Traits really are in a continuum. At one end may be submissiveness at another may be aggressiveness. There is greater variation within each group than across each group. Androgyny is an approach that argues that both men and women must have both qualities. In practice, the feminine is considered necessary for men (nurturing, receptivity etc): rarely the other way. Most saints adopted feminine stances. Only under exceptional circumstances is the Virangana acceptable. Religious mystics talk of transcending gender altogether through higher levels of consciousness.

In every day life, gender stereotypes have a powerful influence. Masculinity-femininity is not just a matter of 'difference' but there is hierarchy built into it. The concept of male/masculinity carries with it domination that is at the same time bolstered by social institutions-property rights, family structure, law, politics etc structure man-woman relations hierarchically where men have more social power.

One of the troubling things about the definition of the male /manhood as dominance gets reflected in violence against women. As a man, he has the right to be obeyed, to receive services (sexual and other). As women gain more equality through education, employment and developmental programmes, through reform of laws to give more rights to women, there is a backlash, a feeling of threat. Taliban repression is a method of establishing dominance. Sexual aggression is an extreme form of exercising power over women, because it is so connected to maleness. It is condoned by society that accepts this as proper masculine value. Hence our judicial processes and community judgements exonerate violent men. Yet all through history have arisen great men who abjured violence, practiced compassion, relatedness, caring- from Buddha to Jesus.

In so far as what is masculinity and what is femininity varies across cultures, they are mutable through education, social manipulation. In this process, modern society offers possibilities. Machines diminish the need for physical labour and muscular strength that gives men advantages. Service occupations today require personal relations that have emotional colouration. Structural changes giving women more rights, production

leaning more to mental and emotional qualities paves the way for a gender revolution. In this process, redefinition of masculinity and femininity is necessary.

Studies on masculinity are few and have hardly begun. In the Caribbean, theorising on masculinity and manhood has become an important component of feminist theorising where both men and women are involved. In the Anglophone Caribbean, among the Afro-Caribbeans, there emerged protests against male marginality. Women surpassed men in education, employment, as heads of families and as mothers totally responsible for children. Men were drifters; school drops outs, taking to crime. This society was referred to as matrifocal. Masculinity has to be seen also in the context of class, race and caste. Where the men feel powerless, it seems the greater is the oppression of **their** women.

Unfortunately there are counter tendencies- the enormous increase in arms; valour and war as masculine assertions; ethnic conflicts; global media assisting increasingly aggressive capitalism where macho men with bulging biceps and wraithlike women as models are purveyed day in and day out. The emphasis has shifted to the 'body'- strength in man, frailty in woman. 'Virility' as defining man had a tragic example of a man fathering 27 children to win a prize. In an era of test tube babies what prize 'fatherhood'?

UNDERSTANDING MASCULINITIES AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

By Anandhi.S

Institute of Development Alternatives, Chennai.

BIO:

ANANDHI S was awarded a Phd from the Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi in 1994 for the thesis – Middle Class Women in Colonial Tamil Nadu, 1920-1947: Gender Relations and the Problems of Consciousness. She has been a fellow with the Indian Council of Historical Research; Charles Wallace Visiting Fellow at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and a South Asia Visiting Scholar at Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford. She has published several papers on Dalit politics and Gender issues. She is currently a Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Alternatives, Chennai.

ABSTRACT:

Masculinity is often merely equated with male sexual identity and therefore perceived as a privilege and a source of power that all men possess in relation to women. In this context, violence against women is explained away as acts of men to confirm their masculinity and power. However, masculinity, mediated through complex social relations, is not merely oppressive towards women but also towards men who do not conform or deviate from the dominant notions and practices of masculinity of their own class, caste or age. In other words, the dominant masculinity not only controls and regulates women's lives but also of men for whom the dominant practices of masculinity are unavailable. Thus, a simple equation of male sexual identity with male power masks the complexities of dominance and subordination between men and women and among men. Through a micro-level study of a village in Kancheepuram dist. in Tamilnadu, I attempt to unravel the reconfiguration of masculinities in a context where both economic and caste relations are undergoing marked transformations. In the study village Paiyanur, the hegemonic masculinity of the upper caste men, whose socio-economic domination is on the decline, is being effectively challenged by the politically assertive Dalit youths. The newly emerging hegemonic masculinity is that of the Dalit youths. The large-scale employment of women – in particular Dalit women -- in the industrial, non-farm sector cross-grades the above transformation. The former aspect of transition has led to the disempowerment of the upper caste men (and consequent changes in their masculine practices) and an assertion of Dalit masculinity. The latter aspect of transition has created new forms of anxieties among Dalit men due to the new role of women as providers and a lack of control over their sexuality in factory and other spaces. The simultaneous assertion of and anxiety about Dalit masculinity has given rise to new forms of violence against Dalit women both in the domestic and non-domestic spheres.

