

Bulletin

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Two Substantive Issues

The Future of Area Studies in the UK

Topic for Debate:-

THE FUTURE OF INTERDISCIPLINARY AREA STUDIES IN THE UK: DEVELOPING RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING

Professor Roger Goodman organised a workshop on this important topic in Oxford in December 2005, with the financial support of the ESRC, HEFCE, and AHRC. Below I list the programme. A summary transcript of the proceedings is available from Roger Goodman [roger.goodman@st-antons.oxford.ac.uk].

At this meeting I was asked to discuss the state of South Asian studies in the UK and did so as best I could. Before I addressed the meeting I had circulated members of BASAS and asked for your views, many of which I incorporated. After the meeting I circulated the address I gave (as best recorded – there were variations in the PowerPoint on the day). This provoked some people to feel upset – and I have apologised to some people who felt I was patronising, having ranked centres by what I saw as their permanence or robustness – but other people said that some of the institutions I rated strongly were not as secure as I had seemed to think.

Because of the breadth and value of the discussions, it is impossible to summarise Roger Goodman's summary further. Rather, I summarise the summary of one part – the speech by the outgoing Director of SOAS, after the programme listed here.

Graham Chapman

Programme

LESSONS FROM THE CURRENT SITUATION OF AREA STUDIES

In The United States: *David Ludden* (University Of Pennsylvania) *John Coatsworth* (Harvard University)

In the Netherlands/Australia: *Rikki Kersten* (Leiden University)

In Germany: *Marianne Braig* (Free University Berlin)

In Singapore: *Amitav Acharya* (Nanyang Technical College, Singapore)

STATE OF AREA STUDIES RESEARCH IN THE UK

Colin Bundy (SOAS; Africa) A Post-war Historical Overview

Rosemary Hollis - Chatham House

James Dunkerley - Institute of the Study of the Americas

George Kolankiewicz - Slavonic and East European Studies

Elisabeth Croll - China

Graham Chapman – South Asia

Janet Hunter – Japanese Studies

FUNDING POLICIES Panel Discussion

Adrian Alsop, ESRC

Tony McEnery, AHRC

Jane Lyddon/Rachel Paniagua (British Academy)

Rama Thirunamachandran (HEFCE)

PUTTING TOGETHER HIGH-QUALITY INTERDISCIPLINARY AREA STUDIES RESEARCH PROJECTS

Towards an Interdisciplinary Study of African Environments: *William Beinart* (Oxford); *Dan Brockington* (Manchester)

Comparative Regionalism: *Anand Menon* (Birmingham), *Andrew Hurrell* (Oxford)

TRAINING RESEARCHERS IN AREA STUDIES:

demographic profile of area studies researchers: *David Mills* (Birmingham)

Supporting teaching in area studies: *John Canning* (Univ of Southampton)
Language training for Area Studies researchers: *Graham Furniss* (SOAS)
Area Studies Specific Methods training: *Karen O'Reilly* (Aberdeen)
Relationship between teaching area specific methods and discipline skills:
Julian Cooper (Birmingham)

THE USERS OF AREA STUDIES KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
Chair *Frances Cairncross* (ESRC/Oxford)

- Charity/NGO sector – *Rosemary Thorp* (Chair, Oxfam)
- Commercial users – *Noel Brehony* (*Rolls Royce*)
- Journalists – *Quentin Peel* (FT)
- Civil servants – *Nigel Gould-Davies* (FCO)
- Consultancy – *Graham Hutchings* (*Oxford Analytica*)

Summary of Some Main Points by Colin Bundy:

The UK: A Post-war Historical Overview

Professor Colin Bundy Principal and Director of the SOAS provided a thorough overview of the development of Area Studies in the last sixty years. Professor Bundy described Area Studies in the UK in the first half of the 20th century as being 'shallowly rooted'. Faced with the increasing realisation that Area Studies could enhance political stability, the government appointed a commission known as the Scarborough Commission in 1944 to examine, and make recommendations for strengthening, the facilities offered by British universities for the study of overseas cultures. The commission resulted in new posts being created and in a scheme of grants being introduced in order to build up university departments. Unfortunately, the posts were largely filled up with civil servants who were focused on language proficiency rather than towards a deeper engagement with other societies.

