

Nordic South Asia Network

Nordic Newsletter 7 - 23 May 2017

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NORDIC SOUTH ASIA NETWORK

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Research Community News

• Lars Eklund reports on the ESS project and possible Indian collaborations



The European Spallation Source ERIC with 15 member- and observer countries is the largest research investment in Swedish history ever. It is a joint European project, like that of many large-scale research facilities

such as CERN in Geneva, and it will eventually become a unique facility for materials research, and a multidisciplinary scientific research centre harnessing the world's most powerful neutron source. The facility, where researchers will be able to study the materials of everyday life, from plastics and proteins to medicines and molecules, in order to understand how they are built up and how they work, is expected to open for external researchers in 2023. *Photo from April 2017, by Per Nordeng/ESS.*

Nordic South Asia Network editor Lars Eklund recently visited ESS and met with Indian researcher Dr. Rithambara Yogi in the Accelerator Division to learn about discussions with India regarding possible collaborations which might come up on the agenda soon. [Read Lars' article on the ESS mega-project in Lund.](#)



• Gothenburg researchers gets funding for marine projects on Indian west coast



In January 2017, Gothenburg University researchers **Anna Godhe** from the Department of Marine Sciences; and **Per Knutsson** from the School of Global Studies were granted a Swedish Research Council project grant (Development research) for three years (2017-19) for an India related project entitled "Investigating the driving forces and spread of antibiotic resistance: the case of marine aquaculture in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa". The project builds on Dr. Godhe's long-time research collaboration with the College of Fisheries in Mangalore - part of the Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences

University. [Read a report by Lars Eklund visiting Mangalore in 2013.](#)

The main collaboration partners in the new project are Professors **Indrani Karunasagar** (*photo to the right*), and **Ramchandra Bhatta** at Nitte University in Mangalore; Dr. **Arvind Singh** at the Physical Research Laboratory in Ahmedabad; and Dr. **Rashmi Narayana** at TA Pai Management Institute in Manipal.

The project deals with the use of antibiotics in aquaculture. This is a hazard



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associated with the development and spread of antibiotic resistance genes (ARG) in marine environments. Bacteria are carriers of ARGs and associated with planktonic organisms, and studies of plankton and oceanic circulation may provide new insight into the spread of resistance. However, to establish fair and effective governance of antibiotic use, especially in developing countries where aquaculture production is an important source of livelihood and revenue, it is also necessary to know the driving forces behind the usage. [Read more about the project...](#)



Dr. Anna Godhe also received a 2016 Swedish Research Links grant for a similar India and Sri Lanka related project entitled *"Interactions between Microalgae and Bacteria used to suppress Pathogens on farmed Shrimp"*. Again, Prof. Indrani Karunasagar at Nitte University in Mangalore is a collaboration partner but also Dr. [Darshane Ruwandepeeka](#) at Saravagamuwa University of Sri Lanka. This project deals with shrimp aquaculture, that is playing a pivotal role in ensuring food and nutritional security of the growing population, in most of the south Asian countries. However, disease outbreaks among cultured animals put significant constraint and affect the economic development. Vibrios belonging to the Harveyi clade are pathogenic marine bacteria affecting both vertebrates and invertebrates causing devastating luminescent Vibriosis. [Read more about the project...](#)

• **Lund University research project on wild bees in Western Ghats region**



In January 2017, Lund University researcher [Almut Kelber](#), Professor in Functional Zoology at the Department of Biology, was granted a Swedish Research Links grant for an India related



project entitled *"The Role of Wild Bees in Pollination Services and Income of Small Farmers in the Western Ghats region in India"*. Professor Kelber is working within [The Lund Vision Group](#) - internationally recognised as one of the leading groups in comparative visual science in the world and collaborates for this project with Dr. [Henrik Smith](#) at same department; and in India with Professor [Hema Somanathan](#) at the [Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in Thiruvananthapuram](#) (IISER- TVM).

The aim of the project is to assess and value pollination by bees as an ecosystem service and for a farm income augmentation in the Western Ghats landscape, in south India. Habitat fragmentation has led to a reduction in pollinator communities worldwide but different pollinators are affected to different degrees. The Western Ghats is one of the "hottest biodiversity hotspots" in the world. The aim is to examine how the different native bee species utilize patchy, modified habitats, and to identify bee species that can cope with habitat modification. The researchers will quantify the economic value of pollination services for small and marginal farmers, and develop strategies for the conservation of bees and thereby, augmenting farm incomes. This will be one of the first studies of effects of landscape structure on pollination services in the Asian tropics. [Read more...](#)

• **Skövde University project to strengthen research links between Sweden and Nepal**



[Alexandra Krettek](#), Professor of Public Health at the Department of Health and Care, Public Health Unit, School of Health and Education, University of Skövde, has a long record of collaboration projects with Tribhuvan University in Nepal. In January 2017, she was awarded a Swedish Research Links grant for a new project entitled *"An Intervention to promote Cardiovascular Health directed at Mothers - a Platform for Capacity building through Research Link between Sweden and Nepal"* in collaboration with Professor [Sakari Suominen](#), and Library Director [Janet Wamby](#) at University of Skövde; Senior Lecturer [Gabriele Eiben](#) at University of Gothenburg; Associate Professor [Abhinav Vaidya](#), Kathmandu Medical College; and Professor [Madhusudan Subedi](#), Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.

