The British Academy

Annual Report

London

2014
The Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held at the Khalili Lecture Theatre, SOAS, University of London

Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square
London WC1H 0XG

on Friday 28th November 2014

at 6:30 p.m.

to consider the Summary of Accounts, and
transact any other business proper to the AGM

at 7.00 p.m.

to hear a lecture titled:
“Only connect ...”
Interdisciplinarity, South Asian Studies and Gender

delivered by
Professor Patricia Jeffery, University of Edinburgh
THE COUNCIL 2013/2014

CHAIR

PROFESSOR IAN TALBOT

TREASURER

DR. KANCHANA RUWANPURA

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DR. PHILIPPA WILLIAMS

SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES JOURNAL EDITOR

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DR. KANCHANA RUWANPURA
DR. EDWARD SIMPSON (until April 2014)
DR. RAJESH VENUGOPAL (from November 2013)
DR. JOHN ZAVOS
COUNCIL’S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2014

Significant information

The British Association for South Asian Studies (BASAS) supports advanced research in the humanities and social sciences of South Asia. Originally, one of the overseas organisations grant-aided by The British Academy, it is now a self-financed charity registered with the Charity Commission under Registration Number 264591.

BASAS is one of the world’s leading learned societies for the study of South Asia. It is the largest UK academic association for the study of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, and the South Asian diaspora. The Association was first established in 1972 as The Society for Afghan Studies. The Association expanded its remit from 1979, becoming The Society for South Asian Studies. On 1 October 2007 the Society merged with The British Association for South Asian Studies. The new organisation combines the grant-giving and overseas research project roles of The Society for South Asian Studies with the representative and advocacy roles of The British Association for South Asian Studies. The aim of the new merged Association is to advance, encourage, support and undertake the study and research of the geography, economics, politics, history, antiquities, archaeology, sociology, ethnography, languages, literature, art, culture, customs, and inter-disciplinary study of the countries and people of South Asia.

The Association has also sponsored research projects in South Asia, as well as programmes of exchange and training. It produces South Asian Studies, an annual journal, in which it publishes some of the research it has funded. The Association also organises an Annual Conference, workshops and lectures, held at different locations each year in the UK, and publishes a series of monographs and occasional papers.

Enquiries about the Association’s activities should be directed to the Assistant Secretary, The British Association for South Asian Studies, 27 Old Gloucester Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AX. Email: basas@basas.org.uk.
Organisation and Structure

The Association is governed by a Council and is administered by certain members of Council appointed as Executive Officers and Council members, assisted at present by a paid part-time Assistant Secretary.

Executive Officers

The Executive Officers who served during the year ended 31st March 2014 were:

- Prof. Ian Talbot, Chairman (from Nov. 2011)
- Dr. Kanchana Ruwanpura, Treasurer (from Mar. 2013)
- Dr. Philippa Williams, Secretary (from Nov. 2011)
- Prof. Adam Hardy, *South Asian Studies* Journal Editor

All Executive Officers serve as members of Council and are members of the committees which advise Council on the awards it makes and monitor the Association’s projects.

Members of Council

The following served on Council during the year ended 31st March 2014:

- Dr. Rohini Chaturvedi (from November 2011, GEC representative*)
- Dr. Deepta Chopra (from November 2009, GEC representative)
- Dr. Meena Dhanda (from November 2011)
- Prof. Patricia Jeffery (from November 2009)
- Dr. Apurba Kundu (from January 2011)
- Dr. Elisabeth Leake (from January 2014)
- Prof. Nitya Rao (from November 2010)
- Dr. Kanchana Ruwanpura (from November 2010, as Treasurer from March 2013)
- Dr. Edward Simpson (from November 2011)
- Dr. Rajesh Venugopal (from November 2013)
- Dr. John Zavos (Contemporary South Asia Editor)
- Dr. Emma Tomalin (as conference convener 2013)

*These roles were created in 2009 to represent Graduate and Early Career researchers.
Members of the Council constitute the Trustees of the Association for the purposes of the Charities Act.

The Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and respective Editors are elected each year at the Annual General Meeting under Rule 16 of the 2007 Rules.

Members of the Council are elected in terms of Rule 15, with vacancies being filled by vote upon nominations (placed in November) each year before the members of the Association at the Annual General Meeting.

