

The law on the autonomy of universities in France is creating a new environment for research and higher education, and will have a major impact on the French research centres and institutes abroad. In France, the creation of Poles of Research and Higher Education (PRES) and the regrouping of establishments theoretically allow the opening up of new specializations and hybrid structures, the development of transversal projects, and the opening of numerous perspectives, notably at the major university poles. This reform package, backed up by the Scientific and Technological Public Establishments (EPST) and notably by the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), will have an important impact on the methods of functioning of our centres. The governance of universities will thereby be profoundly modified, and the responsibility of the heads of centres will have to measure up to the challenges. The implementation of this reform will take time and the results will not be immediate.

In the rest of the world as in India, we are witnessing a similar movement with the creation of autonomous units and the multiplication of centres of excellence. The global economic crisis will shift and pinpoint the necessity to work on research topics that are new and/or open to other disciplines. We have to take advantage of these new opportunities, of these joint movements, in order to align our research centres to international standards and to make them progress to world-class level.

In order to achieve these objectives, the IFP, the CSH and the EFEO-Pondicherry have to, in the long-term and in partnership with our supervising authorities, establish new relationships with these major university poles, with the centres of excellence in India and abroad, in disciplines that are of importance to us. Based on our centres' internationally-recognized scientific contributions, it is essential to open up traditional topics to new disciplines, to create a new knowledge base by focusing on disciplinary interfaces. In this country, which is in constant progress and is exemplary of best international standards in numerous research domains, it will be of utmost necessity to initiate new types of relationships with institutions, in order to be integrated as far as possible in the research landscape of the host country as well as that of France. Without this necessary effort, we will be at best resource centres, and at worst, invisible to the Indian and French institutions of excellence.

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FOCUS

➤ Early Tantra Project

The *First International Workshop on Early Tantra* – the first of three workshops planned under the Franco-German "Early Tantra" project, an European Consortium of Asian Field Study (ECAAF) activity which is co-financed by the *Agence Nationale de la Recherche* and the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* and directed by Harunaga Isaacson (Hamburg University) and Dominic Goodall (EFEO, Pondicherry) – took place from 16th to 25th September 2008 at the Nepal Research Centre in Kathmandu.

The workshop brought together specialists from round the world to uncover and examine interrelationships between tantric traditions, particularly in their "ritual syntax", in the formative period of tantric literature (5th to 7th centuries AD). For two weeks, participants fruitfully read together and worked on draft editions of four important early tantric texts – the *Niśvāsaguhyasūtra*, the *Brahmayāmala*, the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*, and the *Trisamayārājantraṭīkā*. These works, two Śaiva and two Buddhist, exert distinct influence on the later traditions. Discussion focused on linguistic peculiarities and commonalities in the selected corpus, and on related problems of editing and interpretation. The reading sessions, held in the mornings, covered the following titles:

- ♦ *Niśvāsaguhyasūtra*: Chapter 3 (on rites for the attainment of supernatural powers) and Chapter 8 (an account of salvific initiation through worship of the divinities of each level of the cosmos). This work is being edited by a group at Pondicherry. The readings were led by Alexis Sanderson.
- ♦ *Brahmayāmala*: Chapter 21 (on the nine *vratas* and their associated goddesses) edited by Csaba Kiss; and Chapter 39 (on the 'Razor's Edge Observance' or *asidhāvrata*) edited by Shaman Hatley. The readings were led by Alexis Sanderson.
- ♦ *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*: Chapter 13 (on fire oblations), and Chapter 51 (on the preparation of a painting of the fierce god Yamāntaka and its use in ritual for aggressive purposes) edited by Martin Delhey. The readings were led by Alexis Sanderson and Martin Delhey (Ch.13) and Harunaga Isaacson (Ch.51).
- ♦ *Trisamayārājantraṭīkā*: An extract showing the relationship between the *trisamaya* and the *triratna*, and the *Yogācāra* flavour of the anonymous commentator's exegesis, edited and read by Harunaga Isaacson.

In the afternoons, participants presented papers on their research into the early tantric literature, which shed further light on some of the features shared by these *tantras*. Papers focused on the characteristics of a particular tantric system, or presented up-to-date surveys of some aspect of the field. The opening and closing presentations of the Workshop, given by Alexis Sanderson and Péter Szántó respectively, were designated open lectures,

and during these sessions local scholars and visitors filled the meeting room to capacity.

