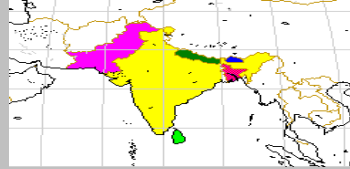


B.A.S.A.S.

British Association for South Asian Studies

BASAS Bulletin



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EDITORIAL

There has been a hiatus in the publication of the *Bulletin*, for various reasons and in view of this it was decided that a new series should be initiated. A fresh start with a new editorial team, we hope, would lead to a more vibrant and interesting publication. Partially indicative of the revitalization of the newsletter, the *Bulletin*, is that it is now available on the World Wide Web see page 3. If you wish to voice an opinion, make a comment, a conference announcement, call for papers, or just write about the state of South Asian studies in your university send in your contributions. Contributions for the next issue must be in by the end of December.

Two recent developments will be of interest to members. The first was that after the European Conference on South Asian Studies at Copenhagen the European Association of South Asian Studies (ESAS) held its first AGM to approve its constitution. Impetus for the formation of this Association, reported in the *Bulletin*, has come from the European Science Foundation. Consequently the push for the establishment for an association has developed as a top down process. The European Science Foundation requires that an elected body should be functioning if it is to be eligible for funding. In the light of this fact the provisional committee decided to proceed rapidly towards constituting itself as a legitimately elected body. The lack of funding, however, has resulted in a compressed timetable for nominations and elections which is unsatisfactory to everyone. The first step in this direction would be that membership fees and nominations for the executive committee to be submitted by the 15th October this year. An invitation to join had been sent to all participants of the Copenhagen conference as well as those who responded to an invitation to join ESAS. These people will be receiving membership forms and fees are 20 ecus (1 ecu = £1.25) for one year and 50 ecus for three years membership. By the beginning of January 1997 elections will take place and a properly constituted association will come into existence. This would lead to its recognition by the European Science Foundation and make the body eligible for funding. There is money available for post-doctoral positions, workshops and in particular for projects that involve collaboration with other area associations. It is important for all members to participate in this exercise as the establishment of a European Association would give South Asian Studies an important platform on the European level which up to now has been missing but has been enjoyed by other area study associations. It would be too optimistic to suggest that such funding would

alleviate the paucity of resources available in Britain for South Asianists but it must be remembered that the sums are not inconsiderable and cannot be ignored. BASAS members who are interested but who are not on the ESAS mailing list should contact the Secretary of ESAS, Professor D.H.A. Kolff, Kern Institute, Leiden University, Post Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands. Tel 00-31-71-527-2939, fax 00-31-71-527-2503, e-mail Kolff@RULLET.LeidenUniv.NL

The other interesting development was the establishment of the Fellowship in South Asian Alternatives (FISSA). A collaborative forum between five institutions from the region with the Centre for Strategic Studies of Colombo acting as the coordinating organization (see advert). This development is to be welcomed, the attempt to develop a regional perspective; on a number of relevant and significant issues that effect and influence the lives of demotic groups, which transcends nation state boundaries is an important collaborative venture. Of course any project that attempts to diffuse inter-state tensions in the sub-continent by encouraging people to people contact and through the dissemination of information and knowledge that has not been filtered through nationalist perspectives is welcome. This is not the only academic venture that attempts to look at the region from a wider perspective, however, the fact that this is based in the sub-continent and it is attempting as a long term strategy to establish a faculty for a South Asian University, to teach courses to students drawn across the region and to engage in research which has relevance, is a novel and ambitious project. It is unclear however, how South Asian scholars outside the sub-continent may participate in this venture. Certainly preliminary discussions have indicated that participation would be welcome but the question remains how this would take place. It maybe that the way forward is through the European Association or that it might be on a purely one-to-one basis with no official understanding between BASAS and FISSA. Comments and opinions about this particular development would be welcomed.

INTERNET RESOURCES FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

To begin with a cliché (how else?): unless you have been living in a cave, you will have seen, heard or read innumerable items concerning the new information technology resource known variously as the Internet, the Information Superhighway, or even the Infobahn. This article will give a basic sketch of the net and explain how three of its aspects - electronic mail, newsgroups and the World Wide Web - can be used for research on South Asia. The article will also recommend a particular electronic mail mailing list for use by BASAS members, list a number of relevant newsgroups, and give the location of the BASAS homepage on the World Wide Web.

Initially the net was created by the United States Defence Department back in the 1970s as a nuke - proof means of electronic communication during a national emergency. The trick was to ensure that no one site in this national network of computers linked by telephone lines was essential to the successful functioning of the network as a whole. To achieve this, all relevant information and data was constantly and freely available to all of the computers linked to ARPANET, as it was known. This open line of communication was soon accessed by scientific institutions who found it a convenient and inexpensive way to share information and transmit data electronically. Academia was not far behind in setting up their own computer networks and then linking these to the larger net. Over the past 25 years, ARPANET has evolved into the Internet, a worldwide net of linked computer networks - still with no centre and thus virtually no means of controlling the flow or content of information.

Accessing the net is straightforward. At the office, the typical academic rings up his or her

institution's computer centre boffins, one of whom will install the relevant software onto his or her office computer and plug it into a telephone socket. A click on the software and voilà, the academic is now free to access the net. At home, the process is almost as simple. Buy a modem, a small box which serves as an interface between your personal computer and the telephone socket. In place of the academic institution, choose a local network provider with which to link to the net, download the appropriate software and away you go. The major difference is the cost. Whereas the institutional link is free to the individual, one will have to pay the local provider a small monthly fee plus the cost of the local telephone [sic] call when accessing the net.

Today, most people access the net via three of its main features: electronic mail, newsgroups and the World Wide Web. Electronic mail, or email, is perhaps the most useful for it allows any user with an email address to send typewritten messages to anyone anywhere in the world also hooked up to the net. Such messages are transmitted inexpensively and virtually instantaneously. Today, most email software applications (such as Mail-it, Simeon or Eudora) also allow users to attach all sorts of files already on their computers to these messages. Thus, whatever can be stored electronically - text files (including whole articles, book chapters, spreadsheets), photographs, sounds and video - can also be sent via email.

