

SASNET - Swedish South Asian Studies Network

Lund University

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SASNET Newsletters

Newsletter 171 – 20 January 2015

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SWEDISH SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES NETWORK

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SASNET News

• Nine panels selected for SASNET 2015 Conference on Structural Transformation of South Asia



Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET) at Lund University organises a three-day international conference on the structural transformation of South Asia on 20–22 May 2015. The conference is entitled "South Asia in Transformation: World of Slums, Global Power Houses or Utopias? Migration, labour, and family changes in a dynamic region".



Gita Sen, Ruth Kattumuri, Zoya Hasan, Abram de Swaan, and Geoff Wood.

Keynote speakers are Gita Sen from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, India (and Harvard School of Public Health, Harvard University); Ruth Kattumuri, London School of Economics, UK; Zoya Hasan, Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR); Abram de Swaan, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands; and Geoff Wood, University of Bath, Bath, UK.

The purpose of the conference is to explore the social consequences of the transformation of South Asian societies



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(and by implication, the world).

Structural transformations produce new opportunities and risks as job possibilities and wealth are created and redistributed unevenly. This may lead to the marginalization of some groups as well as social conflicts. The aim of this conference is also to map the social impact of South Asia's structural transformation so far, with specific reference to changes in labour migration patterns and in the composition of the care economy of families and households. Each of these aspects is often studied in isolation despite the fact that they are deeply interrelated.

The conference will have nine panels, each one led by eminent researchers. The theme of the panels vary from "Urbanization and Social Sustainability", to "Ethnicity, Religion and Changing Caste Relations", and "Structural Transformation and Social Conflicts". Full information about the conference.

• **Lund University organizes EASAS workshop in May 2015**

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.



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). The names of selected participants will be announced in February 2015.

• **SASNET seminar on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Sri Lanka**



Dr. Malin Jordal from the Division of International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH) at the Department of Women's and Children's Health, Uppsala University, will give a SASNET lecture entitled "Living up to the Ideal of Respectability. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Implications for



Unmarried Migrant Workers, Single Mothers, and Women in Prostitution in Sri Lanka" on Wednesday 4 February 2015, 13.15-15.00. The lecture, based on her June 2014 doctoral dissertation, will be held at the Department of Sociology, Lund University, Paradisgatan 5 G, lecture hall TE3. All most welcome!

Dr. Jordal's PhD thesis aimed to gain a deeper understanding of relationships and sexuality of women at risk of social exclusion in Sri Lanka and the risk of violations of their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) that they might face. Individual qualitative interviews with migrant women workers and men in the Free Trade Zone (FTZ), women facing single motherhood and women formerly involved in prostitution were conducted. Findings revealed that the migrant women workers negotiated norms of respectability in a society that highly stigmatizes FTZ women workers, while the men identified conflicting constructions of masculinity existing in the FTZ. The women facing single motherhood navigated oppressive and stigmatizing social forces, and the women in prostitution constructed themselves as respectable in opposition to their societal disvalue and marginalization. In order to retain an image of sexual innocence, unmarried women are likely to refrain from demanding or demonstrating SRHR knowledge and accessing services. Furthermore, gender power imbalances leave the women vulnerable to sexual persuasion, coercion and violence. Once pregnant, social, legal, and knowledge barriers hinder or delay them in accessing abortion services. Unmarried pregnant women are thus left with the alternatives of adoption, infanticide, and suicide or become stigmatized single mothers with risks of health and social exclusion for mother and child. Extreme marginalization and limited power make women in prostitution vulnerable to unsafe sex, rape and violence. [More information about the thesis.](#)

• **SASNET announces short-term research fellowships in South Asian Studies**



The Swedish South Asian Studies Network is pleased to announce a number of PhD or post-doc fellowship stays of 1 to 2 months length at Lund University during the academic year



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2015–2016. The positions are open to PhD candidates in their final year, recent PhDs, and post-docs who have been students at universities in South Asia (i.e., Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka). Applicants must have a research topic concerning the geographical area of South Asia or be doing a comparative study including South Asia.



SASNET can provide visa and travel expenses to and from Lund University, as well as housing and a monthly stipend of SEK 5.000. Candidates must arrange their own affiliation with a Lund University department or research center before submitting an application. That department must be willing to provide them with working space and include them in departmental activities.

SASNET expects that candidates will present their research projects at a public event during their stay in Sweden. Applications should be submitted no later than March 1, 2015 to application@sasnet.lu.se.

Each application must include:

- a cover letter stating when you would prefer to be at Lund University;
- a CV;
- a description of your research (maximum 2000 words);
- a letter of recommendation from your home department;
- a letter of recommendation from a Swedish university; and
- a letter from the chairperson of a department at Lund University stating that the department is prepared to receive you.

• SASA launches 2015 spring semester programme with Nepal events



The South Asian Student Association (SASA) at Lund University welcomes old and fresh students to a new year full of activities. The first SASA event will be a movie night on Thursday 29 January 2015, at 17.00, when Éric Valli's film *Himalaya* from 1999 will be screened. Venue: Social Sciences Students



Union building, Paradisgatan 5 S, Lund (close to SASNET's office).

