

# South Asia Newsletter



Centre of South Asian Studies

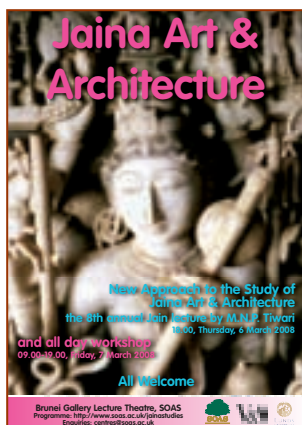
[www.soas.ac.uk/csas/](http://www.soas.ac.uk/csas/)

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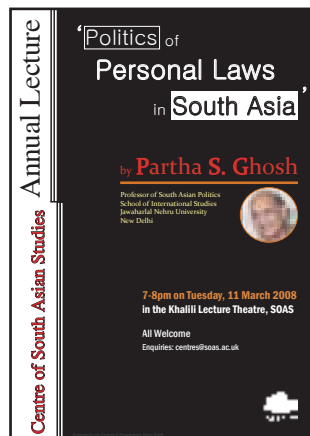
January 2008

## Forthcoming events at SOAS this term:

Centre of South Asian Studies Annual Lecture.  
Further details on [Page 10](#)



'Jaina Art & Architecture' Workshop  
and Annual Lecture  
Further details on [Page 12](#)



Tasher Desh: Dance Drama by Tagore  
Further details on [Page 9](#)



Why India? Why Now? Conference  
Further details on [Page 14](#)

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## STAFF NEWS

### New Staff Member



**Dr Simona Vittorini** BA(Bologna) MA(London) PhD(London)  
 Convenor of States People and Power of Asia and Africa, Lecturer State and Development  
 Department of Politics and International Studies

Dr Simona Vittorini has been a teacher and lecturer at SOAS for four year. She has taught on three different courses concerning state and politics in Asia and Africa. She also lectures at Birkbeck College and the University of Milan. Her research is focused on South Asian politics with special reference to political communication in contemporary India. She has three published articles, the most recent being a chapter in an edited collection entitled Travels and Collections as Metaphors of Colonial Domination in India. She is currently preparing her PhD thesis, Representing the Nation; Competing National Symbolic Repertoires in India, for publication. Recently she has worked as a consultant for UK Trade & Investment, Zurich Insurance, CMS Cameron McKenna and the current Swedish Ambassador to India.



**Dr Lawrence Saez** was elected as the new Secretary of the British Association for South Asian Studies (BASAS), one of the world's leading learned societies devoted to the study of South Asia.

In his elected capacity, Dr Saez shall exercise a general control over the Society's affairs and employees.

During his tenure in office, Dr Saez intends to dramatically enhance the Association's existing relationship with the British Academy and other scholarly institutions. Given the multidisciplinary nature of BASAS activities, Dr Saez is convinced that many South Asianists in the SOAS community will be able to benefit directly from the increased level of activity by the Association.

Accordingly, Dr Saez encourages members of the SOAS community to join BASAS.

Further details about BASAS can be found at <http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/SSAS/about.htm>

*Dr Lawrence Saez is Senior Lecturer in Comparative and International Politics, SOAS*

**Caroline Osella** has been selected to attend an SSRC Inter-Asia conference on "Asian Connections" to be held in Dubai, UAE on February 21-23, 2008. She will present a paper in the panel, "Transnational Circuits: 'Muslim Women' in Asia".  
 Website - [http://www.ssrc.org/program\\_areas/global/papers/](http://www.ssrc.org/program_areas/global/papers/)

**Filippo and Caroline Osella**, guest editors, Special issue of Modern Asian Studies on 'Islamic Reformism in South Asia', Dec 2007.

*Dr Caroline Osella is Reader in Anthropology with reference to South Asia, SOAS*

## Charles Wallace 3 Month Visiting Fellowships at SOAS

### Charles Wallace India Fellowship at SOAS

**Dr Ajay Gudavarthy** was selected as this year's Charles Wallace Indian Fellow at the Centre of South Asian Studies, SOAS. Dr Gudavarthy will spend 3 months at SOAS at the beginning of Term 3 during 2008.

Dr Ajay Gudavarthy, Assistant Professor, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. Earlier was faculty at the National Law School of India University, Bangalore. Areas of interest include theory of social movements and civil society. Recent publications include, 'Antinomies of Political Society: Implications of Uncivil Development' (co-author- G.Vijay, July 2007, EPW); Dalit and Naxalite Movements in Andhra Pradesh: Solidarity or Hegemony? (December 2005, EPW). Currently working on- Human Rights Movement(s) in India: State, Civil Society and Democracy` which is part of a larger on-going work on a book titled, Beyond Civil Society: Rethinking Radical Politics in India.

### Charles Wallace Pakistan Fellowship at SOAS

The decision has not yet been announced. Further details will be posted on the CSAS website in due course.



## Bookshelf

**Mountains Painted with Turmeric**  
**Lil Bahadur Chettri**  
 Translated and with an Introduction by  
**Michael J. Hutt**  
**Columbia University Press**  
**ISBN: 978-0-231-14356-1**

Since its publication in the late 1950s, *Mountains Painted with Turmeric* has struck a chord in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of Nepali readers. Set in the hills of far eastern Nepal, the novel offers readers a window into the lives of the people by depicting in subtle detail the stark realities of village life.

