

# SASNET - Swedish South Asian Studies Network

Lund University

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## SASNET Newsletters

### Newsletter 180 – 28 October 2015

Submitted by [admin](#) on Wed, 2015-10-28 15:37

#### SWEDISH SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES NETWORK

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SASNET currently, 19–20 October 2015, holds its first explorative workshop within its Sweden–South Asia Media Project. It is held in Lund, the focus for this first workshop is on India. It will be followed by a mirror workshop in Delhi in December. The aim is to highlight the future media landscapes in India and Sweden. The two-day workshop in Lund brings up questions related to the following topics: • Working Condition of Journalists; • Political Influence on Media; • Online Ethics; • Gender in Media; and • Innovation in Media. Indian media researchers and journalists present their experiences and outlooks on the future media landscape during panel talks, presentations and seminars. Among the participants should be mentioned Vibodh Parthasarathi, media researcher from the Centre for Culture, Media & Governance, Jamia Millia Islamia University in New Delhi; Professor Anjali Monteiro and Professor K P Jayasankar from Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS) in Mumbai; Dr. Devika Jayakumari from Centre for Development Studies (CDS) in Thiruvananthapuram; and Divya Rajagopal, Financial reporter at Economic Times newspaper in Mumbai.

Hindol Sengupta, Editor-at-Large for Fortune India, being one of the key persons involved in planning for the Sweden-South Asia Media Project from the beginning, took part in a highly interesting panel discussion on What are our Future Challenges for Journalism in Sweden and India? along with Heidi Avellan, Political Editor in Chief at regional newspapers Sydsvenskan and Helsingborgs Dagblad; and in another highly relevant panel discussion, Priyanka Borpujari – independent reporter based in both Mumbai and Guwahati – talked about Journalists' Working Conditions in Sweden and India together with Jonas Nordling, President of the Swedish Union of Journalists (SJF). Read more about the workshop...

See photos from first day on SASNET's Facebook page.

#### • SASNET South Asia Media Project continues with workshop in Delhi

After successfully organizing a first explorative workshop in

## The Sweden-South Asia Media Project

the SASNET South Asia Media Project at Lund University 19–20 October 2015 (read about it), SASNET will now arrange a similar explorative workshop in New Delhi, India on 7–9 December 2015. Venue: "Silver Oak & The Theatre", Habitat World at India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003 (Entry from gate number 3 on Vardhman Marg).

This year's workshops focus on Indian media, but in the future the project will also cover other countries in South Asia. The aim of the workshops is to bring Indian and South Asian media researchers and journalists together to seek new ways of working with future challenges and also to highlight possible projects. The project is coordinated by Andreas Mattsson. Please contact him if you are interested to visit the coming Delhi workshop, by sending an e-mail to the project coordinator [andreas.mattsson@sasnet.lu.se](mailto:andreas.mattsson@sasnet.lu.se)

The preliminary programme for the Delhi workshop is as follows:

#### 7–8 December: THE SOUTH ASIA MEDIA PROJECT

Panel discussions and presentations about journalists' working condition, online ethic, gender in media and innovation in media.

Meet Swedish journalists and media researchers and discuss mutual challenges in the digital context.

#### 9 December: SOCIAL INNOVATION IN A DIGITAL CONTEXT

Panel discussions, lecturers and workshops about how social innovations and technology creates change.

#### 9 December: SOCIAL INNOVATION AWARD

Centre for Work, Technology and Social Change (WTS) in collaboration with SASNET at Lund University will award 100,000 INR to one enterprise or individual from India for their work in social innovation in a digital context (more information). The award will recognise innovators who have created platforms that bring together technology media and human rights.

For more information about the Delhi workshop, see the South Asia Media Project web page.

#### • SASA Travel Grants awarded to three Lund University students

On 21 October 2015, decisions were taken regarding the latest round of the South Asia Student Association (SASA) Travel Grants for Lund University students. For the Spring semester 2016, SASA awarded travel grants to three Lund University students in order to undertake a field study in relation to a thesis in any of the eight South Asian countries. The successful candidates are:

- **Otso Harju**, Masters student in Asian Studies, with an application dealing with female domestic servants employed by middle class, young unmarried metropolitan women in India.
- **Linn Snarsnet**, Masters student from the LUMES programme, with a project proposal on water scarcity in Hiware Bazar in Maharashtra, India.
- **Sanchari De**, PhD student in Communication and Media, regarding a project on the connection on social media and social movements against the backdrop of the Shahbag movement in Bangladesh.

The application round was open during September and early October 2015 for students enrolled at Lund university at fulltime study programmes, preferably including a South Asia focus. The purpose of the travel grants is to give the students the opportunity to visit South Asian countries to carry out their field work and directly engage with local actors to achieve more objective and thorough results. The funding comes from SASNET, that also provides the students assistance with connections and resources needed to complete high quality field work.

#### • SASNET seminar on Politics of Irrigation Reform in India



Professor Peter Mollinga from the Dept. of Development Studies at School of



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Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, holds a SASNET seminar at Lund University on Tuesday 24 November 2015, 14.15-16.00. Prof. Mollinga will speak about "The Politics of Irrigation Reform in India". Venue: Auditorium (nedre salen), LUX building, Helgonavägen 3, Lund.



Peter Mollinga's interests lie in water politics and understanding how different processes characterising neoliberalism (like privatisation, financialisation, re-regulation, corporatisation) play out in the water domain. In addition, he works on how different 'technologies of power' are deployed in these processes (like law, policy and rights; knowledge and ideas; markets and money; technology and landscapes). In his presentation, he will engage in what modes of contestation in everyday politics are and how politics of policy, hydropolitics and global politics of water are connected. The event is a public lecture, but students from two educational programmes, the Development Policy in Practice, and the Bachelors Programme in Development Studies (BIDS), will attend as part of their course work.

• Japanese India Area Studies Institutes want to collaborate with SASNET

On Thursday 22 October 2015, Associate Professor Minoru Mio – Director for the Center for Contemporary India Area Studies at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan – made a courtesy visit to SASNET and Lund University. It was a very special visit, since Dr. Mio came to Sweden and Lund for the first time ever with the sole and specific aim to visit SASNET in Lund and discuss possible Swedish-Japanese

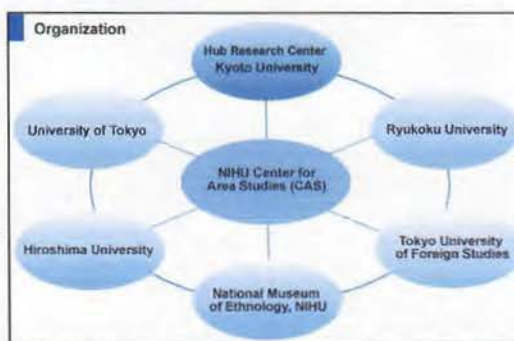


Dr. Minoru Mio together with SASNET staff, from left to right Anna Lindberg, Lars Eklund, Andreas Johansson and Jacco Visser.

collaboration between the India Area Studies institutes in Japan – six in all, under the joint umbrella of the National Institutes for the Humanities of Japan (NIHJ) Program for Advancing Area Studies – and SASNET. It turns out that SASNET is well-known and has a high reputation among Japanese researchers in the field, and Dr. Mio had a mandate from the NIHJ board to present concrete suggestions for building up collaboration, and if feasible sign an MoU with SASNET.

At SASNET, he had discussions with deputy director Lars Eklund and research coordinator Andreas Johansson. Dr. Mio presented the possible collaborative activities that the Japanese Institutes wish to realise. They include the organization of joint South Asia related seminars, especially in the fields of Sustainable Development; Promotion of Inclusive Society and Politics; Consideration on Constructing Peace among Citizens; and Immigrants Network and the (re-)making of "Indian" Culture in and out of India.

Dr. Mio also proposed that an exchange of research staffs and students between Sweden and Japan, and finally that a system to share research resources and data bases should be constructed. He informed that there is quite a large number of Japanese researchers working on South Asia, among them a substantial number of people in the field of Indology. However, since most education and other activities are carried out in Japanese, not much is till now known about this in Europe. The stopover in Lund was the final part of a tour by Dr. Mio to visit a number of leading European South Asia institutes, namely Heidelberg University in Germany, Leiden University in Netherlands, and Edinburgh University in UK/Scotland. With the last one, Edinburgh, collaboration already is running with the Japanese Institutes, and Dr. Mio himself is involved in research collaboration with Professor Crispin Bates. They have jointly produced an edited volume on *Cities in South Asia*, published by Routledge in April 2015 (more information). After a sightseeing of Lund with Lars Eklund, and attending a SASNET seminar, Dr. Mio returned to Copenhagen, and from there back to Japan.



