



Asia Society India Centre New Year Edition 2012

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Message from the Executive Director

Dear Reader,

As we welcome 2012, we are delighted to present to you the New Year edition of Asia Society India Centre's newsletter, which looks back at the last quarter at Asia Society. Here you will find highlights of some of the many programmes and global initiatives that we have undertaken.

Across our 11 global offices, Asia Society has continued to work across sectors, disciplines and regions to provide a better understanding of the Asia-Pacific's peoples, traditions, current affairs and future trends. Our programmes have included a film on the Sri Lankan civil conflict between government forces and the LTTE, a discussion with *Sea of Poppies* and *River of Smoke* author Amitav Ghosh, a music and dance performance from Mongolia, an exploration of Tibetan Buddhist debate and Jewish Talmudic debate, an address by the UN IPCC Chairman Rajendra Pachauri, a walkthrough of exhibitions featuring Pakistani artists to illuminate socio-political undercurrents in art, and the Pacific Green Cities Transportation Conference. With the opening of our two new Centre buildings in Hong Kong and Texas in 2012, we are certain that impact and scope of programmes will be strengthened in the years to come.

Quick Links

- [www.asiasociety.org/centers/india](#)
- [www.facebook.com/AsiaSocietyIndiaCentre](#)
- [http://twitter.com/#!/AsiaSocietyIC](#)

Upcoming Events

[www.asiasociety.org/events](#)

13 January
Dissent, Democracy and Movements for Change
With Aruna Roy, Political and Social Activist and Member of the National Advisory Council, and Manu Joseph, Editor-in-Chief, *Open Magazine*
11:30am, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

19 January
Universities in a Changing World
Private Luncheon with Drew Gilpin Faust, President of Harvard University
Mumbai

21 January
The Sun King, Retold by Linda Gan: A Tale from Thailand
An Adventures of Asia book reading for children aged 5-8
11:30am, Kitab Khana, Mumbai

21 January
Tour of LN Tallur's Exhibition, Quintissential
With Artist LN Tallur and Curator Tasneem Mehta
Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai

22 January
Shehar Ek Sapna: The City as a Dream
With Authors Mohammad Hanif, Aman Sethi, Salman Rushdie, Meenal Baghel, Uday Prakash, and by Ashok Vajpeyi (TBC)
DSC Jaipur Literary Festival, Jaipur

29 January
New Models for International Cultural Collaboration: Insights, Best Practices, and Future Recommendations

We encourage you to visit our website (www.asiasociety.org) and blog (<http://asiasociety.org/blog/asia>) to keep abreast with our programmes, and to access programme summaries, videos, exclusive interviews and expert opinions.

To be informed about all Asia Society India Centre's events and to avail of membership benefits that include free or discounted admission to our events, we hope you will consider joining us as a member, if you are not already one. Our membership form with further details can be found at <http://www.asiasociety.org/support/membership/india>, and we would be happy to assist you with any queries you may have.

Our next newsletter will reach you in April 2012. Until then, we welcome your feedback, and hope to see you at one of our forthcoming programmes.

Bunty Chand
Executive Director
Asia Society India Centre

Poor Economics: Understanding the Desires and Choices of the Poor



Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, with Omkar Goswami, Founder and Chairman, CERG Advisory; Jim Shapiro, Head of Market Development, Bombay Stock Exchange; Intellecap CEO Krishan Sree Kumar and Asia Society India Centre Executive Director Bunty Chand

Authors of *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*, MIT Professors **Esther Duflo** and **Abhijit Banerjee** joined Asia Society India Centre in November in Mumbai for a discussion along with **Omkar Goswami**, Founder and Chairman of Corporate & Economic Research Group (CERG) Advisory Private Limited, and **Krishan Sree Kumar**, CEO of Intellecap.

The authors explained that lifting people out of poverty is a complex business that requires nuanced understandings and recognition of the poor as individuals pursuing pleasure along with more basic desires like nutrition and shelter. To help the poor, they said, we must work with their preferences, not against them. For instance, instead of thinking of the poor as individuals pursuing nutrition, we should understand that they also pursue pleasure in better-tasting food, and provide them food options that combine these elements — like providing biscuits infused with vitamins.

