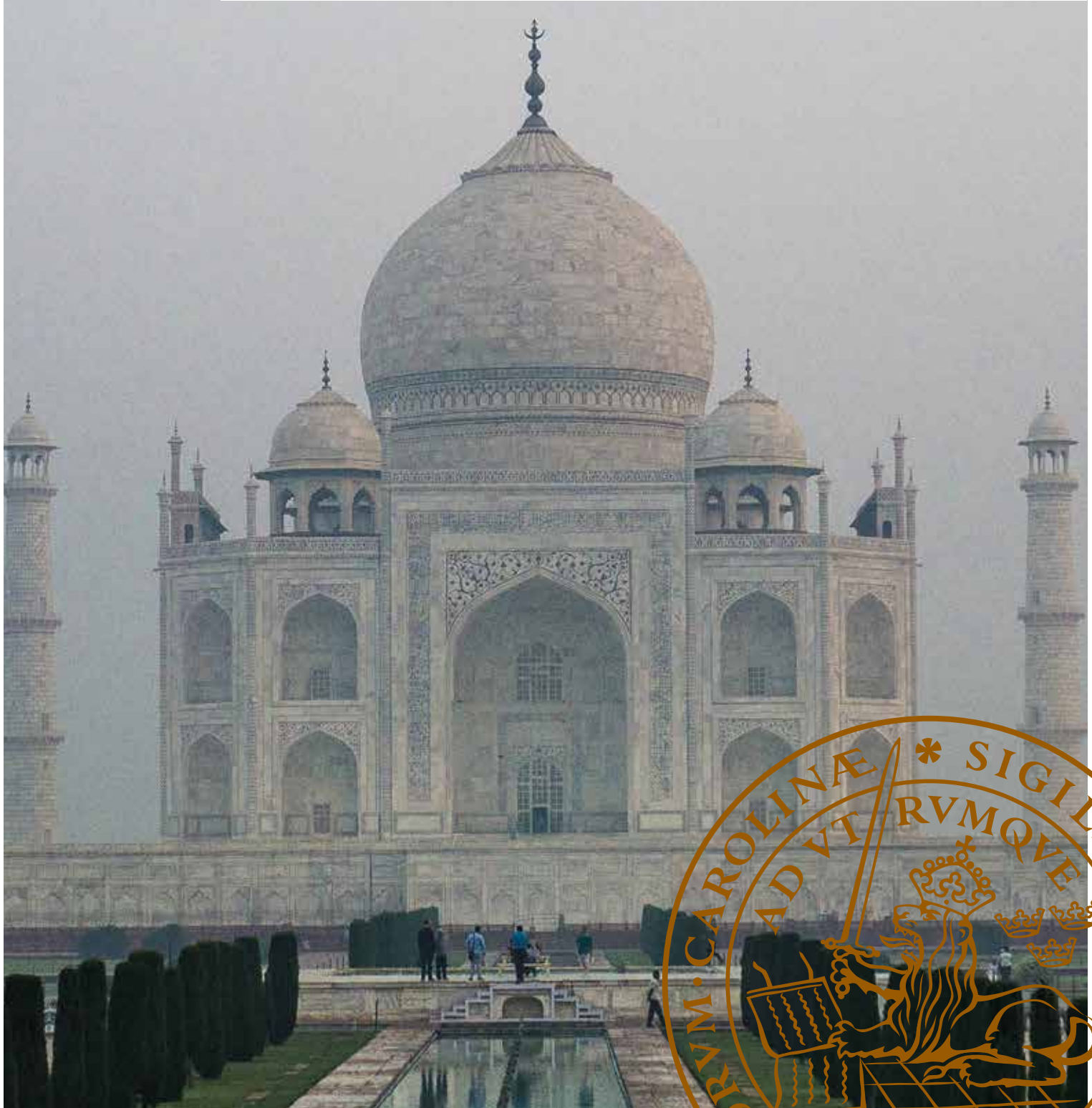




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SASNET Activity Report 2018

SWEDISH SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES NETWORK



SASNET Activity Report 2018

During 2018 SASNET has conducted a wide range of activities to bolster South Asia research and research related accomplishments at Lund University. SASNET has collaborated with several organizations both within Lund University but also with organizations from all over the country through seminars, publications, networking, and conferences. During 2018 SASNET had three employees: office director/research coordinator Andreas Johansson (100%); researcher Admir Skodo (100%) and teaching assistant Soumi Banerjee (20%).