Reserves Policy

The Council reviews regularly the Association’s activities and future commitments. It has been established that a reserve of £20,000 would be needed to wind up the Association’s affairs and to meet any outstanding commitments. Council has therefore determined that the minimum level of the Association’s reserves should be £20,000 and that no commitments should be entered into which would bring the reserves below this level. Given the termination of British Academy funding from 2012 the Council once again recognises that the Association’s reserves should not fall below £20,000.
Risk management

Since the withdrawal of all funding from The British Academy the Association is undergoing a period of transition with regards to its funding streams. Systems and procedures have been established to review the Association’s financial structure whilst continuing to maintain and improve the quality of the Association’s work, along with accurate reporting, and tight financial control. Council is responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Association and taking all reasonable steps for the detection and prevention of fraud and other irregularities. Financial procedures are reviewed regularly.

The Association faces another risk in common with many smaller charities where the week-to-week financial activities of the Association are dealt with by the Treasurer and the Assistant Secretary alone. With no staff, it is not possible to expect the level of internal financial controls, particularly the division of duties, to match those that would be expected within a larger organisation. However in recognition of this risk, the Council has determined that all payments from the Association’s bank account of over £1,000.00 should bear the signatures of two Council Members.

Bankers

Accountants: Thornton Springer LLP
Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditors

67 Westow Street
Upper Norwood,
London SE19 3RW

Bankers: CAF Bank Limited
Kings Hill Avenue
West Malling,
Kent ME19 4JQ

The Association would like to express its gratitude to The British Academy and its staff for the continued support and assistance they have provided for all the activities of the Association throughout the year.
In the past year BASAS has hosted a number of successful events and actively supported scholars conducting research in and on South Asia. On the Council Executive we welcomed Dr Elizabeth Leake and Dr Rajesh Venugopal and said farewell and thank you to Dr Apurba Kundu and Dr Edward Simpson.

In November 2013 the Association held its Annual Public Lecture at the London School of Economics and Political Science. It was a pleasure to welcome Professor Barbara Harriss-White, University of Oxford and SOAS to a packed lecture hall. Her talk on ‘On the probabilities, possibilities and practices of comparing India and China’ examined the similarities and differences between the Indian and Chinese economy, society, and environment and drew on extensive research produced for her edited book with Delia Davin called ‘China-India: pathways of economic and social development’ by Oxford University Press. Over 80 people attended the thought provoking lecture and stimulating discussion, many of whom stayed for a generous reception of drinks and canapés provided by the South Asia Centre at the LSE.

In April 2014 our 28th Annual Conference was hosted by Royal Holloway University of London, and superbly organized by Professor Sarah Ansari with the very able assistance of Dr Elisabeth Leake and Dr Daniel Haines. The 2-day event proved very successful thanks to the hard work of the conference organisers, and the enthusiastic participation of our members within panel debates and events. The conference attracted 117 delegates from UK, South Asia, USA and Europe and included almost 30 panels and round tables encompassing a wide range of interdisciplinary areas, from across the South Asian region.

Panels concerned topics including, but not limited to, exploring gender and rights in post disaster landscapes, lives and work in post-liberal India, the wider world of social marginalisation in India, development and welfare states in South Asia, transnational networks in colonial South Asia and constitution making. Whilst other panels examined village life and its diversity in India, democracy, South Asia’s science and environments, architecture and the politics of space and early modern cultural and artistic interactions in South Asia. The keynote lecture was aptly delivered by Professor Francis Robinson in his retirement year from Royal Holloway on ‘South Asia and West Asia: From the Delhi Sultanate to the Present: Security, Resources and Influence’. A reception was generously hosted by Taylor
and Francis journals South Asian Studies and Contemporary South Asia. The keynote lecture and many of the panel papers will be available to stream as video and audio-podcasts on the BASAS webpage. We are delighted that Dr Tamsin Bradley has agreed to host the Annual Conference at Portsmouth University in April 2015.

This year also brought some sad news for BASAS with the passing of Professor Graham Chapman in September 2014. As Barbara Harriss-White reflects in Graham’s obituary (available on our webpage), he was an instrumental member of BASAS and developed the organisation into the professional association it is today, one that encourages young scholars in an atmosphere of informal and constructive collegiality, internationalism and multi-disciplinarity. Graham’s last engagement with BASAS was earlier this year when he could be found behind a desk in the foyer of Royal Holloway with a genial smile selling off his academic library at bargain basement prices. ‘It’ll pay for the conference fee’ he said. Graham’s death is a huge loss to BASAS, but his legacy is a profound one which we will endeavor to respect and continue as an organisation. BASAS sends deep sympathy to Anne Gerd, Nicklas, Christina and their family.

Our website continues to act as an important portal for news and events related to scholarship and research in and on South Asia, including conference calls, jobs adverts, recent publications and funding opportunities. The ongoing addition of podcasts from our Annual Lectures and Annual Conferences continues to contribute to a steady flow of traffic to the site, and provide an increasingly useful resource for our members around the world. Our membership has increased slightly and we continue to explore ways to expand this base. Given the uncertain future of BASAS funding streams, we continue to run ‘Campaign BASAS’ on our website and welcome donations from our members.