In her own research, Alexandra Krettek - who is also Associate Professor of Cardiovascular Prevention at the Institute of Medicine, Sahlgrenska Academy at University of Gothenburg, and previously worked at the Nordic School of Public Health (closed down in December 2014) - has focused on public health with special emphasis on population-based studies for cardiovascular disease prevention. The new project aims at contributing with new scientific knowledge and establish new research ties in health promotion in Nepal. The expertise of the Swedish members of the team can be integrated into the development of research training in Nepal and can strengthen local research infrastructure and research training. [More information.](#)

• **Fruitful NSAN visit to the Samtse College of Education in Bhutan**

During the period 5-12 May 2017, the NSAN editor [Lars Eklund](#) visited Bhutan on invitation from the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) and more specifically by its College of Education in Samtse (SCE). The planning for the visit originated in Lars meeting Swedish musicologist [Johan Westman](#) working at the Lu-Rig Centre for Music Education and Research. Samtse College of Education is one of eight



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Bhutanese colleges at different locations in the country, under the umbrella of RUB. It was established already in 1968 as the Teachers Training Institute.



Johan Westman and Lars Eklund meeting Nidup Dorji, RUB Vice Chancellor.

Currently SCE has external linkages with a number of European, American and Australian universities, including TERI University in Delhi and Aalborg University in Denmark, but till now no Swedish universities, and that became the main purpose of Lars' visit to broker more connections.

Lars was invited to hold a seminar (*photo above*) for the faculty and students on important research fields common to Sweden and Bhutan, presenting information about Nordic PhD theses and Swedish research projects related to Bhutan – mostly within natural and agricultural sciences, and providing concrete suggestions regarding specific Swedish university institutions in the fields of social science and humanities that might be of interest for SCE.

During his stay in Samtse he also held separate meetings with the professor at the different centres, and with the SCE President, Thinley Dorji. These meetings were fruitful and immediately a connection was made between the Dept. of Mathematics at SCE and a Mathematics department at a Swedish university.

On his final day in Bhutan, in the capital Thimphu, Lars had a 45 minutes meeting with the Vice Chancellor of Royal University of Bhutan, Nidup Dorji.

[Read Lars complete report from the Bhutan visit.](#)

• Copenhagen meeting to form a South Asia across the Nordic Region collective



The Centre of Global South Asian Studies and the Asian Dynamics Initiative (ADI) at University of Copenhagen invite scholars and practitioners across the Nordic region for what is supposed to become the First Annual Meeting of an initiative entitled "South Asia across the Nordic Region (SANR)". The meeting will be held on Tuesday 27 June 2017 at University of Copenhagen. The new collective will offer a platform to present ongoing research, and generate fresh ideas and information that will enhance our knowledge of the South Asian region. This interaction is expected to increase scholarly collaboration across the region in fruitful ways, and the organisers invite participants to submit paper or panel proposals for this inaugural meeting. There is no conference fee required to present papers. The organizers will provide local hospitality, whereas the travel and accommodation costs will be borne by the participants themselves. [More information.](#)

• The Donner Research Prize 2017 to Måns Broo



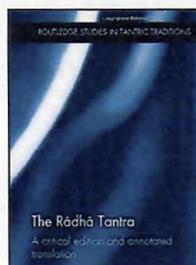
On 21 April 2017, the Donner Institute for Research in Religious and Cultural History in Turku, Finland, has awarded Dr Måns Broo from the Swedish language Åbo Akademi University the 2017 prize for outstanding research into religion. Dr Broo is awarded for his book *The Rādhā Tantra: A Critical edition and annotated translation* (Routledge, 2017).

The book deals with the early-modern genealogy of Tantra in South Asia, more specifically the Rādhā Tantra (RT), which is an anonymous work of 1745 verses, presenting in great detail the relation of love between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa found in well-known Vaiṣṇava literatures. Broo's work contains an elaborate introduction,

the complete Sanskrit text, and a translation.

The Donner Institute Prize is awarded annually for outstanding research into religion conducted at a Nordic university. It is intended for researchers in the field of religious studies for a significant and relatively newly published monograph or article in print or digital form. [More information on the award.](#)

[More information about the book.](#)



• Amartya Sen wins Uppsala University's Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science

Amartya Sen, Thomas W. Lamont Professor at Harvard University, wins the 23rd Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science (Skytteanska Priset). The 2017 Prize will be awarded at a traditional ceremony which will take place in Uppsala on 30 September 2017. The ceremony will be accompanied by Prize winner lecture open to the wide public.

