

# SASNET - Swedish South Asian Studies Network

Lund University

SASNET Newsletter | SASNET | Research | Conferences | Education | Culture | Swedish Institutions | Travelling advise | Resources | Researchers database | SASA Student page

My account | Log out

Basic page *Newsletter 170 – 18 December 2014* has been updated.

## Newsletter 170 – 18 December 2014

[View](#) [Edit](#) [Revisions](#) [Nodequeue](#) [Log](#)

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### SWEDISH SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES NETWORK

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#### Contents:

- SASNET News
- Research Community News
- Educational News
- Conferences and workshops outside Scandinavia
- Conferences and workshops in Scandinavia
- Business and Politics
- South Asia related Culture
- New and updated information

#### SASNET News

##### • Lund University organizes EASAS workshop in May 2014

On behalf of the European Association of South Asian Studies (EASAS), SASNET will host the Ninth European PhD workshop in South Asia Studies, to be held at Lund University, Sweden, on 18–19 May 2015. This is a two-day annual workshop for a maximum of 20 PhD candidates and six faculty members from European universities with an aim to give PhD students an opportunity to receive feedback on their theses from senior scholars and fellow PhD candidates who are also working on South Asian topics.



#### Navigation

- [Add News item](#)
- [Create new page](#)
- [Add Sasnet Researcher](#)
- [See content and pages](#)
- [Create URL shortcut \(alias\)](#)
- [Broken link Report](#)
- ▶ [Import](#)
- [Imported From NIAS](#)
- [Sammanställ ett nyhetsbrev](#)
- [Skapa verksamhetsrapport](#)
- [Open newsletter template](#)

#### SASNET Newsletters

[Newsletter 170 - 18 December 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 169 - 25 November 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 168 - 28 October 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 167 - 6 October 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 166 - 9 September 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 165 - 21 August 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 164 - 16 July 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 163 - 10 June 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 162 - 20 May 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 161 - 29 April 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 160 - 4 April 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 159 - 14 March 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 158 - 17 February 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 157 - 24 January 2014](#)  
[Newsletter 156 - 19 December 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 155 - 20 November 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 154 - 22 October 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 153 - 2 October 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 152 - 5 September 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 151 - 19 August 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 150 - 17 July 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 149 - 19 June 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 148 - 20 May 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 147 - 30 April 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 146 - 4 April 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 145 - 28 February 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 144 - 5 February 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 143 - 11 January 2013](#)  
[Newsletter 142 - 10 December 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 141 - 17 October 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 140 - 27 September 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 139 - 31 August 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 138 - 9 August 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 137 - 18 June 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 136 - 22 May 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 135 - 3 May 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 134 - 4 April 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 133 - 8 March 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 132 - 9 February 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 131 - 16 January 2012](#)  
[Newsletter 130 - 19 December 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 129 - 24 November 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 128 - 28 October 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 127 - 11 October 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 126 - 2 September 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 125 - 12 August 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 124 - 13 June 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 123 - 13 May 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 122 - 7 April 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 121 - 18 March 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 120 - 15 February 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 119 - 20 January 2011](#)  
[Newsletter 118 - 30 December 2010](#)  
[Newsletter 117 - 14 December 2010](#)  
[Newsletter 116 - 12 November 2010](#)  
[Newsletter 115 - 22 October 2010](#)  
[Newsletter 114 - 5 October 2010](#)  
[Newsletter 113 - 7 September 2010](#)  
[Newsletter 112 - 17 August 2010](#)

Participants should be PhD candidates in their second or later year at a European university, working on any topic that has a strong relevant to South Asia. SASNET/Lund University invites European universities to nominate a maximum of three students each for the workshop. Each university should, if possible, also be prepared to send a researcher who can participate in the workshop as a discussant, and (if possible) commit to assisting with travel and accommodation costs for their students. Lund University will provide board and lodging for students and guest faculty members. Sending universities should nominate participating students before 31 January 2015. Abstracts should be sent to the workshop coordinator at Lund university, Dr. Olle Frödin ([olle.frodin@soc.lu.se](mailto:olle.frodin@soc.lu.se)). The names of selected participants will be announced in February 2015.

• **Kristina Myrvold new member of the SASNET board**

Kristina Myrvold, Assistant Professor in History of Religion at the Department of Cultural Sciences, Linnaeus University in Växjö, is a new member of the SASNET Board. A decision was taken by the Lund University Vice Chancellor Per Eriksson on 18th December 2014. Dr. Myrvold holds the board position for the period up till 31 December 2015. She replaces Associate Professor Stefan Jonsson from Uppsala University who had decided to vacate his position after being member of the board since February 2013. The SASNET board has six permanent members, out of which four represent Lund University, plus student representatives, currently two persons. [More information about SASNET staff and board.](#)



• **SASNET report from Delhi conference on Geographies of Resistance**

The Department of Geography at University of Delhi organised an International Conference on "Re Orienting Gender: Geographies of Resistance, Agency, Violence and Desire in Asia" with support from the International Geographical Union (IGU) Commission on Gender and Geography on 19–21 November 2014. The convener was Dr. Anindita Datta. SASNET also provided some support, and was represented at the conference by Director, Dr. Anna Lindberg, and strategic coordinator Ms. Linda Hiltmann. SASNET also supported the participation of two Lund University representatives, namely Prof. Helle Rydström from the Dept. of Gender Studies, and Prof. Catarina Kinnvall from the Dept. of Political Science.



Despite more inclusive geographies today, epistemic violence continues to construct non white, non western subjects mostly as poor, powerless and unempowered. In much the same way, within conventional theory, spaces come to be constructed through discourses that ultimately flatten and homogenize them. In this situation, difference, diversity, local feminisms, local knowledges and local understandings of space and place risk being lost unless seen contextually, using situated knowledges. This seminar sought to re-orient the geographies of gender through a focus on understandings of gender and space in a specifically Asian context. [Read a conference report by Linda Hiltmann.](#)

• **Stockholm reception event for Nobel Peace Prize winner**

To felicitate Indian child rights campaigner Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, the winner of Nobel Peace Prize for 2014, the Indian Ambassador to Sweden, Mrs. Banashri Bose Harrison hosted a reception on Friday 12 December 2014. About 125 invited guests including prominent members of the Indian community, political and business personalities, government officials, members of the media, and academic representatives attended the reception, among them SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund. Mr. Satyarthi arrived in Stockholm from Oslo, where a few days earlier, on Wednesday 10 December, Mr. Satyarthi and



Kailash Satyarthi being welcomed at arrival to Ambassador's residence in Stockholm.