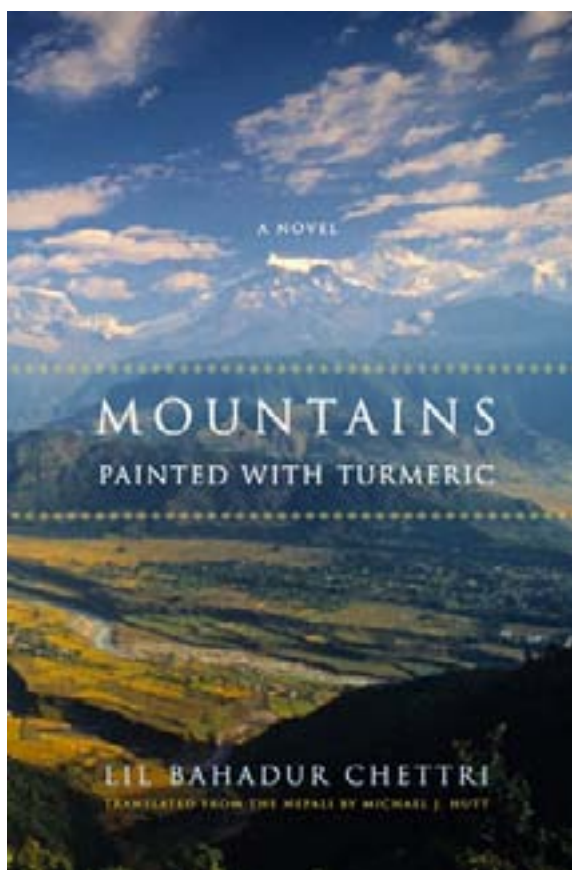
Carefully translated from the original text, *Mountains Painted with Turmeric* tells the story of a peasant farmer named Dhané (which means, ironically, “wealthy one”) who is struggling to provide for his wife and son and arrange the marriage of his beautiful younger sister. Unable to keep up with the financial demands of the “big men” who control his village, Dhané and his family suffer one calamity after another, and a series of quarrels with fellow villagers forces them into exile.

In haunting prose, Lil Bahadur Chettri portrays the dukha, or suffering and sorrow, endured by ordinary peasants; the exploitation of the poor by the rich and powerful; and the social conservatism that twists a community into punishing a woman for being the victim of a crime. Chettri describes the impoverishment, dispossession, and banishment of Dhané’s family to expose profound divisions between those who prosper and those who are slowly stripped of their meager possessions. Yet he also conveys the warmth and intimacy of village society, from which Dhané and his family are ultimately excluded.

### About the Authors

Lil Bahadur Chettri is an Indian Nepali who lives in the state of Assam in northeast India. He is the author of two additional novels, *The Unfulfilled* and *On the Banks of the Brahmaputra*.

Michael J. Hutt is professor of Nepali and Himalayan Studies in the Department of the Languages and Cultures of South Asia at the School of African and Oriental Studies in London. He is the author of *Modern Literary Nepali: An Introductory Reader* and *Unbecoming Citizens: Culture, Nationhood, and the Flight of Refugees from Bhutan*.



“This is a moving story, depicting in wonderfully rich detail the round of village life: the daily farm work and chores, the gossip chain, the weekly market, the limited opportunities, the rapacious rich preying on the poor, and women’s particular vulnerabilities. Reading this story could contribute to understanding why poor villagers would join the Maoist cause.”  
 —Ann Hunkins, poet and translator

“Michael J. Hutt’s contribution as a translator and critic of Nepali literature has been invaluable. With *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*, he brings to light an iconic Nepali novel: the story of sheltered villagers faced with a harsh, changing world. Hutt’s rendition is sensitive and skilled. Through this translation he shares with us his deep empathy for and fine understanding of Nepali reality.”  
 —Manjushree Thapa, author of *Tilled Earth* and *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy for Democracy*

“Lil Bahadur Chettri’s novel is a moving example of social realism, and Michael J. Hutt’s elegant translation lends a timeless, fable-like tone with a gorgeous rendering of the natural scenery.”  
 —Publishers Weekly

“A moving novel of social realism.”  
 —Kirkus Reviews

“A simple yet thought-provoking tale... A subtle, eye-opening look at Third World mores, and the winnowing of society’s weakest links.”  
 —Booklist

# EVENTS

## South Asian History Seminar Series



Department of History  
Faculty of Arts & Humanities  
School of Oriental & African Studies

### SOUTH ASIA HISTORY SEMINAR

Winter Term, 2007/8  
Tuesdays, 17:00  
Room G52

- 8 January**           Aparna Kapadia  
(SOAS, University of London)  
Rajputs, intermediaries and territoriality in middle-period Gujarat
- 15 January**           Aditya Sarkar  
(SOAS, University of London)  
Working-class unrest in the plague years: Bombay, 1896-98
- 22 January**           Fiona Groenhout  
(University of Western Australia)  
Better mad than bad? Colonial knowledge, indirect rule and the politics of princely 'character', 1880-1940
- 29 January**           Saqib Baburi  
(SOAS, University of London)  
Hidden treasure: Emperor Shah Jahan's lost Padshah namah
- 5 February**           Ayan Shome  
(SOAS, University of London)  
Balban: His career and notions of authority in the Delhi Sultanate
- 19 February**           Claude Markovits  
(École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris)  
Beyond imperial connections: Indian circulations outside the British Empire
- 26 February**           Raf Gelders  
(Ghent University)  
From ascetics to crafty priests: The genealogy of colonial discourse
- 4 March**               Tanika Sarkar  
(Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)  
Performing power and troubling plays: public theatre in colonial Bengal
- 11 March**             Polly O'Hanlon  
(Oxford University)  
Intellectuals and intermediaries in the seventeenth-century Maratha state

Convenors:            Professor Ravi Ahuja and Dr Shabnum Tejani

Updates will be posted on the SOAS website at: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/academics/departments/history/events>

## South Asian Law Seminar Series



The soon-to-be opened South Asian Law Centre in the School of Law at SOAS announces a series of South Asian Law Seminars at SOAS in the Spring Term 2008. Further seminars/lectures are planned for the summer term.

