

# LIVING LIGHTLY

## Pastoralism in a Changing World

15-17 February, 2019  
Indian Institute of Scientific Education Research, Pune



*anthra*



**IRD** Institut de Recherche  
pour le Développement  
FRANCE  
French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development



## **Introduction: Living Lightly: Pastoralism in a Changing World**

The first Living Lightly conference was held in Delhi, on the sidelines of the *Living Lightly: Journeys with Pastoralists* exhibition in winter 2016. It was decided at the time to host a bi-annual conference. There was also a suggestion that Living Lightly facilitate collaborative research within the community of scholars working on Indian or South Asian pastoralism.

The Living Lightly conference 2019 was hosted at the IISER Campus, Pune between 15 and 17 of February, with principally two objectives:

1. To present research by young scholars on India's major pastoral communities from different ecological landscapes
2. To discuss possible collaborative work amongst a group of academics who are currently working on pastoralism .

On day 1, 15 February, young scholars from a wide range of disciplines and institutions, with diverse approaches and methodologies, presented fresh research on each of India's major pastoral communities – including those resident in or moving through parts of the Deccan, Kutch (Gujarat), Rajasthan and the Himalayas. It is an impressive body of work! Senior academics served as discussants to each of these papers. Additionally, a round-table of young scholars took place that resulted in a wide-ranging discussion of the kinds of issues/bottlenecks that young scholars have had to deal with in undertaking work on pastoralism.

A smaller group of academics met informally on the 17 February to discuss possible collaborative work that some of us might embark upon. This was a less structured discussion that hoped to take forward deliberations that started in 2016 on potential pathways, mechanisms and agendas for advancing collaborative research within the group.

All three days saw rich discussions with plenty of spillovers over chai, samosas, and meals through the day.

Summaries of the young scholars round table as well as that of the collaborative research round table appear immediately after this introduction. These summaries are followed by abstracts of all papers presented on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. Finally the list of participants is attached in the annexure .

We have not attempted to compile the very rich discussions that accompanied each paper presentation. Scholars received feedback on their papers which will hopefully help in the revisions that presenters might chose to make to these papers.

## **Acknowledgements**

A conference is by definition a collaborative effort and we take great pleasure in acknowledging the work that so many people put in over the past six months. Dhara Pithadiya of CfP has worked tirelessly to oversee the logistics of the conference including the booking of airline, train and bus tickets, the booking of accommodation at IISER as well as elsewhere in Pune city, working out the numbers of participants present at any given meal and so on. Vimal Mehta, of Setu, got off a plane from Orissa, having just helped handle logistics for a different conference, and took the train that evening to Pune to help with the Living Lightly Conference. That there were no technical glitches with the conference, our tea breaks and meals appeared on cue, accommodation for close to 40 people was largely problem free were due to Vimal's organizational skills. Kanna handled the technological interface that allowed Natasha Maru in London to present her work and be part of the ensuing discussion. Manasi from Anthra efficiently tallied travel claims that helped in their processing later. Aditi Thacker, CfP's finance officer remained on top of all payments.

The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune provided exceptional hospitality, including accommodation, meals and a wonderful venue. Prof. Sanjeev Galande was gracious in offering to host us at the IISER campus. Charu Gurav, Manager of the IISER guest house helped smoothen all manner of bureaucratic issues. Sreejit Marar, IISER head of catering, accommodate all our dietary requests.

The conference was funded by contributions from many institutions including a substantial grant from the Institut de Recherche pour le Development, Paris, and smaller contributions from the Centre for Pastoralism and ANTHRA. ATREE, AU, IRD and CfP met the travel expenses of their senior staff, freeing up the IRD, CfP and ANTHRA support to be used to provide travel support to researchers from a wide range of institutions. Pierre Alexander Paquet had grant support that enabled him to attend at no cost to the organizing institutions.

Finally we are grateful to all paper presenters for making their papers available 8 to 10 days ahead of the meeting thereby giving discussants time to read and reflect on these papers ahead of the meeting. Many thanks to the discussants for the uniformly high quality of engagement with all papers.

### **Organizing Committee**

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# Conference Schedule

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> February

**13h00 – 14h00 Lunch**

**14h00 - 15h00 Session I: Western India: the Thar Desert and its Margins**

Discussant: Siddhartha Krishnan, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment

Bikku - *Climate change and sustainable practices among nomadic pastoralists: The Raikas of Rajasthan, India*

Meenal Tapti and Shruti Ajit - *Articulations of Raika women around Kumbalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary on pastoralism*

**15h00 - 16h00 Session II - Western India: Kachchh, from Marshes to Desert**

Discussant: Anita Sharma, Shiv Nadar University

Dayesh Parmar - *Identifying and evaluating landscape fragmentation effects on nomadic pastoralists' mobility: a case study in Kachchh, Gujarat*

Ovee Thorat - *Commoning the pastoral landscape: The challenges for restoring pastoralism in the Banni grasslands of Kachchh, Gujarat*

**16h00 - 16h30 Tea**

**16h30 – 18h00 Session III - Round table: Challenges young scholars face working on pastoralism**

***End of day***

## Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> February

### **9h30 - 11h00: Session IV - Western India: the Ghats and the Deccan**

Discussant: Purnendu Kavoori, Azim Premji University

Iravatee Majgaonkar - *Pastoralism and cattle losses among the Dhangars*

Somnath Vitthal Dadas - *Drought, livelihood and life struggles of the Dhangar (Shepherd) community in Maharashtra*