Full SASNET seminars available on Youtube



Talat Bhat is a film maker residing in Lund. He is regularly engaged by SASNET to do recordings of our SASNET seminars at Lund University. We now present links to all seminars being posted on Youtube. They include seminars by Thomas Blom Hansen, Stanford University; Susan Visvanathan, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU); Subrata Mitra, University of Heidelberg; Brent E Huffman, Northwestern University, USA; Doug Miller, University of Northumbria in Newcastle; and many others.



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We also link up to the keynote presentations from SASNET's April 2013 high-profile one-day South Asia Symposium at Lund University, seminars focusing on five countries of the region: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, by Dina Siddiqi, BRAC University, Dhaka; Surinder Jodhka, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi; Michael Hutt, SOAS, University of London; Ayesha Siddiqi, previously Visiting Scholar at Johns Hopkins University; and Jonathan Spencer, University of Edinburgh, plus a final panel discussion with South Asia ambassadors to Sweden (photo). Go for SASNET's recorded seminars, with youtube links.

• **Honorary Hydén award to Jacco Visser at Lund University Development Research Day 2015**

Lund University Development Research Day 2015 was held on Wednesday 14 October. The title for the one-day conference was "From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals". The Development Research Day is an annual event intended to bring together those interested in development issues from a wide variety of disciplines. This year it was hosted by Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS). Venue: LUCSUS, Josephson House, Biskopsgatan 5, Lund.

In the morning, LU researchers and students presented their research in parallel sessions and in the afternoon two internationally renowned researchers – Prof. Joyeeta Gupta from University of Amsterdam, Netherlands; and Dr. Vandana Desai, University of London, UK – held key note speeches on development and the new Sustainable Development Goals set by UN in 2015.



Vandana Desai and Joyeeta Gupta.

The Hydén Award for Best Thesis on Democratisation and Development in the Third World was distributed in the afternoon, and here Jacco Visser – currently working as an Assistant Communications Officer for SASNET – received an honorary acknowledgment (second place). Jacco's winning thesis is entitled "Towards a Mobile Indigeneity? The Case of Indigenous Students from the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Dhaka, Bangladesh". In the thesis, Jacco examines how increased mobility of indigenous student migrants in Dhaka from CHT affects notions of belonging and indigeneity. Read more about the paper here.



Jacco Visser receiving his honorary award by Professor Hydén.

The Hydén Award is granted to mark the best thesis on socio-economic and political issues in low- and middle-income countries, as presented by a Bachelor or Masters level student at Lund University. The first place this year was secured by Laura Heiberg from the BIDS programme, for her thesis exploring the implications of power relations in access to water in a community-based water project in Western Kenya.

The day ended with a panel discussion on "From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals" with Gupta and Desai. Full information.

• **Andreas Johansson discussed area studies with Columbia University representatives**



Research coordinator Andreas Johansson made an official SASNET visit to New York city, USA in late October 2015. He met representatives of the Department of Middle



Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies (MESAAS) at Columbia University, and discussed the possibilities of successfully merging different fields of area studies into one centre, something MESAAS has been able to do. Andreas also had separate meetings with representatives from the Department of Religious Studies at Columbia University, and finally had a meeting at the City University of New York Graduate Center (CUNY), presenting SASNET.

• **Well-attended SASNET seminar on denial of self-determination in Kashmir**



SASNET organised a seminar on "Kashmiris caught in India-Pakistan Conflict: Denial of Self-Determination and Human Rights" on Thursday 8 October 2015. The main speaker was Dr Dibyesh Anand, Associate Professor in International Relations and the Head of the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Westminster in London. See the poster.



Talat Bhat, film maker based in Lund, was the second participant. His documentary film on Kashmir, "Bring him back" was screened (more information about the film). The venue for the event it was held at the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, in its seminar room which was packed with people.



Dibyesh Anand and Talat Bhat.

After the movie the main speaker Dibyesh Anand who is the author of monographs "Geopolitical Exotica: Tibet in



*Western Imagination*", *"Tibet: A Victim of Geopolitics"*, and *"Hindu Nationalism in India and the Politics of Fear"*, talked about his current research on colonial practices by China and India, with special reference to Kashmir. In his presentation he focused on the fact that while Kashmir is known primarily as a site of territorial dispute between India and Pakistan, there are conflicting narratives around the dispute.

The focus was on a Kashmiri narrative and topics related to this such as that a persistent dehumanisation has been the most conspicuous characteristic of the conflict in the region. Practices of dehumanisation allow the existing nation-states to go against the principles of democracy, human rights and self-determination and enable epistemic, cultural, political and corporeal violence on the Kashmiri body politic. Questions that were raised during the seminar were for example: *What are the conflicting narratives about Kashmir? Are they permanently irreconcilable? Is the dehumanisation of Kashmiris by India mainly a product of armed insurgency in the Kashmir valley in the 1990s or is it an integral part of Indian rule over Kashmir? How important is religion as a factor? What forms of dehumanisation and violence have been deployed by the nation-states to control the people?*



The wider context of the geopolitics of the region – including the stated (post)colonial nature of states such as China, India and Pakistan vis-à-vis occupied and oppressed people of Tibet, East Turkestan/Xinjiang, Kashmir and Balochistan – was also a part of the discussion.

The entire seminar was recorded by Talat Bhat, [go for his Youtube video](#).

#### • SASNET seminar on sex selected abortions in India

Dr. Sabu George from the Centre for Development Studies, New Delhi is one of India's leading campaigner against female infanticide. He gave a public SASNET lecture at Lund University on Friday 9 October 2015. The seminar, entitled *"Sex selected abortions and infanticide in India"* focused on sex selected abortions, and it was organised in collaboration with the Lund based NGO The Swallows India Bangladesh. Venue: Dept. of Political Science, room 021, Paradisgatan 5 H (Eden), Lund. The seminar was being recorded by Talat Bhat and is now available on Youtube. [Go for the video](#).

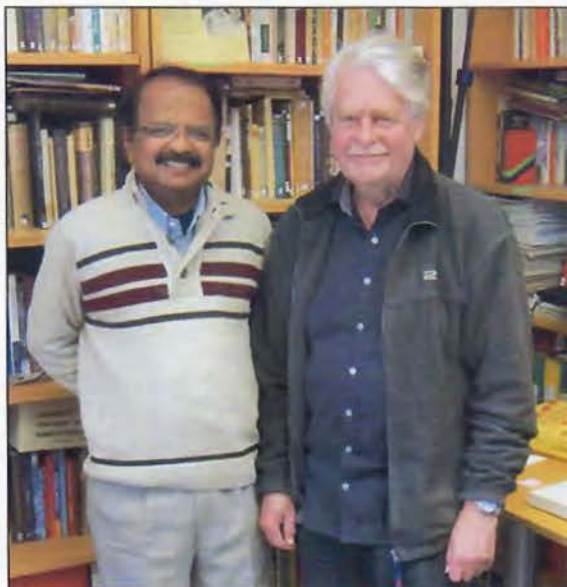


Sabu George talked about his work related to girl child issues such as pre-school child nutrition, female infanticide, girl child neglect, and female foeticide (sex selection). The talk was based on his research on child nutrition which was largely done during 1985 to 1996. Sabu George also talked about female infanticide research in Tamil Nadu, as well as in southern Andhra Pradesh and northern Karnataka. The seminar was based on statistics on sex selection, part of his research in most parts of India up till today. [More information](#).

#### • G K Karanth revisited SASNET and Lund University after three years

G.K. Karanth, Professor of Sociology at the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) in Bangalore made a courtesy visit to SASNET and Lund University in mid-October 2015. Prof. Karanth spends the fall semester 2015 as Visiting Professor through an Erasmus programme at the School of Culture and Society/Department for Indology at Aarhus University in Denmark. There he is involved in teaching at the Master's degree programme in Asian studies that was launched in September 2014. Karanth was previously Visiting ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) Professor at Lund University during the academic year 2011/12, hosted by the Department of Sociology ([more information](#)).

While in Lund, he also had an opportunity to meet several of his colleagues from the department, including Staffan Lindberg, Göran Djurfeldt and others. He also interacted with SASNET director Anna Lindberg, and on Thursday 15th he visited SASNET's office where he met Lars Eklund ([photo](#)).



#### • SASNET seminar on the Social History of Indian Circus



On Thursday 22 October 2015, SASNET organized a seminar in Lund on *"The Social History of Circus in India"*. The speaker is Dr. P. R. Nisha from the Department of History, University of Delhi, India, holding a short term SASNET fellowship during two months at the Department of Human Geography, Lund University. Venue: Room Johannesburg (430), Geocentrum 1, Sölvegatan 10, Lund. [See the poster](#).

In her presentation, Dr. Nisha focused on the







Malabar coast region in North Kerala, an area that has been of interest to social scientists principally for the matrilineal system

and performative arts and martial forms. Malabar has provided the greater part of artists, trainers, managers and entrepreneurs to Indian circuses during the 20th century. As part of her doctoral thesis, 'A History of Circus and Circus Performances in Twentieth Century Kerala', Nisha looked at the various traditions of physical cultures that went into the shaping of circus acrobatics, the recasting of body and its caste and gender structures, new transcultural and transnational spaces that emerged with this itinerant entertainment, technologies of the tent, and the acquisition, taming and training of animals whose past is deeply implicated in the history of hunting, wildlife management and forest policies of the colonial and post-colonial states in India. In short, circus in the sub-continent is embedded with the arrival of the modern and its effects.