**Tuesdays at 6pm unless otherwise stated**  
**Room 116, Main Building, SOAS**

- 08 January**                      Note: 7 pm start this day only  
**Dr. Usha Ramanathan**, Delhi/SOAS  
**Eminent domain and mass displacement**
- 15 January**                      **Dr. Pervez Mody**, Cambridge University  
**Registering distress: Love-marriage in Delhi**
- 22 January**                      **Mekhala Krishnamurthy**, UCL, London  
**Between 'community' and 'state'. An ethnographic glimpse of Nari Adalats (Women's Courts) in Gujarat**
- 29 January**                      **Dr. Roshan de Silva Wijeyeratne**, Griffith University, Brisbane  
**Rethinking Sri Lanka's constitutional present: Buddhism, the Ashokan persona and the galactic polity.**
- 05 February**                      **Prof. Nazrul Islam**, Dhaka University  
**South Asian laws on right to information**
- 19 February**                      **Dr. Hiroko Ito**, Tokyo  
**South Asian laws in Japan**
- 26 February**                      **Biswajit Chanda**, SOAS School of Law  
**Harmonisation of family laws in Bangladesh**
- 04 March**                         **Dr. Shirley Firth**, Senior Research Associate, CEMS, SOAS  
**South Asians and death rituals in the UK**

Free and open to the public  
 Enquiries: [wm4@soas.ac.uk](mailto:wm4@soas.ac.uk)

## The Buddhist Forum Seminars

### THE CENTRE OF BUDDHIST STUDIES

Term Two: January-March 2008

Friday, 3.30-5pm

Room G2, Main Building, SOAS  
(Free and open to the public)

**11 January**

**Martin Boord**

Mi-kha the Gossip Girl  
Exorcism of a Folk Demoness in Tibetan Rural Communities

**18 January**

**Tadeusz Skorupski**

Men, Women, Sexuality, and Enlightenment

**25 January**

**Karel Werner**

The Liberated Person in Buddhism  
Examination of the Concepts of Arhat, Bodhisattva and Buddha

**1 February**

**Sam van Schaik**

A Buddhist Pilgrim's Progress: On the Tibetan Passport of a 10th-Century  
Chinese Pilgrim Travelling to India

**8 February**

**Catherine Newell**

Wat Dhammakaya and the Politics of Meditation in Thailand

**22 February**

**Paul Buxton**

Unearthed! New Perspectives on Old Treasures:  
Visionary Buddhism in Tibet

**29 February**

**Uranchimeg Borjigin**

Buddhism and Mongolian Popular Beliefs



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## Forthcoming Inaugural Lectures at SOAS (by Centre Members)

### **What's the Use of Anthropology to International Development?**

**Professor David Mosse, Professor of Anthropology, SOAS**

Chair: Professor John Harris, University of Vancouver

Director will preside.

**5.30pm on 18 January 2008**

in Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre

All Welcome, No booking required

Enquires: mo2@soas.ac.uk

### **Bollywood's India: Hindi Cinema as a Guide to Modern India**

**Professor Rachel Dwyer, Professor of Indian Culture and Cinema, SOAS**

Chair: Professor Christopher Pinney, University College London

Director will preside.

**5.30pm on 5 February 2008**

in Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre

All Welcome, No booking required

Enquires: mo2@soas.ac.uk

## SOAS Concert Series 2007/08

### **Tasher Dosh: Dance Drama by Tagore** **Tasher Dosh**

26 April 2008

7:00-9:00 PM

Venue: Brunei Gallery Room: Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre

A new production of Tagore's most significant dance drama, Tasher Dosh (Land of Cards), inspired by Alice in Wonderland. The Bengali poet and writer Tagore is considered the voice of India's spiritual heritage. Tasher Dosh, written in 1933 in the context of colonial India, is a satire on the rigidity of class systems, both Indian and British, employing the dramatic and comedic device of a Land of Cards where a population is trapped in stagnation and inflexibility.



Tasher Dosh

FREE ADMISSION TO ALL CONCERTS, NO BOOKING REQUIRED

Venue capacity is limited and we operate a first come first served system. We advise you to arrive early to avoid disappointment.

VENUE: BRUNEI GALLERY LECTURE THEATRE, SOAS, University of London

ENQUIRIES: TEL 020 7898 4500, EMAIL musicevents@soas.ac.uk / www.soas.ac.uk/concerts

## The Centre of South Asian Studies Annual Lecture

### About the Speaker

**Partha S. Ghosh** (b. 1947) is Professor of South Asian Studies at the School of International Studies, JNU. He was formerly a Visiting Professor at the O. K. D. Institute of Social Change and Development, Guwahati, and a Research Director at the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi. His areas of interest include South Asian politics, foreign policy-domestic politics interface, and ethnicity.