During 2015, SASA will in addition to its regular events, especially Fika without borders informal seminars, show movies from South Asian countries. First out is a film shot in Nepal, providing a powerful depiction of the rural lives of Nepal. Fika and soft drinks will be served. More information about the movie.

The first Fika without borders seminar will also be dedicated to Nepal. It will be held on Thursday 5 February 2015, 17–19, at the usual venue: The basement floor at Lund University External Relations (ER) building, Stora Algatan 4, Lund. Dr. Uddhab Pyakurel from Kathmandu University, currently based in Copenhagen, will be the chief guest. More information will follow.

• Lars Eklund on tour to Kolkata, Dhaka and Imphal

SASNET deputy director Lars Eklund will visit India and Bangladesh during the period 18 February–15 March. He will mainly stay in Kolkata and on behalf of SASNET visit the many universities and eminent research institutions there, but also visit Dhaka in Bangladesh and Imphal in Indian state of Manipur. Researchers and others interested to meet Lars can contact him via e-mail, lars.eklund@sasnet.lu.se.

• SASNET student seminar on field work in South Asia

On 10 December 2014, SASNET organized an informal fieldwork seminar for bachelors and masters students at Lund University who are doing fieldwork in South Asia during the spring semester 2015. At the seminar, held at the SASNET office, Anna Lindberg gave a brief lecture on fieldwork and shared her personal experiences on doing fieldwork in South Asia. In addition, information was provided on issues such as travelling, insurance, visas and housing. Among the participants were Sixten Lundqvist, bachelors student in Development Studies, who will travel to Namche Bazaar in Nepal where he will do research among Sherpas and examine welfare structures, focusing particularly on the risks of being a mountain guide and the economic and social consequences may have on individuals injuries and family.



From left to right participants Jacco Visser, Anna Berggren and Sixten Lundqvist.

Another participant, Anna Berggren is also a bachelors student in Development Studies. She will go to Mumbai, India, to do fieldwork on women's empowerment and will investigate the barriers for empowerment in micro-credit organizations. Furthermore Jacco Visser, masters student in Asian Studies, will go to Dhaka, Bangladesh to look at how rural-urban migrants are included in the global economy and how this affects how they relate to local, national and global imaginaries.

Hawwa Lubna, a bachelors student in Development Studies, and till recently a SASNET part-time co-worker, will also go to the region during the spring 2015. She will do her field work study on Migration and Urbanisation in the Maldives. Sharmin Rashid, student in the masters programme in Social Studies of Gender, will carry out fieldwork in Mumbai and Hyderabad, India. Her project is entitled "Vulnerability, Destitution and Criminalization of Beggary".

SASNET will continue to provide support for these students and other students from Lund University that go to South

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Asia through its network in the region and with SASNET's staff experiences in the region. In addition, several students have received a travel grant through SASNET's student body SASA (see <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/fieldstudygrant>).

• **SASNET Networking Partner 13: Department of Cultural Sciences, Linnaeus University, Kalmar/Växjö**



The Department of Cultural Sciences is one of the departments at Linnaeus University that is strongly involved in South Asia related research. List of other such departments. Assistant Professor Kristina Myrvold started to work at Linnaeus University in Växjö from the spring 2013. Before that, she worked at the Department of History and Anthropology of Religion, Lund University. In her research, Dr. Myrvold has focused on religious practices and worship among the Sikhs in Punjab and in different diasporic settings, focusing on *Sikh katha* – oral and textual expositions of *Guru Granth Sahib* – in local and translocal contexts. For four years, between 2009 and 2013, she was the principal investigator and a researcher of the Nordcorp project "*Sikh Identity Formation: Generational Transfer of Traditions in the Nordic Countries*", which was carried out in cooperation with researchers in Denmark, Finland and Norway. She has also been involved in organising a number of workshops/conferences on Sikh and Punjab Studies at Lund University, in 2005, 2008, 2010 and 2013. As a result of these workshops, a network entitled *Sikhs-in-Europe* was formed for the purpose of developing closer academic cooperation between students and researchers with a common interest in the Sikhs and Sikhism in Europe.

Between 1 March 2012 and 30 September 2013, Kristina Myrvold also worked as Director for the Nordic Centre in India (NCI) university consortium.



PhD Candidate Andreas Johansson is working on a dissertation project entitled "*The Construction of Religio-Nationalism – The struggle for religious minority organizations*". He is being supervised by Prof. Olle Qvarnström at Lund University.

In 2014, Kristina Myrvold and Andreas Johansson were given grants both from Crafoord Foundation and the Swedish Research Council for a new research project entitled "*Religion in the Trenches: Miniature Scriptures for Muslim and Sikh Soldiers in the British Army during World War I*". The project will be carried out during the period 2015–2017. The research project investigates the production, distribution, and use of religious miniature scriptures and artefacts for Sikh soldiers from the province of Punjab in India who fought for the British Army at the Western front during World War I. By anchoring the research project in Military History, Book History, and Religious Studies, it explores how the religious objects and their practices manifested complex relationships across borders in a historical context when the British national security was threatened.

Read more about the South Asia research at the Department of Cultural Sciences.

