



Savitribai Phule Pune University



Association for
Asian Studies

**'Cultivating the Humanities and Social Sciences and Supporting
the Under-Represented Scholars of Asia'**



Sweden
Sverige

About Us

SPPU-SIDA-AAS International Project

'Cultivating the Humanities and Social Sciences and Supporting the under-represented scholars of Asia' is an international research project coordinated by Association of Asian Studies (AAS) and supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) is one of the South Asian regional coordinating institutions for this project.

The project aims to develop the research capacity of local universities and enhance the academic knowledge, research skills, experience and resources of their scholars in humanities and social sciences, with a particular focus on junior faculty especially from marginal social groups of South Asian regions.

The main activity of the project consists of a series of capacity-building workshops in the span of four years starting from May 2022 to February 2026. This was the fifth workshop in the series titled *'Researching Marginalities'*- November 25th-29th, 2024.





PROJECT CONVENORS

RAJESHWARI DESHPANDE




Rajeshwari Deshpande is a professor and Head of the Department of Political Science at the Savitribai Phule Pune University. She was the ICCR visiting professor at the University of Technology, Sydney in 2014 and a UKIERI visiting fellow at King's India Institute, London in 2012. Her research interests are in areas such as politics of the urban poor, urban caste-class realities, women's politics, comparative state politics, politics-policy interface, and intellectual traditions of Maharashtra. She is also associated with Lokniti, located at CSDS, Delhi, and a member of the editorial management team of the Sage journal 'Studies in Indian Politics'.

ANAGHA TAMBE



Anagha Tambe is Head of the Department of Women & Gender Studies, at Savitribai Phule Pune University. Her areas of research include: gender, sexuality, and caste question, disciplinary histories of Women's Studies in India, and diversity and democracy in higher education. She has published on ritual 'prostitution' and debates on sex work in post-colonial India. She is awarded the Fulbright Nehru Academic and Professional Excellence Fellowship for 2018 – 2019. Anagha has edited, translated, and written several teaching and learning resources in women's studies, especially in Indian languages.



MENTORS

DR MADHURA LOHOKARE



Madhura Lohokare is with the O.P. Jindal Global University. She obtained her doctoral degree in Anthropology from Syracuse University. Her doctoral research examined how urban spaces produce young men as gendered and caste subjects in the context of Pune city. Her current research interests focus on critical writing pedagogies and exploring the notion of care in the context of writing pedagogy. She has conducted writing workshops for research scholars across universities in India, including in JNU, IIT Delhi, TISS, Mumbai and Savitribai Phule Pune University.

DR SNEHA GOLE



Dr. Sneha Gole completed her B.A in Political Science from Fergusson College, Pune and has a Master's degree in social work from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. She subsequently completed her doctoral work in 2018 in Women's Studies from the Department of Women and Gender Studies at the Savitribai Phule Pune University, examining the women's movement in the post 1990 period, mapping new spaces, strategies and issues of the movement. Her research areas are social movements, with a particular focus on women's movements, gender and development and gender and culture. She teaches papers on feminisms, feminist research methodology and gender and popular culture among others. She was awarded the Awaben Wadia Archival fellowship by RCWS, SNDT University to work on an archive of life narratives of young feminists, 2017-18. She was also selected for the 2022 Fulbright-Nehru Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship.

PROFESSOR KHAM KHAN SUAN HAUSING

Kham Khan Suan Hausing is a Professor (formerly, Head) at the Department of Political Science at University of Hyderabad in Telangana. He was a Fulbright-Nehru Postdoctoral Research Fellow (2012-13) at the Department of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia where he completed a project on "Asymmetric federalism and the question of democratic justice in Northeast India" under the able mentorship of Professor Brendan O'Leary. He has also completed the Leverhulme International Network Project on "Continuity and change in Indian federalism" (2014-15 to 2016-17) where his focus was on 'Telangana and the politics of state formation in India' as a co-researcher. His research interest includes, among others, federalism, ethnic conflicts, nationalism and Indian politics with particular focus on Northeast India.