The authors also spoke about entrepreneurship's limited ability to pull people from poverty. For their businesses to grow enough to achieve this, high amounts of investment are required in most cases, and the poor can rarely access such resources.

This programme was presented in partnership with BSE Ltd., Intellecap and the MIT Alumni Club. For more information and to view video highlights of the programme, please visit <http://asiasociety.org/business/development/understanding-poor-help-poor>.

Also visit the Poor Economics website for organizations that the authors endorse as taking effective steps towards lifting people out of poverty- <http://pooreconomics.com/what-can-you-do>.

With *Melissa Chiu*, Museum Director of Asia Society New York, *Yuko Hasegawa*, Chief Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, *Rajeev Lochan*, Director at National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, *Kimberly Masteller*, Jeanne McCray Beals Curator of South and Southeast Asian Art at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City.
12 Noon, New Delhi

2 February
Gandhi and the Struggling Subcontinent
With *Joseph Lelyveld*, Author of 'Great Soul: Mahatma Gandhi and His Struggle with India,' and *Ranjit Hoskote*, Cultural Theorist, Poet and Critic
6:30pm, Jnanapravaha, Mumbai

7-9 February
Mythologies of Asia
Children's Readings and Activities at the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival
Mumbai

20 February
Himalayan Meltown
Film Screening With *Ajay Chhibber*, Assistant Secretary-General and Assistant Administrator, UNDP
6:30pm, Max Mueller Bhavan, Mumbai

Kyrgyzstan President Roza Otunbayeva on Political Transitions and the Future



This November in New York, Kyrgyzstan's President Roza Otunbayeva joined Asia Society for a discussion on the first peaceful transition her country was to experience in December 2011 after years of political turmoil.

Nearly 500 people were killed in ethnic violence between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the wake of the ousting of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev in 2010. Roza Otunbayeva took over from Bakiyev and stepped in to manage the crisis until fair elections took place.

In this context, President Otunbayeva spoke about the country's political transition and its role in the world. She was joined by Reuters Senior Correspondent and former Asia Society Bernard Schwartz Fellow Philip Shishkin for a discussion on Kyrgyzstan's relations with its Central Asian neighbors.

Watch the complete programme at <http://asiasociety.org/video/policy/kyrgyzstan-president-roza-otunbayeva-complete>. Watch video highlights of the discussion at <http://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/video-kyrgyzstan-president-central-asian-neighbors-future-plans>.

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Australian Defence Minister Stephen Smith Discusses the Asia Pacific Century

Australian Defense Minister Stephen Smith spoke at an Asia Society India Centre programme in December 2011, addressing issues including shared maritime security challenges, the rise of China and the recent Australian policy change to supply uranium to India. He was joined in conversation with Pramit Pal Chaudhuri, Foreign Editor of the Hindustan Times.



Smith expressed Australia's support of a permanent seat for India on a reformed United Nations Security Council, and the need to counter piracy in the Indian ocean.

He said that Australia does not have a policy of "containing" China, as some speak of. Australia believes that as countries rise economically and their place in the world grows, they are entitled to grow their military capability. However, Australia asks that there is transparency about the strategic intentions of these countries, and has said it would prefer that China was more transparent about such capability that it is growing. Smith said that Australia is positive and optimistic that China will emerge into a harmonious environment and as a responsible stakeholder respecting international laws and norms. The regional architecture that exists today facilitates this. For instance, at the expanded East Asia Summit meeting in 2011, 16 out of the 18 countries called for issues in the South and East China Seas to be resolved amicably and in accordance with international law and norms.

Explaining why Australia changed its policy to allow uranium sales to India, Smith provided three main reasons. Firstly, Australia has had a longstanding policy to not export uranium to non-signatories of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). However, in 2008-2009 when the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) approved the civil nuclear agreement between India and the US, Australia saw this as an acceptance by the international community of India not

signing the NPT. At that time, India voluntarily agreed to accept oversight of the IAEA and the NSG, putting India under the umbrella of international civil nuclear regulators. Secondly, there has never been a serious suggestion that India has engaged in nuclear proliferation. Thirdly, as a rising power and the world's largest democracy, India is entitled to the respect that goes along with being a major world power. Allowing uranium sales from Australia to India, Smith said, has opened the door to further enhancing the relationship between the two countries.

