



easa

European Association of Social Anthropologists
Association Européenne des Anthropologues Sociaux

newsletter



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President's Letter

Mariya summarises the past six months of activities as her term as President comes to an end



Dear friends,

It is that time of the second year of our mandate when it becomes difficult not only to rush ahead to finish off initiated projects, but also to take a step back and reflect on what has already been achieved and what might be left for the next EASA executive committee to carry out. The newsletter, our survey has shown, is our main tool for keeping EASA members in the loop about our activities, and I have been further assured of this by your feedback to previous letters of this type: be it by you sharing it with your departments, discussing it on social media, or pointing out my typos. Thank you all for reading so far, and for reading this time as well.

What then are these few issues that kept us busy over the last few months?

As you all know, we carried out a fully hybrid event out of Belfast for EASA2022 – there were, as expected, some small glitches in technology, food supply chains, and reported COVID-19 infections. We aim to learn from these. At the same time, as our summary report in this newsletter shows, it was a very successful event. This is another opportunity to say a deep warm thanks to the scientific and local committees, the keynote and plenary speakers, and to NomadIT's and volunteers' work. And thanks to you all, old and new EASA members, for your participation, patience, and passion.

Outside the official programme, we also held a number of side events which were very well attended and created strong appeal and energy: beyond the outstanding and hugely popular tour of Belfast by local committee's and QUB's own Dominic Bryan, we also had the elegant and personally political Salon; the insightful and inciting Activism event; the Integrity Committee and MeTooAnthro Collective co-organised event on sexual harassment, assault and bullying in anthropology; and the PrecAnthro's gathering on our precarious discipline. There were all timely and well placed, and a big shout out goes especially to the efforts of local committee's and EASA exec member Fiona Murphy who walked the extra mile to secure venues and connect them well with the cultural and political scene in the welcoming but also deeply divided city and country we inhabited for a week.



We also held the Mantas Kvedaravičius Film Award, organised by Chowra Makaremi, and for which late anthropologist and filmmaker's bereaved partner in life and art Hanna Bilobrova was present together with the last member of the jury Rosa Bartoli. The competition was strong with six short-listed movies, very high quality and spoke deeply to some aspects of Mantas's filmmaking. The award went to "ben jij bij bij/are you with me" by Sophia van Ghesel Grothe and Mark Lindenberg. As many participants may not have managed to see the movies during the busy conference programme, we are trying to arrange a further viewing opportunity for members in the months ahead.

And what are the ongoing projects?

We will soon release the results of the precarity and sexual harassments consultancies on which we have been working with Dr Heather McKnight from Magnetic Ideals and Dr Jerika Loren Heinze from Fieldwork Initiative, respectively. We are also organising a small number of webinars to follow-up on some of our activities: one on mapping anti-precarity initiatives around Europe and beyond, and on the global effects of the still and sadly ongoing war of Russia against Ukraine. We have also initiated tighter correspondence with and between European national associations in anthropology, with the hope to coordinate an Anthropology Day and other activities across the continent: one where anthropology is suffering an assault but where local victories have been won, see the Polish case where our colleagues have secured a place for ethnology and cultural anthropology once again in the list of officially recognised disciplines. We have also been communicating with the World Council of Anthropological Associations (WCAA) on connecting better anthropology initiatives for social justice and peace globally.

Last, but not least, we continue our core work of perpetuating the excellent activity of our association's networks with the call for funding just closed (with 30 applications received from 31 networks); and EASA exec elections are coming, nomination deadline 30 November. Do consider nominating your candidate or running yourself. Being part of the exec does require some work, but it is also greatly satisfying to be part of an association that truly shows political commitment and spine in very dark and confusing times.

Yours

Mariya Ivancheva
University of Strathclyde

Outgoing president of EASA, 2021-2023



Overview of the first hybrid EASA conference in Belfast, July 2022

A brief overview of the summer's biennial.

1734 delegates attended EASA2022, of whom 802 participated online and 932 traveled to Belfast. The conference comprised [20 labs](#), [307 panel sessions](#), and 1283



presented papers, making Belfast one of the best attended EASA conferences, second only to online-Lisbon with its 1835 attendees.

The conference was covered in traditional media both in Northern Ireland and abroad and well represented on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

With funds from Wenner-Gren Foundation, Visit Belfast and EASA, the conference was able to directly support the participation of 115 delegates, as well as reduce fees overall. In addition, the conference supported 15 delegates who committed to overland/sea travel, and is also contributing over €9k towards a gold standard carbon-offsetting project, acknowledging the damage done by it to our world. With 46% of delegates not traveling to attend, several delegates overlanding, vegan catering, recycling of badges/lanyards, no book, and an offset equivalent to everybody flying, this event has made a serious attempt to reduce its carbon footprint.