SAYANTAN DATTA

Sayantana Datta (they/them) is a faculty at the Centre for Writing and Pedagogy, Krea University, and an independent science journalist, writer and communicator. Their research and writing are at the intersections of science, gender, sexuality, caste and health, and have been supported by grants from the National Association for Science Writers, USA, the Transforming Education for Sustainable Futures Project and the ReFrame Institute of Art and Expression. They have been listed as one of the twenty trailblazing queer individuals in the country by Egomonk, and their children's book- The Plant Whisperer was mentioned in the Parag Honor List 2023.





DR DIVYA VAID




Divya Vaid is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Jawaharlal Nehru University. She has an MSc and a DPhil from Oxford, UK. She has held postdoctoral positions at the Department of Sociology at Yale University and at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi. Her research interests include the study of social mobility and inequalities, educational attainment, work, economy and the labour market, gendered inequalities, and class and political participation, with an interest in the application of quantitative and mixed methods. Her work has appeared in the *Annual Review of Sociology*, *Contemporary South Asia*, *Asian Survey*, *Studies in Indian Politics*, *South Asian History and Culture* and the *Economic and Political Weekly* among others. She is the author of *Uneven Odds: Social Mobility in Contemporary India*, OUP, 2018, and has co-edited a volume on *Marginalities and Mobilities Among India's Muslims*, Routledge, 2023.

PROFESSOR K K KAILASH



K K Kailash is with the Department of Political Science, University of Hyderabad. He has been associated with the Lokniti since 2007. He is a member of the editorial managing team of *Studies in Indian Politics*. He is an honorary fellow at the Centre for Multilevel Federalism, Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi. Prof. Kailash's research interest focuses on political parties and elections, Parties and Party Systems, Federalism, and State Politics in India. He also contributes frequently to *The Indian Express* and *The Hindu*.





PARTICIPANTS (NOVEMBER 2024)

AAKANKSHA ADITI:

Aakanksha Aditi is a PhD fellow in Theatre Arts from the University of Hyderabad in Telangana. The topic of her research is "Exploring Women's Communal Singing as a Pathway to Resilience and Healing". It highlights the transformative power of communal singing as a culturally specific healing practice, contrasting it with more institutionalized forms of group singing like Satsang, which can limit genuine community engagement.

ABDUL WARIS KHORAM


Abdul Waris Khoram is a PhD Fellow in Sociology from Osmania University in Hyderabad, Telangana. The topic for his research is "The Impact of Non-governmental Organisations' (NGOs') Work on Child Protection in Afghanistan".

ADISH A. S.

Adish A. S. is a PhD fellow in English Literature from the National Institute of Technology in Calicut, Kerala. His topic of research is "A Kashmiri Woman Stuck in Crossfire: Exploring the Impact of Militarisation on Everyday Lives in Farah Bashir's *'Rumours of Spring'*". He is also a prestigious UGC-NET-JRF (Junior Research Fellow) in English.

ALICE ABRAHAM

Alice Abraham is a PhD Fellow in Women's Studies at University of Hyderabad in Telangana. Her Dissertation deals with the three autobiographies *I am Vidya* (2007) by Living Smile Vidya, *The Truth About Me: A Hijra Life Story* (2010) and *Me Hijra, Me Laxmi* by Laxmi Narayan Tripathi (2015). In her Dissertation Chapter entitled "Narrating the Birth Family", she looks at the role of the family in the lives of transgender individuals and the primacy of caste in the construction of the binary gender order.





ALINA KHLGHATYAN

Alina Khlghatyan, from Armenia, is a PhD Fellow in Humanities (Hindi Language and Literature) at the English and Foreign Languages University in Hyderabad, Telangana. Her topic of research is "हिंदी एवं आर्मेनियाई भाषा की ध्वनिव्यवस्था का व्यातीरिकी विश्लेषण".

ANINDITA BHATTACHARJEE


Anindita Bhattacharjee is a PhD fellow in Law at West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences in Kolkata, West Bengal. Her research is entitled "Crime, Customary Law and Dispute Settlement Mechanism Among Santals in West Bengal". She is also a recipient of the prestigious UGC-NET-JRF (June 2023) and has qualified the West Bengal and Tripura Judicial Service in 2022 with AIR 1 and AIR 2, respectively.

