

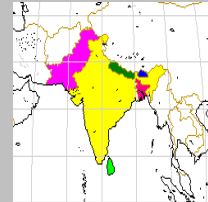
# B.A.S.A.S.

British Association for South Asian Studies

## **BASAS Bulletin**

BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

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### **What is BASAS for?**

At the AGM held at the London School of Economics in September, your new Executive Committee was elected for the coming year. The first meeting of the new Executive will be held in Manchester on Tuesday 15th February 2000. The items already on the Agenda include, predictably, the next Annual Conference etc - but also a discussion of the functions which BASAS can best serve for its members.

At present BASAS runs a truly excellent and enjoyable annual conference, which happily seems particularly attractive to young researchers making contact with each other, produces this Bulletin which spreads news by old fashioned Caxton-like methods, represents BASAS on bodies like the national Co-ordinating Council of Area Studies Associations, maintains links with international groups such as the European Association for South Asian Studies, puts members with specific interests in touch with each other, answers questions from bodies such as HEFCE's RAE, and runs a web site <http://basas.homepage.com>. Sometimes it co-ordinates public statements - on the Rushti fatwa for example. Much of this activity may be obscure to and remote from members. Would you like a more interactive web-site? A web-zine for test-publishing short papers? If you have any specific ideas or requests please send them to a committee member you know or to the Secretary.

Your committee is well spread geographically:-

- Katharine Adeney, London School of Economics, [K.Adeney@lse.ac.uk](mailto:K.Adeney@lse.ac.uk)
- Dibyesh Anand, Hull, [D.Anand@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:D.Anand@bristol.ac.uk)
- Richard Bingle, 2 Lawrence Court Mill Hill London NW7 3QP
- **Graham Chapman, Secretary**, Lancaster, [g.chapman@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:g.chapman@lancaster.ac.uk)
- **Meghnad Desai, Chairman**, London School of Economics, [m.desai@lse.ac.uk](mailto:m.desai@lse.ac.uk)
- Patricia Ellis, Luton, [patEllis@compuserve.com](mailto:patEllis@compuserve.com)
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  - Sinha Shamsheer, Manchester, [SHAMSER.SINHA@STUD.MAN.AC.UK](mailto:SHAMSER.SINHA@STUD.MAN.AC.UK)
  - Michael Willis, British Museum, [mwillis@british-museum.ac.uk](mailto:mwillis@british-museum.ac.uk)
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## **BASAS Annual Conference, LSE September 1999**

The conference was held on 23rd and 24th September, courtesy of arrangements made by Medghnad Desai, Joanne Hay and Katherine Adeney. Cheap but good accommodation was available the other side of the River, near Bankside Power Station - unfortunately not then opened as the new Tate Gallery. But the walk across Blackfriar's Bridge was still worth it, to see one of Europe's most individualistic riverscapes.

The keynote address Reinventing India in the 1990's was given by John Harriss. It was stimulating and lucid - and addressing those key questions about how India in the age of the BJP and globalisation is both reinventing itself and being reinvented. John is in India on field work until summer 2000, so you cannot hassle him for a copy. But a more extensive book written by him and Stuart Corbridge Contesting Modernity, Reinventing India will be published by Polity Press in October 2000.

The papers were grouped into seven sections. They were:

### **Environment and Development**

- *Extracting worth from the environment: 'European ' Jagir in C18th Awadh*, Dr Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, South Bank University
- *From Science to Social Science: 150 years of canal irrigation in South Asia*, Graham Chapman, Lancaster University

### **The Punjab**

- *Partition revisited: fresh challenges and insights*, Ian Talbot, Coventry University
- *Punjabi Nationalism: the Third way between Sikh Secessionism and Indian Nationalism*, Pritam Singh, Oxford Brookes University
- *Archival Resources for studying post partition Muslim Refugees Settlement in West Pakistan*, Ahmad Saleem, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad

## **Democracy and the State in India**

- *Party Fragmentation and the Maintenance of Democracy in India*, Andrew Wyatt, University of Bristol
- *The Foreign Policy of India under the BJP Government*, Amalendu Misra, University of Hull
- *Searching for Hindu Nationalism in Modern Indian History: an analysis of some early ideological developments*, John Zavos, University of Bristol
- *Informal politics and empowerment: case studies from Mumbai*, Vandana Desai, Royal Holloway

## **Contemporary South Asian Women: Gender, cultural identity**

- *Constituting the Asian subject: agency and constraint*, Kath Ray, Manchester University
- *Outsiders Within: Muslim Women and Local Empowerment*, Stacey Burlet, University of Bradford

## **Contemporary Politics in Pakistan**

- *New Social Movements in Pakistan: a Case study of the peace movement*, Yunas Samad, University of Bradford
- *Post-Kargil Politics in Pakistan*, A.Z. Hilali, University of Hull
- *Reconstructing Islamic Discourse: the South Asian Experience*, Iftikhar Malik, Bath Spa University

