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Nordic newsletter 4 - 27 February 2017

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NORDIC SOUTH ASIA NETWORK

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Research Community News

• Danish researcher writes about Rani of Jhansi INA regiment

Women at War: Subhas Chandra Bose and the Rani of Jhansi Regiment by Dr. Vera Hildebrand, previously a research associate at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen. This is a most interesting book on the Rani of Jhansi Regiment (RJR), a female infantry unit of the Indian National Army (INA) formed and led by Indian nationalist politician Subhas Chandra Bose who collaborated with Japan during World War II with the aim of



Rani recruits in Singapore, late 1943. The central portrait is of the regimental namesake, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, who died in battle in 1858 defending her state of Jhansi

liberating India from British rule. The book, published by HarperCollins in 2016, is based on her 2014 PhD thesis from the Program of Liberal Studies at Georgetown University in Washington D.C., USA.

When Subhas Chandra Bose took command of the Indian National Army in Singapore in June 1943, he shocked the Indian expatriate community by announcing he wanted women to join the freedom fight. Many, mostly young girls from all religions, castes and social classes raised in the Indian diasporas in Malaya, Burma and Thailand, enrolled in the INA's all-female Rani of Jhansi Regiment. A contingent of combat-trained Ranis was deployed to Burma in May 1944 but plans to cross into India were never realized, as the British drove the INA and Japanese back into Burma.

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When British troops were only days away from the Rani camp in Rangoon, Bose ordered the Regiment to retreat to Bangkok despite Rani protests, the last 50 departing on 24 April. Only two died in enemy attacks.



The study demonstrates that the young women were not trained to survive in battle in the Burmese jungle. It establishes that there were roughly five hundred members of the Regiment, not one thousand five hundred as frequently cited in scholarly literature. The study confirms that only twenty women fighters were deployed as far as northern Burma, but still three hundred miles from the front. It shows that despite the commonly held view that the RJR fought bravely against the Imperial Raj, it never engaged in combat despite the profound desire of its members to attack the enemy. [Read more...](#)

Vera Hildebrand (photo to the above) is Danish and grew up in Copenhagen. She received her MA in Germanic languages and literature from Harvard University before joining Georgetown University. She traveled extensively in India, Malaysia, and Singapore to locate and interview women who served during World War II with Subhas Chandra Bose in the Indian National Army in Burma.



Captain Lakshmi Saghal, in 1945, as commander of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment

● **Heinz Werner Wessler writes on aversion against conversions in India**



Professor Heinz Werner Wessler at the Dept. of Linguistics and Philology, Uppsala University, has written an interesting article on the

aversion against religious conversions in India ("Aversionen mot konversioner i Indien") in the Swedish language magazine Signum, issue 01/2017. Prof. Wessler gives an excellent overview of the role of Christianity in India and the alleged threat against Indian culture put forward by Hindu activists and others, the "return back to your Hindu roots" movement (*ghar vapasi*), and he calls for a critical self-reflecting and intellectual discussion on religious issues, something that is missing in India today.



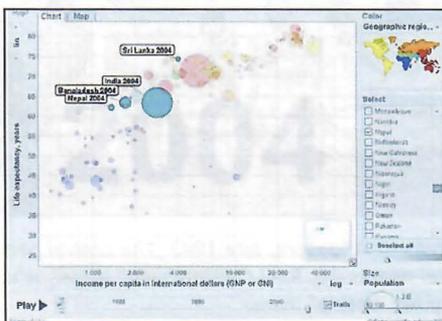
The article is not available for free, but the Signum magazine can be ordered on the net, [go for it](#). Another article on a similar topic by Prof. Wessler is however available to read for free on the Signum web page. The article is entitled "Omvänd er! Stråvan efter sanningen utgör grunden för ett religiöst liv". [Go for the article](#).

● **Hans Rosling challenged our preconceptions about global health**



Hans Rosling, Professor of International Health at Karolinska Institutet, passed away on 7 February 2017. With more than 25 years of worldwide experience on global health concerning the character of the links between economy and health in Africa, Asia and Latin America, he has been advisor to WHO and UNICEF, co-funded Médecines sans Frontiers Sweden and launched new courses and published a textbook on Global Health. Rosling transformed himself into a pop-star statistician by converting dry numbers into dynamic graphics that challenged preconceptions about global health and gloomy prospects for population growth.

