

Abstracts



Navigating Patriarchy: Reflections on Field Work in Pakistan

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In this paper we, two women researchers, reflect on our field research experiences in Pakistan. While we have quite different positionalities and worked in disparate research contexts, we had to navigate strikingly similar power and gender dynamics in Pakistan. Drawing on extensive fieldwork for our Ph.D. studies, we discuss some of the ethical challenges that emerge for researchers when working in patriarchal contexts. We show that many of the uncomfortable situations women researchers have to navigate in such patriarchal contexts are connected to the notion of feminine respectability. We describe and reflect on how, in between switching identities, usually, instinctually, we had to complete the research at the cost of letting go, easing, or thinking nothing of our own and social expectations and values.

Just Lunch: An Ethnography of School Meals and Poverty in Delhi

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The guiding question of my PhD research was: To what extent does the Indian Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) contribute to reducing inequalities? I conducted ethnographic research at two government primary schools in South Delhi, in the surrounding living areas and at an NGO-run kitchen from which the schools receive the food under the MDMS. My analysis examines the extent to which the common meal reduces/reproduces inequalities in the space of the school and also traces the recreation of gender and caste inequalities in the food production processes. Moreover, on a more general level, I discuss how, by whom, according to which rationalities and with what consequences the MDMS is governed revealing how welfare, humanitarian, neoliberal and rights based approaches coexist and intersect in this scheme.

"Don't say the P-Word": Intimate Insights of a Pakistani Heritage Scholar in Contemporary India

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The relationship between India and Pakistan has been deeply hostile since partition. The mutual animosity has resulted in policies under which nationals of both countries are usually prohibited from visiting the other country. But these policies are not even limited to nationals, but also to non-nationals when they possess an Indian or Pakistani family background. Having a Pakistani background, I was able to enter India nevertheless for long-term study purposes. In my talk, I would like to describe the intersubjective collisions when partaking in Indian public life and interacting with national institutions such as a university. I intend to illuminate the everyday forms of resistance (Scott, 1985) and strategies to deal with the antagonistic public transcript concerning Pakistan in contemporary India.

Impact of Watershed Development Projects on Small-Scale Farming Systems and their Adaptation to Climate Sensitive Factors

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An ancient tool to deal with floods and droughts caused by monsoon climate exists in many Asian countries. The excess water from periods of intense rainfall is stored in small lakes and ponds, to save the water for drier seasons. This water can be used for irrigation and groundwater recharge. Focus of the project is to investigate the system in Southern India, how it developed over time and how it can help to overcome negative impacts caused by climate change today.