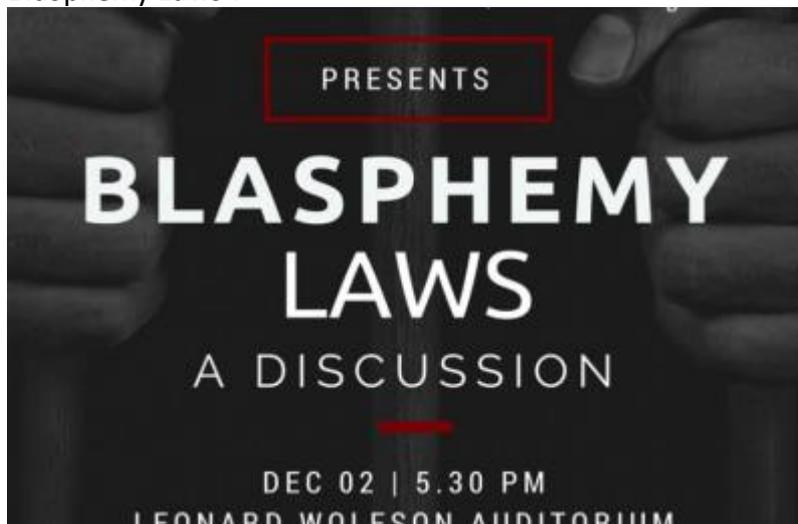


## WOLFSON COLLEGE, SOUTH ASIA RESEARCH CLUSTER ACTIVITY AY 2015-16

Our cluster has flourished through another year - engaged and lively. Here are some un-exhaustive highlights. In November 2015, the college hosted the *Safraz Lecture* by Prof Christophe Jaffrelot of Paris-1 who spoke about 'THE US - PAKISTAN RELATIONS UNDER OBAMA: RESILIENCE OF CLIENTELISM?'



Then in December 2015, under SARC's '*Big Themes, Public Intellectuals Series*' Lecture: Prof Guy Standing of SOAS discussed the influential policy he is championing 'Piloting Basic Income in India : a Transformative Policy for Sustainable Development Goals'. Meanwhile SARC hosted, along with the OU Pakistan Society a lecture and discussion 'On Pakistan's Blasphemy Laws'.



In January 2016, Dr Kasturi Sen (SARC) with Tanya Ahlin (Amsterdam University) presented a *Work in Progress Seminar*: 'ICTs and everyday care practices in Indian transnational families'. Next in January 2016, Veteran BBC journalist and South Asia correspondent, Owen Bennet-Jones held an off-the-cuff discussion with the Contemporary India programme and other specialists in the South Asian region. Part of a series of informal discussions, it was a rare opportunity to speak directly with someone who helps shape the dominant discourses on India and South Asia.

[www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/owen-bennet-jones-visits-csasp#sthash.eUGOTM04.dpuf](http://www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/owen-bennet-jones-visits-csasp#sthash.eUGOTM04.dpuf)



February 2016 marked the second year of the Contemporary South Asia Studies Programme and Lahore School of Economics exchange programme in partnership with Wolfson College. Oxford welcomed two 'recognised students' (studying for PhDs at LSE) in January; and in March Professor Matthew McCartney along with three doctoral/postdoc students from Oxford and one graduate of the MSc in Contemporary India programme visited Lahore [www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/csasp-oxford-and-lahore-school-economics-exchange-programme-2016#sthash.jxe7KfAB.dpuf](http://www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/csasp-oxford-and-lahore-school-economics-exchange-programme-2016#sthash.jxe7KfAB.dpuf)



In February 2016, SARC mounted a workshop on 'Pakistan – Political Economy of a Transforming Society' - with Prof Akbar Zaidi (Karachi University) who gave a lecture on 'Pakistan: The Need for a New Political Economy' - plus Adnan Rafiq, Masooda Bano, Matthew McCartney, Matthew Nelson and Umar Javed.

