

Nordic South Asia Network

Nordic Newsletter 8 - 12 June 2017

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NORDIC SOUTH ASIA NETWORK

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Research Community News

• Oslo workshop to discuss research project on Governing Urbanising India



On 8-9 June 2017, a follow-up workshop to the major international research project entitled "Democracy, Welfare & Development: Indian & Scandinavian Experiences", led by Professor Olle Törnquist (photo) at the Dept. of Political Science at University

of Oslo, was held at Thon Opera Hotel in Oslo. The project funded by the Norwegian Research Council with contributions from University of Oslo and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi, was carried out during the period 2013-2017.

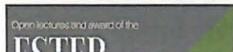
The follow-up meeting was organised by Dr. Kenneth Bo Nielsen from the Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM) at University of Oslo, with an impressive set-up of participating European, American and Asian researchers, including the main participants in Olle Törnquist's now completed project, such as Prof. Niraja G Jayal from JNU; Neera Chandhoke from Delhi University; John Harriss from London School of Economics, UK; and Prof. Pranab Bardhan from University of California, Berkeley, USA, but also other European and Indian researchers with a keen interest in the research theme suggested for a follow-up project, namely "Governing Urbanising India: Citizenship, Policy, and Politics".

Among them researchers from the Institute for Development Studies Kolkata; the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) in Thiruvananthapuram - including Dr. J Devika; Delhi University; University of Göttingen; University of Oxford; and Dr. Henrik Berglund from Stockholm University. The two-day programme was very ambitious, a mix of paper presentations with commentaries, and discussions on the Welfare research project, and the possibilities for building up a new strong research network around the Urbanising theme, and not to forget how to get funding for a project. NSAN editor Lars Eklund took part in the beginning of the workshop as an observer. [Read his report from the workshop with photos.](#)



Kenneth Bo Nielsen to the right with some of the high-profile participants to the Oslo research workshop.

• Ester Boserup Thesis Prize awarded to Emilija Zabiliūtė

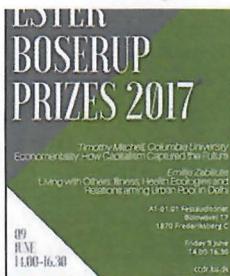


The 2017 Ester Boserup Thesis Prize has been awarded to [Emilija Zabiliūtė](#) from the Department of Cross-Cultural and



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Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen for her PhD dissertation "*Living with Others: Subjectivity, Relatedness and Health among Urban Poor in Delhi*". She defended her PhD thesis that is an ethnographic study of everyday lives and health-seeking practices among urban poor living in a settlement in the margins of Delhi, in June 2016.



The assessment committee praised the thesis saying "it excels in presenting a rich ethnography and in the sensitivity and empathy with which the everyday lives of the poor are analysed and portrayed. The study draws on a long-term fieldwork among urban poor, informal biomedical practitioners, and at a governmental health clinic, run under a developmental programme in the poor urban area. This innovative inquiry underscores

how healing, care and developmental interventions are interlinked with everyday relations in the families and community. The study rethinks precarity among poor embedded in political economies, and shows how vulnerabilities among the poor are relational. By considering the diversity of medical care available to the poor, the study also shows how their access to health is less a question of lack, and more of quality, coherence and navigation of complex healthcare ecologies.

The Catter Boserup Thesis Prize is awarded by the Copenhagen Centre for Development Research (CCDR). In connection with the ceremony, Emilija Zabiliūtė gave a public lecture on 9 June 2017 on her thesis. [More information.](#)

• Uppsala University follow-up study of the MINIMAT project in Bangladesh



In January 2017, Professor **Eva-Charlotte Ekström**, International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH), Department of Women's and Children's Health, was granted a Swedish Research Council project grant (Medicine) for a Follow-up study of the MINIMAT trial in rural Bangladesh. The project is entitled "*Effects of Nutrition interventions during pregnancy for physical activity and metabolic risk indicators in teenagers: A 15-year follow-up study on the*