Nawoo Varak - *Regaining the pastoral space: A case study of pastoral nomadic communities from Goa*

### **11h00 - 11h30 Tea**

### **11h30 - 12h30 Session V - Some Reflections on Current Trends in Pastoral India**

Discussant: Matthieu Salpeteur, Institut de Recherche pour le Développement

Monica Agarwal - *Pastoralism in India - recent trends and perspectives*

Rizvan S Ghasura - *Pastoralism in western India: An overview*

### **12h30 - 13h30 Lunch**

### **13h30 - 14h30 Session VI - Pastoralists' Identities in the Making**

Discussant: Sushma Iyengar, Curator, Living Lightly Exhibition

Pierre-Alexandre Paquet - *Out of the state of nature and out of the nature of the State: a comment about the Islamization of the Van Gujjar pastoralists in India*

Natasha Maru - *Religious reform and pastoral adaptation: Exploring how pastoralists use religion to manoeuvre their changing circumstances*

### **14h30 - 15h00 Tea**

### **15h00 - 17h00 Session VII - Northern India - Himalaya's range**

Discussant: Monisha Ahmed, Ladakh Arts and Media Organization

Padma Dolker - *Diminishing traditional subsistence pastoralism: A study of nomads of Samad Rakchan Village in Eastern Ladakh*

Dada Dadas: *Changing livelihood of pastoral nomads of the Changthang region: A perspective on the Changpa community of Ladakh of Jammu and Kashmir*

Maura Bulgheroni - *Continuity and change. The case of emic perceptions of changes in practices among the Gaddi people (Himachal Pradesh, North India)*

### **17h00 - 17h30 Concluding session**

### **17h30 Tea**

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February**

**Workshop**

**Research on pastoralism in India: ongoing projects, future developments**

**9h30 - 11h00 Current experiences with collaborations**

Monica Agarwal – working with NGOs across six states

Sushma Iyengar – Collaboration with the University of LEEDS

Matthieu Salpeteur – Starting work on breeding / funding opportunities

Rohit Negi - AUD course on pastoralism

Ankila Hiremath – RAMBLE 5 years of collaboration with ATREE, NCBS and others

Nitya Ghotge - Pastoralist women project

Lyla Metha - 5 years of collaborative research on climate change

Vasant Saberwal – Cfp's current work and interest in facilitating pastoral research

Other experiences to be shared

**11h00 to 11h30 Tea break**

**11h30 to 13h00 Research projects that others are embarking upon – are these spaces for potential collaboration?**

**13h00 – 14h00 lunch**

**14h00 onwards- Planning for the future**

- Can we zero in on big questions?
- Do we want to undertake joint fund-raising?
- What opportunities exist?
- When do we want to meet next?

## Round Table on Constraints/Bottlenecks Experienced by Researchers Initiating Research on Pastoralism, 14 February 2019.

### Facilitator Ashish Kothari

The following issues were raised and discussed

1. Lack of easy access to the relevant literature. Possible options are to:
  - Create an online database of articles or for cross sharing of articles within the group.
  - There is a need to critically engage with the archival data.
  - We can have a wiki page devoted to Indian pastoralism  
**(Pierre Alexander Paquet has now created this page**  
<http://pastoralindia.wikidot.com/>
  - Use libgen to upload and share articles. Pierre volunteered to share the link where he uploads article for wider sharing.
  
2. Institutional Support
  - Having an established research station like RAMBLE -- Research and Monitoring in the Banni Landscape. RAMBLE IS a collaborative platform that came into being as a result of consultations between the community, Sahjeevan and scientists from a range of institutions. The community saw a clear advantage in being part of an institution such as RAMBLE, particularly as a means of generating material for potential use in its advocacy work.
  - There are both advantages and disadvantages to the establishment of such a platform. Advantages are fairly obvious – including the potential for learning across disciplines, the potential for more nuanced work informed by such cross-disciplinary learning, the possibility of generating meta data of use to all researchers (eliminating the need for the same data to be generated every time someone wants to do a study), the possibility of undertaking long-term research and so on. But there is also the disadvantage that the community then begins to associate a researcher with the research station, and this has the potential for framing the terms on which community members might interact with a researcher. Some felt that an independent researcher who has to build her own connections to the community is likely to lead to work that is more embedded in the community – while a researcher based in a field station will always be embedded in that context.
  - Need for a listing of ethics for field stations **(Siddhartha Krishnan has shared ATREE's research code of ethics).**
  
3. Funding for technology used for research as well as access to data that uses technology like GIS based maps.

#### 4. Too much work on very few communities

- Already large amount of work in Western and Northern India
- Need for a gap analysis to see identify gaps and identify communities have been relatively under-researched. For e.g. communities who maintain duck or poultry have not been looked at; nor has there been on pastoralists of the north-east, or in states such as Odisha. Even the Deccan is under-studied compared with Rajasthan, Gujarat and the north-west Himalaya.
- Pilot projects can be initiated with under-studied communities.
- CFP is trying to put together a database of pastoralists that may give us a sense of the geographic spread of communities. We could potentially use that to identify research on each of these communities as a way of identifying under or over-studied communities.
- Looking at People of India or TRI of every states that may have access to some work previously done.

