



European Association for South Asian Studies

www.easas.eu

EASAS Newsletter Spring 2024

1. Greetings from the New Executive Board

Dear EASAS Members,

As we welcome 2024, it is our distinct pleasure to extend heartfelt greetings to the vibrant community of the European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS). We are Alessandra Consolaro, Johanna Buss, and Ute Hüsken, honored to serve as your representatives on the new executive board. We are collectively committed to the diverse and rich tapestry of South Asian studies, and we are eager to contribute to the flourishing intellectual exchange within our association. EASAS has long been an important community for scholars dedicated to exploring the multifaceted dimensions of South Asian cultures, societies, and histories.

As we step into our roles, we envision a year marked by collaboration, scholarship, and shared exploration. Our goal is to further strengthen the bonds that make EASAS a thriving intellectual community and provide a platform for meaningful engagements.

Please take especially note of the **Calls for Proposals for EASAS PhD Workshop 2024 / 2025** and the **Call for Proposals for EASAS Academic Workshop 2024/2025**, which you find under 6. And 7. In this Newsletter. Please distribute this announcement widely in your networks.

We are sure you will enjoy reading the **report on the 27th ECSAS 2023 at the University of Turin, Italy**, by Alessandra Consolaro, and we ask you to jot down already now in your calendars the timing of the **28th European Conference on South Asia Studies (ECSAS)**, which will take place in **Heidelberg, Germany from October 1st to October 4th 2025**.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the European Association for South Asian Studies - we are enthusiastic about the collaborative endeavors that lie ahead in 2024.

Warm regards,

Alessandra Consolaro (President)

Johanna Buss (Vice President)

Ute Hüsken (Treasurer)

Executive Board European Association for South Asian Studies (EASAS)

2. Report on the 27th ECSAS 2023 at the University of Turin, Italy

The 27th ECSAS (European Conference on South Asian Studies) took place from 26 to 29 July 2023 at the University of Turin, Italy. 49 panels run for the four days of the Conference, with an attendance of 493 delegates.

ORGANIZATION

The people involved in the organization of the 27th ECSAS are:

CONVENOR Alessandra Consolaro (University of Turin, Dept of Humanities)

CO-CONVENOR Tommaso Bobbio (University of Turin, Dept of Cultures, Politics and Societies)

ECSAS 2023 ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Esterino Adami (University of Turin)

Marzia Casolari (University of Turin)

Chiara Correndo (University of Turin)

Domenico Francavilla (University of Turin)

Veronica Ghirardi (University of Turin)

Gianni Pellegrini (University of Turin)

ECSAS 2023 ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Esterino Adami (University of Turin)

Matilde Adduci (SOAS, London)

Daniela Bevilacqua (SOAS, London)

Tommaso Bobbio (University of Turin, Dept of Cultures)

Pinuccia Caracchi (University of Turin) Honorary

Marzia Casolari (University of Turin)

Raffaele Caterina (University of Turin) Honorary

Carmelina Concilio (University of Turin) Honorary

Alessandra Consolaro (University of Turin)

Chiara Correndo (University of Turin)

Domenico Francavilla (University of Turin)

Martin Fuchs (University of Erfurt, EASAS Vice-President)

Veronica Ghirardi (University of Turin)

Matteo Milani (University of Turin) Honorary

Luca Ozzano (University of Turin) Honorary

Gianni Pellegrini (University of Turin)

Alberto Pelissero (University of Turin) Honorary

Francesco Ramella (University of Turin) Honorary

Danuta Stasik (University of Warsaw, EASAS President)

Michelguglielmo Torri (University of Turin) Honorary

The Turin ECSAS was effectively administered by the CCI (Centro Congressi Internazionale) team.

VENUE AND EVENTS

The conference took place at Campus Luigi Einaudi, in Lungo Dora Siena 100/a, venue that provided an efficient and friendly environment and allowed a rich and fruitful academic interaction.