As the interest in Area Studies in the U.S. was largely based on concerns for foreign policy and conflict management, the Cold War was highly significant to its development. Professor Bundy also drew attention to the role of charitable foundations such as the Ford, Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations in boosting Area Studies. In the U.S., interdisciplinarity was very much in evidence in this growing movement, as for example explicitly stated in the 1948 National Conference on the Study of World Areas. This was of great benefit to the production of knowledge, not least because it challenged the narrowness of traditional disciplinary boundaries. The launch of Sputnik in 1957, together with the concomitant fears about national security, further boosted Area Studies which grew steadily into the 1960s.

In the UK, the situation was less positive, until in 1960, Hayter was appointed by the UGC as the chair of a committee to review the progress of Area Studies since the Scarborough Commission, and his report prompted the second key phase of expansion in Area Studies. Hayter had been influenced to a large extent by the flourishing state of Area Studies in the U.S. and he made a strong pragmatic case against the archaic focus in the U.K. and in favour of Social Sciences. There was a period of expansionist optimism and, according to Professor Bundy, Area Studies enjoyed a brief golden age in the 1960s and 70s.

Professor Bundy then went on to detail some of the difficulties of the subject area in the last twenty-five years. In the U.S., funding for Area Studies stayed buoyant for a relatively long time, although the fall of the Berlin wall and the general demise of the Cold War gradually shifted national and academic priorities at the expense of Area Studies. Modernity also brought challenges of its own, such as considerations about the politics of knowledge production and the implications of globalisation, such as the need to understand global rather than just regional factors.

In the U.K. issues of costs and affordability rose to the fore under the Thatcher government and, sadly, have remained to some extent since then. Area Studies programmes came under threat and the situation became increasingly bleak. The Chairman of the Association for South East Asian Studies reported in 1984 that "the condition of South East Asian Studies within British universities has declined to the point of near

crisis.” In order to address the crisis, the UGC appointed Sir Peter Parker to assess the situation. Perhaps not surprisingly, he reported an urgent need for action as an “irreplaceable stock of excellence” was in obvious danger of disappearing. Some additional funding was provided in order to make up for this but it was by no means enough and a new report was commissioned in the 1990s. The report showed overall positive responses following Parker’s recommendations and evidence of growth, although it also highlighted a number of problems, such as the presence of an ageing academic community still rooted in particular disciplines rather than geared to a regional focus, a significant drop in people going onto do PhDs and a strong tendency for research to be disciplinary rather than regional.

More than a decade later, there is still deep concern for Area Studies because of two main sets of pressures. Firstly, Area Studies, which is resource, time and labour intensive in terms of training and facilities (particularly when it comes to language learning), are much more likely to struggle to survive than other subjects in the current higher education environment, which is driven by market principles such as cost-cutting, efficiency and ‘results’. Secondly, Professor Bundy felt that the RAE was inadvertently putting pressure on academics to focus their efforts into disciplinary channels in order to be successful in this exercise, which has undeniably become a dominant concern for them.

In conclusion, Professor Bundy questioned what changes have taken place and whether the old paradigms concerning Area Studies still applied. He argued that the complexity, fluidity and tensions inherent to the processes of change within Area Studies could not be ignored. He went on to question whether there are Area Studies specific theories and methodologies and whether British area specialists were adequately self-critical and reflective towards their field. Inevitably, Professor Bundy also had to reflect on the way in which Area Studies was ‘uncomfortably dependent’ on changing considerations of national interest, and especially national security. There is a distinct pattern whereby the U.K. government asks ‘Are Area Studies important?’, it then receives a positive response and funds are injected into Area Studies on a short-term basis, before being abandoned, which weakens Area Studies and results in the government asking the same question and repeating the same pattern fifteen years later. His final consideration was where Area Studies were located within the increasingly global politics of knowledge production and he concluded by reiterating the importance of the history of Area Studies in understanding the challenges faced by area specialists today.

FOOTNOTE

South Asia – or rather India in this context – has not been prioritised as a special area by HEFCE, whereas China has) a point I was able to make in my presentation. On this point HEFCE had been given its priorities by government ministers.

There has now been a new Blair Initiative (more correctly a joint Manmohan Singh and Blair initiative) to make the UK and India each others natural partners in research and education. A certain number of millions of pounds has suddenly been pushed in to UKIERI (see www.ukierir.org) to oversee this. Much of this is clearly targeted at disciplinary and particularly scientific knowledge – but you can always try.....