Pakistani child education activist Malala Yousafzai were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2014 ([more information](#)) at a grand ceremony in Oslo. 60-year old Kailash Satyarthi is the founder of Bachpan Bachao Andolan, or the Save the Childhood Movement, which campaigns for child rights and an end to human trafficking. Satyarthi has maintained the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi and he focused on this connection at his speech in Stockholm. [More about the Stockholm reception with photos.](#)

• **SASNET supports Lund University research applications with South Asia focus**

SASNET has introduced a new scheme to promote more South Asia related research at Lund University. Researchers from all faculties and all disciplines within the university can apply for a special one month position at SASNET, a position dedicated to write a research application with a South Asia focus. The first call for applications was sent out in November 2014, and the general response to this offer for researchers to get time off for writing an application ("ansökningsmånad" in Swedish) was very positive, and the following two researchers were granted SASNET research application months

- Professor Ebbe Nordlander from the Division of Chemical Physics, Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Lund University.
  - PhD Candidate Shafqat Ahmad, from the Genetic and Molecular Epidemiology (GAME) Unit at the Department of Clinical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, Lund University.
- Ebbe Nordlander plans to write a research application to the Swedish Research Council for a project to be developed

Newsletter 111 – 24 June 2010  
 Newsletter 110 – 21 May 2010  
 Newsletter 109 – 23 April 2010  
 Newsletter 108 – 9 April 2010  
 Newsletter 107 – 12 March 2010  
 Newsletter 106 – 10 February 2010  
 Newsletter 105 – 29 January 2010  
 Newsletter 104 – 2 December 2009  
 Newsletter 103 – 6 November 2009  
 Newsletter 102 – 20 October 2009  
 Newsletter 101 – 2 October 2009  
 Newsletter 100 – 4 September 2009  
 Newsletter 99 – 23 July 2009  
 Newsletter 98 – 11 June 2009  
 Newsletter 97 – 26 May 2009  
 Newsletter 96 – 30 April 2009  
 Newsletter 95 – 6 April 2009  
 Newsletter 94 – 10 March 2009  
 Newsletter 93 – 4 February 2009  
 Newsletter 92 – 14 January 2009  
 Newsletter 91 – 5 December 2008  
 Newsletter 90 – 3 November 2008  
 Newsletter 89 – 3 October 2008  
 Newsletter 88 – 15 September 2008  
 Newsletter 87 – 21 August 2008  
 Newsletter 86 – 10 June 2008  
 Newsletter 85 – 20 May 2008  
 Newsletter 84 – 25 April 2008  
 Newsletter 83 – 27 March 2008  
 Newsletter 82 – 27 February 2008  
 Newsletter 81 – 30 January 2008  
 Newsletter 80 – 14 December 2007  
 Newsletter 79 – 29 October 2007  
 Newsletter 78 – 9 October 2007  
 Newsletter 77 – 14 September 2007  
 Newsletter 76 – 13 July 2007  
 Newsletter 75 – 20 June 2007  
 Newsletter 74 – 29 May 2007  
 Newsletter 73 – 27 April 2007  
 Newsletter 72 – 17 April 2007  
 Newsletter 71 – 6 March 2007  
 Newsletter 70 – 9 February 2007  
 Newsletter 69 – 9 January 2007  
 Newsletter 68 – 11 December 2006  
 Newsletter 67 – 9 November 2006  
 Newsletter 66 – 17 October 2006  
 Newsletter 65 – 20 September 2006  
 Newsletter 64 – 25 August 2006  
 Newsletter 63 – 20 June 2006  
 Newsletter 62 – 24 May 2006  
 Newsletter 61 – 28 April 2006  
 Newsletter 60 – 7 April 2006  
 Newsletter 59 – 9 March 2006  
 Newsletter 58 – 21 January 2006  
 Newsletter 57 – 17 November 2005  
 Newsletter 56 – 20 October 2005  
 Newsletter 55 – 22 September 2005  
 Newsletter 54 – 15 August 2005  
 Newsletter 53 – 30 June 2005  
 Newsletter 52 – 19 May 2005  
 Newsletter 51 – 19 April 2005  
 Newsletter 50 – 18 March 2005  
 Newsletter 49 – 21 February 2005  
 Newsletter 48 – 20 January 2005  
 Newsletter 47 – 23 December 2004  
 Newsletter 46 – 25 November 2004  
 Newsletter 45 – 2 November 2004  
 Newsletter 44 – 5 October 2004  
 Newsletter 43 – 17 September 2004  
 Newsletter 42 – 27 August 2004  
 Newsletter 41 – 15 July 2004  
 Newsletter 40 – 15 June 2004  
 Newsletter 39 – 11 May 2004  
 Newsletter 38 – 14 April 2004  
 Newsletter 37 – 10 March 2004  
 Newsletter 36 – 17 February 2004  
 Newsletter 35 – 27 January 2004  
 Newsletter 34 – 7 December 2003  
 Newsletter 33 – 13 November 2003  
 Newsletter 32 – 13 October 2003  
 Newsletter 31 – 12 September 2003  
 Newsletter 30 – 12 August 2003  
 Newsletter 29 – 11 July 2003  
 Newsletter 28 – 12 June 2003  
 Newsletter 27 – 13 May 2003  
 Newsletter 26 – 17 April 2003  
 Newsletter 25 – 17 March 2003  
 Newsletter 24 – 12 February 2003  
 Newsletter 23 – 21 January 2003

in collaboration with Associate Professor Tapan Kanti Paine at the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science in Kolkata, India. The project relates to the development of new metal complexes that can act as catalysts for reactions in which hydrocarbons obtained one or more oxygen atoms (a catalyst is a substance or compound that can accelerate a chemical reaction without itself consumed in the reaction).

**Shafqat Ahmed**, who is in the final phase of his PhD thesis work, plans to write an application for a coming post-doc project in collaboration with researchers in Pakistan. His research focuses on biological, clinical and lifestyle risk factors in the development of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease in rural Pakistan. The overall purpose is to assess the biological, clinical biomarkers and lifestyle risk factors in the development of type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM), cardiovascular diseases (CVD) and related diseases. The project also aims to identify the ways by which knowledge of the disease might help optimize preventive and/or treatment strategies in Pakistani rural population. The overarching goal to lessen personal suffering and burden of these diseases around the world. Research applications will be sent to different agencies in Sweden and Europe, including the Swedish Research Council (VR), Swedish Society of Medical Research, and Wellcome Trust in UK.

A new call for SASNET one month position to write a research application will be sent by late Spring 2015 (with a deadline for the fall semester 2015). Please observe that this particular call is eligible for Lund university researchers only.