## **Diaspora**

- *The relationship between the Government of India and the Indian Diaspora: a missed opportunity*, Marie-Carine Lall, LSE
- *Transnational and Global; Dimensions in the Swaminarayan Movement*, Rohit Barot, University of Bristol
- *Diasporic Nationalism or Nationalist Diaspora: the case of Tibetans in Exile*, Dibyesh Anand, University of Bristol
- *Virtually Kashmiris: the emerging discourse of 'Kashmiriyat'*, Nasreen Ali, University of Manchester

## **Reconfiguring Identities**

- *Media and Muslim Identity*, Sameera Mian, University of Leicester
- *Pathologising Settlers: Unsettling culturalisms of disadvantage*, Shamsar Sinha, University of Manchester
- *'We're not ghosts....' Muslim students and marginality in liberal disciplinary regimes*, Imran Tyrer, University of Manchester

## **CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS**

*Partition Revisited: fresh challenges and insights*, Ian Talbot, Coventry

University

The 1947 Partition remains the defining moment in the modern history of the Indian subcontinent, yet it is only recently that the emphasises of 'high politics' approaches and nationalist discourses have begun to be replaced by a concern with its human dimension. The production of a 'history from beneath' of Partition presents immense methodological challenges as well as opportunities for interrogating received communal and national discourses. This paper illustrates some of these tasks and insights with reference to the responses of a small sample survey of refugee families now resident in Lahore

*Punjabi Nationalism the Third way between Sikh Secessionism and Indian Nationalism*, Pritam Singh, Oxford Brookes University.

This paper examines the tensions in the relationship between Sikh identity and Indian nationalism and explores the mediated relationship between Sikhs and Indian nationhood through Punjabi nationalism. It argues that between two extremes of Sikh secessionism and over-bearing Indian nationalism, Punjabi identity and Punjabi nationalism offers a third path which meets the conditions of security for Sikh identity on one hand and the maintenance of Indian territorial integrity on the other. The paper acknowledges the difficulties in building Punjabi nationalism and explores the themes of federalism and minority rights in the broad perspective of Punjabi nationalism.

*The fragmentation of political parties and the maintenance of Indian democracy*, Andrew Wyatt, University of Bristol

Political parties have played a central role in developing liberal democracy in India. As many of these parties have fragmented it seems an opportune moment to re-assess the contribution of political parties to sustaining democracy in India and to examine the consequences of fragmentation for the democratic infrastructure of the political system. The paper examines the general role of parties in structuring democracy. The contribution of parties is assessed in the following categories: aggregation of preferences, policy implementation, conciliation of conflict, commitment to liberal rights and as a focus of accountability. The paper considers the contributions of parties to democracy in India in the periods 1947-1967, 1967-1989 and 1989 to the present. The Congress party features heavily in the first two periods but the performance of other parties takes on greater salience in the post 1989 period. The paper concludes with an assessment of the role of parties in sustaining democracy under the conditions of coalition government.

*Archival Resources for Studying Post-Partition Muslim Refugee Resettlement in West Pakistan*, Ahmed Saleem, SDPI, Islamabad

When the Refugee Rehabilitation Office near Smile Hill in Lahore was being refurbished, a sealed box was discovered during the digging which generated considerable excitement. The workers thought that it contained treasure left by the Hindus. There was much disappointment when all that was found were documents concerning refugee resettlement. The box was buried again. This reveals a telling truth about the people's understanding of the historical record in Pakistan. This paper examines the limited sources which still exist for the study of refugee rehabilitation and highlights the problems facing the historian in accessing and utilising them.

Although India has generally been well meaning towards its neighbours and has no territorial designs against any of them, the relationship with them all have been tense and marred by suspicion and hostility.

The coming to power of the Nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party was feared by many would further deteriorate this relationship and ultimately result in New Delhi adopting an aggressive stance against its neighbours.

A brief assessment of the BJP's foreign policy posture suggests that it has not abandoned the Nehruvian agenda of peaceful cohabitation vis a vis its neighbours. In fact, it has made significant peace overtures towards all its neighbours including its archenemies Pakistan and China. The Lahore Declaration and the establishment of a bus-link between Calcutta and Dacca stand out as manifestations of its good neighbourly intentions. Contrary to the apprehensions of many Indian analysts, the BJP has not promoted jingoism or xenophobic nationalism. It has allowed strong criticisms against the regime by both internal and external actors, and defended itself diplomatically. Its definitions of 'national interest' and 'security' - although some would like to point out as self-serving - has gone down well among the opposition parties and the West.

However, there is a paradoxical dynamism to the BJP's foreign policy postures. During its short time in office, much to the anguish of its neighbours, it has aggressively declared India as a nuclear power, has openly named the names of its enemies, and has also used its military capability to counter the violation of India's territorial integrity. Indeed, under the BJP India has aggressively forced its entry into the world-stage.