#### 5. Ethics of Research

- Understanding the ethics of over subjecting the communities to research. Also understanding the ethics of how our absence may lead to the research coming out of the communities.
- Understanding 'what is the research and what do we intend to do with our research'.
- Including people from within the communities into the research process. Also being sensitive to the needs of the community.
- Process vs output driven research. As part of our research can we be sensitive to generating outputs that the communities can understand and use.
- Can we look at research and how its nature has changed over the past 30 years?
- Important for the agency of the community to be recognized and for the researcher to be sensitized to this issue.

#### 6. Capacity building of young researchers. Orientating young researchers on basic research on pastoralism.

#### 7. Actions that might be taken in the short term

- Creating a listserv with researchers working on pastoralism, to facilitate sharing and connecting.
- Creating a database of organizations/ individuals that are working on/ with pastoral communities in South Asia/ India (non-exhaustive list which can be sorted by region, communities, theme etc).

## **Summary of Discussion on Collaborative Work, 17 February 2019**

We had a rich discussion on the possible avenues for collaboration. The conversations got structured around work that various individuals were working on. The main takeaways were summarized in a final session:

### **Internal communications**

1. Following from the young scholars round-table, there was the suggestion that we create a Wiki – basically a Creative Commons for Pastoral India. Pierre created the page overnight (along with a logo)!! It needs to be populated with references and we need to figure out how else we can use the page. Pierre walked the group through the wiki page, and asked people to start exploring it. The page can be found here: <http://pastoralindia.wikidot.com/>
2. Various members of the group indicated interest/ willingness to collaborate on ongoing projects as well as spoke of the periodic need for young researchers.
3. A Listserve would be useful to enable members to post general interest announcements around, say, the need for a researcher or a request for a document/reference.

### **Field Research Stations**

A general sense that RAMBLE as a field research station has enabled scholars from different disciplines to feed off each other, and perhaps come up with more nuanced understanding of the Banni as an ecosystem. And that the uniqueness of RAMBLE as a field station, based on a collaboration amongst many stakeholders, has played a significant role in ensuring that we have today, the kind of understanding of the Banni that we do. There have been downsides too, such as a failure to create meta data available to all researchers, and the recognition that RAMBLE probably needs to periodically review its working and mandate. But on the whole, there was a feeling amongst those who have used RAMBLE of having greatly benefitted from being part of the field station. Suggestion that a code of ethics be drawn up for the use by RAMBLE or similar field stations.

In that context, interest was expressed in setting up similar field stations in other parts of the country, and aiming, eventually, towards having a field station in each of the three major pastoral geographies.

Ovee was requested to document the evolution of RAMBLE, with the objective of improving our understanding of the elements that have gone into making RAMBLE work as well as it has, as well as the various factors that haven't worked very well.

### **Proposed Workshops/Courses**

1. A 3-5 day workshop on fundamentals of pastoralism. Purnendu was asked to offer such a course as a refresher for older scholars or as an introduction to young scholars embarking on pastoral research. Purnendu has offered to take the lead on

this and has indicated he will work with Siddhartha and Rohit to get this off the ground. There was also a side discussion with Purnendu to see if we might target doing this course in July. Purnendu highlighted key issues that would need to be defined ahead of any such workshop:

- Can one assume some level of familiarity with pastoralism?
- What could be the entry point – ecology? History? Sociology? Which of these perspectives might provide a more complete way of approaching the issue?
- May be a little premature to talk about reading lists – but what themes should we cover – mobility, resilience, methodological
- What should be the geographical scope of pastoralism? Should the course engage with Africa?
- We need to figure ways to reduce the exoticization of pastoralism.
- The comment that pastoralism needs to talk to wider audiences to be relevant. Can pastoralism offer an alter imagination – can we be making a larger argument about pastoralism – as it connects with debates on sustainability and so on.

2. There was a suggestion to host a pastoralism and education workshop. To be hosted by either APU or ANTHRA.

3. There was a request for thinking about a research methods course/workshop. This could complement the 3-5 days refresher course on the fundamentals of pastoralism. A methods course could take multiple forms, and could either function as a one week field school, or more classical “indoor” training. Matthieu Salpeteur has offered to work on developing such a course, once we have a clearer idea of what is needed.

### **Network Meetings**

1. There was a suggestion that the group meet at least once, if not twice a year to continue these and additional discussions. CfP has volunteered to take this forward. Ashwini Chhatre has offered to host the next meeting in ISB.

2. Matthieu Salpeteur pointed to the availability within IRD of funding for network meetings (April deadline). This would be approximately 10,000 Euros a year, with support over a 4-year period. For this to happen, there would be need for a range of institutions to indicate their interest in participating in these meetings. The following institutions were identified as candidates of such a platform: AUD, SNU, CfP, ATREE, IRD, IDS, LEEDS, KV, ISB, ANTHRA, LPPS and the Univ. of Wisconsin. Matthieu has offered to take the lead in identifying what will need to be done to generate these resources. Each institutional head may need to submit a statement indicating institutional interest in being a part of the network.