#### • Success for SASA/SASNET Fika without borders Bangladesh seminar



The South Asian Student Association (SASA) organised its eighth informal Fika Without Borders South Asia event in collaboration with SASNET on Thursday 22 October 2015 from 17.00-19.00 focusing on Bangladeshi food and music. It was a



grand success. More than 70 people came to attend.

The main presentation for this edition was given by Manpreet Janeja, assistant professor at the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies at the University of Copenhagen. She discussed how food plays a prominent role in variegated trajectories of imagining Bangladesh. Food figures in visual art, music, religious rituals, as well as literary tropes, development discourses, and the political economy of hunger. The talk focused on the aesthetics of normal food in imagining Bangladesh.

Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, it examined the practices of everyday cooking and eating 'normal Bengali meals' in middle-class households in the city of Dhaka that employ cooks from poor classes, also drawn from other parts of Bangladesh. In so doing, it illuminates the dynamic character of the aesthetics of food as integral to forms of belonging and domesticity.

This way the presentation invited the audience to approach the form that a meal acquires as a window on the flux of everyday life in the South Asian city. After the presentation there was delicious Bengali food served - food being prepared by the SASA board members assisted by Bubú Eklund and Jacco Visser.



The programme ended with a music performance by Lund Baul's, a music group interpreting Bangladeshi Baul music (photo below). The event was held at Kårhusets Hörsal, LTH, John Ericssons väg 3, Lund. This semester's SASA/SASNET Fika Without Borders series started with a well attended event on the Maldives on the 1st of October. On the 26th of November 2015 the next edition will take place focusing on Afghanistan.





#### • SASNET seminar on Biofuel Development in India

PhD candidate Shveta Soam from the DBT-IOC Advanced Bioenergy Research Centre in Faridabad, India, held a public SASNET lecture focusing on biofuel development in India on Friday 23 October 2015. Venue: Lecture hall G, Chemical Centre, Sölvegatan 39, entrance B. See [poster](#).

Shveta, basically a botanist and environmentalist, is currently a guest researcher at the [Division of Environmental and Energy Systems Studies, Lund University](#), funded by a SASNET South Asian short-term fellowship ([more information](#)). Her presentation was entitled "*Life Cycle Assessment of Biofuels in India and its Impact on Indian Biofuel Programme*", and took its starting point in the decision by the Government of India in 2009 to mandate a 10 p.c. ethanol blending target across 20 states and four union territories, and its proposal to replace fossil based gasoline and diesel by using 20 p.c. biofuels by 2017.

**Abstract:** India's biofuel programme relies mainly on the ethanol from molasses. Therefore, quantification of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the energy consumed during the process of ethanol production is desirable to help policy makers to take meaningful decisions. Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) is one such tool to assess environmental aspects associated with a product, process or service. LCA concludes that fuel ethanol produced from sugarcane molasses in India reduces GHG emissions between 60-75 p.c. and gives a higher Net energy ratio of 3.4 - 4.5 when compared to gasoline. With increasing demand of ethanol blending in gasoline, concern is rising to produce ethanol from lignocellulosic waste and rice straw is one such biomass that is available surplus in the fields. Usually farmers burn rice straw in the field to make their fields ready for succeeding crop. But, if utilized for Bioenergy production it can give a significant reduction in GHG emissions. We compared four different scenarios of rice straw utilization practices in India i.e. used as: 1. fertilizer, 2. animal fodder 3. electricity and 4. biogas. Efficient utilization of rice straw could reduce the burden on environment by avoiding burning. Electricity production from rice straw is the preferable practice to reduce GHG emissions followed by biogas production, animal fodder and use as fertilizer. [More information about Shveta Soam and her Lund University connection.](#)



#### • SASA/SASNET Fika without borders seminar on Afghanistan

On Thursday 26 November 2015 from 17.00-19.00, the South Asian Student Association (SASA) organises the next edition of its informal Fika Without Borders South Asia series. This month the country in focus is Afghanistan. At the event, organized in collaboration with SASNET, our main speaker is **Anders Fänge**, one of Sweden's foremost experts on Afghanistan. He gives a talk entitled *Afghanistan's Classical Problem - A Functioning State* speaking about Afghanistan's history focusing on the problems which have been faced by different Afghan governments which have tried to build a state.

It is the absence of a functioning state that is one of the main causes that the country has been affected by unrest and war during long periods since the founding of the nation 1747, and it remains so even today. Since 2001, after the collapse of the Taliban regime and the establishment of the Karzai government, Afghanistan has received billions of dollars aimed at assisting the country in military affairs, development and state building, but plans and ambitions have not been fulfilled. The Taliban insurgency is growing stronger, the new government has obvious difficulties in getting its act together, neighbouring states are interfering, and international military and development assistance are waning.





Anders Fänge worked a manager of the [Swedish Committee for Afghanistan](#) and has been a pioneer in developing its projects in agriculture, health care, and education. In addition he has been a driving force behind the functional nationwide school system in Afghanistan today. He has also been engaged in securing education for girls and women. In addition to Afghanistan, he has also worked over the past 30 years in Ethiopia for Save the Children, in Central Asia for the Red Cross, and in Somalia and the West Bank for the UN. He holds an honorary doctorate from Umeå University. Besides, Anders is a member of SASNET's board. After the talk we will serve some Afghani snacks. Venue: Basement International Relations Desk, Lund University, Stora Algatan 4, Lund.

#### • Lund Seminar on Rape Culture and Sexism in Globalizing India

SASA, the South Asian Students Association, in collaboration with SASNET, organizes an informal seminar on "Rape culture and sexism in globalizing India" with Dr. Radhika Krishnan on the 5th of November 2015 at 17.00 at the External Relations Desk at Lund University, Stora Algatan 4, Lund. Dr. Krishnan is currently guest researcher at Linnaeus University in Växjö/Kalmar where she is connected to the [Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies](#). The lecture takes its starting point in the horrific and gruesome gang-rape of a 23 year-old woman in Delhi in December 2012, which was followed by massive protests in different parts of India. She has a PhD from the Centre for Studies in Science Policy at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi. Her doctoral research attempted to explore the trade unionist Shankar Guha Niyogi's varied reflections and interventions under the broad rubrics of environment, development and technology. An electrical engineer by training, Radhika has worked with the Delhi-based Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) for several years. Her research has essentially looked at the interactions between technological regimes, communities and local ecologies. Her research interests also include the new social movements of the 1970s and 1980s, which articulated the complex response of peasants, labourers and adivasis (India's indigenous people) to the 'development' project presented to them. [Full abstract.](#)



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

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

### Research Community News

#### • Five Nordic universities among top 100 according to THE World University Ranking list 2015-16



According to the [Times Higher Education \(THE\) World University Rankings 2015-16](#), five Nordic universities appear among the top 100 in the world. Three of them are Swedish - Karolinska Institutet as No. 28 (strongly upwards by 16 positions compared to last year), Uppsala University (ranked as No. 81, up by 17), and Lund University (ranked as No. 90, up by eight). The other two Nordic universities are Helsinki on position 76 (up by 27), and Copenhagen on position 82 (up by spectacular 58 positions!).



The majority of universities in the top of the list are American or British. The ranking list was published on 30 September 2015. The THE rankings employ 13 separate performance indicators, making them the only global university rankings to examine all the core missions of the modern global university - research, teaching, knowledge transfer and international activity.

Slightly below the top 100 comes University of Oslo as No. 135, Stockholm University as No. 136 (down by 38 positions), and Aarhus University ranked as No. 149.

In South Asia, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bangalore (*photo*) continues to be ranked highest, to be among the positions between 251 and 300. Only one more South Asian university - Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay - is ranked among the top 400, in a position between 351 and 400. Another six IITs - in Delhi, Kharagpur, Chennai, Guwahati, Kanpur and Roorkee, are in positions between 400 and 600, along with Jadavpur University in Kolkata; Panjab University in Lahore; and Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad. Finally, nine South Asian universities are ranked between 600 and 800, including Aligarh, Calcutta, Delhi and Dhaka universities. [See the full THE ranking 2015-16.](#)



Compare this information with another ranking service, [QS World University Rankings 2015/16](#), said to be among the most trusted university rankings available. According to this ranking, Lund University is the premier Swedish university, ranked as No. 70 (down by 10 positions compared to previous year), whereas University of Copenhagen is No. 1 in Scandinavia on position No. 69. Another two Nordic universities appear among the top 100, they are KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm on position 92, and University of Helsinki on No. 96. Uppsala has fallen down to 102 (down by 21 positions), and Aarhus follows on on No. 107.