This paradoxical dynamism needs explanation. In my paper I wish to explore the inner dynamics of decision making on foreign policy choices, both at the political and military level. I also intend to gauge the levels of support the BJP has cultivated both internally and externally. I shall also assess the validity of the suggestion that the BJP's foreign policy posture is a reflection of the general national mood. In the conclusion I shall probe the seminal question i.e., whether the BJP's stance has aggravated India's external conflict potential, or it has conceived the best alternative to resolve them.

*Searching for Hindu Nationalism in Modern Indian History: An analysis of some early Ideological Developments*, John Zavos, University of Bristol

The concept of Hindu nationalism has a significance and meaning which has been ferociously contested in modern Indian politics. Its exponents often present it as the 'real' or 'true' form of Indian nationalism, to be contrasted with western-inspired, universalist concepts of 'pseudo-secularist' nationalists. Opponents, on the other hand, present it as the antithesis of 'real' or 'true' nationalism, a threat to the very existence of the Indian nation-state. These positions imply a specific polarity between Indian and Hindu nationalist identities, a polarity which is historically linked to the emergence of communalism in the nineteen twenties as a systematic feature of Indian politics.

In this paper, I will focus on the development of Hindu nationalism in a period prior to the nineteen twenties. That is to say, I will focus on a period prior to the critical period in the development of this polarity between identities based on Indian and Hindu nationalism. My objective is to examine the way in which Hindu nationalism developed autonomously; without, as it were, the pressure of this polarity to configure its meaning. I will concentrate on the ideological development of the Hindu Sabha movement, which emerged in the

first decade of the twentieth century in north-west India. This movement undoubtedly represents an attempt to propagate a nationalism based on the idea of Hindu identity. What will be demonstrated is that this form of identity nevertheless developed very much within the context of rapid change and intense scrutiny of another form of identity, that of elite-led Indian nationalism. The paper argues that the development of these competing nationalisms was intimately related: they operated on the same discursive terrain of middle-class consciousness, and they addressed the same central question of how 'the people' should be represented in relation to the state.

*Post-Kargil Politics in Pakistan*, A.Z. Hilali, University of Hull

Pakistan's nuclear tests in May 1998 strengthened Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and boosted his image but the humiliation of unilateral withdrawal from Kargil in July 1999 brought a decline in his popularity. The Kargil episode destabilised Nawaz's government because his strategies lost the benefits of a "good war" due to a "bad peace". However, the Kargil crisis united the fragile opposition parties and provided fresh air to mobilise the masses against Nawaz's autocratic rule and its regime's blunders. His allies have departed, friends have become foes and he now stands isolated in the national political arena. Punjabi dominance in national life have increased the sense of deprivation in the smaller provinces and is assumed to be a threat to the solidarity of the federation. Nevertheless, present political crisis can be managed through fair governance and with the sharing of power from federal to local level. It is necessary to avoid past mistakes because Pakistan can ill-afford another round of turmoil.

*The Relationship between the Government of India and the Indian Diaspora: A Missed Opportunity*, Dr Marie-Carine Lall, London School of Economics

This paper analyses the relationship of the Government of India with the Indian Diaspora.

Based on the fact that pre-independence India was very concerned about the fate of the expatriate Indians, it is interesting to note that there is a significant shift in policy at the time of independence. The Nehruvian doctrine adopted in 1947 not only excluded the issue of expatriate Indians totally from Indian foreign and domestic policy formulation, but actively encouraged the Diaspora to integrate into their host societies.

The exclusion of a policy towards expatriate Indians was facilitated by India's independent and closed model of economic development, which actively discriminated against outside involvement. As a result of this policy India lost out in her development, as financial contribution from the Diaspora was discouraged.

In the light of changes in the post cold war world and India's vulnerable economic position, the government of India had to open up its economy in summer 1991. The new approach allowed for more liberal foreign investments and certain special incentives were created to attract the Diaspora's money.

Yet between 1991 and 1996 the reforms with respect to NRIs were not actively put into practice and as a result the Diaspora's investments remained abysmally low. The paper concludes that the relationship between the Government and the Diaspora did not change significantly due largely to the perception of the expatriate Indian by the population in general and by the government in particular. As a result India lost out yet again.

*Transnational and Global Dimensions in the Swaminarayan Movement*, Rohit

Barot, University of Bristol

The main purpose of this paper is to examine transnational and global dimensions of the Swaminarayan movement. The genesis and development of the Swaminarayan movement is closely tied up with colonial and postcolonial transnational movement of Gujarati Hindus to East and Central Africa and eventually to destinations in UK, USA and Canada.

Originally a devotional sect founded by Sahajananda Swami in early 19th century Gujarat, the process of segmentation within the sect has created a number of new and exclusive groups which require the distinction between Swaminarayan sects and the movement that provides a wider orbit for new sectarian groups with roots in Gujarat society. The narratives of locality and regions are critical markers of these sectarian groups.

Migration of members of these groups to Africa and the West has enabled them to create communities and networks which are transnational. This transformation creates tensions between local, transnational and global as the groups strive to influence their self-presentation in the metropolitan context, and increasingly and actively through the global medium of the Internet. The paper attempts to highlight some of these tensions which may influence the belief and social organisation of the groups within the Swaminarayan movement and the complex identity of individual men and women.