This edition of the ECSAS was the first one organized fully on-site after the long years of Covid pandemic that had imposed a forced halt to gatherings, meetings and direct exchanges amongst scholars and peoples in general. For this reason, and after extended considerations, the organizing

committee decided that the conference should be held in presence and on site in the premises of Campus Luigi Einaudi, in order to restore the value of ECSAS as a space for debates, discussions and sharing, where people and scholars from all around the world could meet, not only to present their researches but also to talk, build or extend networks, establish collaborations and friendship. These aims are encompassed in the conference epigram 'Building sustainable research networks,' where the keyword 'sustainable' points also to a human dimension, whereas the academic work, the right to critical thinking and free speech are increasingly undermined in many areas of the world.

The registration/reception desk was open during the entire duration of the conference. On 26th July a Welcome aperitivo was held at 'Circolo del Design,' where the participants could visit also 'May Contain Traces of Forest', an exhibition where narrative of scientific research in forestry is intertwined with that of experimentation, planning and production in the field of design.

During the Conference the exhibition 'What was to pass, remained' was held in the Main Hall of Campus Luigi Einaudi. It is a brief history of the De-notified tribes reaching to the Covid years, organized in collaboration with the Arts and Humanities Research Council UK, the British Academy and the School of Museum Studies University of Leicester, Budhan Theatre, Conflictorium-Museum of Conflict Ahmedabad, and Bhasha Research and Publication Center.



1. Exhibition poster

The conference also featured a screening of the film *Mhara Pichchar*, that took place at 'Centro Studi Sereno Regis' on the 27th of July with the presence of award-winning filmmaker and activist Dakxin Bajrange Chhara.

Book Sales and the publishers present at the conference were located in the Main Hall of Campus Luigi Einaudi.

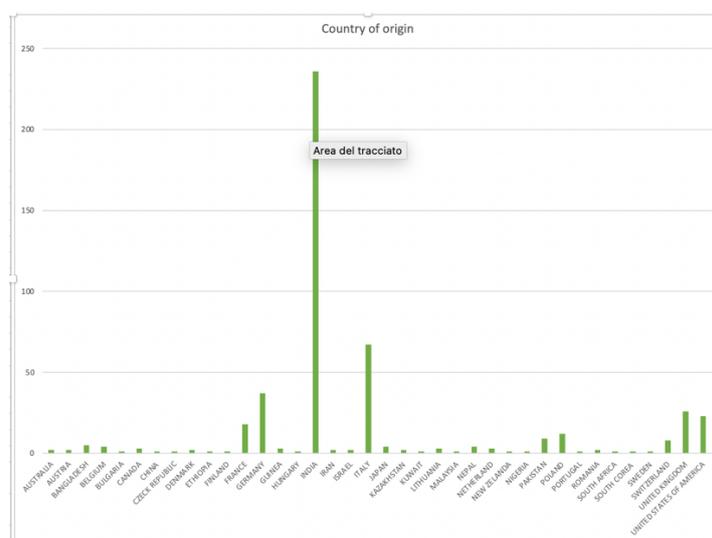
PANELS AND PAPERS

The 27th ECSAS, held in Italy for the second time, was co-organized by four departments (Dept of Humanities, Dept of Cultures, Politics and Societies, Dept of Law, Dept. of Foreign Languages) and the Interdepartmental Centre "Istituto di Studi sull'Asia" ISA, and got the endorsement of Regione Piemonte



2. Logos of the endorsing institutions

The conference gathered 493 scholars from almost 40 countries, representing a wide range of disciplines, from philology, history, anthropology, literary studies to political science, sociology, in addition to various cross- and transdisciplinary panels, and thus creating an exciting forum for academic exchange within and outside the conference panels.



