



Newsletter of the European Association of South Asian Studies, Summer 2009

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1. Establishment of the 'New' EASAS

EASAS is now registered as an association with the German registrars. It is in the process of establishing its status as a charitable institution. This registration has enabled us to open a bank account in the name of the Association. We will need to supply annual accounts to the registrar and to the tax office in Bonn, but the German rules and regulations seem to be the simplest in Europe and involve us in the least expenses. **Attached** to this newsletter you should find the *minutes* of the meeting that established the association as well as the *constitution* (in German and English) that was previously circulated to all members for approval. The constitution complies with the requirements of the registration and tax authorities in Germany.

The founding meeting elected three office bearers – Roger Jeffery (University of Edinburgh) as President, Margret Frenz (University of Leicester) as Vice-President/Membership Secretary, and Christian Wagner (Berlin) as Treasurer. It was explicitly stated that these elections were to run only until the next General Meeting of the Association, which will be held at the Bonn conference, when new elections to these three offices and to the full executive committee would be held.

2. Membership

With the establishment of the 'new' EASAS, we have to change the membership fee from a biennial to an annual payment in order to comply with the requirements of charitable associations. Therefore, we would ask *every* member to fill in the attached form, preferably choose the direct debit as form of payment, and indicate when the next payment is due. Payments will then be collected annually from that date onwards. The new bank details are: the European Association for South Asian Studies e.V., account number 1902172013, V & R Bank Rhein-Sieg, sort code 38060186, IBAN DE83380610861902172013, BIC GENODED1BRS (see also the membership application form). NB for those of you outside the Eurozone, direct debits may not be a viable option, but please find some way of making regular payments in future at least cost to you and the Association. **Attached** please find the new membership *application form*.



3. Up-date on the 2010 Bonn Conference

The 21st European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies (ECMSAS) is scheduled for July 26-29, 2010 in Bonn. EASAS members, scholars and students from any field of research related to the South Asian region are invited to participate. The host agency is the Institute for Asian and Oriental Studies, University of Bonn.

In cooperation with the EASAS presidency, the steering committee has decided to accept 44 panel suggestions from about 75, covering a broad range of research subjects. Contributions to one of the panels during Europe's primary event in South Asian research next year are appreciated! For many years, the ECMSAS has been an important platform and indicator of contemporary trends in South Asian studies worldwide.

Anyone interested to present her or his research to an academic public should contact one of the panel conveners. Young researchers are particularly invited to join the conference and present their findings. The website www.ecmsas.org, recently opened, already contains a complete list of the panels and contact details of the conveners. Panels are completely independent, and conveners can decide themselves about membership of their panel – the organisers and the steering committee members don't intervene on this level.

www.ecmsas.org also contains information about housing and other details concerning the venue. Bonn, the former seat of Germany's government, is a small town on the banks of the river Rhine, easily accessible through rail, car and airplane. The university's chair of Indology, the first of its kind in Germany, was established in the year of the foundation of the university, in 1818.

Early bird register special offer is available through online registration and advance card payment.

Anuradha Bhalla, Conrad Schetter, Heinz Werner Wessler (conference organisers)

4. Venue for the 2012 Conference



The EASAS membership was canvassed in April-May about its preferences for the location for the 2012 conference. Lisbon was the clear favourite, but some members raised questions about the facilities that would be available. The arrangements have now been clarified, and we enthusiastically recommend ISCTE (Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa) as the host institution for 2012. ISCTE is an independently funded university, ranked very highly in the Portuguese academic landscape, and is in the process of changing its name to Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (IUL) / Lisbon University Institute (LUI). It is mainly social sciences and humanities including departments of economics, finance, management, history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, and architecture, with about 8,000 students. The campus is close to the national archives



and various faculties of other universities. Rosa Maria Perez is head of the department of anthropology and will be chair of the local organizing committee.

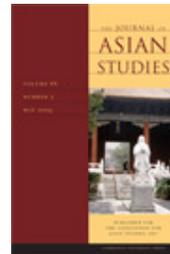
ISCTE/LUI is very conveniently sited with respect to a metro station and the airport, and it can offer excellent facilities. It also can provide budget accommodation (currently used for ERASMUS students) situated in an old monastery very close to the main railway station, St. Apolónia, which would be offered to graduate students and then to others. The price was not agreed but will be in the range of € 15.00 to € 20.00. There are 3 star hotels close to ISCTE with which ISCTE has agreements where it would be possible to find accommodation for € 50.00 to € 60.00. Lisbon is of course a major tourist centre with reasonably priced accommodation.



The best timing for the conference would seem to be between about 15th and 30th of July 2012. Charges will have to be fixed at a later date but might be around € 120.00. More information will be circulated at the Bonn conference.