MINIMAT project in Bangladesh", an dbe carried out as a collaboration project between several institutions: the International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH) at Uppsala University, where Eva-Charlotte Ekström, nutrition epidemiologist, will be the principle investigator. Further at IMCH: Associate Professor **Katarina Selling**, project statistician, researcher; Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm: Dr **M Löf**, senior researcher; ICDDR,B, Bangladesh: Dr **Shams Arifeen**, epidemiologist, child health specialist, Dir Child & Adolescent Health, Dr **Anisur Rahman**, public health epidemiologist, Head Matlab Health Research Center; and Dr **R Ragib**, biochemist, immunologist, Head biochemical laboratory.

The project focuses on the well-documented associations between early life nutrition and long-term health. The epidemic of chronic diseases in low- and middle-income countries including Bangladesh affects societies where woman and child malnutrition still is prevalent, but where changing lifestyles increase the risk for future chronic diseases. There are few studies that evaluate long-term effects of enhanced maternal and foetal nutrition. This is a follow-up of the MINIMAT trial in rural Bangladesh. The aim is to evaluate metabolic risk indicators and how these are influenced by current life style factors that are modifiable by public health interventions. The project will show whether the early pregnancy nutrition interventions have influenced the developmental plasticity and influenced metabolic risk indicators at 15 years, and to what extent these are influenced by current life style factors and biologic, economic and social susceptibility. [More information.](#)

• Swedish-Dutch-Nepalese research collaboration on Groundwater Resources



Steve Lyon, Professor in Hydrology at the Department of Physical Geography and Quaternary Geology at Stockholm University focuses his research on hydrological processes with emphasis on how they emerge and shift in response to climatic variability and anthropogenic pressure. In January 2017, he was awarded a Swedish Research Links grant for a new Nepal related project entitled "*Modernization of Nepal's Groundwater*



Resources" in partnership with **Surendra Raj Shrestha** at the Groundwater Resources Development Board (GWRDB) in Kathmandu; **Deep Narayan Shah** at the Himalayan Biodiversity and Climate Change Center (HimBioClICC), Kathmandu; and **Nick van de Giesen**, and **Jeffrey C. Davids** at Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands. [More information.](#)

Groundwater constitutes the largest supply of available freshwater and comprises roughly one-third of global freshwater withdrawals. Much of Nepal is characterized by significant rainfall during the roughly four-month long monsoon period ranging from June through September, followed by a relatively dry eight-month period from October through May. During this prolonged dry period, the groundwater system provides critical baseflow to springs and streams essential for human needs, food production, ecological health, and hydropower production. The importance of groundwater for meeting agricultural, municipal, and industrial demands, as well as its contribution to dry season baseflow is exacerbated by the lack of surface water storage in Nepal. The project outlines an essential step forward towards improving our understanding and management of groundwater resources in the Kathmandu Valley by: (1) establishing a common platform for organizing, quality controlling, and sharing open source hydrologic data; (2) prioritizing and initiating future citizen science + mobile phone based data collection of groundwater levels, spring flows, precipitation, and streamflow; and (3) sharing this information with key stakeholders with the aims to scale up. The goal is to ultimately expand this model throughout the country to generate the information needed to support sustainable management of groundwater resources now and into Nepal's future.

• Sweden-Nepal research project on Prevention of Perinatal Mortality



In January 2017, Professor **Leif Eriksson** at the Department of Public Health and Caring Sciences, Uppsala University, was awarded a Swedish Research Links grant for a new Nepal related project entitled "*Prevention of Perinatal Mortality. The Nepal Perinatal Quality Improvement Project (NePerIQIP)*". The project



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will be carried out in collaboration several other researchers in Sweden and in Asia, namely Mats Målvist, Anna Bergström, Uwe Ewald, Olivia Brunell, Helena Litorp, Johan Wrammert, Erik Grönqvist and Per-Anders Edin - all from Uppsala University.