The Future of BASAS and SSAS: and BA funding

The British Academy has until recently funded BASIS (Board for Academy-Sponsored Institutes and Societies.) This in turn has funded the following:-

The British Institute at Ankara The British School at Athens The British Institute in Eastern Africa The Council for British Research in the Levant The Egypt Exploration Society The Society for Libyan Studies The British School of Archaeology in Iraq The British Institute of Persian Studies The British School at Rome [THE SOCIETY FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES](#) ASEAUK Research Committee for South-East Asian Studies The Council for British Archaeology .

Most of the money in the budget has gone on the British Institutes overseas with property to maintain – as in Rome and Athens. SSAS (highlighted above) has not had such properties, and has been one of the lesser funded (no complaint) societies, with a grant of between £75,000 and £100,000 per year. The BA decided this year that it would no longer ring fence such societies, and put out a call for any UK learned society to apply for money. The following narrates what has happened so far in relation to BASAS..

1) The BA issued a call to learned societies for an expression of interest in their programme of support over the next five years, to comprise two parts: A) up to £30,000 p.a. for funding core activities; and, B) up to a further £70,000 p.a. for research-related support.

2) BASAS submitted an expression of interest for A – detailing how we needed better and continuous staffing of central administration. SSAS, which has been a BASIS society in receipt of between £75,000 and £100,000 for a number of years, submitted an expression under A and B.

3) The BA accepted both our expressions of interest and invited full applications, rejected applications by other groups related to South Asia (probably because of their smaller size and shorter track records), but suggested clearly that BASAS and SSAS should submit a joint bid, possible under their rules, but with the condition that there was one and only one contact person named..

4) The BASAS Executive met in Cambridge in the early summer and agreed that we should go for a joint bid. Subsequently Emma Mawdsley, Amalendu Misra and Kunal Sen and Graham Chapman met with members of the SSAS Council to discuss the issue further.

These two meetings resulted in agreement that we would submit a joint bid, that there would be a joint committee overseeing research funds in the event of a grant, that we could have a joint administrative staff, that any grant in the first place would go through the SSAS (audited) accounts, and that ultimately we might be thinking of a merger of the two societies.

The application was signed by Peter Robb (who addressed BASAS in April) currently Chair of SSAS, and pro-Director of SOAS.

You, as a member of BASAS, should be aware of the possibility that the two governing bodies/committees may negotiate and propose a merger: but obviously we will only do so if we think it right for the membership and the representation of South Asian Studies in the UK, and it will be the membership that makes any final decision on any proposals.

We will make an announcement about the result of the funding bid as soon as it is known

Graham Chapman

Report: The BASAS Annual Conference, Birkbeck College, April 2006

BASAS held its annual conference in April at Birkbeck College, London, skilfully organised by Dr Martin Menski, to whom we all owe a great debt of thanks. The full programme is available at www.basas.ac.uk and will not be reproduced here. There were 22 panels, and more than 60 papers presented. The panels ranged from "Caste, Religion and Bureaucracy in India, 20th Century" to the "Dynamics of Poverty and Labour in South Asia" and from "Dowry in Contemporary South Asia and the Diaspora" to "Post-Tsunami and Post-war Sri Lanka." As usual, and as we always hope, there were a substantial number of papers presented by postgraduates. The postgraduate prize for the best of these was awarded to Sonia Benjamin from SOAS for her paper "A Rose by Any Other Name: Exploring the Politics of Roja". An updated version of this paper will be invited for publication in the journal *Contemporary South Asia*. **Special commendation also went to Srijana Mitra Das** (University of Cambridge) for her presentation and paper, "'Say Shava Shava!' Self-Censorship, Changing States and the Cultural Economy of Punjabiyyat in Bombay Cinema.' Both of these papers happened to be on a panel about censorship and the media.

This year the annual Nirman Lecture was delivered in sparkling form without a hint of jet-lag, by Professor Zoya Hasan from the Centre for Political Studies (and Director of the Women's Studies Program), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her theme was "Bridging the Growing Divide? The Congress and Indian Democracy".

At the AGM many thanks were expressed to the outgoing Treasurer, Pat Ellis, for her years of service and careful husbandry. Thanks were also expressed to the outgoing secretary, Katharine Adeney, for all her hard work and commitment. She remains on the committee.