Ebbe Nordlander and Shafqat Ahmad.

- Newsletter 22 - 19 December 2002
- Newsletter 21 - 15 November 2002
- Newsletter 20 - 24 October 2002
- Newsletter 19 - 26 September 2002
- Newsletter 18 - 6 September 2002
- Newsletter 17 - 9 August 2002
- Newsletter 16 - 11 June 2002
- Newsletter 15 - 13 May 2002
- Newsletter 14 - 8 April 2002
- Newsletter 13 - 14 February 2002
- Newsletter 12 - 8 January 2002
- Newsletter 11 - 5 December 2001
- Newsletter 10 - 23 October 2001
- Newsletter 9 - 12 September 2001
- Newsletter 8 - 22 August 2001
- Newsletter 7 - 18 July 2001
- Newsletter 6 - 12 June 2001
- Newsletter 5 - 9 May 2001
- Newsletter 4 - 4 April 2001
- Newsletter 3 - 1 March 2001
- Newsletter 2 - 1 February 2001
- Newsletter 1 - January 2001

• **SASNET meeting with Swedish government Expert Group for Aid Studies**

On Wednesday 10 December 2014, SASNET deputy directors Olle Frödin and Lars Eklund met representatives for the Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA), set up by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in early 2013. This group has a mandate to evaluate and analyse Sweden's international development cooperation in order to improve development cooperation and to build up a long-term, high-quality knowledge-base. The Expert Group is to work independently, and its main activity is to commission, compile, implement and communicate evaluations, analyses and studies on the implementation, performance and efficiency of Swedish development cooperation.

EBA Managing Director Sonja Daltung, and two of her colleagues – Mats Hårsmar and Jesper Sundewall visited Lund University as part of their work to find qualified academics at the Swedish universities willing to prepare analytical reports on Swedish development assistance. In Lund they visited for example the departments of Economics, Economic History, Political Science and Sociology, and they also set aside time to learn about SASNET and its role as a Swedish national network on South Asia related research during the past 15 years. [More information about the Expert Group for Aid Studies.](#)



• **Anna Lindberg lectured at partner university in Thiruvananthapuram**

In mid-November 2014, SASNET Director Anna Lindberg visited University of Kerala in Thiruvananthapuram, holding seminars and meeting students and faculty from the departments of Political Science, Sociology, Cultural Studies, Bio-informatics, and Journalism. Among others, she met with Professor Meena Pillai from Cultural Studies; Professor J. Prabash from Dept. of Political Science; Professor Sobha B. Nair and Dr. Pushpam from Dept. of Sociology; and Dr. Harikumar from Dept. of Journalism.



Anna held a lecture on "Gender and Kerala Modernity" that resulted in a lively discussion among the many students and staff members from different departments in attendance (photo from the seminar).

In 2008, Lund University and University of Kerala became partners in the first Indo-Swedish Erasmus Mundus Action 2 mobility programme (more information), and since then the two universities have worked closely together on a number of projects. Dr. Achuthsankar S. Nair (photo), Head of the Department of Bioinformatics & Computational Biology, and Director of the Centre for International Academics, has played a leading role in developing this collaboration and in the general internationalisation of his university. Following Dr. Lindberg's seminar, Dr. Achuthsankar was pleased to point out that, like their collaboration, a coconut palm tree they had planted together on a previous visit was now thriving. He expressed the wish that the partnership between Lund University and University of Kerala may continue in the form of new cooperative ventures.



• **SASNET Networking Partner 12: Pervasive and Mobile Computing Laboratory, Department of Computer Science, Electrical and Space Engineering, Luleå University of Technology (LTU) Campus Skellefteå**

Pervasive and Mobile Computing Laboratory is one of several departments and institutions involved in South Asia related research at Luleå University of Technology (with campuses in Luleå, Skellefteå and Kiruna).

Associate Professor **Karl Andersson** has received a **Swedish Research Links (SRL) grant** from the Swedish Research Council for a three-year Bangladesh related project entitled "A Belief-rule-based DSS to Assess Flood Risks by using Wireless Sensor

SASNET NETWORKING PARTNER

SASNET partners presented till now:

1. Stress Research Institute, Stockholm University
2. Department of Business and Economic Studies, University of Gävle



Karl Andersson and Shahadat Hossain.

*Networks*", dealing with risk assessment of flooding in Bangladesh. It will be carried out during the coming three years. The coordinator on the Bangladeshi side is Professor **Mohammad Shahadat Hossain** from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at University of Chittagong.

Flooding is considered to be one of the most catastrophic forms of natural disaster, responsible for the highest number of fatalities and greater economic damage in comparison to other natural disasters, and is a major issue in Bangladesh. It involves complex, interrelated and multi-dimensional geophysical processes and has a wide range of impact on human lives, activities, and properties.

3. Department of History, Uppsala University
4. Division of Physiotherapy, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm
5. School of Social Work, Lund University
6. Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Gothenburg
7. Department of Water and Environmental Studies, Linköping University
8. Stockholm School of Economics
9. Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE), Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg
10. Division of Chemical Physics, Lund University
11. Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Stockholm
12. Pervasive and Mobile Computing Laboratory, LTU, Skellefteå



Pervasive and Mobile Computing is also involved in an **Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree (EMJMD)** programme in Pervasive Computing and Communications for Sustainable Development (PERCCOM), to which non-European students and scholars are allowed to apply. Prof. Mohammad Shahadat Hossain happens to be one of 18 participants in the third semester programme that is held at LTU in Luleå and Skellefteå during the fall semester 2014. The programme aims at combining advanced Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) with environmental awareness to enable world-class education and unique competences for ICT professionals who can build cleaner, greener, more resource and energy efficient cyber-physical systems. The programme is run by a consortium of 12 European universities, coordinated by Lorraine University in Nancy, France. Lappeenranta University of Technology in Villmanstrand, Finland, is the only other Nordic partner university. [Read more about Pervasive and Mobile Computing Laboratory in Skellefteå.](#)

SASNET tries to keep track of all South Asia related research at the Swedish universities, and in our database we have information about approximately 300 departments where some kind of South Asia related research and/or educational collaboration projects with institutions in the eight South Asian nations is going on. Among our networking partners, we regularly present one these departments – our SASNET partners – and the researchers working on South Asia related projects. [Go for SASNET's list of Swedish departments.](#)

• **More information about SASNET and its activities**  
See SASNET's page, <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet-news>

**Research Community News**

• **Doctoral dissertation on Civil Society, Social Movements and Democratization in Nepal**