Regarding South Asia QS agrees upon putting IISc in Bangalore on top, at position No. 157, followed by a number of IITs - Delhi on position 179, up by 56 positions (*photo of IIT Delhi students*), Bombay on No. 202, Madras on No. 254, Kanpur on position No. 271, Kharagpur on position no. 286, and Roorkee on No. 391. The strongest non-Indian South Asian university to qualify to the QS Top 800 ranking continues to be the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Islamabad, Pakistan, ranked to be in a position between 501 and 550 in the world. [Go for the QS World University Rankings 2015-16.](#)



#### • SASNET and Lund University announces award for social innovation project in India

The Centre for Work, Technology and Social Change at Lund University has announced an award in the field of innovation in collaboration with SASNET. The award will be given to one non-profit enterprise or individual from India for eminent work in social innovation in a digital context.

Innovators who have created platforms that bring together technology media and human rights will be recognised. The winner will receive 100 000 Indian rupees. The award will ceremony will be held at SASNET's Media

#Innovationforgood



workshop in New Delhi 7–9 December 2015 (more information).

To be eligible, candidates must prove their innovation venture has been in operation for at least six months, and it should have a strong connection to social innovation and media. Deadline to send applications is 10 November 2015.

[Full information.](#)

#### • Doctoral dissertation on caste and nation-building in Jaffna, Sri Lanka



Bahirathy Jeeweshwara Räsänen defends her doctoral thesis titled *Caste and Nation-building: Constructing Vellalah Identity in Jaffna* at the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, on November 19 2015 at 13.15. Venue: Anedalseminariet, Seminariegatan 1A, room 326, Gothenburg. The dissertation explores the meanings and practices associated with Vellalah identity in the context of the Tamil nationalist project in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. Given that caste is a culturally sensitive identity and practice among Tamils, the thesis



investigates how dominant caste identity was constructed, (re)negotiated and transformed.

This is done via a case study on Vellalah identity by looking at the construction of Vellalah identity historically, as well as in contemporary Jaffna, with a main focus on the years 2004–2007. This study, in a sense, tries to unpack the Sri Lankan conflict with an inside account of the Vellalah Tamils who were one of the major protagonists of the ethno-national war which lasted more than three decades. The Vellalah, being the hegemonic elite and intelligentsia of the region, monopolised the social, cultural, economic and political resources. At a theoretical level, this study discusses the intersections of identity, caste and nationalism. It tries to account for how Vellalah identity is historically constituted, how major elements of caste relate to Vellalah identity, how the LTTE both influenced caste and Vellalah identity, and finally how war impacted caste and Vellalah identity. This study attempts to shed light on how the Vellalah articulations and (re)negotiations of caste identity shifted the Vellalah to always sustain themselves through power and the societal elite. It also discovers that the internalised caste identity is dynamic and durable. Moreover, it exposes that the axis extend from the Vellalah and the oppressed castes always entails a we-and-them perspective. The central argument of this thesis is that while Vellalah identity evolved over time with certain stable markers of its identity and thus of caste identity, during the period of Tamil militancy such markers of caste identity were radically destabilised in the re-articulation of Tamil nationalism. [Full information.](#)

#### • Heinz Werner Wessler to be formally installed as Professor at Uppsala University

On Friday 14 November 2015, Heinz Werner Wessler from the Dept. of Linguistics and Philology at Uppsala University will be formally installed as Professor. He started as a classical Indologist with great interest in religious history associated with epic literature and narrative representations. However, after his PhD he changed focus to the early modern and contemporary literature, primarily in Hindi, and on the social and cultural development as reflected in the literature. Two of his main areas of research has been classical literature in Sikhism, and on Dalit literature in Hindi, i.e. literature written by the socially marginalized populations. Heinz Werner has translated and published many contemporary Hindi authors' works into German.

Another research project deals with epic hymns in Garhwali, a Hindi dialect spoken in the state of Uttarakhand. In addition to this, he has written language policy publications, and been involved in a research group working on a historical grammar and a dictionary of Hindi from 1703.

Heinz Werner defended his doctoral thesis entitled "Zeit und Geschichte im Vishnupurana" (Time and History in the Vishnu Purana) in 1993 at the University of Zurich, Switzerland. He has been affiliated to Uppsala University since 2009, being in charge of the advanced Hindi courses. Previously he was affiliated to the Division of Indology, Institut für Orient- und Asienwissenschaften, University of Bonn, Germany, where he was in charge of both Hindi and Urdu, as well as modern Indian literature, history of Indian religions, and modern Indian history. Besides his academic qualifications, Dr. Wessler has also been working as a free-lance journalist and as General editor of the quarterly German language magazine SÜDASIEN. Most recently, Heinz Werner Wessler received the World Hindi Award during the 10th World Hindi Conference in Bhopal on 12 September 2015. [More information on SASNET's page about the Dept. of Linguistics and Philology at Uppsala University](#)



#### • Thomas Frostberg writes on backlash after former Lund University VC left office

Extract from article by Thomas Frostberg in *Sydsvenskan* 24 October 2015-10-27

"Vägen tillbaka till dåtiden" (The road back to the past)



During the past year, many people have been up in arms against former Lund University Vice Chancellor (VC) *Per Eriksson*. Not only because of his background as Director General of the innovation agency Vinnova, he prioritized the university's so-called third mission of disseminating knowledge and research findings to society in general (Tredje uppgiften). The criticism also touched upon the fact that he combined a top-down decision making with micro-management (detaljstyrning). A serious sin in the tradition-laden academic community where the faculties and its heads, the Deans, consider themselves to be the only true powerbrokers, since they govern the core business of research and education. The university's role, according to this view, can rather be described as varnishes – with minimal influence. The central level should above all do not operate independently, but only act as a support function.

This did not stop Per Eriksson, who rather went for a tough fight after a controversial decision than to waste time on anchoring things time after time.

His method to bypass the Deans' power position was to set aside a special pot in the budget to use according to his own wishes, and this pot expanded far beyond what was expected to be used by the VC. The money went, according to critics, to his pet projects and favourite people in the organization.

This budget pot he used, among other things, to develop the University's innovation promotion efforts, as well as setting up and financing new initiatives.

On 31 December 2014, Per Eriksson mandate as VC was completed. What is happening now is that the pendulum swings back. Everything he touched seems to currently be in danger. Ongoing projects are transferred into the faculties or are closed down, and applications for new projects are withdrawn unless a faculty shows interest to run it. (Translation: Lars Eklund)



#### • Dhammika Herath launches Sri Lanka Journal of Sociology

Peradeniya University Press, in association with the Department of Sociology at Peradeniya University, is launching a refereed biannual interdisciplinary academic journal titled Sri Lanka Journal of Sociology. The journal accepts contributions in the fields of Sociology and Anthropology and particularly welcomes empirical and theoretical contributions focusing on development, poverty, displacement, peace and conflict, reconstruction, religion, indigenous medicine, health, society and governance, social media and related fields. Submission of articles go through the Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Dhammika Herath. [Full information about the journal.](#)



Dhammika Herath is a Senior Lecturer at Peradeniya, but has a strong connection to the School of Global Studies at University of Gothenburg, where he defended his PhD in 2008 with a thesis entitled "Rural Development through Social Capital? An Inquest into the linkages between social capital and development in war-torn villages in Sri Lanka", and he is currently involved in joint research project on "Political Transition and Religious Radicalization in Burma and Sri Lanka" with Associate Professor Camilla Orjuela. [More information.](#)

#### • Call for contributions to the 2016 issues of IIAS Newsletter

The IIAS Newsletter is a free, non-peer reviewed Asian Studies magazine published three times a year by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden the Netherlands. With approximately 17,000 worldwide subscribers, the magazine is an outstanding forum for Asia scholars to share commentary, research essays, book reviews and announcements of events, projects and conferences with colleagues in academia and beyond. The Newsletter favours articles that place research in context and contain a clear argument. Occasionally opinion pieces and articles not directly based on empirical research are published as well. There is now a call open for research essays and opinion pieces for the 2016 issues. [Full information on guidelines and deadlines for submission.](#)



#### • University of Erfurt announces junior professorship position in Anthropology and History of Religion in South Asia

The Max Weber Center for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies at the University of Erfurt, Germany has advertised a Junior professorship (with tenure track) in Anthropology and History of Religion in South Asia. The Junior Professorship is part of the Research Group "Religious individualization in Historical Perspective", which is funded by the German Research Council (DFG). Initially limited to four years the position may be converted into a permanent position. The successful candidate will represent the subject of



Anthropology and Religion in South Asia in research and teaching at the Max-Weber Center. The candidate must have dealt with historical and contemporary forms of religiosity on the Indian subcontinent in research and teaching. In addition, the candidate focuses especially on traditions and practices in the areas of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism or Jainism as well as on relationships among these traditions and of these traditions with forms of Islamic and Christian religiosity. Core requirements are a PhD conferred within the last 5 years, knowledge of at least one Indian language, publication of at least one monograph or articles with corresponding significance. Deadline for applications is 30 November 2015. [Full information.](#)

