WABASH CENTER
For Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

BLOG

Reflections on a Critical Hindu Studies Pedagogies Seminar

Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective

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The Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective (FCHS)

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Critical Hindu Studies Seminar at Wabash Center Funded Retreat, May 2023

Top left to right: Marko Geslani, Jamal Jones, Vijaya Nagarajan, Shana Sippy, Harshita Mruthinti Kamath
Second row left to right: Shreena Gandhi, Varun Khanna (Vishwa Khanna in lap), Rupa Pillai, Sailaja Krishnamurti
Bottom center: Prea Persaud

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In 2019, the Wabash Center for Learning and Teaching Theology and Religion funded a five-day gathering for five of us—Shreena Gandhi, Sailaja Krishnamurti, Harshita Mruthinthi Kamath, Tanisha Ramachandran, and Shana Sippy—to think about how we might approach the field of Hindu Studies from a critical feminist lens. Out of that retreat, the Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective (FCHS), also known as the Auntylectuals, was formed. Building off of the work we began at that retreat we published an article, "Feminist Critical Hindu Studies in Formation" (*Religion Compass*, 2021), laying out our ideas about what the field might look like if we, as racialized scholars of Hindu traditions, drawing on the work of Sara Ahmed, engaged in a process of "disorientation," which requires that we adopt a method we describe as "interrogative positionality." In that piece, we argue that

There is a long tradition of feminist scholarship that has challenged the false distinction between the personal and political, but it demands that the acknowledgment of positionality be understood as more than an empty performative gesture. Performative positionality is not enough. FCHS demands an interrogative positionality: an ongoing interrogation of our locations, orientations, and relationships to power. (FCHS, Religion Compass [2021], 2)

We recognized that this work of interrogating our positionalities and reorienting our approaches was something that would be enriched were we to undertake the work with other racialized scholars of Hinduism. We convened a multiyear (2019-2024) Intersectional Hindu Studies Seminar that brought in several other racialized scholars in the field of Hindu studies. The core group includes ten scholars—Shana Sippy, Harshita Mruthinthi Kamath, Sailaja Krishnamurti, Shreena Gandhi, Varun Khanna, Vijaya Nagarajan, Jamal Jones, Prea Persaud Khanna, Rupa Pillai, and Marko Geslani—all of whom have different specializations, from ancient to contemporary and literary to ethnographic, within the field Hindu Studies. The Critical Hindu Studies Collective includes a PhD Candidate and both contingent and tenured faculty who teach at a broad range of institutions—from R1 research universities to small liberal arts colleges—in the US and Canada.

Since our first convening, two large Wabash Center grants have nurtured our work together, enabling us to engage in ongoing learning, virtual workshops, and online and in-person collaborations. In addition to annual sessions during AAR, a Wabash grant allowed us to host a 2022 AAR preconference symposium, Critical Hindu Studies Intersectional Pedagogies, where we learned from and with scholars and activists focused on caste not only as it manifests in Hindu traditions but also in Christianity, Islam, and Sikhism in South Asia and North America. The Wabash Center grants have also enabled us to gather for two multiday retreats in August 2023 and May 2024 to continue to imagine our approaches to the field—pursuing pedagogies and scholarship that center matters of justice—and our work together.

We have shared syllabi, facilitated reading groups, critiqued and workshopped course modules, discussed teaching methods, presented papers, engaged in workshops, convened all-day symposia, and imagined exhibitions. We have challenged ourselves and each other to think about the demands that our feminist, anti-racist, anti-caste, and anti-nationalist commitments place on us, our teaching, and our scholarship. While there are many things we have

undertaken together as a collective, we have also found that this work has helped us to reorient our relationships to our own work and teaching. In what follows, we provide some short individual reflections on what these grants have enabled us to accomplish, reflecting back on our past gatherings, and thinking toward the future. We will share more about the specific pedagogical lessons and experiments that were facilitated by these grants in additional submissions for Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion publications. Here, we offer more personal reflections about how the relationships that began in our explorations of our teaching continue to shape us as individuals and as scholars.

We recognize there is much more work for us to do; for example, to truly interrogate the ways Islamophobia and modes of supremacism—brahmanical, male, religious, and racial—have shaped the field and the ways it has been and continues to be taught. We know that our learning and unlearning together will continue and we are grateful for what the Wabash Center's support has allowed us to accomplish together, in our teaching, scholarship, and relationships.