H. D. H. JEEWANTHI

Hakamuwa Durelage Hasitha Jeewanthi is an Independent Researcher in Political Science and a Lecturer at the Department of Political Science of University of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka. Her topic of research is "Urban Politics and Citizenship: A Discourse on Social Identity of Slum Dwellers Based on Their Homeland - A Special Reference to Peliyagoda Urban Council in Gampaha District."

HARSHA V. S.

Harsha V. S. is a PhD fellow in History at Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit in Kalady, Kerala. Her research work is based on cultural history and food history of Kerala. Her ongoing subject of research is "Analysis of Dalit Food Practices in 19th and 20th Century of Kerala".





IBRAHIM AFGHAN

Ibrahim Afghan is a PhD fellow in Political Science at the University of Mumbai in Maharashtra. His focus areas are languages as agents of identity and creativity, impact of narratives on mind and perceptions, women's educational issues and multilingualism. His topic of research is "Critical Analysis of Regional Languages for Muslim Girls Pursuing Higher Education in Maharashtra" and "Economic Challenges in the Feminist Movement in Iran (इराणमधील स्त्रीवादी आंदोलनातील आर्थिक आव्हाने)".

JASEEMUL FARHAN K. P.


Jaseemul Farhan K. P. is a PhD fellow in Political Science at Jamia Millia Islamia University in New Delhi. He is specializing in Political Sociology and Comparative Politics. His topic of research is "Public Policy and Social Marginality: The Question of Muslim Fisher Folks in Kerala". He is a recipient of the prestigious UGC-NET-JRF (Junior Research Fellowship) 2020.

JYOTHISHA V. R.

Jyothisha V. R. is a PhD fellow in English and Comparative Literature at the Central University of Kerala. Her topic of research is "Gendering Science: Tracing the Marginality of Women in Science". Her areas of interest include Gender and Science and Life Narratives.

MADHUMITA DEBNATH

Madhumita Debnath is a PhD fellow in Education and an Educational Researcher at Nagaon University in Assam. Her topic of research is "The Influence of Blended Learning in Enhancing Access to Quality Higher Education with Special Reference to North - East India". She is a prestigious UGC-NET-JRF (Junior Research Fellow).





MAHERA IMAM

Mahera Imam is a PhD fellow in Women's Studies at Bharathidasan University in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu. Her topic of research is "Digital Technology Enabled Gender-Based Cyber Violence: A New Occupational Hazard - A Case Study in Delhi".

MOHAMMAD FAHIM ZALAND


Mohammad Fahim Zaland, from Afghanistan, is a PhD fellow in English Language and Literature at the English and Foreign Languages University in Hyderabad, Telangana. His topic of research is "Through the Western Eyes: Understanding the Representation of Afghanistan in Select Travelogues" (A short thesis) and a paper on "Visualizing Neo-Orientalism: A Reception Analysis of Ted Rall's Graphic Travelogue - *To Afghanistan and Back*".

P. K. G. I. L. Ranasinghe

Puwakdandawe Katuwana Gamage Iruni Lavangi Ranasinghe is an Independent Researcher in Sociology and Social Psychology from Sri Lanka. Her topic of research is "Female Visionary Leaders for Development: A Sociological Reading on Importance Vs Reality of Gender, Development and State University Education in Sri Lanka - A Case Study".

PEEYUSH

Peeyush is a PhD fellow at the Department of Indian and World Literatures at the English and Foreign Languages University in Hyderabad, Telangana. His area of research is Masculinity Studies and his topic of research is "Alternative Sexuality and Masculinity: Study of Selected Indian Texts". He presented a paper titled "Masculine Notion and Nation: Examining the Desire, Appearance, and Performance of Muscular Masculinity in Contemporary India" at the Seventh Annual South Asia Conference organized by Dublin City University in Dublin, Ireland, on 24th-26th April 2024.





S. PRASANNA


S. Prasanna is a PhD fellow at the Department of Sociology at University of Hyderabad in Telangana. The topic of her research is "Question of Honour and Gender Among Dalit Community in Telangana". Her paper aims to provide insights through a sociological lens into the multifaceted nature of honor dynamics within the Madiga community and its broader implications for anti-caste struggles.

SHRUTHI GURUMOORTHY

Shruthi Gurumoorthy is an Independent Researcher of Social Sciences. Her research focuses on "Representation In and As Social Mobility". She has written various articles for Youth Ki Awaaz Fellowship such as "The POCSO Act Is Limited In Its Understanding Of Child Sexual Abuse".