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.

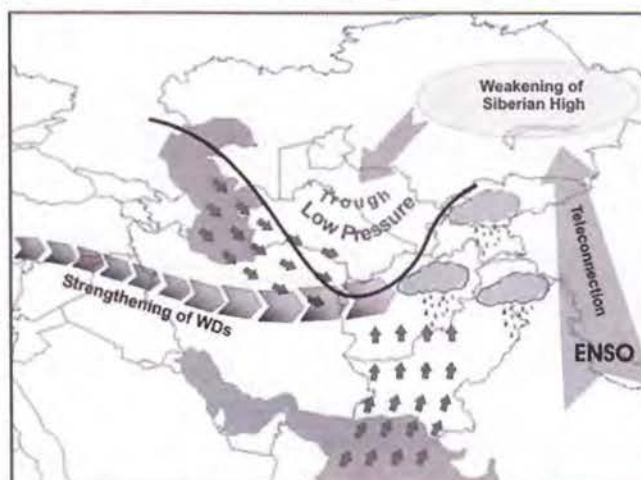
• **More information about SASNET and its activities**

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

Research Community News

• **Doctoral dissertation on South Asian Summer Monsoon and Climate Change**

Faisal Saeed Syed from the Department of Meteorology (MISU), Stockholm University, defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "*Uncertainties in the Regional Climate Models Simulations of South Asian Summer Monsoon and Climate Change*" on 27 September 2011. Syed was at that time working as Deputy Director for the Pakistan Meteorological Department in Islamabad. Faculty opponent was Professor Jagadish Shukla from George Mason University (GMU) in Calverton, Maryland, USA (and also being the President of the Institute of Global Environment and Society).



Abstract: South Asia, a land of contrasting landscapes, seasons and climates, is highly vulnerable to climate

variability over intra-seasonal to decadal time scales. In winter, precipitation over the western parts of south Asia and fog over the Indo-Gangetic (IG) plains are the two major climatic features. During summer most of the region comes under the grip of monsoon. Winter precipitation over the north-western parts of South Asia is associated with eastwards propagating 'western disturbances' originating mostly from Mediterranean. Both observations and regional climate-model simulations show that the winter precipitation increases/decreases during the positive/negative phases of the North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) and the warm (cold) phase of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). During these phases, the intensification of western disturbances results from the effect of an enhanced trough visible at sea-level as well as at higher altitudes over central Asia. The inter-annual variability of fog is coupled over IG plains with a significant trend in the fog frequencies, both in observations and ERA-Interim reanalysis data. This increase shows two distinct regime shifts in 1990 and 1998 with respect to mean and variance, this in contrast to a gradual increase of the humidity over the region. Graphics show proposed mechanism for the effect of the warm El-Niño Southern Oscillation phase on the winter precipitation over Central Southwest Asia. [More information, with link to full-text thesis.](#)

Faisal Seed Syed is now working as Assistant Professor at the Department of Meteorology, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology in Islamabad. But he keeps contact with MISU, and during the fall semester 2014, he visited Stockholm and on 27 November gave a seminar entitled "Tropical Atlantic Influence on Pacific Variability and Mean State in the Twentieth Century in Observations and CMIP5".

• Palagummi Sainath launched People's Archive of Rural India



For three years, Indian journalist Palagummi Sainath, well-known for his writings on social problems in rural India, has worked on grand project to launch an Internet based resource data base on the rich diversity inherent in rural India. The web site, entitled "People's Archive

of Rural India" (PARI) is now running. The site is run by The CounterMedia Trust, an informal body funded by membership fees, volunteer work, donations, and direct personal contributions. Public access to PARI is free, and this is made possible because of support from a large network of journalists, professional filmmakers, photographers, researchers, and many others who provide their expertise free of charge.

The online platform has an ambition to show the everyday lives of everyday people in rural India, through audio, video, print and still photos – where the stories, the work, the activity, the histories are narrated, as far as possible, by rural Indians themselves. By tea-pickers amidst the fields. By fishermen out at sea. By women paddy transplanters singing at work or by traditional storytellers. By Khalasi men using centuries-old methods to launch heavy ships to sea without forks and cranes. In short, by everyday people talking about themselves, their labour and their lives. PARI also aims to help create informative and lively educational resources for students, teachers, schools, colleges and universities in India.

The Archive includes a "Photozone" – which is a large collection of photographs, images of rural Indians, mainly at work and labour, but also with portraits of people, families, homes; and a rolling notebook entitled "Musafir", where writers journeying in different parts of rural India can record their experiences. Read more in a January 2013 interview with P. Sainath in *The Hindu*.

Go for the People's Archive of Rural India (PARI).

People's Archive of Rural India

The everyday lives of everyday people



• EASAS invites proposals for European South Asia workshops

The European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) now invites proposals for academic workshops to receive funding from EASAS. The maximum contribution to be provided is Euros 2,500 for each workshop (or Euros 5,000 over two years). The workshop convenors must be EASAS members, and the workshop must involve more than two European Union countries and preferably include some scholars and post-docs based in South Asia. The workshop can be organized either as the basis for the preparation of papers for publication, or as an event to map out and develop new research projects. Transdisciplinarity is encouraged. Proposals can also include comparative discussion of other parts of the world, as long as there is a strong focus on South Asia.