The BASAS Committee currently in office is as follows:-

Chair - Graham Chapman, Lancaster: Secretary - Amalendu Misra, Lancaster: Treasurer - Emma Tomalin, Leeds: Membership Sec - Andrew Wyatt, Bristol: Co-Editors Emma Mawdsley, Cambridge, and Martin Menski: Webmaster - Apurba Kundu, Bradford: Conference Organiser, Bhaskar Vira, Cambridge: Kunal Sen, Manchester: Katharine Adeney, Sheffield: William Gould, Leeds: Arif Zaman, London. PRESIDENT: Lord Bhikhu Parekh

Notice of Annual Conference and AGM 2007

The next BASAS Annual Conference will take place at St Catharine's College, Cambridge March 28th – 30th.

The local organiser is Dr Bhaskar Vira, [bv101@CAM.AC.UK] of the Department of Geography, Cambridge University. He welcomes suggestions of panels from potential panel organisers. Further notices will follow.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS – AUTUMN 2006

Thursday 5 October 2006 The British Academy, London

Politics and Society in Contemporary India: Change and Diversity

<http://www.britac.ac.uk/events/2006/india/prog.html>

Convenors

Professor Anthony Heath, Oxford and Roger Jeffery, Edinburgh

Demographic and related change in India Tim Dyson, FBA (LSE)

Class, caste and social mobility in contemporary India Divya Vaid and Anthony Heath, FBA (Oxford)

Everyday politics in the social sector: Health providers and ailing villagers Roger and Patricia Jeffery (Edinburgh)

Ethnographic approaches to democracy: lessons from West Bengal Mukulika Banerjee (UCL)

The changing social bases of party politics in India Yogendra Yadav (CSDS, Delhi) and Oliver Heath (BA Postdoctoral Fellow, Essex)

Becoming politicians: the politics of caste, kinship and factionalism in a north Indian town Lucia Michelutti (ESRC Postdoctoral Fellow, LSE)

The Congress Party and the Politics of Representation in India Zoya Hasan (JNU, New Delhi)

Strategic voting and ethnic politics in India Kanchan Chandra (NYU)

Comparative Constitutional Traditions in South Asia

South Asian Studies Seminar The University of Leeds

Seminars are held on Tuesdays at 5.15pm in Room G03 in the Leeds Humanities Research Institute, 29-31 Clarendon Place.

e.mail w.r.gould@leeds.ac.uk for details or directions to the LHRI

3 October 2006 Dr. John Zavos, University of Manchester

‘Negotiating multiculturalism and community cohesion: the Organisation of Hindu identity in contemporary Britain.’

10 October 2006 Rachel Berger, Concordia University and Clare College, Cambridge

‘Indigenising the Body: Ayurveda, Communal Identity and Popular Culture in Colonial UP, 1900-1948.’

7 November 2006 – starting at 4.45 pm Dr. Clare Anderson, University of Leicester.

‘Narratives of Rebellion in the Andaman Islands.’

21 November 2006 Dr. Yasmin Khan, Royal Holloway College, University of London.

‘Everyday life and experiences of Partition in North India.’

11 December 2006 Dr. Magnus Marsden, Trinity College, University of Cambridge.

‘Transnational Muslim life in northern Pakistan’

The first South Asian Studies in the North (SASIN) Seminar

Fri 20 October 2006 Roscoe Building 3.3, University of Manchester

From 11 a.m.

Cross-tradition approaches to studying South Asia

Nandini Gooptu as keynote speaker ‘Work, Politics and Social Identities under Globalization’

Nile Green ‘The Maharaja and the Sufis: Patterns of Cosmopolitanism in Hyderabad State’ (revised title)

Soumhya Venkatesan ‘Performing Hindu-friendly Islam: Muslim craft weavers and their publics, Tamilnadu, South India’

Mary Searle-Chatterjee ‘Tradition-blind? British students at S Asian universities’

Business meeting including finance and arrangements for Feb seminar

SOAS, London, November 18-19, 2006
Comparative Constitutional Traditions in South Asia

The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University (Washington, D.C.) proposes to host this together with the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London). It will be followed by a conference in 2007 at a venue likely to be in South Asia. These events will assess and evaluate the common elements of the constitutional and legal traditions in the region and explore how South Asian countries might usefully learn from constitutional experiences (both successful and unsuccessful) of their neighbors.

The conference is also supported by the Political Studies Association, Politics of South Asia Specialist Group (PSAS Group).