SIMRANJEET KAUR

Simranjeet Kaur is a PhD fellow in Political Science, at Jamia Millia Islamia University in New Delhi. Her research topic is "Citizenship, Contestations and Everyday lives: A Study of Kusumpur Pahadi in Delhi". Her research investigates various norms shaping the environment of slum dwellers and explores their attitudes towards the state and their forms of resistance.





SNIGDHA HANSDA

Snigdha Hansda is a PhD fellow in Political Science at Sido Kanhu Murmu University in Dumka, Jharkhand. Her topic of research is "A Study of Working of Manjhi Pargana System of Governance in Santal Pargana and Its Impact on Lives of Tribal Women (With Special Reference to Dumka District)". Her research seeks to understand the relationship between santal women and the manjhi system which is male dominated. It also seeks to explore various problems that women face in the process of resolution of their problems.

VICKY KUMAR SAW


Vicky Kumar Saw is a PhD fellow in Sociology at the Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines) at Dhanbad in Jharkhand. His topic of research is "Becoming Adivasi: Exploring the state-society relationship in Jharkhand, India". His research explores the transformation in Adivasi discourse from cultural endurance to active resistance against state oppression. It examines pivotal movements and the impact of state policies on Adivasi rights, identity, and autonomy in the post-colonial context.

WASIM AKRAM

Wasim Akram is a PhD fellow in economics at University of Jammu in Jammu. His topic of research is "Job Qualification Mismatch in Indian Labour Market and Related Socio-Economic Issues: A Case Study of Jammu District". His research assesses the prevalence of overeducation, identifies associated factors, and explores the reasons for job selection. He is also the recipient of the prestigious UGC-NET-JRF (Junior Research Fellowship) 2019.

ZAHID HUSSAIN KHAN

Zahid Hussain Khan is a PhD fellow in Humanities at Panjab University, in Chandigarh, Punjab. His topic of research is "Dynamics of Change: Historical Evolution of the Dard-Shina Community and Nature". His research explores the multifaceted transformation of the Himalayan Shina community in Ladakh, and delves into the intricate patterns of life within the community, examining the effects of modernism and the influence of development on their cultural and environmental landscape.





RETURNEES (MAY 2024)

ASHWINI KACHHAP


Ashwini Kachhap is a PhD Fellow in Political Science at the University of Delhi. Her research paper is titled, "Indigenous Ontology of Land: A Field to Locate and Discern Gender Within the Adivasi Community". Her research aims to explore the relationship between Adivasi women and their land within the context of indigenous cosmology, analyzing how colonialism and modernity have impacted their status and agency. By employing post-humanist and post-structuralist feminist frameworks, the study seeks to uncover the complexities of gender dynamics in indigenous societies and argue for a reinterpretation of land as a source of agency for women. Ultimately, it aspires to contribute to the decolonization of knowledge surrounding gender and land in indigenous contexts.

ATHIRA C.

Athira C. is a PhD fellow in Geography from Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit at Kalady in Kerala. Her research paper is titled "Spatial Marginalization of Dalits: A Study on Scheduled Caste Colonies in Urban Region, Kerala". Her research examines the spatial marginalization of Dalit communities living in Scheduled Caste colonies in Kochi, Kerala, highlighting how caste-class-gender dynamics contribute to their alienation. It aims to understand the production of social space and the everyday realities of these communities, revealing how historical injustices and urban development perpetuate structural inequalities. Through critical ethnography, her research seeks to highlight the interconnectedness of social structures that affect Dalit lives in urban settings.

INSHA QAYOOM SHAH

Insha Qayoom Shah is associated with an NGO in the discipline of English and humanities from the Umran Academic Research Association. The research explores how *The Palace of Illusions* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni reimagines Draupadi's character from the Mahabharata, giving her a voice and agency often absent in the original epic. By focusing on Draupadi's inner emotions and subjective experiences, Divakaruni challenges the patriarchal narrative, contributing to feminist reinterpretations of mythological figures and emphasizing themes of gender, resistance, and empowerment.