Crowd at a SASNET event

EVENTS

During the year SASNET hosted several events, most of which were open lectures, but many were also connected to courses. SASNET covered a wide array of topics and invited some of the most prominent South Asia scholars around the world.

18 January

Professor Nishi Mitra vom Berg, held a talk entitled: "Universities as Workplace: Gender Discrimination and Work-Life Balance" at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

21 February

Dr. Henrik Chetan Aspengren, held a talk entitled: "Is India rising? Reflections on Indian foreign policy and its limitations" at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

8 March

Film Screening of the movie *India's Daughter* at Stora Algatan 4, International Desk, at Lund University.

16 March

Shweta Kishore held a lecture on Indian independent documentary. This open event was held in collaboration with the School of Journalism.

3 April

Launch of the new book *Miraklet Indien och dess bak-sida* at SASNET. The book is edited by former SASNET employees Lars Eklund and Staffan Lindberg.

9 April

SASNET hosted a lecture by professor Benjamin D. Hopkins on the forms of colonial authority along the external frontier of British India, organized together with the Graduate School.

23 April

SASNET organized a panel discussion on state building in Afghanistan in a global context. The panel consisted of Professor Robert Crews (Stanford University), Anna-Karin Johansson (former General Secretary of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan), Dr. Admir Skodo (SASNET, Lund University), and Professor Sari Kuovo (Gothenburg University and Afghanistan Analysts Network). The panel was moderated by Ted Svensson (Political Science, Lund University).

25 April

SASNET hosted a seminar at the Center for Theology and Religious Studies on the Afghan Shia: Politics, Piety, and Diaspora.

7 May

Together with the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI), SASNET hosted a seminar in Stockholm on democracy in conflict and post-conflict countries in South Asia. The seminar was centered around talks delivered by Vagisha Gunasekara, Executive Director, American Institute for Lankan Studies, Sri Lanka and Dr. Admir Skodo (SASNET).

8 May

SASNET hosted a seminar with Dr. Vagisha Gunasekara on post-war Sri Lanka at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

15 May

SASNET hosted a talk with Dr. Naheed S. Goraya on Pakistan's Federally Administered in Villa Norlind. 3

4 July

SASNET at Almedalen, Together with the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI) SASNET hosted two panels at Almedalen on the topic "Why India is Important to Europe?" Speakers: Constantino Xavier, Carnegie India Shada Islam, Friends of Europe

Hans Dahlgren, State Secretary for International and EU Affairs to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Henrik Chetan Aspengren, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI)

Ulrika Sundberg, Consulate General of Sweden to India, Mumbai Jenny Eklund, SVP Client Executive and Area Manager South/South East Asia, SEB Erik Ljungberg, SVP Corporate Communications, Scania Aticka Chona, Managing Director India, Six Year Plan.

11 September

Dr. Martin J. Bayly gave a talk for students at the Graduate School entitled "Taming the Imperial Imagination: How the British Came to Know Afghanistan and Why it Matters."

12 September

SASNET hosted a STANCE brownbag lunch with Dr. Martin J. Bayly. This seminar presentation considered the construction of Afghan statehood as a "frontier state" through the development of colonial knowledge by the British in India.

14 September

SASNET affiliated researcher Henrik Chetan Aspengren organized a roundtable in Stockholm on the past, present and future challenges of American-Indian relations. Main speakers of the event were Anita Inder Singh, Founding Professor of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution in New Delhi, and Vittorio Felci, Researcher at Lund University.

