ANNUAL REPORT

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

REPORT WITH SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st JANUARY 2016

The Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held at the Reddaway Room, First Floor, Hall Building, Fitzwilliam College Cambridge, CB3 0DG, UK

on April 6th 2016
at 17:15pm

to present this Annual Report,
and
transact any other business proper to the AGM
THE COUNCIL 2015/2016

CHAIR

PROFESSOR PATRICIA JEFFERY

TREASURER

DR. KANCHANA RUWANPURA

SECRETARY

PROFESSOR NITYA RAO (from Apr. 2015 until Jan. 2016)
DR PRITI MISHRA (from Jan. 2016 until present)

SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES JOURNAL EDITOR

PROFESSOR ADAM HARDY (from Dec. 2014 until Aug. 2015)
DR DEBORAH SUTTON (from Sept. 2015 until present)

CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA JOURNAL EDITOR

DR. JOHN ZAVOS

MEMBERS

MR. EDWARD ANDERSON
DR. LUKE HESLOP (GEC)
DR. ELISABETH LEAKE
PROFESSOR NITYA RAO
DR. RAJESH VENUGOPAL
DR. PHILIPPA WILLIAMS
COUNCIL’S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST JANUARY 2016

Significant information

The British Association for South Asian Studies (BASAS) supports advanced research in the humanities and social sciences of South Asia. Originally, one of the overseas organisations grant-aided by The British Academy, it is now a self-financed charity registered with the Charity Commission under Registration Number 264591.

BASAS is one of the world’s leading learned societies for the study of South Asia. It is the largest UK academic association for the study of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, and the South Asian diaspora. The Association was first established in 1972 as The Society for Afghan Studies. The Association expanded its remit from 1979, becoming The Society for South Asian Studies. On 1 October 2007 the Society merged with The British Association for South Asian Studies. The new organisation combines the grant-giving and overseas research project roles of The Society for South Asian Studies with the representative and advocacy roles of The British Association for South Asian Studies. The aim of the new merged Association is to advance, encourage, support and undertake the study and research of the geography, economics, politics, history, antiquities, archaeology, sociology, ethnography, languages, literature, art, culture, customs, and inter-disciplinary study of the countries and people of South Asia.

The Association has also sponsored research projects in South Asia, as well as programmes of exchange and training. It produces South Asian Studies, a bi-annual journal, in which it publishes some of the research it has funded. The Association also organises an Annual Conference, workshops and lectures, held at different locations each year in the UK, and publishes a series of monographs and occasional papers.

Enquiries about the Association’s activities should be directed to the Assistant Secretary, The British Association for South Asian Studies, 27 Old Gloucester Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AX. Email: basas@basas.org.uk.
Organisation and Structure

The Association is governed by a Council and is administered by certain members of Council appointed as Executive Officers and Council members, assisted at present by a paid part-time Assistant Secretary.

Executive Officers

The Executive Officers who served during the year ended 31st January 2016 were:

- Prof. Patricia Jeffery Chair (from Nov. 2014)
- Dr. Kanchana Ruwanpura Treasurer (from Mar. 2013)
- Prof. Nitya Rao Secretary (from Apr. 2015 – until Jan. 2016)
- Dr. Priti Mishra Secretary (from Jan. 2016 – present)

The ex officio officers who served during the year ended 31st January 2016 were:

- Prof. Adam Hardy South Asian Studies Journal Editor (from Dec. 2014 until Aug. 2015)
- Dr. Deborah Sutton South Asian Studies Journal Editor (from Aug. 2015 until present)
- Dr. John Zavos Contemporary South Asia Journal Editor

All Executive Officers serve as members of Council and are members of the committees which advise Council on the awards it makes and monitor the Association’s projects.