While the hybrid experience is never as seamless as a face-to-face (f2f) one (what with all the delays, the need to speak into a mic and look into a camera at all times, the awkwardness of physically attending a panel where every other participant might be remote etc.) delegate feedback suggests that delivery of EASA2022 as a hybrid event was a success. In a world of chaos and uncertainty due to COVID, war, aviation crises, extreme financial insecurity and soaring prices, the online option kept people in a conference that may otherwise have lost a high number of participants.



Ethnology and Anthropology Returns

Ethnology and cultural anthropology return to the the list of officially recognized disciplines in Poland.



photo: Przemysław Stanula

In 2018 Polish authorities implemented a reform of higher education that reorganized the list of officially recognized disciplines. Each discipline was now to be represented by a significant and comparable number of scholars. Anthropology/ethnology was merged together with cultural

and religious studies to form a new “discipline” under the label of “cultural and religious studies”. Two things should be noted here. First, this decision was a case of the tail wagging the dog, since some disciplines were created essentially for administrative assessment reasons, and thus, to a large extent, arbitrarily. Second, within this new creation, the subject matter of anthropology and ethnology was missing. This meant that although anthropologists continued to work in departments of ethnology and anthropology, teach programs of study under the label of “ethnology”, and do research on anthropological topics, the name “ethnology/anthropology” was absent from the officially established nomenclature. As a wise, old saying goes, what is unnamed does not exist.

The Polish anthropological community vigorously protested this decision. Several letters were sent to the ministry by various organizations, including the Polish Ethnological Society, the Committee of Ethnological Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and a number of university departments. A spectacular protest took place at Adam Mickiewicz University when during a lecture delivered on January 14, 2019 by Jarosław Gowin, then Minister of Science and Higher Education. During the lecture, students stood up with signs labelled “ethnology” and gagged mouths. All letters of protest were then placed in the minister’s hands by me personally

(<https://gloswielpolski.pl/poznan-niemy-protest-na-uam-podczas-konferencji-jaroslaw-gowina-zdjecia/ar/13806556>).

Among these letters were those issued by several international organizations: WAU/IAUES/WCAA, EASA, AAA, SIEF, ASA, CNRS, CREOLE M.A. program partners



(universities in Barcelona, Bern, Ljubljana, Lyon, Maynooth, Vienna and Poznan), and some individual departments (e.g. Copenhagen). These letters were highly appreciated by Polish scholars, who were and remain very thankful for them. We are certain that all of these acts of solidarity strengthened our voice in the struggle to regain our discipline's name. After four years of struggle, we all have succeeded. Under a regulation of the Ministry issued at the end of October 2022 (<https://dziennikustaw.gov.pl/DU/2022/2202>), "ethnology and cultural anthropology" have been placed on the list of disciplines officially recognized in Poland. This is a small, but important victory in the ongoing efforts around the globe to keep anthropology alive worldwide.

Michał Buchowski
Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań
Past President of the Polish Ethnological Society (2005-19)

EASA Mantas Kvedaravičius film award

A full write-up of this newly created honouring award and details of the winner.



Mantas Kvedaravičius was a member of our association. The idea of setting up a film award in his name was put forward by Denea Jovanovic and embraced by the Executive and local organizing committees, as a way for us to celebrate his memory and pay tribute to his unique work. The Award also gives another opportunity to shine a light on the ongoing Russian war in Ukraine, and reaffirm our unambiguous support to the anti-imperialist engagement illustrated by



Mantas's work. We felt the urge to have a time of collective memorialization that is the occasion for our community to affirm our values and recognize Mantas's intellectual, political and artistic legacy of courage and love.

The Mantas Kvedaravičius prize distinguishes a medium or long feature documentary that is remarkable by its cinematographic anthropological and engaged dimensions, and as such, in the wake of Mantas Kvedaravičius's path in research, creation and action. Mantas Kvedaravičius's approach was that of a documentary tradition with strong narrative construction and storytelling, close to the visual codes and grammar of feature films (he is also the director of feature films *Prologos* and *Partenonas* that premiered in Venice in 2019).

