

Care-work for colonial and contemporary white families in India: a historical-anthropological study of the racialized romanticism of the Ayah

An online event held on 7 July 2020 at the International Inequalities Institute, London School of Economics

00:34:28 III: Introducing today's talk is Professor Beverley Skeggs who is a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Sociology at Lancaster University. She is convenor of the Global Economies of Care research theme at the International Inequalities Institute, LSE. Twitter: @bevskggs

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/International-Inequalities/People/Beverley-Skeggs>

00:34:50 III: Today's event is being chaired by Alpa Shah, Associate Professor-Reader in Anthropology at LSE. Alpa read geography at Cambridge, trained in anthropology at LSE, and taught anthropology at Goldsmiths, University of London until 2013, when she returned to LSE. More details about her work are at <https://www.alpashah.co.uk/>.

00:35:11 III: If you would like to receive regular updates about the work of the International Inequalities Institute, please subscribe to the III mailing list for information about research, events, news and Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity updates.

<https://us13.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=4dcb78153313832454ad0afc2&id=02677df8b9>

00:35:24 III: Please note that we are recording today's event, and all being well, we hope to share the video of this event later on via the International Inequalities Institute's website.

Details of today's event:

00:35:41 III: Speakers: Dr Satyasikha Chakraborty (The College of New Jersey) and Dr Shalini Grover (International Inequalities Institute, London School of Economics)

Discussants: Professor Nandini Gooptu (University of Oxford) and Professor Swapna M. Banerjee (Brooklyn College of the City University of New York)

00:36:13 III: The Twitter hashtag for today's event is #LSECare

00:37:25 III: Speaking next: Satyasikha Chakraborty, who is Assistant Professor and a historian of South Asia and the British Empire. She has a PhD from Rutgers University – New Brunswick in 2019. Her research looks at domestic labour in South Asia at the intersection of gender, caste and race. Her book manuscript provides an intimate history of colonial South Asia from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries through the figure of a South Asian maidservant – the ayah – who worked for British imperial families.

<https://history.tcnj.edu/satyasikha-chakraborty/>

Website with a list of publications <https://satyasikhachakraborty.com/>

Academia page <https://tcnj.academia.edu/SatyasikhaChakraborty>

00:40:34 III: If you would like to ask a question of the speakers, you are welcome to post your question in the Q&A box (bottom right of your screen)

00:41:31 III: For those who are just joining us: we are hearing from Dr Satyasikha Chakraborty.

00:42:28 III: Dr Chakraborty is Assistant Professor at the College of New Jersey (TCNJ)

00:49:44 III: Our second speaker today is Dr Shalini Grover.

Shalini Grover is Research Officer in the International Inequalities Institute, LSE, and was previously Associate Professor in anthropology at Delhi University. An anthropologist who specialises in gender, she has published widely on marriage, love, kinship, legal pluralisms and labour relations. Shalini is now working with Professor Beverley Skeggs on the Global Economies of Care theme at the III. Her latest work is on domestic servitude and care practices in India, which she is exploring through a contemporary, transnational and historical lens.

00:51:17 III: The Twitter Hashtag for today's event is #LSECare

00:52:53 III: For those who have just joined us, today's event is called: Care-work for colonial and contemporary white families in India: A historical-anthropological study of the racialized romanticization of the Ayah.

00:53:59 III: We are recording today's event and, all being well technically, we look forward to sharing the video and audio recordings in future via the International Inequalities Institute website at <https://lse.ac.uk/international-inequalities>

00:55:38 III: If you would like to find out about future III events, research and news, you are welcome to subscribe to our email mailing list at:

<https://us13.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=4dcb78153313832454ad0afc2&id=02677df8b9>

00:57:42 III: This event is being held by the Global Economies of Care research theme at the International Inequalities Institute.

00:57:49 III: Learn more about this theme at <http://www.lse.ac.uk/International-Inequalities/Research/Global-Economies-of-Care>

01:00:21 III: For those who have just joined us, we are presently hearing from Dr Shalini Grover of the International Inequalities Institute, LSE

01:04:49 III: If you would like to ask a question of the speakers, do please post your question in the Q&A box (bottom right of your screen)

01:05:40 III: Our discussants today are: Professor Nandini Gooptu (University of Oxford) and Professor Swapna M. Banerjee (Brooklyn College of the City University of New York)

01:06:38 III: Nandini Gooptu is Associate Professor of South Asian Studies in the Department of International Development at the University of Oxford and Fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford. While her past research has been on colonial India, her current research is concerned with social and political transformation and cultural change in contemporary India in the wake of economic liberalisation and globalisation.

