

SASNET - Swedish South Asian Studies Network

Lund University

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SASNET Newsletters

Newsletter 185 – 8 March 2016

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SWEDISH SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES NETWORK

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SASNET News

• SASNET 2015 Work Report now published

The complete SASNET Work Report 2015 (our "verksamhetsberättelse") was published on 29 February 2016. It contains an extensive summary of the work being done by SASNET at Lund University in 2015, in Swedish. An impressive amount of activities have been carried out, including a major research conference in May, and two South Asia Media Project workshops in the fall.

An external evaluation of SASNET was also done by Neil Webster and Pamela Price.

A major portion of the Work Report is an annex consisting of a colourful 2014 Activity Report in English. This provides details about every single networking activity during the year.

[See the SASNET 2015 Work Report.](#)

• SASNET launches Lund University based web site and new format for newsletters

SASNET – Swedish South Asian Studies Network



Soon after the inception of SASNET in January 2001, we launched our web site and introduced our monthly newsletters, that gradually has become richer and richer on information about South Asia related research not only at the hosting university of Lund and other Swedish universities, but also in the rest of Scandinavia, Europe and even in

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South Asia itself. We now have more than 3,300 subscribers worldwide. Since 2011 we have had a fruitful technical collaboration with the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) in Copenhagen, sharing the same web solution. This agreement however lapsed on 31 December 2015, and it is now time for SASNET to integrate our extensive web data into Lund University's (LU) web system, and adjust to the graphic profile that all LU units are obliged to follow. Currently, this work is going on, launching a new SASNET site, focusing on Lund University, whereas most of the content from the old web site will be stored at an exterior web hotel, while deciding what to do with it. It should also be mentioned that from 3 March 2016, a new staff member - Elina Vidarsson (photo), has joined SASNET as a communications assistant. She will work with the new web site, besides being a contact person with the student organisation SASA, taking over this role from Jacco Visser who is returning to his native city of Amsterdam. [More information about SASNET staff.](#) The SASNET Newsletters will also reflect the changed circumstances, focus more on Lund University news and events, and follow the standard layout for other newsletters produced by LU departments.



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• Bangladesh in focus for third SASA/SASNET Fika Without Borders seminar



The South Asian Students' Association (SASA) at Lund University organises its third Fika Without Borders lecture of 2016 on Thursday 10 March from 17.00-19.00. This time the focus country is Bangladesh. Venue: Usual place at the Lund University External Relations building basement, Stora Algatan 4, Lund. [See the poster.](#)



This edition consists of a lecture by **Morten Koch Andersen**, researcher at **Dignity**, the Danish Institute Against Torture in Copenhagen. He will lecture on how human rights documentation and reporting is a dangerous and difficult practice in Bangladesh. A key challenge in human rights work is how to identify victims and document violations. The presentation investigates how human rights activists in Bangladesh assist

survivors of human rights violations and document violations and show how human rights activism and documentation unfold at the intersection of global discourses, national politics and local power configurations. Each level condition and circumscribe the ways in which human rights documentation is carried out, set the limits for gathering of information and delimit what is made public. The presentation will illuminate how documentation is carried out by a variety of human rights actors; local activists, national NGO's and journalists, according to individual rationalities and thresholds of importance and urgency that define whether a violent incident become a case of human right violation. Each actor chose what, and what not, to document and filters information according to the need of the victim and their families, the political situation and the position of the actor in society. It is the process of filtering of information that determines how incidents of violence, abuse and transgression become human rights cases. Filtering is about the ways in which human rights activists perform their work documentation and reporting on human rights. The lecture is open to everyone. As usual we will provide Fika and serve Bangladeshi snacks during the event.

• SASNET/UPF seminar on Buddhist-Muslim Tensions in Sri Lanka

SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs in Lund (UPF) jointly organize a seminar on *Buddhist-Muslim Tensions in Sri Lanka* on Tuesday 3 May 2016, 16.00-18.00. The speaker is Professor Dennis B. McGilvray from the University of Colorado, Boulder, USA. The seminar will focus on the recent violent events between Buddhist and Muslims groups in Sri Lanka. Venue: Palaestra Auditorium, Universitetsplatsen, Lund.