*Diasporic nationalism or nationalist diaspora: the case of Tibetans in exile,*  
Dibyesh Anand, University of Bristol

Though Tibetan nationalism is an ensemble of varied, complex processes and imaginaries, 'Tibetan Studies' in the West (and also most of the world) itself has been largely dominated by either of the four views: missionary, diplomatic, journalistic, or the traveller's view. "Support for Tibet's independence" has become a sort of fad in the West as witnessed in celebrations marking opposition to the anniversaries of the 'Chinese invasion of Tibet'. However Tibetan nationalism and identity itself is untheorised, at best under-theorised. Hardly a work on the issue can be found which is not in tradition of hagiography or martyrology.

The first part of the paper hopes to delineate some of the many dynamics within Tibetan identity/s shaped by embodied and embedded narratives and brings to surface tensions which play performative and constitutive functions in imagining Tibet as a nation. The central, yet ambiguous role played by Dharma-'Tibetan Buddhism' in constituting nationalism among Tibetans is explored. As various studies of protests in Tibet since 1987 have shown, religion in general provides an obvious focus for Tibetan nationalist consciousness as well as for opposition to the Chinese. Religious practices such as circumambulation or korwa, throwing of tsampa and juniper in lha-rgyal festival, as well leading role played by monks and nuns (disgruntled intelligentsia of Gellner?) all point to the continuing vital role played by religion in Tibetan nationalism. Yet, the role has not been unambiguous. For instance, opposition within Tibet in early nineties was more over the ban on lha-rgyal (festival) rather than on the restrictions imposed on incense burning, though it is the latter which is central to Buddhism. This may be so because the tsampa seems to have become a key symbol of Tibetan identity and more so because the Chinese do not eat it How do universalistic pretensions within this religion (Tibetan Buddhism) affect the claims of nationalism which by nature is particularistic? What about the tension between Buddhism as interpreted by Dalai Lama (and wrongly identified with Tibetan religion) and the various pre-Buddhist cults and practices as well as the Islamic elements in Tibetan life? Some of these question will be explored in the

paper.

Particular emphasis would be given to the attempts at espousing a unified 'official' version of Tibetan identity by the Tibetan government-in-exile based in Dharamsala. The role of memory, idea of homeland, 'museumisation' and commodification of culture, politics of place, etc. are some of the themes on which observations would be made. The paper would explore the tensions as well as the complementarity between the diaspora nationalism developing among Tibetan refugees in India (or elsewhere) and the nationalist feelings among the Tibetans living in Tibet. It will be argued that the transnational element (with a persistent resonance of 'home' housing the Tibetan identity) is as significant a part of Tibetan nationalism, as is the 'indigenous' element.

*Virtually Kashmiris: The emerging discourse of "Kashmiriyat"*, Nasreen Ali, University of Manchester

Much attention has been paid to the way in which national identities have been articulated as part of major political projects. Most writings on nationalism fall within the primordialist or constructionist camps. In this paper I will show how both these approaches to ethnicity can be found at work in the emergence of Kashmiri nationalism. I will examine this by displaying the various means by which the notion of "Kashmiriyat" has been articulated disseminated and maintained amongst the Kashmiri population in a de-territorialised space. I will be making use of narratives from the Kashmiri diaspora in Luton to illustrate the way in which the discourse of "Kashmiriyat" manifests itself in their everyday lives, and the impact this has on issues of representation. In other words, this paper looks at the methods by which this discourse recruits its subjects and its impact within the diaspora.

*Media and Muslim Identity*, Sameera Mian, University of Leicester

The role of the media in generating and perpetuating a particularly negative image of Islam has been studied extensively. In Britain the Runnymede Trust's report 'Islamophobia: A Challenge To Us All' has contributed to our understanding of the phenomenon of anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic sentiment in society, in which the media plays a substantial role. This paper focuses specifically on the Muslim communities' responses to these representations from their own personal experiences.

The increasing awareness amongst Muslims of this negative portrayal in the media has resulted in them challenging dominant stereotypes of Muslims and Islam. To what extent have these challenges or rejection come about as a result of the assertion of a 'Muslim' identity within a Western or non-Muslim? Or indeed is it the fact that a more prominent Muslim identity has become visible in some ways because of media? The aim is to gain an understanding of how Muslims feel media contributes to aspects of their own lives, including their Muslim identity.

Using qualitative data I aim to examine how the emergence of a specific Muslim identity from within the category of 'South Asian' has been influenced by media. Why is it that 'South Asian' is no longer accepted by many Muslims, similar to the way the label 'black' is seen as too broad and subsuming for Asians in Britain? Of particular interest here is an examination of how alternative media has been used to organise and reinforce a Muslim identity especially with the recent growth of Muslim magazines, newspapers and websites.