Further reading:

Nandini Gooptu, "Servile Sentinels of the City: Private security guards, organized informality and labour in interactive services in globalized India", *International Review of Social History*, 58, 1, (2013), pp. 9-38.

Nandini Gooptu and Rangan Chakravarty, "Skill, work and gendered identity in contemporary India: The business of delivering home-cooked food for domestic consumption", *Journal of South Asian Development*, 13, 3, (2018), pp. 293-314.

Journal of South Asian Development, Special issue on Skill development in India, 13, 3 (2018) (Guest editor: Nandini Gooptu).

01:11:01 III: You are welcome to post your questions in the Q&A box.

01:14:25 III: For those who have just joined us, we are presently hearing from discussant Professor Nandini Gooptu (University of Oxford)

01:14:54 III: Our next discussant is Dr Swapna M. Banerjee

01:15:52 III: Swapna M. Banerjee is Associate Professor in History at Brooklyn College, USA. Her research lies at the intersection of gender, class, race, and ethnicity in colonial South Asia. Her book *Men, Women and Domestics: Articulating Middle-Class Identity in Colonial Bengal* (OUP, 2004) employs the lens of employer-servant relationships to understand the construction of national identity in colonial Bengal.

Dr Banerjee's webpage:

https://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/academics/faculty/faculty_profile.jsp?faculty=439

01:17:24 III: Dr Banerjee has noted some publications that today's attendees may find useful:

01:17:30 III: "Servants as Social Imaginaries: Intimate Labor of Male Domestic Workers in Late Colonial India" for a special issue on servants of *Indian Economic and Social History Review* (2020).

01:17:37 III: "Baby Halder's A Life Less Ordinary—A Transition from India's Colonial Past?" in Victoria Haskins and Claire Lowrie, eds., *Colonization and Domestic Service* (New York: Routledge, 2014) pp. 239–255.

01:17:54 III: "Blurring Boundaries, Distant Companions: Non-kin Female Caregivers for Children in Colonial India" in *Paedagogica Historica*, 46/6 (December 2010): 777–790.

"Child, Mother, and Servant: The Discourse of Motherhood and Domestic Ideology in Colonial Bengal" "R" in Avril Powell and Siobhan Lambert-Hurley, eds., *Rhetoric and Reality: Gender and Colonial Experience in South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005) pp. 17–50. (Book Chapter).

01:18:10 III: “Subverting the Moral Universe: ‘Narratives of Transgression’ in the Construction of Middle-Class Identity in Colonial Bengal” “R” in Crispin Bates, ed., *Beyond Representations: Colonial and Postcolonial Constructions of Indian Identity* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005) pp. 77–99. (Book Chapter)

“Down Memory Lane: Representations of Domestic Workers in Middle-Class Writings of Colonial Bengal” “R” in *The Journal of Social History*, 37/3 (Spring 2004): 681–708.

01:18:52 III: Dr Banerjee’s links to recent projects and works:

01:18:53 III: DomEQUAL: A Global approach to Paid Domestic Work and Social Inequalities

<https://domequal.eu/output/migrant-domestic-and-care-workers-high-risk-but-low-protection/>

Nilita Vachani, "The Strange, True Story of the Man whose Maid was worth Millions

<https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/the-strange-true-story-of-how-a-chairman-at-mckinsey-made-millions-of-dollars-off-his-maid/>

Sue Peabody, *Madeleine's Children: Family, Freedom, Secrets and Lies in France's Indian Ocean Colonies* (Oxford University Press, 2017)

https://www.amazon.com/Madeleines-Children-Freedom-Secrets-Colonies/dp/0190233885/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Madeleine%27s+Children%2C+Sue+Peabody&qid=1594128904&sr=8-1

01:19:57 III: Today’s event title is:

Care-work for colonial and contemporary white families in India: A historical-anthropological study of the racialized romanticization of the Ayah

The Twitter hashtag for today’s event is #LSECare

01:52:40 III: We are in the final ten minutes of today’s event. Unfortunately time limitations mean that we are not able to address all questions, but thank you to everyone who has joined and contributed their thoughts.

01:53:15 III: This event is being recorded. All being well, we hope to share the audio and video of today’s event via the International Inequalities Institute’s website.

01:53:32 III: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/international-inequalities>

01:56:40 III: The hashtag for today's event is #LSECare

01:56:52 Beverley Skeggs: Thank you to all who attended, and our presenters for a great paper, great responses and for smart questions. We will be developing these themes in the future. We also hope to launch "The Care Manifesto" in September.

01:56:55 III: Twitter: @LSEInequalities

<https://lse.ac.uk/international-inequalities>