One very useful feature of email is the mailing list. This links users interested in a particular topic such as Indian politics, in such a way that a message (complete with any attachment) sent to the email address of the mailing list automatically gets sent to all its subscribers. As the reply or response of any one individual subscriber to such messages also are sent automatically to all subscribers, global conversations easily develop.

Although there are tens of thousands of mailing lists covering all sorts of specialist topics, BASAS recommends that all its members with email subscribe to one in particular; namely, South-Asia-Studies-L. To do this, send an email message to: **majordomo@coombs.anu.edu.au**. In the body of the message, write only: **subscribe South-Asia-Studies-L**. Please then use this mailing list as a means of communicating information about your own research, upcoming conferences and seminars, newly published books, etc. with South Asia researchers worldwide. All information about BASAS activities will be sent to South-Asia-Studies-L.

Newsgroups are similar to email mailing lists in that they allow anyone interested in a specialist topic (and with the relevant software applications such as Trumpet or Netscape 2.0) to send a message to everyone else who chooses to read that particular newsgroup. However, they differ from mailing lists in that there is no need to subscribe to a newsgroup; one simply uses the relevant software to access a group and all the recent messages sent to it. The advantage of newsgroups is their instant accessibility, variety (there are currently tens of thousands), and openness. Unfortunately, these features also serve as disadvantages - because anyone can contribute, everyone does and many newsgroups consist mostly of various rants and feuds. Nonetheless, those interested in South Asia will find that there are currently almost 50 newsgroups which deal with various aspects of the region, including

- **alt.asian.movies**
- **alt.culture.kerala**
- **alt.culture.us.asian-indian**
- **alt.language.urdu poetry**
- **alt.politics.india.progressive**
- **alt.religion.islam**
- **rec.travel.asia**
- **soc.culture.bengali**
- **soc.culture.indian.marathi**

- **soc.culture.sri-lanka**

The World Wide Web (WWW), or web, consists of various sites containing pages of information laid out in a graphic, user - friendly way (and accessible via software applications such as Lynx, Mosaic or Netscape). A site may contain pages that look like the list of contents in a book, the cover of a music CD, a travel brochure, or a painting. A site may provide any kind of information; the text of ones most recent article, a list of the contents of a university library, photos of the work being undertaken by research laboratory, a sample audio track from the latest Oasis CD, or video clips from current MGM films. The most exciting feature about all web pages is their hyperlinks, bits of underlined text or graphics that when clicked on by a mouse lead directly to another site or page. There is no formal structure or protocol for where these links may lead; one just surfs the net from page to page following ones interests. Other ways of finding relevant pages are to consult sites that serve as directories (although with the current number of web pages estimated as well into the tens of millions and increasing all the time no directory can ever be complete) or as search engines (which allow almost instantaneous keyword searches of the very same tens of millions of pages).

BASAS itself now has its own web site, or homepage, located at the address, or URL (universal resource locator), of: <http://basas.homepage.com/> Other sites of interest to researchers in South Asia include:

- AIR - All India Radio - <http://air.kode.net/>
- Alta Vista (Search engine) - <http://www.altavista.digital.com/cgi-bin/query?pg=q&what=web>
- ASARC - The Australia South Asia Research Centre (Australian National University) - <http://coombs.anu.edu.au/Depts/RSPAS/ASARC/ASARC-home.html>
- ASIAWEEK (HongKong) - <http://pathfinder.com/@@KbkgVAcA8ADtm0q3/Asiaweek/>
- Books of South Asian Writers <http://www.webpage.com/hindu/index.html>
- Contemporary South Asia: Books Received (Available to reviewers) - <http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/ses/akcsa.html>
- Daily News (Colombo) - <http://www.lanka.net:80/lakehouse/anclweb/dailynew/select.html>
- Daily Star (Dhaka) - <http://ccwf.cc.utexas.edu/~sbari/>
- Dawn (Karachi) - <http://www.xiber.com/dawn/>
- The Economic Times (Bombay) - <http://www.economictimes.com/>
- HIMAL - <http://www.south-asia.com/himal.html>
- The Hindu (Madras) - <http://www.webpage.com/hindu/index.html>
- Hindusim Today - <http://www.HinduismToday.kauai.hi.us/ashram/htoday.html>
- Indian Express (Bombay) - <http://express.indiaworld.com/open/express/index.html>
- IndiaWorld - <http://www.indiaworld.com/open/index.html>
- INDOlink - <http://www.indolink.com/index.html>
- Journal of South Asian Women Studies - <http://www.shore.net/~india/jsaws/index.htm>
- SAGAR - South Asia Graduate Research Journal (University of Texas) - <http://asnic.utexas.edu/asnic/sagar/sagar.main.html>
- SAUNET - South Asian Womens NET - <http://www.umiacs.umd.edu/users/sawweb/sawnet/index.html>
- South Asian Gopher - gopher://gopher.cc.columbia.edu:71/11/clioplus/scholarly/SouthAsia
- South Asian Diaspora (Library, University of California) - <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/SSEAL/SouthAsia/diaspora.html>
- Sri Lanka Web Server- <http://www.lanka.net/cgi-bin/index2.html>
- Sunday Observer (Colombo) - <http://www.lanka.net:>

80/lakehouse/ancweb/observr/select.html

- trikone (For lesbian, gay and bisexual South Asians) - <http://www.rahul.net/trikone/>
- University of Pennsylvania South Asia Regional Studies - <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/asia/sars.html>
- Yahoo (Comprehensive directory) <http://www.yahoo.com/yahoo/>

NB: URLs must be entered **exactly** for the correct page to be accessed. When typing in URLs, do **not** include the period which may appear at the end of the location. Because web sites and pages are being constantly updated and/or moved, some of the above may longer be operative.

