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## **Pulled paper sparks row**

**Jon Buscall Stockholm**

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A doctoral student at Stockholm University's Department of Oriental Languages claims to have been barred from a conference because of his controversial research, although conference organisers said it was because his paper lacked academic merit.

Tobias Hübinette is being investigated because of his research on interracial marriages and adoption. If the investigation produces substantive evidence, he could face prosecution for reverse racism. Mr Hübinette said: "My department received so many letters of complaint about my research that the university's legal people are examining my work."

Mr Hübinette, Sweden's only doctoral candidate in Korean studies, often criticises media depictions of Asians. His recent denunciation of inherent racism against East Asians in TV commercials led to a pet food advertisement being dropped.

The latest dispute centres on Mr Hübinette's research, which he has published on his personal university web pages. He argues that "what drives (Western man's) fetishism with Asian women is quite simply paedophile tendencies". He also says that the adoption of East Asian babies are part of a long tradition of colonial oppression.

Hans Aili, head of the department, told the newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet*: "I see these texts as personal musings rather than scholarly research." After discussing the content with Professor Aili, Mr Hübinette had to remove the material and links to his own website from the university server.

The external examiner for Mr Hübinette's doctoral thesis, Koen De Ceuster, is a member of the Association for Korean Studies in Europe. Mr Hübinette argues that the association excluded him from its biennial conference held last week at University of Sheffield.

Mr Hübinette said he had a paper accepted for the conference, was given funds to attend but later received a letter from the association's board telling him that he was excluded from the conference on "scholarly grounds". "They did not clarify what their reason was. I think they took this action because of the nature of my work," Mr Hübinette said.

James Grayson, secretary of the association and director of the Centre for Korean Studies at Sheffield, said Mr Hübinette's 250-word proposal for a paper had been accepted. But he continued: "Upon seeing the actual paper (a 20-minute presentation), the association council decided that it lacked sufficient academic quality to be presented at the conference. Consequently, we withdrew his paper from the list of approved papers. One result of this was the withdrawal of support to attend. A large number of papers were presented at the conference, several of which were controversial," he said.

Mr Hübinette is scheduled to defend his thesis publicly in December, and he fears that the allegations that he is a racist will affect his academic career. Professor Aili insisted that his work would be judged on academic merit alone. Mr Hübinette, who has published a book on Swedish Nazis, said: "I regret the upset I've caused. Some of the wording in my research was clumsy."