Professor Lars-Åke Persson will be participant in an Expert Panel. The Asian partners include Dipak Chaulagain and Abhishek Gurung at Lifeline Nepal; and Dr. Ashish KC at UNICEF, Nepal. [More information.](#)



It should be mentioned that Ashish KC (photo to the left) recently defended his doctoral dissertation at Uppsala University, with a thesis entitled "Neonatal Resuscitation: Understanding challenges and identifying a strategy for implementation in Nepal" (Go for it). Dr. Ashish KC also

received a separate research grant in January 2017 - a [Swedish Development Research Project grant](#) by the Swedish Research Council for a project entitled "Upscaling an Implementation Strategy on Simplified Neonatal Resuscitation (HBB QIC) on District Level in Nepal". More info will come.

The project led by Leif Eriksson intends to implement a package of multi-faceted quality improvement (QI) interventions for improving perinatal care in hospitals of Nepal. The intervention combines three different implementation strategies: (1) Facilitation, (2) Audit and Feedback, and (3) Training, with the aim to strengthen the health system and thereby improving quality of perinatal care in the hospitals. The impact of the NePeriQIP will be evaluated on intrapartum related mortality (primary outcome), overall neonatal mortality and morbidity and health worker's performance on neonatal care, and to evaluate the process of implementation (secondary outcomes). A cost-effectiveness analysis to further guide health system investments will also be performed. This study is based on learnings from a study implementing Helping Babies Breathe-Quality Improvement Cycle in a tertiary health care setting in Nepal and large knowledge translation interventions with focus on facilitation and perinatal health in northern Vietnam. In contexts where resources are limited, packaged implementation strategies for QI, such as the NePeriQIP, can enhance knowledge translation. The proposed model can be a replicable solution in settings where the support and investment from the health system is scarce, and yet national government has made a global pledge to reduce perinatal mortality within a set time frame.

• Uppsala Forum on Democracy, Peace & Justice hosted Chennai researcher



Uppsala Forum on Democracy, Peace & Justice is an initiative to facilitate increased cooperation between a number of Uppsala University institutions, including the Department of Peace and Conflict Research; the Department of Government; and Uppsala Centre for Russian and Eurasian Studies (UCRS). The long-term goal of Uppsala Forum is to advance interdisciplinary research and education, as well as to promote internationalization among Uppsala Forum's participating departments, centres and faculties.

A large number of Uppsala Forum seminars, workshops and lectures are organised, and besides researchers at Uppsala Forum units are eligible to apply for certain grants, including the Uppsala Forum visiting fellowship program, smaller planning grants and grants for workshops and seminars.

The Uppsala Forum Fellow for May-June 2017 is Professor Ramu Manivannan from the Department of Politics and Public Administration at the University of Madras in Chennai, India. He was hosted by Professor Ashok Swain at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, and spent a month in Uppsala till 2 June. At the end of his stay, he gave a talk on 'Transitional Justice' (photo). [More information on the Uppsala Forum on Democracy, Peace & Justice.](#)



• Prabha Tirmare SASA seminar on Migrated Communities in India



The South Asia Students Association at Lund University (SASA) organised 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 spoke about "Excluded Children of Migrated Communities in India: A Challenge for Integration and Inclusion". Venue: Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, Finnngatan 16, Lund.

In her talk, she presented 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 was followed by taking focus onto the situation and vulnerability of children of these communities. [Read more...](#)

Prabha Tirmare came to Lund accompanied by her daughter Sanaya Singh, working as Lecturer in Social Work at the Division of Caring Sciences and Psychology, University of Gävle. Originally coming from Mumbai in India, Sanaya Singh moved to Gävle in 2008 and has pursued a Masters degree in Gender, Intersectionality and Change. Both Prabha and Sanaya have met Lars Eklund in his former avatar as SASNET deputy director, and had asked to meet him at the SASA seminar, and this happened (see photo with Prabha, Sanaya and her boy friend Mårten).