The Call for workshop proposals was decided upon by the EASAS Council at its November 2014 meeting in Vienna ([more information](#)).

It was then decided that EASAS will fund one academic workshop a year. It was also stated that not more than half of the total award can be used for catering, otherwise there are no other restrictions on how the funding can be used.

Proposals should include the following:

1. A title of no more than 15 words.
2. Names and locations of all convenors.
3. A brief description (no more than 500 words) of the academic justification for the workshop.
4. Likely dates and location of the workshop.
5. An estimate of the total number of presentations (including, where possible, the names of likely invitees) and the total number of those likely to attend.
6. A summary budget, with brief details of other funding likely to be applied for or already promised.
7. A brief statement (no more than 200 words) of the likely outcome of the workshop (publication, research proposal, creation of a network etc.)

The selection will be made by the EASAS council. A ranking will be developed and then a selection by majority. The deadline for the submission of proposals is 28 February 2015.



Selection will be concluded by 31 March 2015. All funds for 2015 and 2016 will be allocated in this process, and funds must be spent by the end of the calendar year 2016.

• PhD fellowship for project on Green Revolution and Multinational Companies



Jacobs University Bremen offers a PhD Fellowship for a project entitled *"The Green Revolution and multinational companies, 1960s and 1970s"*. Candidates for this position as Research Associate should

be a qualified PhD Student with an excellent MA in modern/contemporary history or a field closely related to the research project on the Green Revolution and/or the overall research project on the International History of Rural Development since 1950.

The research project is embedded in a larger research project on The International History of Rural Development since 1950 funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and coordinated by Marc Frey (Professor of Contemporary History/History of International Relations, Bundeswehr University Munich) and Corinna R. Unger (Professor of Modern European History, Jacobs University Bremen). [More information about the project.](#)

Jacobs University Bremen is a private, state-recognized, English-language research university, offering Bachelor, Master or PhD programs in Engineering, Natural Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences. The guiding principles are first class research and teaching, international diversity and transdisciplinary cooperation. Jacobs University's goal is to prepare young talents from all around the world to take on the new challenges in today's globalized workplace. Currently, more than 1,300 students from over 100 nations live and study on the residential campus. Application for the PhD fellowship must be received by February 15, 2015, for consideration. [More information.](#)



• Linnaeus University research project on The Pioneer Volunteers in India



Associate Professor Cecilia Jonsson at the Dept of Social Work, Linnaeus University in Växjö, has launched a research project entitled *"Pionjärvolontärerna – en internationell generation i*

en föränderlig tid" (The Pioneer Volunteers – an International Generation in a Changing World), based on interviews with representatives of the Swedish NGO The Swallows, with activities both in South Asia (India and Bangladesh) and Latin America, who worked as volunteers in southern India in the 1960s and 70s.



They were the first generation of volunteers who went to conduct field work with secular solidarity organizations in the so-called third world countries. They were the pioneer volunteers whose biographies, including meetings and clashes in the post-colonial era, are analyzed in relation to their explicit work to break colonial ties. In a reconstruction of these cultural encounters, an opportunity to understand and analyze the development towards, and the interest of, contemporary international aid work is given. The study focuses, in particular, on the impact of gender and socioeconomic background as crucial factors for the development of the field.

The project is supposed to be run till 2017, and is partly carried out within the framework of the Linnaeus University Center for Concurrences and Postcolonial Studies. The study is accompanied by a Facebook page entitled *"Återresan till Tamil Nadu/The Return to Tamil Nadu"*, filled with material by the three volunteers involved in the project – Bodil Karlsson, Anita Andersson, and Björn Therkelson – who after a span of 45 years travel back to Chennai and reflect on how life turned out, for us and for the people there. [Go for the Facebook page.](#)

A book is also supposed to be published during 2015,

Cecilia Jansson defended her doctoral dissertation at Linnaeus University in 2012 with a thesis entitled *"Volontärerna: Internationellt hjälparbete från missionsarbete till volontärresebyråer" (The volunteers: From Missionary Organizations to Volunteer Travel Agencies)*. It deals with the new form of foreign travel called "voluntourism" that has emerged in Sweden. In advertisements that invite to "make a difference", travel agencies promote short-term aid opportunities at for example orphanages or schools in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Using theories of new institutionalism and the analytical phrase "the story about", the thesis investigates the way international aid work originated and evolved, and how commercial volunteer agencies entered the field. The thesis was partly based on historical data from organizational reports, biographies of aid work icons, and interviews with volunteers active during the 1960s and 1970s. [Read the dissertation](#) (in Swedish, but with a summary in English).

• Strong South Asian studies environment at Aarhus University

The Department of Culture and Society (CAS) at Aarhus University in Denmark was founded in 2011. It consists of units from the former Department of Anthropology, Archaeology & Linguistics, the Department of History and Area Studies, the Department of Philosophy and the History of Ideas, the Department

of Languages, Literature & Culture, and the Faculty of Theology. The department forms a strong South Asia environment, running a new Masters programme in Asian Studies, focusing on India and South Asia. It is an 120 ECTS credits interdisciplinary programme on society and culture, offering two tracks.