With the ongoing support of the British Academy in association with the European Consortium for Asian Field Study (ECAF), BASAS was pleased to offer research fellowships once again this year. The level and number of applications was high and 4 awards were made to Dr Hephizah Israel (University of Edinburgh) for her project on pre-colonial writing traditions in Tamil, Dr Arthur Dudney (University of Oxford) on Indo-Persian manuscripts, Dr Tara Puri (University of Warwick) on Indian feminist discourse as seen in women’s magazines, and Dr Gerard Mccann (University of York) on diasporic underpinnings of Indian nationalism and India-Africa relations. We are delighted to say that the scheme will continue for 2014-
2015, with opportunities for fellowships in New Delhi, Pondicherry, Kathmandu and Pune.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank two key people whose hard work and commitment to BASAS have been vital in ensuring the smooth and effective organisation of the association over the last year. These include first, Dr Kanchana Ruwapanura for her contributions as Honorary Treasurer. Her attention to detail and careful oversight of BASAS finances as well as plans to grow income are crucial during this period of reduced funding. And, to our Assistant Secretary, Nageela Yusuf, who, as in previous years, continues to play a hugely important role in ensuring continuity within the Association and invaluable support to the Council through her daily management of the Association’s affairs.

Finally, my grateful thanks to all members of the BASAS Council. The Council involves early career and more established scholars from institutions across the UK, representing a range of academic disciplines including Philosophy, International Development, History, South Asian Studies and Geography. The enthusiasm, care and generosity that everyone contributes to the governance and management of the Association is crucial to the ongoing vitality of BASAS today.

Dr. Philippa Williams
Honorary Secretary
The editorial board at SAS has had the pleasure of publishing in South Asian Studies 29.2 (September 2013) the following articles: Hans Bakker on the Trivikrama Temple- a new interpretation of Rāmagiri evidence; Sushma Jansari on Roman coins from the Masson and Mackenzie Collections in the British Museum; Neil Howard on the Fortresses of Nurpur State; and Ibrahim Shah on the Śaiva temple at Gāndhiyān.

South Asian Studies 30.1 (March 2014) featured the following articles: Jason D. Hawkes on landscapes of religious change in Vindhya Pradesh; Gethin Rees on colonial discourse- Indian Ocean trade and the urbanisation of the Western Deccan; Janice Stargardt on Indian Ocean trade in the 9th and 10th centuries-demand, distance, and profit; Libbie Mills on dating and placing early Śaiva texts through prāsādalakṣaṇa; and Fiona Buckee on the design of the spire from temple 45 at Sanchi.

A warm welcome to Meena Dhanda (University of Wolverhampton) who joins the board as Associate Editor. Other movement within the board see Dr Tamara Sears (Yale University) take on the role of Reviews Editor, while Dr Crispin Branfoot (SOAS), formerly Reviews Editor, remains an Associate Editor.

Professor Adam Hardy
Editor, South Asian Studies
REPORT FROM THE EDITOR OF CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA

During the period April 2013 to March 2014 four issues of Contemporary South Asia were produced: numbers 2, 3 and 4 of volume 21, and the first issue of volume 22. 21’2 and 21’4 were both general issues which included a diverse range of articles, from Michael Hutt’s exploration of revolutionary iconography in Nepal to Tamsin Bradley’s assessment of changes in dowry practices in Kerala – both in 21’4 – and a distinctive interdisciplinary article on dalit writing in the UK by Nicole Thiara and Annapurna Waughray in 21’2. A further article of note from these issues is that by Andrew Wyatt on ‘Populism and politics in contemporary Tamil Nadu’, which appeared in 21’4. Andrew has been the Book Reviews Editor on the journal since early in 2010. He relinquished this post early in 2014 (after issue 22’1), and I would like to record my very warm thanks to him for all his hard work on the journal. I was delighted to be able to publish his article on Tamil politics near to the end of his term as Reviews Editor.

Through a pleasing synergy, Andrew’s replacement as Reviews Editor was also a major contributor to volume 21 of the journal. Sandwiched between the two general issues in this volume was 21’3, a special issue on South Asian tissue economies, guest edited by Jacob Copeman. Jacob went on to become Reviews Editor in 2014, from issue 22’2 onwards. I would like to welcome Jacob to the editorial team. The innovative special issue Jacob guest edited in 2013 explored, as he says in the introduction, ‘questions generated by the extraction, circulation, valuation, and technical manipulation of biological substances…in order to gain new insights into the meanings of humanness, life, value, and relationality in South Asia’. The issue provided a fascinating range of articles, exploring tissue economies amongst particular communities and sectors in Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and Texas, and including a stimulating reflective afterword by Lawrence Cohen. Like several of our special issues in recent years, South Asian Tissue Economies was subsequently reproduced in book form, published by Routledge in 2014.