The lectures were as follows: Alexis Sanderson (Oxford), "The Saiva Age"; Csaba Kiss (EFEO), "Introduction to the *Brahmayāmala*"; Shaman Hatley (Concordia), "On the Relationship between the *Brahmayāmala* and the *Dīkṣottara*"; Dominic Goodall (EFEO), "*Vidyādīkṣā* and *Muktīdīkṣā*: initiations in the *Niśvāsa*-corpus"; Diwakar Acharya (Kyoto), "The *Jayottaratantra*: the Urtext of the *Jayākhyasamhitā*"; Michael Slouber (UC Berkeley), "The Earliest Sources for the Bhūta and Gāruḍa Tantras"; Nirakan Kafle (EFEO), "A Summary of Chapter 14 of the *Niśvāsaguhyaśūtra*"; Martin Delhey (Hamburg), "The *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* and its Early Nepalese Witness"; Harunaga Isaacson (Hamburg), "Remarks on *Trisamayārajantra* material surviving in Sanskrit"; Péter-Dániel Szántó (Oxford), "Notes on the *Catuṣpīṭha*, an early Buddhist *yoginītantra*".

Editions of all four texts studied in the Workshop are currently under preparation as part of the Early Tantra project. Selected papers from the Workshop may be published in connection with this project, as part of a separate volume. It has been planned that the second Workshop will take place at the EFEO Centre in Pondicherry, India, in 2009.

For more details, see the links at <http://www.tantric-studies.org/projects/early-tantra/>

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RESEARCH

CSH

➤ Indo-Pak Nuclear Deterrence

A part of the ongoing project "Nuclear Deterrence in Second Tier States" at the CSH, the paper entitled "Indo-Pak Nuclear Deterrence", presented at the Centre in September 2008, examined the nuclear behaviour of India and Pakistan in order to understand the functioning of deterrence between two nuclear armed neighbours that share a troubled history and still have unresolved territorial disputes. Through the experiences of the Kargil conflict and Operation *Parakram*, both of which tested Indo-Pak

nuclear deterrence, the paper highlighted lessons for not only the two nations, but also for the larger international community.

On the basis of analytical literature available on the subject, the paper tested three hypotheses: one, that when a relatively weaker power that also harbours revisionist ambitions acquires nuclear weapons, its new status prompts it to engage in more confrontational adventures even against a more powerful adversary to alter the existing status quo. Pakistan tried to do that in Kargil in 1999. Secondly, that with time and better understanding of the unique nature of nuclear weapons and deterrence, brash nuclear behaviour often settles down into a more mature and constrained response to situations. The actions of India and Pakistan during Operation *Parakram* in 2001-02 proved this. Thirdly, once it is understood that nuclear weapons are for deterrence and not warfighting, even countries with small nuclear arsenals behave no differently from states that possess several thousands of such weapons. The assumption that small nuclear arsenals and rudimentary command and control lend themselves to temptations of nuclear use is misplaced. Credible nuclear deterrence between India and Pakistan would hold on the same bases it has held elsewhere – fear of nuclear destruction, imposition of unacceptable damage, and the ability to rationally calculate and weigh the benefits against the costs.

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➤ The Economic Reform Process in Kerala

This case study is part of an ongoing research project at the CSH called "Economic Reforms, Regional Economies and Evolving Federal Governance", directed by Dr. Loraine Kennedy. The overall objective of the project is to study the economic reform process and its implications at different levels of analysis. The point of departure is India's uneven growth process in the wake of reforms, across sectors and across national territory. The research will undertake to explain these inter-regional variations by focussing on the response of a select number of state governments to reforms in rhetoric and action, and on their growth strategies.

This particular case study of Kerala examined the scope and impact of economic reforms implemented in the state since 1991. Kerala is generally known for its remarkable human

development indicators and for the high level of political consciousness of its population, resulting in demands for progressive social policies. In our study, three main aspects of the reform process were identified: the content and sequencing of reforms, the political economy of reform implementation, and the outcomes of the economic policies in terms of both economic and social indicators. For this purpose, more than 30 interviews were conducted with actors from various sectors within Kerala's society: government officials, leaders of opposition parties, scholars, journalists and representatives from private companies and Chambers of Commerce.

As a result of these exchanges with a wide variety of actors implicated in the reform process, a number of hypotheses have emerged that will soon be tested in our next round of field studies in Haryana and Madhya Pradesh.