[Apurba Kundu](#) University of Bradford

A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF YOUNG BRITISH HINDUS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR RELIGIOUS TRADITION

This study, currently underway at the newly constituted Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit, is directed by Dr. Robert Jackson with Eleanor Nesbitt as Senior Research Fellow responsible for ethnographic fieldwork. It follows on from our three earlier ethnographic studies of young British Hindus which were reported in our book, *Hindu Children in Britain* (Trentham 1993, ISBN 0 948080 73 6). Our subjects were Gujaratis and Punjabis from backgrounds that differed widely in terms of *jati*, *sampradaya*, socio-economic background and migration history. We examined the children's self-perception, the roles which they learned in the family, their distinctive experience of food and fasting, of festivals, prayer and worship and the significance in their lives of *gurus*, *babas* and religious movements before considering the contribution of the arts and formal teaching to the processes of cultural transmission. The Hindu tradition emerged as changing, but not in decline, and the young people were better described as 'multiply culturally competent' rather than as caught 'between two cultures'.

The present study focuses on some of the same young people, after an interval of six to eight years. It aims to ascertain, by interview, observation and other ethnographic methods how members of a group of young British Hindus perceive their religious tradition and their relationship to it, and to discover in what ways this relationship has changed since they were interviewed previously. We shall also be trying to find out whether these Hindus regard their tradition as affecting only limited areas of their lives or whether it is a total world view.

In all of these respects we shall be keen to note our subjects' level of knowledge, acceptance and participation with regard to caste, family obligations and relationship, dietary imperatives (e.g. vegetarianism), the use of Indian language, beliefs (e.g. regarding *karma* and reincarnation) and ritual activity (*puja*, *vrata*, life cycle rites and festivals).

A further aim is to determine what contribution certain factors have made over the intervening six to eight years to changes and continuities in these young Hindus' perceptions of their tradition. These factors include gender, 'ethnic' background, *jati*, socio-economic background, Hindu institutional influence and events (personal, local, national and sub-continental) during this period. The contribution of education, the media and non-Hindu peers to subjects' perceptions of themselves in relation to their tradition will also be considered.

Besides breaking new ground as the first longitudinal study of young British Hindus, we

anticipate that this research will contribute to religious studies theory on the representation and reproduction of Hindu tradition in different contexts. It will also make a contribution both to the development of an adequate conceptual framework for discussing religious transmission, change and continuity and to methodological discussions on the processes of fieldwork, the analysis and interpretation of data and the writing of ethnographic texts.

Eleanor Nesbitt University of Warwick

SASRF - SOUTH ASIAN SOCIAL RESEARCHERS' FORUM

The South Asian Social Researchers' Forum (SASRF; formerly known as the Asian Social Researchers' Forum) was formed as an independent group in 1994 thanks to an initial grant from the Nuffield Foundation. Its objectives are to (a) promote relevant and effective research with South Asian communities, (b) offer support and provide networking opportunities for South Asian researchers, (c) encourage the exchange of information and dissemination of research findings, and (d) advance the knowledge of methodologies appropriate to research with South Asian communities.

SASRF's first objective was to produce a national directory of people working with South Asians in all areas; including academia, community and health care, local and national politics, and the voluntary sector. Copies of the inaugural 1995/96 directory, including the names of over 80 members and details of their research interests, South Asian language skills, contact addresses and phone numbers, remain available (for a fee of £5.00 inc. p&p) from SASRF at the address below.

SASRF also stages an annual conference and seminars throughout the year. At the most recent seminar in May 1996, Dr. Tariq Modood of the Policy Studies Institute spoke to a large audience at the University of London on 'The Fourth National Survey on Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Insights and Observations'. This was followed by a buffet reception during which audience members were able to approach Dr. Modood informally.

In the future, SASRF plans to publish a newsletter giving details of upcoming events, reports of work-in-progress and other relevant information, and to publish a series of occasional papers.

Membership of SASRF is open to researchers of South Asian origin irrespective of their gender, religion, sexual orientation, and/or other opinions (for a fee of £6.00 waged or £3.00 unwaged). Members are entitled to free and/or reduced admittance fees to events, the newsletter, inclusion in the directory and a free copy of the directory. Other interested individuals (£5.00 waged or £2.00 unwaged) and institutions (£20.00) may join a mailing list which entitles them to reduced admittance to SASRF events, and the newsletter. To join, send a cheque made out to 'SASRF' for the relevant amount to: SASRF, PO Box 8246, London W6 7WE.

Full details of SASRF, including upcoming events and links to sites of potential interest to South Asian researchers, may be found on the World Wide Web at <http://sasrf.homepage.com/> or by contacting SASRF President Nadeem Hai at the Department of Sociology and IS, Humanities Building, Rosamond Street, Off Oxford Road, Manchester M15 6LL, Tel: 0161-247-3009, Email: N.Hai@mmu.ac.uk.

Nadeem Hai Manchester Metropolitan University

THE INDO-BRITISH REVIEW: A JOURNAL OF HISTORY

The Indo-British Review, recently celebrated its Silver Jubilee. Not all Indian journals last so long. It has a very respectable circulation within India, some 900. But, alas, this is not matched outside with only thirty-two subscribers in the UK. Quite probably people are unaware of a radical change in editorial policy and hence my writing again in the newsletter. Although there are still the occasional general issues, the policy now is for thematic issues, edited by guest editors. William Crawley's *A Broadcasting Partnership: India and the BBC 1932-1992*, launched, with a discussion panel, at the Nehru Centre, was a great success. Some 1,250 have been sold and it is being reprinted. More recent thematic issues include Ian Talbot's on *Punjab and Partition* and Douglas Peers' on *The East India Company* and back issues are available. Future issues include Allen Greenberger's and Edith Piness' on *Travellers to India*. If anyone is interested in taking on the role of guest editor, please contact me with a proposal. On the average such issues will need twelve to fifteen contributors. There is a set of directions available for editors.