Masculinity, Sexuality And Reproductive Health In A Community Of Baroda: A Few Observations

By

N.Rajaram

Department of Sociology, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

BIO:

Presently Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology. Recent publications, among others, include a monograph, *Health Status of Women in Gujarat* (as first author). A product of Delhi University and JNU. Worked extensively and intensively on Gujarat. Other areas of research work include cooperatives and development, gender, political sociology and migration.

ABSTRACT:

This presentation examines some of the findings regarding the conception of young men regarding masculinity and their attitude towards different dimensions of masculinity that have bearings upon sexual and reproductive health. These findings emerge from a larger research study conducted in 1999-2000 titled "*A Study of young men's perceptions of their own reproductive health in a slum of Baroda*".

Gendering Childhood: Masculinity and Reading

By Deeptha Achar

BIO:

Deeptha Achar has worked on popular boys fiction of late nineteenth century Britain for her Ph.D dissertation. Her current research interests center around education and childhood in India. She teaches English at MS University, Baroda.

ABSTRACT:

The central premise of my paper is that a characterization of masculinity in identitarian terms rather than as a process would impoverish attempts to understand masculinity. My account of the gendering of childhood in mid-nineteenth century Britain would examine the historical and political context for the emergence of masculinity as a locus of interest and inquiry. Examining masculinity as it is played out in the genre of adventure, I attempt to show that reading is implicated in the construction of colonial boyhood. I argue that this was a process which involved questions of class and race as much as masculinity.

Collective Violence, Public Spaces and the Unmaking of Men

By DEEPAK MEHTA

BIO:

Deepak Mehta teaches at the Department of Sociology, Delhi University. He completed his PHD from Delhi University in 1991. In 1998 he was awarded the Charles Wallace Fellowship for post doctoral work. He was a visiting research fellow at the Queens' University, Belfast, Ireland. He has also been a visiting Assistant Professor at the Department of Anthropology, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA. In 1997 his book *Work, Ritual, Biography: A Muslim Community in North India* was published by OUP. His other publications include:

- The semiotics of weaving, 1992
- Circumcision, Body and Community, 1996
- Writing the Riot
- Circumcision, Body and Community, in T.N.Madan edited *Muslim Societies in India*
- Circumcision, Body Masculinity: The ritual wound and collective violence, in Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele and Pamela Reynolds (eds): *Violence and Subjectivity and Community*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

ABSTRACT:

The writing of collective violence in India, framed under the term 'communal riots', has provided a reassuringly secure reference point for social science (and especially historiographic) analyses. Very little is written of the

actors in these riots, their ideas of themselves as victims, perpetrators and/or witnesses. Much less is known of the complexities of gender for wounded bodies, especially processes by which adult males, caught in violence, are denuded of their masculinity. This paper attempts an initial elaboration of how, through collective violence, masculinity is unmade, its link to public spaces and through it the nation-state. While I do not argue for an inherent connection between individual and political bodies, I suggest that this relationship is tied to the idea of national borders and segregated spaces. Through ethnographic accounts that detail the violation of individual bodies (both male and female) I will argue that 'signatures of terror', in Nordstrom's phrase (1997:164), are crucial in the making of public spaces as national borders and the unmaking of certain male bodies.

On 6 December 1992, members of various Hindu organizations demolished the Babari mosque, situated in the town of Ayodhya in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. Less than 24 hours after the demolition large parts of India were engulfed in violence between Hindus and Muslims. The city of Bombay (later renamed Mumbai) was in a state of virtual civil war until the third week of January 1992. From the middle of 1994, I began collaborative fieldwork in a slum in Mumbai, called Dharavi. Our intention was to study the affects of the violence of 1992-93 and to map its trajectories in the life of various residents of the slum.