19 September

Dr. Atreyee Sen held a talk entitled: "'No city for lovers': Public romance, illicit sex and urban moral policing in Mumbai'" at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

20 September

Dr. Henrik Chetan Aspengren, held a talk entitled: "'Is India rising? Reflections on Indian foreign policy and its limitations'" at the Edens hörsal. . The event was in collaboration with UPF.

8 October

SASNET in collaboration with MAVA (Men Against Violence and Abuse) invited students to a documentary screening and lecture held by the founder of this Indian organization.

9 October

UNESCO Chair Ashok Swain gave a talk on climate change and river disputes in South Asia at LUMES.

31 October

SASNET hosted a panel on Hindu nationalism that addressed the particular narratives and discourses of populist politics in India in the light of neoliberal politics and globalization.

1 November

SASNET hosted a lunch seminar with Nitasha Kaul on "The gendered politics of authoritarianism in contested democracies" at the Department of Political Science.

14 December

SASNET and Svalorna Indien, Bangladesh in Lund organized a release party for the new issue of *Sydasiens* magazine.

Workshops and Conferences

Throughout 2018 SASNET has hosted three workshops and helped with the organization of one conference. These events discussed contemporary issues in South Asia and Sweden.



Panel at the annual South Asian Conference in Madison

14–15 April

SASNET hosted a workshop on Nationalisms in South Asia. The workshop was generously funded by the Crafoord Foundation. Professor Frank Korom (Boston University), Associate Professor Jan Magnusson (Lund University) and the director of SASNET Andreas Johansson took the lead in organizing the workshop. The core idea of the workshop builds on a generation of scholarship arguing that nationalism was a strictly Western affair. Bengali Nobel Laureate in Literature, Rabindranath Tagore, for example, stated that his homeland India never developed nationalism. However, his book *Religious Nationalism* (1994) Peter van der Veer provides an important corrective to this scholarship. Van Veer argues that while Asia might not have had “secular” nationalisms, it most certainly produced “religious” nationalisms. This workshop focused on examples from

South Asia to examine whether or not a meaningful comparison can be made within one distinct cultural region – namely, the Indian Subcontinent. In addition to the organizers the workshop saw paper presentations by Peter Van Der Veer (Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen), Boris Wille (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg), Susan A. Reed, (Bucknell University), Mari Miyamoto (Keio University), Mara Malagodi, (City Law School, University of London), and Jürgen Schaflechner (University of Heidelberg). Discussant was Ted Svensson from the Political Science department, Lund University.

27 April

SASNET hosted a workshop on covering the political election in India. The workshop is held at School of Journalism (Jo3urnalistutbildningen), In Liquid Newsroom - an interactive workshop - media researcher Vibodh

Parthasarathi and journalist Divya Rajagopal took the participants through the process of covering this complex political process.

11–12 May

The Afghanistan and Central Asian Association (ACAA) and SASNET hosted a two-day conference on the situation for Afghan refugees in Sweden. This conference discussed the current situation in Afghanistan, challenges faced by returning refugees and how Sweden can support refugees who return to Afghanistan. It also discussed key dimensions regarding integration in Sweden, including citizenship and legal status, interaction with Swedish authorities and labour market integration. NGOs, the public sector and councils will share experiences of projects supporting different aspects of integration. The speakers came from NGOs, political parties, the public sector and academia. The conference provided a space to shape new ideas and networks to promote learning, inspiration and progress and to provoke conversations that matter. Entrance to the conference was free. Some of the participants were, Dr Nooralhaq Nasimi Founder of the ACAA and the European Campaign for Human Rights for the People of Afghanistan, Jorrit Kamminga Ph.D, Research Lead Inclusive Peacebuilding, Rasmus Ling (Miljöpartiet), Prof. Dr Maarten Vink (M.P.) Malmö University, Admir Skodo, SASNET. The conference took place in LUX Aula 3 Helgonavägen, Lund.