It should be explained that the journal, whilst it retains its wish to be one which specially addresses the Indo-British story, and in many ways it is a journal which is publishing memoirs and primary source material on this theme, is increasingly focusing on a wider range of themes in modern Indian History.

Costs have been kept low. New subscribers pay a once only membership fee of £15 for the Indo-British Historical Society and a £25 annual subscription, covering four issues in two volumes (thematic issues tend to be long and constitute two issues). Please send cheques made out to the Indo-British Historical Society and send to:

The Business Manager

Indo-British Historical Society

21 Rajaram Mehta Avenue

Madras 600 029

For anyone seriously interested in either being a guest editor or ordering the journal, there are free copies available of a recent issue edited by Rosie Llewelyn-Jones 'To Independence and Beyond'.

Antony Copley Rutherford College, The University, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NX

INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS ON SOUTH ASIA MEET IN COPENHAGEN

The Fourteenth International Conference on South Asian Studies was recently held in August at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. The Conference has been a regular event taking place every two years since the late 1960s and the last one was held in Toulouse, France, in 1994 and the next one scheduled for 1998, will be hosted by the University of Prague in the Czech Republic.

The series remains to date the largest gathering of South Asianists in Europe and has been

quite effective in furthering research and teaching on the region. European academic interest in South Asia itself has been centuries old, even predating British colonization of the sub-continent. However, the establishment of South Asian Diasporic communities in the West, growing commercial and political relations between South Asia and the European Union and a greater mobility between the two regions has enhanced existing academic interest in this region.

Almost every major academic institution in Europe with teaching or research programmes on South Asia were represented at this conference. Delegates from South Asia, North America, Eastern Europe, Russia and the Far East deliberated on diverse themes on South Asian Studies. The Conference proved to be highly successful with a large turn-out and the twenty-one panels covered a wide variety of academic disciplines. It was attended by more than 250 leading academics specializing in the region, with panels covering religious studies, history, sociology, politics, gender, environment, literature, migration, the Diaspora, philology, philosophy, economics and regional conflicts. There were about 20 papers on Muslim South Asia with subjects ranging from Sufism, the Pakistan movement, the Boundary Award, Kashmir dispute, Urdu literature and ethnic conflict.

The first three days of the Conference were devoted to panels, the fourth day was earmarked for business and organizational matters. Following this the participants launched the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS) whose office bearers will be elected early next year.

The organizers of the Copenhagen Conference this year also held receptions and cultural events for the aesthetic and cultural needs of the participants. The conference dinner was addressed amongst others by Pakistan's ambassador to Denmark followed by a welcome speech by his Indian counterpart. The Urdu Service of Radio Denmark brought out a special programme on the proceedings of the Conference as there is a growing Pakistani community in Copenhagen.

Generally, there was a feeling among academics that despite all the wherewithal, the region has been missing out on the new Asian century and efforts are needed to resolve the regional and inter-state conflicts. Meeting in a non-South Asian environment, Indo-Pakistani scholars agreed upon the urgency of deconstructioning the cold war and descalating the arms race so that scarce resources are diverted to the social sector. The panels on economy, sociology, religion and ethnicity focused on these issues and conflicts which has derailed progress towards prosperity and peace. It was generally felt that the official policies did not address the socio-economic needs of these societies. Elites representing the official hierarchies in both India and Pakistan remain heavily biased in favour of the *status-quo* which is leading to massive disillusionment.

Iftikhar H. Malik Bath College of Higher Education

BASAS CONFERENCE 1996

The British Association for South Asian Studies (BASAS) held its annual jamboree over a period of two days in Bradford. The delegates were welcomed by Yunas Samad and Apurba Kundu the conference organizers. Fifty delegates from across Britain and different parts of the world attended the conference; not only from South Asia but from as far away as Australia. There were panels on economic history, politics, media and on the South Asian Diaspora. The quality of the presentations was high and they stimulated articulate debate. There was strong interest in the Diaspora panels which produced vigorous discussion both during and after the presentations. Research on the Diaspora only makes South Asia studies increasingly relevant to a city like Bradford which has a high concentration of ethnic

minorities from the sub-continent. The Conference dinner took place in a renowned local restaurant and delegates sampled exquisite South Asian cuisine.

The AGM was convened on the second day by Lord Desai and regrettably the resignation of Richard Newman, Sheila Smith and Javeed Majid were accepted. Elections took place and new officers were elected to the executive committee.

- Lord (Prof) Meghnad Desai, President (LSE)
- Dr. Yunas Samad, Secretary (Bradford)
- Professor Graham Chapman, Membership Secretary(Lancaster)
- Andrew Robinson, Treasurer, (THES)
- Professor David Arnold (SOAS)
- Dr. Roger Jeffrey (Edinburgh)
- Dr. Avril Powell (SOAS)
- Dr. Richard Newman (Wales)
- Dr. Pat Ellis (Luton)
- Dr. Tazeen Murshid (North London)

[Yunas Samad](#) University Bradford

SOUTH ASIA LIBRARY GROUP (SALG)

SALG's 55th conference was held on 28 June 1996 in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at the University of Cambridge. The Group was welcomed by Mrs Catherine Anson, the librarian of the Faculty Library, after which Professor Gordon Johnson talked about problems of source interpretation in relation to the 'Thugs' in nineteenth century India. The emphasis in the rest of the programme was on developments in the application of computer programmes to specific problems in the field of South Asian literature. Dr. John Smith spoke on 'Texts and machines: coping with the Mahabharata', with special reference to the UNIX system. Dr. Dominik Wujastyk talked on 'Sanskrit manuscripts and the Internet', the emphasis being on how large-scale projects for digitalization can be made to meet the real needs of scholars. A tour of the Faculty library, led by Catherine Anson, concluded the programme.