The first track has a language specialisation – giving students an opportunity to learn Hindi, which is the most common language in South Asia, on an advanced level. From January 2015, Dr. Vivek Kumar Shukla (*photo*) has joined the department to teach Hindi. He is coming from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi. He has a PhD in Hindi Translation, with a thesis about translations of



early modern Hindi poet Kabir. Earlier, he wrote his M.Phil. dissertation on Salman Rushdie's book *Midnight's Children*. The second MA programme track has an international specialisation that aims to give the students an ability to acquire skills to deal with the Indian subcontinent in an increasingly globalised and interconnected world. [More information about the MA programme.](#)



An affiliated unit to the department is the Contemporary India Study Centre Aarhus (CISCA) established in 2009. The aim of CISCA is to advance the study of contemporary Indian society, history and language (Hindi). CISCA has a broad network of universities in India. It is chaired by Dr. Uwe Skoda. Recently, Aarhus University and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) also agreed to support an Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Chair professorship at Aarhus University. The new agreement is based on the experience of a previous agreement on hosting an ICCR Chair at Aarhus University. It was signed in November 2014 by Rector Brian Bech Nielsen and the Ambassador of India to Denmark, Niraj Srivastava, and will remain in force till the end of the academic year 2016-17. [More information about the ICCR professorship.](#)

• Kenneth Nielsen takes over charge for Asianettverket



The Norwegian Network for Asian Studies (*Asianettverket*) – an important source about South Asia related research in Norway – has a new man in charge. After 18 years, Harald Bäckman at the Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM), University of Oslo, has handed over the responsibility to Kenneth Bo Nielsen (*photo*). Kenneth works at the Dept. of Sociology, University of Bergen, but retains his old relation to SUM. At the same time, Asianettverket – existing since 1996 – extends the mode of distribution of news from weekly e-mails to daily updates via Facebook and Twitter. [Go for the Facebook page.](#)



• Genetic evidence that European Romas descend from Dalit community in India

A new genetic study suggests that the European Roma (gypsy) communities are descended from low caste Dalits ("untouchables") who migrated from the Indian sub-continent 1,400 years ago. Romas themselves have long believed they have origins in India, citing common Sanskrit words in their languages and photographs of darker-skinned ancestors in South Asian clothes, while earlier research has offered some scientific support for their suspicions. Now a study led by Indian and Estonian academics, including Dr Toomas Kivisild of Cambridge University, has confirmed their origins in the Indian sub-continent, and even identified the location and social background from which they emerged.

The findings have been welcomed by Britain's Gypsy Council, which said it would help to promote understanding of Roma people throughout Europe. "We are Britain's first Non-Resident Indian community," said council spokesman Joseph Jones.

The study, which was published recently in the journal *Nature*, examined Y chromosomes in DNA samples to compare the genetic signatures of European Roma men with those of thousands of Indians from throughout the sub-continent. Scientists from Hyderabad's Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology collaborated with colleagues in Estonia and Switzerland to compare more than 10,000 samples, including from members of 214 different Indian ethnic groups. They were analysed to match a South Asian Y chromosome type known as "haplogroup H1a1a-M82", which passes down male bloodlines, with samples from Roma men in Europe. [Read more.](#)



• Ghent vacant PhD position to study role of political violence in governance in Bangladesh

The Conflict Research Group (CRG) at Ghent University, Belgium, announces a vacant position as PhD researcher to work on the project: '*Violence, public order and the state in South Asia: Understanding the role of political violence in governance in Bangladesh*'. The project will focus on the analysis of the relation between political violence and governance in one division of the country, using predominantly qualitative and ethnographic research methodologies (although integrated in a mixed methods design). The research will be conducted under supervision by Professor Bert Suykens at CRG. It is a 4-year full-time position with a start contract between 1 February and 1 October 2015. Candidates, who should have a Masters degree, with good grades, in Social Sciences or Humanities, and with relevant fieldwork experience, should apply to vacancy.crg@ugent.be before 25 January 2015. Successful applicants can be called for an interview, either in person or over skype. The submission deadline can be extended if no or too few suitable candidates apply. [Full information about the vacant position.](#)



• Research fellow position for study of Origins of the Indian Labour Diaspora

Crispin Bates, Professor of Modern and Contemporary South Asian History at the School of History, Classics and Archaeology at University of Edinburgh, Scotland; and Andrea Major, Associate Professor at the School of History, University of Leeds, have succeeded in winning funding for a major Research Councils UK project on Indian labour diaspora. A two-year Research Fellow position is now being announced for this project, entitled "*Becoming Coolies: Rethinking*



the Origins of the Indian Labour Diaspora, 1772-1920", the position will be based at University of Leeds. Besides Bates and Major, the project team includes Dr. Marina Carter. Closing date for applications is Sunday 13 January 2015. [Details about application.](#)