Prof. Rosling was the driving force behind the creation of Gapminder, originally a non-profit venture based at Malmö that launched an animated computer programme using the so-called Trendalyzer software – turning time series of development statistics into



attractive moving graphics. A first project was the creation of a World Health Development Chart – in collaboration with WHO – showing the relation between the rates of child survival and GDP per capita during the last 50 years in all the countries of the World. Since 2003, Gapminder – now a registered foundation based in Stockholm – was developed through a collaboration with United Nations Division of Statistic and the UNDP, visualizing the fulfillment of the millennium development goals in the yearly Human Development Reports directly on the Internet.

On 16 March 2007, Google acquired Gapminder's Trendalyzer. In April 2010, Gapminder Desktop was released. This is the tool Hans Rosling uses to present global trends. [Download Gapminder Tools App](#)

In a 2007 TED video, Hans Rosling explained why ending poverty – over the coming decades – is crucial to stop population growth. [Watch the TEDTalk](#).

● **India related doctoral theses from Karolinska Institutet**

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For the past 60 years, Karolinska Institutet (KI) has been involved in a large number of Indo-Swedish collaborative research projects. Roughly half of Karolinska Institutet's departments have projects with over 100 different academies and research institutes in India. KI has also a long tradition of research collaboration with Pakistan. In recent years, several South Asian PhD candidates have defended their doctoral dissertations at KI, among them **Ujjwal Neogi** who defended his thesis entitled "*Translational Genomics of HIV-1 Subtype C in India: Molecular Phylogeny and Drug Resistance*" from the Department of Medicine Huddinge in 2013; **Rashmi Josephine Rodrigues** who defended her thesis entitled "*m-Health for antiretroviral treatment support: Evidence from India*" from the Department of Public Health Sciences in 2014; **Martin Gerdin** who defended his thesis entitled "*The Risk of Dying. Predicting Trauma Mortality in Urban Indian Hospitals*", from the Department of Public Health Sciences in 2015; **Kristi Sidney Annerstedt** who defended her thesis entitled "*Nobody Delivers at Home Now*" from the Dept of Public Health Sciences, also in 2015; and **Kirti Iyengar** who defended her thesis entitled "*Simplifying Medical Abortion Services in Primary Care Settings in India*" from the Department of Women's and Children's Health in 2016. [Read more about their theses.](#)



• **Interesting South Asia related theses on Epidemiology at Umeå University**



The Department of Public Health and Clinical Medicine at Umeå University, and especially its unit for Epidemiology and Global Health is involved in several collaborative research projects in the Third World, including South Asia. The North-South perspective is an important characteristic of its research and teaching, approaching public health issues locally and nationally in Sweden, as well internationally. In recent years a number of South Asia related PhD projects have been completed, among them are:

Anand Krishnan who defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "*Gender inequity in child survival. Travails of the girl child in rural north India*" in October 2013; **Tej Ram Jat** who defended his doctoral thesis entitled "*Maternal Health and Health Care in Madhya Pradesh State of India: An Exploration using a Human Rights Lens*" in November 2014; **Bharat Randive** who defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "*Study of the Conditional Cash Transfer Programme Janani Suraksha Yojana for the Promotion of Institutional Births: Studies from Selected Indian States*" in January 2016; **Vijendra Ingole** who defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "*Too Hot!: an Epidemiological Investigation of Weather-Related Mortality in Rural India*" in September 2016; and finally **Kaaren Mathias** who defended her doctoral dissertation entitled "*Shadows and Light: Examining Community Mental Health Competence in North India*" in December 2016. [Read more about their theses.](#)

• **Lars Eklund joins INLANSO language study centre based in Varanasi**

On 1 February 2017, former SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund takes up a position as Executive Director, Communications, for the Varanasi-based Centre for the Study of Indian Languages and Society (INLANSO). Lars retired from SASNET on 31 December 2016. He will now develop the INLANSO web site but also represent the organisation at international conferences and events. The work will be carried out both from Sweden and India. INLANSO is currently expanding its activities, teaching more languages, and attracting new groups of students.