• Kashmir films screened in Malmö as part of Malmö-Howrah Art Project



As part of the ongoing Indo Swedish Art project "Malmö-Howrah. Conflicting Spaces", a film programme on the political situation in Kashmir was held at Garaget, Lönnngatan 30 in Malmö on Saturday 3 June 2017. The documentary film, *Bring Him Back*, directed by Kashmiri journalist and writer, Fahad Shah, and produced by Talat Bhat, who is a filmmaker and activist based in Malmö, Sweden under the



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RÅFILM Production, was screened, as well as the film *Inshallah, Football* by the director



Ashvin Kumar.

Bring Him Back is a film about the struggle of Maqbool Bhat's mother to get her son's mortal remains back from Tihar jail of India - where he was executed in 1984. It was first released during a screening at the University of Westminster in London two years back. (*Scene from film on photo to the right*)

Talat Bhat (*on photo*) was present at the Malmö screening and informed about his film at the event that was organised by Meteor International in collaboration with RÅfilm. NSAN editor Lars Eklund participated in the film seminar. [More information about the Malmö-Howrah project.](#)

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

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

Seminars and Conferences in Scandinavia

• **2017 Norwegian Network for Asian Studies Open Summer Meeting**



The Norwegian Network for Asian Studies held its 2017 Open Summer Meeting on Wednesday 7 June 2017, 15.15-18.00. A good gathering of Asian studies scholars from University of Oslo and other research institutes in the city attended the event, including Arild Engelsen Ruud, Pamela Price, and many other South Asianists.

This year, award winning author Ivo de Figueiredo (*photo to the left*) introduced 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.

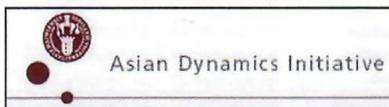
Lisa Björkman from University of Louisville, USA, gave a talk on "Pipe Politics, Contested Waters" based on her monograph on Mumbai. Finally, the two winners of this year's "Best Norwegian MA thesis on an Asian topic" were announced. The meeting was organised by Dr. Kenneth Nielsen at the Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM), Sognsveien 68, Oslo. The NSAN Editor Lars Eklund attended the Open Summer Meeting in Oslo. [See his photos.](#)



Kenneth Nielsen and Linn Adelsten Christensen, hosts for the Open Summer Meeting.



• **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.](#)

• **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.](#)

• **Information about South Asia related lectures and seminars**

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

Conferences and workshops outside Scandinavia

• 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. 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.](#)



• 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.](#)

• High-level Summer School on Indian society at University of Torino

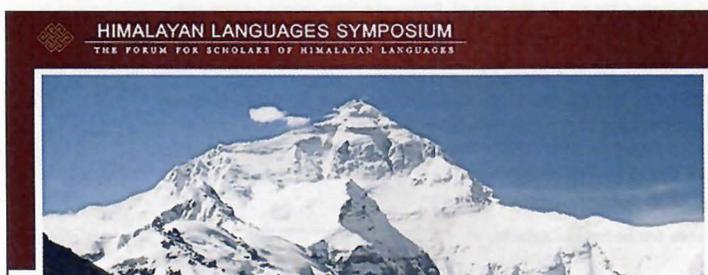


On 3-7 July 2017, the Department of Culture, Politics and Society, University of Torino, Italy, organises the second edition of its Summer School on Politics, Development and Social Change in Contemporary India (TOIndia Summer School 2017). This is a unique high-level and demanding Summer School, taught by leading scholars from India and Europe, providing insights into contemporary India at the highest possible level. The staff includes eminent researchers such as Jan Breman, University of Amsterdam; C P Chandrasekhar, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Barbara Harriss-White, University of Oxford; and Christophe Jaffrelot, SciencesPo Paris. The working language is English and the programme is suitable for students and professionals with different disciplinary backgrounds.