Ghosh has authored several books which are: *India's North-East and Beyond: Cross-National Perspectives* (New Delhi: Inter-India Publications, 2008, edited, forthcoming), *The Politics of Personal Law in South Asia: Identity, Nationalism and the Uniform Civil Code* (New Delhi and London: Routledge, 2007), *Unwanted and Uprooted: A Political Study of Refugees, Migrants, Stateless and Displaced in South Asia* (New Delhi: Samskriti, 2004), *Ethnicity versus Nationalism: The Devolution Discourse in Sri Lanka* (New Delhi: Sage, 2003), *BJP and the Evolution of Hindu Nationalism* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1999, 2000), *Pluralism and Equality: Values in Indian Society and Politics* (New Delhi: Sage, 2000, co-edited), *Rivalry and Revolution in South and East Asia* (London: Ashgate, 1997, edited), *Cooperation and Conflict in South Asia* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1989, 1995) and *Sino-Soviet Relations: US Perceptions and Policy Responses: 1849-1959* (New Delhi: Uppal, 1981). He has also contributed chapters to many edited volumes. Besides, he has a long list of publications in professional journals of international repute as well as magazines and newspapers.

Ghosh is well traveled both within India and abroad, including all the countries of South Asia. He spent two years in Germany as a Humboldt Fellow (1985-86, 1993) and one year in the United States as a Ford Scholar (1992-93). Between 1989 and 1994, he was several times invited to Sri Lanka to serve as a member of the Sri Lanka government sponsored international teams that monitored the local, parliamentary and presidential elections. Ghosh is the recipient of many national and international awards, prizes and scholarships.

In 1990-91 he served as a member of the Indian Censor Board for Film Certification, Delhi Chapter, which was meant to certify the documentary films.

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**The CSAS Annual Lecture is taking place at  
7-8pm on Tuesday, 11 March 2008  
in the Khalili Lecture Theatre, Main Building, SOAS  
All Welcome (free and open to the public)  
Enquiries: [js64@soas.ac.uk](mailto:js64@soas.ac.uk)**

### About the Lecture

#### Politics of Personal Laws in South Asia

By  
**Partha S. Ghosh**

The viability of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) has always been a bone of contention in socially and politically plural South Asia. It is entangled within the polemics of identity politics, minority rights, women's rights, national integration, uniform citizenry, and, of late, global Islamic politics and universal human rights. While champions of each category view the issue from their own perspectives, making the debate extremely complex, this lecture tries to provide a holistic political analysis of the issues involved.

At the core of the discourse between the pro- and anti-UCC groups is whether there should be a centralised view of the legal system in a given society, or, rather, a decentralised one which includes in its purview the personal laws of religious groups and the customary laws of local castes and tribes.

As almost all South Asian states today subscribe to a decentralised view, as also (most of them) share a common history, this lecture would present a comparative analysis of the applicability of the UCC. India would figure most prominently, being the most plural and vibrant democracy, as well as accounting for almost three-fourths of the region's population. This would give the backdrop for an analysis of the other states in the region.

Annual Lecture

Centre of South Asian Studies

‘Politics of  
Personal Laws  
in South Asia’

by **Partha S. Ghosh**

Professor of South Asian Politics  
School of International Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi



**7-8pm on Tuesday, 11 March 2008**  
**in the Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS**

All Welcome

Enquiries: [centres@soas.ac.uk](mailto:centres@soas.ac.uk)



Designed by the Centres & Programmes Office, SOAS

# Jaina Art & Architecture

**New Approach to the Study of  
Jaina Art & Architecture**

**the 8th annual Jain lecture by M.N.P. Tiwari  
18.00, Thursday, 6 March 2008**

**and all day workshop  
09.00-19.00, Friday, 7 March 2008**

**All Welcome**

**Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS**  
Programme: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/jainastudies>  
Enquiries: [centres@soas.ac.uk](mailto:centres@soas.ac.uk)





## Jaina Art & Architecture 10th Jaina Studies Workshop

### The Annual Jain Lecture

Thursday, 6 March (6pm)

in the Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS

**Professor Maruti Nandan P. Tiwari**

(Banaras Hindu University)

**New Approach to the Study of Jaina Art and Architecture**

### Workshop Programme,

Friday, 7 March (9am-7pm)

in the Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS

#### Speaker

**Prof Avadhanula Vijaya Kumar Babu**  
(Osmania University Hyderabad)

**Prof Nalini Balbir**  
(University of Paris III)

**Dr Robert del Bonta**  
(San Francisco)

**Prof Christine Chojnacki**  
(University of Lyon)

**Dr Max Deeg**  
(Cardiff University)

**Prof Christoph Emmrich**  
(Toronto)

**Dr Peter Flügel**  
(SOAS)

**Dr Janice Leoshko**  
(University of Texas, Austin)

**Uma Maheshwari**  
(JNU, New Delhi)

**Dipl Ing Gerd Mevissen**  
(FU-Berlin)

**Dr Lisa Nadine Owen**  
(University of North Texas)

**Prof Olle Qvarnström**  
(Lund University) &

**Dr Niels Hammer**  
(Kopenhagen)

**John Henry Rice**  
(University of Pennsylvania)

**Dr Prakash Shah**  
(SOAS)

**Prof Alvappillai Veluppillai**  
(Tempe)

#### Title of Paper

Jaina Stūpa at Vaddamanu, Andhra Pradesh: A Study

Jain Yantras: Texts and Representations

From Narrative to Icon: The Bāhubali Image at Śravana Belgola

Eulogy and Ritual in Jaina Medieval Literature

Indian Influence on Mani Reconsidered: The Case of Jainism

The Man Who Fell from the Gopuram Conflict, Consecration and Reconstruction among the Jains of Kanchi