Members of Council

The following served on Council during the year ended 31st January 2016:

- Mr. Edward Anderson (from Sept. 2015)
- Dr. Tamsin Bradley (as conference convener, April 2014-15)
- Dr. Luke Heslop (GEC*) (from Nov. 2014)
- Prof. Patricia Jeffery (as Chair from Nov. 2014)
- Dr. Elisabeth Leake (from Jan. 2014)
- Dr. Priti Mishra (from Sept. 2015, as Secretary from Jan. 2016)
Prof. Nitya Rao (from Nov. 2010, as Secretary between Apr. 2015- Jan. 2016)
Dr. Kanchana Ruwanpura (from Nov. 2010, as Treasurer from Mar. 2013)
Dr. Philippa Williams (as Secretary between Nov. 2011-until Apr.2015, as general member from Apr. 2015)
Dr. Rajesh Venugopal (from Nov. 2013)
Dr. Bhaskar Vira (as conference convener, April 2015-16)

Dr. John Zavos (Contemporary South Asia Editor)
Prof. Adam Hardy (South Asian Studies Editor until August 2015)
Dr. Deborah Sutton ( South Asian Studies Editor from September 2015)

*These roles were created in 2009 to represent Graduate and Early Career researchers.

Members of the Council constitute the Trustees of the Association for the purposes of the Charities Act.

The Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and respective Editors are elected each year at the Annual General Meeting under Rules 15 and 16 of the 2007 Rules.

Members of the Council are elected in terms of Rules 15 and 16, with vacancies being filled by vote upon nominations.

**Reserves Policy**

The Council reviews regularly the Association’s activities and future commitments.
It has been established that a reserve of £20,000 would be needed to wind up the Association’s affairs and to meet any outstanding commitments. Council has therefore determined that the minimum level of the Association’s reserves should be £20,000 and that no commitments should be entered into which would bring the reserves below this level. Given the termination of British Academy funding from 2012 the Council once again recognises that the Association’s reserves should not fall below £20,000.
Risk management

Since the withdrawal of all funding from The British Academy the Association is undergoing a period of transition with regards to its funding streams. Systems and procedures have been established to review the Association’s financial structure whilst continuing to maintain and improve the quality of the Association’s work, along with accurate reporting, and tight financial control. Council is responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Association and taking all reasonable steps for the detection and prevention of fraud and other irregularities. Financial procedures are reviewed regularly.

The Association faces another risk in common with many smaller charities where the week-to-week financial activities of the Association are dealt with by the Treasurer and the Assistant Secretary alone. With no staff, it is not possible to expect the level of internal financial controls, particularly the division of duties, to match those that would be expected within a larger organisation. However in recognition of this risk, the Council has determined that all payments from the Association’s bank account of over £1,000.00 should bear the signatures of two Council Members.

Bankers

Bankers:
CAF Bank Limited
Kings Hill Avenue
West Malling,
Kent ME19 4JQ

Accounting Matters

Accounts independently examined by Professor Ned Bertz (Associate Professor) and professionally certified accountant at the University of Hawaii:
http://manoa.hawaii.edu/history/people/ned-bertz

The Association would like to express its gratitude to The British Academy and its staff for the continued support on the ECAF programme activities of the Association during the financial year.
2015 has been a year of many changes. I am happy to report that after an extensive selection process, Dr. Deborah Sutton, Senior Lecturer in History at Lancaster University, has been selected as the new Editor of the Association’s flagship journal - South Asian Studies. This is an important development for BASAS as it works to broaden the scope of the journal and increase its distribution. Dr. Sutton has been an Associate Editor of South Asian Studies since 2010 and has seen a number of articles through from submission to publication, in addition to this she has promoted the journal at conferences and workshops. In the last few months Dr. Sutton has been recruiting new Associate editors and a new Editorial board for SAS.

Dr Philippa Williams stepped down as Secretary in April 2015 in order to undertake a period of parental leave. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Philippa for her outstanding work as BASAS Secretary, a task that she fulfilled with her usual competence, cheerfulness and adroitness whilst overseeing a number of important developments for BASAS including work on the 'Equality, Diversity and Dignity' policy and the enhancement of the BASAS web-presence. She has made a huge contribution to the work of BASAS and we look forward to her continuing involvement in years to come. Prof. Nitya Rao has acted as Secretary from April 2015 to January 2016. During her tenure she convened the selection committee for the SAS editor and negotiated a new contract for the journal with Taylor and Francis. She was also responsible for overseeing the election of new members to the BASAS Council, initiating a Constitutional review process and representing BASAS interests as a member of the South Asia panel of the British Academy. We thank her for her hard work during this crucial time of transition. Professor Rao has stepped down as Secretary in January 2016 due to research commitments in India. I have taken over as acting Secretary from January 2016 pending council elections later in the year.