7–8 November

Together with the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI) SASNET hosted a workshop on the Indo Pacific. The workshop was generally funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond. The workshop focused on the emerging

geostrategic arena, referred to as the “Indo-Pacific”. The workshop will initiate a project on the implications of a closer Indo-Pacific partnership centring on Japan and India and its effects on European foreign policy, and enable the formation of an international network of scholars working on the topic. In light of the economic and military rise of China and changing regional objectives of the United States many analysts and scholars have called for an “Indo-Pacific” partnership centring on Japan and India. Such a partnership could counterbalance Chinese dominance in the region and secure key trade routes. India in particular has a strong interest in creating a “multipolar world order” that is not dominated by hegemonic superpowers like the United States or China. Participants: Henrik Chetan Aspengren, Researcher, deputy head of Asia, Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI), Lars Tore Flåten, Senior Fellow, Norwegian Institute for Defense Studies, Centre for Asian Security Studies, Karl Gustafsson, Senior Research Fellow, Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI), John Hennessey, Post doctoral fellow, Linnaeus University, Andreas Johansson, Director of SASNET, Lund University, Marko Juutinen, Doctoral Student in Politics, School of Management, University of Tampere, Misato Matsuoka, Lecturer, Tokai University, Rani D. Mullen, Visiting Research Fellow, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, Paul O’Shea, Senior Lecturer, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, Amitendu Palit, Senior research fellow, Research lead (trade and economics), Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, Jivanta Schottli, Visiting researcher, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore



Staffan Lindberg, signing books at a SASNET event.

Research

During January SASNET invited submissions of manuscript articles and reviews to be published in late 2018-early 2019 in Volume V of *Chakra: Nordic Journal of South Asian Studies*. Chakra will publish original work from scholars of South Asia in the humanities and social sciences including, but not limited to, history, religious studies, literary studies, sociology, gender studies, economics, geography, political science, anthropology, and philosophy.

PUBLICATIONS

Andreas Johansson

Peer review

- "Miniature Qurans in the First World War: Religious Comforts for Indian Muslims Soldiers" (with Kristina Myrvold). Sheffield: Equinox.

Policy Brief

- "The 2018 Political Crisis and Muslim Politics in Sri Lanka" in ISAS Insight No. 526, 13 December 2018

Editor

Religion – Första utgåvan, Lund: SSRF.

Popular Science

- "Sri Lanka: constitutional crisis triggers fears of 'bloodbath'" in *The Conversation*. October, 2018.
- "Valspecial" in " " in *Sydasiens-äntidskrift*, URL: <http://sydasiens.se/politik/valspecial-2018/>
- "Islamologen" in *Religion – Första utgåvan*. Lund:SSRF
- "Violent Buddhist extremists are targeting Muslims in Sri Lanka" in *The Conversation*. April 2018. <https://theconversation.com/violent-buddhist-extremists-are-targeting-muslims-in-sri-lanka-92951>. Republished in *Quartz*, *scroll.in* and *the Independent*.
- "The Outsider: your average Yakuza wouldn't recognise himself in this movie" in *The Conversation*. March 2018. <https://theconversation.com/the-outsider-your-average-yakuza-wouldnt-recognise-himself-in-this-movie-93297>. Republished in *New Zealand Herald* and *Asian Times*.
- "Sri Lanka local elections: the return of Rajapaksa" in *openDemocracy*, February 2018. URL: [https://www.opendemocracy.net/andreas-](https://www.opendemocracy.net/andreas-johansson/sri-lanka-local-elections-return-of-rajapaksa)

[johansson/sri-lanka-local-elections-return-of-rajapaksa](https://www.opendemocracy.net/andreas-johansson/sri-lanka-local-elections-return-of-rajapaksa).

- "Maldives crisis: a bitter religious divide comes to the fore" in *The Conversation*, February 2018. URL: <https://theconversation.com/maldives-crisis-a-bitter-religious-divide-comes-to-the-fore-91455>. Republished in *Qrius*, *Business Standard* and *Sydasiens*, nummer 2, 2018.