This paper aims to outline some of the issues which have arisen in my research this year and present initial findings from interviews conducted with

young Muslims.

*Pathologising Settlers: Unsettling Culturalisms of "Disadvantage"*, Mr Shamser Sinha, University of Manchester

This paper is broadly about identity and diversity. Specifically, it deals with the collapsing of racial stereotypes into de facto deterministic categories of "culture" and how "race" relations academics have not challenged this process. Indeed it is my position that authors such as Berthoud and Modood have furthered this process themselves by presenting arguments, particularly about Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups, that associate "disadvantage" with the cultural properties of these settler groups.

However, their position in 'Ethnic Minorities in Britain', is predicated on measuring ethnic harmony in terms of how well settlers assimilate with host statistical patterns. The presumption is that the closer settlers are to these patterns the nearer we are to ethnic harmony. This implies that where these patterns do not match, blame is to be laid on settlers' culture and not the broader societal environment. This is particularly clear in the case of female participation in the labour market, which leads to questions about the assimilability of Muslim settlers within the 'host' nation. Therefore how much is "diversity" truly reflected in such works when social disqualification is blamed on the cultural characteristics of settlers? That this position is in accordance with liberal-democratic principles and social contracts serves to question whether liberal democracy and "race" relations theory reflect the social reality of Bangladeshi and Pakistani settlers. Alternatively are they an instrument of coercion based on essentialising the cultural identity of these settler groups

*'We're not ghosts...': Muslim Students and marginality in liberal disciplinary regimes*, Imran Tyrer, C.G.E.M./Department of Sociology, University of Manchester

According to Barbara Grant, hegemonic liberal discourses of university education focus on development of "the unique but universal individual" which amounts in practice to disciplinary practices designed to both construct particular types of 'ideal' and 'norm' in subjects and to discipline students to "become more like the norm of the 'good' student". In this respect Grant's work has important implications for those of us involved in research or practice around equal opportunities in higher education because it points to the underlying power relations that university delivery is a function of, and the ways in which these discipline students in particular ways to 'conform'.

In this paper I will discuss the ways in which the university as a disciplinary regime constructs Muslim students and in doing so marginalises them if they reject the hegemonic constructions of them produced by their institutions. This discussion will focus around the notions of 'norm' and 'consensus' building central to higher education and how, despite widened and diversified participation, these continue to function as exclusivist processes offering the Faustian dilemma of assimilation-participation or maintenance of identity exclusion which characterised the situation of Muslim students in a number of cities across the country. Within this schema, the epistemic violence central to certain inscriptions of 'minority' are read in terms of their role in the maintenance of monolithic conceptions of 'majority' or 'consensus' which fail to reflect institutional ethnic and religious diversity, and university equal opportunities policies and practices in four case study universities are discussed as the disciplinary mechanisms through which this is effected.

This paper is the product of research carried out in a number of British

universities between 1998 and 1999. As such it is sited within the context of increasing recognition of the articulation of a distinct 'Muslim' identity within Britain and debates around 'Islamophobia'. At the same time it engages with a body of literature which has tended to pathologise Muslims as 'non-liberal' subjects when attempting to gain equal provision and recognition within liberal-secular institutions in this country.

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## FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

18th February: *Jain Culture and History Workshop*, Brunei Gallery, SOAS. Contact [BL1@soas.ac.uk](mailto:BL1@soas.ac.uk)

19 - 20 February: *Migration, Urban Development and Demographic Change in Punjab 1890s - 1990s*. Coventry University. Contact: Professor Ian Talbot, School of International Studies and Law [106432.1724@compuserve.com](mailto:106432.1724@compuserve.com)

*Culture and Economy in the Indian Diaspora*, 8-10 April 2000, India International Centre. The Centre for Indian Studies at the University of Hull in co-operation with the Indian International Centre, New Delhi, and the Transnationalities Communities Research Programme of the British Economic and Research Council (ESRC), is organising a major conference on the Indian diaspora. The conference will be the first event of its kind, and bring together leading scholars of the subject from India and overseas to address issue of contemporary concern with special reference to culture and economy. Contact Prof. Gurharpal Singh, Department of Politics and Asian Studies, University of Hull, Hull, HU6-7RX, Email: [G.Singh@pol-as.hull.ac.uk](mailto:G.Singh@pol-as.hull.ac.uk) Tel: 01482-348918

*Gender and the Transmission of Values Systems and Cultural Heritages*, Universiteit van Amsterdam, May 2000. Contact [leysdorff@pscw.uva.nl](mailto:leysdorff@pscw.uva.nl)

*The Worlds of the East India Company 1600 - 1834*, (National Maritime Museum and University of Leicester) at the NM Museum, London, July 13th to 15th 2000. Enquiries Miss Helen Jones, Research Administrator [research@num.ac.uk](mailto:research@num.ac.uk)

*16th European Conference On Modern South Asian Studies*. Centre For South Asian Studies, The University Of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, 6-9 September 2000. Contact: [www.ed.ac.uk/social/sas/](http://www.ed.ac.uk/social/sas/)