As a result of elections in July 2015, two new members joined the BASAS council. Mr. Edward Anderson, Smuts Research Fellow in Commonwealth Studies,
Cambridge University was elected to the regular council. And, I, Dr. Pritipuspa Mishra, Lecturer in History, University of Southampton, was also elected to the regular council. We hope to expand the council further during elections to be held during summer 2016.

During this year BASAS website has been extensively developed to better serve visitors as well as the website administrator. Several developments are ongoing and to-date the following have been released on the live website: social media icons have been embedded throughout the site making it easier for people to share website content, on the home page a live RSS feed now displays the most recent SAS and CSA articles, members can both donate and Gift Aid at the time they make or renew their membership via PayPal, members will also be sent renewal reminders to let them know when their membership is due.

In the last year we were able to fund three exciting projects through the ECAF fellowships. Dr. Deborah Sutton (Senior lecturer, Lancaster University) received a fellowship to work on her project titled “Inhabited Pasts: The many lives of Monuments in Delhi”. The grant funded a very well-received workshop at Goethe Institute in New Delhi and archival research in New Delhi. Dr. Emma Dawson Varughese was funded for her project titled “Genre Fiction of New India: Post Millennial receptions of ‘weird’ narratives”. The grant has allowed Dr. Dawson Varughese to complete a book manuscript on this innovative topic to be submitted to Routledge in early 2016. Finally, Dr. Simona Vittorini, Department of Politics and International Studies SOAS, received a grant to work on her project titled “The performance of Governance of Narendra Modi’s Government at the Centre”. The fellowship has enabled her to continue her research on the performative politics of Modi’s government. Unfortunately, this will be the last year of the BASAS ECAF fellowships as the British Academy has discontinued this grant programme.

Lack of funds has also meant that we have had to cancel the BASAS annual lecture for this year. However, BASAS has been active on other fronts. In 2015, the Association has rejoined UKCASA and members of the council have been attending events organized by them. Dr Luke Heslop reported on his participation
in the Foreign Affairs Select Committee meeting, where interest was expressed in the BASAS Annual Conference. There may be an opportunity to incorporate a Foreign Affairs Committee panel as part of the conference if the Association so wished. Further, BASAS was able to have a voice in the deliberations of the STERN review of the Research Excellence Framework (REF). We submitted a BASAS response to the review questionnaire and were able to cite particular concerns that academics within area studies may have with the proposed changes in the REF.

BASAS also agreed to sponsor a prize for the best student paper at the third Annual Allchin Symposium on the Archaeology of South Asia entitled ‘South Asia and its Neighbours’, sponsored by the Department of Archaeology, Durham University with The Ancient India and Iran Trust, December 4th-6th 2015, at Durham University. The UK hosts one of the largest communities of scholars researching the archaeology of South Asia outside the subcontinent and the Allchin Symposium provides a unique opportunity to bring them together annually. It creates a forum for the presentation and discussion of current research and methodological and theoretical concerns as well as specifically providing a forum for early career researchers and PhD students to exchange ideas. This year, the Steering Committee have expanded the remit of the Symposium to include ‘South Asia and its Neighbours’ in the expectation that this will enhance links between those studying South Asia and those researching the archaeology of Central Asia, South-east Asia, Iran, the Persian Gulf, and the Himalayas.

The BASAS Annual Conference 2016, April 6-8, at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, has received considerable attention and support, including from the University of Cambridge, Centre of South Asian Studies, which will co-host the Conference as part of its 50th Anniversary celebrations. A large number of paper abstracts have been received from graduate students and academics from both the UK and South Asia.

Dr. Pritipuspa Mishra
Acting Secretary
REPORT FROM THE EDITOR OF SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