The School aims to offer in-depth knowledge of key aspects of politics, economy and society in contemporary India through a multidisciplinary approach. Important recent trajectories of social change - as well as continuity - will be explored, encouraging critical reflection among students. In particular, the 2017 edition will provide an analysis on India's development trajectory in the past two decades, with attention to poverty, inequality and labour informalisation in a gendered perspective, as well as to issues such as the agrarian question and pauperisation. A specific focus will be placed on the most recent political transformations with attention to identity politics and social movements. [Full information about the TOIndia Summer School 2017...](#)

• 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, contributions 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...](#)

• SSEASR conference on Asian Culture and Religion by the end of 21st Century

The 7th International Conference of the South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion (SSEASR) will be held at Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, 9-12 July 2017. The Conference is being organized by the Vietnam Buddhist University in collaboration with Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam National University of Social Sciences and Humanities. The theme for the conference will be "ASEAN Region's Culture and Religion by the end of 21st Century: A Dialogue of Past with Present?". The SSEASR operates under the policies and principles of the parent body International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR), which seeks to promote the activities of all scholars and affiliates that contribute to the historical, social, and comparative study of religion. As such, the IAHR is the preeminent international forum for the critical, analytical and cross-cultural study of religion, past and present. [Full information.](#)



• Vilnius conference on Nation, Gender and History in Asian film

Asian Arts Centre and The Centre of Oriental Studies at Vilnius University, Lithuania, organises an international conference entitled 'Nation, Gender and History: Asian Cinemas in Perspective' on 7 - 9 September

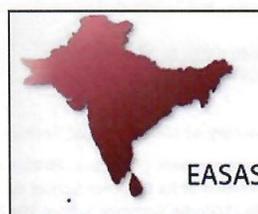


2017. Scholars, film professionals and other interested are invited to participate. The idea of a national culture has played a fundamental role in the definition, historiography and evaluation of Asian cultural practices for at least two centuries, and cinema is no exception. In today's world, however, ideas of the nation appear as increasingly problematic. The same can be said of gender, the pertinence of which in individuals' understanding of themselves and their history has, over the last decades, been challenged from many fronts. And yet both ideas of nation and gender continue to mark discourses about identities and countries, including and perhaps especially in situations of conflict. 2017 marks the 70th anniversary of the independence and partition of India and Pakistan. The conference takes this opportunity to raise the question: can we still argue for the centrality of national cinemas? What role do notions of gender play in our appreciation of a nation's cinema? And how do the interconnections between gender and nation in cinema help us understand the present historical moment?

While the organisers are interested in papers on the cinema of every Asian country, they particularly welcome papers on the all too often overlooked and still poorly researched cinemas of Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines, as well as on regional language formations such as Pashto, Sindhi, or Bhojpuri cinemas. They especially welcome papers on popular, low-budget genres (exploitation, B-grade, horror, sci-fi, and erotic films). [Full information.](#)

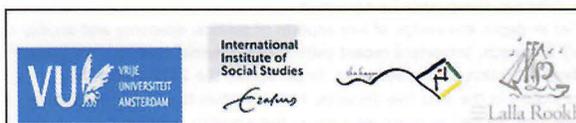
• 11th EASAS PhD workshop in South Asian Studies to be held in Naples

L'Orientale University of Naples will host the 11th European PhD workshop in South Asian Studies, to be held in Procida, Naples, Italy, from 22 to 24 September 2017. The EASAS doctoral workshops take place annually and aim at giving PhD students the opportunity to discuss their thesis with fellow PhD students and senior scholars who work on South Asia. The doctoral students who wish to attend the workshop must be in their 2nd or 3rd year. The Scuola di Procida, Centro di Alta Formazione dell'Università degli studi di Napoli and EASAS will provide accommodation and board at Procida, the smallest island in the Bay of Naples measuring 4 km² and thus walkable in its entirety. Hydrofoils take about 40 minutes from Naples (Molo Beverello), ferries take one hour from Naples (Porta di Massa). At the workshop, the PhD researchers are to share rooms with another participant, as is usually the case at EASAS PhD workshops. Applicants must be members of EASAS at the time of submission of the application for funding. The deadline for the submission of proposals was 30 April 2017. [Full information.](#)