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## FORTHCOMING SEMINAR SERIES

**Cambridge University Centre for South Asian Studies.** The South Asian Seminar meets at 5pm on Wednesdays during Full Term in the Director's Room, Centre of South Asian Studies. The seminar provides an opportunity to study South Asia from a wide variety of disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. The seminar programme for Lent Term 2000 is as follows:

- January 26: *Economic Change and the Creation of the Nation-State: South Asia, 1920-1950*, Professor B. R. Tomlinson (University of Strathclyde)
- February 2: Fifty Years of the Indian Union: An Historical

Perspective, Professor Suranjan Das (University of Calcutta and British Academy Visiting Professor)

- February 9: India's Nuclear Doctrine, Dr W. P. S. Sidhu (St Anthony's College, Oxford)
- February 16: The Problem of the Courtesan in Early Medieval India, Dr Daud Ali (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London)
- February 23: Democracy, Civil Society and Governance in India: Lessons from a Contemporary Urban-Environmental Perspective, Bharat Dahiya (University of Cambridge)
- March 1: When Potential Migrants Become Refugees: Family Histories of the Bengal Partition, Meghna Guha-Thakurta (University of Dhaka)
- March 8: Classifying Case-Histories: The Subject of Colonial Psychiatry, Bombay Presidency, 1870-1940, Shruti Kapila (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London)

**University of Hull, Department of Politics and Asian Studies.** Wilberforce Building, Room S.31, Tuesdays 3.15-5.00PM. Organised by Prof. Gurharpal Singh, Tel: 01482-465755 Email G. Singh@pol-as.hull.ac.uk

- 15 February: Wahegurupal Singh Sidhu, MacArthur Fellow at the Centre for International Studies, University of Oxford. The Making of India's Nuclear Doctrine?
- 29 February: Dr. Yunus Samad, University of Bradford. Social Change and Labour Relations in Pakistan
- 7 March: Dr Uday Singh Mehta, Dept. of Politics, University of Hull. The Politics of Identity and Interest in Contemporary India
- 14 March: Dr Rachel Dwyer, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of (6.00PM) London. The Erotic of the Sari in the Hindi Film
- 28 March: Dr Faisal Devji, Institute of Ismaili Studies, London.
- Confounded though Immortal: Jinnah and the Radicalisation of Indian Political Thought. Inaugural lecture by Professor Gurharpal Singh: 'Re-examining centre-state relations in India'. 6pm, 15 May 2000, Middleton Hall, University of Hull.

**University of Oxford Contemporary South Asia Seminar**, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St. Giles, , Oxford, OX1 3LA, 2 pm, Blackhall Seminar Room. Contact: Dr Nandini Gooptu, Dr Judith Heyer, Professor Barbara Harriss-White. tel: +44 (0)1865 273600 website <http://www/qeh.ox.ac.uk>

- 20 January: Geetanjali Gangoli, LSE, Legal discourses around prostitution in India: State and feminist perspectives
- 27 January: Naomi Hossain, IDS, Sussex, Suspicion and support: NGOs and Bangladeshi elite discourses of poverty
- 3 February: Andrew Wyatt, University of Bristol, Economic globalisation and the Indian state
- 10 February: Martin Lau, SOAS, About the role of law in a lawless state: The example of Pakistan
- 17 February: Carey Watt, Cambridge, Voluntarism,

associational cultures and civil society in India, 1900-20 and beyond

- 24 February: Alistair McMillan, Nuffield College, Oxford, BJP or NDA? Patterns of voting in recent elections in India
- 2 March: Anasuya Sengupta, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, Embedded or stuck?: The study of social embeddedness, state capacity, and formal and informal institutional structures in the Indian state
- 9 March: Sumantra Bose, LSE, Breaking the deadlock: An alternative approach to Kashmir

**School of Oriental and African Studies South Asia History Seminar**, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG Tuesdays 5 pm Room G58 Convenor: Professor David Arnold, History Department.

- January 18: Subho Basu (SOAS), The Calcutta general strike of 1937
- January 25: Round Table Discussion on Archives in and of South Asia, Led by Martin Moir (formerly of the India Office Library)
- February 8: Debraj Bhattacharya (SOAS), Crime and modernity: writers and Goondas in Calcutta in the 1930s~40s
- February 15: Uday Mehta (Hull), Partition: a conceptual explanation
- February 29: Ruhi Grover (Otago), Negotiating the landscape: imperial spaces, markets and the mobility of timber in colonial north India
- March 7: Shabnum Tejani, Cow protection and Tilak's Ganapati: riots, rites and the question of 'Custom' in Bombay Presidency, c. 1893
- March 21: Abha Singh (Delhi), Religion, identity and social protest: the Satnamis of Narnaul

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## News from cognate associations

