

# Patrika

BULLETIN OF THE FRENCH RESEARCH INSTITUTES IN INDIA  
September 2007, No. 25



“Philology” has long been suffering from poor press: many people associate the label with an unworldly bookishness that lives in cheerful ignorance of current intellectual fashion, and one hears from time to time of its being declared “dead” or “dying”. This is surprising, since it really refers to what we do when we make a sincere effort to understand a text. Sheldon Pollock recently called it the “discipline of making sense of texts”.

This is not to say that it is necessarily straightforward or easy to do: the ease with which we understand a given text will depend on such factors as how well we know its script and language, how near or far we are from the text in time or in culture – in other words, on what we know about it and the context in which it was produced.

Whether we interest ourselves in cultural, religious or political history, such access as we have to the past is often primarily gained through “making sense of texts”. True to the tradition of the French School of Asian Studies (EFEO) of concentrating on the study of sources (whether archaeological, written or oral), the Pondicherry Centre of the EFEO has built up considerable expertise in the interpretation of Sanskrit and old Tamil literature and this it strives to transmit to rising generations. One way of doing this is through workshops devoted to the study of published and unpublished Sanskrit and Tamil texts. This year, following closely upon the workshop on Early Saivism in January, the Centre has also hosted a Sanskrit reading retreat and a workshop on royal epigraphy, focusing particularly on pre-12th century inscriptions in South India in Sanskrit and Tamil.

These events are international occasions for intensive joint study that help advance the projects underway in Pondicherry and that often spawn new collaborative projects with scholars from abroad.

The Pondicherry Centre's long-term commitment to the study of South Indian religious architecture is not being neglected either, for a new member of the EFEO joins the Centre this month, whose principal interest is the iconography of Pallava and Pandya monuments: Valerie Gillet.

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Head of the Pondicherry Centre of the EFEO

## FOCUS

### ➤ India's democratic renewal in question

This project is part of an international programme of the French Research Institutes abroad, entitled “*Democratic transformations in emerging countries: Latin America, Africa, Asia – 1990-2005*”, and coordinated by the French Institute of South Africa (IFAS). Nine individual studies revolve around a common questioning of the depth and impact of several phenomena that seem to pertain to a renewal of India's democratic practices. Thus, the project focuses on the impact of the renewal of political elites (particularly in relation to quotas and the rise of parties representing the lower castes), through the analysis of the relationship between the representation of identities and that of interests. It considers State Assemblies as a site of identity politics, with a focus on the evolution from violent to “normal” political action. It also questions the democratic dimension of decentralization through case studies concentrating on Chhattisgarh. Lastly, it assesses the depth of the renewal of mobilizing structures by studying the relations between the participatory and representative dimensions of local democracy in megacities.

The project was implemented through a monthly seminar devoted to one of its central themes: the forms, objects and challenges of political mobilization in India. Open to all interested research scholars apart from team members, the seminar took place between July 2006 and May 2007.

The project recently concluded with a two-day workshop (9th-10th July, Delhi) involving, beyond team members, Prof. Sudha Pai and Prof. Pralay Kanungo (Jawaharlal Nehru University), Dr. Laurent Gayer and Dr. Véronique Dupont (Centre de Sciences Humaines), Dr. Savyasaachi and Dr. Mujibur Rahman (Jamia Millia Islamia), Dr. Girish Kumar (Indian Institute of Public Administration) and Dr. Claire Bénit-Gbaffou (IFAS, Johannesburg).

The workshop showed how studies focusing on the same site of democratic activity, though dealing with different states, question and complete each other. The first two series of studies, dealing with State Assemblies, shed new light on the relationship between the representation of interests and that of identities, especially in terms of mobilization strategies. The last two series of papers highlighted the importance of scale in the articulation of the participative and representative dimensions of “local” democracy, in both rural and urban contexts.

Besides two collective publications, a major outcome of the workshop is the elaboration of a new research project comparing the participative dimension of urban governance in India and South Africa.

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### ➤ “Manuscript Open Day” organized by the French Institute of Pondicherry (IFP) and the EFEO on 13th July, 2007, at the IFP

This “Open Day” was devoted to the palm-leaf manuscripts housed at the IFP and the EFEO in Pondicherry. The event was presided over by Dr. Suddha Gopalakrishnan, Director of the Indian Government's National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM). The Governor of Pondicherry regretted not being able to attend the opening ceremony due to the national

mourning that had been declared following the death of the former Indian Prime Minister, Chandra Shekhar.