The first issue of volume 22 was the annual conference issue from the BASAS conference held in Leeds in 2013. The issue was guest edited by the ex-treasurer of BASAS, Emma Tomalin. It showcased a selection of papers from the conference,
including the keynote address by David Arnold, ‘On the road: a social iteration of India’, and the winner of the annual BASAS award for the outstanding postgraduate paper at the conference, which this year was won by Luke Heslop, a research student at the University of Edinburgh’s Department of Anthropology. Luke’s paper, ‘On Sacred Ground: The Local Politics of Contesting Space’ provides a careful ethnographic account of a dispute over religious space in post-war Sri Lanka. A hearty thank you to Luke and all the other contributors to CSA during this year; this includes the many book reviewers who continue to make our Reviews section a thriving and informative feature of each issue.

Finally, I would like to say a very big thank you to Dipankar Banerjee of the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies in New Delhi, who this year stepped down after many years service on the journal’s Editorial Board. I would also like to welcome Amita Shastri of the Politics Department at San Francisco State University to our Board. Amita brings to the Board her expertise in the study of democracy, ethnicity, nationalism and the political economy of development throughout South Asia, but with a particular focus on Sri Lanka.

John Zavos
Editor, Contemporary South Asia
ANNUAL LECTURE AND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Annual Lecture

The Association actively supports the spread of knowledge about South Asia. To this effect we have sponsored the following lecture:

Professor Barbara Harriss-White
‘On the probabilities, possibilities and practices of comparing India and China’

Professor Harriss-White opened this wide ranging and fascinating talk with John Lydgate’s maxim that ‘comparisons are odious’ as he writes in 1440 AD with respect to a ‘Debate between the Horse, the Goose and the Sheep’ and which has greater military value to man. The fundamental problem is that comparisons engender competition and hatred. Yet, Harriss-White takes this premise as a challenge to constructively frame different approaches to comparison as practice, and applies these to the ‘India vs. China’ debate as well as the possibility of comparison more generally within the social sciences.

The talk drew on extensive research for Harriss-White’s edited volume with Delia Davin on ‘China-India: pathways of economic and social development’, published by Oxford University Press, and discussed the similarities and differences between Chinese and Indian pathways to development. The discussion juxtaposed perspectives from India and China on international economic relations, domestic economy, demography and family life, labour force and migration and environment while intentionally steering clear of politics. As well as highlighting some of the contrasts and continuities between these themes, not least that there are more differences in the economies than in social and developmental control, Harriss-White went on to argue that the challenge with comparison lies less in the subject under scrutiny, and more with academic approaches and in particular, the rise of pluralism in social science.

The proliferation of mini-narratives and sub-fields each with their own technical language works against the possibility of holistic comparative work. Instead Harriss-White argues for a new epistemological approach that accepts and celebrates theoretical pluralism, the existence of debates and contention and rigorous comparison of structure of difference as analytical building blocks for the co-production of knowledge about the structures of difference and similarity.
A podcast of this annual lecture will be made available on our website.

Professor Barbara Harriss-White is a Senior Research Fellow in Area Studies and Emeritus professor of Development Studies, Wolfson College, University of Oxford and Professorial Research Associate with the Department of Development Studies, SOAS.

Her research interests have developed from the economics of agricultural markets to India's socially regulated capitalist economy and corporate capital; and from the malnutrition caused by markets to many other aspects of deprivation: notably poverty, gender bias and gender relations, health and disability, destitution and caste discrimination.

Annual Conference

The Association’s 28th Annual Conference was held at Royal Holloway University of London, 2-4th April 2014. Convened by Drs Sarah Ansari, Elisabeth Leake and Daniel Haines it attracted scholars from around the world, featured 30 panels and roundtables, and a keynote speech delivered Professor Francis on “South Asia and West Asia: From the Delhi Sultanate to the Present: Security, Resources and Influence”. A videocast of the keynote speech along with select audio podcasts will be made available on the Association’s website.

Tahrat Shahid, University of Oxford, won the 2014 Annual BASAS Paper Prize for her paper: “Sexual equality in family laws for Muslims in Bangladesh: A fear of change”. The Annual Prize is a long standing feature of the Association’s conference and is awarded to the best paper given by a post-graduate student.