The one fact that was clear in our fieldwork was that the understanding of violence could not be framed under an uncontested set of explanations. Much like the lives of the people in Dharavi, where old and new solidarities collide, where boundaries between intimate and public spaces are not sharply drawn, where bricolage in social relationships is an everyday condition of existence, our fieldwork proceeded in a way that aggregate and fragmentary perspectives on violence took turns. All the inhabitants agreed that there was violence in Dharavi in 1992-93, but vested interests, personal histories, ideological positions and propaganda, together ensured that a definition of violence was at best a powerful fiction or negotiated half-truth. Descriptions of violence in 1994 and 1995 were fundamentally different from its descriptions provided by the same set of people in 2001. Therefore, we cannot think of violence as a thing happening to passive recipients. It is a process that is braided into the texture of everyday life. The *danga*, as the violence is named, is now the background of many of the inhabitants' struggle to survive. We can, for example, see its inflections in inhabitants' attempts to settle with state housing policies, micro political practices structured around ration cards and voters' identity cards and interpersonal relationships ordered on the basis of religious affiliations. And yet we find a common weave in the stories of residents, a left over of the violence of 1992-93.

This remainder, I wish to argue is a complex image of the nation state, the public domain and the idea of the public itself and the uneasy and often violent merging with bodies of groups of people who are seen as alien and other. [[A sense of this link emerges when Muslim men describe how circumcision became a stigmatizing mark during the violence of 1992-93.

You see the roads were under constant threat. Groups of boys from outside would wait on the roads. If they found anyone, they would strip him to discover his identity. We would spare all those who were *katua* (literally, the 'cut' - a derogatory term for circumcision). They [Hindus] call us *katua*, people who are not male. Some of ours were knifed, others more fortunate were made to stand in a sewer and shout '*Jai Siya Ram*' ('Hail Lord Ram and his wife Sita'). If they didn't they were beaten...When they came into attack, we could hear them shouting, 'Where are the *Katua*?' (*Katua kahan hai?*), 'Catch the *katua*' (*Katua pakro*), 'See there's another *Katua*, cut it off' (*Dekho, wahan Katua hai, kat do uski*).

Two Muslim brothers who were textile entrepreneurs in Dharavi reported this conversation to us in 1995. They had suffered extensive losses during the violence and one of them had briefly returned to his village in Uttar Pradesh. In June 2001, I met the younger brother over an extended conversation on the economic and political conditions in Dharavi.

Of course, Dharavi has improved, but sometimes I recall those days of *dhasat* (terror). My brother has settled in our *mulk* (hometown). He doesn't make as much money there as he would here, but then he isn't bald like me (laughs). I do my work from home. My home is my job and I don't feel safe in 'public' [in English]. My children [three sons and a daughter live with him] don't go out alone. I take care to teach my boys to be vigilant - no show of anger, no loud voices, always properly dressed. No beards. I fear the day of their meeting with these *Jama*'at men.

Q: There is no danger in 'public', is there?

S: No, no, not at all. But we were made naked in public. They took down our pants and called us Pakistani, as if my nationality is on my *linga* (penis). After the *danga*, the chawl committee was made and met those of us who

remained. I went to those meetings. The police told us that we could live freely now. But live with what? Earlier I had a big house, now a small one room. Sometimes when I walk along these roads, I remember how some of us were stripped. The same members of the chawl committee and the police did it. I saw this; we all saw this, more often than I care to remember.

Q: Didn't Muslims retaliate. Didn't they also identify people through *Khatna* (the ritual term for circumcision)?

S: I don't remember. We may have. But so what? I was changed by the terror. I can no longer think of these *galis* (alleyways) as my own

Q: How were these *galis* your own?

In answer, he asked me to take a walk with him. Outside his house we walked towards a square (Shamim called this the *maidan*) in the centre of which is a water pump. A male child was drawing water while two others were trying to fly kites. On one side of the square, a few men were putting sheets of cloth into large iron pots, filled with boiling dye water. He asked one of them to get bales of cloth from his house and to begin colouring them. He explained that before 1992, he would not take on dyeing work as the market and consequent profit margins for such cloth were limited to semi-urban areas of Maharashtra.

S: Before the *danga*, we all had our own *sthan* (place). Opposite this *maidan* [pointing to a row of shops], Ajim had his tailor shop. He lived with his wife and children. He ran away during the *danga* after his shop was looted. He came back but he hasn't continued with his work. Madhav lived next to him. He has moved to greater Mumbai. Often we would have kite-flying competitions during Id and Diwali. Now it's *Maharti pujas* and the *namaz*. It was said that during Id this was the biggest marriage market in Dharavi. Now on Id I don't go to the *maidan*.

