CHANGING PATTERNS OF SECULARISM, RELIGIOUS VITALITY AND RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN INDIA // *CHANGEMENTS DES MODÈLES DE SÉCULARITÉ, VITALITÉ RELIGIEUSE ET VIOLENCE RELIGIEUSE EN INDE*

N. J. DEMERATH III.
University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA
demerath@soc.umass.edu

Pathans Reading Gandhi: **Khudai Khitmatgars Engagement with Non-violent Political Islam and Positive Masculinities**

BABAR, Aneela Z. (Monash University, Australia)

Aneela.Babar@adm.monash.edu.au

I borrow from Pratt's reference to Andersons' observation of communities being distinguished in *the style in which they are imagined* by analyzing the language of 'positive masculinities' employed by the Khudai Khitmatgars of North Western Frontier Province in pre-partition Pakistan. I do this by examining how this movement during the Indian nationalists' struggle against colonialism 'grappled' with Orientalist imagination of the Pathans as 'the martial, hyper masculine race', engaged with the Gandhian principle of non violence and managed to execute the ideal of 'positive masculinity' through their code of what constitutes as the 'complete man' from a framework (both cultural and religious) that was local to their region. By coming up with their alternative discourse of Pukhtoonwali (the code of Pathans) and becoming fervent Gandhians I narrate the social space in pre-Partition North West Frontier Province and how the adoption of non-violence did not see the scale of communal violence in the province that the rest of South Asia did at the time of partition. Sadly, as Banerjee (2000) narrates post partition they faced the brunt of political violence and repression by successive Pakistani regimes; with none of the prestige, acknowledgement in history books and recognition that their colleagues elsewhere in South Asia received, the Khitmatgar's discourse remains contested in today's Pakistan. In my paper, I attempt to catalogue a narrative of the Khudai Khitmatgar's mediations with definitions of masculinity, religious identity, and honor.

Redefining the Premises of the "Secular": problematizing the Religion-Political Alliance

GHOSH, Ranjan (Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut, Essen, Germany)
nonhistorian@rediffmail.com

Given the intricacies of an inextricable alliance between religion and politics, the defining premises of 'secularism' within the Indian subcontinent become deeply problematic. The paper, in the first part, tries to understand what makes religion and politics so unavoidably

intermeshed in the history of India as a nation. So how do we re-view "secularism" now when we know separating politics and religion can, at times, be nearly insuperable within the contexts of the contemporary upsurge of religious fundamentalism, religious revivalism and manipulative majoritarian politics? The paper also investigates the stunted definition of the term secular in the Indian constitution with brief references to the constituent assembly debates leading up to the framing of the Indian constitution (1952). How have we really come to understand the word 'secular'? Questioning several contemporary socio-political-religious development (communalisation of history text books, Shah Bano case, the VHP and its mandir-agenda etc.), the paper argues the inappropriateness of secular concepts imported from the West as means to interpret the complex psyche of the subcontinent. Interpreting such issues, the paper finally argues that secularism is not the ideology of the post-religious world and tries to develop a fresh perspective within the religio-political-social complexities of the subcontinental existence.

Local Religious Tradition of Living Together as an Alternative to Secularism: Towards an Understanding of the Politics of Hindu Communalism and Communal Harmony in Kerala, South India.

SANTOSH. Raghavan Nair (Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, India)
r_santho@yahoo.co.in

This paper analyses the process through which traditional religious spaces and symbols like local temples and festival processions are appropriated by Hindu right wing organizations as a strategy to facilitate communal mobilization in a costal village in Kerala, south India. While these strategies have been successful to a great extent, the anti-Hindutva forces in the village, especially the Communist party, a section of Muslims and Dalits, adopt similar strategies of using the religious processions to disseminate the message of communal harmony to counter the propagation of Hindutva ideology. The paper argues that the adoption of a visibly Hindu religious symbols to propagate communal harmony by these secular and non-Hindu groups is not emanating from the hegemonic notion of 'tolerating the other', rather it is a process of revitalizing the living tradition of pluralistic and harmonious co-existence. The politics of Counter-hegemonic forces against the communal mobilization of Hindutva only tries to protect the local religious tradition of living together above the differences but with all the differences in their respective identities.

Cette étude analyse le processus par lequel des espaces et des symboles réligieux traditionnels tels les temples locaux et les processions de festival sont appropriés par des organismes hindous de l'aile droite comme stratégie pour faciliter la mobilisation communale dans un village côtier au Kerala, l'Inde du sud. Tandis que ces stratégies ont été couronnées de succ s en grande partie, les forces d'anti-hindutva dans le village, particuli rement le parti communiste, une section de musulmans et dalits adoptent les stratégies semblables d'employer les processions réligieuses pour disséminer le message de l'harmonie communale pour parer la propagation de l'idéologie hindutva. L' étude maintient que l'adoption des symboles réligieux visiblement hindous pour propager l'harmonie communale par ces groupes séculaires et non hindous n'émane pas de la notion hégémonique de 'tolérer l'autre', il est plutôt un processus de révitaliser la tradition vivante de la coexistence pluralistic et harmonieuse. La politique des contre- forces hégémoniques contre la mobilisation

communale du hindutva essaie seulement de protéger la tradition réligieuse locale de la vie ensemble au-dessus des différences mais avec toutes les différences dans leurs identités respectives.