On display were posters presenting the history of the collections, their contents and techniques for conservation and cataloguing. Samples of the collections and explanatory notes were exhibited at the venue. Specialists from both institutions demonstrated writing on palm leaves and cataloguing techniques, with a software developed by the IFP.

The on-line catalogue of the IFP's transcripts (paper manuscripts) was officially launched the same day.

Attracting several hundreds of visitors, including political and cultural figures, teachers and groups of students, the event also found a large echo in more than a dozen local and regional newspapers and eight TV channels, both English and Tamil.

The success of the occasion confirms the importance that the Indian authorities give to the manuscript collections housed at the IFP. It also underlines the interest that these manuscripts, memory of an ancestral culture, arouse in a very large public.

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**For more information :**  
<http://www.ifindia.org/Manuscript-Open-Day.html>  
<http://www.ifindia.org/-Manuscripts-.html>  
[http://www.muktobodhalib.org/digital\\_library.html](http://www.muktobodhalib.org/digital_library.html)

## RESEARCH

### CSH

➤ **Strategy and Vision in Politics: Jawaharlal Nehru's policy choices and the designing of political institutions**

This research project, conducted by Ms Jivanta Schöttli, doctoral student in political science (South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, Germany), seeks to analyse the art and craft of policy-making. Core questions that guide the research are: How are policy decisions made? What are the short and long-term implications for the conduct of politics (the impact on the room for manoeuvre, the terms of debate, the contentiousness of issues)? How do leaders balance strategy and vision? How can analysts take into account both the value and instrumental rationality that go into decision-making?

The central importance of Jawaharlal Nehru in India's political development is indisputable, particularly since he was closely involved in almost every policy area. However, as a literature survey will demonstrate, the existing material on Nehru, though extensive, tends by and large to be narrative at best and sycophantic at worst. Thus, the thesis proposes to tackle Nehru, the political man, as a tactician and to examine his choices and actions within the constraints of his time. In the hope of generating a new perspective, the thesis focuses on three case studies taken from the policy areas of the planned economy, foreign relations and social reform.

Research in Delhi will consist primarily of archival work at the Nehru Memorial Library. In addition, the aim is to interview policymakers who have had to work within the parameters of Nehru's legacy and to use the opportunity to discuss the research project with local academics.

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### IFP/EFEO

➤ **Spotlight on Panini's grammar**

The analysis of Sanskrit scholarship is one of the foundations of "French Indology" in Pondicherry. The research programme on *Paninian grammars* is one of its pillars.

This grammar (4th century B.C.) was till now examined "through its examples", a project jointly led by the IFP and the EFEO under the supervision of Dr. François Grimal, Research Director at the EFEO. The Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (Practical School of Higher Studies, with Dr. Jan E.M. Houben as a Research Director) is adding, with the IFP, a new dimension to the study: the "rearrangements" to Paninian grammar in the 16th and 17th centuries. The programme's two constituents have a common objective: to explain the purpose and functioning of Panini's grammar through its "modern" developments, in order to better understand its present usage by traditional Indian grammarians.

Two renowned Indian institutions, the Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth of Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh) and the Jagadguru Ramanandacharya Rajasthan Sanskrit University of Jaipur (Rajasthan), are collaborating with the programme.

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## EVENTS

(For more information on events, please consult our respective websites)

### Lectures/Seminars/ Round Tables/ Workshops

#### CSH

**The sixth edition of the international conference, *Journées d'Economie Publique Louis-André Gérard-Varet***, was held in Marseille on 14th and 15th June, 2007. Launched in 2002 and coordinated since then by Prof. Nicolas Gravel (CSH and IDEP-GREQAM), this conference aims at encouraging the production and diffusion of high quality research in public economics, with a special emphasis toward results that shed light on various aspects of "real world" public decision-making. In this sense, the conference is in the spirit of the project of developing the *Institut d'Economie Publique* (IDEP) to which the French economist Louis-André Gérard-Varet devoted the last years of his life. The sixth edition of the conference welcomed the

presentation of about 60 contributed papers and three keynote lectures given by Peter Diamond (MIT), Guy Laroque (INSEE and University College London) and Robin Boadway (Queens University). All major themes of public economics such as taxation, political economy, health, education, fiscal federalism and normative foundations have been covered by the conference which is clearly becoming one of the most important meetings in this field in Europe and worldwide.