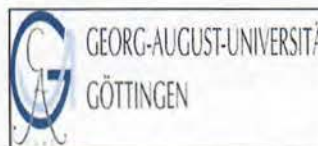
#### • Proposals invited for the CROP Poverty Research Prize 2015

The Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP) Bergen, Norway, in cooperation with Zed Books, seeks original, high-quality, alternative and critical academic manuscripts for the CROP International Studies in Poverty Prize 2015. Particularly works challenging the dominant thinking and knowledge about poverty in our world are welcomed. Innovative proposals are accepted from all disciplines of the Social Sciences and the Humanities in which poverty is the central focus of the monograph. CROP is particularly interested in the themes Poverty and Human Rights, Gender Disparity, Institutional Design, Policy Innovation and Global Justice. The deadline for submissions is 30 November 2015. The winner will receive 50,000 Norwegian Kronor (approximately 6,000 USD) and the manuscript will be published in the CROP International Studies in Poverty series by Zed Books. [Full information.](#)



#### • Göttingen announces Professorship in Development Economics with South Asia focus

The Faculty of Economic Sciences at the Georg-August-University Göttingen in Germany invites applications for a Professorship in Development Economics with a focus on South Asia. Applications are invited from candidates working in any field of economics who have demonstrated regional specialization in South Asia and an interest in empirical research. This includes particularly candidates in development economics but also fields such as microeconomics, public economics, international economics, labour economics or industrial economics related to South Asia.



Candidates must have a PhD in economics and a recognized research reputation including a high level of publications in refereed journals. Responsibilities include developing interdisciplinary research collaborations with the Centre for Modern Indian Studies (CeMIS) and the Research Centre Poverty, Equity, and Growth in Developing and Transition Countries as well as teaching responsibilities. Applicants from abroad are explicitly welcome. Knowledge of German is desirable but not required at the start of an appointment. The deadline for application is Thursday 12 November 2015. [Full information.](#)

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

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

#### Educational News

#### • Swedish Institute announces Study Scholarships for international master students



The [Swedish Institute](#) has now announced its Study Scholarships which are annually awarded to students from selected countries for full-time master's level studies in Sweden starting in the autumn semester 2016. The scholarships are aimed at developing global leaders and is funded by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and offers a unique opportunity for future leaders to develop professionally and academically and to experience Swedish society and culture. The scholarship covers both living costs and tuition fees. This year students from the South Asian countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives can apply. Applicants must have at least two years' work experience and must display outstanding academic qualifications and leadership experience while also showing ambition to make a difference by working with issues which contribute to a just and sustainable development in their country. An estimated total of 300 scholarships will be available. The application period opens with a first application round from 1-15 December 2015, followed by a detailed second application round for successful candidates from the first round on 1-13 February 2016. [Full information.](#)



• **Linnaeus University organizes ambitious faculty trip to New Delhi**

The [Linnaeus University](#) in Växjö and Kalmar organizes a university-wide faculty trip to India on 23-27 November 2015. The participants will be based in New Delhi, and the aim is to raise awareness and interest for collaboration with India among the faculty of Linnaeus University. In addition the visit serves as a possibility for staff members to explore and learn more about the academic culture in higher education and research in India.



The ambitious programme includes a workshop at the [Nordic Centre in India \(NCI\)](#) office in Delhi, where the participants will be introduced to the higher education in India – including structure, policy and governance. Furthermore the delegation will visit a number of universities and also the Swedish Embassy. The group consists of 14 staff members from representing subject areas of business, engineering, media and communication, history, religion and language studies.

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

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

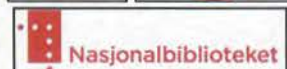
**Seminars and Conferences in Scandinavia**

• **Oslo seminar on violence against Christians in Pakistan**

Paul Rollier, Assistant Professor in South Asian Studies at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland, gives a lecture on 2 November 2015, 14.15- 16.00, at the [Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo](#). The presentation, entitled *Of Blasphemy and Arson: Violence against Christians in Contemporary Pakistan* is part of the Morgensterne lecture series and will focus on the arson attack of Joseph Colony, a Christian enclave in Lahore in 2013. It will provide a detailed account of the events that led a mob of factory workers to destroy the neighborhood on the allegation that a resident had blasphemed against Islam. In doing so, the lecture will illustrate that the recent surge in violence against Pakistan's Christian communities cannot be reduced to Islamic activists. Rather the lecture will point out how blasphemy laws shape social relations between Christian minorities and the rest of the population. More broadly the lecture thus seeks to provide insight in the specificity of anti-Christian violence in Pakistan and on its relationship to communalism and sectarianism in the region. [More information.](#)



• **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 Santhal 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.

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. Full information on the symposium web page.

• **Karolinska Institutet seminar on alcohol consumption in South India to be held in Stockholm**



Dr. Anuradha Rose, Associate Professor of Community Health at Christian Medical College in Vellore (CMC), India, holds a guest lecture at Karolinska Institutet (KI) in Stockholm on Monday 16 November 2015, at 14.00–15.30. Her presentation is entitled "Addressing Alcohol problems: Temptations in the tribes" and focuses on alcohol consumption in South Indian tribal communities. The seminar is of interest to a wide audience with interests in alcohol issues in general, treatment with limited resources, and a public health approach to rapidly changing life styles in low and middle income nations. Dr. Rose clinical work and research is mainly community based and involves primary care and among tribal populations. The seminar is organised by the Centre for Psychiatry Research within the Department of Clinical Neuroscience at Karolinska Institutet. Venue: Widerströmska huset, KI, Tomtebodavägen 18A. Full information about the seminar.

• **Uppsala seminar on Vivekananda and his contested legacy**



Professor Joseph Prabhu, from California State University in Los Angeles, USA, holds a guest lecture at Uppsala University on Wednesday 18 November 2015, 16.15–17.45. He will speak about *Swami Vivekananda and His Contested Legacy*. The seminar is organised by the Department of Linguistics and Philology in correspondence with the Forum for South Asian Studies (FSAS) at the university. Venue: Room 9-2029, Engelska Parken, Thunbergsvägen, Uppsala. In his

presentation, Prof. Prabhu examines how Vivekananda is at once an important and contested figure both in India and the West. On the one hand, he is a proponent of "practical Vedanta" which introduced Hinduism to the Modern West and gave a practical and modern form to an ancient religion. On the other, he is seen by Hindu nationalists as a champion of a militant and at times chauvinistic Hinduism, often intolerant to Islam. Full information.



• **7th SASNET-Fermented Foods international seminar in Gangtok**

The Swedish South Asian Network on Fermented Foods (SASNET-FF) organises its seventh international seminar on Fermented Foods Health Status and Social Wellbeing on 20–21 November 2015. The seminar will be hosted by the Department of Microbiology at the School of Life Sciences, Sikkim University in Gangtok, India. The theme for the 2015 seminar will be "Ethnic Fermented Foods and Beverages: Microbiology and Health Benefits".

SASNET-Fermented Foods was established in November 2003 and is now officially registered as a scientific society in India. It was launched in 2003 by Professor Baboo Nair, Division of Applied Nutrition and Food Chemistry, Lund University, and has helped to strengthen relation among academicians, researchers and food industry professionals. The network is coordinated by Professor J. B. Prajapati, Head of Department of Dairy Microbiology, SMC College of Dairy Science at Anand Agricultural University.

It is basically an association of researchers, professionals, academicians, food industry personnel and all those who are interested in research, development and promotion of fermented foods especially for public health and social well-being. At the present the network has more than 200 members and growing to gather like minded people. The main objectives of the network are to develop a forum for scientists for exchanging information in the field of food fermentation; to promote collaborative research programmes among scientists of Europe and Asian countries and to collaborate with food industries in product development and marketing of fermented foods. More information about the Gangtok seminar.



• **Stockholm conference on Political Participation in Asia**

A conference entitled "Political participation in Asia: Defining and deploying political space" will be held at Stockholm University 22–24 November 2015. It is jointly organised by Dr. Eva Hansson from the Dept. of Political Science; and Dr. Meredith Weiss, University at Albany, State University of New York, USA. This conference aims to deconstruct and disentangle



political space across interactive subnational, national and transnational scales; across categories of individuals and groups, including those with greater or lesser access to decision-making power; and across modes and media, from street protests and rallies, to documentary film and graffiti, to petitions and press conferences. Papers from across disciplines, focused on these and related questions in the context of East, Southeast, and South Asia, will be presented. 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

### • Guadeloupe conference on Indian Languages in Diaspora.

An International conference on "Indian Languages in Diaspora. Strategies of Retention and Modes of Transmission" will be held 29 – 31 October 2015 in the French overseas département of Guadeloupe in the Carribean.