Participants: *Katherine Adeney*, University of Sheffield · *Granville Austin*, Independent Historian, Washington D.C. · *Rochana Bajpai*, SOAS · *Upendra Baxi*, University of Warwick · *Kevin Brown*, Indiana University · *Clark Cunningham*, Georgia State University College of Law · *John O'Dowd*, University College, Dublin · *Rohan Edrisinha*, Centre for Policy Alternatives, Colombo · *Thomas Fleiner*, Institute of Federalism, Fribourg · *Alexander Fischer*, SOAS · *Marc Galanter*, University of Wisconsin Law School · *Yash Ghai*, University of Hong Kong · *Sara Hossain*, High Court of Bangladesh · *Michael Hutt*, SOAS · *Venkat Iyer*, University of Ulster · *Gary Jacobson*, Williams College · *Ratna Kapur*, Center for Law and Feminism · *Sunil Khilnani*, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University · *Prabha Kotiswaran*, SOAS · *Sudhir Krishnaswamy*, University of Oxford · *John H. Mansfield*, Harvard Law School · *Alistair McMillan*, Nuffield College, Oxford · *Pratap Bhanu Mehta*, Jawaharlal Nehru University · *Werner Menski*, SOAS · *Matthew Nelson*, SOAS · *Vasuki Nesiah*, International Center for Transnational Justice · *Pasquale Pasquino*, CNRS and New York University · *Vikram Raghavan*, World Bank · *Lawrence Saez*, LSE · *Andras Sajo*, Central European University · *Subir Sinha*, SOAS · *Arun Thiruvengadam*, New York University School of Law

This meeting is by invitation only. For further details, see: <www.sais-jhu.edu/programs/asia/southasia/sa_events/constitutionalism.html>

or contact: southasia@jhu.edu

South Asia Trade and Investment Forum 2006

A joint forum of the South Asia Trade and Investment Network (SATIN), from the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC) and the SAARC Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI)
88A St James
London 22 - 23 November 2006

See: <http://www.cbcbglobal.org/cbcbglobal/meetings/forthcoming/satif/satin.html>

Or contact BASAS Executive Committee Member Arif Zaman [s.arif.zaman@GMAIL.COM], who is **the link**.

Call for Papers: **Refugees and the End of Empire**

29-30 June 2007 at De Montfort University, Leicester

Please send abstracts of around 250 words to Panikos Panayi ppanayi@dmu.ac.uk or Pippa Virdee, pvirdee@dmu.ac.uk

by **30 November 2006**.
continues next page

Refugees and the End of Empire

One of the most negative legacies of the twentieth century was the development of the refugee, a person who emerged during the inter-War years, as nationalism, fascism and communism gripped the European continent. While scholars have recognized the importance of war and the arrival of intolerant regimes in the construction and expulsion of refugees, less attention has focused upon the consequences of imperial collapse. All of the major Empires (broadly interpreted) which ended during the twentieth century, led to successor states which developed new forms of exclusivist national ideologies which identified, and often expelled, sectors of their populations, which did not possess the right ethnic credentials. This process first manifested itself with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, where successor states in the Balkans 'exchanged' populations in the era of the First World War, while the newly nationalist rump Turkey eliminated its Armenian and Greek populations. At the same time, the collapse of the Tsarist Empire also led to mass population displacement. At the end of the Second World War, the fall of the Nazi Empire in Eastern Europe resulted in the expulsion of Germans who had lived in Eastern Europe for centuries, while people who found themselves working in Germany either returned home or sometimes lived in refugee camps for years. The end of the British and French colonial Empires was also accompanied by population 'exchanges' and expulsions, especially in the case of India/Pakistan and Algeria, but also in smaller colonies such as Cyprus. In the case of the last of these, refugees emerged over a decade after British retreat. Finally, the end of the Soviet Union and the emergence of successor states with nationalist ideologies led to the creation of new outgroups.

The purpose of the conference is to examine the relationship between imperial collapse, the emergence of successor nationalism, the exclusion of ethnic groups with the wrong credentials, and the refugee experience. The conference organizers welcome proposals which look at these themes in all of the major cases of twentieth century imperial collapse. Themes of particular interest include: the role of empire in creating distinct ethnic populations; the emergence of exclusivist nationalist ideologies and their views of minorities; the attitude and role of successor states in the creation of refugees; and the refugee experience.