Admir Skodo

Peer-reviewed articles

- "The Long and Short Arms of the State: Swedish Multidirectional Controls of Afghan Asylum Seekers During the Cold War," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, forthcoming 2019.
- "Migrant Smuggling, Reasons for Fleeing, and Uses of Asylum Capital among Afghan Asylum Seekers in Sweden," *Nidaba: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Middle East Studies*, 3(2018).
- "Idealism," *SAGE Encyclopedia of Research Methods*, forthcoming 2020.

Policy Papers

- "The Impact of Forced Migration on Afghanistan's Domestic Politics and Foreign Relations," *Swedish Institute of International Affairs Occasional Papers*, 3(2018), available at [<https://www.ui.se/globalassets/ui.se-eng/publications/ui-publications/2018/ui-brief-no3.-2018.pdf>].
- "Sweden: By Turns Welcoming and Restrictive," *Migration Information Source*, *Migration Policy Institute*, 2018 [<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/sweden-turns-welcoming-and-restrictive-its-immigration-policy>].

Journalism and Popular Science

- "Afganska kvinnor fast mellan gamla seder och nya rättigheter – även som asylsökande," *Sydasiens*, October 15, 2018 [<http://sydasiens.se/>

forskning/afghanska-kvinnor-fast-mellan-nyarrattigheter-och-gamla-seder-aven-som-asylo-kande/].

- "Afgghanska asylsökande i den svenska migrationsdebatten," *Sydasiens*, May 13 2018 [<http://sydasien.se/forskning/afghanska-asylsokanden-svenska-migrationsdebatten/>].
- "Välutbildade migranter kan bygga stark afghans stat," *Afghanistan-Nytt*, 2018.
- "Pakistan's 'Pashtun Spring' Pits Human Rights Demands Against War on Terror Politics," *The Conversation*, February 22 2018 [<https://theconversation.com/pakistans-pashtun-spring-pits-human-rights-demands-against-war-on-terror-politics-91687>].
- "Afghanistan: A Permanent Crisis of Legitimacy," *The Times Literary Supplement*, October 20, 2017.
- "How Afghans Became Second-class Asylum Seekers," *The Conversation*, February 20, 2017 [<https://theconversation.com/how-afghans-became-second-class-asylum-seekers-72437>]. Republished by The Independent.
- "How Immigration Detention Compares Around the World," *The Conversation*, April 19, 2017 [<https://theconversation.com/how-immigration-detention-compares-around-the-world-76067>].
- "A Populist Myth About Immigration Courts and Public Opinion: Evidence from the US and Sweden," *Open Democracy*, March 3 2018 [<https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/admir-skodo/populist-myth-about-immigration-courts-and-public-opinion-evidence-from-us-and-sweden>].
- "Scandinavia Takes Plenty of People from Trump's 'Shithole Countries,'" *The Conversation*, January 15 2018 [<https://theconversation.com/scandinavia-takes-plenty-of-people-from-trumps-shithole-countries-90062>].
- "Swedish Immigration Is Not Out of Control – It's Actually Getting More Restrictive," *The Conversation* February 29, 2017 [<https://theconversation.com/swedish-immigration-is-not-out-of-control-its-actually-getting-more-restrictive-73491>]. Republished by The Independent.

Maria Tonini

- Routledge Handbook of Queer Development Studies entitled "Circumscribed Recognition: creating a space for young queer people in Delhi".

COMMISSIONED EDUCATION, TEACHING, AND SUPERVISION

SASNET researcher Admir Skodo was the lead teacher of the interdisciplinary EU-funded training program at the Swedish Migration Agency entitled Understanding Asylum, designed to strengthen the legal and scientific basis of asylum investigations. He was responsible for coordinating the work of a group of scholars from psychology, legal studies, cognitive science, philosophy, history, political science, along with a group of experts from the Agency. He was also responsible for developing and delivering seminars on country of origin information (where he often used Afghanistan as a case study and in exercises), source criticism, and critical thinking. He delivered these seminars in October 2018 to asylum officers, Agency experts, and decision makers. But because his contract was not renewed at the end of 2018, he was unable to see through this program through the end.