## **Compilation of Accepted Abstracts**

### **1. Pastoralism in India: Recent trends and perspectives**

*Monika Agarwal, Research Scholar, Centre for Pastoralism, Gurgaon  
(monikka.agarwal@gmail.com)*

The Centre for pastoralism (CfP) undertook a household survey of migratory pastoralists in the year 2018 to understand current trends in pastoral production. The survey examines data from over 1200 families covering 36 districts across Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka representing unique landscapes inhabited by pastoralists in North, West and South of India. The survey has captured more than 25 communities including Rabbari, Bharwad, Jat, Charan, Sodha, Dhangar, Kuruba, Kuruma, Mathura Banjara, Nanda Gawli, Gaddi, Gujjar, Van Gujjar, Kanet, Raika, Bhotia, Meghwal, Korangya, Sindhi Muslim among others. These communities represent diverse livestock production systems inclusive of both small and big ruminants - sheep, goat, cow, buffalo, and camel herders. This paper is a summary of preliminary findings.

### **2. Climate change and sustainable practices among nomadic pastoralists: The Raikas of Rajasthan, India**

*Bikku, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Anthropology Department, University College of London (UCL), London, UK (b.bikku@ucl.ac.uk)*

The socio-economic, political systems and climate conditions for the past several decades have adversely affected the agricultural, indigenous, nomadic and pastoral communities across the world. However, in India, the majority of these communities have been able to continue their traditional occupations through environmentally sustainable practices in their respective habitats. The Raikas is one of such traditional herding people of the Thar Desert in Rajasthan. They have been able to continue their survival through herding of camels, sheep, and goats as part of both the short and long-distance migration for the centuries.

Western Rajasthan is an arid region with low rainfall and its inhabitants have frequently experienced droughts and famines. The paper attempts to understand various mechanisms used by this pastoral community to sustain in the harsh environmental conditions. The paper focuses on the Raikas and their relationship with the environment, with particular emphasis on their religious beliefs and local knowledge system in coping with the changing climate. Further, it also underlines how are various local institutions and strategies helping the Raikas to continue their survival through nomadic pastoralism in different geographical areas.

### **3. Continuity and change. The case of emic perceptions of changes in practices among the Gaddi people (Himachal Pradesh, North India)**

*Maura Alba Bulgheroni, PhD candidate, Free University of Brussels  
(maura.bulgheroni@gmail.com)*

In Hindi, the word 'change' is commonly translated as 'badlaav'. This is the main term we used during our investigation on recent changes in weather and on the so-called pastoral adapting strategies of the Gaddi, a Himalayan community living in Himachal Pradesh (North of India). This presentation focuses on the emic perception of changes in practices and, based on differences between etic and emic perspectives, it discusses the concept of change.

Twelve-months ethnographic research reveals that Gaddi people observe recent and strong changes in weather characteristics and in climate patterns, all of which impact grazing lands quality, animals health, and the degree of danger in pastoral migration. Both direct and indirect impacts of changes in weather have visible repercussions on nomadic herders' activity: increasing of small-scale movements, changes in transhumance timings, changes in animal distribution, night migration. However, people do not consider pastoral practice as being changing or adapting but as a process characterized by a dynamic stability which does not present ruptures while being constantly evolving.

In this vein, I will present and interpret four narratives of emic perception of changes which I have documented through ethnography:

1. adjustments of the pastoral practices that are, as they have always been, following the dynamics of the natural environment,
2. evolutions of a whole system seen as a normal change in which humans and weather are one the mirror of the other,
3. simplification of a certain Gaddi identity (of which pastoralism is a central element) and
4. maintenance of Hinduist beliefs and worldview according to which pastoralism is the dharma (the duty and moral conduct) of Gaddi people.

Consequently, emic conceptions of coping strategies to climate change draw our attention on their complexity and emphasises the strong relativity of the concepts of change and of adaptation.

### **4. Drought, livelihood and life struggles of the Dhangar (shepherd) community in Maharashtra**

*Somnath Vitthal Dadas, Research Scholar, Tata Institute of Social Science, Mumbai  
([somnathdadas123@gmail.com](mailto:somnathdadas123@gmail.com))*

Various types of exploitation on the Dhangar community makes them vulnerable. They find it difficult to access government schemes. Pastoral nomadic groups like the Dhangars are often excluded from basic citizenship rights such as ration and voter cards. Lack of citizenship right in turn makes it difficult for them to access government schemes.

Their nomadic lifestyle gives them limited access to education, health and livelihood schemes and programs of the government. The literacy rate among pastoral nomads is very low. Even though the government has been implementing The Right to Education Act it seldom touches this community. Due to lack of

citizenship rights and education, the community has found it difficult to adopt new occupation or livelihood sources.

The link between drought pastoralism and the impact of drought over pastures and meadows is poorly studied in the context of the livelihood of the Dhangars.

Maharashtra has been facing droughts for several decades and the Dhangar community and their livestock face several types of hardships. There are almost no studies available on the impact of drought on the Dhangar (Shepherd) community.

Indian pastoralism is under-researched and poorly documented. More specifically population figures are scanty or non-existent. (Sharma, Rollefson and Morton 2003).

Therefore, it is essential to study the contemporary situation of the community. It is also essential to study if there are specific programs or initiatives by the government to sustain the livelihood of this community and efforts taken by the non-government sector related to improving education status among the community.

## **5. Diminishing traditional subsistence pastoralism: A study of nomads of Samad Rakchan Village in Eastern Ladakh**

*Padma Dolker, Research Scholar, JNU, New Delhi, (padmadolker13@gmail.com)*

Pastoralism is an age-old livelihood option for many communities and ethnic groups in the mountains. Cold areas with scarce resources and low level of technology are natural habitat for this practice. It provides manure for farms, draught power to till land and perform other agricultural activities in addition to animal products like milk, wool, meat and hides etc.