3. Country of origin of participants

As the graphic shows, the majority of participants today come from South Asia, but it must be noted that India is overrepresented in comparison to other South Asian countries. This suggests that some work has to be done in order to bridge this gap and allow also scholars from other South Asian countries to participate. Another issue regards the commitment of these participants to EASAS: they have to become members in order to participate, but we know from statistics that they are not effectively interested in belonging to the Association and sometimes cancel their membership soon after the ECSAS or stop paying the membership fees altogether. This is an issue that the next organizers and EASAS might want to discuss.

In response to the Call for Panels we received 80 proposals, out of which 51 panels were selected by the Academic Committee. As two panels merged eventually, only 49 panels appeared on the Conference Program.

Here is the list of the accepted panels:

- 01 – Bengali Muslim Societies and Literatures, c.1600-1947
- 02 – Rewriting Hindu Women within Contemporary Popular Media
- 03 – Changing Forms of Gendered Participation in Politico-ideological Movements in South Asia: Histories, Networks,
- 04 – Pathways from Injury: Legal Narratives of Prejudice and the Politics of Hate in South Asia
- 05 – Health, disease and epidemics: multidisciplinary perspectives on the socio-ecology of medicine in pre-modern So

- 06 – Housing, Dwelling, Multilocal ‘Home’-Making: Repertoires of Living Together in Urban South Asia and Beyond
- 07 – Towards Collaborative Research on Cereal Cultures in South Asia
- 08 - Imagining the city: Literary and religious practices of urbanity in early modern and modern South Asia
- 09 – Making Artisans: Artisanal Lives and Production in South Asia
- 10 – Stasis and Motion in the Processional Culture of Kathmandu Valley: The Buṅgadyaḥ Yātrā Revisited
- 11 – Rethinking governmentality: Sovereign agency beyond the state in South Asia
- 12 – South Asian Collections in European Museums: Examining their acquisition, display, and futures
- 13 – The Travelling Female Performer: Mobility and Agency in and beyond South Asia, c. 1760-1940
- 14 – Servitude and Mobility in Pre-Colonial and Colonial South Asia
- 15 – Hospitals in South Asia: Historical and Ethnographic Perspectives
- 16 – Re-orienting Borderlands: Beyond spatial fixations in South Asia
- 17 – More Than Human: Animal-Human Relations in Pre-Modern South Asia
- 18 – Deviant Bodies, Prohibited Territories and Academia in South Asia
- 19 – Beyond “linguistic areas” – Recent advances in the study of language contact in South Asia
- 20 – Self-translation, translating the self: Multilingual writers in South Asia
- 21 – Violence against women in South Asian countries
- 22 – The present democratic crisis in South Asia: causes, distinctive elements and historical precedents
- 22 – The present democratic crisis in South Asia: causes, distinctive elements and historical precedents
- 23 – Engaging the world through contemporary South Asian tantric and shamanic traditions
- 24 – Timely Histories: A Social History of Time in South Asia
- 25 – Thinking with markets: Practices and codes of engagement in South Asian economic milieus
- 26 – Radical Poetics in the Literary Cultures of South Asia
- 27 – Muslim agency within and against India’s regimes of urban segregation
- 28 – South Asian sacred spots: Nodal Points in Webs of Connections
- 29 – Travelling stories, bodies and genres and the making of communities
- 30 – Creative and social engagement with conflict: a perspective from the South Asian Diaspora
- 31 – The Forms, Genres and Languages of Early Modern Indian Philosophy
- 32 – Dynamics of Language Diversity, Multilingual Identities and Linguistic Nationalism in South Asia
- 33 – Transmitting know-how in a shifting world – the case of contemporary India
- 34 – Religious and Environmental Encounters: North Indian Mountains Through the Eyes of Travellers
- 35 – Postmodern Narratives of Caste and Indigeneity
- 36 – Interrogating Deviance and ‘Crime’ in Colonial and Postcolonial South Asia
- 37 – Violent births and deaths: coping with challenging life experiences in South Asia
- 38 – Adivasis and Adivasi Studies
- 39 – Citizens at Risk: Caste, Violence and State Institutions in India
- 41 – Managerialism and the Transformation of Indian Capitalism in the Mid-Twentieth Century: The Experience of Ahmedabad
- 42 – Changing Contours of Legitimacy and Governance in India
- 43 – Trans/Third Gender Communities and Religion in South Asia
- 44 – New archival traces of the Second World War in the India-Myanmar-Bangladesh borderland
- 45 – South Asian–Portuguese relationships from the fifteenth century to the present: Colonialism, interactions, and identities
- 46 – Sustainable Regeneration of Water Infrastructures: An Invitation to Forge Interdisciplinary Governance & Policy
- 47 – Recent Cultural Heritage Initiatives in Nepal and the Himalayas
- 49 – Public Knowledge: Audiences in South Asian Media and Screen Studies
- 51 – The Digital Turn in South Asian Television Studies
- 53 – Security and heritage in the making of urban futures: Insights from South Asia and its diasporas