Jain Sacred Places: Sammeta Śikhara

Title TBC

The Tamil Jains and the Cakkili Raja Story: Constructing Identities

North Bengal (Ancient Varendra): An Innovative Sub-Centre of Jaina Sculptural Art

Demarcating Sacred Space: The Jina Images at Kalugumalai

The Jain Cave Paintings at Ellora

Orienting Jaina Polity: Temple Building in Vijayanagara-Period Kanara

Jain Temple Art and Ritual in the Diaspora: The Derasar at Potters Bar

South Indian Jainism: The Role of Religious Polemics in Tamil

#### Organisers

Dr Peter Flügel (SOAS)

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E-mail: [jainstudies@soas.ac.uk](mailto:jainstudies@soas.ac.uk)

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## EVENTS

International conference for the UK creative industries

# Why India? Why Now?



**A one-day prestigious event on 28th January 2008, Brunei Gallery, SOAS**

This event will feature what present day India has to offer the UK creative industries, highlighting why 2008 is the right time for creative businesses to look at this lucrative emerging economy.

The conference is sponsored by Creative Connexions (a new initiative helping UK creative industries explore business opportunities in India).

**An excellent array of speakers has been carefully selected to provide the most important insights and experience in a hugely competitive field.**

- Hear inspirational case studies and success stories from leading companies
- Find the best way to take your company to the next level of international expansion
- Network with peers
- Put your questions to the panel
- Take advice specifically to your needs
- Share in their knowledge.



## CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

The Why India? Why Now? conference proudly boasts an exceptional line-up of world renowned business and creative industries names.

Rodney Fitch CBE, Fitch – Conference Chair Founder of internationally acclaimed design agency, Fitch, a former member of the Design Council, and a past president of the Designers and Art Directors Association and the Chartered Society of Designers.

Laura Hoke, Creative Connexions. Delivering the conference welcome address.

Alpesh Patel, UK Trade and Industry Dealmakers between India and UK. One of the UK's most well known financial commentators and authors with nine best selling books on trading.

Graham Cartledge, Benoy. A fellow of the Chartered Society of Designers for more than 35 years, with a distinguished career in architecture and design.

Sharon Bamford, CEO of UK-India Business Council. Lead organisation supporting UK India commerce.

Parminder Vir OBE, Film Producer. Conference Content Organiser. A member of BAFTA, appointed to the UK Film Council in 1999.

Mehmood Khan, Indian Institute of Management.

Working at Unilever since 1982 across divisions such as Marketing, Exports, Procurement, Business Development and Innovation.

Janice Hughes, Spectrum Value Partners. A respected and experienced economist in the field of fixed and mobile telecommunications.

Parvinder Bhatia, VTR plc / Prime Focus Group. Associated with industry bodies in India including FICCI and CII.

Peter Day, BBC Radio 4. Afternoon Panel Chair. One of the most renowned business reporters in the United Kingdom, at the forefront of the business news for more than 30 years.

For further details please visit [www.whyindiawhynow.com](http://www.whyindiawhynow.com)

## DATE AND LOCATION

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2008 (9am-6pm, plus drinks reception), Brunei Gallery, SOAS, Russell Square

## WHO IS IT FOR?

Media creatives, creative SMEs, academics, finance sector with an interest in media investment, others with an interest in India and the creative industries.

## HOW TO BOOK

**Tickets are selling out fast, please book early to avoid disappointment. To book a place and for full programme details visit: [www.whyindiawhynow.com](http://www.whyindiawhynow.com)**

For more information contact Katie Mills, SOAS Interface, [katiemills@soas.ac.uk](mailto:katiemills@soas.ac.uk)



## Leading South Asia academics discuss honour killings

by Lawrence Saez and Eleanor Catherine James, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)

The issue of honour killings is one of most hotly contested controversies in the study of gender politics in South Asia. Sadly, repeated instances of such murders have also made the subject of 'honour killings' a prominent policy subject for debate in Britain. In order to explore the cultural, legal, and epistemological facets to 'honour killings', a world renowned panel of respected academic figures and practitioners met in London on 6 November 2007 at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London.

The event, co-sponsored by the Politics of South Asia Specialist Group of the PSA, the South Asian Network on Research on Gender, Law, and Governance (SARN), and the University of Warwick, took the form of a one-day international conference under the stewardship of Professor Shirin Rai, one of the world's leading authorities on gender, governance, and development.

The conference panelists framed the question on honour killings within the context governing communities, polities, and sexualities in India, Pakistan and Britain. Speakers Kaveri Sharma and Amrit Wilson made presentations on the legal definitions of honour killings. Group discussion afterwards was mediated by Chair Judge Marilyn Mornington. The audience pointed out that many terms specific to South Asian cultures are not defined in British Law, such as "honour." **This makes it difficult to work with judges, social workers and housing officials in cases where such cultural issues are involved. Their**

lack of understanding and/or training on these cultures means terms such as dowry abuse are problematic when it comes to carrying out their duties. Other conference attendees pointed out the complexities of defining honour killings. For instance, Professor Shaheen Sardar Ali pointed out that many instances of violence were based on financial or political feuds within families. The ability of these families to justify crimes through terms specific to South Asian culture was enabling miscarriages of justice. Professor Ali suggested for the need to deglamourize honour killings. In her view, the reporting of these events tend to articulate the perspective of the perpetrator rather than the victim and can obscure the real motive of the crime. For her part, Judge Mornington took the view that differentiation and definition of complexities regarding cases involving South Asian women would allow for better coping mechanisms by the legal machinery of the state. During the conference, further

speakers addressed the issue of the relationship of honour killings to the topic of race and violence. Participants agreed that many white British women were also facing violence within the home and that this was largely overlooked by the popular media. In this sense, participants talked about the idea that honour was not only a South Asian notion and that this concept existed in many communities, including white British ones. There was agreement that culture specific terms must be used to explain the contexts from which South Asian women victims of violence come from, rather than serve as generic labels that easily become tools of discrimination. Nevertheless, many participants pointed out that potential victims of honour killings remain unprotected by police and social services because initial interest is often in the immigration status of the woman, rather than the nature or severity of her complaint against her male partner.