TEACHING AND SUPERVISION

Admir co-developed and co-taught the course Introduction to Middle Eastern Debates at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Lund University, during 2017. He supervised Jia Liu, a Master student in Middle Eastern Studies and Lund University, and her Master thesis on Hazara politics in Afghanistan. Andreas supervised three students on MA-level at the Center for Theology and Religious Studies.

STIMULATION

In order to further stimulate research on South Asia at Lund University SASNET invited applications for research grants on an ongoing basis. SASNET funded the following grants:

- "Gender, Disasters and Climate, Summer School" was granted 102 962 SEK from SASNET. Project manager was Phu Lama at the Risk Management and Societal Resilience, LTH.
- "The Influence of dietary patterns and physical activity levels on type 2 diabetes in Bangladesh" was granted 31 662 SEK + overhead from SASNET. Project manager was Sanjib Saha at the Health Economics Unit.
- "A workshop to initiate research on the globalization of the welfare state, the influence of New Public Management (NPM) and the impact and social policy and social services between the Schools of Social Work at Tata Institute of Social Sciences and Lund University" was granted 54 480 SEK. Project manager was Jan Magnusson at the School of Social Work.

- “Pop-Up Newsroom” was granted 80 000 SEK. Project manger was Andreas Mattsson, School of Journalism.
- “Electionland” was granted 37 920 SEK. Project manger was Andreas Mattsson, School of Journalism.

IN MEDIA/ OUTREACH

During the year SASNET employess have frequently made media appearances. Andreas Johansson, researcher and director of SASNET, was interviewed on Swedish Radio (Studio Ett) about the latest development in the Maldives, including what this development means for Maldivian democracy. Utrikesmagasinet also interviewed Andreas about the role of religion in the Maldives, including what this development means for Maldivian democracy.

SASNET researcher Admir Skodo was interviewed on Afghanistan and Afghan migration by Svenska Dagbladet (twice), Expressen TV (twice), Ystads Allehanda,

Global Daily News. Requested to be interviewed by SVT Rapport, Flamman, Sveriges Radio Malmö, Kommersant (unable to do so because of other commitments).

GRANTS

SASNET researcher Admir Skodo received a grant from Magnus Bergvall's Foundation for his research on Afghan refugees and asylum seekers in the United States and Sweden. The grant is in the amount of 30 000 SEK and is to be used for field research in the Afghan community in New York.