We hope to offer a small number of subsidised places to doctoral students.

The 9th Asian Urbanization Conference

will be held in Korea in August 2007.

Details are to be found at

<http://www.ship.edu/~aura>

MEMBERS' NEWS

Congratulations to Sharmina Mawani

On the award of her PhD.

Mawani, S. (2006) **The Construction of Identities Amongst Young Adult Nizari Ismaili Muslims in Toronto and Mumbai**, Unpublished PhD Thesis, SOAS, University of London.

And to her co-author Anjoom Mukadam for their publications:-

Mukadam, A. and Mawani, S. (2006), '**Nizari Ismailis in the West: Negotiating National, Religious and Ethnic Identity**' in Y. Kalogeras, E. Arapoglou and L. Manney (eds) *Transcultural Localisms: Responding to Ethnicity in a Globalized World*. Heidelberg, WinterVerlag. Mukadam, A. and Mawani, S. (2006), '**Post-Diasporic Indian Communities: A New Generation**' in S. Coleman and P. Collins (eds) *Locating the Field: Metaphors of Space, Place and Context in Anthropology*. London: Berg.

From Elisabeth Arweck elisabeth.arweck@warwick.ac.uk

Breaking the Last Taboo

A New Project in the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit at the University of Warwick

A programme on Radio 4 in June this year highlighted issues surrounding culturally mixed couples in Britain, with reference to marriages between Blacks and Asians (*Breaking the Last Taboo*, 12/6/06). While the number of mixed marriages is growing, little research has been done in this area.

A new project at the University of Warwick aims to redress this by investigating mixed-faith families and the way young people form their religious identity. The three-year study (June 2006–May 2009), funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, is carried out by Dr Elisabeth Arweck, Dr Eleanor Nesbitt, and Prof. Robert Jackson. Drawing on previous studies in the Research Unit on religious nurture, the project is looking at the factors which influence young people's religious beliefs in relations to their parents who adhere to combinations of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism.

Given the increasing diversity of young people's ethnic and cultural backgrounds, questions such as how upbringing, school education, and participation in their community activities affect religious identity are of great importance. Such issues are all the more significant in light of general assumptions about the discrete nature of religious and cultural communities, which do not allow for the rich mix of cultural strands which families and individuals within them may draw from in their everyday lives.

The research team would welcome any information about this topic and contact with members of mixed-faith families.

Dr Samiksha Sehrawat is moving from Oxford to a full-time lectureship in history at the University of Strathclyde, to start on October 1. She researches both history of medicine and environmental history.

Emma Mawdsley has left the Department of Geography at Birkbeck College (hosts for the very successful 2006 BASAS Conference) to join the Department of Geography at Cambridge, where she will be a colleague of our host for the 2007 BASAS Conference, Dr Bhaskar Vira, a coincidence which we hope will help Bhaskar..

Glyn Williams has moved from King's College London to the Department of Town and Regional Planning, University of Sheffield (glyn.williams@sheffield.ac.uk), where he will be Senior Lecturer with responsibility for creating a new MA in Planning and International Development.

"Seeing the State: Governance and Governmentality in Rural India", which he co-authored with Stuart Corbridge, Rene Veron and Manoj Srivastava has now been published in the Cambridge University Press Contemporary South Asia series (<http://www.cup.cam.ac.uk/us/catalogue/catalogue.asp?isbn=0521542553> has details and an excerpt on line). He is currently working with Katie Willis and Paula Meth on a book, "New Geographies of the Global South: 'developing areas' in a changing world", to be published by Routledge."

A Postcolonial People : South Asians in Britain

N. Ali, V.S. Kalra, S. Sayyid (eds)

"A Postcolonial People is an innovative and intriguing blend of scholarship and reportage on the multi-faceted experience of British Asians, covering everything from discrimination to bhangra, Bradford to chicken tikka, Asian British cultural landscapes to arranged marriages.

Eschewing both anthropological approaches and overtly theoretical analyses, the contributors map out the heterodox impact of British Asians on the United Kingdom, detailing their achievements and set-backs, points of intersection and divergence as a postcolonial people, and everyday lives."

