

The Development of Political Economic Agency: An Examination of the Siddis of India

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CALL FOR BOOK CHAPTERS

The Development of Political Economic Agency: An Examination of the Siddis of India

Editors: Alecia D. Hoffman, Ph.D. and Sharron Y. Herron-Williams, Ph.D.

The most prominent group of Africans that occupy India are the Siddis, who number somewhere between 40,000-50,000.¹ Populations with a direct lineage to Africa, for example, reside in Gujarat and Karnataka, India. The Siddi population has long held a place and space on the Indian subcontinent.²

According to the scholar, Purnima Mehta Bhatt, Africans began arriving in India as early as the first century CE. This movement across the Indian Ocean continued for approximately 2,000 years.³ Additionally, many that arrived in the Indian Ocean region pre-date the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade to the Americas. Those that arrived in India were not relegated only to positions of slavery, but several Africans arriving on the sub-continent rose to positions of prominence. Individuals such as Malik Andil, Malik Sarwar, and Malik Ambar served as influential leaders.⁴ These men, and others like them, were afforded opportunities not provided to those arriving in the Americas. They received education and training, served as merchants and sailors, and were provided military training.

A great deal of scholarship focusing on Africans in India highlights the historical, cultural, social, and religious dynamics. These discussions serve as a point of pause

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and reflection and lead to more pointed questions surrounding the political agency of the Siddis today. How do the Siddis interact and participate in governance and institution building in India? How is agency developed and then lost amongst a people? Lastly, what steps must be taken to re-establish agency amongst the Siddis themselves and through local, regional, and national governance systems?

This book will expand the existing literature on the Siddis of India and go beyond existing historical, cultural, and religious narratives. The authors will explore the place and space of the Siddi population within the political and economic spheres of Indian society. In addition to the exploration of African people on the continent of Asia, the authors will contribute to the growing body of literature that examines the developments of the African diaspora in the Global South.

This work will present a multidisciplinary approach to the subject, building from the leading theoretical paradigms of political agency, rational choice, and structuralism. It will provide the building blocks for further inquiry into the development and maintenance of political agency amongst people who have long resided in the Indian Ocean region. We seek to develop knowledge, stimulate public discourse, and increase dialectics on this vital topic. We invite scholars and practitioners who research and write about nation-building and development to submit abstracts that address the effect of political-economic agency amongst the Siddis of India. Scholars may address some of the proposed themes listed below.

- The Geographical Location of the Siddis of India
- Religious Agency of the Siddis of India
- Social Stratification in Indian Society and its Intersections with Governance
 - --Historical
 - --Contemporary
- The Implications of Structural Violence on the Siddis of India
- Education: Building Capacity for Future Generations
- National Sports Program: Siddis as India's Athletic Ambassador's
- Social Issues and Siddi Women
- The Impact of Sustainable Community-based Approach for Livelihoods Enhancement (SCALE) and Development of Siddi Economic Empowerment
- Government Policies and Agricultural Empowerment
- The Role of the Indian Ministry of Tribal Affairs: Mitigating the Plight of the Siddis
- The Role of NGOs and the International Community in the Life of Siddis

- Housing Programs of Siddis
- Siddis of Gujarat
- Siddis of Goa
- Siddis of Karnataka
- Siddis of Maharashtra
- Siddis of Andhra Pradesh
- Siddis of Telangana

NOTE:

- Please check with the editors to see if (a) any of the listed topics are still available; or (b) you are interested in a topic that is not listed but which may fit into the overall theme of this project.

Submission Procedures:

1. Please submit a 300-350 word abstract outlining the leading ideas, insights, anticipated research findings, and keywords **by May 31, 2022**. A 1-2 page CV and a one-page biographical profile are also required.
2. Contributors will be notified of acceptance or rejection of abstract(s) **by June 21, 2022**. Authors whose abstracts are accepted will be sent guidelines for completing their chapters.
3. Each chapter is set for a maximum of 30-double-spaced pages (including the notes, tables, figures, and bibliography). **Completed chapters are due no later than November 30, 2022.**
4. Send your abstracts/inquiries to Dr. Alecia D. Hoffman (aleciadhoffman@gmail.com) and Dr. Sharron Y. Herron-Williams (syherronw@gmail.com).

About the Editors:

Alecia D. Hoffman, Ph.D., is an associate professor of political science at Alabama State University. Her areas of research interest include the development of the Global South, international political economy, migration/trafficking, and Sino-African relations. She is the author, co-author, editor, and co-editor of several publications

in edited peer-reviewed works. She has presented at academic conferences and symposiums on her areas of research interest. She serves on editorial boards of peer-reviewed journals, and she is a member of several professional political science organizations.

Sharron Y. Herron-Williams, Ph.D., has more than 25 years of experience in higher education and currently serves as a Professor of Political Science, Fulbright Scholar Liaison, and President of the Southern Conference on American American Studies, Inc. (SCAASI). She is an expertly trained administrator, educator, lecturer, researcher, facilitator, consultant, and mentor. She has served as president and/or chair of numerous professional organizations. Throughout her professional career, she has had the opportunity to work with diverse and international leaders, students, faculty, researchers, program directors, embassies, governmental and educational authorities, and other constituencies. She has published articles and book chapters, designed programs, written grants, identified curricular and co-curricular opportunities, led and accompanied administrators, students and faculty on study away and abroad experiences, conducted training, developed and executed memoranda of understanding, and continues to broker and maintain relationships. To this end, she has participated in and conducted training in the United States and abroad, worked with and led organizations that have an international or global focus and mission, and have traveled around the world educating, recruiting, and making presentations about the value of obtaining a broad-based education and cultural understanding.

1. Sumanth Reddy, "Siddi Life and Their Sense of Belonging in Karnataka, India," *Focus on Geography* vol. 64 (15 March 2021), [Siddi Life and Their Sense of Belonging in Karnataka, India \(focusongeography.org\)](https://focusongeography.org); "Scheme of Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)," F. No. 11011/01/2019-EMRS/PVTG-Government of India-Ministry of Tribal Affairs, September 17, 2019.

2. There are variations on the spelling which include *Siddi*, *Sidi*, *Siddh*.

3. Purnima Mehta Bhatt, *The African Diaspora in India: Assimilation, Change, and Cultural Survivals* (London: Routledge, 2018), xi.

4. Malik means leader, ruler, or king and is often utilized to identify a headman of a village.

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