Jeevan Baniya from the Department of Political Science at University of Oslo defended his doctoral dissertation on Thursday 4 December 2014. The thesis was entitled *"Civil Society, Social Movements and Democratization: A Case Study of Nepal"*. It is an

exciting study on the role of civil society in Nepal's democratisation, focusing on what main lessons may be learned regarding the role of social movements in the transition to Democracy in Nepal, and to what extent are these relevant for current transition processes abroad. Professor Chaitanya Mishra from Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu is a member of the opponent committee. [More information.](#)



**Abstract:** The study has explored the conditions and factors that gave rise to various civil society organizations and social movements in Nepal during the period between 1893 and 2008. It has analyzed whether and how the CSOs and social movements contributed to democratization. The author has looked at some key dynamics, actors and their capacities and sources of power, their political practices for mobilizing and organizing and means of democratization they have focused on. Generally institutional changes and the rise of democratic system have contributed to the emergence of CSOs and movements. Operation and formation of CSOs and movements have been difficult under autocratic and repressive regime. And armed revolts and movements have appeared especially under such regimes. Wider and organized opposition movements have risen when regimes and rulers have faced crisis and internal division and when politically imbued and ideologically committed actors have tapped on such weakness and have built broader alliances among civil society and political actors. Most commonly, mass movement have emerged when various opposition forces have found a common enemy to fight against. [Read more...](#)

• **Uppsala researcher discovers new *Corydalis* species in Arunachal Pradesh**



Dr. Magnus Lidén, researcher in Systematic Biology at the Evolutionary Biology Centre, Uppsala University, is a plant taxonomist involved in research concerning taxonomy and evolution of the plant family Fumariaceae, which includes the large genus *Corydalis* (nunneört in Swedish) with a main distribution in the Eastern Himalayas and Southwest China. After having reasonably covered the Chinese and western Himalayan taxa, he has focussed



during the last few years on Arunachal Pradesh in the northeastern corner of India. This Himalayan state is today, along with adjoining regions in northern Myanmar (Burma) the last white spot on the Corydalis map, and each visit by botanists result in discoveries of new species – especially on heights above the forest limit, that is around 4.000 metres above sea level.

His specific research interest has brought him into contact with researchers and students at the Center with Potential for Excellence in Biodiversity at Rajiv Gandhi University in the city of Doimukh in the Rono Hills of Papum Pare District close to the Assamese border. Here Magnus is now affiliated as an associated research fellow, and so far Magnus and his Arunachal colleagues have discovered several species new to India, and some even new to science in general, but there is still a lot to do, especially in the Anjaw district and the mountains bordering Burma and East Tibet.



Dr. Lidén is also connected to the National Geographic magazine, and has written several feature articles on Botany in the Himalayas. Recently, in mid-October 2014, he published a text about a tradition among the Nyishi tribe, one of many Tibeto-Burmese tribes that inhabit the valleys and foothills of the eastern Himalayas, to make ceremonial hats – see photo – using the bill of the endangered Asian hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*). However, an ingenious innovation by the Nyishi forest officer Chukhu Loma now enables survival of both tradition and hornbills. Newly produced hats have a plastic bill replica, a change that has been widely accepted by the Nyishi community, thereby saving the birds. Read more about Magnus Lidén and his research.

• Kathmandu researcher part of Galtung's international peace research network



The Peace and Conflict Studies Center (PCS) in Kathmandu, Nepal was founded in 2006 as an academic, action and policy research based institution with a purpose to promote peace and the respect of human rights, reform security and encourage democratic processes. The focus is on providing research, support



Bishnu Pathak and Johan Galtung.

and training to local policy-makers and implementers, security organs, political parties, and civil society with an emphasis on the empowerment of poor, marginalized, disadvantaged and vulnerable (PMDV) groups. The PCS Director is Dr. Bishnu Pathak with a PhD in Conflict and Human Rights from Tribhuvan University, and with a Nordic connection. He has worked as a Peace and Conflict Analyst at the IIDS/Finish Embassy, and as a researcher at the Danish Center for Human Rights, Peace and Conflict. More information on PCS web site.



Dr. Pathak is also Convener of the South Asia section of TRANSCEND International, a network for Peace, Development and Environment founded 20 years ago by Norwegian Professor Johan Galtung and a few others as a conflict mediation organization. By now TRANSCEND has more than 400 scholars-practitioners from more than 60 countries as members. Among other activities, Transcend runs an online Peace University, and its Media Service (TMS) publishes 'Situation Updates', till now 110 interesting papers on human security, civil-military relations, conflict transformation, peace building initiatives, community policing, human rights, federalism and more. Besides, TMS also publishes weekly digests containing analytical briefs and

commentaries with the unique perspective of independent contributors from throughout the planet, often focusing on South Asia. Prof. Galtung himself writes a weekly editorial providing unique insights, analyses and proposals based on 50 years of research, teaching, mediation and active promotion of peace by peaceful, nonviolent means. He introduced Peace Studies to academic curricula worldwide in the 1950s. More information on TRANSCEND Media Service web page.

• Swedish long-standing institutional support to ICDDR,B in Dhaka

Several Swedish university departments are involved in research collaboration with the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) in Dhaka, an institution more commonly only referred to with its acronym icddr,b. This applies especially with researchers at University of Gothenburg, Uppsala University and Karolinska Institutet. The Swedish government is also strongly involved. In October 2012, representatives of the Swedish International Cooperation Agency (Sida) and icddr,b signed an agreement that provides icddr,b with SEK 54 million of institutional support and project funding over the period 2013-15.



Karin Rohlin, Head of Development Cooperation & Deputy Head of Mission at Swedish Embassy in Dhaka, and icddr,b's Interim Executive Director, Dr. Abbas Ghuiya, sign the agreement in October 2012.

For almost 30 years, Sida has served as one of icddr,b's core donors, providing consistent financial support – both unrestricted funds and project funds. Sida's support has enabled icddr,b to develop low-cost solutions to the health problems that affect billions of people living in poverty in Bangladesh and across the world. icddr,b's competencies undergird Swedish interest in public health knowledge generation of global or

regional significance, and in building research capacity in developing countries for pro-poor health research.