Shana Sippy, *Centre College*

This work has been generative for me in more ways than I can count. Above all, this work has been care work. Our engagements with one another stem from and are nurtured by relationships. Instead of centering a singular academic agenda or the advancement of personal and professional goals, we have centered process. Together we have remembered, reimagined, affirmed, and challenged ourselves to think about what we do when we are doing *what we do*, why we are doing *what we do*, and *where we hope to go* in our doings going forward. Yes, it has been about pedagogies and syllabi. Yes, it has been about asking questions about our deepest commitments and the contours of our complicities. Yes, it has been about rethinking the teaching and study of Hindu traditions, texts, and histories. Yes, it has been about all the troubling things that must be troubled and addressed—caste violence, racism, Hindutva, Islamophobia, homophobia, misogyny, and the legacies of colonialism in our field and the academy. Yes, it has been about building collegial relationships, and sharing assignments and readings for use in teaching. And yes, it has been about thinking through what it means to prioritize solidarity and envision the myriad ways activist scholarship might manifest.

Yet, for me, what this Seminar and these grants have ultimately been about is finding people for whom I have profound respect. Through this process, I have connected with people whom I trust deeply, even though there is so much I don't yet know about each of them. I have forged bonds with people who have supported me in different ways—personally and professionally—especially as I've found myself lost and sad, distraught and confused, as our world and the academy as a microcosm continues to implode in so many ways. It has been about knowing that I can pick up the phone and ask any number of these colleagues and friends to help me think about how to present challenging material to my students in a way that meets them where they are or seek advice on translating and interpreting a text or

phenomenon that is particularly vexing. It has been about a process of continual reflection with people whom I feel I can always count on to simultaneously challenge and support me. I hope that I have offered a fraction of the care and affirmation to all of them in the measure to which I have received it. This Seminar has, above all else, been about relationships and I can think of no grant that I have ever received that has had such a profound and lasting impact—building academic community and deep friendships—as these ones that we have generously received from the Wabash Center.

Marko Geslani, *University of South Carolina*

For me, the central question that has been nourished by the Critical Hindu Studies Seminar has been "Who is it for?"—it being first my local field of training, Hindu studies, an academic formation that implicates religious studies and Asian studies (Asian religion), and, in its widest historical implications, Orientalism and Humanism. This has been an acutely personal question for me, a Filipino-American, and thus a uniquely underrepresented minority in a field that itself has increasingly—and problematically—claimed the function of minority representation.

The present-tense version of this question bears immense potential, even in its irresolution. As a long archive of contested human collectivity, a cultural tradition of pan-Asian influence, and a historical confluence of imperial and Brahmanical power, one can hardly begin to prescribe the possible stakeholders of the study of "Hinduism." As a set of bounded historical traditions and ungoverned discursive effects in the present, this field bears a seemingly inestimable global significance, or at least one far beyond its traditional White North-Atlantic/Brahmanical subjects. But to even fathom the range of these potential interlocutors, and what challenges are posed by widening the audience of our field, we must dwell on the past tense of the question: Who has it been for? Or why has Hindu studies been monopolized by a shared White and Brahmanical gaze? How can we understand our field as an effect of American Orientalism?

Part of the work of Critical Hindu Studies then is to cast a critical gaze on the history of our subfield from wider interdisciplinary perspectives on the American university. Let me give one example from some research that Rupa Pillai and I have been doing on the history of Asian American studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

In November 1990, six years before the founding of the Asian American studies department, Asian American student-activists at Penn demanded that the Department of Oriental Studies change its name. For them the department's name presumed the study of a racial slur. As one student put it in the *Daily News*, "'Oriental' is for rugs." What was at stake for these students was not whether they could study classical Chinese poetry, but more existentially, how to abide a university that organized human knowledge around a slur. Oriental did not represent the Asian; it could only serve to represent through a kind of negation. Most importantly, the students demanded, Oriental studies was not a substitute for Asian American studies.

For some professors in the Oriental studies department who were resistant to the change,

what was at stake was their identity as Orientalists. What was at stake was Orientalism as a discernable and venerable disciplinary tradition. Politicizing the literal meaning of Orient (via its Latin etymology), they argued that the term "Oriental," which governed "the East," near and far, was more embracing than "Asian," a term which they took to refer predominantly to East Asians. Some professors worried, finally, about the repercussions of capitulating to "political correctness."