During the business meeting members heard that the Group's 'Union list of periodicals in Western languages relating to South Asia' is on the point of publication, and that the updating of the 'Directory of South Asian collections in UK libraries' is well under way. A draft version of the Group's survey of teaching and library provision on South Asia in the 'new(er) universities' has been circulated in the 1996 Newsletter. Contributors are asked to correct or amplify their contributions ready for publication next year in the SALG Newsletter, and/or in the BASAS Bulletin. Information on new initiatives in the South Asian field in 'old(er) universities' would also be gladly received.

Dr. Avril Powell SOAS, University of London

PRG MEETS AT BATH COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Punjab Research Group (PRG) held its summer meeting on the campus of the Bath College of Higher Education (BCHE), Newton Park, Bath. Meeting thrice an academic year, the Group has provided an informal platform for ongoing research on the three Punjabs (Indian Punjab, Pakistan Punjab and the Punjabi Diaspora) and South Asia in

general. Faculty members, visiting fellows, artistes, activists and postgraduate students deliberated on scholarly presentations, some of which are subsequently published in *The International Journal of Punjab Studies* or are brought out in the monograph series of the PRG. The meeting on 30 June 1996 at BCHE was attended by 20 participants and heard papers by Gurharpal Singh (De Montfort), Harold Lee (London), Tej Purewal (Manchester) and Gautam Sataypal (Chandigarh). Lively discussions were interspersed with breaks including a lake-side walk. Iftikhar Malik, on behalf of the participants, congratulated Dr. Ian Talbot for bringing out two new studies on the Punjab. His biography of Khizr Hayat was viewed as pioneering work on the last Unionist Chief Minister of British Punjab. Both Drs. Gurharpal Singh and Ian Talbot have also edited a new volume, *Punjabi Identity: Continuity and Change* based on the papers presented at the 13th European Conference of South Asian Studies at Toulouse. Salutations were also offered on the publication of Yunas Samad's *Nation in Turmoil* and a volume edited by Shinder Thandi and Pritam Singh entitled *Globalisation and the Region: Explorations in the Punjabi Identity*. The PRG decided to hold its next termly meeting at Coventry University on Saturday, 26 October 1996.

Iftikhar Malik Bath College of Higher Education

BURTON STEIN 1926-1996

To friends, family, colleagues, students and many others who knew him, whether in person or simply from his work, by correspondence, or just by reputation, it seems incredible that one so vigorous and audacious, so lively, warm and funny, who seemed for so long to defy age and mortality, should suddenly have vanished.

Burt's most lasting monument must of course be his life work, his professional contributions to the continuing development of the social and economic history of India, particularly that of the south, where he did much to stir up debate and enliven countless meetings, conferences and the less formal occasions that took place in pubs and parties. His professional involvement, despite his notional 'retirement', continued almost to his death; he leaves a history of all of India that was approaching completion when his illness forced him to desist. And though his interests and publications were diverse, perhaps the theme that ran most clearly through it all was that of 'community', which he defined, not in the narrow nationalist, class or sectarian sense by which the universal human desire for belonging has been so twisted and perverted, but as a locality where many different kinds of individuals and groups necessarily find common interest in the environment that affects them all.

Burt always felt strongly that he 'was a part of that involuntary, palpitating life', and could not be content only to observe and analyse the past from an almost paradisiacal niche in Hawaii. Among the reasons for his decision to relocate in London had been the possibility of participating in community life in a way that no longer seemed possible in his native country. Settling in the Waterloo area of London, within a short walking distance of outlets for three engrossing passions - the India Office Library, the South Bank Centre for the performing arts, and County Hall, the headquarters of local government -- he plunged into local issues with his usual enthusiasm. Over the course of time, he acquired an expertise in the social welfare system that he used for a decade as a volunteer advice worker. For several years he headed the area's community planning group, whose hard work he saw successfully influence the outcome of a number of public inquiries - often as not to be overturned by the political considerations of central government.

With dismay, he watched the mounting attacks on local government, housing, transportation and education, most of them on the hollow pretext of 'efficiency' or 'choice'. The one institution that always seemed to embody the ideals of quality and equality, to continue to

be valued and hence somehow to function under the unremitting onslaughts of cuts in funding was the National Health Service, of which he was to be a grateful beneficiary both in life and death, although for so long he seemed no more in need of a doctor than of a toupee.

In 1990 he suffered a heart attack and received prompt, sensitive and expert care which would have cost tens of thousands of dollars in the United States - only a fraction of which might have been covered by insurance - and which restored him to even more vigorous health and activity than before. Six years later, during his final illness, he received care and treatment that would have cost hundreds of thousands. There was no imaginable remedy or service that was not lavished on him without stint, despite the hopelessness of his condition and swingeing cuts which, in the name of efficiency, had created desperate shortages of the most basic medical necessities. Although there was, miraculously, always a bed for him when he needed it, simply to change a dressing took several times as long for staff to round up the required bandages and ointments - inefficiency in the name of efficiency. Yet the overworked, underpaid, hard pressed and hard stressed nursing staff continued to pay devoted attention, not only to every need but to every wish - even including writing out postcards to his friends at his dictation when he was no longer able to do so.

Devising an appropriate commemoration for Burt is not an easy task. His colleagues may meet together and discuss the issues and subjects that interested him and to which he contributed. But how can the causes and institutions that he touched and was touched by be in some way recognized, not just with thanks, but with attention to the perils that hang over them, and without papering over and helping to conceal the damage already inflicted? And how can this be done while preserving and making visible the interconnections between the disparate parts of his life and interests?