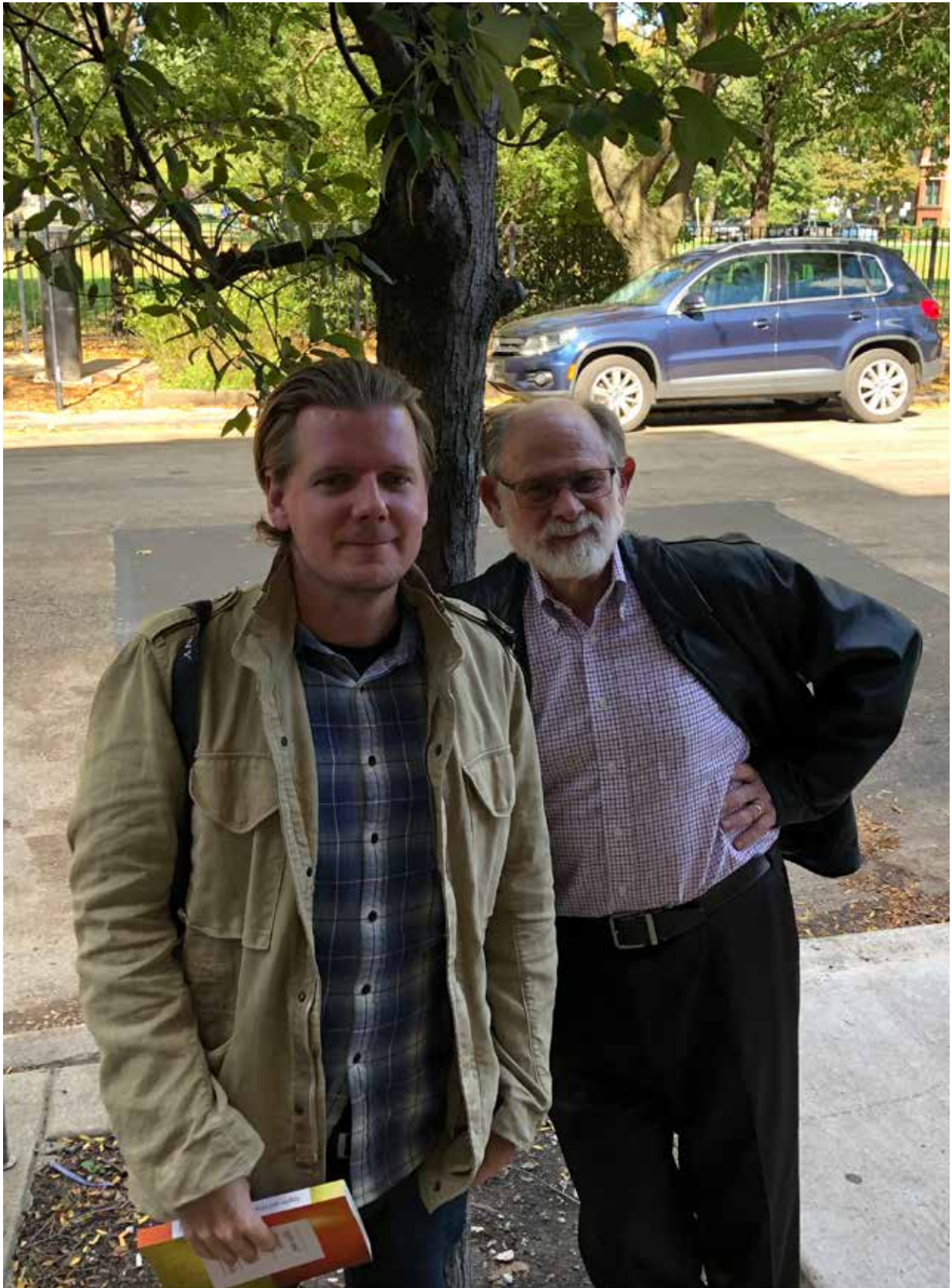
SASNET received funding from the Crafoord Foundation to organize a workshop next year. The workshop is entitled “The domestic, Regional and Global Impact of Afghan Migration” and will be held in the beginning of 2019. 75 000 SEK.

SASNET received funding from Stiftelsen Grace och Philip Sandblom to organize a workshop on Afghanistan. 51 000 SEK.



Panel on Afganistan, Robert Crews, Admir Skodo, Anna-Karin Johansson, Sari Kuovo & Ted Svensson.

Networking



SASNET Director Andreas Johansson and Professor Bruce Lincoln in Chicago

During the year SASNET staff visited conferences and had meeting with South Asian related researchers across the globe. SASNET is keen on working together with Karlstad University since it has, since 1995, been collaborating with various institutions in India. Andreas met with Katarina Plank and Kristian Niemi and discussed KAU:sa study center at Varanasi and its collaboration with Banaras Hindu University (BHU).

In 26-27 April Andreas traveled to Dublin and participated in Ireland India Institute Conference on South Asia. Andreas chaired the Panel: *the Presence of the Past: Revisiting colonialism* and talked to the director Eileen Connolly of future collaboration between SASNET and IU.

