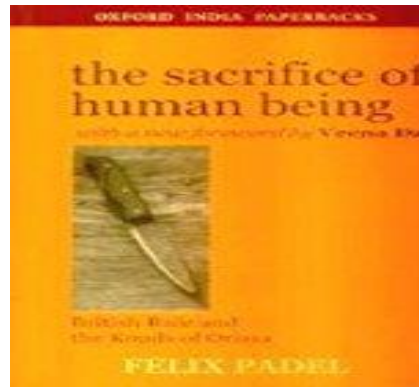




CENTRE FOR WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY

Two papers on *Tribal India*

13th January, 2017, 4 p.m-6 p.m. ROOM- FULTON-202



Felix Padel: Reverse Anthropology - Revisiting the fieldwork behind *The Sacrifice of Human Being* in the context of colonial & present-day 'structural violence' in tribal India

Tribal communities have changed out of all recognition in the 35 years since I started fieldwork; and so have outside influences and ways of understanding them. Kond areas have been inundated by violence from Maoists and security forces, as well as the Kandhamal riots of 2008. Certain features echo the violence of initial penetration or conquest by East India Company forces from the 1830s-60s. Reversing the gaze 'upwards', to analyse the social groups at the top of the power structures, makes ever more sense, and offers fresh frameworks for the researcher, as well as a means to make sense of grassroots perceptions.

Felix Padel is an anthropologist trained in Oxford and Delhi Universities who has worked on tribal and environmental issues in India. This talk revisits his first book, originally published in 1995 as 'The Sacrifice of Human Being: British Rule and the Konds of Orissa', with an expanded edition in 2010, 'Sacrificing People: Invasions of a Tribal Landscape'. His 2nd book is with Samarendra Das, 'Out of This Earth: East India Adivasis and the Aluminium Cartel', and his 3rd is 'Ecology Economy: Quest for a Socially Informed Connection' (2013)

Malvika Gupta: A Hidden History and its Genocidal Legacy - Tribal Education in India and the Normalisation of Boarding Schools

Discourse on India's tribal communities focuses on the 'literacy gap': Adivasis are among the least literate or 'educated' group in India, with women lagging even further behind. What this masks is a 'stolen generation' policy of assimilation, that contradicts the official policy of 'integration'. According to careful policies formulated from the 1950s on, Adivasi schools were meant to use tribal mother tongues, employ tribal teachers, and incorporate a lot of tribal culture into the curriculum. What happened is the opposite: Adivasi children are still being ridiculed and punished at school if they speak their own language. One result is the rapid decline of hundreds of ancient languages, tied to nature-based economies that are sustainable in the long-term sense, that are simultaneously undermined by the large-scale boarding schools for tribal children, often funded by the very mining companies who are grabbing tribal lands; and by the alienation of 'educated' children who, if they return to their communities at all, have learnt nothing of their traditional knowledge and value systems. This decline in 'Adivasi economics', and countless nature-based skills, forms part of an on-going cultural genocide taking place in India.

Malvika Gupta is a researcher from Delhi University, whose M.Phil thesis, 'Critical Analysis of Tribal Education Policies'(2016), shows the assimilationism that contradicts post-Independence efforts to integrate tribal cultures with the mainstream. She is currently a consultant to UNESCO on a project aimed at spreading peace education and Sustainable Development in Asian countries.

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