The disconnect between the two parties could not have been more stark. They disagreed on the meaning of "Oriental," the value of Orientalist knowledge, and the very question of the relationship between knowledge and politics. The way in which the professors refused to admit that "Oriental"—whatever its etymological roots—could be a racial slur in 1990s Philadelphia is striking. Surely as Orientalists they possessed the means to verify such a philological question. But in refusing this task, they seemed to exercise their disciplinary privilege—also a Brahmanical one—to base epistemic power on access to the oldest etymology. Equally striking, is that one question that seemed to have been less important for the student activists, was the question of the value of Orientalism—the ancient repertoire of eastern humanism—to Asian Americans. It is almost as if they could not spare time to ask such a question so long as they were governed by the term "Oriental."

Critical Hindu Studies has been a site of ongoing reflection on the question of the Asian and the Oriental, terms that continue to collect and coordinate all of us. In its balance of safety and auto-criticism, it is one of the most hopeful collectives I have been a part of.

Rupa Pillai, *University of Pennsylvania*

The Critical Hindu Studies Seminar has been an invaluable community in which I could grow as a scholar and rethink my responsibility as a scholar-teacher. I joined the Seminar soon after completing my PhD in cultural anthropology with no clue of what my future would be. While my graduate program had strengths in public anthropology, I was unclear about how to do that work and about the political stakes of my research. This Seminar was instrumental in helping me find that clarity. Reading with this community inspired me to think about how my scholarship should engage caste, anti-blackness, and Islamophobia. Conversations with this community have prompted me to consider how religious studies and area studies are linked to the origins and institutionalization of ethnic studies. Finally, as a collective, this community has modeled a different way to do scholarship that centers intention by slowing the pace of academic knowledge production. Rather than rushing to produce, the Seminar offered a space for us to think together, nurturing relationships of trust where we leaned into the discomfort to improve our ideas and consider the impact of our scholarship.

Prea Persaud, *University of Florida—Swarthmore College/Haverford College*

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When I was invited to participate in the Critical Hinduism Seminar, I was unsure of my relationship to caste, but I wanted to take the time to learn more and think through my own personal and academic history. In our initial Seminar, after reflecting on the readings, we were asked if we would now say that we are implicated in and/or benefit from caste dominance. I raised my hand in the affirmative because I understood then that even if I was not sure of whether I was from a dominant caste, I still benefited from caste structures. But since then, thanks to our continued discussions, I have come to think of upper caste-ness not as some identity that one has or doesn't have. Neither is caste dominance just a performance, that is, the performance of brahmin-ness that some participate in. As many have described white supremacy, caste is the water that we are all swimming in. It is inescapable and continually shaping how we understand and relate to the world whether we are conscious of it or not. Once I really started to comprehend this, I could understand caste in the Caribbean (the geographical focus of my academic work) in a very different way than I did during those initial conversations. Back then I was stuck on identifying who was caste dominant, or what were caste dominant practices, and what was my relationship with them/those practices. Caste is often talked about in terms of endogamy and occupation and those specific things become the center of debate as we begin to think about the existence of caste in the diaspora. Understanding caste to be about how we understand beauty, civility, class, fashion, and so forth, however, allows us to move past these constraints and dissect the ways in which things that we have thought of as "objective truths" are actually caste specific. So identifying the continued existence of specific caste identities is less important than untangling these ideas which have not only traveled in the diaspora but are actively cultivated. This realization would have not been possible without the continued conversations of this group. They have not only allowed me to carve out a new space for my academic work but they have also helped me define how I want to show up in the world as an activist scholar.

Varun Khanna, *Swarthmore College*

I've been lucky that my field (Sanskrit) and department (Classics) is flexible enough to allow me to work on almost anything I want to. My body and positionality stand as a kind of yoke that holds threads going in a million directions where each thread is a valid area of research, writing, and/or teaching. In the last five years, I have been introduced to a completely new set of readings and theoretical material that have deepened my critical ability and complexify my thinking apparatus such that my work and teaching have become truly intersectional. There are two main directions that I have explored as a result of the last five years of thinking together with the members of the Critical Hindu Studies (CHS) Seminar.

The first is the deep uncovering of caste as a system of power that operates on and through my body and the casted and outcasted bodies around me. I have had a chance to explore this area of study through the reading and discussion groups that we did together as well as through the formulation and teaching of my new course, Caste and Power. During this course, I studied how caste operates on us through various vectors such as gender, religion, class, race, food,

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love, language, and many others. The course was the crystallization of my effort to understand caste, but it also resulted in a student-led project to have caste acknowledged as a mode of oppression in our college's non-discrimination policy.