Since 2012 INLANSO, which is an independent registered trust, successfully run Hindi Study Programmes for Nordic and European students in Varanasi. In recent years, it has also launched an Urdu programme in Lucknow, a Tamil programme in Pondicherry, and in 2017 a Bengali programme will be set up in Kolkata. The language programme was developed by Dr. **Mirja Juntunen**, former Director for the Nordic Centre in India university consortium (NCI) and being a Senior Lecturer in Hindi at the universities of Stockholm, Uppsala and Aarhus. She is now the Academic Director at INLANSO, in charge of its activities along with Dr. Dipak Malik, INLANSO Managing Director. [More information in the INLANSO folder.](#)

Lars Eklund visited the Centre for the Study of Indian Languages and Society in 2012 and met teachers and students, learning about the background of the Hindi Studies Centre in Varanasi. [Read his report.](#) (On photo, a group of 4th semester advanced Hindi students from Uppsala University who spent four months studying Hindi at INLANSO in 2014)

• **Post-doc fellowship available for India project at IKOS in Oslo**

University of Oslo announces a two-year Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship at the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages

(IKOS) within the research project "*Indian Cosmopolitan Alternatives: Ritual Intersections and the Proscription of Religious Offense*". The Fellowship is funded by The Research Council of Norway. The successful candidate will join the collaborative effort to address the role of ritual intersections and the law in safeguarding India as a multi-faith society

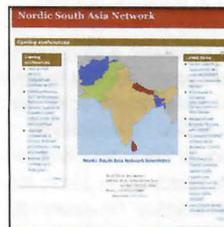


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and to augment the visibility of Indian case material in international academic debates on plural societies and cosmopolitanism. The project is coordinated by Professor Kathinka Frøystad. [More details.](#)

• **Subscribe/unsubscribe for Nordic South Asia Network newsletters**

The Nordic South Asia Network was launched by 1 January 2017 with a web site presenting news about South Asia related research in the Nordic countries, and South Asia related conferences worldwide. The web site is still under construction but already monthly newsletters are offered to you and other interested people. Go for <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu>. Are you less interested in getting this information on a regular basis, just inform and you will not receive more mails from me. Send e-mails to sydasiens@sydasiens.se



• **Siri Hettige Sri Lanka chair professor at SAI in Heidelberg**

The South Asia Institute (SAI) at University of Heidelberg, Germany, now inaugurates its first Sri Lanka Chair professorship. Siri Hettige, well-known researcher and Emeritus Professor of Sociology at University of Colombo, will be the holder of the chair. He will be installed on Thursday 9 February 2017 at the South Asia Institute, Library, Heinrich Zimmer



Reading Room.

At the beginning, Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Bernhard Eitel, President of Heidelberg University, His Excellency Karunatilaka Amunugama, Ambassador of Sri Lanka, Norbert H. Quack, Honorary Consul of Sri Lanka and Prof. Dr. William Sax, head of department of Anthropology, South Asia Institute will give welcome addresses. Afterwards, Prof. Hettige will give a talk entitled „Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Sri Lanka: Prospects and Challenges“. [Read more.](#)

SAI also has two other chair professorships: The Heinrich Zimmer Chair for Indian Philosophy and Intellectual History, since 2014 held by Prof. Amiya Sen: and the Allama Iqbal Professorial Fellowship, which however is vacant since 2014.

• **More information about South Asia related research at Swedish and Nordic universities**

See our page, <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/research-community-news>

Educational News

• **1,000 applications for Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) programme 2017**

The call for applications for the Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) programme 2017 was open till 9 February 2017. More than 1.000 applications were received.

Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) is an intercultural leadership programme for young leaders in South Asia. YCF offers personal and professional development to leaders who work for positive social change in the field of democracy, human rights, sustainability and equality. The programme provides the tools necessary to accomplish greater social impact. YCF builds and strengthens individual leadership through group-centric methods such as collaboration, feedback and reflection. Participants will learn in group from merited facilitators and from each other, through workshops, practical exercises and hands-on performance.