CONTRIBUTORS:

Fauzia Ahmad, Claire Alexander, Humayun Ansari, Muhammad Anwar, Karl Atkin, Avtar Brah, Rachel Dwyer, Gurharpal Singh, Rupa Huq, Barnor Hesse, John Holt, Yasmin Hussain, John Hutnyk, Raminder Kaur, Arvind Mandair, Sean McLoughlin, Tariq Modood, Noha Nasser, Ceri Peach, Sanjay Sharma, Alda Terracciano, Shinder Thandi and Laura Turney

EDITORS:

N. Ali is a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Research in Primary Care, University of Leeds. V.S. Kalra is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Manchester; he is author of *From Textile Mills to Taxi Ranks* (2000) and co-author of *Diaspora and Hybridity* (2005). S. Sayyid is University Research Fellow in 'Race', Ethnicity and Postcolonialism in the School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds. He is the author of *A Fundamental Fear* (2nd edn, 2003).

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Email hurst@atlas.co.uk

Pritam Singh would welcome feedback and dialogue on his paper

2005 **'Hindu bias in India's 'secular' constitution: probing flaws in the instruments of governance'**, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.26, No.6, pp 909-926.

He says: "I am particularly interested in correspondence with those who are interested in exploring the link between centralisation, unitarist nationalism and the rise of Hindutva ideology in India. The other issue of interest to me is the flawed nature of Indian secularism."

Dr.Pritam Singh,Oxford Brookes University, [psingh@brookes.ac.uk]

From **Palash Kamruzzaman**, Liverpool

May I take this opportunity to request **Bangladeshi citizens** to participate in an online survey on **Bangladesh's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)** and its 'participatory' nature (in its preparation).

The PRSP was supposed to include views and participation from all major stakeholders i.e. direct representatives of poor, labour organisations, women groups, civil society organisations (CSOs), political parties, parliament (where applicable), sectoral ministries, regional banks and international donor agencies to name a few.

This online survey is a part of a doctoral research and is interested to comprehend and explore in which extent the PRSP of Bangladesh incorporated the ideas and views of civil society in Bangladesh and how these views enhanced the national poverty reduction strategy.

The research would greatly benefit from the participation of Bangladeshi citizens and we highly appreciate if anyone let their fellow Bangladeshi friends and colleagues know about this survey. It is ensured that all the information will be kept confidential and only be used for research purpose. Everyone who will take part into this survey will have a chance of winning one of two complementary cash prizes of BDT 15000 (Fifteen Thousand Taka).

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/sspsw/research/survey.htm>

Many thanks, Kamruzzaman

From **Barbara Harriss-White**, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford

Trade Liberalisation and India's Informal Economy

will be out before the end of 2006 from OUP New Delhi.

Edited by Barbara Harriss-White and Anushree Sinha, this collaboration between QEH, Oxford and NCAER, New Delhi compares and contrasts the insights from field research in rice and textiles with those from a novel computable general equilibrium model incorporating the informal economy.

From **Emma Tomalin**

**AHRC Diasporas, Migration and Identities Programme
Research Networks and Workshops Scheme**

**From Diaspora to Multi-locality:
Writing British Asian Cities**

We would like to inform BASAS members about a new AHRC funded 'research network' which aims to establish a permanent forum for sustained and focused networking and interchange between scholars and others interested in the South Asian heritage presence in Britain. Interested members are encouraged to log their details on the 'people' section of the network website (<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/writingbritishasiancities/>), where they can also access further details about this project. This is an interactive web resource including access to papers, a discussion forum, a database of researchers, writers, professionals, etc, and links to other sites of interest

This is an interdisciplinary network, with an emphasis upon the existing and potential contributions of the Arts and Humanities and the Social Sciences towards understanding the diversity of Asian Britain and how it has changed over time. The network will achieve this, in the first instance, by reflecting comparatively upon the ways in which the 'local' and 'trans-local' social, political, economic, cultural and religious dynamics of five distinctive 'British-Asian' cities (Birmingham, Bradford, Leicester, Manchester & Tower Hamlets) have been 'written' at particular moments in time, from the 1960s to the 2000s. We are interested to evaluate the contributions of the following genres of 'writing': ethnography; local and oral history; literary and cultural production including 'British-Asian' literature, art, films, music, etc; newspapers and the media; official reports. The network will also consider the distinctive contributions of, and interactions between, differently located 'insiders' and 'outsiders', seeking especially to interact with, and be challenged by, those active and / or working in civil society & the 'cultural' and 'community' sectors.

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