The **Indian Economists Forum** was inaugurated at the Nehru Centre in London in October 1999 with a lecture by Jagdish Bhagwati (from Columbia University) followed in December by a conference on the theme of The Indian Economy at the End of the Millennium. The Forum, organised by V.N. Balasubramanyam (Lancaster University) and Homi Katrak (University of Surrey) is open to academics working on India's economic policies, problems and performance. The next meeting of the forum is scheduled to take place sometime in March at the LSE. E mail; [V.Balasubramanyam@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:V.Balasubramanyam@lancaster.ac.uk)

**Bangladesh International Community News** covers events, publications, and Internet services of interest to foreigners living in Bangladesh, Bangladeshis living in Bangladesh and abroad ... to anyone with an interest in Bangladesh. BICN publishes a FREE email newsletter twice monthly from Dhaka during September to May. Each issue includes a comprehensive calendar of upcoming events in Bangladesh plus Bangladesh-related events abroad; a feature article; links to Bangladesh-related Internet resources; community announcements; and

more. There's also a website at <http://bicn.com> [sample@bicn.com](mailto:sample@bicn.com) - for a FREE sample issue [bicn-subscribe@listbot.com](mailto:bicn-subscribe@listbot.com) - to subscribe, unsubscribe instructions appear in each . Sara Bennett, Dhaka Bangladesh Members and Visitors' News

Congratulations to **Ian Talbot** of Coventry University who has recently been promoted to a Chair.

**Geetanjali Gangoli** is the Sir Ratan Tata Fellow at the Asia Research Centre of LSE, and will be staying in London till May. He will be working on Prostitution: Issues Of Work, Sexuality And Displacement. He writes:

I have been conducting research on issues around prostitution. As a part of my ongoing research, I have interviewed sex workers in Calcutta and Bombay. In Calcutta, the Sonagachi Sex Workers Union has recently raised important questions about the stigmatising of sex workers, issues of sexuality and health. In Calcutta and Bombay, I have also conducted interviews with Non Government Organisations (NGOs) working with sex workers, e.g., Sanlaap in Calcutta and Prerana in Bombay.

I have found that where the question of reproductive health and prostitution has been raised, it has been in the context of AIDS-HIV prevention efforts. The logic of this is that sex workers are identified as a "high risk" category as far as HIV infection is concerned. I suggest that there is a need to expand debates around sex workers beyond AIDS and HIV infection. I would also like to examine attitudes to sexuality and sexual behaviour. It might be interesting to look at how women in the profession perceive these issues. Preliminary interviews with sex workers in Delhi and Calcutta reveal that while many sex workers are outside the margins of conventional family, and marriage systems, they are often attached to one partner, and hold to the ideals of faithfulness to their partner, and monogamy. What are the factors pushing women and girls into prostitution? Issues of trafficking need to be addressed here, which would form a part of the push factors. Are the images of coercive prostitution which forms such a large part of media debates on trafficking between and within countries in South Asia entirely relevant? There is a need instead to focus on the overall economic trends in South Asia, where liberalization and globalisation has contributed to a destruction of the traditional production base, increasing impoverishment and shrinking options for men and women.

The research that I would like to focus on will be based on my interviews and official documents. In addition, it will be pertinent to read on ongoing debates on the issue in the west. In short, the areas that I will address will be: official perceptions on sex work and health issues, questions of trafficking and citizenship, within which some women are excluded from the rights discourse, the perceptions of sex workers regarding some areas of their lives, i.e., sexuality, work and family. I will also attempt a tentative analysis of the ways in which these questions are taken up by and impact the organising of sex workers through unions and NGOs.

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## **2000 BASAS PRIZE**

The BASAS prize will consist of a monetary award of £100.

The BASAS prize is intended to encourage young scholars, either studying for a degree in an institution of higher learning and/or be no older than 35 at the time of the 2000 BASAS Annual Conference. The author need not be a member of

BASAS.

To be eligible, a paper should focus on the theoretical and/or practical means by which our understanding of the present problems of co-operation and confrontation in South Asia, its constituent states of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, or the South Asian Diaspora can be enhanced. Papers may address issues relevant to the arts, humanities or social sciences.

In addition, papers must: (a) not published previously; (b) be submitted in advance to BASAS Secretary Professor Graham Chapman (see below) to arrive no later than July 31st 2000; and (c) be presented at the BASAS Annual Conference, to be held in September in Edinburgh.

The judging panel will consist of the executive board members of BASAS. The panel reserves the right not to present the award and will not enter into correspondence concerning its final judgement.

Contact for further details: Graham Chapman, BASAS Secretary, Department of Geography, Lancaster University, Lancaster LA1 4YB e-mail [g.chapman@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:g.chapman@lancaster.ac.uk)

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## *CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA: In memory of Neelan Tiruchelvam: Minority rights in South Asia*

### **Special issue: Call for papers**

"The real challenge is to enable us to construct a future which acknowledges the diversity of the people of the world and provides for a plurality of belonging to the world, the nation and the community." —Neelan Tiruchelvam, speaking at the South Asia Editors Forum, Delhi, April 1999

Neelan Tiruchelvam-lawyer, academic, politician, human rights activist and a member of the International Editorial Board of *Contemporary South Asia* (CSA) since its inception in 1992-was assassinated on 29 July 1999, ostensibly because of his dedication to the constitutional protection of minority rights.