The four-week programme is divided into two modules at separate times and places, in the fall 2017 and spring 2018. Application is open to individuals between 22 and 32 years of age from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan or Sri Lanka, who are actively working for social change through the promotion of transparency, democracy or human rights. Applicants must have a proficient command of both written and spoken English. [More information.](#)

• **Follow-up week for the 2016 YCF programme participants in Malmö**

The 2016 batch of Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) - the intercultural leadership programme initiated by the Swedish Institute, and directed towards young people with leadership talents from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, has had its follow-up session in Malmö 20-23 February 2017. On Thursday 23 February, a mingle session was organised at Media Venture Lab, and Lars Eklund attended the function. For several of the participants from South Asia, the day came to be a memory of sorts since a heavy snowfall started in Malmö. [Read more...](#)



Roushan Elahi



Susan Zarah Atai



Jyotisman Chakma

• **Other educational news connected to South Asian studies all over the World**

See SASNET's page, <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/education-news>

Seminars and Conferences in Scandinavia

• **Varanasi conference on Gender, Activism and Politics in India and Sweden**

A joint Indo-Swedish conference entitled "Gender, Activism and Politics in India and Sweden" will be held at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi on 2-4 April 2017. The Swedish organizing partner is Karlstad University.

While both India and Sweden acknowledge the need for enhancing women participation and empowerment; their immediate concerns and priorities have been diverse. In Sweden there is growing concern about the declining participation of women in electoral politics and how it relates to the growing sway of neo-liberalism. Also there are anxieties about the proportionately low

participation of women from the community of immigrants, diasporas and the minorities.

On the other hand, India pins great importance to empowerment of women in the context of feminization of poverty, illiteracy, hunger and gender based violence. In parallel we observe a re-masculinisation of politics in both countries with a steadily growing populism that are following an authoritarian sentiment sweeping over the world. [More information.](#)



• Aarhus conference on Anthropology of Fright. Perspectives from Asia

A workshop on "Anthropology of Fright. Perspectives from Asia" will be held at Aarhus University 18-19 May 2017. The conference is jointly organised by Stefano Beggiora (Dept. of Asian and

North African Studies, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy); Lidia Guzy (India Study Centre Cork, School of Asian Studies, UCC Cork, Ireland); and Uwe Skoda (CISCA, Dept. of Global Studies, Aarhus University, Denmark).

Headlines around the globe in 2016 – ranging from terrorist attacks to war in Syria, Brexit etc. – were dominated by "frightful" events. For this workshop the organisers would like to focus on fright and fear in a broad sense – not limited to the above-mentioned global events. Taking a distinctive Asian perspective they are interested in the idea of fright: what are sources of fright and fear, how do we encounter them and handle such fears whenever we are confronted with them, when and how are 'monsters' produced, what mechanisms are employed to suppress, transform or seek fright? In a comparative and multidisciplinary approach we would like to bring together different but often overlapping contexts of fright. Contributions are invited from across the humanities, arts and social sciences spectrum including anthropology, sociology, religious studies, area studies, folklore studies, political science etc based on empirical research. Please send an abstract (250-300 words) by 28th of Feb to cisca@cas.au.dk.

[Full information.](#)

• Asian Century in focus for 2017 ADI conference in Copenhagen

The Asian Dynamics Initiative at University of Copenhagen organizes its 9th annual international ADI conference on 26-28 June 2017. The focus for the 2017 annual ADI conference will be the question of 'the Asian century' that is yet to be fully examined. The

ways in which new connected histories, flows and connections both within, and beyond, territoriality are taking shape will be discussed. What kind of circulatory worlds are produced through these multiple connections forged across temporalities via commodity trade, investments, human migration, technology, tourism, religion, art, literature and other forms of cultural consumption? How has Asia historically circulated beyond its territorial boundaries? And how do these circulations shape the contemporary world?

The conference organizers invite abstracts for paper presentations addressing Asian circulations and dynamics in a global context, but especially welcome perspectives relating to one of the panels listed below.