Participants to the conference then shifted the focus of the debate by discussing the role of religious leaders (or *walis*) with relation to honour killing crimes in South Asia. Speakers Nafisa Shah, Uma Chakravarty and Pratiksha Baxi made presentations on the topic of *wali*. For instance, speaker Nafisa Shah spoke of the possibility of *walis* being female members of the victim's family. She elaborated that the perpetrators and victims family are usually from the same immediate family. This means that the perpetrator and *wali* can actually be mirror images of the each other. Her argument was that the structure of violence thus fits into the **rhythm of the law**. Professor Uma Chakravarty took a feminist/civil rights activist stance, claiming that the conceptual framework of violence need to be understood. In her view, the relationship between sexual governance and domestic and cultural could be termed 'a deeply political issue'. Like other speakers, Professor Chakravarty emphasized that **honour crimes need** to be understood as part of broader hierarchies of oppression.

Once again, the cultural dimensions of honour killings were addressed. For instance, Professor Shaheen Ali here pointed out that there are multiple layers of cultural discourse surrounding honour crimes. Her view was that they are not just about killing per se, but involve other types of punishment. Nevertheless, participants pointed out that the incidence of honour killings is alarming. One participant suggested that over 90% of criminal cases lodged in the Sindh province (Pakistan) are honour crimes. At the same time, there is a great deal of suppression of evidence from family members. The consensus was that legislation in South Asia strongly reflects cultural norms and values, thus there was some caution about the potential for reversing further developments in honour killings.

The event culminated with



presentations by Professor Shaheen Sardar Ali and Reena Patel relating to their work regarding the South Asian Research Network on Gender, Law, and Governance (SARN) in Pakistan and India respectively. It was noted that the spread and prevalence of HIV/Aids in South Asia had contributed to the incidents of violence against women, including honour killings, which were a feature of South Asian communities in South Asia and in the diaspora. Professor Rai linked the discussion about honour killings to a broader debate about women's political representation. She argued that in order to hold on to their legislative seats in India, female politicians often strove to **de-genderise their** positions and their political agendas. The result of this strategy was that many women MPs did not express a desire to participate in development or social sector portfolios, opting instead for ministries that had no direct connection to gender issues. Professor Rai addressed the issue of engagement. She argued that if equality is the goal, attitudes need to be challenged so equal representation is needed at every level of government. Nevertheless she emphasized that having quotas is not the issue; it is the sustainability of negotiated participation that is critical.

The final keynote speaker at the conference was Dr. Maleeha Lodhi, Pakistan's High Commissioner to the UK. During her presentation she addressed the importance that women politicians had had in South Asia. She offered examples from her past experience as a female journalist and diplomat working in and for Pakistan. Dr Lodhi agreed with Professor Rai that representation quotas were insufficient for sustainable participation. In her view, such quotas could lead women becoming 'surrogates' to fill positions, often being given seats on less important committees. She agreed with the proposition that the thrust of party competition can lead women politicians to degenderise their position, but she stressed that this is a process of evolution. However, she concluded that representation is not the main issue. It is women's political consciousness and agency that will create the preconditions of equality and emancipation that are needed to reduce gender discrimination in access to social welfare and economic opportunity as well as to stop gender based violence.

**Dr Lawrence Saez is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Politics. Eleanor Catherine James is a student at SOAS and President of the SOAS Women's Society.**

## SOUTH ASIA RESEARCH (SAR)

South Asia Research is an interdisciplinary area journal for the South Asia region, now published by Sage Publications in London and edited by Werner MENSKI. The topics covered include modern and pre-modern history, politics, economics, anthropology, literary and visual culture, language and literature. Its primary aim is to give rapid access to current research work and to provide opportunities for publication to research students as well as to established scholars. In addition to reports of research in progress and book reviews, review articles are also welcome. South Asia Research also publishes 'thought pieces' and interpretative essays that address issues and problems arising from new research.

SAR now appears three times a year and is available electronically through SAGE, which has led to a much larger readership for the journal, as access figures demonstrate.

SAR is available on line at <http://sar.sagepub.com/>

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#### Articles

##### SHABNUM TEJANI

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##### SHANDIP SAHA

The Darbār, the British, and the Runaway Mahārāja: Religion and Politics in Nineteenth Century Western India

##### YUMNA SIDDIQI

'Power Smashes into Private Lives': Violence, Globalization and Cosmopolitanism in Salman Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown*

##### TRINANJAN CHAKRABORTY and ABHIJIT KUNDU

The Coming of the Secular in Indian Polity: A Sociological Reading

##### ASHOK K. PANKAJ

Engaging with Discourse on Caste, Class and Politics in India

#### Review article

##### ROSHAN DE SILVA WIJEYERATNE

Colonialism, Caste and Custom in Indian History: Revisiting Governmentality  
Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton and London: Princeton University Press, 2001).