Sida project funding has supported research in a wide array of areas, including, among others: immunology and microbiology research in the areas of enterotoxigenic E. coli (ETEC) and in the surveillance for virulence antigens; interventions to improve immunogenicity oral enteric vaccines – cholera and typhoid vaccines – all these research issues covered by researchers at the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Institute of Biomedicine at Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg. Other researchers have focused on the production cost estimation of child healthcare services in Bangladesh; health systems research examining effect of post-menstrual regulation family planning counseling on subsequent fertility and family planning method use. Sida has also played a vital role in icddr,b's zinc research aimed at mitigating diarrhoea in children under five. For example, long-term, Sida-supported research led to the discovery that zinc when taken with ORS further reduces fatality rates from diarrhoea, as well as the severity and likelihood of hospitalisation during future diarrhoeal episodes. Beginning 2004, WHO and UNICEF recommended use of the ORS-zinc approach in treating

acute diarrhoea globally.

The other significant area where Sida's unrestricted funds have played a critical role is in maintaining and improving core infrastructure, such as the surveillance systems, healthcare facilities and field sites. The Health and Demographic Surveillance System (HDSS) at icddr,b's Matlab field site is the longest continuously running longitudinal data resource in the developing world, monitoring over 225,000 people. It is a model for the global INDEPTH Network, which works to strengthen research capacity in low- and middle-income countries to use HDSS to inform health policies. Matlab and its data continue to be an invaluable resource in understanding underlying trends and factors important for designing and developing policies, strategies and intervention programmes. [Read more about the Swedish institutional support.](#)

SASNET's Lars Eklund and Staffan Lindberg visited icddr,b in 2005, [read their report.](#)

• **Public lecture by first ICCR visiting professor at Uppsala University**



Professor Siddharth Singh, first Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) visiting professor at Uppsala University, presented his views on "Indian Studies in India and abroad: Challenges and Prospects" in a public ICCR lecture on Friday 12 December 2014 at the university main building in Uppsala. He pointed out in his lecture that "India has taken the best from all religions that came from outside" and constructed its open society. He explained the example of the Buddhist Nalanda university that saw the famous Chinese pilgrims I-tsing and Hsuan-tsang among its students as a role model for an Indian university open to all kinds of intellectual interactions. Indian studies, whatever this term may mean within India and abroad, can never be uniform and always have to accommodate different expectations. He strongly suggested more international academic exchange as an essential tool to discover new fields of research in humanities and social sciences.



Professor Singh who is the Head of the Department for Pali and Buddhist Studies at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi, India, arrived in mid-October and will stay till April 2015 in Sweden, being affiliated to Uppsala University's Department for Linguistics and Philology during his stay. Prof. Singh has also previously been a visiting professor in Sweden twice – in 2006 and 2008 respectively, and been a visiting faculty at University of Colorado, USA. In 2005, he was honoured by a "President Award" in India for his contribution to Pali & Buddhist Studies, and has published books and research papers in this field. He is now the first in a planned row of four consecutive ICCR guest professors in Uppsala according to a contract the Government of India/ICCR and Uppsala University, signed by Indian Ambassador Banashri Harrison Bose, and Eva Åkesson, Uppsala University Vice Chancellor.

• **Doctoral dissertation on open angle Glaucoma in Nepal**

Suraj Shakya-Vaidya from the Institute of Medicine at Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg (and the Nordic School of Public Health, Gothenburg), defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "Primary open angle glaucoma in Nepal: Exploring the Unknown" on Wednesday 10 December 2014. The faculty opponent was Professor Nawi Ng, Umeå university. Suraj Shakya Vaidya has worked in Nepal as an academician and clinician for 19 years in the field of Ophthalmology and lately relocated to UK. She has special interest in glaucoma and was involved in several glaucoma researches in Nepal including two research projects on Pseudoexfoliation syndrome funded by Nepal Health Research Council.



**Abstract:** Dealing with blindness related to primary open angle glaucoma (POAG) has always been challenging due to late detection as POAG can remain asymptomatic until end stage. Most eye hospitals in Nepal conduct opportunistic screening programs for glaucoma, but no reports confirm whether screening programs achieve their goals in preventing blindness. [More information including link to full-text thesis.](#)

• **Doctoral dissertation on Chaitanya Vaishnava community practices in Vrindavan**



Samrat Schmiem Kumar at the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages,





University of Oslo, will defend his doctoral dissertation entitled *"Sacred Modernity and its Fragments. Space, Environment and Life-Worlds in the Indian Temple Town Vrindavan"* on Tuesday 13



January 2014, 09.15. The evaluation committee consists of Professor Torkel Brekke, University of Oslo; Professor David L. Haberman, Indiana University, USA; and Associate Professor Lucia Michelutti, University College London, UK. Venue

for dissertation: Arne Næss' auditorium, Georg Morgenstiernes hus, Blindern, Oslo.

The main objective of the PhD research project has been to investigate the complex and ambiguous relationship between the 'subaltern space', the life-worlds of its subjects and the modern identity and modernisation discourse of the post-colonial Indian nation-state. A project seeking to understand how processes of modernization influence life practices of members of the Chaitanya Vaishnava community in the sacred temple town (dham) of Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh, India. The project begins with locating Vrindavan on the periphery of Indian national modernization and then reads the narratives of the self and community as well as life stories from members of the Chaitanya Vaishnava community against the theories and practices of modernity in India.

Mr. Kumar was recently (September 2014) appointed as the new Director at the Nordic Centre India (NCI) Liaison Office in New Delhi ([more information](#)).

• **University of Bergen announces PhD positions focusing on Religious Spaces in Mumbai**

The Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion (AHKR) at University of Bergen, Norway, announces two South Asia related PhD positions in a project entitled *'Dwelling and Crossing: The Socio-Religious Dynamics of Religious Spaces in Mumbai'*. The first position should focus on the issue of 'Religion in Public Spaces in Mumbai', and the second on 'Religion and Violence in Mumbai'. The project is coordinated by Prof. Michael Stausberg and Prof. István Keul



in Bergen, but involves researchers from other universities as well. They have formed a small international group of scholars that recently met in Mumbai to discuss the setup of the projects. The group consists of Prof. Martin Fuchs from University of Erfurt, Germany, Prof. Heinz Werner Wessler from Uppsala University, Professor Raminder Kaur, Sussex University, UK, and Associate Professor Gopika Solanki, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. The advertised positions will also be part of the group. The successful candidates are expected to develop and complete their PhD research projects in three years, and they should be expected to relocate to the University of Bergen and conform to the regulations that apply to the respective position. Deadline for applications is 2 January 2015, and the appointments are expected to begin on 1 April 2015.