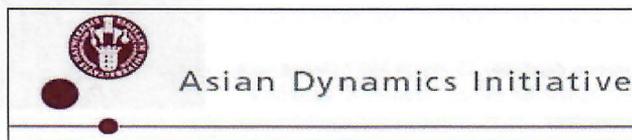
There is a panel with a direct South Asia focus, entitled "(En)countering sexual violence in the South Asian city", convened by Atreyee Sen and Emilija Zabliute, University of Copenhagen; Raminder Kaur, University of Sussex. The deadline for submitting paper proposals is 1 March 2017. [More information.](#)

• Information about South Asia related lectures and seminars

See SASNET's page, <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/lectures-in-scandinavia>

Conferences and workshops outside Scandinavia

• Indo-Swedish workshop on Global Social Theory in New Delhi



A workshop entitled "Towards Global Social Theory? Possibilities and Tensions" will be held in New Delhi 18-20 April 2017. It is organized by Henrik Chetan Aspengren, Linnaeus University in Växjö, with logistical assistance by the Nordic Centre in India (Umeå and Delhi): The workshop is funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond and LNU Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies.

This workshop is addressing current debates regarding the dominance of Northern thought in social theory. The role of modern European Empire and European modernity, as well as the structure of current knowledge systems in marginalising theory from the South has been discussed in this connection. Although the liveliest

debate on these issues has been coming out of the discipline of sociology, scholars from other parts of the social sciences have also contributed.

The workshop format is unconventional in the sense that there will be no open call for papers; instead ten scholars active within the field have been invited to submit previously unpublished papers. Invited participants include Gurinder K Bhambra, Professor of Sociology, University of Warwick; Ananta Kumar Giri, Madras Institute of Development Studies; Stefan Jonsson Professor of Ethnic studies, Linköping University; Sujata Patel, Professor of Sociology, University of Hyderabad; Aakash Singh Rathore, Visiting professor Centre for Philosophy, Jawaharlal Nehru University; and Sanjay Seth Professor of Politics, Goldsmith, University of London.

The participants have been asked to relate their contribution to one of three specific questions, ensuring a tighter fit between each paper and the general aim of the workshop:

- How can the work of contemporary social theory, generally produced in Northern/Western universities, be useful to social movements around the global south?
- How can Southern and decolonial theories connect over disciplinary and geographical boundaries and what is the role [place] of the university in this process?
- How can concepts developed in the South effectively be introduced to studies of social processes also in the North?

During the third day of the workshop, two separate panels will take place at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi and the Observer Research Foundation, respectively.

[More information.](#)

• **BASAS 2017 conference at Nottingham**



Linnaeus University Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies



On 19-21 April 2017, the British Association of South Asian Studies (BASAS) holds its annual conference in

Nottingham. The conference is hosted by Nottingham University's Institute of Asia and Pacific Studies (IAPS) and Nottingham Trent University's Postcolonial Studies Centre. The keynote speaker is feminist historian, publisher and writer Urvashi Butalia, sponsored by IAPS.

Registration will open in January 2017. Registration deadline: 15 March 2017 Please note that you must be a BASAS member in order to register for the conference. To become a member, visit <http://basas.org.uk/become-a-member/>.

An award of £250 will be made for the best paper presented at the Annual Conference. Entries should be no longer than 7000 words and submitted no later than 15 March 2017 to the conference organisers at basas2017@nottingham.ac.uk. A panel of judges comprising the conference organisers and council members will make the final decision based on the paper and the presentation. The winning paper may be considered for publication in one of BASAS's associated journals, Contemporary South Asia or South Asian Studies. [More information.](#)

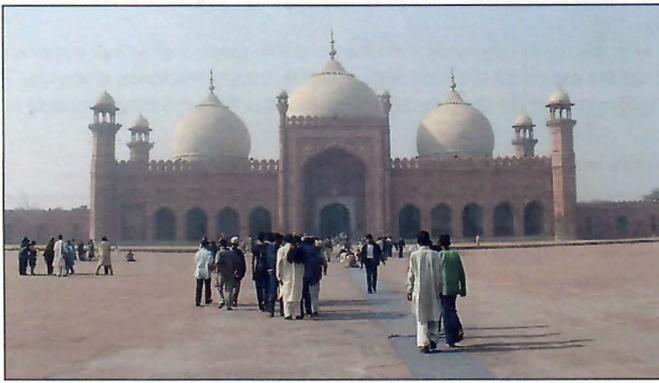
• **Brandeis University conference on the Unfinished Legacy of Ambedkar**