The journal has gone through an editorial transition during the year under report. In October 2015, Adam Hardy stepped down and I was appointed as editor. The next few weeks were spent reviewing the journal’s editorial practises and scope. Several Associate Editors and members of the Editorial Board resigned from their positions. Several new scholars were invited to join the journal as members of the editorial board and as associate editors in order to revitalise the journal. Associate Editors and members of the Editorial Board will serve initially for two years thought this term can be extended for two further years. The new appointments include colleagues in the U.K., U.S. and in India whose expertise stretches the composition of the board to reflect the re-drafted editorial remit of the journal. These new appointments and those who remain have been asked to actively seek out opportunities to publicise the journal and to attract submissions. The aims and scope of the journal were broadened to attract submissions that address a range of arts and humanities research: ‘The methodological remit of South Asian Studies encompasses historical, archaeological, art historical, literary, musicological, cinematic, heritage, and media studies’. The core focus on material and visual culture has not been lost. A key asset of the journal is the generous provision of plates by Taylor and Frances. This unusual allowance presents a means of drawing submissions from a wide-range of arts and humanities scholarship. The journal will continue to publish archaeological research though will favour analytical, long essays rather than expositions of raw archaeological materials. The chronological scope of the journal remains broad, from the ancient to the mid-twentieth century. These changes are intended to increase the profile of the journal, attract high-quality original research and, in turn, increase subscription and submission rates to the journal.

A new editorial assistant should be appointed in the coming weeks. The editorial assistant will support more efficient administration of the review process of submissions. A twitter account (@BASAS_SAS) has been created for the journal.
to promote the journal’s content, the activities of editors and raise the profile of the journal.

The journal will be given a more conspicuous profile at the BASAS conference, 6-9 March 2016, with the aim of underlining the journal’s importance to the Society and raising its profile among scholars of South Asian in Britain and abroad.

A Special Issue of the journal was published in September 2015, edited by Rachel Parikh and Imma Ramos: ‘Divine Intervention: The Role of Religion and Ritual in South Asian Visual Culture’. Routledge has recently approached the Society for permission to re-publish this excellent collection as a book. Such a publication should draw more attention to the journal and potentially will garner the Society royalties from sales.

A number of submissions are being reviewed currently and a Special Issue is being prepared for the May 2016 issue of the journal: ‘Reuse of the Past: The Making of the Deccan, 1300-1700’ to be guest edited by Ajay Rao, Art History, Toronto University.

Deborah Sutton, *South Asian Studies*, 10 February 2016
REPORT FROM EDITOR OF CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA

During the period 1st Apr. 2015 – 31st Jan 2016, Contemporary South Asia published three issues of volume 23 of the journal. This included two special issues. Issue 23(2) was an analysis of the 2014 national election in India, through which the BJP came to power with an outright majority. Subtitled ‘Explaining the landslide’, the issue was guest edited by Louise Tillin and Gilles Verniers, and includes a range of articles that explored the party tactics of the BJP (Christophe Jaffrelot), the Aam Aadmi phenomenon (Andrew Wyatt), and regional analyses of areas such as Odisha (James Manor). This timely issue was followed in 23 (3) by a special issue on Jammu and Kashmir: Boundaries and Movements. Guest edited by Martin Sökefeld, this issue explores the J&K region through marginalities: that is, by decentring the traditional focus on the geo-politics of the Kashmir valley. The issue includes articles focused on Gilgit-Baltistan (Herman Kreutzmann) and the borderlands between Azad Kashmir and Pakistan (Pascale Schild), as well as some focused on different kinds of marginalities, such as articulations of the Kashmiri women’s movement in cyberspace (Shahnaz Khalil Khan). 23 (4) was a general issue which carried papers such as an examination of Dalit involvement in the Nepali civil war (Richard Bownass) and a sociological analysis of the Nano, the much-touted ‘people’s car’ launched by Tata Motors in 2008 (Kenneth Bo Nielsen and Harold Wilhite). Throughout the year our Reviews section has produced a wide range of reviews of recent publications of interest to our readership. There are some exciting developments planned for the reviews section over the coming year, including the first of a series of Review Forums, in which one book will be reviewed by a range of commentators, accompanied by a responsive reflection from the book author. Many thanks indeed to Jacob Copeman for all his work in sustaining and developing this feature of the journal as Reviews Editor. Indeed, we are very grateful to all our article and book review contributors during this period, and particularly to our guest editors, who do such a great job in providing focused analyses of particular issues and themes of interest to our readers. If you have
an idea for a themed special issue of the journal, do email me at john.zavos@manchester.ac.uk to discuss this further.