Sen is awarded the Prize for his multifaceted achievement that "combines insights into human vulnerability with knowledge about the potential of democratic political power to redress and relieve this deprivation." Sen, who originates from West Bengal, has spent most of his professional career at Universities of Cambridge and Harvard, all while retaining an affiliation with Delhi University in his native India. In 1998, he was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences and he has used the award to start the Pratichi Trust in India and Bangladesh that works to improve women's access to education and health care.

The Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science was launched in 1994 by Uppsala University. It relates to Johan Skytte, who donated a considerable sum to University in 1622 to found a professorship in Political Science and Eloquence. Johan Skytte, by then a leading statesman within the Swedish Realm and vice-chancellor of Uppsala University, believed that while Sweden usually excelled at the field of battle, she tended to underperform at the negotiation table, something Johan Skytte was determined the new chair at Uppsala University could help to change. The Prize is handled by a foundation governed by a board, that includes the patron, Count Nils-Axel Mörner; current Skytte Professor of Political Science, Li Bennich-Björkman; and the Vice-chancellor of Uppsala University, Eva Åkesson. [Read more.](#)



• Swedish Institute India Alumni Conclave held in Goa



On 5-7 May 2017, the Swedish Institute (SI) organised an SI INDIA Alumni Conclave 2017 in Goa, with the theme being Sustainability. Among the invitees were former participants in the Young Connectors of the Future (YCF) leadership programme, a programme directed towards young people with leadership talents from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka who represent different sectors of society and are visionaries in positions to make a difference. NSAN Editor Lars Eklund is involved in the programme, as a member of the selection committee. [More information about the YCF programme.](#)

The Conclave was co-organised by the Swedish Embassy in Delhi, and included an ambitious programme with several speeches and participant-led talks by Bibhash Das and journalist Mohit Rao on Sustainable Energy. Besides, Lawyer Guneet Kaur spoke about "Social Media, Freedom of Expression, Hate Speech and Legal Protection"; and Jayanthi Pushkaran spoke about "Gender Equality: Walk the walk not just talk the talk"; [More information about the Goa](#)

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Conclave

• Oslo triple mini-seminars on Educational Freedom in India

The Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages at University of Oslo organised a triple mini-lectures seminar on the theme "Educational Freedom in India" on Tuesday 16 May 2017 at 15.15. Venue: Georg Sverdrups hus (the library building), seminar room 2, Blindern, Oslo. This roundtable on the status of academic and educational freedom in India dealt with issues such as self-censorship, accusations of being anti-national, of defamation, campus battles, textbook bans. All keywords that are increasingly characteristic of newsreports on the state of academic freedom in India.



Ravinder Kaur, Moumita Sen and Lars Tore Flåtten.

At the same time India has regular and free elections, a free press and a very active new media, and a legal system that tends to uphold individual citizenship rights vis-à-vis mob accusations. The aim is to achieve a better understanding of what is happening to academic freedom in the world's largest democracy and soon the world's most populous country and a very significant economy. The three presentations were:

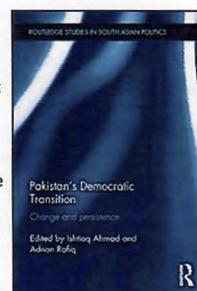
- Professor Ravinder Kaur, University of Copenhagen: "The Nation Wants to Know": Media, Freedoms, Politics"
- Dr. Moumita Sen, University of Oslo: "In the name of nationalism: the university as battleground"
- Dr. Lars Tore Flåtten, University of Oslo: "The Hindu Nation in Historical Narratives"

[Read more...](#)

• Edited volume on Pakistan's Democratic Transition

Pakistan's Democratic Transition. Change and Persistence. Edited volume by **Ishtiaq Ahmad**, Stockholm University, and **Adnan Rafiq**, University of Oxford. Routledge 2017.

Politics in Pakistan has traditionally been understood in the context of civil-military relationship. In May 2013, for the first time in history, Pakistan saw an elected government complete a full term in office and transfer power through the ballot box to another civilian government. In view of such an important development, this book offers critical perspectives on Pakistan's current democratic transition and its implications for national politics, security and foreign policy. It critically analyses the emerging political trends in the country, including their underlying sources, attributes, constraints, and prospects of sustainability. Drawing on history, diverse theoretical perspectives, and empirical evidence, it explains the dynamics of the democratic process, contested borders and spaces, and regionalism. Contributions are from 13 prominent scholars in the field, who provide a wide-ranging analysis of Pakistan's contemporary national and regional challenges, as well as the opportunities they entail for its viability as a democratic state. [Read more...](#)



It should also be mentioned that a new edition of Professor Ishtiaq Ahmed's excellent book "The Punjab Bloodied Partitioned and Cleansed" is to be published by Oxford University Press during 2017 to mark the 70th Anniversary of the Partition of the Punjab (and India). [More information on this book.](#)

• Pär Jansson writes about Sikhs and Sikhism

Sikherna och deras värld by Swedish journalist **Pär Jansson**. The first book in Swedish about the Sikh religion and its 23 million followers worldwide, of which 17 million live in Punjab, India. Carlssons 2017.

Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak in the 1500s. He wanted to reform Hinduism and break the Brahmins monopoly of interpreting religious texts. Guru Nanak believed that God's blessing was for everyone. He was against the religious hierarchy, which forced people to show obedience to a closed priesthood. Sikh history is full of drama. There has long been an independence movement in Punjab in India and the radical Sikhs have wanted to establish an independent nation. In the 1980s, this led to a bloody conflict with the central government in New Delhi. The holiest site is the Golden Temple in Amritsar, which was then stormed by Indian troops. In retaliation Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh guards. [More information.](#)



• Oslo special seminar on Professor Georg Morgenstierne and his work

Every year, the South Asia section at the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages (IKOS), University of Oslo, arranges a series of what is known as Morgenstierne lectures. The seminar series owes its name to Georg Morgenstierne, who was a renowned Professor of Indo-Iranian languages from 1937 till 1963 at the University of Oslo. (Before that he was actually Professor of Comparative Indo-European Linguistics at University of Gothenburg 1930-1937). As a researcher, Morgenstierne travelled extensively in Asia, from Sri Lanka to Afghanistan and Iran - a region that was also difficult to access geographically, politically, and linguistically in his time. The National Library's archive contains a plethora of Morgenstierne's manuscripts, letters, and photographs that document his travels and thorough research of the cultures and languages of the countries he visited. Especially noteworthy is his documentation from travels in the Hindu Kush region in 1929, where he also made short audio and film recordings. His impressive bibliography includes well over 200 publications.



On Thursday 27 April 2017, a special seminar focusing on Prof. Morgenstierne himself was held at the National Library in Oslo. The programme included interesting presentations, including one by Johanne Ostad who spoke about "From Santali to Sanskrit - Language archives in the National Library". [More information.](#)

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

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

Educational News

• Lars Eklund visited INLANSO study centres in Varanasi and Mussoorie



The NSAN editor Lars Eklund, who is also Executive Director, Communications, for the Varanasi-based Centre for the Study of





Indian Languages and Society (INLANSO), has spent three weeks on a reconnaissance tour to India and Bhutan. During the period 25-29 April 2017, he spent time in Varanasi to study the activities at the main INLANSO office. He then joined Dr. Miriya Juntunen Malik (*photo*), Academic Director at INLANSO, and Dr. Dipak Malik,



Roquiya Khatoon and Vivek Kumar Jaiswal with Dipak Malik in Mussoorie.

INLANSO Managing Director, in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand state, to launch the new summer course in Hindi there from early May. During his stay in India, Lars has met most of the INLANSO staff, including local Hindi language teachers Dr Roquiya Khatoon and Dr Vivek Kumar Jaiswal; and students from Oslo and Uppsala Universities, with the advanced student Armin Chiochetti also teaching. Lars in close collaboration with Miriya has also planned for an update of the INLANSO web site and taken part in the planning of new courses and programmes.

[Read more about Lars' 2017 reconnaissance tour to Varanasi and Mussoorie.](#)

● **INLANSO summer programme on The Power and Culture of Indian News Media**

The Centre for the Study of Indian Languages and Society (INLANSO) in Varanasi, India, offers a summer programme on "The Power and Culture of News Media in India", 3-28 July 2017. It will be held in Varanasi and Lucknow.



Applications should be sent before 5 June 2017. The course will focus on the role of news media (printed press) in shaping the political contexts for both regional and national actors during the period prior to the independence as well as during the recent period. The continuing expansion of the newspapers in regional languages has provided common people direct access to the political fora as well as it has offered others to get through political messages.

Through lectures, seminars and reading of the newspapers, especially the regional ones (Hindi, Urdu and Tamil) different approaches, if any, will be identified and analysed. Power and culture of printed news media in India will also be critically investigated through direct interactions with the readers and the journalists. Participants should have a minimum of 2 years of academic university studies of South Asia related area studies including the study of Hindi/Urdu and preferably (but not necessarily) Tamil/Telugu/Malayalam/Kannada. [Full information.](#)

● **INLANSO Hindi summer course on Literature and Culture of Benares**

From 3 - 28 July 2017, the Centre for the Study of Indian Languages and Society (INLANSO) in Varanasi, India, offers an **Intensive Hindi Study Programme on the Spectrum of Literature and Culture of Benares**. Applications should be delivered before 5 June 2017.



The programme is intended for those interested in improving their spoken Hindi while exploring the literary and cultural heritage as well as present day setting in the multifaceted city of Benares. Knowledge of Hindi grammar upto lower intermediate level is necessary accompanied by fluency in reading and writing the Devanagari script.

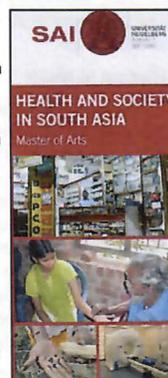
The tuition fee includes 20 hours of instruction, tuition, guiding, coordination, outdoor visits included in the programme, exams and the evaluation. Costs for traveling to and from Varanasi/Lucknow, local transportation, accommodation costs, medical costs, visa fees and insurance fees will be paid by the student. [Full information.](#)

● **Apply for Heidelberg's master's programme on Health and Society in South Asia**



Since 2008, the South Asia Institute at University of Heidelberg, Germany, runs an interdisciplinary Master's programme entitled "Health and Society in South Asia" (MAHASSA). The programme is a taught, two-year interdisciplinary degree with a focus on Medical Anthropology and South Asian Studies.

