

New Directions in Bangladesh Studies A Symposium

Abstract

Driven by powerful new economic vectors, including the globalization of migrant labor and the garments industry, counterintuitive development markers, a globally assertive diaspora, and a challenge to Indian hegemony within South Asian studies, Bangladesh Studies has moved in exciting new directions in the last decade in terms of research agendas and methodologies. The growing coherence of the field has been made possible by the growth of a university network in Bangladesh, increased collaborations between scholars and activists inside and outside Bangladesh, the growing prominence of the *Journal of Bangladesh Studies*, and the establishment of a Center for Bangladesh Studies at University of California, Berkeley. The speakers at this symposium, representing a range of disciplines and institutional ranks and affiliations, are engaged in scholarship about Bangladesh that pushes beyond the longstanding preoccupations with development and security and beyond the boundedness of present-day national borders and national history. These scholars are decolonizing and reanimating Bangladesh studies by defining the field of Bangladesh studies as expansively, generously, and inclusively as possible, by challenging the hierarchies in development studies, literary studies, gender studies, South Asian Studies, and Islamic studies that have long cast East Bengal, East Pakistan, and Bangladesh and those who live there on the periphery of these fields—and as recipients, not producers, of knowledge.

Three of the four symposium sessions will highlight new interdisciplinary approaches to a wide range of topics: the occlusion of the peasant in postcolonial knowledge production, the challenges posed by the climate crisis for different groups, and relations of friendship and control within and across generations of women. The fourth session will be a larger discussion led by the authors of recent English-language monographs on Bangladesh and the editor of the *Journal of Bangladesh Studies* about academic publishing about Bangladesh both within Bangladesh and the United States.

Proposed Schedule

8:30–8:45 am: **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

8:45–10:15 am: **Ilyas's *Khwabnama*, the Coming Community, and the Missing Peasant**

Assistant Professor, Lahore University of Management Sciences

Associate Professor, Columbia University

Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins University

Clinical Associate Professor, New York University

Lecturer (Doctoral Scale), Queen's College

Professor, BRAC University

10:15–10:30 am: All-Conference Break

10:30 am–12 pm: **The State, Environment, and Development in Bangladesh**

Associate Professor, Manhattanville College

Associate Professor, Syracuse University

PhD student, York University

Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Oslo

Professor, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

12:00–1:45 pm: Lunch Break

1:45–3:15 pm: **Academic Publishing on Bangladesh in Bangladesh and the US**

Associate Professor, Colgate University

Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins University

Associate Professor, University at Buffalo

Professor, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

Professor, University of Oregon

3:30–3:45 pm: All-Conference Break

3:45–5:15 pm: **Configuring the Sisterhood: Friends, Kins, and Weak Ties**

Associate Professor, Colgate University

Associate Professor, University at Buffalo

Associate Professor, Worcester State University

Postdoctoral Fellow, Colgate University

Professor, University of California, Berkeley

Professor, University of Massachusetts, Boston

5:15–5:30 pm **Concluding Discussion**