The third annual international conference on the Unfinished Legacy of Dr B.R. Ambedkar will be held 28-30 April 2017 at Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, USA. The theme for the conference will be "Re-imagining Religion, Caste, and Social Justice in South Asia". It is being organised by the Center for Global Development and Sustainability (GDS) at Brandeis University, and co-sponsored by the The Indian Institute of Dalit Studies in New Delhi; The India China Institute at The New School, New York, USA; The Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy at the National Law School of India University in Bangalore; the Boston Study Group; The W.E.B. DuBois Department of Afro American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA; and the Ambedkar International Mission, USA. Abstracts should be submitted before 3 March 2017. [More information.](#)



• **Honolulu summer institute on Islam in Asia: Traditions and Transformation**

The Asian Studies Development Program (ASDP), a joint initiative of the East-West Center and the University of Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, organises a four-week summer institute programme entitled "Islam in Asia: Traditions and Transformation" from 12 June to 7 July 2017. It has been made possible in part by a major grant from the US National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).



This multidisciplinary summer institute will offer context-rich and critical engagement with Islamic traditions, examining their origins and how they have shaped and been shaped by the cultures and societies of South and Southeast Asia. The first three weeks of the program will consider how Islam historically addressed both personal and social needs in ways that were inseparable from the dynamics of intellectual exchange, artistic production, social organization and politics. The final week will examine the complex interplay of Islam and globalization in the context of contemporary Asia. Application deadline is 1 March 2017. [More information.](#)

• **Triple conferences on Comparative Peacebuilding in Asia**

Three conferences with the theme "Comparative Peacebuilding in Asia - Liberal and Illiberal Transitions from Ethnic Conflict and Authoritarianism" will be held in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the United Kingdom in 2017 and 2018, supported by the British Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Independent Social Research Foundation (ISRF). This series of three conferences seeks to promote research and facilitate interdisciplinary discussions on the illiberal, nationally driven peacebuilding processes in conflict-affected South and Southeast Asia.



There has been an extraordinary expansion of academic interest in this field, and a new generation of scholars is producing exciting research drawing on theoretical innovations and empirical advances, including interesting comparative work. [More information about the project.](#)

The aim is to bridge academic nodes and peacebuilding knowledge and practice in the UK, Europe, Australia, North America and Africa, with Asia, and also to connect scholars and policy-makers within South and Southeast Asia. In particular, the organisers - including Dr Rajesh Venugopal, London School of Economics and Political Science - are looking for contributions that deal with liberal and illiberal peacebuilding conditions in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Indonesia, Cambodia, Nepal, India, Timor-Leste, Philippines, and Thailand. The conference dates are:

Colombo, Sri Lanka: 30 June - 2 July 2017

Yogyakarta, Indonesia: December 2017 (precise dates to be confirmed)

London, UK: June 2018 (precise dates to be confirmed)

[Full information.](#)

• **2017 South Asia Anthropology Group (SAAG) meeting in Edinburgh**



The Annual Meeting of the South Asia Anthropology Group (SAAG) holds its meeting at University of Edinburgh, Scotland, on 8 September 2017. The theme for the 2017 meeting is "Identity, Politics, and Resistance". It is being convened by Hugo Gorringe, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, University of Edinburgh.

The issue of identity has been at the heart of several important political developments and social movements over the past few years in South Asia. In India, critics argue that the rise of the BJP, culminating in the election of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister in 2014, has legitimised a vehement brand of Hindu nationalism, in turn contributing to an atmosphere of intolerance and hatred and an escalation of discrimination and violence against Muslims, Christians, Dalits, and women. In Bangladesh, freedom of speech remains under serious threat as a severe backlash against secularism accounts for violent attacks against writers and bloggers at the hands of radical Islamist groups. In Pakistan, identity based politics are ever present in conflicts based on sectarian, religious and regional divides. Sri Lanka meanwhile continues to embark on a process of national and ethnic reconciliation following a long and bitter civil war between the majority Sinhalese and the Tamil minority in the northeast. Nepal, too, has embarked on a new process of political settlement following the peace accord in 2006, contentious politics of identity and federalism and constitutional reform amidst protests from different religious and ethnic minorities. In all instances, there are growing demands for, and promises of, economic growth and development that are coterminous with a shrinking of state provision.