Neelan's lifelong work for the promotion of non-violent and constitutional solutions to minority and human rights grievances began as a law student at the universities of Ceylon and Harvard, respectively. Along with developing his legal career at Tiruchelvam Associates, Neelan enjoyed prestigious academic appointments-including a Fulbright fellowship-in Sri Lanka and the US. At home, he helped draft the District Development Council law before entering parliament in 1983 as a Tamil United Liberation Front representative. Later, Neelan was part of the think tank behind the 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan Accord and played a key role in the 1995 constitutional reform and devolution programme of the Chandrika Kumaratunga administration. Outside the government, he founded and directed the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (Colombo) dedicated to promoting non-violent solutions to ethnic conflict. Abroad, he served as a member of member of international observer and expert missions to Pakistan, Chile, Kazakhstan, Ethiopia and South Africa and, in 1999, was elected chair of the human rights organisation, Minority Rights Group International (London). At the time of his death, Neelan was working on a government programme of major constitutional reform, including an Equal Opportunity law seeking to end social and gender discrimination, and was shortly to take up a visiting professorship at Harvard this autumn.

In recognition of his work and in honour of his memory, CSA is soliciting submissions for a special thematic issue, In memory of Neelan Tiruchelvam:

Minority rights in South Asia. Papers may examine any aspect pertaining to the current state of minority rights in the region by drawing upon new empirical research and/or fresh theoretical approaches. Papers giving a comparative perspective of minority rights' issues in two or more South Asian countries-India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives-are particularly welcome. (Selected papers also may be published in an edited book.)

Submissions of no more than 7000 words in length should be written in accordance with CSA's Notes for Contributors (available at <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/carfax/09584935.html> or from the address below) and submitted (as an email attachment if at all possible) by **1 April 2000** to: Dr Apurba Kundu Editor, *Contemporary South Asia*, Department of Applied Social Sciences, University of Bradford, Bradford BD7 1DP, UK Tel +44-(0)1274-235-046 \* Fax +44-(0)1274-235-295 \* Email [a.kundu@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:a.kundu@bradford.ac.uk)

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## **New Position**

Sardarni Kuljit Kaur Bindra Chair in Sikh Studies. HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY announces the establishment of Sardarni Kuljit Kaur Bindra Chair in Sikh Studies. The Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies invites applications for a tenure-track position in the field of Sikh Studies with broad preparation in South Asian Religions. Applicants should have familiarity with classical texts in their original languages, and field experience in South Asia. Demonstrated interdisciplinary interests are desirable. Teaching responsibilities include Introduction to Eastern Religions, upper-level courses in South Asian Religions and Sikh Studies.

The chair holder will also be expected to play a leadership role in the development of Sikh Studies. The endowment of the Chair will include support for scholarly conferences at Hofstra and travel for research purposes. Requirements: Ph.D. or expectation of Ph.D. by August 2000. Some undergraduate teaching experience is preferred. Applications will be received through March 30, 2000 or until the position is filled.

Hofstra University is a comprehensive educational institution enrolling 8000 full time undergraduates and 5000 graduate and part time students in all areas of the Liberal Arts and Sciences as well as in Business, Communication, Education, Engineering and Law. Our 238 acre residential campus is located in suburban Long Island, just 25 miles from Manhattan. AA/EO Send complete dossier (including letter of application, writing sample, three letters of reference and evidence of teaching proficiency) to Search Committee A, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549.

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## **British Association for South Asian Studies**

Visit our Web page at [basas.homepage.com](http://basas.homepage.com)

You are invited to join/renew your membership of the British Association for South Asian Studies. Membership includes most academics in British universities who work on the countries of South Asia, i.e. India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal, and others who are interested in the region. BASAS produced a tri-annual newsletter and organises an annual conference. Current subscription rates are as follows:

	One year	Two years	Three years
Full rate	£7.00	£13.00	£18.00
Concessionary rate	£3.50	£6.50	£9.00

The full rate is payable by members resident in the U.K. who are in full-time employment; all others, including those overseas, pay the concessionary rate.

Please tear off the attached slip and enclose it with you cheque made out to BASAS. Send it to Graham Chapman, Department of Geography, Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YB, Tel: 01524 593737, e.mail [G.Chapman@Lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:G.Chapman@Lancaster.ac.uk).

Alternatively, you may arrange a bank transfer made payable to 'BASAS' and send to Lloyds Bank plc, 19 Upper Street, Islington Branch, London, N1 0PJ, UK. Sort Code: 30-94-57. Account Number: 0393696.

I wish to become a member/renew my membership of BASAS. I enclose a cheque/have arranged a bank transfer made payable to BASAS for (please tick the appropriate amount):

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Discipline(s), research interests:

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