[More information on the Religion in Public Spaces in Mumbai position.](#)

[More information on the Religion and Violence in Mumbai position.](#)

• **Gunnel Cederlöf Visiting Professor at Shiv Nadar University**



Since 1 January 2014, Gunnel Cederlöf is on leave from the Department of History, Uppsala University. Instead she has become connected to the Division of History of Science, Technology and Environment at the KTH Royal Institute of



Technology in Stockholm ([more information](#)), and Guest Professor at the Centre for Concurrencies in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies, Linnaeus University, Växjö. In an interesting development she is also currently a Visiting Professor at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Shiv Nadar University in Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, India. The position lasts five years (2014-2019), and facilitates collaboration between KTH Royal Institute of Technology and Shiv Nadar University. Together the two universities will collaborate in the broad field of environmental

humanities and social sciences. The initiative will specifically focus on research and higher education. [More information.](#)

Shiv Nadar University is a multi-disciplinary, student-centric, research-focused university established in 2011. It offers a full range of academic programs at the undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral level. SNU's multi-disciplinary curriculum provides students a strong foundation in disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, natural sciences, technology and engineering studies, communications and management, while enabling them to gain mastery of a subject of their choosing.

• **Nordic Southeast Asian Studies Network launched**

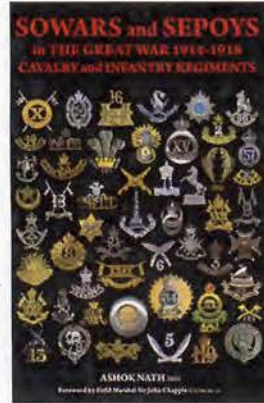
A group of scholars from the universities of Copenhagen, Lund, and Helsinki have established a Nordic Southeast Asian Studies Network. Funding has been obtained from The Joint Committee for Nordic research councils in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NOS-HS) for the running of the network and for organizing a number of workshops. The first workshop on *Demographic changes in Southeast Asia: Regional and international ramifications* will take place in Copenhagen 16-17 April 2015. One day of the workshop is reserved for doctoral research. Financial support is offered to a number of doctoral students who wish to attend and present. [More information about the network.](#) [Link to planned workshops by the network.](#)



• **Dhaka release function for Ashok Nath's book on Sowars and Sepoys in the World War 1**



Indo-Swedish historian and researcher Ashok Nath, connected to the Dept. of History at Stockholm University, has just completed his next book: *Sowars and Sepoys in the Great War 1914-1918*; the book carries a foreword by Field Marshal Sir John Chapple, and bridges an important gap in the historiography of individual Indian Cavalry and Infantry Regiment during the period 1914 - 1922. It records their war services, battle honours, and ethnic composition along with a detailed study of their regimental iconography. A early chapter in the book explains the complex class structure, martial race theory, identity and the primary elements that created an effective combat regiment and more importantly how the military authorities structured Indian regiments to exploit and to reinforce a South Asian soldier's most deeply rooted values and his sense of self. This book therefore is a significant contribution on India and the First World War.



Nath had been earlier invited at the International Great War Conference held in March 2014 at New Delhi, to speak on Indian Cavalry and Infantry Regiments, the main combatant arms that fought in France, Flanders, Egypt, Palestine, and Mesopotamia and in East Africa during the First World War. By the end of the war over 1,100,000 Indian had served at the cost of over 64,000 lives and many more in wounded and maimed. History however, unkindly blurred out Indians from the big picture of the war, partly because Britain downplayed their contribution, and even more so because independent India completely ignored them. In fact in her zeal to throw off the vestiges of colonial rule, India disowned parts of her own history and the men who shaped it.

The writing of this book is part of a series of historical studies on the history of South Asian Armies from circa 1740 to current times. His earlier book *Izzat – Historical Records and Iconography of Indian Cavalry Regiments 1750-2007*, is acclaimed as the definitive work on the subject. ( see link - attachment)

Ashok Nath currently resides in Bangladesh (his wife being posted to the Swedish Embassy) and he is visiting senior research fellow at the *Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies*.

A soft launch of the book was held at the Swedish Ambassador's residence on 9th December, to be followed by a bigger event in January 2015 at the British High Commission in Dhaka.

Nath's main focus of research is South Asian conflict history and military cultures, and he is considered the most eminent scholar of the Indian Army during the Company and Raj period (1600 -1947) and an internationally renowned authority on South Asian regimental iconography. [More information about Ashok Nath and his research.](#)

● **Sida sponsored International Training Programme on ICT and Pedagogic Development**

An International Training Programme workshop on "ICT and Pedagogical Development" was held in Stockholm 17–22 November 2014. It was jointly organized by the Department of Computer and Systems Science at Stockholm University; the Department of Educational Administration at M.S.University of Baroda, India; and the LIFE Academy, with the support of Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). 25 delegates from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Sweden took part in this regional workshop. Participants gave thematic presentations on Emerging technologies in Education, and their change projects initiated in their respective countries. The participants were also exposed to good practices in schools and universities including the visit of India Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.



Prof. K. Pushpanadham, India with Dr. C. G. Larson and Ms. Sara Jaison from Life Academy, Sweden.

One of the main objectives of the regional workshop was to share international knowledge on ICT in Education and to learn from the local experience of ICT as a pedagogical tool in the educational system. The overall objective of the programme was to contribute to capacity building and the start up of change processes in the participants' organizations in order to integrate ICT in educational policies and strategies at all levels of the educational system.



Participants were exposed to theoretical aspects of the ICT and Pedagogic development during this first phase of the training programme at Stockholm University, and this regional phase included few selected study visits to educational institutions at different levels of the educational system. Prof. K. Pushpanadham – Director of the regional phase of the ITP – highlighted the emerging technologies in Education and their potential to make education more relevant and enjoyable. In the era of knowledge based society, the Information and Communication technology has opened the vistas for lifelong learning. He has also stressed the need for the human component and touch in using ICT in schools. He has highlighted

the etiquettes of ICT integration in education. Children have become explorers of knowledge and are actively engaging in the information processing. He mentioned that "Learning to Learn" is the skill that we need to imbibe in our learners. There is a need for skill development in ICT for both teachers and students to enable them to optimally utilise the potential of ICT in Learning. The proper utilization of ICT in Education requires Accessibility to ICT, Awareness on the part of society, Competencies to utilize them in the classroom processes and accountability on the part of users. Educational institutions have a great role to play in this regard. [More information about the training programme.](#)





• **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**

• **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**

• **Oslo seminar on the role of religion and its relation to development in Pakistan**



The Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) invites to a seminar entitled *"Blessing or Blockage? Religion and Development in Pakistan"* on Thursday 18 December 2014, 09.00–11.00. The seminar critically engages with the questions about religion and development in Pakistan, asking what roles religion is playing in the Pakistani society, and how this is and is not related to different conceptions of development. Following the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize to Malala Yousafzai (and Kailash Satyarthi) heightened

attention is being paid to the possibility for girls to get an education in Muslim societies, as well as to children's rights more broadly. Yet the question of the different roles religion plays in any society – in politics, in economic and social development, is one which is highly context dependent on the historical and political landscape of each society. Through a focus on Pakistan – this seminar contributes with a perspective on a particular geographic, social and religious context – through the eyes of leading Pakistan experts engaging in a panel debate. Venue: PRIO, Hausmanns gate 7, Oslo, Norway.