It is integrated with the curriculum of Heidelberg University's South Asia Institute, allowing students to integrate South Asian languages, geography, politics, etc. into their plan of study. Most students base their Masters Thesis on field research conducted in South Asia. The language of instruction is English. The programme is intended for students who plan to work (or already work) in health-related fields but also for those who wish to pursue an academic career. The programme is administered by the [Dept. of Anthropology at the South Asia Institute](#), specializing in Medical



Anthropology, with various staff members conducting research on ritual healing, folk medicine, South Indian medicine, health and environment, Ayurveda, Tibetan Medicine, gender and health, women's reproductive health and Islam, and other topics.

The programme combines Medical Anthropology with South Asian Studies. Medical Anthropology is the study of healing systems, not primarily in terms of scientific theories or health policies, but also focusing on and analyzing how they are practiced in concrete, socio-cultural contexts. Admissions for the next program starting in October 2017 is now open and applications should have reached the University before 15 June 2017. [More information about MAHASSA.](#)

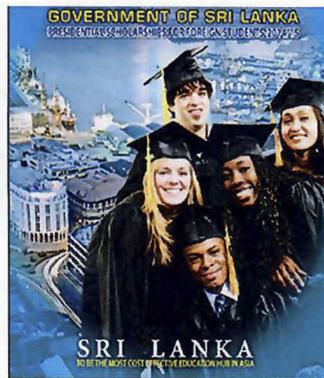
● **Sri Lanka offers Presidential Scholarships for Foreign Students**

Every year, the Government of Sri Lanka invites applications from eligible students for the award of undergraduate and postgraduate scholarships offered by the Ministry of Higher Education and Highways, Sri Lanka under



the Government of Sri Lanka Presidential Scholarships for Foreign Students programme, now latest for the academic year 2016/17. [More information about the programme.](#)

This programme has been in operation for five years and provides 100 undergraduate and postgraduate scholarships annually to foreign students from identified countries. These countries include all South Asian nations. Among the Nordic countries Sweden, Norway and Iceland are included. The ambition is that this scholarship scheme would bring about stronger educational and cultural ties with friendly nations. Students are given a chance to enroll themselves in either undergraduate or postgraduate programs conducted by some selected state universities in Sri Lanka. The vision behind the programme is to turn Sri Lanka into an International Hub of Excellence for Higher Education by 2020. Courses are to commence in November 2017. Since this is a government to government scholarship programme, candidates should apply for this scholarship with the recommendation of the government scholarship nominating agency (Ministry / Institution) of the respective country. The scholarship will include tuition fees, Visa charges, Flight fares and a monthly living allowance. Last official date for submitting applications was on the 8 May 2017. [Read the full brochure about the programme.](#)

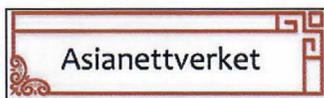


• Other educational news connected to South Asian studies all over the World

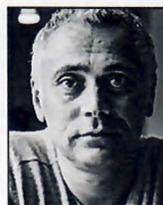
See SASNET's page, <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/education-news>

Seminars and Conferences in Scandinavia

• 2017 Norwegian Network for Asian Studies Open Summer Meeting



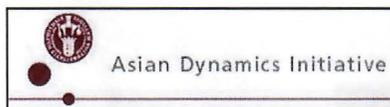
The Norwegian Network for Asian Studies holds its 2017 Open Summer Meeting on Wednesday 7 June 2017, 15.15-18.00. This year, award winning author Ivo de Figueiredo (*photo*) introduces his recent book "A Stranger by my Table", a book that



took him on a journey back to his ancestral village Saligao, in erstwhile Portuguese India. Lisa Björkman from University of Louisville, USA, will give a talk on "Pipe Politics, Contested Waters" based on her monograph on Mumbai. Finally, the winner of this year's "Best Norwegian MA thesis on an Asian topic" will be announced. The meeting is organised by Dr. Kenneth Nielsen. Venue: Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM), Sognsveien 68, Oslo, seminar room on the top floor. [More information.](#)

The NSAN Editor Lars Eklund will attend the Open Summer Meeting in Oslo.

• 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 2017 annual ADI conference addresses the question of 'the Asian century' that is yet to be fully examined. We attend to the ways in which new connected histories, flows and connections both within, and beyond, territoriality are taking shape. 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?



Francesca Bray and Sumathi Ramaswamy.

