



SAI | SÜDASIEN-INSTITUT
Universität Heidelberg

Abteilung Neusprachliche Südasiestudien
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Abteilung Neusprachliche Südasiestudien

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“Narratives about the Ownership of Urdu”

The historiography of Urdu comprises certain narratives about its ownership: is it the language of Muslims? A composite language of Muslims and Hindus of north India? Where was it born? Etc. These narratives serve the political functions of strengthening Hindu and Muslim as well as Indian and Pakistani identities. This article examines the claims that Urdu belongs to the geographical areas now comprising present-day India and Pakistan. Moreover, though to a lesser extent, narratives claiming descent from languages now spoken in these countries are also examined. The construction of the linguistic history of Urdu as well as Hindi excludes and includes texts and varieties of the common ancestor of Urdu and Hindi in ways which are imbued with concerns of communal and nationalistic identities.

Date: Wednesday, 18.7.2012
Venue: South Asia Institute, Room 316
Time: 9.15 pm / 9 Uhr c.t.

All are cordially invited!

Dr. Christina Oesterheld