On June 5-6, the South Asia Across the Nordic Region second annual meeting was held at the University of Oslo. The two-day meeting covered discussions on how to move the network forward as well as different paper panels on South Asian topics. SASNET director, Andreas Johansson, chaired a panel session that included, among others, a paper by Dan Vesalainen Hirslund from the University of Copenhagen entitled "Hierarchies and Solidarities of Urban Labor: Subcontracting, Informalisation and Brokerage in Kathmandu". On the second day SASNET teaching assistant Soumi Banerjee presented her Master's thesis in a presentation entitled "Beyond the Crisis of Identity: (De)constructing 'Self' and 'Other' in the Narratives of Partition of India".

Professor Emeritus Baboo M. Nair represented at scientific collaboration organized by the Department of Food Science, Copenhagen University in association with Danish Ministry of External Affairs, Danish Ministry of Food and Environment, Danish Embassy in India and Indian Embassy in Denmark. Professor. Nair talked about the ongoing SASNET fermented food project at this event.

In October SASNET director Andreas Johansson and SASNET researcher Admir Skodo attended the 47th Annual Conference on South Asia in Madison, Wisconsin and presented their work and SASNET in meetings and panels. During the same week they also meet with representatives from University of Chicago and presented SASNET and ideas for further collaborations.

SASNET researcher Admir Skodo presented a paper entitled "The internationalized state and conflicts: The Afghan diaspora and Afghan statebuilding since 1979" at the international Refugees, Borders and Membership Conference, held at Malmö University October 24-26.

Through a new collaboration between Sydasien and SASNET the magazine once again appears in print, this time biannually. Through SASNET the online version of Sydasien gains more depth as a platform for reports

and articles that present new research on South Asia in a clear and accessible manner. Selected articles appear in the printed version of Sydasien.

SASNET's South Asia Library received a generous donation in the form of a Gandhi Collection from the relatives of the late Professor Lars Lindström.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The past SASNET has been very active on social media (Facebook and Twitter) posting jobs and conferences around the world related to South Asia. This is important to maintain the network idea of SASNET. SASNET do also post job opportunities at Lund University since most of the followers are from South Asia.

SOUTH ASIA INITIATIVE

The Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI) and the Swedish South Asian Studies Network (SASNET) at Lund University are launching a collaboration focusing on India and South Asia. The long-term collaboration will include both research and analysis and aims at building a strong research environment of international quality. Through the year UI and SASNET have collaborated via some of the above mentioned events but also the SAI project have led to collaborations and ongoing discussions with the Europe India Research and Dialog Network (EIRDN), DISS, SIDA, UD, and Folke Bernadotte Akademin.

As a further step in the collaboration between UI and SASNET is the launch of a series of podcasts on India and South Asia. The project manager for this podcast is Henrik Chetan Aspengren, who is an affiliated researcher at SASNET. In the first episode Professor Gunnel Cederlöf, Linnaeus University, (picture) talked about her research on the India-China corridor, an area that spanned China, India, Bangladesh and Myanmar between 1820-1920.

2019-2020

During 2019-2020 SASNET will have a researcher coordinator and director employed on a 100% basis, and two teaching assistants employed 20% and 10%. During this period SASNET will also start a post-doc project (100%) on religion and politics in South Asia. This project will be connected to the South Asian initiative and will investigate the possibilities of future collaboration between Center for Theology and Religious Studies (CTR) and the Department of Political Science. During the coming years SASNET will continue to take on affiliated researchers to broaden its knowledge production on South Asia.

About SASNET

SASNET's activities take place at Lund University, where SASNET through research, lectures, workshops, and conferences in cooperation with various departments and centers at the University aims to provide and spread perspectives on South Asia. The mandate is national and aims at promoting collaboration between Swedish as well as Nordic universities. It primarily does so through networking activities and the online circulation of a monthly newsletter that publicizes research on South Asia in the Nordic countries.

The network is a subdivision of the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES).

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Visit SASNET's office

Norlindska huset
Biskopsgatan 5, 223 62 Lund



SASNET

SWEDISH SOUTH ASIAN
STUDIES NETWORK

LUND UNIVERSITY
SASNET

P.O. BOX 114
SE-221 00 LUND
PHONE: +46 46 222 73 40