



European Association for South Asian Studies

www.easas.eu

EASAS Newsletter Winter 2016

Dear EASAS members,

This issue of our Newsletter comes close to Christmas time. The new Council wishes you merry Christmas and a very happy New year!

Here are our latest news.

1. 24th ECSAS at the University of Warsaw (Poland)

The 24th ECSAS (European Conference on South Asian Studies) took place at the University of Warsaw (Poland) from 27 to 30 July 2016. 49 panels run for the four days of the Conference, with the participation of 449 delegates.

The Organising committee (convenor Prof. Danuta Stasik and co-convenors Dr Aleksandra Turek and Dr Jakub Wilanowski-Hilchen) and the Academic committee (Dr hab. Krzysztof Dębnicki, Collegium Civitas/University of Warsaw, Poland; Dr Margret Frenz, University of Oxford, UK; Prof. Roger Jeffery, University of Edinburgh, UK; Prof. Joanna Jurewicz, University of Warsaw, Poland; Dr Dorota Kamińska-Jones, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland; Dr hab. Bożena Śliwczyńska, University of Warsaw, Poland; Prof. Ravi Srivastava (Jawaharlal Nehru University, India) provided an efficient and friendly environment that allowed a rich and fruitful academic interaction.

The 24th ECSAS, held in Poland for the first time, was co-organised by the Polish Oriental Society (PTO) and the Faculty of Oriental Studies of the University of Warsaw. It could acquire its format thanks to the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland in the form of their generous grant for the PTO. Financial support was also provided to the University by BGK – Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego. A substantial part of these grants was used for the 24th ECSAS bursaries that were awarded to participants from South Asia (35 persons) and Central & Eastern Europe (12 persons) in order to encourage participation from these parts of the world. The conference gathered 449 scholars from almost 40 countries, representing a wide range of disciplines, and thus creating an exciting forum for academic exchange within and outside the conference panels. The Warsaw ECSAS was efficiently administered by the NomadIT team.

Here are some pics taken from our Treasurer, Lars Eklund.



Main Gate of the University of Warsaw



Old Library building



Opening session



Old University Library, assembly hall



The (delicious!) welcome party



The wonderful young volunteers

Keynote lecture



<https://youtu.be/UP9GPTUh7Wk>

On Thursday 28th July Prof. Sumit Guha (Professor of History, University of Texas), gave his keynote lecture on the topic "Asia, Europe and America in the Making of 'Caste.'" In this lecture he looked at the long history of what is often thought of as Southern Asia's 'peculiar institution', caste, in the *longue durée* and across world history. It focused especially on the first age of globalization, which was inaugurated by the Iberian voyages from the late fifteenth century. This intensified already ancient processes in which marked and bounded social entities (including castes), collided with each other in the course of political, economic, and environmental upheavals. The boundaries and membership of these entities could not remain unaffected. Furthermore, states – indeed colonial empires, grew in durability, size and reach through the past half-millennium. Prof. Guha outlined how these processes helped to shape the working and conceptualization of caste. He argued that an adequate understanding of South Asian society requires us not only to bring the state back into its social history; it must bring non-Hindus back in, too. Otherwise, we not only risk historical error but also encourage a politics that sees non-Hindus as alien to Indian society. In conclusion, he argued for the continuing value of historical and Indological skills for an understanding of the present and the past.

EASAS Research Student Awards were granted to encourage and support young scholars working in the field of South Asian Studies. The 2016 winners are Natalie Lang, with a paper titled 'Distinction through religious knowledge on Reunionese Hindu Facebook sites,' and Max Stille, with a paper titled 'Communities of Code-switching Connoisseurs: Multilingualism in Islamic sermons in Bangladesh'

2. New Executive Council

The new EASAS Council was elected. Here are the election results:

President:

Martin Gaenzle, University of Vienna, Austria

Vice-President:

Alessandra Consolaro, University of Turin, Italy

Treasurer:

Lars Eklund, University of Lund, Sweden

Advisory Committee:

Gunnel Cederlöf, Linnaeus University, Sweden
Margret Frenz, University of Oxford, UK
Martin Fuchs, Max-Weber-Kolleg, University of Erfurt, Germany
José Mapril, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal
Samiksha Sehrawat, Newcastle University, UK
Kunal Sen, University of Manchester, UK
Aleksandra Turek, University of Warsaw, Poland
Raphaël Voix, CEIAS, Paris, France
Ines G. Zupanov, CEIAS, Paris, France

3.EASAS Academic Workshops 2016

In 2016 EASAS funded three Academic Workshops.

The first 2016 EASAS Workshop on 'Opening Up Intimate Spaces: Women Writing and Autobiography in India' took place at the Adam Mickiewicz University Poznan, Poland, from 19 to 20 May 2016. This workshop focused on Indian women's writings in India. Most studies of India have tended to focus on the public and the political spheres, seeing them entirely in masculine terms. The fact of women's much lower literacy levels, their containment within ideologies of femininity and domesticity, compounded by the deafening silence of the imperial archive on women's experiences have led to the relegation of women's writings to the margins of mainstream Indian history. This workshop follows an important shift in studies of Indian history towards a reappraisal of women's roles in the making of pre-modern and modern India by focusing on their writings about their lives.

The second EASAS Workshop on 'South Asian Apparel Workers in the Post-Rana Plaza World: Worker Health Beyond the Factory Floor' took place at the University of Edinburgh, UK, from 15 to 16 July 2016. This workshop focused on worker health in the garment industry since the collapse of Rana Plaza in Bangladesh in 2013.

The third EASAS Workshop on "'Potent Substances' between Asia and Europe: Redefining materia medica in Tibetan and Himalayan Medicine and Buddhist Ritual" took place at the University of Vienna, Austria, from 1 to 4 September 2016. This workshop focused on how medical and ritual substances are identified and categorised in Tibetan traditions, as well as possible impacts on their 'potency' within recent EU pharmaceutical regulations.

4. SAMAJ/EASAS Joint Issues

The selection of panels for the next SAMAJ/EASAS joint issues has been completed.

Out of Panel 23 will come Joint issue n. 5 (2017), titled 'Changing Family Realities in South Asia,' that will be edited by Fritzi-Marie Titzmann.

Joint issue n. 6 (2018) will be the result of Panel 8. It will have the title 'Wayside-Shrines in South Asia Practices and Publics' and will be edited by Borayin Larios and Raphaël Voix.

5. 2017 EASAS Doctoral Workshop

The next EASAS PhD workshop will be held at the Centre for Higher Learning of the "Orientale" University of Naples (Italy) from 22 to 24 September 2017. It will be jointly organized by Stefania Cavaliere ("Orientale" University of Naples) Alessandra Consolaro (University of Torino).

The location is "Scuola di Procida - Centro di Alta Formazione dell'Università degli studi di Napoli "L'Orientale" which is situated on the island of Procida (www.isoladiprocida.it/unior/).

Established in 1732, the "Orientale" University of Naples is the oldest school of Sinology and Oriental Studies in Europe and has a strong tradition of language, cultural and social studies, both ancient and modern, relating to Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

The Scuola di Alta Formazione, Procida, is located in a 17th century historical building that has been renovated and equipped with all the technical appliances that are required for seminars, conferences, exhibitions and other academical activities (www.unior.it/index2.php?content_id=6353&content_id_start=1).

Procida is the smallest island in the Bay of Naples: it is only 4 square kilometres and one can walk everywhere. Hydrofoils (aliscafi) take about 40 mins from Molo Beverello in Naples, and ferries (traghetti) take one hour from Porta di Massa in Naples.

A call for papers will be published on our website www.easas.eu. Stay tuned!

6. EASAS Academic Workshop 2015

The call for Proposals for EASAS Academic Workshops 2017/2018 is now open. Submission deadline is 31 January 2017. You can find more information on our website www.easas.eu.