During 2015 I can also report that we have had quite a few changes to our International Editorial Board. We say goodbye and many thanks to Frank Conlon, Chris Smith and Taj-ul Islam Hashmi, with many thanks for their hard work over the years. Frank in particular has been a rock, offering his wisdom, guidance and good humour in countless board meetings. Very special thanks to Frank. We are also very pleased to welcome some new members onto our Board: Lamia Karim of the Anthropology Department at Oregon University; Srirupa Roy of the Centre for Modern Indian Studies at Georg August Universitat Gottingen; Atreyee Sen of the Anthropology Department at University of Copenhagen; and Smriti Srinivas of the South Asia program and Anthropology Department at University of California Davis. Welcome to all of you and many thanks for agreeing to become part of our team. Another Board change occurred a little before the period covered by this report, but I nevertheless would like to record it here. In accordance with our agreement with BASAS to have the current Chair of the BASAS Council on the CSA Editorial Board, February 2015 saw Ian Talbot replaced by Patricia Jeffery as a member of our Board. Many thanks to Ian for his work on the Board over the three preceding years, and welcome to Patricia.

Do visit our website to find out more about the journal. You will find us at www.tandf.co.uk/journals/ccsa. And don’t forget to keep on contributing to our journal, with articles, book reviews, and viewpoints which help to maintain our profile as a lively, stimulating interdisciplinary space focused on the study of South Asia.

John Zavos, Contemporary South Asia, 29 February 2016
NEWS FROM RECENT FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS

Since 2011 BASAS has been administering the British Academy-BASAS ECAF Visiting Fellowships which support the research visit of a UK based academic to an ECAF operated field centre in South Asia.

The maximum value of a fellowship is £5,000 and the purpose of the initiative is to advance the scholar’s personal research, build his/her wider network, and enable him/her to contribute to the academic life of the centre. Below, some of our recent fellowship recipients share their experiences with us.

ECAF reports

Dr. Emma Dawson Varughese, Associate, Leeds Beckett University

*Genre Fiction of New India: post-millennial receptions of ‘weird’ narratives* is a book manuscript which explores narratives of Hinduism and science in popular Indian fiction in English. Analyses of texts and author interviews interrogate ‘the weird’ as a genre term and how the reception of this fiction varies widely from domestic Indian responses to non-Indian, ‘western’ responses. The book presents the term ‘Bharati Fantasy’ and considers the roles of epic narrative, the numinous, ‘fantasy’ narratives, as well as mythology and ‘truth’ in cultural memory.

The Fellowship allowed me to access both space and time to write. Being in India, I was able to review the body of fiction that my Routledge manuscript engages with (what I term ‘Bharati Fantasy’) and subsequently, the content and organisation of my chapters changed. Having had a break from my research due to maternity, it had been 2 years since the initial submission of the book proposal to Routledge. Much new fiction has been published since then and I quickly realised that a significant proportion of that fiction needed to be included in my book manuscript. The beginning of my Fellowship in Pune therefore, was spent collecting in (and ordering) the new fiction. As I got hold of these new books, I was able to see that my initial book proposal no longer fully represented the body of writing I am focusing on. Two categories of ‘Bharati Fantasy’ became apparent and I have reorganised my chapters in light of this development. Much of this fiction I explore in my book is only available in India and thus the time reviewing and purchasing the new fiction was invaluable. A key theme in the book is ‘reception’...
and the fact that a significant number of these texts do not appear outside of India or the wider region makes for fascinating discussion some of which I explored through my author interviews. I set up four author interviews: Amish Tripathi, Ashwin Sanghi, Samhita Arni and Anand Neelakantan in Mumbai. Two of these four – Samhita and Anand – came about by me being in India as I had not had contact with these authors previously. I contacted them whilst in India and being able to phone and meet up with them made things much easier. In my discussion with Amish Tripathi, Ashwin Sanghi and Anand Neelakantan in particular, I was able to examine the interface between science, rational thought and Hinduism, epic narrative and cultural memory.

Although the ECAF centre at Pune (through Deccan College) is currently closed, I was warmly received by Prof Kshirsagar who connected me to Dr Deodhar with whom I spent some time studying Hindu thought and Vedanta. I had many questions in my mind about some of the topics and terms that had come up through the reading of Bharati Fantasy. I was particularly keen to talk to Dr Deodhar about the Sanskrit term itihasa, notions of fate, history, epic narrative and truth. Dr Deodhar was invaluable in helping me understand much of these terms and ideas; indeed, it was most helpful to go with the questions I had, rather than being presented with information through a series of lectures that may have been only tangentially related.