The *Becoming Coolies* project seeks to challenge existing assumptions about who 'first wave' Indian migrants were, how much information they had, and why they decided to migrate. It will place the migrants' own incentives, understandings and individual outcomes at the centre of the story in order to critically reassess patterns of Indian migrant labour. The project will look beyond longstanding tropes of victimhood and passivity to re-evaluate the role of subaltern networks and subaltern agency in the process of migration, demonstrating how indentured migrants navigated and (re)negotiated identities that were ascribed to them by colonial observers – as slaves and sepoys, coolies and convicts – and exploited opportunities for social mobility. The project also seeks to show that migrants drew on pre-existing patterns of labour mobility, and on familial and other networks when choosing to migrate, and thus contributed towards the expansion of systems that would inform choices of later, 'second wave' migrants. [More information about the project.](#)

• **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

• **Landskrona folk high school offers field study tours to South Asia**

Albins Folk high school in Landskrona is one of a number of Swedish folk high schools sending students to South Asia. Albins offers a one-year full-time course entitled "*Global change – Sustainable world*". The next course starts in the Fall 2015. Deadline for applications is 1 June 2015.

The course content stands on three pillars: First is how globalization affects us. Second is the three aspects of sustainable development, ecological, social and economic. What are the global challenges for humanity? The third pillar is how can we influence the development working through democratic organizations and NGOs?

During the course two field study tours are made. In the autumn a visit to a *Transition Town*, as it is called, in Great Britain during 1-2 weeks. In the spring a two months tour to India and Bangladesh and meet NGOs working with Human Rights, environment, Fairtrade, Trade Unions in textile and garment industry, women empowerment, child rights, organic farming etc. Most time is spent in Tamil Nadu and Uttharakhand but shorter visits are also made to New Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore and Varanasi.

Albins also offers the course in four other different varieties, among them one specialised on Voluntary work, and one more general India course (one semester only)

Albins Folk high school is run by 26 regional trade-unions in Skåne in the south of Sweden. It offers a non-formal adult educator which mean that students can influence content and methods through democratic participating in the learning process. Students have access to study loans and grants from CSN. [More information.](#)



• **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

• **CROP workshop on Poverty, Water and Development in the South**



The Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP),

based at University of Bergen, Norway, organises a workshop on "*Poverty, Water and Development in the South*" on 3 – 5 June 2015 in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil. It is co-organised

by the Universidade Federal da Integração Latino-Americana (UNILA, Brazil), and the Nile Basin Research Programme (NBRP). Over the last decades, multilateral institutions, development agencies and states have promoted and strengthened a conventional view of the

relationship(s) between poverty, water and development. The fight against poverty is usually undertaken by the mere provision of water to the poor in order to meet their nutritional, cleaning and sanitation needs. Such a restricted approach has proved to be inadequate in preventing the production and reproduction of poverty through generations. Water allocation practices are becoming increasingly inequitable, inefficient and unsustainable. As water is perceived as a scarce natural asset, "More Value per Drop" has become the new credo for the commodification of a natural common good. As a result, water governance institutions are tacitly discriminating against poor households and communities that rely on values that go beyond market rules.

This workshop will focus on, but not be limited to, questions such as:

– How are water and development issues linked to anti-poverty policies and strategies? What are the conceptions of



poverty underpinning pro-poor water policies? Are public investments promoting water justice?
 – What are the processes and mechanisms that make water play a key role in the development of poor communities?
 How do water appropriation, management and use contribute to explaining and/or unravelling asymmetric power distribution, inequities and poverty?
 – How are water-related conflicts and rights addressed at an institutional level, locally and/or nationally?
 – Are energy-related infrastructure investments being designed and implemented without taking into account their impact on water resources and the needs-vulnerable sectors? Are current water policies actually promoting equitable and sustainable development?
 – What is the achievement and relevance of local water policies with respect to the Millennium Development Goals and their successors (SDGs)? [Full information about the workshop.](#)

• **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

• **Delhi conference on Modernity and the formation and transformation of genres**

The Goethe Society of India organises a conference entitled "*Through the looking glass. Modernity and the formation and transformation of genres*" will be held at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi 18-20 February 2015. This international conference will take forward the discussion initiated at the previous conference on the idea and function of genres by focusing specifically on what may be called the genres of modernity. It will explore the emergence and subsequent trajectories of specific genres in the historical context of modernity and the social, cultural, political, economic and technological changes that it involved. Its concern will therefore be less with the so-called natural forms or modes of literary expression and more with the historically contingent symbolic forms that grew out of and sought to capture and articulate the temporal and spatial disorientations of the modern age. This contingency is marked by the fundamental influence of modern technologies – print, photography, film, digital media, as well as the larger technological and societal transformations that they represent. Abstracts should be submitted before 30 December 2014. [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.