Whilst identity politics seeks to present social categories as behavioural entities, it is clear that considerable effort is required to mobilise groups into political action. Such mobilization also reveals how everyone has multiple identity options. Take the large-scale mobilisation around Dalit rights, particularly in Hyderabad following the suicide of a Dalit PhD scholar and activist and in Gujarat where thousands of Dalits took to the streets to protest attacks by cow-protection vigilantes. Such politics suggests that the BJP is antithetical to Dalit interests, yet political analysts note how many Dalits voted for Modi and the BJP in 2014 - swayed by promises of clean politics and development. Elsewhere, feminist activists and campaigners



have highlighted the endemic nature of sexual violence and harassment in campaigns that have been criticized for neglecting the caste contours of such violence.

SAAG 2017, thus, seeks papers that engage with questions of identity formation and the question of whose voices are amplified or silenced in the process. We also call for papers on the less political - more banal - processes of identity that underpin socio-political decisions and engagement across the sub-continent. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 31 May 31 2017. [Full information](#).

● Peshawar conference on State and Society in South Asia

The 26th International Pakistan History Conference will be held at University of Peshawar on 9-11 October 2017. The theme for the conference, jointly organised by the the Pakistan Historical Society; the Dept. of History at University of Peshawar; and the Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, is "State and Society in South Asia: Historical Perspective".



Historically South Asia consists of the present day states of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The region has more than 2,000 ethnic entities with populations ranging from hundreds of millions to a few thousand. The blend of these various groups has produced composite cultures with some common traditions and beliefs. Despite the tendency towards assimilation, the traditions of some ethnic groups in South Asia have persisted throughout history, sometimes giving rise to strong local traditions such as the distinctive South Indian and Bengali cultures. The conference aims to generate an academic debate on different aspects of State and Society in South Asian context from earlier times to the recent past. The debate would look into the various phases of the development and growth of Society and State in the past, their role in present, and impact on the future. Abstracts should be submitted before 15 March 2017. Selected papers will be published in a reputable journal or edited volume from a reputable publisher, subject to fulfillment of procedural requirements including plagiarism check and blind peer review. [Full information](#).

● 46th Madison conference will be an open-topic conference

The 46th Annual Madison Conference on South Asia will be held 26 – 29 October 2017. The conference, that is sponsored by the Center for South Asia at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, attracts over 800 scholars and specialists on South Asia, who travel from countries all over the world and much of the United States. It is a great venue for intellectual, professional, and social exchange. Panels, roundtables, and individual papers on all topics pertaining to South Asian studies are welcome. Registration and proposal submission forms (single papers, panels, roundtables, preconferences) are available on line. Registration as a non-presenting participant at the Conference is open to the general public. The conference features nearly 100 academic panels and roundtables, as well as association meetings and special events ranging from performances to film screenings. This year's conference chair has invited an open-topic conference; there is no theme. Submissions for the 46th Annual Conference on South Asia will open in February 2017. The deadline for Preconference Submissions is March 1. All other submission types are due April 1. Letters of acceptance will be sent in early June, and at that time the full schedule will be available online. Venue: Madison Concourse Hotel, 1 West Dayton St., Madison, Wisconsin, USA. [More information](#).



● Time to propose panels for the 2018 ECSAS conference in Paris



The 25th ECSAS (European Conference on South Asian Studies) will take place at the Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CNRS-EHESS) in Paris, France from 24 to 27 July



2018. The call for panels is now open and will close on 30 April 2017. Panel convenors and paper presenters at the 24th ECSAS must be members of EASAS through 2017 & 2018 or 2018 & 2019. Non-members cannot attend the conference. [More information at the conference web page](#).