Dr. Philippa Williams
Honorary Secretary
July 2013 saw the launch of the Campaign for BASAS. Members who have been with the Association for some time will have seen it evolve through some challenging situations in its 26 year history. Despite these challenges, the Association manages to achieve a significant amount with few resources.

Since 2005 the association has awarded a total of 45 language training grants amounting to £62,431, which have been used to learn a wide array of languages ranging from Dzongkha to Hindi.

In the past the Association held regular competitions awarding grants for workshops, conferences, and research projects.

It is unfortunate that at present we are unable able to offer any such type of assistance to our members due to the cessation of all grant support to the Association from the British Academy.

There is hope however, as we believe Association members, past and present, can make a huge difference by working with the Association to establish an endowment fund that would allow us to continue to support scholars by offering a variety of grant competitions.

This is an appeal to all who have been involved with, and benefited from, their affiliation with the Association to make a small donation to help it continue its work to support the study and research of people and countries of South Asia.

The British Association for South Asian Studies is a UK registered charity (no.: 264591.) To make a donation please visit the association’s website at: http://www.basas.org.uk/news-events/campaign/campaign-2013, alternatively contact the Assistant Secretary at basas@basas.org.uk.
MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Graph and table showing growth for membership year 2014

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Some of the diverse research areas in which our members are involved

www.basas.org.uk
NEWS FROM RECENT FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS

Since 2011 BASAS has been administering the British Academy-BASAS ECAF Visiting Fellowships which support the research visit of a UK based academic to an ECAF operated field centre in South Asia.

The maximum value of a fellowship is £5,000 and the purpose of the initiative is to advance the scholar’s personal research, build his/her wider network, and enable him/her to contribute to the academic life of the centre. Below, some of our recent fellowship recipients share their experiences with us.

ECAF reports

Dr. Tara Puri, Global Research Fellow, Institute of Advanced Study/ Department of English, University of Warwick

I was awarded a BASAS and British Academy ECAF Visiting Fellowship to research Indian women’s magazines at the beginning of the 20th century. The award allowed me to spend 11 weeks in India, visiting the Nehru Memorial Library and the Marwari Library in Delhi, the Tamil Nadu State Library and the Roja Muthiah Research Library in Chennai, as well as the Sound and Picture Archives for Research on Women (SPARROW) in Mumbai.

The last decades of the 19th century saw an emerging feminist consciousness in India that was closely linked with a number of women-led movements and organisations, as well as women’s increasingly visible role in the independence movement. I aimed to study these developments by focusing on women’s magazines. Though women’s magazines existed in India in the latter half of the 19th
century, these were few and far-between; only at the beginning of the 20th century did women’s magazines begin to emerge as an important and viable part of popular print culture. During this trip, I worked on a group of magazines in Hindi and English from 1900-1914, focusing on their writings on women’s selfhood, education and work. My work addressed three key questions: 1) How do Indian women’s magazines at the beginning of the 20th century show a sense of shared experience as well as a feminist consciousness? 2) How do these magazines respond to the idiom and format of British women’s magazines (including missionary magazines), putting it to use in expressing a new and hybrid identity and expression? 3) How do they reflect upon British women in India, as well as Englishness in the context of the Indian nationalist movement?

During this trip, apart from locating and surveying a range of different periodicals from the period, I was able in particular to focus on two magazines, Bharat Bhagini in Hindi and The Indian Ladies’ Magazine in English. The length of my stay in India made it possible for me to read carefully these publications, and get a sense of their relationships to larger networks of print culture as well as their own internal developments. This fellowship was also an excellent opportunity for me, as an early career researcher, to not only undertake an extended period of archival research but also to establish links with other Indian researchers and academics especially in Delhi University, where I presented a paper based on this research in early September. At the moment, I am in the process of writing a journal article and drafting a preliminary chapter for a monograph based on this research. Additionally, I will be presenting a paper based on this work at the annual conference of the North American Victorian Studies Association in November 2014.
Dr. Hephzibah Israel, Lecturer in Translation Studies, University of Edinburgh

The BASAS-ECAF Fellowship at the Ecole Francaise D’Extreme-Orient (EFEO), Pondicherry was a valuable time of research into conventions of life-writing and autobiographical representations in the Tamil literary tradition. I was able to collect materials, discuss my research topic with Tamil pundits and present my ongoing work to several research groups.