Confirmed keynote speakers include Francesca Bray, Professor of Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh, who will speak about "The politics of the Handloom: Craft, Technology and the Modern Nation in China and India"; and Sumathi Ramaswamy, Professor of History, Duke University, USA, who will speak about "A Mahatma on the March: Towards an Aesthetics of the Ambulatory". [Full information.](#)

• Lund University lecture on Urbanizing Maoism in Nepal

The South Asian Students Association at Lund University (SASA) organised a seminar with Dan V. Hirsland from Dept. of Social Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, on Thursday 11 May 2017, 17.00-18.30. He spoke about "Urbanizing Maoism: Thoughts on a Peasant Revolt in the Age of Neoliberalism". Venue: Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES), seminar room, Finngatan 16, Lund. The event was open to everyone and as usual at SASA events fika was served.

Dan V Hirsland defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "Sacrificing Youth: Maoist Cadres and Political Activism in Post-War Nepal" in 2012. In his Lund presentation, he takes as a starting point the spectacular transformation of Maoism in Nepal after the peace process in 2006. While Maoism historically grows out of a critique of feudalism related to an agricultural political economy, the context of democratic or democratising nation-states based on liberal principles are posing formidable challenges in how to adapt to highly urban-centric and transnational elite structures of the state. [Read more...](#)



• SASA seminar on Excluded Children of Migrated Communities in India

The South Asia Students Association at Lund University (SASA) organises an informal lecture with Associate Professor Prabha Tirmare from the College of Social Work in Mumbai, India, on Tuesday 30 May 2017, 17.00-19.00. She will speak about "Excluded Children of Migrated Communities in India: A Challenge for Integration and Inclusion". Venue: Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, Finngatan 16, Lund. In her talk, she will present contextual information about the Indian society and caste system to understand the complexities of indigenous groups such as the Nomadic Tribes and De-notified Tribes. This will be followed by taking focus onto the situation and vulnerability of children of these communities. [Read more...](#)



• Information about South Asia related lectures and seminars

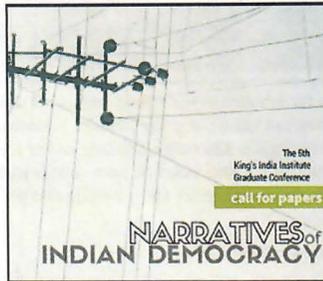
See SASNET's page, <http://nordicsouthasianet.eu/lectures-in-scandinavia>

Conferences and workshops outside Scandinavia

• Kings India Institute graduate conference on Narratives of Indian Democracy

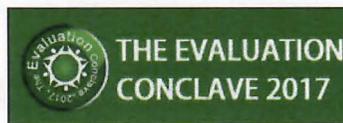
The King's India Institute in London, officially launched in January 2012, is committed to building India's human and intellectual capacities to address global issues on its own terms, foster long-range thinking on India's most essential dilemmas, and deepen international comprehension of the distinctive character of India's growth path and its challenges. The Institute's activities encompass academic research and scholarship, postgraduate teaching and research, policy analysis and debate, and public engagement in arts and culture. It is headed by Professor **Sunil Khilnani**, and the academic staff includes several eminent South Asia specialists such as Professor **Christophe Jaffrelot**, Professor **Harsh V Pant** and Dr **Jahnavi Phalkey**.

On 31 May 2017, the King's India Institute organises its 5th annual Graduate Conference in London. The theme is "*Narratives of Indian Democracy*". The Graduate Conference offers an opportunity for research students to share their work and receive feedback from eminent academics/experts from various disciplines. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 15 March. [Full information](#).



• 4th Evaluation Conclave on Gross National Happiness in Bhutan

The Community of Evaluators – South Asia (CoE-SA) announces its 4th Evaluation Conclave (Conclave 2017) to be held in Bhutan from 6 – 9 June 2017. It will be a collaborative Event of CoE – SA, the Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC) of the Royal Government of Bhutan, and the Evaluation Association of Bhutan. Conclave 2017 will focus largely on the relationship between well-being and sustainable development with a view to demonstrate the importance of evaluations in these areas. Conclave 2017 will be a forum for government, civil society, donors and evaluation fora. Call for contributions and conclave registration are now open. [Full information](#).



Happiness – or people's satisfaction of their lives – has become the key indicator of well-being. Many factors contribute to happiness; these include personal factors such as income, health, the freedom to choose life styles etc. Additionally, there are social conditions such as community interactions and governance. The conditions of the environment in which we live also contribute significantly to well-being and happiness. In the recent times, work has progressed on quantifying happiness; for example, the evaluative happiness, as detailed in the World Happiness Report, looks at overall quality of life and has developed benchmarks. The ultimate aim of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is human well-being examined from economic, social, and environmental objectives, rather than from a narrow agenda of economic growth alone.

• 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-weeks 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. [More information](#).

• Rural South Asia in focus at SOAS Graduate Conference

The 2017 South Asia Institute Graduate Conference at SOAS University of London will be held 12-13 June 2017. The theme of the conference is "Interrogating the 'rural' in South Asia: ruptures and continuities". This workshop explores the varied interpretations of 'the rural' as a simultaneous space of both rupture and continuity in terms of its social, political and economic dimensions. Through such discussion, the workshop seeks to question and reimagine the continued relevance of 'the rural'. [Read more...](#)



• Asian Dream in focus for 5th ICAS conference in Ottawa

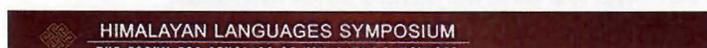
The Fifth International Conference on Asian Studies (ICAS2017) will be held in Ottawa, Canada, 17 - 18 June 2017. The theme for the ICAS2017 will be "*Asian Dream – Global Prosperity: Challenges & Issues*". It is jointly organised by the International University of Japan; the International Center for Research & Development, Sri Lanka; and the and Unique Conference, Canada. Abstracts should be submitted by 15 May 2017.