**An international conference** was organized on 29th and 30th May in the University of Paris X, Nanterre, to synthesize the results of a three-year Indo-French research project on *Urban Actors, Policies and Governance*. It first reviewed the transformation of Indian cities for a French public mostly not up-to-date with such a body of work. Second, the conference contrasted the Indian experience with case studies from the North or the South, where similar processes of decentralization and liberalization have had consequences for urban governance. Studies on health in India and Switzerland, on reforming city management in Shanghai, on the role of users in the French water sector provided scope to debate on public sector reform, privatization and participation in different contexts. The conference was attended by researchers, professionals and students. The following institutions provided financial support: the Geography Department of Nanterre University, *Laboratoire de géographie comparée des Suds et des Nords* (GECKO), the Centre for the Study of India and South Asia (CEIAS), the *Maison des Sciences de l'Homme* (MSH) and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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<http://www.csh-delhi.com/programs/programs.php?selectedcategory=Urban%20Dynamics#>

**Monthly seminar on *Contemporary forms and objects of political mobilizations*** held at the CSH as part of the collective project on "India's democratic renewal in question", coordinated by Dr. Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal. This seminar continued with a presentation by Dr. Gilles Verniers (Institute of Political Studies, Paris), "Assessing the transformations of the composition and role of local elites in the conduct of Uttar Pradesh State Assembly elections", discussed by Prof. Radha Kumar (Jamia Millia Islamia) on 10th May. (See also **Focus**).

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**Monthly Seminar on *Dynamics of Contemporary Islam in South Asia***, held at the CSH as part of the international programme on "Restructuring of Contemporary Islam and Economic Development in Asia, from the Caucasus to China", coordinated by Dr. Laurent Gayer. The seminar continued with a presentation by Dr. Zarin Ahmad (CSH) on "Muslims in Sri Lanka: A Socio-Political Trajectory", on 25th July.

• The presentation explored the situation of Sri Lanka's third largest community comprising 8.5 percent of a 20 million-strong population. Though not direct participants in the nearly three decade-long conflict (between majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils), Muslims are stakeholders yet marginalized in the peace process. Their overwhelming numbers in north-eastern Sri Lanka, the main theatre of conflict, their language, Tamil, and religion, Islam, makes their position unique in the island's politics.

Politically and economically, their dilemma lies in being situated between two larger, opposing groups. They have tried to maintain a 'neutral' position. They wish to remain in Sri Lanka, but demand parity with the Tamils. This makes them suspect in the eyes of both communities. However, the Muslim community, caught between two opposing forces, zealously protects its sense of personal security and claims to a distinct history and culture.

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## IFP

For more details on these events, please consult our website, at the following address:

<http://www.ifpindia.org/-Seminars-.html>

**Seminar on Debt Bondage: Issues and Perspectives** at the Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, on 19th and 20th April. The IFP (*Labour, Finance and Social Dynamics* programme), the Institute for Human Development (Delhi) and the FNV Vakcentrale (a Dutch association) jointly organized this seminar. The objective was to draw up an inventory on two important issues in India, forced labour and debt bondage, and their evolution in time. The occasion allowed for a very rich debate among historians, anthropologists, economists – the best European and Indian specialists on the issues concerned –, decision-makers (the National Commission for Enterprises in Unorganised Sector, International Labour Organisation, etc) and representatives of Indian civil society (NGOs, Centre for Education and Development, etc). The seminar will lead to a joint-publication, expected in early 2008, brought out by the Oxford University Press.

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**Seminar on Metropolitanisation: Methods and Analysis Tools** at the UMR ADES of the University of Bordeaux 3, France, on 7th June. The conference was organized by Dr. Kamala Marius-Gnanou (University of Bordeaux 3), who coordinates a research project at the IFP on Chennai's urban dynamics. The seminar brought together eminent specialists (geographers, economists, country planners, etc) in urban development. Its objective was to compare different methodological and disciplinary approaches to the development of big cities, through case studies selected notably from Asia. The conference was a prelude to an ambitious project concerning a geo-referenced database of world towns, cities and metropolises, coordinated by the SEDET (Laboratory

Societies Developing in Space and Time; University of Paris 7), which has just been proposed to the French National Agency for Research (ANR). The IFP's Laboratory of Applied Informatics and Geomatics is associated with the setting up of the project, for what concerns the Indian part.