We had settled by this time (mid-afternoon) into a small pub by the side of the Sixty-Foot road. Initially hesitant, he allowed himself to be persuaded to drink beer and then continued.

Workers are unreliable and you have to be careful about your behaviour and what you say to them in the *maidan*. I give my orders at home and I pay them by the day there. I've stopped buying on credit from the cigarette shop, earlier I would settle my accounts by the month. One must be silent and in control. This brings respect.

Q: Didn't the *maidan* always have dye workers?

S: They all left. Service people, all Maharashtrians, have taken their place. For them, it's an extra source of income but they don't know anything.

Q: Was there any violence in the *maidan*?

S: During the *danga* Muslims were brought here and stripped. Even now, I find it difficult to talk about what they did. The *maidan* was called the *Majlis-e-Pakistan* (the parliament of Pakistan). Now children to defecate use this place, it's a public latrine.

Q: What happened after Muslims were stripped.

S: Thrashed and kicked on our genitals. Whatever you can imagine, I can only say it was worse. Now, do you want to eat?

The interaction of violence and public geography pulls in two directions; one is a withdrawal from the public into the domestic; the other is a change in the terms of belief about secular life as it is lived out in neighbourhoods. It would be tempting to argue that Shamim's retreat into the domestic provides the functions of shelter and refuge. The domestic stabilizes virtue since the public domain is unstable and is the space where the tedious details of the workday are renegotiated. The trouble with this view is not that it is wrong but that it is incomplete. It provides a static picture of domestic processes. If, in Shamim's case, members of the domestic relate to each other by wresting meaning from the details of an unstable public geography, then it only shows that the enemy has come within the place of hiding. Intimate life is to be policed so that public appearance is maintained. Emotions are fixed into orderly presentations and he must be vigilant about his children's' behaviour, both at home and in the public.

This public domain is characterized by an absence of secularity. For Shamim, it is not only that the public space of his neighbourhood is emptied of heterogeneity, but that this emptiness is central to his experience. He now positions himself as a spectator in the public. He does not participate in public life as much as he steels himself to observe it. It is almost as if he is more comfortable witnessing someone else's expression than as actively conveying expression himself. It is in this light that we can understand his injunction to discipline himself and his children to silence in public. Silence in the public area of his neighbourhood is a means of withdrawal and it is in this space that his codes for interpreting emotional expression are also codes for isolation from others. Observation and 'thinking before speaking' take the place of social relations in the public.]

'Recasting Men, Rethinking Masculinity'
By Mangesh Kulkarni

BIO:

Mangesh Kulkarni teaches Political Science at the Department of Post Graduate Studies & Research, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai. He served as a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Malawi (Africa) in 1998. During 1998-2000, he was also in the editorial team of *New Quest* - an interdisciplinary journal of society and culture. His publications include two edited volumes: (1) *India in World Affairs* (1999) and (2) *Politics in Maharashtra* (1995), and (3) *A Terrorist of the Spirit* (HarperCollins, 1992) - a translation of the Marathi poems of V. A. Dahake. He has published numerous articles in national and international periodicals. He has visited the U.S.A., France, South Africa and Malawi on various academic assignments. He launched the Forum for the Study of Indian Masculinities (Mumbai) in 1999 and serves as its Convener.

ABSTRACT:

The last two decades have witnessed a growing activist as well as academic interest in the construction and reconstruction of masculinities. This development can be traced to the critical reflexivity induced by the feminist emphasis on the social construction of gender, the critique of patriarchy, and the rise of women's movements/women's studies. 'Recasting Men, Rethinking Masculinity' takes stock of men's movements/studies in the U.S.A and India.

Profeminists have been interrogating the dominant constructs of masculinity through a critique of male socialisation and gender roles with the objective of helping women secure socio-economic and political parity. They particularly seek to reduce male violence against women, children and other men. Another major concern of profeminists is the elimination of various expressions of sexism such as rape, pornography and homophobia or hatred of homosexuals. In the U.S.A. this tendency is represented by the National Organisation of Men Against Sexism. Its local counterpart is the Mumbai-based group MAVA - Men Against Violence and Abuse. MAVA conducts several awareness-raising programmes geared to gender justice. Especially noteworthy is its annual Marathi publication 'Purush Spandan' that it brings out in collaboration with a like-minded group in Pune.