Economy of Ladakh has primarily been based on subsistence agriculture along with livestock rearing. In the eastern part of Ladakh called Changthang, environmental constraints pose severe restrictions on agricultural activities. Thus, nomadic pastoralism has been the mainstay of the economy. Changthang region is predominantly inhabited by pastoralists known as Changpa, some of whom continue to be nomads.

Livelihood of Changpa nomads has mainly sustained with the help of products from the animals they rear. There has been a transformation in traditional subsistence economy and there is a general trend towards livelihood diversification, changes in socio-economic characteristics and composition of herds of pastoralist nomads of Changthang. It is pertinent to study the shift in transformation of livelihood and socio-economic characteristics and to find out various factors which results in such outcome. Primary, as well as secondary, data was used for this study.

Sino- Indian border disputes of 1962 and Indo-Pak conflicts of 1965 and 1971 and the Kargil conflict of 1999 with Pakistan enhanced political and strategic significance of Ladakh. It led to large deployment of army in Changthang and other parts of Ladakh. These along with other factors like construction of roads, improvement in connectivity and accessibility, opening of the region for tourism, introduction of Public Distribution System (PDS) etc. resulted in structural transformation of local pastoral economy and associated social and cultural institutions.

There has been significant reduction of households practicing nomadic

pastoralism as well as number of livestock per household. Changpas are either migrating to Leh or leading a sedentary life by engaging mainly in tertiary activities especially related to tourism.

## **6. A critical study of the Changing pastoral life in the Pangong region of Ladakh**

*Tsering Dorjay and Jamphel Sheyan, Research Scholars, Central University of Jammu, Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir (jamphelleju@gmail.com)*

Pangong Valley is a rich reservoir of agro-nomadic plateau and stretches from Mugleb-Phobrang to Chushul with around 2100 population (Census 2011). It is situated at a distance of 165 km away from district headquarter Leh in Jammu and Kashmir State. There has been recorded a tremendous change in the life style of people in the Pangong region with the explosion of tourism after 2010. This valley once a nomadic and sparsely agro-based community has swiftly shifted to the hospitality business. Once, a land of yak and butter is slowly changing into a land of camps and restaurants. With this change in livelihood, the balance of nature and man has also undergone a change which has brought drastic changes in the valley.

The paper tries to explore the new livelihood of hospitality in this valley and weigh it against the generation old livelihood. It also tries to explore different variables like modern education, unchecked blooming of tourism and business set up in Pangong region and celebration of modernity which has resulted in the parish of year old livelihood. It also tries to question how this change has resulted in the rapid degradation of pastoral setting of the valley. There is chunk of population who still engage in the nomadic livelihood not because they cannot explore tourism business, but they think tourism is like a whirlpool whereas animal and pasture is their identity and generation old livelihood. They are very critical of this sudden change in the livelihood and living style of people in Pangong region. This shift has changed the attitude of people from value oriented development to the greed of economic development. The paper also tries to postulate some ideas to overcome the disintegration of this pastoral setting.

## **7. Pastoralism in Western India : An overview**

*Dr Rizvan S Ghasura, Assistant Professor, College of Veterinary Science & A.H Navsari Agricultural University Navsari Gujarat (rghasura07@gmail.com)*

Pastoralism in India is more appropriately regarded as an occupational specialization that represents one of many economic activities pursued within the village context, a category on a par with farming, trading, weaving, goldsmiths, etc. In many cases, pastoral castes do not only own livestock, but also look after and pasture the animals belonging to other village members, acting as hired herders. In most countries, nomadic pastoralism is on the decline, because of government interventions and a myriad of other factors restricting mobility. Rajasthan may be one of the few areas where the opposite is the case. The number of people and sheep flocks on migration is increasing. In the arid extreme west, people have always been semi-nomadic, leaving their homes during periods of water and fodder shortages that occur regularly at certain times of the year.

## **8. Struggle of nomadic Dhanagar (shepherd) women for getting Education**

*Arati Kade, Research Scholar, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai  
(arati.k2212@gmail.com)*

In the varna system the society was divided in four varnas, Brahmin, Vaishya, Kshatriya and Shudra. But some sections of society were kept out of this varna system, they are the atishudra or avarna. The atishudras comprises of dalits and nomadic tribes. Dalits have their settlements or basti outside the villages and the other section i.e. nomadic tribes were not a part of settled society or they were never allowed to become a part of it.

So, dalits and nomads are the most marginalized sections. As dalits were settled they had gained the attention of the reformers like Phule and Dr. Ambedkar but nomads always failed to gain this kind of attention. In today's era also nomadic tribes are the under researched or undocumented part of the society. They are yet to get the attention of researchers and policy makers.

The kind of livelihood options they are dependent on leads them to stay outside the mainstream society even in today's era. Many of the nomadic tribes are still dependent on their traditional occupation for which they practice nomadism, which is one of the reason because of which they have failed to access the facilities such as health or education.

The reason behind keeping them outside the village is not only their occupation, it lies in the caste system also. The upper castes from the village keep these nomads out of the caste society by not allowing them to enter the village so that there will be no danger of these nomads becoming part of the village economy and being conscious of their social status. The rules of maintaining caste system were applied to nomads also (Bhosale N. 2008). Education is one of the ways for an individual to emancipate from the undignified life or making conscious to oneself of the slavery they are living in.

As Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar says, coming as I do from the lowest order of the Hindu society; I know what is the value of the education. the problem of raising the lower order is deemed to be economic. This is a great mistake. The problem of raising the lower order in India is not to feed them, to clothe them and make serve the higher order as is the ancient ideal of this country. The problem of the lower order is to remove from them that inferiority complex which has stunted their growth and make them slaves to others, to create in them the consciousness of the significance of their lives for themselves and for the country, of which they have been cruelly robbed by the existing social order. Nothing can achieve this expect the spread of higher education. This, in my opinion, is the panacea of our social troubles.

But the structural violence of caste system does not allow certain sections of the society to access education. Dalit and nomadic women are the most vulnerable to this structural violence because this violence become triple layered ie. caste, patriarchy and class, when it comes to women. So, even if nomadic communities send their children to school by fighting with this caste system then also boys will get first priority leaving girl child for doing labour inside the family as well as outside for earning livelihood for family.

Savitribai Phule in her poem says,  
Education is the path,

For the Shudras to walk,  
For education grants humanity  
freeing one from an animal-like existence

So, for women from Nomadic tribe it is very necessary to get education to get emancipation from the caste as well as patriarchal society. In this paper I want to discuss the struggle of Nomadic Dhanagar women in accessing education, their perception about current education system and its importance or relevance in their lives.

In order to address the issues of pastoralist women this paper includes the testimonies of the women who describes their own experiences. The study is conducted in the Shirur Tehsil of Pune District.

Objectives of the study:

- To study the nature of nomadism among the contemporary Shepherd community through the gender perspective
- To study the struggle of nomadic Shepherd Women for education

Research Questions:

- What is the nature of nomadism among contemporary Dhanagar community?
- What is the role of women while practicing nomadism in Dhanagar Community?
- What is relevance of current education system in the life of nomadic women?
- What are the main problems faced by Nomadic Dhanagar women for getting education

**9. Exploring patterns of livestock loss among pastoral families in Koppal, Karnataka**  
*Iravatee Majgaonkar, Research Scholar, Wildlife Conservation Society -- India, Bengaluru (iravati.m@gmail.com)*

Koppal district in Karnataka is a mixed mosaic landscape with agro-pastoralism as a prominent livelihood source among people. These pastoral groups share space with large carnivores in these human-use landscapes and hence are a major stakeholder in any potential conservation intervention. An assessment of how pastoral groups interact with their environment becomes essential to understand potential impacts of any conservation activities on their lives and livelihoods. The objective of my study was to examine interactions between groups of pastoral families and grey wolves *Canis lupus pallipes* (a Schedule-I species according to the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972) since the latter is a state protected animal known to cause losses to livestock. By using semi-structured interview surveys, I tracked livestock losses experienced by groups of pastoral families across 20 villages in Koppal district over a period of 6 months from November 2017 to April 2018. This resulted in discerning proximal and infrequent causes of livestock losses to pastoral families and brought some interesting political and cultural narratives to the forefront. The findings not only describe how pastoralists interact with their environment in Koppal but also highlight

a few reasons why large carnivores are able to persist in these agro-pastorally used landscapes.

**10. Out of the state of nature and out of the nature of the State: a comment about the Islamization of the Van Gujjar pastoralists in Modi's India**

*Pierre-Alexandre Paquet, McGill University, Montreal, Canada*  
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This paper retraces a genealogy of the Van Gujjar subject. It seeks to do this by probing the manners of speech by which the Van Gujjars enact their identity as a Muslim caste group who faced historical injustice since the colonial period. It is argued that the arts of pleading which the Van Gujjars have developed for addressing state authorities and 'foreign expertise' within the confine of state forests (state scientists, scholars, NGO workers, and the like) have played a central role in shaping their subjectivity as marginalized subjects who have nonetheless been able to embody religious morality and duty. Drawing on examples from my own ethnographic fieldwork and archival research, this paper explores the ways by which the Van Gujjars speak truth to power, ask those who govern to fulfill expected norms of acceptable behavior, and ascribe meaning to the comportment of those who, like themselves, are governed.

**11. Religious reform and pastoral adaptation: Exploring how pastoralists use religion to manoeuvre their changing circumstances**

*Natasha Maru, PhD candidate, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, United Kingdom* (natasha.maru@gmail.com)

Pastoralism is recognized as a livelihood as well as a cultural system founded on the duality of shared resources and mobility. With increasing pressures from human-induced and climate-related risks, there is growing interest in studying pastoral adaptation strategies. While several studies focus on the relationship between pastoralists and their natural resources, this paper aims to go beyond the ambit of this relationship to explore how socio-cultural factors, such as religion, are mobilised as a strategy to cope with changing circumstances.

Religious reform among the Muslim pastoralists in India urges them to move away from folk Islam and Sufism to a stricter adherence to the word of God as stated in the Quran. Looking at the case of the Sindhi-Muslim pastoralists in India, this paper shows how the adoption of religious reform allows them to refashion themselves as legitimate citizens that deserve the recognition of their rights. Moreover, it fosters a pan-national network on which they rely to develop new livelihood adaptation strategies. Parallels can be drawn with the Van Gujjars of Uttarakhand and the Gujjars of Himachal Pradesh who have gone through similar processes of reform.