This programme was presented in partnership with the Mohile Parikh Centre, with support from the Consulate General of Australia in Mumbai, as part of the *Future of Asia* series. To learn more, visit <http://asiasociety.org/calendars/india-and-australia-asia-pacific-century>.

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Sarah Sze's Infinte Line

From December 2011 to March 2012, Asia Society's Museum in New York is featuring *Sarah Sze: Infinite Line*, the first exhibition to focus specifically on Sarah Sze's process. It is an exploration of line, literally and figuratively, across mediums from drawings to sculpture to installation. Initially trained in architecture, Sze explores the ways space is both represented and experienced in two and three dimensions.

Known for her installations, Sze utilizes everyday materials such as disposable plastic eating utensils, notepads, scissors and ladders, among other objects. The exhibition comprises two-dimensional works on paper and a new, large-scale site-specific installation in which she creates a complex web of materials that visually engages the architectural dynamic of a space and invites viewers to reevaluate their relation to their surroundings.

Browse the exhibition website at <http://sites.asiasociety.org/sarahsze/> for an interview with the artist, works by the artist, and more.



Sarah Sze, *Guggenheim as a Ruin*, 2009. Ink, string, collage on paper.
Private collection.

Another Pakistan: Asia Society Podcasts



Veteran journalist Christopher Lydon of Radio Open Source traveled to Pakistan in the Summer of 2011, microphone in hand, ready to take the pulse of the embattled nation. The result is *Another Pakistan*, a candid and thought-provoking series of podcast conversations brought to you by the Asia Society and the Watson Institute at Brown University, with support on the ground from Aman ki Asha.

The podcasts feature interviews with speakers including Mohammed Hanif, Author of *A Case of Exploding Mangoes*, Rashid Rana, eminent Pakistani artist, Ashis Nandy, Director of the Center for the Study of Developing Societies, Imtiaz Alam, Senior Pakistani Journalist, and Ayesha Jalal, Professor of History at Tufts University.

To access *Another Pakistan* podcasts, visit <http://asiasociety.org/countries/asia-society-podcast-another-pakistan>.

U.S.-East Asia Relations: A Strategy for Multilateral Engagement

In November 2011, Asia Society released its latest task force report, *U.S.-East Asia Relations: A Strategy for Multilateral Engagement*. The task force was Co-Chaired by Han Sung-Joo, Professor Emeritus at Korea University, and J. Stapleton Roy, Director for the Kissinger Institute on China and the United States at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

Since the 1997 financial crisis, East Asians have expressed a growing and layered approach in regionalism ranging from free trade and economic agreements among neighboring countries, to ministerial meetings and summits in the ASEAN+3 and East Asian Summit processes. Despite these variations, the phenomenon of East Asian regionalism has shared a common feature: it has thrived on an intra-Asian basis that largely excluded the U.S. Given the current economic and political climate, the report suggests that U.S. cannot afford to be on the outside any longer.



Asia Society Fellow and Co-Director of the Task Force Report, Simon Tay

The task force's recommendations include engaging more deeply with the U.S. and avoiding Asian triumphalism, recognizing that integration on different economic and security issues will continue at different speeds in the region, and bolstering the dynamism of ASEAN to offer regional leadership.

For more information and to download the full task force report, visit <http://asiasociety.org/policy/task-forces/task-force-us-east-asia-relations-strategy-multilateral-engagement>.

2011 Asia 21 Young Leaders Summit- Worlds Apart Together

The Asia Society Asia 21 Young Leaders Summit, the pre-eminent gathering of the most dynamic under-40 young leaders in the Asia-Pacific region, was held in New Delhi in November 2011. The theme for the 2012 Summit was *Worlds Apart Together: Shared Values for an Asia-Pacific Community*. Dialogues explored such topics as the perceived future of inequality in the Asia Pacific region, the impact of social media, how Asia should deal with its demographic dilemma, and how to foster and promote Asia's next generation women leaders.

The Keynote speaker for the conference was Brijendra Singh, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, and the delegates included prominent individuals across regions and sectors including Lobsang Sangay, Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government in Exile, Vani Tripathi, National Secretary of the Bhartiya Janta Party, Seungheon Song, Partner of McKinsey & Company's Seoul Office, and Sharmin Obaid Chinoy, Journalist and Documentary Filmmaker for Channel 4 (U.K.).