A different response to feminism has been articulated by the men's rights movement in the U.S. It focuses on modern constructions of gender, which place unfair restrictions on men. It particularly targets legal and social realities that place the male at a disadvantage: military conscription, the judicial tendency to favour mothers in child custody suits, as also higher rates of suicide and violent crime among men. It deploys feminist methods in the analysis of gender from a male viewpoint. Its extremist fringe, however, rails against 'feminist excesses' and the 'social overvaluation of the female', and may therefore be seen as a backlash. An Indian example of the men's rights tendency is the Committee for the Protection of Men's Rights (Maharashtra), which seeks to safeguard the interests of married men facing harassment through the misuse of Section 498 (A) of the Indian Penal Code.

A third strand endemic to the U.S. is spiritual revisionism, also known as the mythopoetic men's movement. It has roots in the counter-cultural tendencies of the 1950s. The revisionists are deeply dissatisfied with the traditional male roles, which cause men to suffer alienation from their bodies, emotions, work, other men, women and the earth. They seek to overcome this alienation through a spiritual and psychological transformation of men. Their therapy involves attention to the individual self and the disorders of the soul, use of myths and rituals originating outside the industrialised Western world, small support groups, weekend retreats and workshops.

Socialists in the men's movement view the construction of masculinities as part of the larger economic processes, and are aware of class differences between men. They generally take a profeminist stance. African-Americans broaden the agenda of the movement by drawing attention to the question of racial injustice. The gay rights movement seeks to end discrimination against homosexuals through political activity. It emphasises the adverse effects of homophobia on men, which include alienation and insidious forms of self-hatred. Both the socialist and gay tendencies are present in India. While the former has a diffuse presence, the latter has vocal and media-savvy spokesmen like Ashok Row Kavi and fora such as 'Bombay Dost'. Penguin has recently brought out an anthology of Indian gay literature. The African-American tendency could find an echo in the dalit movement, particularly as dalit women have already articulated the need for an autonomous space of their own.

It is clear that many of the above-mentioned currents overlap. Most agree that traditional forms of masculinity, which valorise self-centred, unemotional, competitive, aggressive and sexually promiscuous behaviour, require

serious reevaluation for enhancing the well being of both men and women. In the West, this ferment has led to the development of Men's Studies - an interdisciplinary area of inquiry akin to Women's Studies. Men's Studies has acquired an impressive following in the U.S., resulting in the formation of professional associations and journals devoted to the discipline. The resulting investigation of masculinity from historical, political and socio-psychological perspectives has yielded a rich harvest. In India this remains practically virgin territory. Recent years have witnessed the publication of important studies of Indian masculinities, but these have come mostly from NRI or foreign scholars.

An early attempt to understand the construction of masculinities in India can be found in the writings of social psychologists like Sudhir Kakar and Ashis Nandy. Kakar has inquired into the specificity of the normative matrices, family structures and socialisation processes which shape the psyche of Indian men. He has also examined Indian masculinities in the context of sexuality, popular culture and communal violence. Nandy has provided an influential account of the impact of British rule on the restructuring of masculinities in India. He argues that the hyper-masculinist British imperial ideology warped the fluid gender identities which characterised pre-modern Indian society, resulting in the inflation of the Kshatriya model of masculinity, which had earlier occupied a limited social space.

However, this thesis has been recently challenged by two historians - Rosalind O'Hanlon and Mrinalini Sinha. The former has underscored the centrality of martial masculinity to society and politics in the late Mughal period, while the latter has pointed out that 'British manliness' and 'Indian effeminacy' were conjointly constructed within the imperial social formation. Other important insights of historical and contemporary relevance have come from Joseph Alter's anthropological study of wrestling and nationalism in North India, Sanjay Srivastava's study of the Doon School, and Thomas Hansen's analysis of communalism. But this is only a beginning; the dark subcontinent of Indian masculinity still awaits exploration.

The feminist movement has acted as a catalyst stimulating a wide-ranging interrogation of masculinity over the last few decades. The reconstruction of masculinity along emancipatory lines must therefore proceed in tandem with feminism. But it is also important to point out and correct the flaws in the latter. This is particularly true of misandry - a belief that masculinity itself is responsible for most of the world's woes - which sometimes raises its ugly head in the women's movement. Moreover, it is important to develop an independent agenda for recasting men.