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

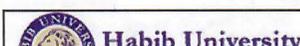
On 5-7 October 2017, an international conference on Diaspora Studies and Policies will be held at The Hague, The Netherlands. The conference, with the theme "Challenging Perspectives on the Indian Diaspora", is organised by



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 was 30 May 2017. [Full information.](#)

• Habib University President's Conference on Questioning South Asia

The 2017 Habib University President's Conference will be held in Karachi,



Pakistan, 22-24 November 2017. The theme for the conference will be "Questioning South Asia", focusing on how the politically-charged and contested category of South Asia stay can intact amid geological shifts and political restructuring underway globally? In these times of radical shifts in historical conditions, it becomes important to reconsider frameworks of knowledge determined by the ideologies of nation-states. This call for papers seeks contributions from scholars willing to think beyond the construct of South Asia as a territorially bound space with discrete nations. Papers are invited from scholars who seek to identify the historical modalities of the emergence of South Asia as an analytical construct, and shed light on how it continues to operate as a geographical, cultural, and economic category. Questioning South Asia as a discourse that at present burdens the scholarly imagination, and overdetermines conference agendas and research funding, might reconfigure the strategies we employ to understand the region. Abstracts should be submitted by 15th June 2017. [More information.](#)



• New Zealand Asian Studies Society Conference in Dunedin

The 22nd New Zealand Asian Studies Society (NZASIA) International Conference will be held in Dunedin 27-29 November 2017. It is being hosted by the University of Otago in Dunedin on south island. In line with NZASIA's key objectives, this biennial conference is multidisciplinary and aims at bringing together scholars working in the broader, open, and contested site of Asian studies. Participants are invited to submit panel or paper proposals presenting original research on any Asian-related topic. Particularly the organisers seek contributions from emerging scholars and postgraduate students and a number of events are specifically targeted to support the new generation of researchers.



Keynote speakers include Professor Subrata K Mitra, Director for the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), and Visiting Research Professor, NUS, Singapore. The dynamic interaction of culture and rationality has deeply influenced his research profile, which focuses on governance and administration, citizenship, hybridity and re-use, the evolution of the Indian state from classical to modern times, the transition to democracy and its consolidation, and security and foreign affairs of South Asia. Professor Mitra's presentation is sponsored by New Zealand India Research Institute (NZIRI). Deadline for submitting abstracts is 30 June 2017. [Full information.](#)

• 18th South Asian Literary Association Conference to be held in New York



The 18th Annual South Asian Literary Association (SALA) Conference will be held in New York City, US, on 8-9 January 2018. A Call for papers has now been announced. The theme for the conference will be "Precarity, Resistance, and Care Communities in South Asia". The conference is co-chaired by Dr. Sukanya Gupta and Dr. Afrin Zeenat.

The organisers are interested in insecurities and care communities that may exist within states and within bodies. Papers could answer the following questions, among others: What forms do these insecurities and care communities take in literature and culture? How do authors depict states of insecurity or care communities? What literary devices do they use? How do bodies and states clash? What insecurities do diasporas pose to the host nation-state? What precarities do foreign nationals face in South Asia?

Deadline for submitting abstracts is 15 August 2017. Please note that those who submit abstracts for consideration to the SALA conference must become members at the time of submission. [Full information about the conference.](#)

• 5th International Congress of Bengal Studies in Savar

The 5th International Congress of Bengal Studies will be held 25 - 28 January 2018 at

Jahangirnagar University in Savar, Bangladesh.