#### Book Reviews

##### FABRIZIO M. FERRARI

Imtiaz Ahmad (ed.), *Understanding Terrorism. Beyond Statist Discourses*.

##### SUMAIYA KHAIR

Amarjit Kaur and Ian Metcalfe (eds.), *Mobility, Labour Migration and Border Controls in Asia*.

##### FABRIZIO M. FERRARI

Vasudha Dhagamwar, *Role and Image of Law in India: The Tribal Experience*.

##### FRANCESCA ORSINI

Malashri Lal and Sukrita Paul Kumar (eds.), *Interpreting homes in South Asian literature*.

### South Asia Research 28.1 [February 2008]:

#### Articles

##### NEERA CHANDHOKE

Exploring the Right to Secession: The South Asian Context

##### RAZIUDDIN AQUIL

Hazrat-i-Dehli: The Making of the Chishti Sufi Centre and the Stronghold of Islam

##### MOSTAFA HAIDER

Recognising Complexity, Embracing Diversity: Working Children in Bangladesh

##### SHOBNA NIJHAWAN

'The Touchstone of a Nation's Greatness is the Status of its Women' – Responses to Colonial Discourses on Indian Womanhood

##### AYAKO KAGEYAMA

Extent of Poverty Alleviation by Migrant Remittances in Sri Lanka.

#### Reviews

##### AYLA KARMALI

Carsten Wieland, *Nation State by Accident: The Politicization of Ethnic Groups and the Ethnicization of Politics: Bosnia, India, Pakistan*

##### JEREMY A BROWN

Atul K Shah, *Celebrating Diversity*

##### CAROLYN JORDAN

Philippe Gervaid-Lambony, Frédéric Landy and Sophie Oldfield (eds.), *Reconfiguring Identities and Building Territories in India and South Africa*

##### LALITA DU PERRON

Lakshmi Subramaniam, *From the Tanjore Court to the Madras Music Academy: A Social History of Music in South India*

##### MARTIN MENSKI

Kaushik Sunder Rajan. *Biocapital. The Constitution of Postgenomic Life*.



## Divided We Stand

India in a Time of Coalitions

Paranjay Guha Thakurta and Shankar Raghuraman, Senior Editor, *The Times of India*

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Neloufer De Me

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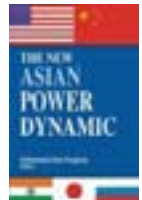


## The New Asian Power Dynamic

Edited by Maharajakrishna Rasgotra

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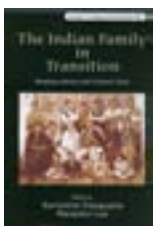
## The Indian Family in Transition

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M Micheal, University of Mumbai

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May 2007 \* 372 pages  
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### 'South Asian Contact Zones in the Metropolis' Workshop

#### **Making Britain: South Asian Visions of Home and Abroad 1870-1950**

**Making Britain** is a 3 year AHRC-funded project that examines South Asian contributions to Britain's literary, cultural and political life in the period 1870-1950. Complicating the common perception that a homogeneous British culture only began to diversify after the Second World War, the project explores how an early diasporic population impacted on British life and helped to form contemporary Britain's cultural-political identities. An interdisciplinary approach will illuminate the diverse ways in which South Asian writers, artists, activists and professionals in Britain formed affiliations, groupings and solidarities to create a dynamic 'contact zone' at the heart of empire.

---

#### **Workshop 1: 'South Asian contact zones in the metropolis'**

Wednesday 23 April 2008

9.30am to 4.30pm

Wolfson Room, Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, London

**This one-day workshop** will be considering South Asians and their varied interactions with the metropolis in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Keynote speakers are Antoinette Burton (Professor of Global and Transnational Studies, University of Illinois) addressing themes of diaspora and trans-nationalism, and Partha Mitter (Emeritus Professor of Art History, University of Sussex) addressing the interface between migrant artists and modernism. There will also be a panel on 'Indians on the Celtic Fringe'. The day will be rounded off by a plenary panel of the core research team on the **Making Britain** project discussing the project and the day's papers.

**Making Britain** is led by Professor Susheila Nasta (Open University), in collaboration with Professor Elleke Boehmer (University of Oxford) and Dr Ruvani Ranasinha (King's College London), and Research Assistants Dr Sumita Mukherjee (Oxford) and Dr Rehana Ahmed (Open). We are working in partnership with the British Library and SALIDAA, and in consultation with leading scholars Dr Rozina Visram, Professor Partha Mitter, Professor Lyn Innes and Dr Deborah Swallow.

For any queries please email [arts-making-britain@open.ac.uk](mailto:arts-making-britain@open.ac.uk)

For registration details, please visit [www.open.ac.uk/arts/south-asians-making-britain](http://www.open.ac.uk/arts/south-asians-making-britain)

\*As places are limited, please register your interest in attending this workshop as soon as possible; registration deadline is Wednesday 3 April 2008.

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For directions to Senate House, see: <http://www.lon.ac.uk/map>

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## Experiencing the state: marginalised people and the politics of development in India

The Society, Environment and Development (SED) cluster invites you to come and engage in dialogue concerning contemporary interactions between the state and its marginalised populations, and consider how these populations both experience and shape the contemporary Indian state.