Some elements of such an agenda would include the salvaging and strengthening of fatherhood, encouragement of healthy male-bonding and mentoring to generate new forms of solidarity, defeating the 'machine man' archetype so as to achieve true physical and psychological/spiritual well-being, and establishing a nurturing and creative relationship with nature. A great deal of study, soul-searching and organisational initiatives are required to translate this agenda into practice. In the process, men may lose more than their chains, but they surely have a whole world to gain.

De-Constructing Masculinity: A Cultural Analysis of Khasi Kinship and Marriage **By Tiplut Nongbri**

BIO:

TIPLUT NONGBRI teaches Sociology at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has been engaged in post graduate teaching and supervision of M.Phil and Ph.d research in the areas of Family and Kinship, Gender Studies, Sociology of Tribes, and Environmental Sociology for several years. She has published a number of research papers in leading journals in India and abroad and as independent chapters in books. Her recent publications include a review of the Khasi Custom of Lineage Bill, 1997 in *Gender, Technology and Development*, 4, (3) 2000 and a critique of the Supreme Court ban on timber logging in Northeast India, in *Economic and Political Weekly*, May, 2001

ABSTRACT:

This paper attempts to delineate the position of men in the Khasi society. Set against the backdrop of the rising tide of the 'men's lib' campaign (spearheaded by some student and youth organizations) to emancipate the Khasi male from the obscurity of the matrilineal system, it seeks to closely examine their position by looking into their gendered identity through their roles as brothers, fathers and husbands. Premised on the idea that gendered identities are a product of culture, I rely heavily on indigenous categories and thought to make sense of men's diverse roles both within the family and community at large. As a consequence, the discussion moves along two axes - i) dissecting the masculine identity as it is revealed in the domain of language and everyday speech and ii) tracing the distinctive feature of the Khasi matrilineal system and the implications of its diverse

rules and principles on men and women in the society. It is my contention that an analysis of the position of men could best be carried out by relating it to their opposite counterpart, women.

'Here Comes Papa': Matriliney, Men and Marriage in Early Twentieth Century Malabar

By Praveena Kodoth

BIO:

Praveena Kodoth is a research associate at the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum and is working currently on Gender, Family and Property Rights in Kerala. She is interested in the History of Institutions, the Legal discourse and more recently in issues of gender and development with reference to Kerala.

ABSTRACT:

The Madras Marumakkatayam Act, 1933 is better known for having opened the floodgates for the partition and consequent material disintegration of the taravad (matrilineal joint family) in Malabar. However it also resolved the question of marriage, which had been the very bone of contention among Nair reformers, in the late nineteenth century. The customary marriage relation among the Nairs (sambandham) was defined by the colonial civil courts not as a legal institution conferring legitimacy but as making way for promiscuous intercourse. The Malabar Marriage Act, 1898, sought to remedy this by providing a form of marriage grounded in the western notion of 'marriage as a contract', which critics had already pointed out conformed more to a 'status' than to a free contract. The legislation however was barely used and soon declared a dead letter the reason cited being the resentment of a great majority of the people (including the educated considered the 'natural' constituency for such a legislation) against the suggestion that sambandham was anything less than a legally constituted form of marriage. Even after (or perhaps especially after) it was clear that the Malabar Marriage Act was a failure, legislative efforts in the twentieth century centred the concerns of partition, inheritance and taravad management rather than marriage. I will argue in this paper that the experience of the marriage act made it both necessary and possible to pose the question of marriage differently - by not questioning its legitimacy in a strictly legal sense, reconstituting it nevertheless as the primary site of socio-economic transactions among men and women. These moves facilitated its conformity with the emerging normative form of marriage, centred in the conjugal nuclear family even while avoiding the controversial issue of its imputed lack of legitimacy. Hence the Madras Marumakkatayam Act, 1933 legalised sambandham, with a few crucial modifications regarding inheritance and maintenance rights, rather than replacing it with either 'contractual' or sacramental marriage, which is evident in that divorce continued to be free and easy for both women and men. But outside the legal or legislative terrain, Nair male reformers campaigned to reconstitute marriage in a sanitised and conformative mode, editing out precisely those customs and rituals that had fostered the reading that it permitted sexual permissiveness among women. The effort to reform marriage then continued to be central to early twentieth century matrilineal social reform. Reform at the local level erased those rituals and customs that celebrated women's sexuality and shaped others. This made way for the emergence of 'husbands' and 'fathers' in a patrilineal and patriarchal idiom that combined the requirements of the western contractual and 'Hindu' sacramental modes. Male social reformers then delivered at the doorstep of the Madras Marumakkatayam Act, a 'husband' and 'father' who would replace the patrilineally inscribed karanavan (maternal uncle and executor of property) of the colonial law. In the process women's relations to property in the emerging conjugal families were to be tied precariously to their positions as daughters and wives, where previously they had been established by birth, in what was arguably the only coparcenary in which women were members.