[www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/sites/sias/files/documents/Pakistan%20conference%20programme%2025Feb.pdf](http://www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/sites/sias/files/documents/Pakistan%20conference%20programme%2025Feb.pdf)



In March 2016, SARC hosted the annual meeting of the Punjab Research Group workshop



In the same month, the South Asia Programme of the University in partnership with Wolfson College was delighted to welcome visiting academics from the University of Warsaw and the University of Economics in Wroclaw to Oxford in March. Two joint seminars were organised, as well as a busy schedule of social events

[www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/csasp-welcomes-visitors-warsaw-and-wroclaw-poland#sthash.4g3yJs7G.dpuf](http://www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/csasp-welcomes-visitors-warsaw-and-wroclaw-poland#sthash.4g3yJs7G.dpuf)



In March 2016, students of the MSc in Contemporary India engaged in vibrant discussion with Colonel Zulfiqar Ali Bhatti, Army and Air Advisor to the Pakistan High Commission in London. The session was held at Wolfson College and led by CSASP's Dr Kate Sullivan, who drew the group's attention to a number of common 'assumptions about Pakistan' that students regularly encounter in the scholarly literature that accompanies her lecture series on India's international relations. In response, Colonel Bhatti offered nuanced insights and a range of Pakistani perspectives on questions of domestic, regional and global significance. The Colonel also offered fascinating insights into the origins of his personal commitment to public engagement and his motivations for engaging with students and other groups during his posting in the UK. Held under Chatham House rules, the open discussion between all participants was testimony to the success of the Colonel's endeavours, and offered both students and staff on the MSc in Contemporary India new lenses through which to understand Pakistan, India and the region.

[www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/bringing-perspectives-pakistan-study-contemporary-india#sthash.G9zC0Cu7.dpuf](http://www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/bringing-perspectives-pakistan-study-contemporary-india#sthash.G9zC0Cu7.dpuf)



In May 2016, SARC supported the annual *Graduate Student Workshop*, this time organised by Dr Uma Pradhan: 'What is South Asia: locating the region in social sciences' – with internationally renowned senior scholars in an engagement with junior ones. The keynote Lecture was given by Professor David Washbrook and participants included Nemat Bizhan & William Maley, Kate Sullivan, Ammara Maqsood, Maya Tudor, Lipika Kamra and Indrajit Roy;

[www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/graduate-led-workshop-what-south-asia-locating-region-social-sciences](http://www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/graduate-led-workshop-what-south-asia-locating-region-social-sciences)

In May 2016, SARC also hosted the international and multidisciplinary research conference on Burma's Rohingya people, in the LWA, attended by 65, watched live-streamed by **over 2000 people in 41 countries** including 500 in Burma itself. The keynote lecture was given by Professor Gyatri Chakravorty Spivak, Columbia University.

[www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/myanmar%E2%80%99s-democratic-transition-what-does-mean-persecuted-rohingya](http://www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/myanmar%E2%80%99s-democratic-transition-what-does-mean-persecuted-rohingya)

In May 2016 Wolfson College interviewed and appointed a three-year stipendiary (paid) Junior Research Fellowship (three years of paid research time) in the social sciences of contemporary South Asia and closely associated with SARC. The successful candidate Mr Ali Jan is just about to complete his DPhil and will be joining Wolfson in October 2016 for three years, he is a political scientist/ economic anthropologist who conducts fieldwork in small towns of Pakistan.

[www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/sites/sias/files/documents/South%20Asia%20JRF%20Wolfson.pdf](http://www.southasia.ox.ac.uk/sites/sias/files/documents/South%20Asia%20JRF%20Wolfson.pdf)

In July, 2016, a one-day conference on Caste in South Asia and its Diasporas was organised by Dr George Kunnath, linking Wolfson's SARC with Area Studies' CSASP), to explore the contemporary manifestations of caste in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh, and their diasporas in the UK, through the lens of religion, economy, gender, politics, and ethnicity. The keynote lecture was given by Professor David Mosse from SOAS.

On July 9<sup>th</sup> SARC participated in the research clusters event at Wolfson College's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary weekend celebrations, exploring the theme '*South Asia in 1966*'. This involved talks by Matthew McCartney (South Asia's early economic capabilities); Barbara Harriss-White (The Green Revolution); Kate Sullivan (Reforming the Indian Foreign Service); Indrajit Roy (The rise and rise of Indira Gandhi) ; George Kunnath (The roots of Maoism).

Finally on July 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> the South Asian Democratic Cultures Research Programme staged their final International Conference (linking UCL with SARC).

All this activity was possible through Wolfson's seed funds for which we are all very grateful.

Barbara Harriss-White and Matthew McCartney