1. What is comparative method and when is it an effective tool for understanding the historical relationships between Southern Asia and Southern Africa? Which of the following --labour and social class, region and territory, event and subaltern agency, state and political institutions – have proven most fruitful as sites of comparison these contexts? What other categories would be useful to think with?

2. Race has been a central category of analysis in colonial and postcolonial scholarship. How have historians used histories of race – as identity, as economic and social relation, as a vehicle for capital or sexual order – to challenge traditional histories? What are the limits as well as the possibilities for critical race histories of modern colonialism?

3. Though hardly new in historiographical terms, the Indian Ocean World has become the dominant unit of analysis for connecting South/South East Asia to East Africa and Southern Africa. How do you explain this trend? to what extent do or should historians of the region draw on thematic lenses - the body, migration, intimacy, violence, labor, technology, the environment – as a way of capturing the uneven and fractious colonial histories of the IOW from 1850-1950?

4. Works of fiction are increasingly used in historical scholarship as a means of accessing identities and interiorities that are generally opaque in traditional historiographical sources. Some scholars argue, however, that this practice degrades the integrity of history. Does fiction enrich or erode academic histories of Southern Africa and Southern Asia?

5. Have gender and women’s history been successfully integrated into the conceptualization, researching and writing of world history? Give specific examples from the historiographies of Southern Africa and Southern Asia.

6. What were the central flaws of colonial-era historiographies of the connections between South Africa and India? To what extent have academic social histories written since the 1980s been able to address and correct these flaws?