MRIDUGUNJAN DEKA


Mridugunjan Deka is a PhD fellow of Political Science at Gauhati University. His research topic is "Of Marginalisation, Political Violence, and Agency: A Review of Adivasi Identity Issues with Special Emphasis From Western Assam". His research examines the historical and contemporary socio-political challenges faced by Adivasis in Western Assam, particularly in relation to their quest for social justice and Scheduled Tribe status amidst the complexities of ethnic identity and conflict influenced by Bodo insurgency. It critiques the oversimplified portrayal of Adivasis as a monolithic "tea-plantation community" and highlights the nuanced lived experiences of these communities in the context of ethnic strife and political violence.

NAJ PARWEEN

Naj Parween is a PhD fellow in History from Sido Kanhu Murmu University. The topic of her research is "उपनिवेशवाद विरोधी आदिवासी विद्रोहों में झारखंड की आदिवासी महिलाओं का योगदान" ("Contribution of tribal women of Jharkhand in anti-colonial tribal rebellions"). Her research explores the historical and contemporary contributions of Adivasi women in Jharkhand's anti-colonial movements, highlighting their limited recognition in historical documentation despite their significant involvement. It emphasizes the need to integrate various sources, including oral traditions and folk songs, to acknowledge and amplify the voices of these women in the broader narrative of resistance.

NITISH GOGOI

Nitish Gogoi is a PhD fellow in Sociology from Tezpur University in Assam. His topic of research is "Breaking the "Masculine Silence": Ethnic Uprisings and Childhood Memoirs of Terrors and Sufferings Among the Former Bodo Men Rebels in Assam, India". His research examines the overlooked experiences of male former rebels from the Bodo society in Assam, focusing on their traumatic experiences of violence during childhood and their negotiation of these experiences. By utilizing life history narratives, it argues for a broader understanding of male vulnerability in conflict contexts and advocates for incorporating men's perspectives into gender analysis in the northeastern region of India.





SARANYA S.


Saranya S. is a research scholar pursuing PhD at the Centre for Comparative Literature, School of Humanities, University of Hyderabad, India, and her research topic is "Many Silenced Voices: Tracing Subaltern Counterpublics within Contemporary Malayalam Fiction". Her research examines 'Meesa' by S. Hareesh as a critical exploration of subaltern narratives in Malayalam literature, highlighting the character of Meesa and his symbolic mustache as tools of resistance against caste oppression. It critiques mainstream representations that marginalize these voices, advocating for the reclamation of subaltern experiences and histories.

SHALINI S.

Shalini S. is a PhD student at the Department of English and Comparative Literature, Central University of Kerala, working under the supervision of Dr. Vellikkeel Raghavan. She is a scholar of Film Studies, and her topic of research is "Caste(ing) the Porcine Body: Becoming-Animal of a Dalit in *Maamannan*". Her research explores the concept of "becoming-animal" in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy as a framework to analyze the portrayal of pigs in the film *Maamannan*, examining how this representation challenges caste dynamics and contributes to discussions of Dalit subjectivity by fostering a transformative relationship between humans and animals. Through close engagement with the film's aesthetics, it argues that the interconnection between the protagonist and the pigs illustrates a shared experience of suffering and identity, transcending traditional human-animal hierarchies.

TAHSEEN FATIMA

Tahseen Fatima is pursuing a PhD program in the Department of Political Science, at the University of Delhi. Her research paper is titled "Politico-Economic Shifts and the Feminization of Weaving: A Case Study of Julaha Muslim Women Working across Clusters in Jharkhand" and it examines the feminization of labor in the weaving industry among Julaha Muslim women in Jharkhand, analyzing the historical and socio-economic transitions that have shaped their roles within this traditionally male-dominated occupation. Through qualitative narratives and key informant insights, the study highlights the paradox of empowerment and insecurity faced by women weavers in the context of a neoliberal economy.





TSHUMILA LAMA

Tshumila Lama is a PhD fellow in Political Science from the University of North Bengal. Her topic of research is “Trade Unions and Political Parties in the Tea Industry of Darjeeling Hills: A Critical Analysis”. Her research explores the dynamics between trade unions and political parties in the Darjeeling tea industry, focusing on how this relationship impacts the struggles of tea plantation workers facing exploitation and poverty. It critically examines whether the political affiliations of trade unions enhance their effectiveness in advocating for workers' rights and improving conditions or impede their functioning.

