



Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences Seminar Series Lecture

Calling God on the Wrong Number

Hindu-Muslim relations in PK (2014) and
Bajrangi Bhaijaan (2015)

by
Rachel Dwyer

Date: Tuesday, 10 January 2016

Time: 4 pm

Venue: Seminar Room, HSS

This talk focuses on two Hindi films, PK and Bajrangi Bhaijaan, both comedies, which are among the biggest hits in the hundred year history of Indian cinema, examining how they deal with issues which may loosely be termed religious, in that they are set in the context of clearly designated Hindu practices, which directly concern Muslims and Pakistan.

About the Speaker:

Rachel Dwyer is Professor of Indian Cultures and Cinema at SOAS, University of London. She took her BA in Sanskrit at SOAS, followed by an MPhil in General Linguistics and Comparative Philology at the University of Oxford. Her PhD research at SOAS was on the Gujarati lyrics of Dayaram (1777-1852). She teaches undergraduate and postgraduate courses in cinema and supervises PhD research on Indian cinema.

Professor Dwyer's main research interest is in Hindi cinema where she has researched and published on film magazines and popular fiction; consumerism and the new middle classes and the middlebrow; love and eroticism (of the wet sari and of the kiss and saying 'I love you'); visual culture (sets, locations and costumes); religion (Hinduism and Islam); emotions (anger and happiness); Gandhi and the biopic; stars (Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Rishi Kapoor and dynastic stardom); Hinglish and language in cinema. She has written a book in the British Film Institute's 'World Directors' series about one of the great figures of the Hindi film industry, Yash Chopra, with whom she has worked for several years. She later wrote the BFI's guide to '100 Bollywood films'. Her most recent book is 'Bollywood's India: Hindi cinema as a guide to modern India' (published in India as 'Picture abhi baaki hai')