The second is the study of Sanskrit pedagogies with respect to the new understanding of caste. What is the relationship between Sanskrit and caste? How do we teach Sanskrit in such a way that it stops being a vehicle for the fortification of caste structures? *Can* we teach Sanskrit in such a way? I was inspired by the CHS Seminar to think beyond the mere reorganization of Sanskrit canonical sources and pedagogical practices and to instead attend to the actual *transmission* of Sanskrit as the locus of critique. As part of this process, I organized the "Sanskrit Dilemma" panels at the American Academy of Religion conferences in 2022 and 2023, which resulted in excellent discussions by racialized scholars of Sanskrit about the various dilemmas that they embody in the classroom. I wanted to push them to interrogate their own relationship to Sanskrit and what contradictions emerge when they include their own body in their analysis of the transmission of Sanskrit in their lives. Through this process, we discovered that the dilemma of Sanskrit is not only how to teach it while we are faced with the pressures of Hindutva on the one side and Orientalist academia on the other side, but rather it is whether Sanskrit can be recovered from its position as a vehicle for the propagation of caste, and whether we can use Sanskrit as a means for challenging that position.

I was inspired by the Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective's call for Hindu scholars to become more reflective, interrogate their positionalities, and examine intersecting processes of racialization, the regulation of sexuality, and the violence of caste to develop what might be termed a "Critical Hindu Studies." Using this as a model, the Sanskrit Dilemma panels considered what a "Critical Sanskrit Studies" that actively engages with and critiques the above challenges could look like. The panels therefore served as a forum for panelists to discuss along with the audience their own positionalities with respect to Sanskrit studies and to examine these intersecting processes to think through the possibility of developing a Critical Sanskrit Studies, which has resulted in a small community of Sanskrit scholars who are invested in these analyses, the transformation of our pedagogies, and the possibility of collective publication in the future.

Harshita Mruthinti Kamath, *Emory University*

The Critical Hindu Studies Seminar has undoubtedly shaped the trajectory of my research and teaching. In working with my colleagues for the past five years, we have been able to create a new field—Critical Hindu Studies—which brings together a range of racialized scholars to interrogate the study of Hindu traditions in the North American academy. The impulse for creating this community of scholars is articulated by the Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective, who ask,

Who built this room? Whose labor was rendered invisible? Who benefits? And who is continually left outside? What can we gain from disrupting linear narratives that adhere to

neat chronologies? In raising these questions, our aim is to challenge ourselves, and our colleagues, to imagine what it might look like to meaningfully commit to researching and teaching Hindu formations from an anti-caste, anti-racist, feminist perspective. (*Religion Compass* [2021], 11)

These questions have become foundational for my own entry into our collective scholarly work, and I return to them frequently when thinking about the goals of the Seminar. As a result of my participation in the Seminar, I have focused increasingly on intersectional themes of caste, gender, sexuality, and power in my own scholarly work. For teaching, I have also begun to incorporate themes of caste in all of my courses. In Fall 2023, I taught MESAS/WGS 378W: Caste at Emory University with the explicit goal of adding caste protections to our anti-discrimination policy at Emory. The course was also inspired by my colleague Varun Khanna's course, Caste and Power at Swarthmore College, which used the lens of power to introduce the topic of caste.

Working with this group has been a source of joy—we have laughed together, cried together, written together, and very often disagreed with one another. My colleagues have served as models for me to think about how to write from a place of ethical commitment rather than a place of fear.

Jamal Jones, *University of Wisconsin-Madison*

In the CHS Seminar, I have found myself in a community that has provided me with both permission and discomfort: the permission—or, better, the imperative and the encouragement—to think through the politics of studying Sanskrit literature and the discomfort that comes with asking the questions this studying prompts. In many ways, I have thought about my work as a project of both disenchantment and celebration. On one hand, I entered the field wanting to move beyond thinking of Sanskrit as a language of sacred literature alone. This language of religion and sacred literature, while valued, may also be seen as lacking a kind of rational or aesthetic seriousness. So, studying Sanskrit literature in this disenchanted way was meant to buck the stereotype—to show its intellectual and civilizational respectability, and support broader arguments for the "i" value of non-Western cultural materials beyond their hoary spiritual offerings. All the same, I have also come to see how such an orientation can easily lead to another type of triumphalism; or in the case of Sanskrit studies, it can very easily feed arguments that underwrite supremacist ideologies and undermine a politics and ethics of care and community.