In the aftermath of the Sri Lankan civil war against the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) which ended in 2009, an unexpected outburst of hostility against the island's Muslim minority has been led by militant Sinhala Buddhist monks. Organizations such as the *Bodu Bala Sena* ("Buddhist Strength Force") have accused Sri Lankan Muslims of black-velled misogyny, cruelty to animals, and jihadi terrorist planning, all of which they use to justify attacks against Muslim mosques and shrines that violate the "sacred zones" of Buddhist temples. This illustrated presentation will review the recent anti-Muslim incidents in Sri Lanka in the context of Sinhala Buddhist ethno-nationalism, and it will discuss the long-term dilemmas of Muslim minority identity in Sri Lankan society. During his visit in Lund, Prof. McGilvray will also give another seminar, focusing on Sufism. [More information.](#)

• SASNET seminar on Governing of Sexuality: Indian Police enforcing the Anti-Sodomy Laws



On Thursday 12 May 2016, 15.00-17.00, SASNET organizes a seminar with Professor Jyoti Puri from Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts, USA, on the Criminalization of Homosexuality in India. The seminar is entitled "(Un)Making Sexual States: Antisodomy Law and Racialization in India". It is a joint event with the Global Gender Matters network within the **Department of Gender Studies**, Lund University. Venue: Room M 221, Dept. of Gender Studies, Allhelgona Kyrkogata 14, Lund. Professor Puri is an interdisciplinary scholar who writes and teaches at the crossroads of Sociology; Sexuality and Queer studies; and Postcolonial Feminist Theory. In her presentation, Prof. Puri argues that governing sexuality helps constitute states. Drawn from fieldwork among police in

Delhi, she explores how enforcing the controversial anti-sodomy law is mediated by racialized discourses.

• **More information about SASNET and its activities**

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet-news>

Research Community News

• **Time to apply for funding from Swedish Research Council**



The 2016 general call for applications to the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) for Project Research Grants for most subject areas – Humanities & Social Sciences; Medicine & Health; Artistic Research; and Culture & Cultural Heritage Research – closes on Tuesday 15 March. For research in Economics and Natural Sciences, the deadline is Tuesday 5 April.

Of even more interest to South Asia related research is the deadline for applications regarding Development Research; and the Swedish Research Links grants – it is Tuesday 19 April 2016.

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Swedish Research Council offers research grants to all the disciplines. The goal, as formulated by the Swedish Government, is to establish Sweden as a leading research nation.

The Swedish Research Council is one of the most important funders of Swedish South Asia related research. [Full information about the general announcement.](#)

South Asia related developmental projects given Swedish Research Council grants in recent years

- 2012 (for 2013-17)
- In 2013 (for 2014-16)
- 2014 (for 2015-17)
- 2015 (for 2016-18)

South Asia related projects given Swedish Research Links grants in recent years

- In 2013 (for 2014-16)
- In 2014 (for 2015-17)
- In 2015 (for 2016-18)

• **Amit Prakash returns to Sweden as ICCR Professor at Uppsala University**

During the spring 2016, Professor Amit Prakash from the Centre for the Study of Law and Governance at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi works as ICCR Visiting Professor at the Dept. of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University. He is the second in a planned row of four consecutive ICCR guest professors in Uppsala – the first was Professor Siddharth Singh, from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi. The ICCR guest professorships are based on a contract between the Government of India/ICCR and Uppsala University.

This is not his first Swedish appointment. In 2013, was a guest professor at the Dept. of Economic History at Stockholm University. Previously he has also been a guest professor at University of Copenhagen and Fondation de la Maison des Sciences de l'homme in Paris. Amit Prakash holds a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. His areas of research include "Politics of Development", "Dynamics of Socio-political and Ethnic Identity Mobilisation", "Indian Politics", "Governance and Development", "Conflict Governance and the State", and "Global Governance". [More information.](#)



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

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/research-community-news>

Educational News

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

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/education-news>

Seminars and Conferences in Scandinavia

• **Uppsala seminar on Wali Dakkani – the Father of Urdu Poetry**



Professor Tatiana Oranskaia from the Department of Culture and History of India and Tibet at the University of Hamburg, Germany, holds a guest lecture at Uppsala University on Wednesday 9 March 2016, 15.15 – 17.00. The lecture, organized by the Dept. of Linguistics and Philology, is entitled *The Gate of Poetry: Linguistic Contemplations in a Ghazal of Wali Dakkani*. Venue: Engelska parken, Thunbergsvägen 3 H, house 9, room 9-2029.