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**Seminar on Siddha Medicine: Historical, Social and Medical Perspectives** at the IFP on 23rd and 24th August. Siddha medicine, relatively unknown and often assimilated to Ayurveda, has rarely been studied in the social sciences. The theme was at the heart of the conference organized by the IFP's *Societies and medicines in South Asia* programme. Over two days, historians, anthropologists, sociologists and economists met in order to debate on subjects intrinsic to siddha medicine. Some of the themes that fuelled discussions were the image of the *cittar*, the representation of the body, the medicine's relation to Tamil identity and to 'traditions' sometimes reinvented, as well as its place in India's pluralistic medical landscape. A joint publication containing articles of the best presentations is planned.

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**Seminar on Metropolitan Transition in India** at the Anna University in Chennai (Madras) on 30th and 31st August. The IFP and the School of Architecture and Planning of the Anna University jointly organized the seminar. The objective was to allow geographers, city planners and entrepreneurs to share their experiences and discuss strategies for urban development in India. The event coinciding with the public unveiling of the urban development plan for Chennai by the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority, special emphasis was placed on the city's development. Representatives from several big companies investing in the metropolis – both French (Renault, Véolia, Saint-Gobain, etc) and Indian (Ashok Leyland, Mahindra, etc) – as well as from the Economic Mission of the Embassy of France in India, were present during the event. The seminar was co-financed by the IFP and the Renault group. It will lead to a joint publication in 2008.

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**Workshop on Social Management of Water in India** at the IFP on 12th April. Decentralization and participative management are keywords for current reforms on water management in many countries throughout the world. In India, this essentially leads to the creation of formal Water Users' Associations to manage irrigation through channels or tanks, an ancient irrigation system of pond-reservoirs. The IFP organised a workshop dealing with the social and cultural problems arising from the face-off of these associations with already existing institutions, whether they concern villages, civil society in general or governments (central and regional). At the workshop, scholars from various disciplines and practitioners in the field from Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat shared their experiences. A list of social and cultural problems requiring further study was drafted, and collective

thought given to what ought to constitute a preferred methodology.

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**Lecture on the Reform of Mahalir Thittam** at the IFP on 7th June. The reform of *Mahalir Thittam* is a microfinance and women's empowerment project. Discussions during the event were based on in-depth studies conducted over the past six months on the Self-Help Group federation's structure, different issues concerning government policies with regard to its implementation, the views of different stakeholders, NGOs and women's groups, vis-à-vis the federation as well as the relations between NGOs and government agencies in implementing the *Mahalir Thittam* programme.

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**Hélène Lefebvre**  
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**Lecture on Socializing Historical Environments** at the IFP on 30th July, 2007. This presentation provided a long-term overview of ancient human land use in a region of eastern Karnataka, reviewing evidence from the Neolithic period (ca. 3000-1200 B.C.) to the Medieval period and the establishment of the Vijayanagara Empire (ca. A.D. 1336). Relying on excavation data, survey observations, remote sensing analyses and palynological assessments, the lecture considered how a variety of past cultural activities – ranging from agro-pastoral subsistence production to the construction of reservoirs and elaborate megalithic mortuary complexes – were instrumental in configuring both material environments and social relationships. The broader point of the talk was that many of the landscape features within the study region – although commonly considered part of an *a priori* natural environment – are historical products of a confluence of past cultural practices, socio-political strategies and material processes.

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**Lecture on Reformulation of Tamil Traditional Theatre as an Organic Form of Community Theatre** at the IFP on 14th August. *Kooththu*, the traditional theatre of the Tamils of Sri Lanka, is an art form that integrates people in the process of its own creation and performance. *Kooththu* performance, as a process, naturally contains aspects of community theatre. Its reformulation is neither the work of a specialist nor an experiment. Representing change in an art form, it also provokes change in the people who perform and celebrate it. The reformulations must be carried forward with the participation of the people in their own location, so that the progress made is experienced and evaluated by the participants themselves. Change in people's minds will lead to change in their activities. The facilitator's role is to implement these reformulations, not alone but with the knowledge and participation of the community.