What's the other direction for me? Beyond the questioning and critique of varieties of hegemony and supremacy, I am still working through the question of what there is to gain from thinking about or through Sanskrit literature. How does one bridge the gap between the technical analysis of archaic materials and the—let's call them bigger, or general, or just personal—questions of how we ought to see the world, and what we ultimately hope the world can be? This particular problem—basically one of articulating the personal and political

relevance of the work—has come to frame both my research and my teaching.

For example: One of the major questions I have been wrestling with, at least implicitly, has to do with how we might think of the relationship between (political) identity and language. On the one hand, the predominant ideology of Sanskrit ties the so-called supreme language of the gods to the elite, dominant identity of the brahmin who is the only kind of person who can authentically, authoritatively, and correctly articulate its most powerful sounds. (Or else, picking up insights from Varun Khanna: Those who invest in learning Sanskrit acquire the privileged status and power to articulate essential truths.) Given its entanglements with caste politics, some are likely to find this essentializing view of the relationship between language and identity distasteful for the ways in which it reinforces structures of hierarchy and domination. On the other hand, there are notions of language—of literary voice and identity—for which I have more sympathy: Even if some audiences might disparage the idea that certain literature is valuable at least in part because it articulates truth in a language that can only be expressed by a particular—and perhaps marginalized—kind of body in a particular social location, I (and I think others) would say there is some real value. But how can we articulate that value—and our commitment to that value—without replicating the problems that come with the Sanskrit case?

Shreena Gandhi, *Michigan State University*

This group has made me a better scholar. When I started my book revisions about a decade (!) ago, the manuscript was about how yoga has been raced, gendered, and classed in the US. After my book was torpedoed by some white male scholars, I lost confidence. While I no longer believe that my book was the worst thing ever written (as one white male scholar asserted), looking back, I feel there was always something missing from my analysis. At first I thought I should lean more into white supremacy, cultural appropriation, and the dynamics of whiteness. Yet I did not think I was doing a good job connecting the story of yoga in the US with the dynamics of yoga and colonialism in India. After joining/forming this group, I was frustrated that my scholarship seemed so far outside the boundaries of this group. But I knew there was a connection, I just was unable to see it…

…Until a fabulous dinner this past November at Ruth Chris with three of my fellow Critical Hindu Studies comrades, Jamal, Prea, and Varun. Over medium rare steaks in the Vedic tradition of Hinduism, I had a realization: yoga in America is not just about white supremacy. The way yoga has come here is also connected to brahmanical patriarchy, the construction of Hinduism not as a religion, but as a philosophy or way of life (I think Hinduism has serious Buddhism envy in this regard), and that the combination of white supremacy and brahmanical patriarchy allows conservative ideas about the body, the possibilities of the body, and health, to be entrenched through the practice of yoga. Because of my inclusion in this group, which was made possible by the Wabash Center, I have a stronger book, one that I am confident about finishing and putting out into the world.

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I am also now a better scholar activist. At the recent Asian American Studies Conference there were quite a few panels on caste and the rise of Hindutva in India and the United States—our collective even had a panel on the impact of Feminist Critical Hindu Studies in our scholarship, teaching, and activism. I heard from colleagues that some older Palestinian scholars lament not looking deeper into the ways in which Zionism entrenched itself into American political and popular culture—they said they are glad to see so much attention being paid to Hindutva, because, as we know from recent reporting and scholarship, the wet dream of Hindutva-inspired organizations would be to have the influence of Zionism and the cultural capital to say that any criticism of caste, India, or Modi is Hinduphobic. So I think our work has political urgency—it's always been political, but this moment has driven home that if we don't do the work now, we'll regret it later. And so, our work is intersectional and necessary, but also related to all seeking liberation from oppressive structures and ideas.

Vijaya Nagarajan, *University of San Francisco*

This Seminar was an unexpected, rich boon in my scholarly life. To be with fellow racialized scholars of Hinduism was a revelatory kind of work that had, indeed, been extremely rare and intermittent throughout my life as a scholar. Hindu Studies was made up of mostly white scholars for decades, until very recently. When I began this work as a graduate student, decades ago, there were few scholars of Indian, or Indian-American, or Asian-American background who were studying religion or Hinduism; you could count them on one hand, or at most, two. So, for me, participating in the Seminar felt like coming to a rich well in an oasis in the desert of my life as a scholar in terms of fellow racialized scholars of the fields of South Asian and South Asian-American religions. Intersectionality has always been growing as an aspect of Hinduism in my work in terms of gender and environment, but the caste aspect was subsumed in a relatively unexamined way, until this Critical Hindu Studies Seminar. As soon as the Critical Hindu Studies Seminar came into my view and I was invited to participate in it, I realized how a well-examined and evolving understanding of caste is critically essential for understanding Hinduism and its diasporas. Caste has now become, for me, a vital and necessary way of understanding Hinduism. In terms of my own intellectual work, the individual and collective learning, deeper exploration, and understanding of caste have intertwined the following subjects: (1) caste, class, and race; (2) caste, dalit views, and ecology; and (3) caste and climate; and have all affected my syllabi in Hinduism: Hinduism: Climate, Religion, and Environment; Commons: Land, Water, Air; and more. Participation in the Seminar has also deeply affected my theoretical and ethnographic research on the relationships between Hinduism, ecology, climate, and the commons. All my work from now onwards will be shaped by critical concerns regarding caste. The Critical Hindu Studies Seminar has been a kind of intellectual, scholarly home I could hardly have imagined before it unfolded into existence, and now seems so integral to my work.