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➤ Religious innovation and social assertion: The *Ravidassia* disciples of Sant Niranjan Dass, in India and around the world

Religious identity in India is closely linked with the caste one belongs to and conversion to a new system of rituals and beliefs is often seen as a means to improve a low caste status. The objective of the present research work is to go further into the analysis of new religious movements which aim at reforming the position of one *jati* in the caste hierarchy. The focus of the work is the popular institution which spearheads the *Ravidassia* assertion: the Dera Sant Sarwan Dass Ji, located in the Doab region of Punjab. Most of the followers of this *dera* - a sacred place for a living guru and his disciples - belong to the Chamar - a lower caste whose traditional occupation was leather work - population of Punjab. This study will particularly analyse the different religious strategies adopted by a sect, close to Sikhism, in order to annihilate one's caste origin. It also seeks to question the impact of religious conversion on collective as well as personal identity. Moreover, the attempt will be to evaluate the actual capacity of a heterodox sect to succeed in the process of redefining the position of its followers in the hierarchy of castes and, more deeply, in reforming the caste system.

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EFEO

➤ The Cankam Project

The “Cankam Project” conducted by the Pondicherry Centre of the EFEO has received a reinforcement after the first publication of the project series by Dr. Eva Wilden (Paris, Hamburg) has been launched, for Dr. Thomas Lehmann (South Asia Institute, Heidelberg) has joined the Pondicherry Centre within the framework of the European Consortium of Asian Field Study (ECAAF), and will be devoting his energies to Cankam literature.

The “Cankam Project” consists of (1) the search for and identification of manuscripts of Classical Tamil Cankam literature in various manuscript libraries and other institutions in Tamil Nadu and the digitization of these manuscripts; (2) the preparation of critical editions and annotated translations of the Cankam texts; and (3) the composition of an Electronic Dictionary of Cankam Literature, based on the individual word indices contained in the critical editions. The project is managed by Dr. Eva Wilden (EFEO Paris/University of Hamburg) and Dr. Jean-Luc Chevillard (CNRS, Paris).

After the publication of the critical edition and annotated translation of the Cankam text *Narrinai* in 2008, the three following Cankam texts are being worked upon at present: *Kuruntokai* by Dr. Eva Wilden, *Ainkurunuru* by Dr. Thomas Lehmann and *Kalittokai* by Dr. T. Rajeswari. The publication of these texts has been planned for 2009, 2010 and 2011. Missions to various institutions and libraries in Tamil Nadu in search of Cankam manuscripts and the process of their digitization have been intensified. Contacts have also been established with the National Library in Kolkata, which holds quite a number of manuscripts that transmit Cankam texts.

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EVENTS

Lectures/Seminars/Round Tables/Workshops

(For more information, please consult our respective websites)

CSH

International Seminar on *National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in India: Impacts and Implementation Experiences*

organized by CSH in collaboration with Institute of Human Development, New Delhi at India International Centre, New Delhi on 16th-17th September 2008. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) 2005 is a landmark in the history of social security legislation in India after independence. A legislation of this nature is bound to have repercussions at different levels, right from altering the socio-economic conditions of the affected districts to altering the social dynamics which presently weigh heavily against the disadvantaged and the poor in these backward districts. Given the importance of this Act in changing the landscape of rural India, CSH organized an international seminar to do a stock-taking of the implementation of the NREGA in the last three years.

The initial call for papers for this seminar received an overwhelming response. Apart from the papers that were submitted, a large number of papers were also invited from experts working on issues related to public works and implementation of NREGA. The seminar was attended by many policy makers and academicians working within the country as well as abroad. It was inaugurated by Ms Rita Sharma, Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development. Key policy makers who participated in the deliberations of the seminar included Ms Amita Sharma, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development; Prof Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission; Mr. Yugandhar, Member, Planning Commission and Prof Jean Drèze, Member, Central Employment Guarantee Council. This occasion was also utilized to present the preliminary research findings of the ongoing research at CSH on NREGA. Prof Nicolas Gravel, GREQAM made a presentation of the findings. Dr Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, Minister for Rural Development gave the valedictory address. The deliberations of the meeting are now being finalized for publication.

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Emerging issues in social sciences: a Franco-Indian perspective. This research seminar, organized by the Centre de Sciences Humaines, consists of a series of dialogues between French and Indian scholars, aiming to take stock of, and to publicize, recent evolutions in the theory and methodology of French and Indian social sciences. It is meant to develop a collective reflection on the relationship between theories, methods and research objects, on how theories frame our apprehension of “reality”, and vice versa.