• **Sri Lanka Training Programme on Terrestrial/Aquatic Wildlife**

An International Training Programme on Terrestrial/Aquatic Wildlife & Primate Conservation is organised by the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Sri Jayewardenepura in Nugegoda, Sri Lanka, 2-23 August 2015. The purpose is to provide the opportunity to gain an understanding of the biodiversity and to experience the diverse habitats using field excursions, and to provide the participants hands – on experience of practicing ecological sampling technique methods in the field. Deadline for early bird registration is 30 April 2015. [More information.](#)



• **28th Annual Conference of Japanese Association for South Asian Studies**

The Japanese Association for South Asian Studies (JASAS) invites paper and panel proposals for its 28th Annual Conference to be held 26-27 September 2015 at University of Tokyo, Komaba Campus. The proposals from abroad are open to non-members of JASAS. No registration fee is required. Unfortunately, JASAS is not able to offer any financial support or accommodation to the participants. Deadline for submitting proposals is 31 March 2015. [More information.](#)



JASAS was founded in 1988. As a nation-wide academic body, it holds annual sessions and publishes *Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies (JJASAS)* (from 1989) and *International Journal of South Asian Studies*

(IJSAS) (from 2008). JASAS helps maintain scholarly communication among its members, as well as contacts between Japanese researchers and research organizations and their foreign counterparts. Sometimes JASAS organizes also seminars, research projects, etc.

● SAAG 2015 meeting focuses on Leadership and Authority in South Asia

The UK South Asian Anthropologists' Group (SAAG) will hold its 2015 meeting at Cambridge. The theme for the meeting, convened by Anastasia Piliavsky and Nick Evans at Girton College, is "*Leadership and authority in South Asia*". It will be held in early December 2015 (either 4-5 or 11-12, a decision has still to be taken), and focus on the recent wave of elections in South Asia that has left new kinds of leaders and leadership in its wake. Nepal's transition to democracy; the sweeping election of Narendra Modi (*photo*), an outsider to India's political elite, as the country's Prime Minister; mass political protests in Pakistan; and the burgeoning population of South Asia's criminal politicians all raise pressing questions of leadership, authority and legitimacy. Who has authority over whom and why? How do leaders lead and why do followers follow, or not follow? What potencies, entitlements, and responsibilities do authority figures have? What ideas and values legitimise persons and institutions?



The SAAG meetings are a welcoming and intellectually rigorous way for early-career social anthropologists to present their work and have it discussed by more seasoned colleagues. The papers are circulated in advance and get plenty of discussion time in the meetings. The organisers encourage the submission of papers dealing with all aspects of leadership and authority in South Asia and the global South Asian diaspora. Please submit abstracts to Anastasia Piliavsky or Nicholas Evans no later than 30 April 2015.

● 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

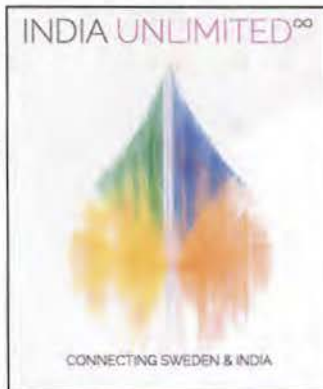
● India Unlimited seminar on Swedish Technologies & Make in India

India Unlimited, the Indo-Swedish initiative launched last year by the Embassy of India in Sweden, now comes alive again for a new season with events dealing with business as well as with culture. First out in the India Unlimited 2015 events list is a seminar on "*Swedish Technologies & Make in India: New Partnership Opportunities*" in Stockholm on Friday 30 January, 14.30-16.30.

The seminar is coorganised by the Sweden-India Business Council (SIBC) and coincides with the biannual meeting of Trade Ministers of India and Sweden to take stock of bilateral trade and investment and discuss future collaborations in various sectors, will be held at Stockholm School of Economics, Sveavägen 65, is free of cost but pre-registration is necessary. [More information about the seminar.](#)

Sweden has long been recognized as a global leader in innovative technologies. India, looking for new technologies that can transform and empower is aspiring to be the next Global Manufacturing hub under its new dynamic political leadership. With advantages of the world's biggest pool of quality human resources and a booming market, new partnership opportunities arise. At the seminar, Indian & Swedish ministers and business leaders will discuss the synergies, opportunities and future potential of technology partnership between the two countries.

Participants include Indian Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, Swedish Minister of Enterprise and Innovation Mr. Mikael Damberg, President of Business Sweden Ms Ylva Berg, Professor Örjan Sjöberg from Stockholm School of Economics, and Ambassador of India Banashri Bose Harrison. Register for the India Unlimited seminar.



● 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

● Interesting Indian films at 38th Gothenburg International Film Festival



The 38th Göteborg International Film Festival (GIFF) will be held from 23 January till 2 February 2015, and it is as usual a grand feast for cineasts, Lars Eklund from SASNET is one of them. Almost 500 films from altogether 89 countries will be screened during the festival period at 24 cinema halls all over Gothenburg. [See the full programme.](#)

Unfortunately, this year South Asian film production outside of India is represented only by a multinational film project by American film maker Diana Whitten, "*Vessel*" with some Pakistan focus. It tells the story of a ship sailing around the world, providing abortions at sea for women with no legal alternative. [More information.](#)

Another international film project, involving India and Pakistan, is the feature film "*Tigers*" (*photo*) made by Bosnian director Danis Tanovic. It focuses on how multinational corporations still aggressively pushing infant formula in poor countries, with the result that parents mix the powder with contaminated water and their children die from diarrhea. This shocking film is based on a true story. [More information.](#)



Four films made by Indian directors are scheduled in the programme. The first is Kanu Behl's debut film "*Titali*", about the lives of two brothers in the teeming metropolis of Delhi. They make a modest living by car-jacking. Kanu Behl casts a wry look at the underbelly of a burgeoning city, and assuredly delves into the strains and stresses facing a family in a rapidly changing society. [More information.](#)

Another debut film is made by Marathi director **Chaitanya Tamhane**. This feature film is entitled "**Tibida**" (The Court), *photo*, and examines the grindingly slow wheels of Indian justice through a simple court case. A poor sewage worker is overcome by toxic fumes and dies. The police decide that it is a case of suicide brought about by the 'inflammatory' songs of a local social activist. [More information](#).