Warring Masculinities: The Nation and Disintegration

By Karen Gabriel

BIO:

Karen Gabriel teaches English Literature at St. Stephens' College, University of Delhi.

ABSTRACT:

The homogenizing discourses of nationalism and the nation attempt to negotiate the issue of heterogeneity in ways that are gendered and sexualized. Using two films *Border* (J P Dutta, 1997) and *Prahaar* (Nana Patekar 1995), I will try to argue that orthodox gender schemes particularly in the context of the issue of heterogeneity, acquire a special relation to violence. I will show how both *Border* and *Prahaar* concern themselves not just with the knotty

question of who the quintessential *Indian* is, but with the equally fundamental one of who the quintessential *man* is. I shall therefore examine albeit briefly, the value that gender and sexuality have within such structural and cognitive analytics and schemes of a collective like the national body. These films situate their inquiry within the special and celebrated instances of the state sponsored institutions of the violence of war and the army. In the process they set out the ways in which the national populace, spaces, rights, authority and status are gendered, and they clarify the importance of *militarism* to/in societies, communities or discourses, the utility of war or the preparedness for it. However, we shall see that both identities – that of the ‘true’ Indian and the ‘true’ man – emerge as manufactured, prone to pathology and disintegration even while statedly essential, returning the films to the central ‘problems’ of heterogeneity and gender instability.

Gender Designs: Masculinity and Femininity in the Age of Hindutva
By P.K. VIJAYAN

BIO:

P K Vijayan teaches English Literature at Hindu College, University of Delhi

ABSTRACT:

This paper will concern itself with how masculinities can be seen in the context of politics. How does one understand and employ the category masculinity conceptually and in its empirical forms and presences within political contexts? What one is addressing here is the issue of how the analysis of masculinity contributes to the analysis of and in political discourse. This will attempt to give body to the understanding of gender as political by addressing the politicization of gender and the ways in which politics works its way into gender in a very specific political moment. It is important therefore not to see masculinity as a set of subjective phenomena constituted either in privacy or in the micro realm, but rather as a process of identity formation structured by and operating in very extensive, ramifying and interrelated spheres. The paper will concentrate on opening out a series of questions that would arise out of such a reconfiguration of the relation between gender and politics rather than attempting shorthand answers. I shall draw my fieldwork conducted in Kerala in 1999-2000 and my evolving theoretical work into the articulation of these questions.

Clinical material on masculinity: a developmental perspective from contemporary psychoanalysis
By Madhu Sarin

BIO:

Madhu Sarin taught political philosophy at the University of Delhi for several years before being trained as a psychoanalyst. She was practising for many years in New York and has recently shifted back to Delhi.

ABSTRACT:

Psychoanalysis, the unconscious and psychotherapy. Presentation of clinical material:(Description of patient and Presenting Problem), of five male patients referred for psychotherapy from a University counselling service. Some reflections on this material from a contemporary psychoanalytical perspective.

Friends: The Neighbourhood Boys Club
By Chaitali Dasgupta

BIO:

Chaitali Dasgupta has done her M. Phil in Sociology from Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University. Her area of specialization is Adolescent Masculinity. She has recently finished working as a researcher in a project titled “From Violence to Supportive Practice: Family, Gender and Masculinities in India” conducted by Dr. Radhika Chopra, Delhi University and supported by UNIFEM.

ABSTRACT:

In this paper I am addressing the issue of gender relations and masculinity from within the context of “pada” or neighbourhood localities of Kolkata. Departing from the literature on gangs I have moved away from the whole construction of the urban street gang seen only in terms of practices of violence. I have attempted to

begin looking at them from an egalitarian mode and work through the notions of hierarchy, gender and masculinities that these male spaces construct for themselves as well as for the larger community. By looking at the boys groups and boys clubs I have tried to explore the means through which the club and the friendships that are formed around the club become non-formal spaces and sites of the articulation of male worlds and formations of masculinities outside the formal spaces of socialization such as family, school and workplace.