RATTUS HIERARCHICUS: AFFECT, CASTE, AND HUMAN-RAT RELATIONSHIPS IN RAJASTHAN [1]

Adviser:
Radhika Govindrajan [2]

Though widely considered a "pest" throughout much of the world, at the Karni Mata Temple in the Indian State of Rajasthan, rats are worshipped as the reincarnated, male-children of the Hindu goddess, Karni Ma. Even as rats outside the temple are exterminated in the name of public health, the rats who inhabit the temple are considered by many locals and pilgrims to be members of a local upper-caste group, the Charans. This project takes the polysemy of rat bodies as the starting point for an exploration of several broader questions related to multispecies affect, caste relations, and pollution. By attending to people's affective relations with and differing perspectives of rats, this study will examine how the divinization and humanization of rats draws on and impacts existing caste relations among humans in the areas surrounding the temple.

People Involved: Kyle Trembley [3]
Status of Research or Work: In progress

Department of Anthropology · University of Washington · 314 Denny Hall, Box 353100· Seattle, WA 98195-3100
Telephone: (206) 543-5240 · Email: anthinfo@uw.edu

Source URL: https://anthropology.washington.edu/research/graduate/rattus-hierarchicus-affect-caste-and-human-rat-relationships-rajasthan

Links