Convenors may also present a paper during the conference, either in their own panel or another. Due to the 'competition for time'

within such a conference, colleagues are allowed to convene no more than one panel and present only one paper during the conference. All panels are open to paper proposals through the website and not just to previously-solicited contributions. EASAS appreciates a well-balanced composition of convenors and panelists within a panel (by gender, with an international mix of participants, and senior and junior scholars) but the main criterion will be the high academic quality of your panel. One convenor per panel must be based in a European institution. The conference organizers will also seek to ensure that the wide range of disciplines usually represented at the conference finds adequate coverage, both separately and in interdisciplinary panels.

ECSAS requires all accepted panels to be open to paper proposals through the website: proposed panels should not be 'closed' to further papers ab initio. Young researchers are advised to contact panel convenors to be considered for inclusion in their panel; young researchers are also encouraged to propose panels themselves. No panel may run for more than 4 sessions of 90 minutes.

The ECSAS has met regularly since 1968, and has provided an important opportunity to discuss current research and scholarship on topics relating to South Asia within the humanities and social sciences. The 2004 conference was organised by SASNET in Lund, [see the 2004 conference page](#).

The most recent ECSAS conference was held in Warsaw, Poland, in July 2016. Lars Eklund attended the conference, at that time representing SASNET, Lund University (but also as a member of the EASAS board - re-elected for the position as treasurer). [Go for his Warsaw report](#).

● Other conferences connected to South Asian studies all over the World

See SASNET's page, <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/conferences/conferences>

South Asia related culture in Scandinavia

• Akram Khan Dance Company performed Chotto Dosh on Sweden tour

Renowned and celebrated British choreographer Akram Khan and his dance company has completed a Sweden tour with a performance entitled *Chotto Dosh*. With roots in traditional kathak dance, Khan has developed his own unique contemporary style. He has toured the world and worked together with stars such as Juliette Binoche, the National Ballet of China and Sylvie Guillem. *Chotto Dosh* is Akram Khan's first work for families and is inspired by his own childhood, with one foot in the UK and the other in Bangladesh. *Chotto Dosh* is a magical dance theatre experience, a playful story about identity and a young man's childhood, about his parent's expectations and the importance of following your dreams. With spectacular animations and specially-composed music, the show moves between the bustling streets of Bangladesh and an enchanted forest.



The first performance was held in Halmstad on 7 February 2017, and the tour then led to Gothenburg, Jönköping, Luleå, Piteå, Umeå, Kungsbacka and finally Malmö (Dansstationen/Palladium) on 26 February 2017. [More information with detailed tour programme.](#)

• New performances of Philip Glass opera Satyagraha in Stockholm and gothenburg

During the fall 2016, the opera *Satyagraha* by US composer Philip Glass, was staged in Sweden for the first time, opening on 14 September at Folkoperan in Stockholm in a co production with Cirkus Cirkör. The huge success resulted in a new premiere on 6 April 2017, with six additional performances till 22 April, and after that also three performances in Gothenburg on 29 April-1 May. Opera singers and circus artists will meet on the Folkoperan stage in a space where anything can happen and the laws of gravity are suspended. The 1979 work includes scenes from the young Gandhi's life in South Africa. It was then he discovered Satyagraha, insistence on truth, which



was to become the start of what we call civil disobedience. Gandhi went on to become one of the most famous people in the world within the non-violence movement. The director Tilde Björfors is founder and artistic director of Cirkus Cirkör. Her previous works *Wear it like a crown*, *Knitting Peace*, *Borders and Limits* address subjects such as peace, borders, risks and opportunities. Her interpretation of *Satyagraha* further develops these themes and goes a step further in daring to believe in a peaceful path.

US composer Philip Glass has been one of the most influential music makers of the late 20th century. Although his music is sometimes labelled minimalist, it is powerful and suggestive, often with an almost hypnotic power. Via world tours with his own ensemble and working with artists such as David Bowie and Laurie Anderson, he has acquired a large circle of admirers worldwide. [Read more...](#)

• Information about South Asia related culture in Sweden/ Scandinavia

See SASNET's page, <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/cultural-events>

Best regards

Lars Eklund

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