After considerable thought and consultation with both local activists and professionals, I have determined to establish a memorial fund to be dedicated to the amelioration of the working conditions of the nurses of St. Thomas' Hospital, who cared and continue to care not only for Burt but equally for all their patients, and to do this in the first instance by furnishing and equipping a room for them to take whatever short respites, meals and refreshments their twelve-hour shifts may occasionally but unpredictably permit. Other possibilities may in due course present themselves. To this end, the advances on the royalties of Burt's final book will be dedicated, so that both he and his colleagues and friends who have generously given their time, efforts and knowledge toward its completion will have contributed and added their thanks to my own. In addition, by circulating this notice, not only within the locality and country that was his final home, but among his friends and acquaintances in Asian Studies all over the world, I hope to help publicize the often-denied truth about what an institution devoted to the well-being of all without distinction can mean and be for every kind of community, no matter where located.

If you wish to aid the Burton Stein memorial fund, please send your contribution and/or suggestions and comments to me, **Dorothy Stein**, at 37 Pearman Street, London, SE1 7RB, UK.

CALL FOR PAPERS

POLITICAL PARTIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN ASIA

International Political Science Association, Seoul, August 17-21, 1997

Panel organisers:

- Subrata K. Mitra (*Heidelberg*)
- Kay Lawson (*San Francisco and Paris*)

Political parties have been described as 'creatures of modern and modernising political systems', symbols of 'economic modernity', 'a measure of identification with the nation-state as distinct from parochial groupings' and, most vitally, as intermediaries between state and society in their capacity as agents of articulation and aggregation of political demands. The political processes of Asian states during the period following the second world war provide a vast space in which to undertake a spatio-temporal analysis of many of these theoretical assertions about the origin, growth and demise of political parties and their role in facilitating the interaction of state and society.

Though they are conveniently grouped together in terms of a common geography as 'Asian states', these political systems contain tremendous diversity in terms of size, length and depth of colonial rule, the spread of poverty and affluence, ethnic diversity of the population, models of development based on autocratic planning or integration with the international markets economy, and, finally, the continuity of a state tradition or its discontinuity through colonial intervention, and finally, a historical familiarity with and social acceptance of the political role of the military. Being a pivotal concept for the interplay of political forces, the party system and process are vulnerable to the impact of all these variables.

With political parties and civil society in Asia as its main focus, the panel intends to engage in a discussion of specific case studies as well as comparative analysis across parties and countries. Please send the title of your proposed paper and a brief synopsis to: Professor Subrata K. Mitra, Department of Political Science, South Asia Institute, Im Neuenheimer Feld 330, 69120 Heidelberg, Germany, Fax +49 6221 544591.

EDINBURGH PAPERS IN SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

The following titles are available, priced £2 (including postage and packing):

- NUMBER 1, 1995 John Brockington, *Concepts of the Self in the Ramayana Tradition* ISBN: 1 900 975 00 0
- NUMBER 2, 1995 Jonathan Spencer, *Learning from the Particular: Intellectuals and 'Ordinary People' in Situations of Ethnic Conflict* ISBN: 1 900 975 01 9
- NUMBER 3, 1995 Crispin Bates, *Race, Caste and Tribe in central India: The Early Origins of Indian Anthropometry* ISBN: 1 900 795 02 7
- NUMBER 4, 1996 Caroline Dyer, *The Improvement of Primary School Quality in India: Successes and Failures of 'Operation Blackboard'* ISBN: 1 900 795 03 5
- NUMBER 5, 1996 Claire Anderson, *The Genealogy of the Modern Subject: Indian Convicts in Mauritius, 1814-53* ISBN: 1 900 795 04 3
- NUMBER 6, 1996 Anthony Good, *On the non-existence of 'Dravidian Kinship'* ISBN: 1 900 795 05 1

For further details about this series, or the Centre itself, please contact The Convenor, Centre for South Asian Studies, c/o Department of Sanskrit, The University of Edinburgh, 7 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9LW, Telephone: (0) 131-650-4182 or 650-3976 Fax: (0)131-650-3989 E-mail: South.Asian@ed.ac.uk

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT TO USERS

ORIENTAL AND INDIA OFFICE COLLECTIONS, THE BRITISH LIBRARY

ARE ON THE MOVE

Please take particular note if applying for sabbatical leave or research grants to travel to use OIOC in 1998 or 1999

The Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library, will be moving from Orbit House, 197 Blackfriars Road, to the new British Library building at St Pancras, Euston Road, London NW1.

THE MOVE OF THE OIOC COLLECTIONS IS EXPECTED TO TAKE PLACE OVER A 9 MONTH PERIOD BETWEEN SPRING 1998 AND SPRING 1999

- The Reading Room at Orbit House will remain open until the start of the move, but with some material being unavailable during the last 3 months
- There will be no Reading Room service from OIOC collections for a period of 4 months from shortly after the start of the move
- The new Oriental and India Office Reading Room in the St Pancras building will open at the end of this closed period, but some material may still not be available to begin with
- Full services from all parts of the collections will be resumed within 5 months of the opening of the new Reading Room
- Delays in answering enquiries - letter, fax or e-mail, can be expected throughout this period
- The processing of reprographic/photographic orders will also be delayed throughout this period

NB More precise dates regarding Reading Room closure and unavailability of collections will be given wide circulation as soon as available. Requests for current information should be addressed to Move Information, Oriental and India Office Collections, British Library, 197 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NG (tel: 0171 412 7811; fax 0171 412 7641; e-mail oioc-move@bl.uk). The British Library apologises for any inconvenience this disruption may cause but we look forward to serving you in our new location.

Are you a SOUTH ASIAN Scholar?

Do you feel that you have to shed country-centric thinking, transcend borders and initiate dialogue on a number of issues that increasingly need to be addressed on a regional basis?

As a scholar, trying to develop a 'regional' perspective on live issues, do you feel enormous difficulty in gaining access to peers who are pursuing research on a 'local' level? Do you fear intellectual isolation?

Announcing, the formation of **FELLOWSHIP IN SOUTH ASIAN ALTERNATIVES**

(FISAA)

FISSA is a collaboration of a group of networking institutions from the countries of the region. It is implementing a one-year pilot programme where scholars from the non-governmental sector will get together in joint intellectual exercises designed to break the intellectual barriers that separate South Asian societies..