A round table on academic freedom took place on the last day of the conference, where issues such as authoritarian state and censorship, gender and other related modes of power play, working conditions and precarity, and epistemology were discussed. For some unforeseen problems the organization is somewhat lagging behind in the follow up, but there is the intention to create a platform for further discussion and research on these issues.

The call for papers took place between November 2022 and January 2023 and the ECSAS received 843 abstract proposals. Decisions regarding the papers were left entirely up to the individual panel convenors and in the end 391 papers were presented at the Conference. In addition to selecting papers of high academic quality, the Committees ensured a well-balanced composition of panel convenors and panelists (according to gender, nationality, age).

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

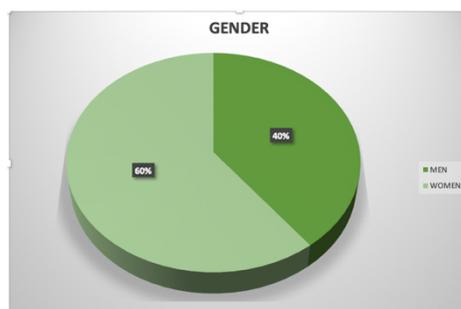
It was an honor and pleasure to listen to our two keynote speakers.

Ayesha Jalal (Tufts University) spoke on 'Engaging Europe: Iqbal on Space, Time and Enlightened Thought,' uncovering processes of exchange, intellectual reframing and creative expression by foregrounding the thought of the poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal.

Urvashi Butalia (publisher and historian) presented a talk on 'The Researcher and the Researched: Exploring a Complex Set of Questions', problematizing how patterns of research have been changing to ask: what happens when the researched speaks back?

SOME STATISTICS

It is important to underline that gender imbalance is now in favour of female participation, as 60% of the participants identified as women (we are aware of the limitedness of this binary representation).



4. Participants according to gender

In order to promote early career scholars (134 participants were students), EASAS sponsored a fee waiver grant for 27 PhD students who had not yet discussed their doctoral thesis at the time of the Conference.

Early registration took place from February 2023 to 21 May 2023 and the fee was set at € 190,00/student € 100,00 early bird, € 230,00 /student € 130,00 late registration. Most participants (77%) registered as early bird, while 23% preferred a late registration. Out of the total participants, 134 registered as students.



5. Registration time

SPONSORS AND GREEN POLICY

In addition to funds allocated by the Departments of the University of Turin, our sponsors were Turismo Torino, Heidelberg Asian Studies Publishing, and Smat.



6. Logos of sponsors

Smat provided water dispensers at the Conference venue at disposal of the participants, in order to reduce the use of plastic bottles.

In order to provide a sustainable conference, the ECSAS organization and CCI joined the Food for Good project for the recovery and redistribution of surplus food.



7. Food for Good Logo

CONCLUSIONS

The overall atmosphere at the conference was excellent and also the conference dinner at 'Circolo Canottieri Armida' on the Po River banks made all those present appreciate the importance for scholars to meet in person at these kinds of events.