Wali Dakkani (1667-1707) is known as the Father of Urdu Poetry, and his presentations of the Poetic Word as the Beloved. The lecture will particularly examine the relations between the meaning and the form of expression, arguing that these ideas are interpretable in the Saussurean terms of 'signifier' and 'signified'. [More information.](#)

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

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/lectures-in-scandinavia>

Conferences and workshops outside Scandinavia

• **Leiden conference on Language, Power and Identity in Asia**



The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden hosts an international conference to explore the interrelations between language, power and identity in Asia. The conference entitled *"Language, Power and Identity in Asia: Creating and Crossing Language*

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International Institute
for Asian Studies

Boundaries will be held 14–16 March 2016. Venue: National Museum of Antiquities, Rapenburg 28, Leiden, the Netherlands. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 15 May 2015. Participants are invited to submit a paper to address aspects of this topic, with a

particular emphasis on Asia, but papers that illustrate the subject from other parts of the world are also welcome. The conference explores how linguistic differences, practices, texts and performances are of critical importance to political, social and intellectual power structures among communities in the past and in the present, especially through processes of identity formation. How do (and how did) languages shape borders - social, ethnic, religious, or "national"? Likewise, how do languages and linguistic communities move across these limits? In what ways do processes of hybridisation and multilingualism affect the formation of transnational or translocal identities, and how have they done so in the past? How have policies of language standardisation impacted on the political and intellectual spheres? What is the power of orality and performance vis-à-vis a variety of textual productions, through manuscript culture, epigraphical practices, print media, and the Internet?

Participants in this interdisciplinary conference are invited to address these and other subjects pertaining to the interrelations between language, power, and identity in pre-modern and contemporary Western, Central, South, Southeast and East Asia. Academics working from a wide range of disciplines, including philology and literary studies, linguistics, cultural and media studies, history, anthropology, archaeology, epigraphy, and sociology are encouraged to submit abstracts. The organising team includes Prof. Mark Turin, now based at the First Nations and Endangered Languages Program, University of British Columbia, Canada. [More information about the conference.](#)

• US South Asian Studies Association conference to be held at TERI in Delhi

On March 18-20 2016 the American South Asian Studies Association organizes its tenth anniversary conference titled 'India at the Crossroads' at Tata Energy Research Institute



(TERI), New Delhi. The conference will deal with how, from its murky beginnings two millennia ago, until the present, Indic societies have proven to be innovative in all fields of human endeavor- theology, mathematics, philosophy, literature, economics and others. To this end the organizers welcome research in honor of Professor Rajni Kothari's work on Indian politics and how his works brought the inner workings of Indian society to life and changed Western perspectives of India's political landscape. Furthermore contributions on contemporary public policy issues, particularly but not exclusively related to the environment, education and infrastructure development are encouraged. Finally, contributions that examine the dynamic and accelerating rate of change and economic growth in India and its impact of other countries in the region are welcomed. [Full information.](#)

• Sri Lanka Conference on Peace, Reconciliation and Development Challenges

The Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka organizes an international conference on Peace, Reconciliation and Development Challenges (ICPRD) to be held on 24-25 March 2016. The conference seeks to create an alternative form of dialogue focused on peace, reconciliation and development that is vital for the sustenance of diverse communities, nation states, territories, cultures, values, and environments with input from a variety of disciplines. [Full information.](#)



• Seattle dissertation workshop for doctoral students working on New Media in Asia