Venue: Mémorial ACTe, Pointe-à-Pitre. The conference committee is chaired by Appasamy Murugaiyan from EPHE-UMR 7528 Mondes iraniens et indiens in Paris.

For more than three decades, the Indian diaspora has been the subject of many discussions and studies among researchers interested in the historical and economic aspects as well as the anthropological, social and political dimensions of migration. However, the presence of Indian languages and their role within these diaspora populations have so far attracted very limited interest than expected. Of all the elements of identity (re)construction, language retention and transmission is the most problematic. Retention and transmission of the diasporic Indian languages may be mapped along a continuum ranging from disappearance or extreme marginalization to recovery, preservation and promotion through socio-cultural organizations or, in the ideal situation, by the State. The conference focuses on the languages of origin (LO) of the Indian diaspora societies, immigrated during the historical period of indenture that is from 1834 to 1920, known as the historical or old diaspora. They are settled in the following countries and areas: Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar, Mauritius, Reunion, Seychelles, South Africa, Fiji, Guyana, Suriname, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Trinidad and Tobago. They belong to the two main linguistic groups of the sub-continent: The Indo-Aryan group: Hindi (Awadhi & Bhojpuri), Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati, Sindhi, Punjabi and Konkani; and the Dravidian group: Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam.

The objective of the Conference is to provide a forum for discussion and interaction among researchers and educators on theoretical language retention and transmission issues in diasporic contexts, enhanced by relevant country-based case studies. Being hosted in Guadeloupe, the conference will pay particular attention to the Indian diaspora people settled in the French overseas departments (DOM): La Réunion, Guadeloupe and Martinique. It is important to highlight that most of them are of South Indian origin and claim Tamil as their language and culture. [More information.](#)

### • Delhi conference on Global Environmental Change in the Himalayas

Heidelberg University organises an international conference on "Global Environmental Change in the Himalayas: Controversies, Impacts, Futures" to be held in New Delhi, India 6–8 November 2015.

A prediction by the IPCC that glaciers would disappear from the Himalayas by 2035 produced considerable public concern, followed by controversy over its accuracy and finally it was shown to be erroneous. This perceived crisis followed in the line of several previous narratives such as "Himalayan environmental degradation". On the one hand, such controversies point to the importance of the Himalayan region in the context of Global environmental change; but they also show how these controversies are exacerbated by insufficient understanding of the Himalayas. To develop such an understanding we require scientific collaboration, research methods that complement each other and an explicit integration of the human dimension in any discussion of environmental change in the South Asian mountain belt. Further, it is important to identify ongoing and potential impacts of these changes in terms of human-environmental interactions, natural hazards, non-equilibrium ecology and socio hydrology. Building on an identification of potential impacts, it is important to examine future scenarios that include a discussion of response pathways and possible adaptation strategies.

The conference will start with a unique exhibition on "repeat terrestrial photography" that identifies changes of glaciers, vegetation, land use and urban development in the Himalayas. This conference aims to bring together scholars, researchers and practitioners from diverse disciplines to share their findings and to intensively exchange on the multifaceted topic.

The conference has received generous financial support from the German House for Research and Innovation (DWIH) in New Delhi. There is no conference fee for confirmed participants. Presentations are invited on themes such as, but not limited to: Historical records of climate change; Remote sensing of environmental change; Direct and indirect impacts of climate change; Human development in the Himalayas; Socio-hydrology; and Changes in the cryosphere. [Full information.](#)



### • Baltimore conference on Human and Physical Environment in Asia

The University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), USA, organises a one-day conference in Asian History/Asian Studies on Saturday 7 November 2015, 09.00–15.00. The theme is "Asia in Context: The Human and Physical Environment", and the conference aims to bring together scholars doing exciting work in "reading" Asia beyond textual sources, exploring bodies, objects, and environments to build a more nuanced understanding of the Asian past and present. In the process, it also presents new approaches and methodologies for the study of Asian history and society. Invited speakers include Preminda Jacob from the Department of Visual Arts at UMBC who will lecture about "The Painted Walls of Chennai. Street Semiotics in an Indian City". Attendance is free, but registration is required. [More information.](#)

### • Islamabad conference on Post-Conflict Rehabilitation

The National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) in Islamabad,





Pakistan hosts an International Conference on Post-Conflict Rehabilitation on 10–11 November 2015, at NUST Center for International Peace and Stability (CIPS). It is organised in collaboration with Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF). The conference will provide an opportunity for policy makers and senior researchers to share their research on the theme. Although the conference keynote presentations will mostly focus on post-conflict situation in Pakistan's regional context, CIPS invites international and national researchers from the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities to present papers that will also include international best practices related to post-conflict rehabilitation strategies, policies and practices.

The one and a half day conference spread over three sessions will separately look at post-conflict rehabilitation and de-radicalization in Pakistan and other regions of the world. Scholars will address the following questions and themes: • The Processes associated with Efficient Post-conflict Rehabilitation Programmes; • Counter-radicalization programmes as a means to promote national security and stability; and • Challenges of Reintegrating communities in the post-conflict areas. [More information.](#)



#### • Durban conference on 155 years of Indian presence in South Africa

An international conference entitled "*Celebrating 155 years of Indians in South Africa: Ethnicity, Race and Citizenship: Place of Indians in the New South Africa*" will be held in Durban, South Africa, 11 – 15 November 2015. It is being organised by the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics at Howard College Campus, University of KwaZulu Natal, Although the focus is on South Africa, the organisers also invite scholars working on Indian diaspora in other countries to offer papers and participate



in the conference proceedings. The participation of scholars beyond South Africa will enable researchers in the field of diaspora studies to reflect on broader theoretical issues in conceptualising the Indian diaspora.

The arrival of Indians since 1860 some as indentured workers and others as independent passengers with an intention to trade has fundamentally changed not only the demographic landscape of South Africa, but also had a deeper impact culturally, socially and religiously. On 16 November 2015 it will be 155 years of their presence in the country. Their experience extends from the colonial history to apartheid and finally culminating in the new South African dispensation. As such, their memories, their social history, their cultural and religious outlook has been shaped by these three key phases of history. In as much as they have shaped the memories of other cultural groups, they have been profoundly affected by their interactions with the rest of the South African population groups. This conference seeks to understand and appreciate as well as to conceptualise their presence in South Africa and also to assess and take stock of their contributions to the South African way of life as a whole, their troubles and anxieties not only of the past but also of the present. The conference aims to bring together researchers and academics to engage in critical discussion on a range of themes and topics that relate to South African Indians. [More information.](#)

#### • Mysore conference on Global Economic Growth and Sustainability: Challenges and Prospects

Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Institute for Management Development (SDMIMD) in Mysore, India, organises an international conference on "*Global Economic Growth and Sustainability: Challenges and Prospects*" on 20–21 November 2015. The organisers invite members from the academia and corporate fraternity to participate in the deliberations by submitting research papers and case studies.



Unprecedented growth has been experienced in most part of the globe during last few decades. However, unfortunately, the fruit of such growth has not improved the quality of life for all. While the poverty has been reduced in some of the emerging economies like India, China and Vietnam, half of the world's population owns less than 1 percent of the wealth. Fifty percent of the world population lives on less than \$2.50 a day. Recent statistics also show that the ratio of people at poverty to wealthy level is 88 to 1, while it increased from 44 to 1 in 1973. More than half of total workforce of 2.6 billion in the developing economies is employed in the "unorganised sector" with unfavourable working conditions. Unemployment, especially of youths, is in the range of 40 to 70 percent. With close to 1 billion people suffering from malnourishment and 820 million chronically hungry, 2.7 billion people living without proper sanitation and clean water, around 125 million children not going to school and around 30 million children dying of preventable diseases in last 10 years before reaching the age of five; do clearly indicate that a large part of the population have been deprived of the opportunities in sharing the fruits of the growth. [More information.](#)

#### • Third International Conference on Languages, Literature and Society in Bangkok

The Third International Conference on Languages, Literature and Society (LLS2016) will be held on 18–19 January 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand. It is jointly organised by Ithaca College, New York, USA; the International Center for



Research & Development, Sri Lanka; JK University, India; and Unique Conferences Canada. Dr. Ramaratnam, Vice Chancellor, JK University, will be the academic chair, whereas Prabhath Patabendi is the conference convener. The event, the largest conference on languages in Asia, includes a chair by Dr. Ramaratnam, as well as a wide variety of panels on a broad range of language related topics such as indigenous languages, semiotics, classical literature contemporary literature, pragmatics, the history of linguistics among many others. The deadline for abstracts is 15 December 2015, for registration the deadline is 30 November. [Full information.](#)

#### • South Asian University conference on the economic development in the region

For the second consecutive year, the Faculty of Economics at South Asian University (SAU) in New Delhi, India, organizes a conference devoted to South Asian Economic Development on February 18-19, 2016. South





Asia, despite growing at impressive rates over the last decade and a half, is still home to the largest concentration of world's poor with abysmal levels of access to basic economic and social infrastructure. In addition, the region remains one of the least integrated in the world. The conference strives to provide a platform for research containing methodological advances, both in economic theory and empirical methods, which would contribute to understandings of South Asian economic development. To this end the organizers invite theoretical and empirical contributions in all areas of relevance to South Asian economies. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 23 November 2015. Full information [about the conference](#).