The organizing committee extends its gratitude to all the colleagues, students and friends who contributed to make 27th ECSAS in Turin a successful event.

You will find some visual impressions of this conference at the end of this newsletter.

Turin, 13 December 2023
Alessandra Consolaro

3. 28th European Conference on South Asia Studies (ECSAS) to take place in Heidelberg, Germany from October 1st to October 4th 2025

Text Nestled along the Neckar River, Heidelberg is considered to be one of the most beautiful cities in Germany. Asked to name their favorite destination in Germany, visitors from abroad consistently choose Heidelberg Castle. Visitors are drawn by the historical flair of this university city, with its stunning setting, wide range of activities, and restaurants to meet every taste.

Heidelberg is a city of science and research. Heidelberg University is Germany's oldest university with a good 39,000 students. 57 Nobel Prizes have been awarded to researchers who have lived and worked in Heidelberg.

In the realm of South Asian studies, Heidelberg stands as an unparalleled destination for the EASAS biannual conference in October 2025. Heidelberg University's renowned South Asia Institute for more than 60 years has consistently spearheaded academic discourse on the region. The South Asia Institute comprises seven professorships in Development Economics, Anthropology, Geography, History of South Asia, Cultural and Religious History of South Asia (Classical Indology), Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures (Modern Indology) and Political Science of South Asia.

Heidelberg's cultural scene, a dynamic blend of theatres, museums, and galleries, provides an immersive backdrop for the ECSAS 2025. Participants will find respite in the vibrant streets resonating with the harmonies of street musicians. Quaint cafes, steeped in history, invite informal intellectual exchanges, adding an extra layer of richness to the conference experience. As conference attendees traverse the cobblestone streets of the Altstadt, they will find themselves immersed in a living tapestry of medieval structures, culminating in the iconic Heidelberg Castle. Heidelberg's commitment to sustainability and innovation will enhance the conference experience. Participants traversing the city's green spaces and experiencing its efficient public transportation system will witness firsthand the embodiment of Heidelberg's dedication to creating a sustainable and intellectually invigorating environment.

The South Asia Institute's faculty and students are excited to welcome scholars from all over the world to the 28th ECSAS in Heidelberg.

4. Council Meetings

A General meeting as well as a meeting of the EASAS Council were held during the ECSAS conference in Torino. The Minutes have been circulated separately. At that occasion, a new Executive Boards and Advisory Committee was elected.

Executive Board:

President: Alessandra Consolaro, University of Turin, Italy

Vice-President: Ute Hüsken, University of Heidelberg, Germany

Treasurer: Johanna Buß, University of Leipzig, Germany

Advisory Committee:

Monika Browarczyk, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland

Martin Fuchs, University of Erfurt, Germany

Borayin Larios, French Institute of Pondicherry / École Française d'Extrême-Orient, Pondicherry, India

Carola Lorea, University of Tübingen, Germany

Kama Maclean, University of Heidelberg, Germany

Rahul Mukherji, University of Heidelberg, Germany

Danuta Stasik, University of Warsaw, Poland

Heinz Werner Wessler, Uppsala University, Sweden
Verena Widorn, University of Vienna, Austria

5. EASAS Publications

The Council is currently exploring options for an EASAS publication series or a Journal published by the EASAS. Monika Browarczyk, Ute Hüsken, and Sanjukta Das Gupta formed a committee inquiring with diverse publishers about the conditions for a EASAS book series or, alternatively, an EASAS journal. A decision on the form and venue of the EASAS publication will be taken in the course of 2024 by the Advisory Committee – we'll keep you updated!