Indian pastoralists, and, indeed, pastoralists from various parts of the world, have found a religious justification for their livelihood. Still, the impact of such factors on the adaptation capacity of pastoralists remains understudied, especially when a direct link cannot be drawn (as in the case of indigenous religions and their natural resource management practices). The shifting political landscape in India,

characterized by, on the one hand, economic liberalization, and, on the other, religious intolerance, provides the perfect field for such an examination.

## **12. Identifying and evaluating landscape fragmentation effects on nomadic pastoralists' mobility: a case study in Kachchh, Gujarat.**

*Dayesh Parmar, Research Scholar, Gujarat Institute of Desert Ecology, Bhuj, Kutch, Gujarat (dayesh.parmar@gmail.com)*

This project was initiated with concern about landscape fragmentation in regards to pastoral uses of natural resources. The aim of this project was to better understand how landscape fragmentation affects nomadic pastoralists and how it changes the way, they can get access to grazing resources and water. Pastoralists in India are indeed faced with problems to sustain their livelihood, since - among other problems - grazing lands are increasingly reducing. In this project, we monitored the moves of three nomadic groups belonging to the Rabari community with a mixed methodology. We combined remote sensing (RS), a powerful tool for investigating land use/ land cover change dynamics, GPS tracking and different types of surveys (systematic and qualitative) to understand how the daily moves of the shepherds with their herds were shaped by landscape structure. The analyses were carried out to characterize these different fragmented landscapes in regard with pastoralists' access to natural resources, and to identify the key factors or characteristics that are the most affecting nomadic pastoralist livelihood. Further results provide descriptions of pastoralists' mobility patterns in relation with the different land classes.

## **13. Gujjar nomads in Himachal Pradesh: A study of space**

*Jitender Singh, Research Scholar, Panjab university, Chandigarh (jitz8894096092@gmail.com)*

The nature of society in Himachal Pradesh is heterogeneous in terms of its ethnic composition as well as religious orientation. This heterogeneity in the state can be seen at racial, linguistic, cultural and religious level. Bhot, Khampa, Lahula, Pangwals, Swangla, Gaddi and Gujjars are the various tribal groups inhabiting the state with almost different almost different traditions, economy and problems.

Living in rough hilly terrain, tribal population faces many problems in their day to day life. Gujjars are the pastoral and agricultural ethnic groups, having unique linguistic and cultural identity, is among the most deprived tribes of the state. Their economy mainly depends on the products of their flocks use of and the natural pastures around the year. In Himachal Pradesh Gujjars are mainly concentrated in Chamba, Mandi, Bilaspur, Solan, Sirmour, Kangra, Una, Hamirpur, Kullu and Shimla districts. With 92.5 thousand population Gujjars is the second largest tribe of Himachal Pradesh after Gaddis (Census 2011).

In Himachal Pradesh like other states Gujjars are with two religious identities. Muslim Gujjars have a fixed annual nomadic path as compared to the settled Hindu Gujjars. The unstable life of Muslim Gujjars has resulted further problems such as illiteracy, social backwardness etc. The present study aims to focus on problems of nomadic Gujjars travelling in the state. To understand lifestyle and problems of

Gujjars nomads a small field survey and interview has been conducted for the three different nomadic groups consisting of few families in the present study.

#### **14. Articulations of Raika women around Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary on pastoralism**

*Meenal Tatpati and Shruti Ajit, Research Associates, Kalpavriksh Environment Action Group, Pune, Maharashtra (meenaltatpati01@gmail.com; shrutiajit16@gmail.com)*

For the past year, we have been carrying out research in villages around the Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary in the Pali District of Rajasthan with women from the semi-pastoralist Godwar Raika community. As of now, we have documented the life-stories of 18 women ranging from the age group of 15 to 90 years, who belong to families who used to practice long term migratory pastoralism, and some of who are now practicing settled pastoralism.

This preliminary study has given us a unique snapshot of a community in transition, from a migratory form of pastoralism to a more settled form, through the eyes of its women. Their articulations have so far provided us an understanding of the changes that have taken place over generations and an insight into how they have coped with these adverse changes- including shrinking commons, exclusionary conservation policies leading to restricted access to commons, privatization of grazing commons and breakdown of the interrelationships between the various communities in the landscape who were previously interdependent on each other.

Further, we have been able to explore the agency of the Raika women at various levels (household, community, institutional and discourse) and what are the various ways that they negotiate with the changes mentioned above that occur within and outside their communities.

#### **15. Commoning the pastoral landscape: The challenges for restoring pastoralism in the Banni grasslands of Kachchh, Gujarat**

*Ovee Thorat, PhD Candidate, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, Bengaluru (ovee.thorat@atree.org)*