South Asian University is an international university established by the eight member nations of South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) viz. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It started its operations from the academic year 2010. The university now offers post-graduate and doctoral programmes in various disciplines that include Development Economics, Computer Science, Biotechnology, Mathematics, Sociology, International Relations and Law.

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

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



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

#### • International academic yoga conference to be held in Krakow

The Jagiellonian University Institute for the Study of Religions in Krakow, Poland and the Modern Yoga Research group organize an international academic conference titled *Yoga darśana, yoga sādhana: traditions, transmissions, transformations*. The conference, taking place from 19-21 May



2016, is held in response to recent developments in yoga research at various institutional levels and aims to showcase and advance contemporary research on yoga. Yoga can indicate among other things, a philosophical system, a set of physical, mental or devotional techniques aimed at achieving liberation from cycles of rebirth, union with a deity or ultimate reality while in the contemporary world, yoga also designates a globalized wellness practice, associated with notions of 'spirituality'. The conference will mainly focus on yoga and its textual and performative aspects, drawing attention to the dialectical relationship between the two. In addition, the conference attempts to discuss methodological approaches to yoga through interdisciplinary discussions involving, among others, indologists, scholars of religion, philosophers, philologists and linguists, anthropologists, sociologists and historians. Full information.

#### • Leiden conference on Waste in Asia



The Institute of Area Studies at Leiden University, The Netherlands, organizes an international conference on waste in Asia on 9-11 June 2016. The organizers invite proposals on the broad theme of 'Waste in Asia' from the humanities and social sciences regarding both the present days and the past. Possible topics may include, but need not to be limited to, waste



collection and recycling, food waste and its prevention, packaging, dustbins, and other forms of material culture related to waste, garbage art, digital waste and waste-related literature. Particularly papers on social, political and cultural contexts influencing attitudes, practices and policies related to waste across Asia, as well as their social, political and cultural consequences. The conference is part of activities undertaken within the framework of the Garbage Matters Project. Deadline for the submission of papers is Thursday 10 December 2015. Full information.

#### • Fifth Asian Borderlands conference to be held in Kathmandu



The Asian Borderlands Research Network holds its fifth annual conference at the Social Science Baha Institute in Kathmandu, Nepal on 12-14 December 2016. The conference will be addressing how social scientists are



now recognizing that borderlands generate a dynamism in and of themselves, and that cross-border linkages are far more central to historical change than previously acknowledges. Special emphasis will be placed on borders and cross-border flows of people and objects that have not been highlighted during previous conferences of the network, such as air and maritime borders, high-altitude borderlands, borderlands with a high risk of natural disasters and control over cyberspace, among others. The conference will be organized along three main themes. The first theme is livelihoods and how everyday lives are increasingly subject to state power and/or neglect. The second theme is communities and how new border alignments have considerable impacts on diverse ethnic, religious, and occupational communities. The third theme is flows and seeks to address the flows of people, goods, and ideas across Asian borderlands. The deadline for the submission of panels is 15 January 2016. Full information.

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

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



## Business and Politics

### • Information about South Asia related business and politics in Sweden

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

## South Asia related culture in Scandinavia

### • People's Peace Prize to be awarded to Mahatma Gandhi posthumously



On Saturday 5 December 2015, the Peace Movement (Fredsrörelsen) at Island Orust on the Swedish west coast (50 km north of Gothenburg), will give a posthumous People's Peace Prize in memory of Alfred Nobel's Will to (Mahatma) M K Gandhi. The award will be



handed over to Ms. Radha Bhatt, Chairman of the [Gandhi Peace Foundation](#) in New Delhi, India. The award

ceremony will take place in the evening at 19.00 at Svanviks skola near to fishing village Stocken, but be preceded by a day full of seminars, from 10 AM till 17 PM,

on Gandhi's life and mission. Peace researcher Jørgen Johansen from the Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research in Lund, and Mr S Upadhyay (Jaya), educator and founder of Jagriti Vihara, a development organisation in Indian state of Jharkhand, will lecture on *"The Importance of Gandhi for Today's World"*.

The International Tagore Choir from Lund will perform at the award ceremony, and Indian food will be served.

Inclusive fee for the seminar (with lunch and coffee) and celebration will cost SEK 300. You can already register your interest via email to the organisers behind Fredsrörelsen på Orust, Ola and Erni Friholt, on [ernifriholt@tele2.se](mailto:ernifriholt@tele2.se).

Already two weeks earlier, on Thursday 19 November 2015, at 19.00, Fredsrörelsen på Orust organises another programme on Mahatma Gandhi, at Kulturhuset Kajutan in Henån. The programme is entitled *"Reading of Gandhi"* and features actor and theatre manager Sissela Kyle who will animate speeches and articles about self-reliance and liberation, from the book *"Om ickevård. Tal, artiklar och brev av M K Gandhi, 1906-1948"* (h:ström Text och Kultur publishers, 2014), translated and edited by Erik Carlquist and with contributions also by Sweden-Indian writer Zac O'Yeah and Stellan Vinthagen, Professor of Nonviolence and Resistance Studies at University of Massachusetts. The programme also includes a musical programme by rabindrasangheet singer Bubu Munshi-Eklund from Kolkata/Lund. More information about both events on <http://www.fredsrörelsen-pa-orust.se/aktuellt.php>.

### • Sandviken charity concert with Miss India Sweden 2015 Sanaya Singh



Originally coming from Mumbai in India, Sanaya Singh moved to Gävle in 2008 to study international social work in Sweden. She is now a Lecturer in Social Work at the [Division of Caring Sciences and Psychology, University of Gävle](#), and a member of the SASNET network. In recent years, Sanaya has been strongly involved in promoting Indian culture, music, dance and folklore in Sweden. Trained in Bharata Natyam classical dance, but also conducting Bollywood dance classes and workshops, she performs at various cultural events. Besides, she was recently chosen as *"Miss India Sweden 2015"*. As such, she represented Sweden at the Miss India Worldwide competition that was held at Mumbai on 5 September 2015. More than 40 contestants of Indian origin settled in various countries across the globe between the age of 17 years and 27 years, unmarried and citizens, residents, or born in the country they represent, participated in the Miss India Worldwide pageant ([more information](#)).

On 15 November 2015, at 15.00 Sanaya Singh will be one of the participants in a charity concert in Sandviken, dedicated to underprivileged children in India. The contributions donated will go to [Wings to Hope](#), a Swedish NGO working in Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu. The concert will be held at Musikverket, Kulturcentrum in Sandviken. [More information](#).

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

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

## New and updated items on SASNET web site

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

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

### • Useful travelling information

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

## Best regards

Lars Eklund

Deputy Director



Från: **Lars Eklund** Lars.Eklund@sasnet.lu.se  
Ämne: SASNET News Extra 17 November 2015  
Datum: 17 november 2015 14:55  
Till: Lars Eklund lars.eklund@sasnet.lu.se



# SASNET

## Swedish South Asian Studies Network

### 2015 VR grants to Swedish South Asia related research

In late October and early November 2015, the Swedish Research Council (VR) decided upon project grants within Medicine and Health; Development Research grants; and Humanities. SASNET presents the list of South Asia related projects 2015:

- Professor **Jan Holmgren**, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Institute of Biomedicine at Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg for a project entitled "Development of an Improved, Single-strain, Locally Produced Oral Cholera Vaccine", to be carried out in collaboration with Michael Lebens, Stefan Karlsson, and Manuela Terrinoni.
- Professor **Marle Vahter**, Division of Metals & Health, Institute of Environmental Medicine, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, for a project entitled "Rice, Malnourishment and Toxic Metals – Factors leading to Inhibited Development among Children?"
- Professor **Gunnel Cederlöf**, Division of History of Science, Technology and Environment; School of Architecture and the Built Environment (ABE), KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm for a project entitled "The India–China Corridor" to be carried out in collaboration with Willem van Schendel, Dan Smyer Yu, Mandy Sadan, and Arupiyoti Saikia
- Professor **Ebbe Nordlander**, Division of Chemical Physics, Department of Chemistry, Lund University for a project entitled "New Metal Based Pharmaceutical Candidates for Treatment of Malaria and HIV".
- Professor **Örjan Gustafsson** from the Department of Environmental Science and Analytical Chemistry (ACES), Stockholm University, for a project entitled "Source Determination of Black Carbon (Soot) Aerosols in Bangladesh: Prioritized Short-lived Air Pollutions"
- Professor **Lars Åke Persson**, International Maternal and Child Health, Department of Women's and Children's Health (IMCH), Uppsala University, for a project entitled "Developmental Origins of Health and Disease: Effects of pregnancy nutrition interventions on growth, body composition and timing of puberty", which is a follow-up of the MINIMat trial in rural Bangladesh that was implemented in a setting, where food insecurity and maternal malnutrition still prevail, but where changing lifestyles and economic growth potentially increase the risk for future chronic disease of the offspring, to be carried out in collaboration with Eva-Charlotte Ekström, Katarina Selling and Emma Lindström at IMVH; and Shams Arifeen, Anisur Rahman, and Ashraf Khan at International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) in Dhaka. [Read more detailed descriptions of the 2015 South Asia related VR projects.](#)