At Deccan College, I also met with Dr Sonal Kulkarni-Joshi who had been very helpful on email before my arrival in Pune. I had planned to deliver a lecture at Deccan College on the linguistic aspect of my research on Indian genre fiction but Dr Sonal was concerned that I may not have too many students attending given the time of year I was there (the start of the new semester) as well as the focus of my paper. She suggested I try the Department of English at the University of Pune. She helped make that contact (Prof Jaware) and as a result, I gave a paper there. The paper was well received and I was invited to return to give a second paper as part of the Visual Studies PG teaching sessions – I spoke on my most recent book (co-authored) on a study of domestic Chick Lit book covers.

Deccan College also connected me to Anil Inamdar at the American Institute of Indian Studies. Anil was very helpful in finding me Hindi Language tuition – he put me in contact with Dr Dixit and I took lessons with her to improve my spoken Hindi. We worked on listening skills, fluency of response and confidence in using
the Hindi I already know. She has suggested that I use Hindi more frequently at home and that I continue to use the grammar tables and aids I have designed to give me confidence in ‘getting it right’.

Dr. Deborah Sutton, Senior Lecturer in History, Lancaster University

The research carried out in Delhi was extremely productive but did deviate from the course anticipated in my application. The Superintendent of the Delhi Archaeological Circle had changed and the new Superintendent, while quite communicative, was not as facilitative as I had hoped. Most of the work done, therefore, was carried out at the sites of registered monuments in Delhi and at the Delhi State Archives.

The highlight of the research was a workshop held at the Goethe Institute, at the Max Muller Bhavan.

The workshop attracted six excellent presentations and included the preview screening of a short film, ‘The Palace Is Dreaming’ a film by Parijat Desai and Alla Kovgan. The film was discussed by Professor Kavita Singh of the School of Art and Aesthetics at JNU. The workshop attracted a large audience (31) and paper summaries were invited for consideration for publication in Frontline, India’s premier weekly news magazine.

I would like to thank BASAS/British Academy for awarding me this Fellowship. Thank you for supporting me as an independent academic.

- E. Dawson Varughese
I was able to carry out a comprehensive survey of inhabitation and perceived delinquency at registered monuments in the city before independence. The dissonance between bureaucratic intent, and the enactment of legislation, and the department’s ability to know, let alone control, the local use of registered monuments was striking. The department of archaeology accommodated a range of usages, in particular at Muslim religious sites, but then faltered in its attempts to monitor permitted customary usage or maintain records of the nature of the allowances made. Despite this, the department appears to have begun, and continued, to measure appropriate custody according to the care and condition of the monument, not according to the letter of protection legislation. It became clear that archaeological custody in the 1920s and 1930s gave greater latitude to devotional activity that in the post-independent period. From the 1970s onwards, and today, site usage has been informally accommodated by superintendents and chowkidars.

The occupation of monuments and their position within the rapidly developing city has not been a linear process of loss. I was able to consult voluminous records that dealt with the occupation, planned and unplanned, and evacuation of mosques in the city following the partition in 1947. These files contain fascinating information about two registers of history; the agreements brokered between India and Pakistan (which emphasised a commitment to preserve sacred sites abandoned by the displaced on both sides) and the contingent need to provide some form of shelter to refugees. Hundreds of buildings were occupied by refugees and the majority were gradually evacuated (refugees repeatedly sought alternative accommodation). The occupation of registered monuments in the city, the Purana Qila, Safdarjung’s tomb, Humayaun’s tomb and Ferozshah Kotla, represents a neglected history of the city’s past.

I will return to Delhi in January/February for two weeks and deliver papers at Jawaharlal Nehru University and Nehru Museum. In hope soon after to submit an article for publication, provisionally entitled, ‘Inhabited Pasts: Monuments, Protection and Publics in New Delhi, 1912 – 1970s’, for publication in the Indian Economic and Social History Review.
Dr. Simona Vittorini, Senior Teaching Fellow, SOAS University of London

I was awarded a BASAS/BA/ECAF fellowship to research into the spectacular and performative politics of Mr Modi’s government. The proposed research project intended to provide critical insight into Narendra Modi's government spectacular political practices.