The third session took place on 19th September 2008 in the School of Social Sciences, JNU, and had two panels. The first panel, with Prof Romain Bertrand (Sciences-Po, Paris), and Prof Tanika Sarkar (JNU), was devoted to “Current trends in French and Indian colonial studies”. The second panel focused on “The development of gendered studies of political activism in France and India”. The speakers were Prof Olivier Fillieule (University of Lausanne), and Urvashi Butalia, feminist scholar and publisher.

The fourth session, on 14th November 2008, took place in the Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, JNU. Dr Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal (CSH) and Prof Niraja Gopal Jayal (JNU) compared “Theories and experiences of participation in France and India”.

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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>

International Seminar on *The commercialization of Local Knowledge* jointly organized by the IFP, the University of Warwick, UK, and the Centre for Indian and South Asian Studies (CEIAS), France, and held at the IFP on 5th to 6th November 2008. For a long time, local knowledge was synonymous with indigenous knowledge, traditional knowledge and seemed to be linked with the idea of small territory and local identity. Yet, the rise of a moral awareness has led to a policy of conservation and gathering of local knowledge under the control of international organisations (UNESCO, NGO) which tend to assimilate local knowledge to a natural resource meant to be preserved.

The development of commercial interests for local knowledge in a vast range of domains (medicine, pharmacopeas, astrology, etc) shows the involvement of multi-national companies as well as local initiatives. These shifts point out the tensions and the predicament provoked by the globalization of local knowledge.

The issues surrounding local knowledge, can offer some useful methodological foundations for rethinking this link between knowledge and market. Focusing on the 'commercialization of local knowledge', this conference addressed both the process of commodification of 'local knowledge' and the circulation of 'local knowledge'.

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Lecture on *Modelling of forest fires in the Western Ghats*, at the IFP on 30th September 2008. Given that the Western Ghats (WG) represent an area of high biological interest, the main objective was to model the spatial distribution of fires in the WG from a set of localities of fire occurrences (detected by the satellite MODIS) and a set of environmental variables (i.e. vegetation, topography and climate) used as inputs in a statistical model (i.e. Maxent). The focus was on the evaluation of the predictive power of such fire distribution models depending on the environmental variables used as inputs and especially depending on the data sources of the climatic variables. Further studies have to be done to identify the best predictive model and to quantify the relative importance of biophysical parameters known to affect the likelihood of fire occurrence.

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WELCOME

...At the CSH

Nicolas DE BEAUREGARD, Ecole Militaire de Saint-Cyr, joined the CSH in September 2008 for 3 months (as part of an agreement between the two institutions).

Charlène SIMON, a doctoral student in the Centre for the Study of India and South Asia (CEIAS, CNRS-EHESS, Paris), joined the International Relations division of CSH in October 2008 as an affiliated student for a one-year fellowship to work on the Ravidassia movement in India and around the world. (See **Research**)

Arpita MITRA, Publications in-charge, joined the CSH in November 2008.

Dalal BENBABAALI is a doctoral student of economic and social geography at the University of Paris X and is working on migration and upward mobility of Kamma community, a dominant caste of Andhra Pradesh. She joined the Economics division of CSH on 21st November 2008 as an affiliated student for a one-year fellowship.

...At the IFP

Prof. Velayudom MARIMOUTOU took up his post as Director of the French Institute of Pondicherry (IFP) on 16th September 2008. He succeeds Dr. Jean-Pierre Muller who headed the Institute during the last five years.

Prof. Marimoutou, Ph.D in Economics, was previously Deputy Scientific Director in the SHS department of the French National Agency for Scientific Research (CNRS). He was also the Director of the GREQAM, a mixed research unit of the CNRS in Economics, and was Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Management at the University of Montesquieu, Bordeaux 4, France. He is the author of numerous papers in economics, applied econometrics and econometrics.

We extend him a warm welcome. We are sure that his past experiences as head of large and renowned scientific centres will contribute to the development, growth and influence of the French Institute of Pondicherry.

T. NITHYA, holder of an M.Sc in Computer Science, joined the *Built-Up Areas in India (e-GEOPOLIS)* project on 17th November 2008, for a one-year period, to enter and digitize relevant data, under the supervision of Dr. Frédéric Borne.

...At the EFEO

Leah COMEAU, doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania, is staying in Pondicherry from 29th September to 4th February, where she is studying the *Tirukkovaiyar* with T. S. Gangadharan (EFEO).