**Keynote Speaker: Dr Glynn Williams, University of Sheffield**

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2008**

Calling young academics including graduate students seeking a forum to present 'work in progress'



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- Changing political environment: transition of governments from the NDA to the UPA – left coalition;
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The workshop will draw on empirical case studies from India, to discuss the following:

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- Suitability of state policy to the needs of marginalised communities;
- Representation of marginalised communities by state agencies, formal & informal organisations;
- Politics of power relations as an influencing factor for participation in & impact of state policy;
- Impact of state actions on livelihoods of marginalized communities and shaping of state processes through the experiences of and reactions by marginal people.



**Contact details:** For more details and to register contact:

Philippa Williams ([pjw61@cam.ac.uk](mailto:pjw61@cam.ac.uk))  
or Deepta Chopra ([dc323@cam.ac.uk](mailto:dc323@cam.ac.uk))

Deadline for paper submissions: December 14<sup>th</sup> 2007

**EVENTS**

अनु प्रत्नास आयवः पदं नवीयो अक्रमुः

*The ancient bards have walked in a newer step—R̥g-Veda 9, 23, 2*

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**25th Annual STIMW Symposium**  
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University of Manchester

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Offers of papers by 14 Jan 2008 please to  
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In 2006 STIMW moved successfully to Manchester to continue to offer a forum for the discussion of papers on varied aspects of Indian religions. This year, STIMW celebrates 25 years by combining with the 20th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies being held in the University of Manchester from 7-11 July 2008

Paper proposals for STIMW 2008 are particularly welcomed from international scholars who would not normally be able to attend the one day event in the UK, but who will be attending the ECMSAS conference.

For details of ECMSAS 2008, see <http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/ecmsas/>.

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# NEW AND FORTHCOMING TITLES

## Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series

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**Pritam Singh**, Oxford Brookes University, UK

This book examines India's development through an exploration of the triangular relationship between federalism, nationalism and the development process. It focuses on one of the seemingly paradoxical cases of impressive development and sharp federal conflicts that have been witnessed in the state of Punjab.

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**Kishore C. Dash**,

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Edited by **Heidi R.M. Pauwels**, University of Washington, Seattle, USA

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A Complex Web

**Ali Riaz**, Illinois State University, USA

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## **BASAS Annual Conference 2008**

**University of Leicester  
26-28 March 2008**

The British Association of South Asian Studies (BASAS) is hosting its annual conference at the University of Leicester. You are welcome to join us. BASAS annual conferences are noted for their friendliness, informality, and open interdisciplinary intellectual exchange. The Association hosts the Nirman Foundation lecture each year at the time of the BASAS annual conference. This year's speaker will be Vishvajit Pandya. Each year, BASAS also awards a prize for the most outstanding paper given by a student at its annual conference.

Further details about the conference can be obtained from the conference organisers:

Dr Prashant Kidambi (University of Leicester). Email: [pk64@le.ac.uk](mailto:pk64@le.ac.uk)

Dr Clare Anderson (University of Warwick). Email: [clare.anderson@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:clare.anderson@warwick.ac.uk)

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Further details about BASAS can be obtained via its website  
<http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/SSAS/about.htm>

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The Centre Chair will have the final say on which materials appear in the Newsletter. Items we would like to particularly receive are:

- reports on academic workshops/conferences;
- details of forthcoming academic events

We would like to thank all the readers who have already sent in articles.



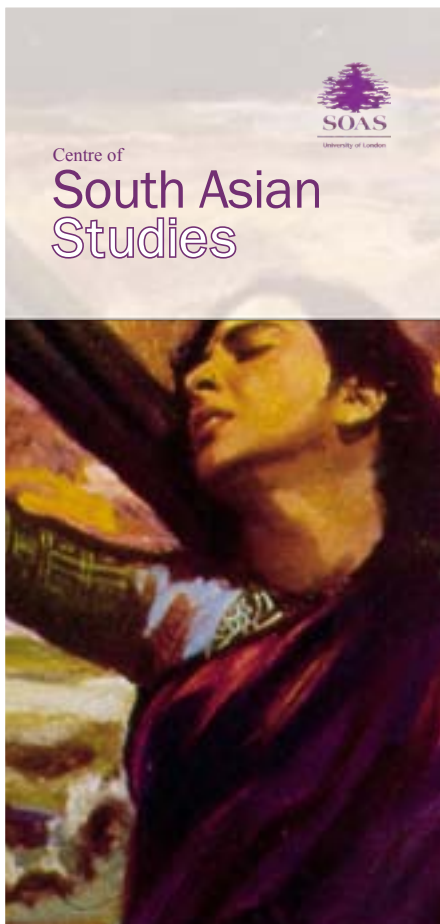
## CENTRE OF SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

Since its inception in 1916, the School of Oriental and African Studies has been an important international centre for the study of South Asia. In 1966, the Centre of South Asia Studies was established to co-ordinate the research of the South Asian specialists spread widely throughout SOAS.

At present SOAS employs over thirty full-time South Asian specialists in the teaching staff. In addition to a department of South Asian Languages and Cultures, SOAS has South Asia specialists in the departments of Anthropology, Art and Archaeology, Development Studies, Economics, History, Law, Music, Religions and Politics. Several South Asian specialists are also based near SOAS in other institutions of the University of London.

One floor of the SOAS Library is dedicated to the South Asia collection, overseen by the South Asia librarian and two assistants. The Library continues to develop its web pages relating to South Asian Studies.

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## Centre of South Asia Studies

### Contact Details

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### CSAS Keywords Webpage:

The Keywords Project initiated by Dr Rachel Dwyer can be found on:

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The essays on South Asian Keywords have been written by a number of internationally known scholars.

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- CSAS mailing list;
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- your first name and surname.



# NOTES

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