Visit the conference website at <http://sites.asiasociety.org/asia21summit/>.

Book Corner

The Book Corner features two books in every edition of our newsletter that we believe would be of interest to our members. We feature both new releases as well as older books of

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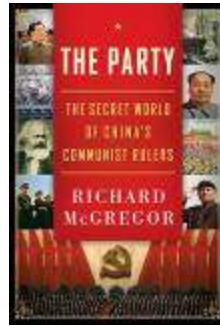
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relevance today, which engage themes relating to Asian countries.

The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers

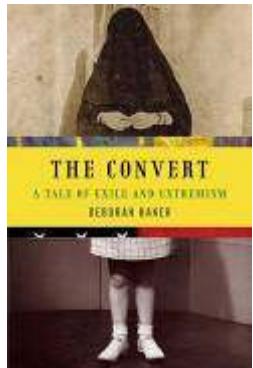
China has undergone a remarkable transformation in the past three decades- on a scale similar to that of the Industrial Revolution in the West. The most remarkable part of this transformation, however, has been left largely untold—the central role of the Chinese Communist Party.

In *The Party*, Richard McGregor delves deeply into China's inner sanctum for the first time, showing how the Communist Party controls the government, courts, media, and military, and how it keeps all corruption accusations against its members in-house. The Party's decisions have a global impact, yet the CPC remains a deeply secretive body, hostile to the law, unaccountable to anyone or anything other than its own internal tribunals. It is the world's only geopolitical rival of the United States, and is steadfastly poised to think the worst of the West.



The Party was the recipient of Asia Society's 2011 Bernard Schwartz Book Award. McGregor was joined in conversation Tuong Vu, author of *Paths to Development in Asia*, and Jeffrey Wasserstrom, author of *China's Brave New World: And Other Tales for Global Times* at Asia Society New York in December 2011. Read more at <http://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/2011-bernard-schwartz-book-award-peers-behind-curtain-china>.

The Convert: A Tale of Exile and Extremism



What drives a young woman raised in a postwar New York City suburb to convert to Islam, abandon her country and Jewish faith, and embrace a life of exile in Pakistan? *The Convert* tells the story of how Margaret Marcus of Larchmont became Maryam Jameel of Lahore, one of the most trenchant and celebrated voices of Islam's argument with the West. A cache of Maryam's letters to her parents in the archives of the New York Public Library sends acclaimed biographer Deborah Baker on her own odyssey into the labyrinthine heart of 20th century Islam. Casting a shadow over these letters is the enigmatic figure of Mawlana Abul Ala Mawdudi, both Maryam's adoptive father and mentor, and the man who laid the intellectual foundations for militant political Islam.

Some of the questions Baker raises as she attempts to understand Maryam's journey are, how did the Cold War devolve into the war on terror? Is the argument between Islam and the West a metaphysical one or a historical one? Is Maryam's story just another bleak chapter in the so-called clash of civilizations?

In November 2011, Asia Society India Centre hosted Deborah Baker in conversation with **Shahid Amin**, Professor of History at the University of Delhi. Learn more at <http://asiasociety.org/calendars/convert-tale-exile-and-extremism-biography-deborah-baker-0>.

About Asia Society

Asia Society is the leading global and pan-Asian organization working to strengthen relationships and promote understanding among the people, leaders, and institutions of the United States and Asia. We seek to increase knowledge and enhance dialogue, encourage creative expression, and generate new ideas across the fields of arts and culture, policy and business, and education.

Founded in 1956, Asia Society is a nonpartisan, nonprofit educational institution with offices in Hong Kong, Houston, Los Angeles, Manila, Melbourne, Mumbai, New York, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, and Washington, DC.

Charles R. Kaye, Chairman, Board of Trustees

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Mailing List, Membership, and More

For more information on the following, please email admin@asiasociety.org.in.

- Upcoming events
- Join the mailing list
- Individual membership
- Corporate Membership

If you would like to react, offer suggestions, or comment on any of the content you've read in this newsletter, we would be happy to hear from you. Please write to asiasociety@asiasociety.org.in. We look forward to your active participation in the Asia Society India Centre community.

Thank you!