Csaba KISS, who has completed a doctorate on the *Matsyendrasamhita* at the University of Oxford, spent the month of October studying with the EFEO's Shaiva reading group in Pondicherry. He is currently working on a critical edition of parts of the *Brahmayamala-Tantra* as part of the Franco-German (ANR-DFG) project on "Early Tantra", a collaboration between the EFEO and the University of Hamburg.

Dr. Greg BAILEY (La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia) visited the EFEO Centre in Pondicherry during September 2008. He worked on the *Periyapuramam* and collected materials on the influence of early Buddhism on the development of the *Mahabharata*.

Dr. J.-L. CHEVILLARD (CNRS – Université Paris 7) spent three weeks from 25th October to 14th November to work in collaboration with the members of the Pondicherry Centre on the publication of the proceedings of the EFEO-CIIL colloquium "Towards an Internal Chronology of Theories in Ilakkannam" which took place from 29th February to 2nd March 2008.

Alberta FERRARIO, a doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania, returns to Pondicherry in December for a period of 3 months to participate in the EFEO's Shaiva reading group.

Dr. Corinna WESSELS-MEVISSSEN visited Pondicherry in December as part of her study of ritual lamps and the sculptures of Darasuram.

Dr. Edeltraud HARZER (University of Texas at Austin, USA) visited the EFEO Centre in December to pursue work on her current projects, one on the *Mahabharata* and the other on altar art.

Phaedra BOUVET, a doctoral student of architecture from the University of Paris X has received an EFEO scholarship to continue her research on the study of ceramic artefacts that attest to the first exchanges between the Indian subcontinent and South-East Asia.

Natasja BOSMA, a doctoral student from the University of Groningen, will be visiting the Pondicherry Centre of the EFEO in December and January to better understand the Shaiva religious context relevant to her study of the history of the area once known as Dakshina Kosala. Her research is funded by the Dutch (NWO-funded) project whose principal aim is to edit the old *Skandapurana*.

GOODBYE

...At the CSH

Marie-Hélène ZERAH, Head of the Division of Urban Studies left CSH at the end of July 2008. She continues to be associated with CSH projects and is one of the coordinators, along with Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal, of the project on "Democracy and Urban Governance in India and South Africa".

Laurent GAYER, Head of the Division of International Relations left the CSH in

September 2008, but continues to be associated with CSH projects.

Rupa SENGUPTA, Publications in-charge left the CSH in September 2008.

...At the IFP

Quentin RENARD, Bio-Engineer from the University of Gembloux, Belgium, who had joined the *Dynamics of Forest Diversity* project on 1st June 2008 to study cases of forest fires in the Western Ghats, under the supervision of Dr. Raphaël PELISSIER, left on 30th September 2008.

...At the EFEO

Marcus FISHBURN (Oxford University) left Pondicherry after spending a month studying Sanskrit texts with Mr. Krishnamachari.

Andrea ACRI, a doctoral student at the University of Leiden studying the Shaiva Tatur literature of Indonesia, left Pondicherry after spending four months pursuing his studies on Shaivism and participating in the Shaiva reading group at the EFEO.

MILESTONES

CSH

A special prize for research during internship

Between April and July 2008, two students of *Ecole Polytechnique*, Loïc Watine and Florian Bersier, participated, under the supervision of Dr. Himanshu, in the joint research project conducted by the London School of Economics (LSE) and the CSH entitled *Palanpur: India's economic 'revolution': A perspective from six decades of economic development in a north Indian village*. They have been awarded a special prize – *Prix du Stage de Recherche* – by the *Ecole Polytechnique* for their research dissertation during internship. This is the second time that *Polytechnique* students who have come to CSH have got this prize.

A redesigned and updated website for the CSH

The new version of the CSH New Delhi website has been launched on 10th October 2008. The whole database has been updated and **RSS** (Really Simple Syndication) feeds have been added on the homepage.