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**The Fourth Intensive International Sanskrit Summer Retreat**, organized by EFEO and the Indo-European Studies Department at Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest), took place at the EFEO Centre in Pondicherry over two weeks starting 16th July. Its aim was to encourage Sanskritists to read together and study texts from several disciplines. Three separate daily reading sessions were dedicated to philosophy, poetry and Purana/Tantra. The texts studied were, for philosophy, the opening of Jayanta's *Nyayamanjari* (Kei Kataoka's edition) and a part of Ramakantha's tenth-century commentary on the *Paramoksanirasakarika* (S.L.P. Anjaneya Sarma, Dominic Goodall, Alex Watson are preparing an edition); for Tantric/Puranic literature, the marriage of Shiva and Parvati in Jayadratha's *Haracaritacintamani* (Alex Watson is preparing an edition) and passages on Shaiva yoga in the *Svacchandatantra* and the *Nisvasatitvasamhita* (an edition is being prepared by Alexis Sanderson, Dominic Goodall, et al); for poetry, chapter 11 of the *Raghuvamsa* with the commentary by Vallabhadeva (an edition is being prepared by Harunaga Isaacson and Dominic Goodall) and of Damodaragupta's *Kuttanimata* (Dominic Goodall and Csaba Dezso are preparing its edition and translation). Twenty-nine participants came from Austria, France, Italy, Japan, Hungary, Poland, the UK and the US. The renowned singer Sri Trichur Ramachandran was invited to perform on 27th July at the EFEO Centre.

Two lectures in Sanskrit were delivered by Professor Mani Dravida of the Madras Sanskrit College, one on the notion of *pramana* ("valid means of knowledge") according to Jayanta, the other on the archaic Shaiva view that liberation takes place when the qualities of the Lord are transferred to the liberated soul.

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<http://www.efeo.fr/actualites/asie.shtml>

**The Classical Tamil Summer Seminar**, organized by Charlotte Schmid and Eva Wilden, was held from 6th to 20th August. Entitled "Engraving the King's Fame: Sanskrit Prasastis and Tamil Meykkirttis", it was this year devoted to the tradition of royal eulogy in the inscriptions of southern India. During this workshop, several inscriptions belonging to the Gupta, Calukya, Pallava, Pandya and Chola dynasties were studied, in both Sanskrit and Tamil, as well as a hitherto unknown 8th-century inscription in Sanskrit from Cambodia (shortly to be published by participants in the EFEO's project, *Corpus des inscriptions khmères*). The workshop's starting point was to throw light on the development of and literary background to the eulogies carved on the walls of so many Chola temples throughout the Tamil-speaking South. Professor Leslie Orr (Concordia University), widely known for her studies on the role of women as reflected in the Tamil epigraphic corpus, also attended. The famous classical singer Srimati Bombay Jayasri was invited to perform on 10th August at the EFEO Centre in Pondicherry.

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### ... At the CSH

**Basudeb CHAUDHURI** will be joining as the new Director of the CSH in September.

**Loraine KENNEDY** joined as the new Head of the Economic Transition division of the CSH in September.

**Nidhi CHAWLA**, Accounts Assistant, joined the CSH in August.

**Jivanta SCHÖTTLI**, doctoral student in Political Science at the South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg (Germany), joined the CSH in August for a two-month internship (under an agreement signed by the two institutions).

(See **Research** section)

**Rupa SENGUPTA**, Publications in-charge, joined the CSH in August.

### ... at the IFP

**Payal BAL**, student with an M.Sc Degree in Zoology from the Pondicherry University, joined the *Managing Biodiversity in Mountain Landscapes* project from 14th May to 25th June, 2007, as a trainee, to work on *GIS Mapping*, under the supervision of Dr. Claude Garcia.

**Cédric BERTRAND**, student from the *Institut Universitaire Technologique* de Lannion, France, joined the Laboratory of Applied Informatics and Geomatics from May 8th to 31st August, 2007, to do a training programme on Systems and Networks Management and work on the *Digital Database* project, under the supervision of Dr. Frédéric Borne.

**D. AMUDHAVALLI**, an M.Phil student of Botany from the Department of Plant Sciences, Kanchi Mamunivara Centre for PG studies, Pondicherry University, joined the *Palaeoenvironments in South India* project from 1st May to 1st October, 2007, as a trainee, to work on *Pollen Analysis* under the supervision of Dr. K. Anupama.