The EFEO, located in an old colonial building has beautiful library rooms that occupy most of the first floor. With tall, wide windows all around, and a central leafy courtyard, it is an ideal setting to research over the summer months. Apart from their collections on Tamil literary history, available in Tamil and English publications, EFEO’s own publication list was very useful for my work. Their publications cover a range of up-to-date research in Tamil literature, culture and history by leading Tamil scholars worldwide. Since very few of these publications are available in any of the academic libraries in the UK, it was particularly useful to have access to these at the EFEO.
Of these, I was also able to buy some publications most relevant to my current research topic. The librarian, Ms Shanti Rayapoule, was most helpful in locating books and putting me in touch with other scholars in Pondicherry who have researched diaries maintained by eighteenth-century Tamils working for either the French governor at Pondicherry or the European trading companies.

My most exciting and valuable discovery was that of eighteenth-century diaries written by four generations of Tamils based in Pondicherry. I was aware of the existence of the very first one, Ananda Ranga Pillai’s (1709-61) twelve volume diary, but had no idea that his nephew and grand nephews also kept diaries. Meeting scholars based in Pondicherry brought to light three further diaries that followed Ananda Ranga, recording both personal and political history of the region from the second half of the eighteenth century. I was able to buy critical editions of the diaries published by these scholars and discuss with them the kinds of conceptual shifts and developments that were taking place in eighteenth-century Pondicherry, which has a different political and intellectual history to surrounding regions which were either still under the rule of Tamil and Maratha kings or the English East India Company. Particularly useful was my introduction to M. Gobalakichenane who lives in Paris and researches eighteenth-century Tamil materials in the French archives in France and in Pondicherry and who discovered manuscripts of the fourth Tamil diarist from the late eighteenth century, thus covering the entire century. This material is very valuable for my research as my aim in visiting Pondicherry was to construct a pre-nineteenth century history of life writing in Tamil by Tamils. Moreover, both scholars were not only generous with their time while we met in Pondicherry but have also promised to keep a look out in other archives for autobiographical materials that might be useful to build a picture of the development of life-writing in Tamil.

An unexpected advantage of researching at the EFEO in the month of August was the Classical Tamil Summer School that was held there from the 4th to the 29th August. This meant that there were more Tamil scholars and postgraduate students present at the Centre during all of August. It was very good to interact with this community of scholars from Europe, United States and Tamil Nadu who had come together in the context of reading Tamil classical texts together.
I discovered unexpected convergences in research interests and materials. The seminar series that was held in conjunction with the summer school was also useful: rich interdisciplinary perspectives were offered by presenters working in different areas of Tamil Studies. The Summer School teachers were also members of an ERC-funded research project titled ‘NETamil,’ a five year project (from 2014 onwards) to collect Tamil manuscripts, catalogue and digitize them systematically. Particularly useful was meeting Dr. Eva Wilden, the Principal Investigator of the project, who has a broad knowledge of Tamil classical and medieval literature, who pointed my attention to the Tamil colophone tradition that included an autobiographical element. She also read out parts of a rare manuscript that she had access to which contained a poem that was mainly, and unusually autobiographical.

“The Summer School teachers were all also members of an ERC-funded research project titled ‘NETamil,’ a five year project (from 2014 onwards) to collect Tamil manuscripts, catalogue and digitize them systematically.”

I also read at the Institut Français de Pondichéry at the other end of the French part of the town. The institute and library specialize in contemporary Tamil literature and was a very good resource to research autobiographical developments from the twentieth century onwards. I was also able to discuss more contemporary traditions of Tamil autobiography with scholars based at the Institute, such as Dr. M. Kannan, who leads the project on contemporary Tamil literature. He not only introduced me to other scholars in Pondicherry but also knew a wide circle of Tamil-English translators he could put me in touch with if I required draft English translations of Tamil texts.

I travelled to Thanjavur from Pondicherry as I was keen to consult the Maharaja Sarawati Mahal library which is famous for its palmleaf manuscript collections. I spent a few days collecting materials there and I also met a well-known retired Tamil scholar living in Thanjavur, K. Ramachandran. He is a translator himself and has edited and published several volumes of Saivite literature. He was very welcoming and willing to engage on a discussion of traditions of life-writing and to analyse why there are so few examples of life-writing from before the eighteenth century. He offered to continue our conversation over email should I have any further questions in the coming months.
I had several opportunities to present my work to scholars in Tamil Nadu. At the EFEO, I was invited to give a talk as part of the Classical Tamil Summer School Seminar series in August. The audience included scholars based at the Centre as well as staff and students attending the summer school. There was a lively discussion after the presentation, which continued over dinner that evening. I was invited by Father Emmanual Dosan, Principal of Sacred Heart Seminary, Poonamallee, Chennai to give the annual lecture instituted in honor of the institutions former Rector, Fr. Jaswantraj. The lecture, which examined the fraught relations between the Tamil Catholic and Protestant churches through nineteenth-century polemics on the use of Tamil poetic genres for Christian purposes, stimulated a range of questions from staff and students during the Q&A at the end. I also presented my work at Madras University at the Department of Christian Studies, School of Philosophy and Religious Thought at the end of August, where I was asked to speak on my previous work on the Tamil Bible in translation. I spoke on a particularly controversial issue that continues to divide the Protestant Tamil church today and it was a valuable occasion for me as it was the first time I had the opportunity to present to an audience for whom this was a lived reality and an ongoing battle rather than an academic question. The audience included staff and students as well as church ministers who were on the department’s mailing list and so were able to give me feedback on the current situation in their churches regarding current attitudes to the different Tamil versions of the Bible.