Mantas Kvedaravičius's cinema was ethnographic in the sense that it resulted from long-term engagement on the field, and explored ethnographic questions such as memory, lived experiences of violence, temporality, the everyday of conflicts, etc. His work on dangerous and sensitive fields was in touch with burning political and social issues, and recognized as an important contribution to the advancement of human rights. However, his visual research was clearly distinct from 'investigative' approaches: it was attached to a poetry of images (minute attention to light, long shots, slowness, sensitive dimension focusing on the texture of things and beings through a work of image and sound). In this sense, Kvedaravičius's cinema was not about denouncing but capturing the everyday and profound experience of conflicts on our social bodies, through the visible and the invisible.

The six films in the selection were of very high quality and spoke deeply to some aspects of Mantas's filmmaking: looking at everyday life under conflict, allowing a slow pace of observation, archiving resistance.

The award goes to the film "ben jij bij bij/ are you with me" by Sophia van Ghesel Grothe and Mark Lindenberg, who filmed





Sophia’s grandmother over the course of three years, to document the life she still lives despite living with Alzheimer’s disease. A simple and sincere film on the everyday life of a middle-class family in the Netherlands that seems far away from the geopolitical contexts that Mantas focused on during his life. Yet we all agreed it was the film that most closely speaks to Mantas’s way of reaching a specific level of closeness that narrates absence, disorientation and the pain of memory through a distinct sense of bodily tangibility, familiarity, and presence. Are you with me, asks this without a question mark. The quality of being here and being with the other, in a cinema that is not a window into understanding but a companion and an intense, caring observer.

Just as Mantas’ films are not about war but about people living, in the midst of war, Are you with me is not a representation of Alzheimer’s, but an attempt to accompany life in the midst of loss without making pronouncements. The moment of cinema offered by this film takes place in the fugitive space that is opened by the absence of fear, and this relates both to how Mantas worked and what he searched for.

THE OTHER FIVE NOMINATED FILMS



Rift Finfinnee by Daniel Kötter



Objetos Rebeldes/Rebel Objects
by Carolina Arias Ortiz



Guanzhou, une nouvelle ère/
Guanzhou, A New Era by Boris
Svartzman



A Colombian Family by Tanja
Wol Sorensen



Ait Atta: Nomads of
the High Atlas by
Eda Elif Tibet



EASA elections- call for candidates by 30th of November

Members are urged to put themselves forward for election to the Exec.

The term of office of the elected members of the present Executive Committee of EASA is coming to an end. We invite applications/nominations from members to stand for election. Candidates must be nominated and supported by members.



EASA is a self-governing democratic body. The EASA Executive is made up of seven EASA members, five of whom are elected on a biennial basis. The composition of successive Executive Committees shows the pan-European character and remit of EASA. Candidates for election as Trustees must be a resident of Europe or primarily affiliated with a European institution, and their nomination must be supported by another member. All members are strongly encouraged to consider standing for election in order to support a flourishing and scholarly society and European discipline.

No member may be elected to office more than twice in succession: the only exception are up to two members co-opted by the elected Executive so as to ensure the continuity of EASA's administrative and publishing functions. The Treasurer and Secretary were appointed in 2019, and they can hold office until 2025.

By convention the elected members of the Exec with the highest numbers of votes become President and Vice-President. Other roles within the current Exec include Networks Liaison, Lobbying, PrecAnthro liaison and Media officer. On average Exec members spend about one to two days a month (from 0-5hrs/week) on EASA business, depending on their role. The Exec meets virtually on a regular basis and everyday business is conducted via email and Slack. Key roles for the committee include overseeing the biennial conference, supporting and funding EASA networks, defending the interests of members (eg by investigating working conditions within the academy) and promoting the work of the association and the discipline more broadly.



EASA is registered with Companies House and with the Charity Commission. As such it is bound by its constitution, relevant laws and EASA adheres to guidance on proper governance.

- Applications must comprise:
- A short personal presentation (max. 150 words);
- A picture of the candidate;
- The name of the nominating member;
- The name of the supporting member.

Members interested in submitting their candidature are invited to do so using the form below by end of 30th November.

We will publish the list of candidates shortly after and the online vote will take place from 15th December until 16th January. The results will be made available the day after. The handover meeting for the new Executive Committee will take place 6-8 February 2023 in Barcelona. We'd ask those standing for election to please now book those dates in their diary so as to be available, if elected.

Any interested members who would like to know more about the job or the nomination process are free to contact the Secretary ([monica.heintz\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:monica.heintz@gmail.com)), or other current executive committee members whose email addresses can be obtained from the EASA membership directory.

[Apply here](#)