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Joshi, G.

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Author: Joshi, G.

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Propositions – Stellingen

1. In south-eastern Panjab, households crystallized around the governance of resources, and were bound together by reciprocal if hierarchical relationships. Kinship lay not in a specific set of blood relations, nor in particular kinds of marriages, but in the acknowledgment of allied interests and mutual loyalties and obligations.
2. The household was a varied and fluid entity, that encompassed a variety of relationships. Servants, clients, friends, followers, and disciples could all be part of a single household.
3. An approach to community that concentrates upon the household brings nuance to our understanding of state and society in Panjab, and allows us to rethink concepts such as ‘caste’ and ‘tribe’.
4. The demilitarization of south-eastern Panjab, and the limits placed by the colonial state on the capacity of households, husbanding, ascetic, and lordly, to provide for their dependents, was ultimately of greater significance for the region, than were the colonial state’s attempts at increasing the cultivated extent.
5. The social effects of colonization on the Indian subcontinent were variegated and cannot be reduced to a single trend. Nor can these effects be deduced from a study of colonial discourse alone.
6. The colonial archive is a rich and voluminous body of sources, which defies simple classification. It is diverse and often internally inconsistent, and those inconsistencies frequently offer valuable insights.
7. The study of Indian languages is a valuable, if not essential, tool in the toolbox of historians of colonial India.
8. Much of the historical evidence from South Asia continues to evade simple categories of migration. How to define migration so as to include the subcontinent in global studies thereof remains a challenge for scholars.
9. Good research cannot thrive without societal investment in universities. The value of universities should not be reduced to short-term quantitative indicators of utility.
10. Universities should organize and fight for their staff, rather than offloading the consequences of dwindling funding upon their students or their most vulnerable employees (academic as well as non-academic).
11. Friendship, solidarity, and empathy are of great value in academia, making life more agreeable, and producing better research.
12. After its cruel and catastrophic mishandling of the pandemic in India, only the most recent in a series of colossal administrative failures, the Narendra Modi-led government should resign.