“I had several opportunities to present my work to scholars in Tamil Nadu. At the EFEO, I was invited to give a talk as part of the Classical Tamil Summer School Seminar series in August.”

Since, one of my research interests is also comparative religions, I was fortunate to have been in Pondicherry during two very important religious festivals celebrated in Tamil Nadu between the end of August and beginning of September: the Hindu festival of Vinayaka (known as Ganesh in other parts of India) Chaturti and the Catholic festival celebrating the birth of the Virgin Mary, the centre for which was the historic Catholic pilgrimage centre at Velankani, a few hundred kilometers south of Pondicherry. During Vinayaka puja, there were Vinayaka processions, with decorated chariots down the central streets of Pondicherry, as also the immolation of the Vinayaka images at the sea front. The preparations for the Catholic festival was fascinating as the public presence of Christianity in Tamil Nadu during this period was far more pronounced than in other parts of India. There were large, lit hoardings and images of the Virgin Mary along the high streets of Pondicherry and
Chennai. Further, since Pondicherry lies on the coastal route from Chennai to Velankani, it sees a high number of pilgrims who walk to Velankani from various parts of the state to the pilgrimage site. It was fascinating to see Catholic pilgrims dressed up in the traditional ochre clothes of the Hindu pilgrim, carrying images and flags in the style of Hindu pilgrim parties, except that they held images of the ‘Velankani Matha’ or Virgin Mary.

Last, while at Pondicherry I heard that my application for a grant to the AHRC to study Tamil autobiographical accounts of religious conversions to Christianity from the nineteenth century had been successful. So the BASAS-ECAF fellowship was a timely and valuable period of research which will feed into a two-year AHRC research project on conversion, translation and autobiography starting from November 2014.

Dr. Arthur Dudney, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Early-Modern Indian Cultures of Knowledge, Faculty of Oriental Studies, Oxford University

I spent five weeks in India in August and September funded by a BASAS/British Academy ECAF Visiting Fellowship. The purpose of my fellowship was two-fold. Firstly, it allowed me to visit the Persian manuscript libraries in Delhi and Chennai to view manuscripts that were unavailable to me during earlier stays in India. Secondly, and arguably more importantly, I hoped to identify collections that could benefit from a British Library Endangered Archives Programme (EAP) grant and encourage the custodians of these collections to apply to the scheme. The most successful manuscript archive visit was at the Governmental Oriental Manuscripts Library housed at Madras University, Chennai.

The relevant members of staff were welcoming and I was able to view some sixteen Persian texts from this rich but relatively unknown collection. While in Chennai, I also gave an invited lecture at the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras. In Delhi, I gained first-hand knowledge of the state of administration of various libraries and discussed the EAP scheme with about a dozen people. This has led to at least one EAP application for this year, namely for the preservation of the Raja of Mahmudabad’s library in Lucknow.
RECENT AWARDS MADE BY THE ASSOCIATION

The following awards were made by Council in the financial year covered by the report:

Annual Paper Prize:


BA-BASAS ECAF Fellowships:

- Dr. Arthur Dudney was awarded £2,233 to travel to India for the purpose of surveying manuscripts of Indo-Persian dictionaries and philological works in several libraries in Delhi and at Madras University, Chennai.

- Dr. Tara Puri was awarded £4,050 to travel to India for the purpose of researching a core group of magazines in Hindi and English from 1900-1914, to analyse writings on women’s selfhood, education and work, along with the influence of British women’s magazines in shaping these colonial femininities.

- Dr. Hephzibah Israel was awarded £4,745 to travel to L’Ecole Francais d’Extreme Orient, Pondicherry, for the purpose of researching pre-colonial life-writing and autobiographical traditions in Tamil and other Indian language literatures.

- Dr. Gerard Mccann was awarded £2,425 to travel to India for the purpose of conducting archival research in the National Archives of India and the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library towards publications on the diasporic underpinnings of Indian nationalism and India-Africa relations in the twentieth century.
We are pleased to announce that the Association has made arrangements to support the dedicated distribution of its publications.