Shonali Bose has directed "**Margarita With a Straw**", a heart-warming coming-of-age feature a teenage girl refuses to let the cerebral palsy that afflicts her, diminish her quality of life. Not only is she beautiful and smart, but she is also clever enough to win a scholarship to New York. There she discovers a world of writers, philosophers, political activism, freedom, and sex. [More information](#).

Avinash Arun has made a Marathi film entitled "**Killa**" (The Fort), about 11-year old Chinu who is forced to leave the bustling city of Pune and accompany his mother on a new assignment to a rural districts on the west coast of India. The desolate beauty of the Konkan coast as well as the lush-green vegetation of its hinterland have been lovingly captured in this coming-of-age feature that is both touching and funny. [More information](#).



Finally, should be mentioned "**The Arms Drop**", a most interesting film by Danish director **Andreas Koefoed** about the dramatic events taking place on a December night in 1995, when four tons of weapons were dropped from an airplane over the state of West Bengal in India. The incident made headlines all over the world and an international investigation kicked off. When Peter Bleach, a charismatic arms dealer, was arrested in India, the evidence quickly pointed to Niels Holck, a Dane, being the mastermind behind the operation. Faced with extradition and marked as a terrorist, Niels now fights to make his version of events known. Through reenacted scenes, archive footage and interviews, this nerve-racking documentary thriller presents the fascinating backstory to an event involving the MIS as well as the Indian intelligence agency and which caused a crisis in Indian-Danish Relations. [More information](#).



Scene from *The Fort*.



Scene from *The Arms Drop*.

• 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

• Challenges highlighted in 2015 Pak Institute for Peace Studies security report

Pakistan Security Report 2014. Report by Pak Institute for Peace Studies, Published by Narratives Books in Islamabad, January 2015. Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) brings out an annual security report at the end of each year, which is widely disseminated in Pakistan and abroad. Pakistan Security Report 2014 includes not only casualty figures in terrorist/militant attacks, but also analyses the perpetrators' tactics and the security forces' response. The report highlights the challenges thrown up by internal insecurity and their implications for Pakistan, and the ways and means to achieve security not just for Pakistan, but also for the wider region. [More information about the report](#).

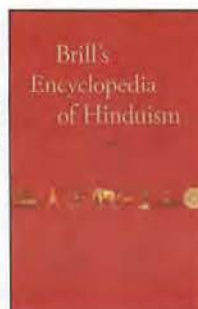
PIPS is an independent think-tank committed to providing an in-depth analysis of regional and global issues relating to peacebuilding. The institute engages in research to understand the ongoing conflicts (such as militancy, religious extremism, radicalisation and national insurgency) with the help of leading academics, scholars and thinkers on these issues in their local, regional and global context with a view to creating knowledge that will foster peacebuilding. PIPS is currently pursuing two comprehensive and multi-layered programmes for peacebuilding: the PIPS De-radicalization Plan and the PIPS Media Interventions to Promote Democratic Values and Conflict Resolution Plan. These programmes are not limited to mere empirical understanding of issues relating to peacebuilding, but to fully implement developed strategies for countering radicalisation and to spread the message of peace.

PIPS also aims to form a South Asian Policymakers Group in collaboration with its South Asian partners. Apart from researches and reports, PIPS is also managing a web journal, South AsiaNet, to cover a range of issues facing Pakistan and South Asia, in particular peace and security. [More information about PIPS](#).



• Sixth volume of Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism now published

Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism. Volume Six. Edited by Knut A. Jacobsen (Editor-in-Chief), University of Bergen, and Helene Basu, University of Münster, Angelika Mallinar, University of Zürich, Vasudha Narayanan, University of Florida (Associate Editors). Covering the entire breadth of the previous five installments, volume VI of Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism is an essential reference guide offering systematized insight into the terminology of this comprehensive work of scholarship. In addition, it presents a dozen articles that are missing from earlier volumes. The rich general index consists of all terms from the past volumes. Each concept term included in the general index is glossed and identified by language (Sanskrit, the Indic vernaculars, Persian, etc.). Moreover, the general index is divided into some two dozen categories, such as divinities, performance traditions, religious traditions, and poets/teachers/saints (the latter two further separated into pre-19th century and modern). With an estimated 25,000 entries, this index volume represents a valuable companion to the main-entry essays and an indispensable resource for all who study the history and structure of Hindu traditions. [More information.](#)



• Swedish departments where research on South Asia is going on

This month there were 1 new department added to SASNET's list:

‡ Department of Economics, Stockholm 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

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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