6. Call for Proposals for EASAS Academic Workshop 2024 / 2025

EASAS resumes funding of academic workshops. The call is open now for the proposal of workshops to be held in 2024 or 2025. The workshop must involve more than two EU countries and preferably invite some scholars and post-docs based in South Asia. The workshop can be organized either as the basis for the preparation of papers for publication, or as an event to map out and develop new research projects. Proposals can also include comparative discussion of other parts of the world, as long as there is a strong focus on South Asia. EASAS can support workshops with an amount of up to € 3,000 for on-site events and up to € 1,000 for events planned in an online format.

If you are thinking of applying for support for a workshop, please note the following essential and desirable elements:

Essential

- At least one of the workshop convenors must be based at a university or a research institute in a European country.
- All proposed workshop convenors must be members of EASAS at the time of submission of the application for funding and have no overdue membership fees (join here: <https://www.easas.eu/become-a-member/>; pay your fees here: <https://dashboard.easas.eu/>).
- At least one of the convenors must be affiliated to the hosting university or institution where the workshop will take place.
- Not more than half of the total award can be used for catering.
- Funding will take the form of reimbursement of payments made against receipts; EASAS cannot provide an up-front subsidy.
- Funds must be spent by the end of the calendar year 2025 and settled by the workshop organiser(s) with EASAS within two months after the event.

Desirable

- Some scholars and post-docs to be invited to the workshop should be based in South Asia.
- Transdisciplinarity is encouraged.

Proposals must include the following:

1. A title of no more than 15 words.
2. Names and locations of all convenors.
3. A brief description (no more than 500 words) of the academic justification for the workshop.
4. Likely dates and location of the workshop.
5. An estimate of the total number of presentations (including, where possible, the names of likely invitees) and the total number of those likely to attend.
6. A summary budget, with brief details of other funding likely to be applied for or already promised.
7. A brief statement (no more than 200 words) of the likely outcome of the workshop (publication, research proposal, creation of a network etc.)

The deadline for the submission of proposals is 15 April 2024. The EASAS Council will complete the selection process by 30 May 2024.

Please submit proposals by email to office@easas.eu

Call for Proposals for EASAS PhD Workshop 2024 / 2025

The Call to Universities and Higher Education Institutions to host the 2022/2023 EASAS Doctoral Workshop is now open. The workshop will give PhD students an opportunity to receive feedback on their theses from senior scholars and fellow PhD candidates who are also working on South Asian topics. In addition, it will create networks between PhD candidates working on South Asia and help them develop contacts with others. The doctoral workshop is envisaged as a two-day event for a maximum of 16 PhD candidates and 6 senior scholars based in Europe, to be held at a host European university.

The host university will organize the workshop and arrange board and lodging for students as well as the invited senior scholars. The selection of the host university will be made by the EASAS Council. The EASAS will financially assist with accommodation and board for students and senior scholars at the workshop with a sum up to € 3,000. Participants will have to make their own travel arrangements. In case a host university wants to organize a workshop as an online event, EASAS support funding will be capped at € 1,000. Please note that the EASAS membership is mandatory for all participants (join here: <https://www.easas.eu/become-a-member/>; pay your fees here: <https://dashboard.easas.eu/>).

Proposals must include:

- Willingness to hold the workshop in 2024 or 2025, specifying the period.
- Brief description of the institution.
- Brief description of the local steering committee for the doctoral workshop, whose members must be specialists in South Asia studies and members of EASAS. The workshop steering committee will plan and manage the workshop, select the student participants and the invited faculty members.
- Brief budget, listing costs for venue, accommodation, and board of participants.

Please send your proposals to office@easas.eu by 15 April 2024. The EASAS Council will complete the selection process by 30 May 2024.

Please submit proposals by email to office@easas.eu

Some Visual Impressions of the 27th ECSAS in Turin



the venue:
Campus Luigi Einaudi



moments from
the keynotes





the exhibition in the main hall



the meeting
on academic freedom

Dakxin Bajrange Chhara
at the screening of
Mhara Pichchar





our priceless volunteers



last but not least, moments of leisure