South Asian Studies back issue journals are now available from the Periodicals Service Company. For more information please contact:

Periodicals Service Company  00 1 518 537 4700
11 Main Street  psc@periodicals.com
Germantown, NY 12526  www.periodicals.com
USA

_Buddhist Landscapes in Central India: Sanchi hill and archaeologies of religious and social change_ (Julia Shaw) is available from Left Coast Press. For more information please contact:

Left Coast Press, Inc.  00 1 925 935 3380
1630 N. Main Street, #400  explore@lcoastpress.com
Walnut Creek, California 94596  www.lcoastpress.com
USA

_Gods on the Move: Architecture and Ritual in the South Indian Temple_ (Crispin Branfoot), _Religion and Art: New Issues in Indian Iconography and Iconology_ (ed. Claudine Bautze-Picron), and _The Temple in South Asia_ (ed. Adam Hardy), are available from Arthur Probsthain Bookshop. For more information please contact:

Arthur Probsthain Bookshop  44 (0)207 636 1096
41 Great Russell Street  www.apandtea.co.uk/bookshop.html
London, WC1B 3PE, UK  arthurprobsthain@hotmail.com

Arthur Probsthain also manage a pop-up bookstore at SOAS, University of London.
THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

ACCOUNTS

for the year ended

31 March 2014

Registered Charity No 264591
## BASAS Accounts 2013/14

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| **Expenditures:**              |          |         |
| Core                           |          |         |
| Administration:                |          |         |
| Assistant Secretary            | 12,000.00| 10,526.30 |
| Office Rental                  |          | 750.03   |
| Telephone/internet             | 700.00   | 106.89   |
| Other Office Costs             | 2,000.00 | 610.40   |
| Bank Charges                   | 60.00    | 20.00    |
| Good Governance:               |          |         |
| Annual Audit                   |          | -       |
| 2013 Annual Report, AGM with Lecture | 700.00 | -       |
| Room Rental For Meetings       | 300.00   | -       |
| Travel to Meetings             | 1,500.00 | 1,821.66 |
| Communications and Activities: |          |         |
| Other Administrative Expenses  |          | 489.47   |
| Conference Keynote             |          | 44.30    |
| BASAS Website Development      |          |         |
| BASAS Websites Annual Maintenance | 200.00 | 407.86   |
| EASAS membership               | 100.00   |         |
| UKCASA membership              | 50.00    |         |
| Bursaries and conference prize, LEEDS | 700.00 | 1,075.00 |
| Payment to Informa for journals (bundled with subs) | 8,400.00 | 7,183.75 |
| **Total Sub Total Core**       | 26,710.00| 23,035.66 |

<p>| <strong>Research</strong>                   |          |         |
| ECAF Fellowships               | 15,000.00| 4,118.00 |
| <strong>Total Research</strong>             | 15,000.00| 4,118.00 |</p>
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SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH

The British Association for South Asian Studies promotes and supports study and research into the humanities and social sciences of Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Details of the Association’s programmes are available on the Association’s website. As grant programmes and other funding initiatives are approved by The British Academy, further particulars and application forms will be made available on the Association’s website.

The Assistant Secretary
The British Association for South Asian Studies
27 Old Gloucester Street, Bloomsbury
London WC1N 3AX

Tel: +44 (0)20 7388 5490
E-mail: basas@basas.org.uk
Website: http://www.basas.org.uk
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4. **Annual Conference** for BASAS members
5. **BASAS postgraduate article competition** open to members only
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Membership can also be made by filling in the form below, and sending it to the address indicated, along with a cheque in pound sterling, for the appropriate amount.

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Individuals can join BASAS or renew their existing membership using three methods: payment using PayPal, payment by cheque, and standing order payment. The membership fees for 2014 are listed below:

- Individual membership rate - £45
- Individual concessionary rate - £25

**Payment by cheque**

Individuals wishing to pay their membership fee by cheque, should send a completed registration form along with a cheque made payable to the British Association for South Asian Studies (drawn from a British bank account) to: The Treasurer, British Association for South Asian Studies, 27 Old Gloucester Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AX.
APPLICATION FORM

All fields must be completed in order for your registration to be valid.

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BASAS members will receive a copy of *South Asian Studies* or *Contemporary South Asia* as part of their membership. BASAS members who wish to subscribe to both journals, need to make an additional payment of £15.

I want to subscribe to

- [ ] South Asian Studies
- [ ] Contemporary South Asia
- [ ] both journals (£15 extra)