### Swedish Research Links grants to twelve South Asia related projects

The twelfth round of the Swedish Research Links grants programme was decided upon on 3 November 2015. Introduced by Sida and the Swedish Research Council in 2002, Swedish Research Links aim to stimulate cooperation between researchers in Sweden and those in selected developing countries. The programme is open to researchers in basic and applied research within all academic disciplines. The programme offers grants for international collaborative research projects of high scientific quality and of mutual relevance for scientists in Sweden and scientists in Asia, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Africa, Latin America and Europe. SASNET presents the list of the 12 South Asia related collaboration project applications that were given grants for the three-years period 2016–18. They are divided as follows: Karolinska Institutet two projects; KTH Royal Institute of Technology one project; Linköping University four projects; Lund University one project; Swedish National Veterinary Institute (SVA) one grant; and Uppsala University three projects. [Go for SASNET's presentation page.](#)

### Doctoral dissertation on caste and nation-building in Jaffna, Sri Lanka

Bahirathy Jeeweshwara Räsänen defends her doctoral thesis titled Caste and Nation-building; Constructing Vellalah Identity in Jaffna at the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, on November 19 2015 at 13.15. Venue: Annedalsseminariet, Seminariegatan 1A, room 326, Gothenburg. The dissertation explores the meanings and practices associated with Vellalah identity in the context of the Tamil nationalist project in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. Given that caste is a culturally sensitive identity and practice among Tamils, the thesis investigates how dominant caste identity was constructed, (re)negotiated and transformed. [Read more...](#)

### SASNET shares office space with Centre for Middle Eastern Studies

Since December 2013, the SASNET office is located at Paradisgatan 5 G in central Lund, in premises belonging to the Dept. of Sociology. However, with more people working at SASNET it has become necessary to provide some more office space. This has now come true with the help of another Lund University unit that SASNET is collaborating with on a frequent basis, namely the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CME). SASNET is now also located in a building named Norlind, located at Biskopsgatan 5 (within three minutes walking distance from the other SASNET office). On Monday 9 November 2015, SASNET director Anna Lindberg moved her office to the refurbished Norlind building, along with research coordinator Andreas Johansson and project leader Andreas Mattsson, whereas deputy director Lars Eklund stays in the Paradisgatan office with assistant communications officer Jacco Visser. [Read more...](#)

### SASNET seminar on Politics of Irrigation Reform in India



Professor Peter Mollinga from the Dept. of Development Studies at School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, holds a SASNET seminar at Lund University on Tuesday 24 November 2015, 14.15–16.00. Prof. Mollinga will speak about "The Politics of Irrigation Reform in India". Venue: Auditorium (nedre salen), LUX building, Helgonavägen 3, Lund. Peter Mollinga's interests lie in water politics and understanding how different processes characterising neoliberalism (like privatisation, financialisation, re-regulation, corporatisation) play out in the water domain. In addition, he works on how different 'technologies of power' are deployed in these processes (like law, policy and rights; knowledge and ideas; markets and money; technology and landscapes). [Read more. http://www.sasnet.lu.se/mollinga](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/mollinga)

## SASA/SASNET Fika without borders seminar on Afghanistan

On Thursday 26 November 2015 from 17.00–19.00, the South Asian Student Association (SASA) organises the next edition of its informal Fika Without Borders South Asia series. This month the country in focus is Afghanistan. At the event, organized in collaboration with SASNET, our main speaker is Anders Fänge, one of Sweden's foremost experts on Afghanistan. He gives a talk entitled Afghanistan's Classical Problem – A Functioning State speaking about Afghanistan's history focusing on the problems which have been faced by different Afghan governments which have tried to build a state. See the poster. [Read more...](#)

## High time to propose papers for 24th European Conference on South Asian Studies in Warsaw

All scholars interested in South Asian studies are reminded that the call for papers for the 24th European Conference on South Asian Studies – ECSAS2016, taking place at the University of Warsaw (Poland) from 27 to 30 July 2016, closes at midnight GMT on Monday 30 November 2015. The biannual conference, organised by the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) is this time hosted by the Faculty of Oriental Studies at University of Warsaw. [Read more...](#)

## Staffan Lindberg lectured on a South Indian Dalit caste at Lund University

Staffan Lindberg, Professor Emeritus at the Department of Sociology at Lund University, and former SASNET Director, held an open lunch seminar on the trajectory of the Madharis, a Dalit caste in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu during half a century, on Tuesday 17 November 2015, 12.00–13.00 at the Department of Sociology in Lund. The seminar was entitled "Back from hell. Marked for ever? Trajectory of a Dalit caste in south India during half a century". In his presentation, Staffan examined how progressive development has taken place between an initial fieldwork project in Tamil Nadu in 1967 compared to the situation at present. [Read more...](#)

## Oslo seminar on the transposition of Buddha images as Local Deities

Salvarpatti Manuvelraj Ponnudurai, currently a PhD candidate at the Department of Visual Studies, School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, gives a presentation at Oslo University entitled "Transposition of Buddha images as Local Deities: An Art Historical Inquiry of Faking and Forging". The seminar will be held on Wednesday 18 November 2015, 14.00-15.30. Venue: Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM), Sognsveien 68, Seminar room 4th floor, Oslo, Norway. [Read more...](#)

## Uppsala seminar on Vivekananda and his contested legacy

Professor Joseph Prabhu, from California State University in Los Angeles, USA, holds a guest lecture at Uppsala University on Wednesday 18 November 2015, 16.15–17.45. He will speak about Swami Vivekananda and His Contested Legacy. The seminar is organised by the Department of Linguistics and Philology in correspondence with the Forum for South Asian Studies (FSAS) at the university. Venue: Room 9-2029, Engelska Parken, Thunbergsvägen, Uppsala. In his presentation, Prof. Prabhu examines how Vivekananda is at once an important and contested figure both in India and the West. [Read more...](#)

## Winnie Bothe lectures in Stockholm on the democratization process in Bhutan

Dr. Winnie Bothe from the Dept. of Political Science at Lund University holds an open guest lecture at Stockholm University on Friday 20 November, 13.00–15.00. She will speak about Democracy in Bhutan. The seminar is organised by the Forum for Asian Studies at Stockholm University. Venue: Södra husen, room D9, Frescati. In her presentation, Dr. Bothe examines how Bhutan, often called the world's youngest democracy, has introduced democracy as a practice and its understandings have entered the country. [Read more...](#)

## Copenhagen seminar on inter-religious love and slum citizenship in India

Associate Professor Atreyee Sen from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Copenhagen holds an open seminar entitled Pyar, paap aur politics (love, sin and politics): Inter-religious love affairs, slum citizenship and community surveillance in two radicalized Indian ghettos on Friday 27 November 2015, 10.00–12.00. Atreyee Sen is an urban anthropologist with a regional focus on South Asia. The seminar is organised by the university's Centre of Global South Asian Studies at the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies. [Read more...](#)



## PhD position in South Asian/Indian Ocean History in Dresden, Germany

The Institute of History at the Dresden University of Technology has announced a PhD position in the field of nineteenth- and twentieth century extra-European history, with a particular focus on South Asian/Indian Ocean history. The position is a fixed term until 31 October 2017. Main responsibilities are the conception and implementation of a research project in the field of extra-European history and the cooperation in developing a research cluster in extra-European history. The closing date for applications is 2 December 2016. [Read more...](#)

## Professorship position in South Asian Anthropology and History of Religion at Erfurt University

The Max Weber Center for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies at the University of Erfurt, Germany has advertised a Junior professorship (with tenure track) in Anthropology and History of Religion in South Asia. The Junior Professorship is part of the Research Group "Religious individualization in Historical Perspective", which is funded by the German Research Council (DFG). Initially limited to four years the position may be converted into a permanent position. The successful candidate will represent the subject of Anthropology and Religion in South Asia in research and teaching at the Max-Weber Center. Applications should be received by 30 November 2015. [Read more...](#)

## Proposals invited for the CROP Poverty Research Prize 2015

The Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP) Bergen, Norway, in cooperation with Zed Books, seeks original, high-quality, alternative and critical academic manuscripts for the CROP International Studies in Poverty Prize 2015. Particularly works challenging the dominant thinking and knowledge about poverty in our world are welcomed. The deadline for submissions is 30 November 2015. [Read more...](#)

Best regards,

**Lars Eklund,**

Deputy Director  
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