FISSA envisions creating a pool of scholars from which the faculty of a proposed South Asian University could be drawn in future. Able to create and teach courses to students from across the region, the faculty will initially engage in research on issues that affect the region, such as:

- *Nuclear Disarmament Water Management*
- *Ethnicity and Violence Culture and Society*
- *Trade and Economics Resource Management*
- *Women Trafficking/AIDS Drug Abuse*

FISSA is an ambitious programme which hopes to grow as a link between the intellectual communities of South Asia, across borders and disciplines. To succeed, FISSA requires the input and participation of the intelligentsia from all over South Asia and overseas. This is not an announcement requesting fellowship applications. We are, at this time, inviting comments and queries from young South Asian scholars, who can write to any of the following individuals.

- **Bangladesh** : Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, BASGAT, 1/203 Easter Place, 21 Siddheswari Lane, Dhaka-1217
- **India** : Dr Ashis Nandy, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, 29 Rajpur Road, New Delhi
- **Nepal** : Mr Ajaya Mani Dixit, Nepal Water Conservation Foundation, GPO Box 2221, Kathmandu
- **Pakistan** : Dr Zia Mian, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, PO Box 2342
- **Sri Lanka** : Dr Iftekhar Zaman, Regional Centre for strategic Studies, 4-101 BMICH, Baudhaloka Mawatha, Colombo-7

KODIKARA AWARDS FOR SOUTH ASIAN STRATEGIC STUDIES1996-97

Regional Centre for Strategic Studies

Colombo, Sri Lanka

MAIN OBJECTIVES:

: Encourage and sponsor research on South Asian strategic and security related issues by scholars within and beyond the region;

: Promote interaction among South Asian and other scholars and experts on South Asia; and

: Foster linkages between centres and institutions within and outside South Asia devoted to studies on strategic, disarmament and security issues.

The primary objective is to address the main areas of research interest of the Centre by sponsoring specific studies. It intends to encourage rigorous research particularly targeted to younger generation of scholars who can bring into focus fresh perspectives and new ideas.

ELIGIBILITY, SELECTION AND DURATION

Age limit up to 35 years are eligible for grants which will be tenable for 4-6 months. Women candidates are particularly encouraged to apply. The programme is mainly targeted to South Asian nationals based in this region, but applicants of South Asian origin residing elsewhere are also invited to apply. Selection will be made on the basis of: a) academic record and research competence; b) merit of the proposal to be submitted; and c) report of two academic referees.

STIPEND AND ALLOWANCES

Each grantee will receive a total stipend of up to \$2,000.00 to be paid over a period of up to 6 months.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications and reference letters must reach RCSS no later than 30 April every year.

FURTHER INFORMATION can be obtained from Executive Director, Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, 4-101 BMICH, Baudhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka. Tel: (941) 688601-2, Fax: 688602, e-mail: postmast@rcss.ac.lk

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CENTRE OF SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

School of Oriental and African Studies

Workshop on 'A Comparative Study of the South Asian Diaspora Religious Experience in Britain, Canada, and USA', **4, 5 and 6 November 1996**. Convenor: Professor John R Hinnells

Annual Lecture: 'Islamic policies of the Western colonial powers: their relevance in the European Union in the post-colonial era'. Speaker: Professor Dr P S van Koningsveld (Rijks Universiteit, Leiden), **6 November 1996, 6pm Lecture Theatre, SOAS**

INSTITUTE OF COMMONWEALTH STUDIES

28 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DS

Enquiries: Seminar and Conference Secretary

Telephone: 0171 580 5876 Fax: 0171 255 2160

Workshop on 'Political Corruption in South Asia', **Friday 29 November 1996 (provisional date)**, Organisers: Dr Gurharpal Singh (De Montfort) and Professor James Major (ICS).

Conference on 'Bangladesh 1971-1996: past, present and future', **16-18 December 1996**. Organisers: Professor James Manor (ICS) Drs Mahmud Ali (BBC World Service), Tazeen Murshid (North London) and Willem van der Geest (QEH, Oxford).

Institute of Commonwealth Studies

Gender in Empire and Commonwealth, Postgraduate Seminar, Thursdays 5 p.m.

Organiser: Dr Deborah Gaitskell, SOAS. Telephone: 0171 323 6047

10 October '*Quaker Embassy: the work of women missionaries in Bhopal state, India, 1901-1930*', Siobhan Hurley (SOAS)

University of Cambridge

South Asian Seminar, 5.15 p.m. Wednesdays in the Director's Room, Centre of South Asian Studies, Laundress Lane, Cambridge CB2 1SD. Telephone: 01223 338 094, Fax: 01223 316913. Details from the Convenor, Dr Lionel Carter

School of Oriental and African Studies

Centre of South Asian Studies Seminar, 5 p.m. Room G58, Alternate Tuesdays with the exception of 5 November, Enquiries: 0171 323 6353 (direct line)

22 October *Contemporary lives in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh: a photographic essay*. Michael A. Tarr (University of California, Berkeley)

6 November **Centre of South Asian Studies Annual Lecture, 6 p.m. Wednesday in the Lecture Theatre** *Islamic policies of the Western colonial powers: their relevance in the European Union in the post-colonial era*, Professor Dr. P.S. van Koningsveld (Rijks Universiteit, Leiden)

19 November *Bengal merchants and the English East India Company 1750-1800* (Provisional title), Shubra Chakrabarti (University of Delhi)

3 December *Making early Tamil cinema musical*, Steven Hughes (University of Chicago)

Department of History

South Asian History Seminar (primarily for staff, graduate students and visiting scholars). Enquiries: History Departmental Office (direct line) 0171 323 6146, Fax 0171 323 6046, **Tuesdays 5 p.m. Room G58**

15 October *The colonial state and the Indian Communists. Why was there no revolution?*,

Bhagwan S Josh (Jawaharlal Nehru University)