An introduction to the topic will be given by Associate Professor Masooda Bano, Oxford University, UK; Associate Professor Christopher Candland from Wellesley College in Massachusetts, USA; and Khalid Rahman, Director-General for the Institute for Policy Studies, Islamabad, Pakistan. They will be followed by a panel debate and questions and comments from the audience.

Masooda Bano's primary area of interest rests in studying the role of ideas and beliefs in development processes and their evolution and change and specializes in the study of informal institutions and development. Christopher Candland is the co-director for the South Asian Studies Program at Wellesley College, His research focuses on the political dimensions of human development, based on comparative and quantitative studies within Southern Asia. Khalid Rahman's main research contribution has been on Pakistan's social and political developments with an active focus on Afghanistan, Pakistan-China Relations and Madrassa Education. Full information about the PRIO seminar.



• **Oslo symposium in commemoration of Paul Olav Bodding's Santali research**



Paul Olaf Bodding was a Norwegian missionary, linguist and folklorist who served in India for 44 years (1889–1933), and operated mainly from the town Dumka in the Santal Parganas District. Bodding created the first alphabet and wrote the first grammar for the Santali-



speaking native people in eastern India. In 1914 he also completed the translation of the Bible into the Santali language. He was a celebrated scientist, and he is still well known among the Santals living in the states of Jharkhand, Bihar and Assam as well as in Bangladesh. The two universities of Oslo and Tromsø will now commemorate Paul Olav Bodding and his work by organising a three-day symposium together with the National Library of Norway. The symposium is entitled *"Belief, Scholarship and Cultural Heritage: Paul Olav Bodding and the Making of a*

*Scandinavian-Santal Legacy* and will be held in Oslo on 3–5 November 2015. Venue: The restored historic Professor Residence, in Karl Johansgt. 47, near to the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 1 March 2015.



The vision and early initiative to this event came out of the Scandinavian-Santal Heritage Initiative headed by Professor Tone Bleie at the Department of Sociology, Political Science and Community Planning at University of Tromsø.

The organizers hope to provide some supporting grants for participants from South Asia. Support to panel participants from European destinations can be considered on need basis. For submission and/or further information please contact Professor Tone Bleie in Tromsø, or Professor Øivind Fuglerud, Head of Department of Ethnography, Numismatics and Classical Archaeology at Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo. Detailed programme will be available online from March 2015. [More information.](#)

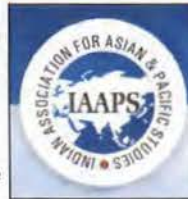
- **Information about South Asia related lectures and seminars**

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

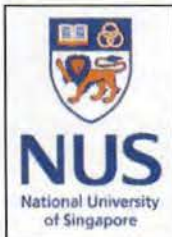
### Conferences and workshops outside Scandinavia

- **Seventh IAAPS conference to be held in Tezpur**

Seventh Biennial International Conference of the Indian Association for Asian & Pacific Studies (IAAPS) will be held 20– 22 December 2014 at Tezpur University in Assam. Scholars from all regions of Asia are expected to participate in order to enrich the already established network between Indian scholars & scholars across Asia-Pacific regions. IAAPS promotes research, conference, seminar, lecture programs and understanding of different Asian & Pacific regions in its cultural, social, political and economic scenario. The Association is a forum for scholars engaged in area studies to carry out social science oriented studies, which are to some extent inter- regional and inter-societal comparative studies. The keynote speaker will be Professor Prasenjit Duara, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. [More information.](#)



- **Singapore conference on Islamic Cosmopolitanism in Asia**



A conference on *"Wild Spaces and Islamic Cosmopolitanism in Asia"* will be held in Singapore 14 – 15 January 2015. It is jointly organised by the Asia Research Institute at National University of Singapore (NSU), and the International Centre for Muslim and non-Muslim Understanding at University of South Australia. It focuses on the issue of whether state and non-state efforts to distribute Muslims in time and space allowed for the containment of religious populations, or contributed to new manifestations of diversity and mobility? Did the contests between containment and connection generate new social, political, and ethical frameworks that might be construed through the explanatory framework of "Islamic cosmopolitanism"? The objectives of this conference are to articulate flexible definitions of Islamic cosmopolitanism across Asia, examine historically and ethnographically the dialectic between Muslim and non-Muslim diversity on the one hand, and map the re-constitution of

Muslim beliefs, practices, and networks at the blurry boundaries of spatial and regulatory enclosure as a technique of power. [More information.](#)

- **SSAI workshop on Religion, Environment and Global Concepts of Conservation in South Asia**

The SOAS South Asia Institute (SSAI) at University of London invites to a one-day workshop on *"Religion, Environment and Global Concepts of Conservation in South Asia"* to be held on Friday 20 February 2015. The workshop is convened by Dr. Mari Miyamoto, and Dr. Michael Hutt – the SSAI Director. Deadline to submit papers and presentations is 20 December 2014. Venue: MBI Al Jaber Room, MBI Al Jaber Building, 21 Russell Square, London.



This one-day workshop will capitalise upon the presence of Dr Miyamoto (*photo*), being a Newton International Fellow at the School of Oriental and Asian Studies (SOAS) during 2015, and a visit from her principal research collaborator from Bhutan. Dr. Miyamoto obtained her PhD from Kyoto University in the field of political anthropology working on cultural politics of environmentalism in contemporary Bhutan for which she did intensive ethnographical fieldwork in Bhutan. The workshop is intended as an opportunity for a discussion of interpretations of the global concept of environmental conservation in South Asia and the contradictions and conflicts which arise between this and local concepts and practices. The workshop will focus on religious and cultural aspects of conservation as inseparable factors in people's everyday lives and practices in the region.

The organisers invite offers of papers, presentations and thought pieces from researchers who are interested in how the concepts and regulations of global environment conservation are interpreted or re-conceptualized in people's everyday practices and value systems in rural South Asia, particularly in relation to religion, including rituals for indigenous deities and localised spiritual practices. The workshop will aim to create a new network of scholars with a shared interest in this issue, and discuss the scope for future research initiatives. PhD students who are at an advanced stage of their research are welcome to participate as well as established researchers and academics. Contributions to this workshop may take the form of unpublished papers of 2.500-4.000 words, or 20-minute presentations of schemes of ongoing research in this field. If you would like to attend and contribute to this workshop, please send a 200-word abstract of your proposed contribution to Dr. Mari Miyamoto before 20th December 2014. The SOAS South Asia Institute will provide a contribution to travel and accommodation costs to a maximum of £200 for contributors travelling from outside London whose papers have been accepted for inclusion in the workshop programme.

