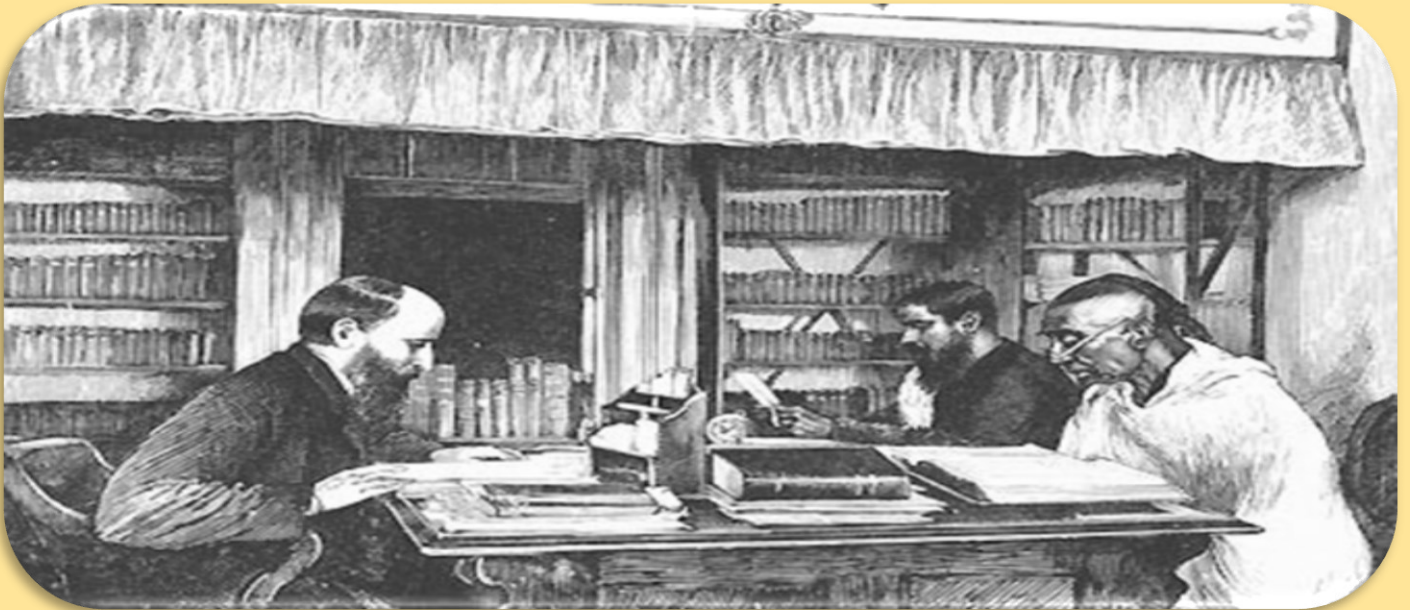




**SAPIENZA**  
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

**Dottorato in CIVILTÀ DELL'ASIA E DELL'AFRICA**

**Curriculum Subcontinente Indiano e Asia Centrale**



# **Decolonizing Research Methodologies in South Asian Studies**

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Buddhist Studies, University of Vienna

Introduce: Prof. Mario Prayer

Venerdì 29 novembre 2024, ore 14-16

<https://uniroma1.zoom.us/j/88527908867>

The lecture will outline a critical inquiry into how colonial legacies continue to shape academic frameworks and knowledge production in South Asia. It will examine the concepts of academic imperialism and academic dependency where Eurocentric curricula and research paradigms overshadow indigenous epistemologies and restrict intellectual autonomy within South Asian academia. Drawing on theoretical perspectives from the postcolonial imperialism critique, we will address the challenges of dismantling Western academic dominance as well as decolonizing strategies like integrating indigenous knowledge systems, valuing local narratives, and fostering intellectual resilience etc. We'll discuss concrete methodologies, such as contextualizing research within local epistemic frameworks and employing participatory action research to balance power dynamics between researchers and communities. Additionally, translating and indigenizing research materials to better reflect South Asian sociocultural realities, rather than enforcing Western theoretical models, will be explored. Through these discussions, the lecture will highlight the importance of reframing academic spaces to empower South Asian voices and counteract historical subjugation, creating a more inclusive and autonomous scholarly landscape.

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Dr. Aftab Husain Shah has been teaching in the Department of South Asian, Tibetan, and Buddhist Studies at the University of Vienna since 2008. Trained primarily in literary studies and holding a doctorate in comparative literature focused on the topic of *The Reception of Modern Indian Languages & Literature in German-Speaking Countries*, his academic interests encompass language politics, gender studies, the politico-cultural aspects of religion, and postcolonial studies, with a strong emphasis on the dynamics of modern South Asia, particularly in India and Pakistan, as well as Muslim South Asia. He is a distinguished writer predominantly in Urdu and is also proficient in Hindi, English, and German, contributing to both poetry and prose. In addition, he serves as the editor of *Words & Worlds*, a biannual magazine dedicated to migrant literature in German and English.