29 October *Composite culture and the cultural faultline: "Hindus" and Muslims in pre-colonial India*, Shashi Josh (Nehru Memorial Museum and Library)

5 November **5.15 p.m.** *Sagas of victory; theories of defeat: towards non-sectarian histories of sectarian strife in India*, Shahid Amin (University of Dehli)

12 November *The historical novel in Hindi: Vrindavanlal Varma's Hjansi ki Rani*, Francesca Orsini (SOAS, University of Cambridge)

26 November *Railways and the making of modern India*, Ian Kerr (University of Manitoba)

10 December *The king is dead, long live the king! or Karmic kin(g)ship in Kota* (illustrated), Norbert Peabody (University of Cambridge)

University of Oxford

South Asian History Seminar, Tuesdays 2.15 p.m. Small Dining Room, 1st Floor, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St Giles, Oxford. Convenor: Dr David Washbrook, Centre for Indian Studies, St Antony's College, Oxford, OX2 6JF. Telephone/Fax: 01865 274559

15 October *Feeding grass to lions: the Khudai Khidmatgar and Akali Movements compared*, Mukulika Banerjee (Wolfson College and University College, London)

22 October *Orality, print and the novel in 19th century Tamil*, Stuart Blackburn (SOAS)

29 October *Treasures of the earth: attitudes to European mining in India, circa 1770-1850*, Andrew Grout (SOAS)

5 November *Between three worlds: perspectives on the Pakistani worldview*, Mohammad Waseem (Quaid-i-Azam Fellow, St Antony's College)

12 November *Courtly fashioning in medieval India*, Daud Ali (SOAS)

19 November *Nationalism and its doubles*, Robert Young (Wadham College)

26 November *Popular politics in Bombay city, 1890-1920*, Prashant Kidambi (Wadham College)

3 December *In search of Vanaratna (1384-1468): the life of 'The Last Pandit' according to newly discovered Tibetan sources*, Michael Aris (St Antony's College)

Queen Elizabeth House

Seminar in Contemporary South Asia, 2 p.m. Thursdays, Blackhall Seminar Room, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LA. For further information contact Dr Naandini Gooptu, QEH, email: NGOOPTU@VAX.OX.AC.UK.

17 October *Dominant Daughters-in-Law and Submissive Mothers-in-Law? Urban Inversions in South India* Penny Vera-Sanso University of Kent at Canterbury

24 October The Muslim Community and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka *Meghan O'Sullivan*
Brasenose College, Oxford

31 October Land Market Transactions in Rural India: Theory and Evidence *Kailas Sarap*
University of Sambalpur and Visiting Fellow, QEH

7 November Agrarian Relations, the Role of the State and the Process of Urbanisation: A
case study of Thanjavur district, India, 1901-1991 *R. Rukmani* Madras Institute of
Development Studies and Visiting Fellow, QEH

14 November **NB Venue: Library Wing, Seminar Room*** Engendering Institutional
Communalism: Gender, Community and the Local State in rural Bijnor *Patricia Jeffery*
Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Edinburgh

21 November Urban Poverty in Pakistan *Jo Beall* London School of Economics

28 November Filth and the 'Public Sphere': Concepts and Practices of Space in Calcutta
Sudipta Kaviraj School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

5 December Access to Environmental Justice: A Case Study of Karachi *Martin Lau* School
of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

Evening Seminar on South Asia

NB: This term we are combining some of the seminars in this series with a programme of
films on women in Asia organised by the Asian Studies Centre of St Antony's College. The
day and time remain unchanged: **Mondays, 8 p.m.** The films will be screened at the **Nissan
Lecture Theatre at St Antony's on Weeks 2 and 5.** The seminar will, as usual, be held at
the **New Room, Hilda Besse Building, St Antony's, on Week 8.**

Week 2 21 October Screening of *Bhaji on the Beach* - feature film on South Asian women
in Britain. The director, Gurinder Chaddha, will introduce the film.

Week 5 11 November Screening of *Father, son and holy war* - documentary film by Anand
Patwardhan on gender, patriarchy and religious violence in India. Nandini Gooptu of St
Antony's will introduce the film.

Week 8 2 December *Ms Criana Connal*, Linacre College. 'The Bandit Queen, Kali and
Phoolan Devi' (Venue: New Room, St Antony's).

BASAS Bulletin Editorial team: [Yunas Samad](#), Department of Social and Economic
Studies, University of Bradford, Bradford, BD7 1DP, Tel 01274 384804, Fax: 01274
385295, e.mail: a.y.samad@bradford.ac.uk.

Avril Powell, Department of History, SOAS, London University, Russell Square,
Thornhaugh Street, London, WC1 OXG, Tel 0171 323 6256, e.mail: AP5@SOAS.ac.uk

BASAS Bulletin Webmaster: [Apurba Kundu](#) Email: a.kundu@bradford.ac.uk

***NB: Contributions have to be received before the end of December for inclusion in the
January issue.***

BASAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1997

APRIL 11-13: BATH COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

THEME: REFLECTIONS ON INDEPENDENCE AND PARTITION

KEYNOTE ADDRESS SPEAKER: DR DAVID WASHBROOK

THERE WILL ALSO BE OPEN STREAMS.

THOSE WISHING TO ORGANISE PANELS OR GIVE PAPERS SHOULD CONTACT:

- **Dr Yunas Samad** University of Bradford Tel: 01274-384804 Fax: 01274-385295
Email a.y.samad@bradford.ac.uk
- **Dr Pat Ellis** University of Luton Tel: 01582-456843 Fax: 01582-459789
- **Dr Iftikhar Malik** Bath College of Higher Education Tel: 01225-873701 ext 244
Fax: 01225-872912 Email: i.malik@bAthhe.ac.uk

BASAS Information Provider/Webmaster: Apurba Kundu. Email: a.kundu@bradford.ac.uk

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