- **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

### • 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

### • Excellent book on the interplay of politics, ethnicity, religion, and criminality in Karachi

*Karachi. Ordered Disorder and the Struggle for the City* by Laurent Gayer. Oxford University Press 2014. With an official population approaching fifteen million, Karachi is one of the largest cities in the world. It is also the most violent. Since the mid-1980s, it has endured endemic political conflict and criminal violence, which revolve around control of the city and its resources (votes, land and bhatta-“protection” money). These struggles for the city have become ethnicized. Karachi, often referred to as a “Pakistan in miniature,” has become increasingly fragmented, socially as well as territorially.

Laurent Gayer is a research fellow at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), currently posted at the Centre de Sciences Humaines (CSH) in Delhi. He is also Research Associate at the Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud in Paris. He has coedited, with Christophe Jaffrelot, *Armed Militias of South Asia: Fundamentalists, Maoists, and Separatists*, and *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalization*, both of which are available from OUP.

Review by Anatol Lieven, *New York Review of Books*: “Laurent Gayer’s *Karachi* is the best book yet published on the interplay of politics, ethnicity, religion, and criminality in one of the world’s largest cities.” [More information.](#)

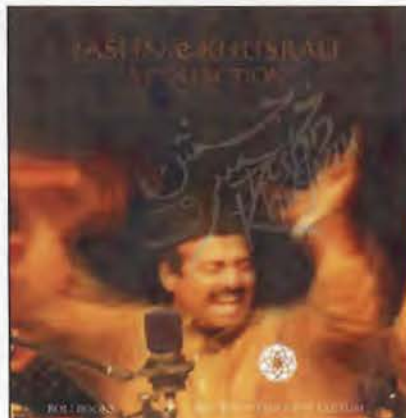


### • Collection on South Asian Sufism and the roots of Qawwali music

*Jashn-e-Khusrau: A Collection* by Shakeel Hossain, Irfan Zuberi, et.al. Lustre Press 2014. This collection compiles the events of Jashn-e-Khusrau, a festival illuminating the genius of Amir Khusrau, held at Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti and India International Centre, Delhi in March 2010. The festival was organized and produced by Aga Khan Trust for Culture in collaboration with Archaeological Survey of India and India International Centre.

Jashn-e-Khusrau celebrates the *sūfiānā kalām* (mystical poetry of Islam) of Amir Khusrau (1253 – 1325). Rendered in the *khānaqāh* (shrine) of his beloved *pir*, Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya (1238 – 1325), the *kalām* has been kept alive for over 750 years by the *qawwālī* singers in the shrines of the *Chistiya silsilā*. The festival puts together an exclusive assembly of selected *khānaqāhī qawwālī* with different *dargāh* affiliations – each with distinctive style and repertoire. In that way it is singularly unique. It includes several other related events such as lectures on the poetry of Amir Khusrau and its contribution to *qawwālī* tradition; a discussion with the *qawwāl* on the development of the *qawwālī* styles and contents; heritage walks in Nizamuddin Basti where Amir Khusrau lies buried next to Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya; film screenings on *sūfi* music and on Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan – one of the greatest exponent of *qawwālī* of our time; and an exhibition displaying Humayun’s Tomb, Sunder Nursery and Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti area urban renewal initiatives.

*Jashn-e-Khusrau: A Collection* presents three music discs exemplifying the vast repertoire of *khānaqāhī qawwālī* and Amir Khusrau’s *kalām*. The book presents, in the first section, three essays with an introduction articulating the history, tradition, and literature of *khānaqāhī qawwālī* as attributed to Amir Khusrau. The second section compiles the *kalām* of the *qawwālīs* included in the discs with transliterations and translations.



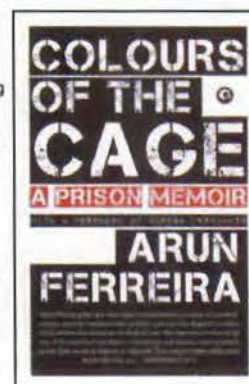
### • Restrained memoirs on the inhuman treatment in an Indian jail



*Colours of the Cage: A Prison Memoir*, by Arun Ferreira. Aleph Book Company 2014. In May 2007, Indian human rights activist Arun Ferreira was picked up from the railway station and arrested by the Nagpur Police on charges of being a Naxalite. Over the next few months, he was charged with more crimes – of criminal conspiracy, murder, possession of arms and rioting, among others – and incarcerated in one of the most notorious prisons in Maharashtra, the Nagpur Central Jail. He was booked under India’s sedition law; a colonial era relic that Indian politicians are naturally fond of, for it allows them to crush dissenting individuals effectively. He was kept incarcerated for a period of 54 months between 2007 and 2012. *Colours of the Cage* is Ferreira’s account of

his stay at Nagpur Central Jail. Every time he would be acquitted in a court of law, plainclothes policemen would abduct him at the gates of the prison and file freshly trumped-up charges against him, until finally, in January 2014, he was acquitted in the last of these cases.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this book is that it does not contain one angry sentence. For someone who has been wronged by the system repeatedly, Ferreira’s writing is remarkably restrained, stripped down and doggedly



journalistic. There are several passages that depict the inhuman treatment that he had to suffer, but I will reproduce one from the first chapter here, because it seemed to me to be indicative of several vital issues regarding human rights and the short-sightedness of the Indian elite. [Read more...](#)

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

This month there were 5 new departments added to SASNET's list:

- ‡ Department of Chemistry and Molecular Biology, University of Gothenburg
- ‡ Swedish Language Bank, Department of Swedish, University of Gothenburg
- ‡ Pervasive and Mobile Computing Laboratory, Department of Computer Science, Electrical and Space Engineering, Luleå University of Technology (LTU), Campus Skellefteå
- ‡ Systematic Biology, Department of Organismal Biology, Evolutionary Biology Centre (EBC), Uppsala University
- ‡ Department of Informatics and Media, Uppsala University

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, Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year 2015

Lars Eklund

**Deputy Director in charge of Communication  
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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**Visiting address:** Paradisgatan 5 G (first floor, room no. 201), in the premises of the Department of Sociology, Lund University.

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