PUBLICATIONS

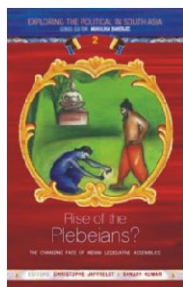
CSH

Rise of the Plebeians? The Changing Face of Indian Legislative Assemblies

Editors: Christophe Jaffrelot & Sanjay Kumar
Series: Exploring the Political in South Asia
Series Editor: Mukulika Banerjee

Routledge, in association with CSH, CSDS and CERI-SciencesPo., 2009

Language: English. 530 pp. Hardback Rs 895
ISBN 978-0-415-46092-7



This book traces the changing social profile of the elected representatives of Indian states and, in turn, points to an uneven democratization of the regional political class. In view of the crucial role that caste plays in state politics in India, the book examines

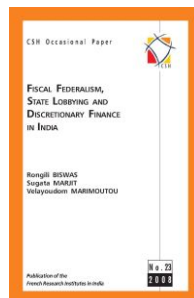
how India's caste-based social diversity gets translated into politics by tracking the individual trajectory of 16 states since the 1950s to the present times. It focuses on one dominant parameter – the caste background of the elected representatives in state legislatures, i.e., Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), even as it factors other instrumental indicators such as their occupation, gender, age, and education. One of the first comprehensive studies of the sociological patterns of Indian political personnel at the state level, the work will be of interest to scholars of political science, modern political history, sociology, South Asian studies as well as the general reader.

Keywords: caste, political representation, sociological profile of Indian political personnel

Fiscal Federalism, State Lobbying and Discretionary Finance in India

Rongili Biswas, Sugata Marjit & Velayudom Marimoutou

CSH Occasional Paper 23, New Delhi, 2008



In a quasi-federal democratic polity such as India's, lobbying for central funds by the states is often done in a covert fashion. The present paper is one of the first attempts at constructing certain proxy political variables to quantify the extent of such lobbying in

India. Here an effort has been made to quantify lobbying in terms of ministerial representation in the council of ministers. Several time and state dummies have been used to account for the constituent states' political alignment with the Centre as well as the 'breaks' in the Indian system represented by economic reforms and the advent of coalition politics. Taking panel data covering 20 years and 14 major states, the study shows that its constructed variables do explain disparity in central fund disbursements under the discretionary head in a robust way. Discretionary disbursement mainly refers to that part of the central fiscal disbursement to states distributed through union ministries or the Planning Commission but which is, at every instance, non-formulaic. These findings remain valid even after the impact of income on the transfers has been taken into account, dealing with it as an endogenous variable. Finally, the present exercise leaves open the question whether coalition governments and economic reform measures tend to impact on state lobbying at the Centre in a significant manner.

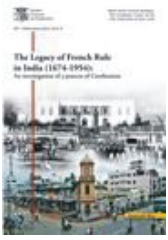
Keywords: state lobbying, discretionary disbursement, political variables

IFP

The Legacy of French Rule in India (1674-1954): an Investigation of a Process of Creolization

Animesh Rai, IFP - Publications Hors série n° 8, IFP / Henri Peyre French Institute of CUNY, 2008, viii, 251 p.

Language: English. 500 Rs (18 Euros)
ISBN: 978-81-8470-167-8



Creolization can be defined as an interaction of heterogeneous cultures leading to a new and unexpected reality. This book is an attempt to investigate whether or not nearly three centuries of French presence (1674-1954) in the former French territories of India (Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahé, Yanam and Chandernagore) have led to creolization. Can one say that there are traces of French colonization, language and culture in the former enclaves? If so, what is their significance with respect to India as a nation? The investigation has been based on an analysis of historical facts and ground realities gauged from an observation of local life and conversations with people of these territories.

Keywords: creolization, former French territories of India

Tibetan Medicine in the Contemporary World. Global Politics of Medical Knowledge and Practice

Laurent Pordié, London and New York: Routledge (Needham Research Institute Series, Cambridge), 2008, 271 p.

*Language: English (120 Euros)
ISBN: 978-0-415-44789-8*



The popularity of Tibetan medicine plays a central role in the international market for alternative medicine and has been increasing and extending far beyond its original cultural area becoming a global phenomenon. This book analyses Tibetan medicine in

the 21st century by considering the contemporary reasons that have led to its diversity and by bringing out the common orientations of this medical system. Using case studies that examine the social, political and identity dynamics of Tibetan medicine in Nepal, India, the PRC, Mongolia, the UK and the US, this book answers the following three fundamental questions: what are the modalities and issues involved in the social and therapeutic transformations of Tibetan medicine? How are national policies and health reforms connected to the processes of contemporary redefinition of this medicine? How does Tibetan medicine fit into the present, globalized context of the medical world? This volume will be invaluable to students and scholars interested in contemporary medicine, Tibetan studies, health studies and the anthropology of Asia.

Keywords: Tibetan medicine, modern institutionalization, politics of knowledge, therapeutic globalization

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