**Andrew BAUER**, PhD candidate in Anthropology from the University of Chicago, USA, joined the *Palaeoenvironments in South India* project from 29th June, 2007 to 1st June, 2008, as an affiliated student, to work on the pollen analyses component of his project *Land Use and Social Differentiation in Iron Age South India* under the supervision Dr. K. Anupama.

**Guillaume CHAMPLONG**, International Civil Volunteer and successor to Agathe Garandeau, joined the Laboratory of Applied Informatics and Geomatics for a one-year period, to work in the field of GIS and informatics applications, and more specifically on three projects led at the IFP, namely, *Webmapping*, *Digital Database* and *Historical Atlas of South India*, under the supervision of Dr. Frédéric Borne.

**Pascal DOUARD**, International Civil Volunteer from France, joined the Laboratory of Applied Informatics and Geomatics from 20th April, 2007, to 1st April, 2008, as successor to Simon Georget, in order to work on GIS tools and informatic applications, and to continue work on the *Webmapping* and *Digital Database* projects, under the supervision of Dr. Frédéric Borne.

**Marie LAVAL**, student with an M.Sc Degree in Rural and Tropical Forestry from AgroParisTech-ENGREF, France, joined the *Managing Biodiversity in Mountain Landscapes* project from 3rd May to 25th October, 2007, as a trainee, to work on *Community Forest Management*, under the supervision of Dr. Claude Garcia.

**Aude MAYANS**, student in Masters 1 of Edition and Communication from the University of Cergy-Pontoise, France, joined the Centre for Documentary Resources as a trainee, from 11th July to 10th September, 2007, to work under the supervision of Ms. Anurupa Naik.

**MUTHUKUMAR. V.** M.A. and M.Phil Degree holder, joined the *Cataloguing and Preservation of Manuscripts* project from 10th February to 30th September, 2007, to do cataloguing and conservation work under the supervision of Dr. Dominic Goodall.

**Dr. Sivagnanam JEYASANKAR**, Ph.D and Senior Lecturer in Drama and Theatre Arts from the Department of Fine Arts, Eastern University of Sri Lanka, joined the *Contemporary Tamil Culture* project from 14th May to 14th July, 2007, as an affiliated researcher, to work on the topic of *Reformulation of traditional theatre as an organic form of community theatre*.

**Anubhav MOHANTY**, student from St. Stephens College in New Delhi, Department of Economics, joined the *Labour, Finance and Social Dynamics* project from 14th May to 15th June, 2007, as a trainee, to work on the *Survey of Debt Situation in Select Rural Areas in Tamil Nadu* under the supervision of Dr. Marc ROESCH.

### ... at the EFEO

**Jean-Luc CHEVILLARD** (CNRS) visited the Pondicherry Centre in July-August in order to complete the second volume of his work on Tamil grammar: *Le commentaire de Cennavaraiyar sur le Collatikaram du Tolkappiyam* (Cennavaraiyar's commentary on the Tolkappiyam Collatikaram), Collection Indologie 84.2.

**Csaba DEZSO** (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest) came to Pondicherry in July-August in order to work with Dr. Dominic Goodall on their translation of the *Kuttanimata* ("The Bawd's Counsel"), an 8th-century Sanskrit novel in verse.

**Martine GESTIN** has been at the Pondicherry Centre since June, thanks to a post-doctoral grant awarded by the EFEO. She is conducting research on South Indian courtly poetry and the oral *Adivasi* traditions of the southern Ghats. She is affiliated with the *Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale* of the Collège de France (EHESS-UMR 7130).

**Nina MIRNIG** (doctoral student at the Oxford University) visited Pondicherry in June-July in order to pursue her

doctoral research on Shaiva post-mortem rituals.

**Damian O'BRIEN** (Oxford University) spent a month (June-July) at the Pondicherry Centre to study Sanskrit.

**Vincenzo VERGIANI** ("La Sapienza" University, Rome) will be at the Pondicherry Centre from August to October in order to participate in the workshop "Engraving the King's Fame: Sanskrit Prasastis and Tamil Meykkirttis", and to complete his study on a section of the *Vakyapadiya*, a fundamental treatise on Sanskrit grammar.

**Alex WATSON** (Oxford University) returned to Pondicherry in July-August to continue work with Anjaneya Sarma and Dr. Dominic Goodall on their joint project on concepts of liberation in the *Paramoksanirasakarikavrtti* of Ramakantha (10th century).