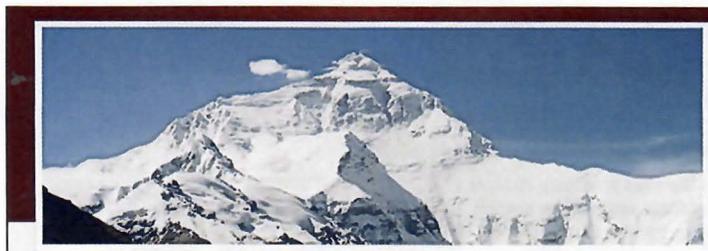
ICAS2017 is a two day interactive international forum will create an opportunity for academics, practitioners, and PhD students to come together, review their research findings, exchange ideas, and discuss emerging trends. The conference convener is Prabhath Patabendi. The keynote speakers include Professor N. S. Cooray, Associate Dean, Graduate School of International Relations, International University of Japan; and Wimal Rankaduwa, Professor of Economics and International Development Studies at University of Prince Edward Island, Canada. [More information](#).

• 23rd Himalayan Languages Symposium to be held in Tezpur

The 23rd Himalayan Languages Symposium



will be held 5-7 July 2017 at Tezpur University in Tezpur, Assam state, India. The 2017 HLS is hosted by the Linguistics wing of the university's Department of English and Foreign Languages. The Himalayan Languages Symposium is



an annually convening, open scholarly forum for scholars of Himalayan languages since 1995. Contributions are welcome on any language of the greater Himalayan region, e.g. Burushaski, Kusunda, Tibeto-Burman, Indo-Iranian, Austroasiatic, Kradai, Andamanese, Nihali, Dravidian or any other language of the area. In addition to linguistic presentations, contribution are also welcome from related disciplines such as history, anthropology, archaeology and prehistory. The forum is secular and scholarly and not open to political or religious contributions. [Read more...](#)

• **Interesting panels at ICAS 10 to be held in Chiang Mai**

The International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) - the largest international gathering in the field of Asian Studies, holds its 10th summit on 20-23 July 2017 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. ICAS attracts participants from over 60 countries to engage in global dialogues on Asia that transcend boundaries between academic disciplines and geographic areas. Since 1997, ICAS has brought more than 20,000 academics together at nine conventions. ICAS 10 is organized by the Regional Center for Social Change and Development (RSCD), with support from the Faculty of Social Sciences of Chiang Mai University (CMU), one of the best universities in Southeast Asia. Nearly 2 000 Asia specialists and representatives of civil society are expected to attend.



The extensive programme includes panels on "Exhibiting Indian Archives: Putting Heritage Back in Place"; "Democracy, Decentralization and Local Politics in South Asia"; "India's Foreign Policy 2014-2017: Reflections and Perspectives"; "Postcolonial Displacements: Migration, Narratives and Place-Making in South Asia"; and "Trajectory of Muslim Women in South Asia: A Development Discourse". [Full information.](#)

• **Middle Bengali Retreat cum Workshop in Transylvania in August**

For the second time, a Middle Bengali Retreat and Workshop will be held in Miercurea Ciuc/Csíksereda, Romania, 3-13 August 2017. It is organised by the Faculty of Economics, Socio-Human Sciences and Engineering, Department of Human Sciences at Sapientia - Hungarian University of Transylvania, in collaboration with AIBS (American Institute of Bangladesh Studies) and

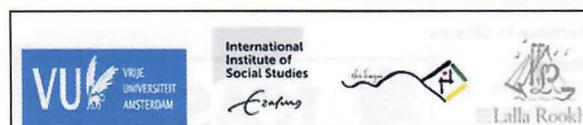


the University of Chicago, USA. Deadline for applications was 2 May 2017. (Photo from the 2016 retreat) The aim of the retreat is to bring together scholars and advanced students of Middle Bengali in a relatively informal way, to discuss or simply to enjoy reading together texts on which a specialist is working. In this way, not only the audience would benefit from the leaders' expertise but important feedback will also be provided for panel leaders from a qualified audience. Participants are normally academics and graduate students; however, undergraduates with a firm commitment are also encouraged to attend.