A range of development interventions have been made to improve grasslands to increase their productivity by state and non-state actors in recent times. This is premised on the idea that grasslands are wastelands, and that nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists are backward. This has led to sedentarisation of pastoralists and fragmentation of rangelands. At the same time, compartmentalization of such landscapes and sedentarisation is carried out by the state to simplify it for better governance. On the other hand, there is a knowledge base that supports the benefits of pastoral mobility, especially the ecology of the rangelands. With more recent debates around social justice and common property institutions, pastoral mobility is being introduced into rangeland management policies. Turner (2011) calls this the New Pastoral Development Paradigm. I explore the outcomes of such interventions that aim to restore pastoralism through efforts to 'recommon' pasture lands. Although under state control as a Protected Forest, Banni has become open for a multitude of actors and interests, especially after the earthquake of 2001. In the last decade there have been many interventions to promote dairy and tourism industry. With commodification of livestock, milk, and

the land, there is an increasing need of pastoralists to become sedentary and desire to control a private piece of land. Over the years, this has led to mixed institutions that do not fit into either commons, state-controlled, or private (Turner, 2016). The attempts of the state and NGOs, however, are focussed on treating Banni as these fixed categories viz. a well-mapped protected forest or a purely pastoral landscape devoid of other livelihoods. Although working on well-being, to counter the marginalization of rangelands, NGOs promote pastoralism, which does not consider the on-ground reality. I explain that the ground-reality is intricately linked to the social and ecological heterogeneity in Banni. Yet, it is the powerful actors who decide management while some lose out. This has led to the recent conflict between these actors which have made restoring pastoralism a challenge in Banni. Engaging with the people and uses of these grasslands which get ignored in the dominant narratives would help in a more nuanced and inclusive envisioning of the landscape.

### **16. Regaining the pastoral space: A case study of pastoral nomadic communities from Goa**

*Nawoo Varak, Assistant Professor, Government College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Quepem, Goa and PhD Scholar, Goa University, Goa (varakn@gmail.com)*

The attacks on nomadic pastoral groups in India have alarmingly increased from settled village communities. The rape and murder of Asifa Bano in Kathua in Jammu, killing of Sangita Bhosale's family in Dhule districts of Maharashtra, vandalism of huts of Vanarmare group and demolitions of Dhangar houses in Goa are some of the examples of attacks on Pastoral nomadic communities. This leads to historicize the geographical locations of these communities. This paper is an attempt to produce a social space i.e. pastoral space to safeguard the constitutional rights of pastoral nomads. The research focuses on the movements of nomadic itinerants groups between Portuguese Goa and British India. This leads to further explore the formation of regionalities in Maharashtra and Goa. The regions are created through the process of creating regionalities (Kaviraj, 2017). The creation of regionality is based upon the regional languages, folklore, etc. The Criminal Tribes Act, 1871 attached criminality to the self of pastoral nomads. This resulted in these itinerants groups becoming bilingual and multilingual. Such historical instances cause their exclusion in the formation of regionality. The linguistic states privilege the rights of agrarian-pastoral communities. The state of Goa represents dense ecosystem. Such ecosystem retains the indigeniety of the settled ago-pastorals. The invocation of indigeniety of settled agrarian castes bars nomadic pastorals to settle down. The Banjara (Lamani, Lambada), Dhangars, Dukkarmare were engaged in cattle rearing and animal husbandry. The article 48 of Indian Constitution directs the state to reorganise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific line. The evidences from the state suggest that these nomadic pastoral are replaced from the pastoral economy and settled castes are privileged for the benefits of modern and scientific agriculture and animal husbandry. The production of pastoral space would lead to bridge the binaries between nomadic pastorals and settled pastorals.

## List of participants

List of those who participated in the two-day conference (15-16 February) as well as the day-long brainstorming on possible collaborative research going forward (17 February). Not all were present for all three days.

Monica	Agarwal	Centre for Pastoralism
Monisha	Ahemad	Ladakh Arts and Media Organization
Shruti	Ajit	Kalpavriksha, Pune
Maura	Alba Bulgheroni	Free University of Brussels
Pierre	Alexander	McGill University, Montreal
RAMESH	BHATTI	Centre for Pastoralism
	Bikku	University College, London
Ashwini	Chhatre	ISB, Hyderabad
Jay	Dev	C U Shah University, Wadhwan City, Surendranagar
Arunmani	Dixit	Centre for Pastoralism
Arun	Dixit	Centre for Pastoralism
Padma	Dolker	JNU, New Delhi
Tsering	Dorjay	Central University of Jammu
Rizvan	Ghasura	College of Veterinary Science & A.H Navsari Agricultural University Navsari Gujarat
Nitya	Ghotge	Anthra, Pune
Ankila	Hiremath	ATREE
Sushma	Iyengar	Independent Researcher
Pankaj	Joshi	Centre for Pastoralism
Arati	Kade	TISS, Mumbai
Cathleen	Kaur	TISS, Mumbai
Purnendu	Kavoori	Azim Premji University
Siddhartha	Krishnan	ATREE
Sajal	Kulkarni	WASSAN, Hyderabad
Iravatee	Majgaonkar	CWS-India
Natasha	Maru	IDS, Sussex
Lyla	Mehta	IDS, Sussex
Rohit	Negi	AUD
Dayesh	Parmar	GUIDE
Dhara	Pithadia	Centre for Pastoralism
NITIN	RAI	ATREE
Vasant	Saberwal	Center for Pastoralism
Matthieu	Salpeteur	IRD, France
Anita	Sharma	Shiv Nadar University
Jamphel	Sheyan	Central University of Jammu
Jitender	Singh	Panjab university
Kanna	Siripurapu	WASSAN, Hyderabad
Meenal	Tatpati	Kalpavriksha
Ovee	Thorat	ATREE

ABI	VANAK	ATREE
Nawoo	Varak	Goa University
SANDEEP	VIRMANI	Centre for Pastoralisam
Somnath	Vitthal Dadas	TISS