**Professor Saroja BHATE**, former Head of the Department of the Sanskrit and Prakrit Languages, University of Pune, came to Pondicherry along with her two students, Prajakta Sarnaik and Sarita Kulkarni, in connection with her project to produce a critical edition of the *Kasikavrtti*, the earliest surviving complete Sanskrit commentary on the grammar of Panini.

## GOODBYE

### ....At the CSH

**Véronique DUPONT**, Director of the CSH and Head of the Urban Dynamics division, ended her tenure at the end of August. She is to rejoin the Institute of Research for Development, Paris.

**Nicolas GRAVEL**, Head of the Economic Transition division, left at the end of August. He is to rejoin the University of the Mediterranean (Aix-Marseille II).

**Benoît Tarroux**, doctoral student in economics, left the CSH in May.

**Chetna CHOPRA**, Librarian-Documentalist, left the CSH in July.

**Attreyee ROY CHOWDHURY**, Publications in-charge, left the CSH at the end of July.

**Kulmohan SINGH**, Accounts Assistant, left the CSH in July.

### ...at the IFP

**Fanny CHRETIEN** and **Margaux DECROIX**, two students from the *Centre National d'Etudes Agronomiques de Régions Chaudes* (CNEARC), Montpellier, France, joined the *Managing Biodiversity in Mountain Landscapes* project from 13th April to 15th August, 2007, as trainees, to work on the *Characterization of production systems integrating coffee plantations in the Western Ghats* under the supervision of Dr. Claude Garcia.

**Eléna Galán DEL CASTILLO** and **Eduardo Tarik Serrano TOVAR** from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain, joined the *Social Management of Water* project, as trainees, from 27th February to 8th

June, 2007, to work on *Water-users associations and traditional irrigation institutions. Traditional knowledge*, under the supervision of Dr. Olivia Aubriot.

### ...at the EFEO

**Mical WIESLAW**, doctoral student at the University of Hamburg, left Pondicherry after six months. He has been studying Sanskrit texts related to the worship of Kurukulla with Dr. Dominic Goodall.

## OBITUARY

### Demise of K. Venugopalan, well-loved Sanskritist

It is with sadness that we record the demise on 2nd August, 2007, of K. Venugopalan, a Sanskritist who was associated with the *École française d'Extrême-Orient* in Pune for more than 20 years. He specialized in Poetics and Indian Philosophy and worked in the Dictionary Department of the Deccan College for the "Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Sanskrit on Historical Principles". Those who study South Indian manuscripts are likely to have started doing so with his "A Primer in Grantha Characters" (1983) at their side. Many scholars from abroad who studied with him over the years will recall his delight in the reading of different genres as well as his friendly warmth.

## MILESTONES

### IFP

#### CD-ROM release: Pondicherry past and present

A bilingual (French-English) CD ROM, made by Dr. Jean Deloche and titled *Pondicherry Past and Present*, was released at the General Consulate of France in Pondicherry on 24th April, in the presence of Mr. Pradip Mehra, Chief Secretary to the Government of Pondicherry, the Mayor of Pondicherry and many other local figures.

This CD-ROM, edited by the IFP and the EFEO, is illustrated with magnificent plans and maps preserved in the French archives as well as a great variety of photos, old and new. It is at the same time an introduction to the history of Pondicherry, an inventory of its monuments and a town guide. As an invaluable document, it will be of interest not only to scholars and students, but also to the general public.

Contact: Dr. Jean Deloche  
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#### An ecologist of the IFP honoured in New Delhi

Dr. B.R. Ramesh, Research Director at the IFP's department of ecology, was unanimously selected for the prestigious "TN Khoshoo Memorial Award 2007" for "excellence in environmental studies". The award was presented to him in New Delhi on 25th April, 2007, in the presence of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, one of the "founders" of the Indian "green revolution", and Dr. Jairam Ramesh, the Indian Government's Minister of State for Commerce.

This distinction illustrates and confirms the interest shown in India in the studies undertaken by the IFP's department of ecology, as well as the important contribution of permanent Indian researchers. Dr. B.R. Ramesh, who has been working at the IFP for the past 25 years, is one of the best examples among them.