5. Invitation to participate in the Annual Meetings of the Association of Asian Studies

Robert T. Snow, Ph.D, Director for Development and Strategic Planning, Association for Asian Studies has written at the suggestion of Shivi Sivaramakrishnan of Yale University and Vice President of the Association of Asian Studies (AAS), and Ramya Sreenivasan of the University of Buffalo and Chair of the South Asia Council of the AAS, to invite panel proposals for the next two meetings of the AAS from the European Association for South Asia Studies. They also seek to encourage more participation from individual members of EASAS. Shivi Sivaramakrishnan is Vice President of the AAS, and will deliver the Presidential Address at the Honolulu meeting in 2011.



Dr Snow writes further: "Shivi, Ramya, and I are coordinating efforts to boost South Asianist participation at the AAS, since South Asian Studies and scholars from South Asia have often been under-represented at the AAS annual meeting. I should add that Europeans have also been under-represented! We welcome more participation from European scholars. While we cannot guarantee that round tables or panels proposed will be accepted by the Program Committee, the Committee is looking for strong panels from South Asia, especially ones that bring in presenters from the region, that represent the social sciences, and/or that bring in voices from beyond the academy (meaning policy makers, journalists, public intellectuals, etc.) The next AAS annual meeting will take place in Philadelphia, March 25-28, 2010. The deadline for panel/round table proposals is August 7th, 2009. Here is a link to the 'Call for Papers' page on the AAS website, which offers more specific information: <http://www.asian-studies.org/annual-meeting/2010-Call-for-Papers.htm> The 2011 AAS annual meeting, when Shivi will be the President, will be held in Honolulu, March 31-April 4, 2011. It will be held in cooperation with the International



Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) based in the Netherlands. We very much hope that you will consider participating, and encourage colleagues to submit panel proposals as well.”

6. Report on the Post-graduate workshop, “Rethinking Popular Practices in South Asian Cities,” University of Amsterdam, June 11-12 2009

Lotte Hoek of the University of Amsterdam and Ajay Gandhi of Yale University convened an academic workshop at the University of Amsterdam in June 2009. The meeting was sponsored by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research (ASSR), and the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS).

The objective was to gather ethnographers working on a wide, under-explored, set of people and practices in South Asian cities, under the rubric of the popular. Very many people in the region’s proliferating urban spaces engage in forms of political action, imaginative leisure, and commercial practice that cannot be understood as uninflected by, or antagonistic to, modern or formal domains. Indeed, contemporary urban masses on the subcontinent have frequently provisional and tentative engagements with the prevailing political vocabulary and economic fashions, but they are simultaneously deeply committed to modernist ideals. Though these groups may awkwardly fit within the prevailing narratives of modernity, their visibility in wider society reveals an embrace of, and increasing mastery over, state resources, urban space and mass culture.

Nine anthropologists presented their work on a wide range of South Asian cities, from Karachi to Dhaka, and Delhi to Colombo. The novelty and intellectual vibrancy of the workshop resulted from the small number of participants and format of the proceedings. The papers were pre-circulated, which were briefly introduced by other participants, discussed by other anthropologists drawn locally from Amsterdam and Utrecht, and then subject to lengthy general discussion.

Overall, there was a sense amongst the organizers and participants that every presenter gained valuable individual feedback, and also that a set of recurring issues connected these ethnographic explorations across their particular urban venues. On the basis of the momentum generated from this workshop, the organizers are examining the feasibility of convening another such meeting in the next year, and planning for the publication of some of the papers in an edited volume or special journal issue. The contribution of EASAS towards a portion of the workshop expenses, specifically food, drinks, and transportation costs, was greatly appreciated.

7. Nordic South Asia Conference in Helsinki 26th to 29th May 2010

Conference and PhD. workshop organized by the Nordic Association for South Asian Studies

From its web-page: <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/aasiakonferenssi/>



“India has been increasingly incorporated into the global economy since its economic reforms. At the same time, South Asian countries have started to revive their economic co-operation. Throughout the region, communication systems have also improved vastly. Although South Asian societies are changing, many features of local cultures show continuity - not as unchangeable but as new interpretations.

Bustling trade relations with the other regions is, however, no new phenomenon in South Asia. If globalization is regarded as the movement and supply of goods, services and knowledge across borders, South Asia is one of the earliest globalized economies in world history.

The international conference *Globalizing South Asia* brings scholars from different fields (history, anthropology, sociology, economics, geography, environmental science, development studies and politics) together to analyze cultural, economic, political and environmental connections in South Asia. How does the history of South Asia’s translocal connections help us understand present day globalization? How are global political, economic, and environmental processes impacting South Asia and what are the local responses? What kind of cultural dynamism does the increase in translocal connections produce?

We invite contributions which take into account the broader context of local issues concerning culture and society in globalizing South Asia, both empirically and theoretically. The conference is meant to stimulate networking and exchange, and to create a forum for discussions for scholars and doctoral students within and outside the Nordic countries. We aim to publish a peer-reviewed volume of selected papers after the conference.”