Papers, in English or Bengali, on all areas of Bengal Studies, including, but not limited to,

Literature and Criticism, Comparative Literature, Linguistics, Folklore, Cultural Studies, Media Studies, History, Economics, Geography, Political Science, Development Studies, Ecology, Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy, Fine Arts, Archaeology, Museology have been invited. [More information.](#)



• Bishkek Conference by the Asian Borderlands Research Network

The 6th Conference of the Asian Borderlands Research Network will be held 23-25 August 2018 at the American University of Central Asia in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The conference theme will be "Ruins, Revival(s) and Resources", focusing on the generative and productive capacity of border spaces, which is urgently in need of being addressed. Remnants of the past, both material as well as immaterial ruins, constitute heritages that continue to affect livelihoods across Asian borderlands. Increasingly, borderlands witness a surge in religious, cultural, linguistic, and ideological revival(s), where the past is perceived as a resource for securing community futures. Whether through the bottom-up claims of marginalized communities or top-down state processes of recognition, designations of cultural heritage have become arenas of contestation where varied actors seek to reframe histories. For this upcoming 6th Asian Borderlands conference in Bishkek, the organisers invite panels and papers that address the following questions: How are borderlands in Asia creating alternative spaces for heritages, self-definition and the extraction of resources? How can these cases serve to rethink social theories of various kind?



Since one of the main goals of this conference is to spur collaboration and conversations across diverse fields in the hope of building up a more nuanced picture of the intersections and relationships across Asian borderlands, the organisers would like to include scholars, writers, policy studies researchers, artists, filmmakers, activists, the media, and others from a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds. This might help to develop new perspectives in the study of Asian Borderlands. Applicants are encouraged to submit a full panel proposal, as only a small number of individual papers will be selected. The deadline to send in panel, roundtable and paper proposals is Monday 2 October 2017. Participants will be notified around January 2018. [Full information.](#)

• One year ahead to the 2018 ECSAS conference in Paris



The 25th European Conference on South Asian Studies (ECSAS) is scheduled for 24-27 July 2018 in Paris, France. It will be held at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences



Sociales, (54 and 105, Blvd. Raspail). It is organized by the

Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CNRS-EHESS). The call for panels is now over. 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

• Bengali song programme at Brokiga Bengalen in Stockholm



On Tuesday 13 June 2017, at 17.30, Brokiga Bengalen Butik at Södermannagatan 50 in Stockholm invites to its final event for the spring semester 2017, a musical programme with Malik Nafiz, originally from Bangladesh but now living in Sweden. In the programme we hear examples of folk songs, traditional and modern songs. Music, song and poetry have long tradition and are deeply rooted in the Bengali folk souls, both love songs and philosophical considerations about existence as descriptions of the beauty of nature and the boatman's idoga work on the many rivers. Common to the songs is the intense emotionality and the will to approach life's big and small issues. The songs



are introduced by Christina Nygren, who launched Brokiga Bengalen Butik in 2011. The shop focuses on selling Bengali goods, but is also a place for cultural events such as concerts and lectures.

• Excellent International Tagore Choir spring concert 2017



The International Tagore Choir in Lund made a great performance 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, included *Amader Shantiniketan* - the students song at Tagore's university outside Kolkata; *Anandaloke Mangalaoke*; and *Saakatore oi kaadiche*. As usual, the choir was led by Bubun Munshi Eklund, and with the NSAN editor being a member of the choir. Jazz saxophonist Ed Epstein was a guest artist in this concert. [More information.](#)

[Listen to the choir singing Saakatore oi kaadiche.](#)



• Information about South Asia related culture in Sweden/ Scandinavia

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

Best regards

Lars Eklund

Subscribe to the newsletter by sending an email to [sydasion@sydasion.se!](mailto:sydasion@sydasion.se)

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