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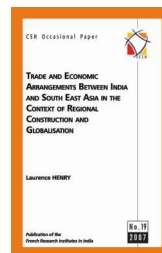
## PUBLICATIONS

### CSH

#### Trade and Economic Arrangements between India and South-East Asia in the Context of Regional Construction and Globalisation

Laurence Henry

CSH Occasional Paper 19, New Delhi, 2007, 124p



Economic and trade relations between India, on the one hand, and South-East Asia, on the other, are shaped by numerous agreements and groupings that may become formal international organizations in the future. They are indeed based not only on comprehensive economic agreements or free-trade

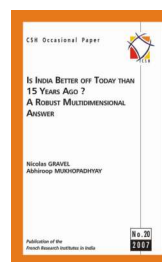
agreements between India and ASEAN or, at the bilateral level, with Thailand and Singapore in particular, but also on the BIMST-EC and the MGC groupings. Mainly informal and ad hoc arrangements in the past, they are today more institutionalized, founded on a more formal corpus of law. The paper first presents the regional initiatives, and the manner in which they are governed and managed. It then states that they are overlapping but, at the same time, also influenced by the same philosophy of trade and economic liberalization as well as the WTO system, in terms of law, institutions and dispute settlement. They are equally the result of multilateral, regional and bilateral tensions and aim to protect different interests at different levels. The paper finally discusses the possible influence of these arrangements between India and South-East Asia on the future organization of regional economic and trade integration in East Asia.

**Keywords:** economic agreements, free trade, regional cooperation and integration

#### Is India better off today than 15 years ago? A robust multidimensional answer

Nicolas Gravel & Abhiroop Mukhopadhyay

CSH Occasional Paper 20, New Delhi, 2007, 60p



This paper provides a robust normative evaluation of the spectacular growth episode that India has experienced in the last 15 years. Specifically, the paper compares the evolution, between 1988, 1996 and 2001, of the distribution of several individual attributes on the basis of ethically robust dominance criteria. The

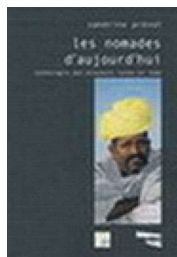
individual attributes considered are real consumption (measured at the individual level), literacy rate, infant mortality and violent crime rates (all measured at the district levels). District level variables are interpreted as (local) public goods which, along with consumption, are assumed to contribute to individual well-being. The robust criteria used are generalizations, to more than two attributes, of the first and second order dominance criteria of Atkinson and Bourguignon (1982) and are known to correspond to the unanimity of utilitarian value judgements taken over a specific class of individual utility functions. The main result of the empirical analysis is that all utilitarian rankings of distributions of the four attributes – which assume that individual utility functions satisfy the assumptions of second order dominance – show that India was better off in 2002 than in 1988 or 1996, but that these rankings disagree as to how to rank 1988 and 1996. Furthermore, if one removes crime from the list of attributes, the dominance is shown to apply steadily over the whole period.

**Keywords:** Poverty, welfare, dominance, multidimensional, development, local public goods

## IFP

### Les Nomades d'aujourd'hui. Ethnologie des éleveurs Raika en Inde.

Sandrine Prévot. Préface de Gilles Tarabout. Aux Lieux D'Etre in collaboration with the IFP (Distr. Aux Lieux d'Etre), 2007, 240p. ISBN: 978-2-916063-43-0. 25 €



The Raikas are a caste of breeders in the most arid zone of India, Rajasthan. Created, according to mythology, by Lord Shiva to breed camels, they are today sheep breeders. While this activity promotes the economic integration of Raikas in contemporary India, the economic and ecological

changes that have swept the country these past decades have paradoxically compelled this group to a nomadic life. However, the change in lifestyle has not resulted in any profound change in their social organization. Moreover, the pastoral social structure has also been preserved by the specificity of their marital system: marriage through exchange of sisters between two agnatic groups. Yet their increasing mobility isolates them from modern society, both culturally and socially. This might have no repercussions on their social structure if certain members of the caste, who choose to abandon their pastoral lifestyle in order to work in cities and who question the institution of marriage, do not initiate a split within the caste.

Sandrine Prévot has shared the life of the Raikas for over a year. In this book, she analyses the changes taking place in the pastoral way of life in the face of India's modernization, through a subtle description of the Raikas' daily life.

**Keywords:** pastoralism, caste, Rajasthan, Indian modernity

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