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Sailaja Krishnamurti, *Queen's University*

This group has helped me to arrive at a sense of clarity about my work. I have more clarity about what I think, about my own theoretical frameworks, my ethics, and my politics, than I have ever had. I know more about what I am doing, and why doing it is important—and necessary.

Through our work together, I've been inspired to begin a new book project on contemporary Hindu identities. I want to find pleasure in this work. A prolific friend and colleague told me that she is productive because for her, writing is relaxation. Will it ever feel relaxing to me? What do I need to get to that point? I am writing these words as I am on the brink of my first sabbatical after twelve years of full-time teaching. I am looking forward to experiencing writing as liberating rather than terrifying, stressful. I have the gift of one year. And it is a gift—it is an enormous privilege, a dying privilege, and one that I want to make use of as much as I can. I think of Mary Oliver and I want to ask myself: what will I do with my one wild sabbatical year? How do I make every single day count, and find the wonder in creating new ideas? What happens if I move away from this endless running, hamster wheel of administration, always behind schedule, to a mode in which I work on my own schedule, I am accountable to myself, and I can build my own capacity?

The work that we have done together in Feminist Critical Hindu Studies, and later in this larger Critical Hindu Studies Seminar, has not only deeply impacted my own intellectual inquiries, but has profoundly impacted the way I conceptualize the work of academia. Thinking and working together and actively engaging in collaborative idea-making are forms of scholarship that are generally devalued in the humanities. But collaboration and collectivity are at the heart of my practice as a feminist, and I believe we have been able to bring these values into the intellectual home we've built together. The most important part of this group for me, without question, has been the sense of community and support that we have fostered for each other. I am realizing that we have not "produced" a lot, but resisting the impulse to race to the outcomes and deliverables has been crucial to our work together. What we have been doing, and the most important part, is the building of a new way of imagining being in and surviving the academy. I am anxious thinking about "what happens next" and how we will sustain this community in the next few years. I want to hold on to this space and continue to dream about new ways of working together.

Bios:

Shreena Niketa Gandhi is a unionized, Fixed Term Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Michigan State University in East Lansing Michigan. She is a founding member of the Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective.

Marko Geslani is Associate Professor in Religious Studies at the University of South Carolina. In addition to his work in Critical Hindu Studies, he works on ritual and astral science in

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medieval Hinduism.

Jamal Jones is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Harshita Mruthinti Kamath is Visweswara Rao and Sita Koppaka Associate Professor in Telugu Literature, Culture and History at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. She is a founding member of the Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective.

Varun Khanna is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics teaching Sanskrit at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. He works on the history and culture of Sanskrit transmission.

Sailaja Krishnamurti is Associate Professor of Gender Studies at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. She is a founding member of the Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective (aka the Auntylectuals).

Prea Persaud is a Visiting Instructor in the Department of Religion at Swarthmore College and in the Peace, Justice, and Human Rights Concentration at Haverford College in Pennsylvania. Her research is on Hinduism in the Caribbean.

Rupa Pillai is a senior lecturer in the Asian American Studies program at the University of Pennsylvania.

Vijaya Nagarajan is an Associate Professor in Religious Studies and Environmental Studies at the University of San Francisco in San Francisco, CA. In addition to her research on Critical Hindu Studies, she works on Hinduism and Climate; On the Languages of the Commons: Land, Water, Air, etc.; and Autobiographies, Spiritualities, and Landscapes.

Shana Sippy is Associate Professor of Religion, Chair of the Religion and Asian Studies Programs at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky. She is a founding member of the Feminist Critical Hindu Studies Collective (aka the Auntylectuals). She has served as the Project Director for the two large Wabash Grants.

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