The format will be similar to the other Intensive Retreats (for Sanskrit see e.g. <http://www.efeo.fr/siisr/index.htm>) including outings and reading texts outdoors within beautiful scenery. Each day, three ninety-minute reading sessions will be conducted by outstanding specialists. One text will be read through several sessions. This year, the readings will cover a wide range of Middle Bengali texts and a variety of genres (narrative, lyric, didactic) and periods (from the Bengali Sultanate to late Mughal times). After a general introduction on Middle Bengali grammar, prosody and literary genres, we will read texts such as Rūprām's Dharmamaṅgal, narratives on the lives of Sufi saints, Brajabuli lyrics by Vidyapati and other poets, Vaiṣṇava hagiographies and plays, etc... Session leaders who confirmed their participation are Tony Stewart (Vanderbilt University), Rebecca Manning (University of Indiana, Bloomington), Thibaut d'Hubert (University of Chicago), and Ishan Chakrabarti (University of Chicago). [Full information.](#)

• **Challenging Perspectives on the Indian Diaspora theme for The Hague conference**

On 5-7 October 2017, an international conference on Diaspora Studies and Policies will be held at The Hague, The Netherlands. The conference, with the theme "Challenging Perspectives on the Indian Diaspora", is organised by



the Foundation of the Lalla Rookh Academic Chair), in conjunction with VU University of Amsterdam, The International Institute of Social Studies of the Erasmus University Rotterdam in The Hague, and the Municipality of The Hague. Academic and policy papers from disciplinary, multidisciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches that will emphasize new areas and linkages with India are invited, including topics like the role of Bollywood films, homemaking and integrating practices, identity making, issues concerning citizenship and legal arrangements, and the politics and economics of diaspora. The conference will pay attention to exploring topics from new disciplinary areas, such as anthropology, economics, law, politics, sociology, geography, art and media, and history. Keynote speakers include Professor Brij Lal, Australian National University, Canberra; Professor. N. Jayaram, former Dean Tata Institute for Social Sciences, Mumbai; Professor Shakuntala Rao, State University New York; Professor Vineeta Sinha, National University Singapore; and Professor Peter van de Veer, Director of the Max Plack Institute, Göttingen. Deadline to submit abstracts is 30 May 2017. [Full information.](#)

• **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

• **International Tagore Choir spring concert 2017**

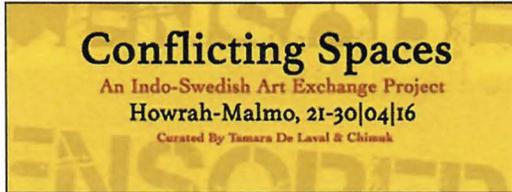
The International Tagore Choir in Lund performs with a concert at Teater Sagohuset in Lund on Wednesday 31 May 2017, at 7 PM. The programme, a belated tribute to the Nobel Laureate's 156th birthday, includes *Amader Shantiniketan* - the students song at Tagore's university outside Kolkata; *Anandaloke Mangalaoke*; and *Saakatore oi kaadiche*. As usual, the choir is led by Bubbu Munshi Eklund, and with the NSAN editor being a member of the choir. Jazz saxophonist Ed Epstein is a guest artist in this concert. [More information](#).



• **Indo-Swedish Art project on Conflicting Spaces – Howrah and Malmö**

An Indo-Swedish Exchange Art Project & Exhibition entitled "*Conflicting spaces - Howrah - Malmö*" was inaugurated in Malmö on 21 April 2017, and is now running with events happening both in Malmö/Lund, Sweden and Howrah/Kolkata, India.

It is an initiative by the artist group Meteor International, based in the Seved/Sofielund district of Malmö, Sweden's third largest city. The group makes art projects mainly in the public space, at unexpected places. The group was formed in 2003 to make it possible to make larger projects that needed many participants and that could reach out to an unpredicted audience.



The International initiative is curated by Swedish artist Tamara De Laval (*photo*) and Indian performance artist ChiMuk, and the artists participating from India are Taxi (Suman Samjapati & Sourav Roy Chowdhury); Sonal Mithal; Sanyukta Sharma, and Anupam Saikia. Swedish artists participating are Kristina Muntzing; Martin Dahlqvist; Anna Wessman & Marko Cesarec; and Ola Åstrand.

During this project the artists try to concentrate two complete different cities practice of seen-unseen labor and the process of its viewing. Howrah and Malmö are each a city which has its own visual parlance but there is strong understanding of human labor, city's new lifestyle, developing society and its hidden crisis. Here one city had a long history of labor industry, people's movement, naxalite history and of course current political scenario where the city is more free with open economy, migrated labor, new political friction and new understanding of neo-social spaces. Howrah is based on a side of a river bank opposite Kolkata formal british capital. History of this city is also reflected from its architecture and living history which is also a crucial element. Malmö on the other hand is a relatively small city with labor-industrial history. It had the large shipyard industry Kockums until it moved the production from Malmö in 1998, and a number of textile factories that closed down in the 1950s and 60s.



The programme consists of various forms like site-specific installation, video screenings, artist talks, reading session, performances. The theme Howrah-Malmö has been chosen because of the similar character of the Indian and Swedish city, old industrial cities. The initiative is supported by the Swedish Government Agency Konstnärskommittén/IASPIIS. [More information](#).

Indian performance artist
ChiMuk programme in Lund on
Saturday 20 May 2017.

Best regards

Lars Eklund

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