Since his election in 2014, many acts of Mr Modi's government – swearing in ceremonies, appointments of new personnel, assertion of authority, launch and implementation of new policies – have taken a highly staged form, making use of hyper-visible ritualised forms of communication, of key cultural symbols and of performative acts. At the heart of this project is the belief in the importance of performative and spectacular expressions of power. These acts not only create consensus and legitimise the government and its actions, but they ultimately also usher in new authoritative understandings of the nation and of nationhood. The award allowed me to spend around 7 weeks in New Delhi.

The purpose of the trip was twofold: to conduct empirical analysis of the various public and spectacular events of the Modi Government and to identify their essential components (forms of spectacle, repertoires, ritual topography, agents).

The length of my stay in India made it possible for me to:

- Start building a database of the performative acts of this government from Modi’s swearing in ceremony onward (including policy launches, inaugurations, commemorations, official national holidays etc).

- Participate (when possible) to the government’s performative acts of governance

- Identify key players and ritual producers and interview them when possible
- Interact with members of the press and of the academic community, with current and retired politicians both from the BJP and opposition parties

- Expand my already established network of Delhi-based contacts

Particularly useful was the possibility of breaking my trip in two. Not only I was able to attend what has possibly been Mr Modi’s most spectacular diplomatic event but also to follow up questions and issues that I had not had the chance to investigate during the first stay.

At the moment I am in the process of writing a journal article titled ‘Staging Politics – Performative Governance and Narendra Modi’s Government’. I am also scheduled to deliver a presentation of a paper based on the work carried out in India for the SOAS Department of Politics Research Seminar in Term 2.
The Association has made arrangements to support the dedicated distribution of its publications.

Printed South Asian Studies back issue journals are now available from the Periodicals Service Company. For more information please contact:

**Periodicals Service Company**

11 Main Street
Germantown, NY 12526
USA

00 1 518 537 4700
psc@periodicals.com
www.periodicals.com

*Buddhist Landscapes in Central India: Sanchi hill and archaeologies of religious and social change* (Julia Shaw) is available from Left Coast Press. For more information please contact:

**Left Coast Press, Inc.**

1630 N. Main Street, #400
Walnut Creek, California 94596
USA

00 1 925 935 3380
explore@lcoastpress.com
www.lcoastpress.com

Gods on the Move: Architecture and Ritual in the South Indian Temple (Crispin Branfoot), Religion and Art: New Issues in Indian Iconography and Iconology (ed. Claudine Bautze-Picron), and The Temple in South Asia (ed. Adam Hardy), are available from Arthur Probsthain Bookshop. For more information please contact:

**Arthur Probsthain Bookshop**

41 Great Russell Street
London, WC1B 3PE, UK

44 (0)207 636 1096
www.apandtea.co.uk/bookshop.html
arthurprobsthain@hotmail.com

Arthur Probsthain also manage a pop-up bookstore at SOAS, University of London.
## BASAS Income and Expenditure Statement 2015/16

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SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH

The British Association for South Asian Studies promotes and supports study and research into the humanities and social sciences of Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Details of the Association’s programmes are available on the Association’s website. As grant programmes and other funding initiatives are approved by The British Academy, further particulars and application forms will be made available on the Association’s website.

The Assistant Secretary
The British Association for South Asian Studies
27 Old Gloucester Street, Bloomsbury
London WC1N 3AX

Tel: +44 (0)20 7388 5490
E-mail: basas@basas.org.uk
Website: http://www.basas.org.uk
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- Individual concessionary rate - £25

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Individuals wishing to pay their membership fee by cheque, should send a completed registration form along with a cheque made payable to the British Association for South Asian Studies (drawn from a British bank account) to: The Treasurer, British Association for South Asian Studies, 27 Old Gloucester Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AX.
APPLICATION FORM

All fields must be completed in order for your registration to be valid.

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<td>First name</td>
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<td>Last name</td>
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<td>Academic or institutional affiliation, including department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status (e.g. student, lecturer, professor)</td>
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<td>If you are a student, please provide details of your programme (i.e., master’s or doctoral) and year of study</td>
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<td>Research interests</td>
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- [ ] Contemporary South Asia
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