The American Association for Asian Studies (AAS) organizes its 15th consecutive Dissertation Workshop, to be held in conjunction with the 2016 AAS Annual Conference in Seattle during the period 28–31 March 2016. The workshop is intended for doctoral students in the humanities and social sciences who are proposing or in the early stages of conducting dissertation research. The 2016 workshop focuses on the social, political and cultural consequences of New Media within and across Asia. The deadline for applications is 8 January 2016. [More information.](#)



• Shimla conference on Intimacy and Belonging in Contemporary India



The Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS), in Shimla, India, organizes an international conference titled *Intimacy and Belonging in Contemporary India* on April 4-6 2016. The conference will focus on emerging forms of intimacies in contemporary India and will attempt to address the politics behind the changing natures of belonging. It will do so by examining what causes intimacy and what



restricts one's identity of belonging, particularly the transformation in modes of intimacy resulting from transnational ties, migration, alternative socio-economic doctrines and new communication technologies will be in focus. There is an open call for papers along the following lines of enquiries: Emerging Trends of Intimacies, New Temporal and Spatial Practices, Democratization of Intimate Relations as Emancipatory Belongings and State, Law and the Performativity/Representation of Addictive/Contested/Censored/Queer Intimacies in India. [Full information.](#)

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

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/conferences/conferences>

Business and Politics

• Information about South Asia related business and politics in Sweden

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/news-sources/swedish-politics-and-business-related-south-asia>

South Asia related culture in Scandinavia

• Sindhi Sarangi concerts with Lakha Khan in Scandinavia

Lakha Khan – main exponent of the Sindhi Sarangi music tradition visits Scandinavia in March 2016. He will give at least two concerts in Sweden and three in Denmark. The Swedish performances are held on 18 March at Kulturhuset Oceanen in Göteborg, and on 23 March at the Victoria Theatre in Malmö. In Denmark, he plays in Copenhagen on 19 March, in Odense on 20th, and in Hillerød on 31 March. [More information on Danish gigs.](#) [More information on Swedish gigs.](#)

Sindhi Sarangi is a string instrument that plays an important role also in the Indian state of Rajasthan, but also within Sufi music more broadly. Lakha Khan's expertise bridges the gap between South Asian folk and classical music. He is one of the last remaining musicians who masters this complex instrument and the centuries-old musical tradition of Sindhi Sarangi. Lakha Khan, 69 is a sarangi player and vocalist, and perhaps the greatest exponent of the sindhi sarangi.

He was born in the village of Raneri in Jodhpur district into a family of traditional musicians from the Manganiyar community. He was trained at an early age by his father Tharu Khan and later, by his uncle Mohammad Khan, in rendering the compositions of the Multan school of Manganiyars. A living legend, Lakha Khan is not only a virtuoso on the sarangi, he sings fluently in Sindhi, Punjabi, Hindi, Marwari and a variety of dialects, his knowledge and skill spanning the divide between folk and classical music. He confesses "classical always remains in control while we, who have learnt on our own, take liberties. At times we go out of tune but at times we discover something new as well."



• **Information about South Asia related culture in Sweden/ Scandinavia**

See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/cultural-events>

New and updated items on SASNET web site

• **Swedish departments where research on South Asia is going on**

Constantly added to the list of research environments at Swedish universities, presented by SASNET. The full list now includes more than 300 departments, with detailed descriptions of the South Asia related research and education taking place! See the full list of departments here: <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/institutions/research-environments>

• **Useful travelling information**

Look at our [Travel Advice page](#). Updated travel advises from the The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office about safety aspects on travelling to the countries of South Asia.

**Best regards,
and thanks for reading
SASNET Newsletters since 2001**

Lars Eklund

**Deputy Director
SASNET/Swedish South Asian Studies Network**

SASNET is a national network for research, education, and information about South Asia and is based at Lund University. Its aim is to promote a dynamic networking process in which Swedish researchers cooperate with their counterparts in South Asia and around the globe.

The SASNET network is open to all branches of the natural and social sciences. Priority is given to interdisciplinary cooperation across faculties, and more particularly to institutions in the Nordic countries and South Asia. SASNET believes that South Asian studies will be most fruitfully pursued as a cooperative endeavour among researchers in different institutions who have a solid base in their mother disciplines.

The network is financed by Lund University.

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