

BNAC Study Day Report, University of Edinburgh

The Britain Nepal Academic Council (BNAC) held its seventh study day on 30th March 2009 at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. Coinciding with the British Association of South Asian Studies conference, over fifty attendees enjoyed a packed schedule of varied presentations. In keeping with the tradition of the event, the call for papers was open and encouraged unpublished ongoing research and the work of graduate students. Thus the day embodied the diversity and richness of current research interests both in and about Nepal in the UK, with presentations including the fields of political science, development, public health, nursing studies, anthropology, and botany. It was particularly gratifying that nearly half the presentations made were by current students from the Universities of Leeds, Aberdeen and Edinburgh.

Bookended between stimulating reflections on the current socio-political situation in the Tarai by the *Nepali Times* journalist Prashant Jha, and the most recent film of the anthropologist Ben Campbell, “A Transhimalayan Road and the People of the Border”, papers were arranged around themes and research clusters. Presentations outlining broad research agendas included: The Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh’s the Flora of Nepal Project (<http://www.rbge.org.uk/science/major-floras/flora-of-nepal>); six presentations showcasing the Aberdeen Public Health Research agenda, (including work on HIV and sexual health, Maoist health workers, and women’s health issues) and the work by members of the Centre for Nepal Studies (UK) (<http://www.cnsuk.org.uk/>). Other presentations incorporated a focus on socio-political transformations (the demise of the Monarchy, the question of Nepal as a “failed state”, and local perceptions on conflict), health worker migration from Nepal to the UK, development related issues (communications technology and community forestry), and public health. The popularity of the event, and the opportunity to share the work of others normally disciplinarily distant, means that a more systematic conference will be planned by BNAC for the future.

To see the full timetable of presentations and presenters for the day visit:
http://www.digitalhimalaya.com/bnac/study_days.html

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