



ASOCIACIÓN ESPAÑOLA
DE ESTUDIOS INTERDISCIPLINARIOS
SOBRE LA INDIA

CALL FOR PAPERS

3rd International Conference

Oceans, Seas, Rivers: Crossings in Indian Societies and Cultures.
Océanos, mares, ríos: tránsitos en las sociedades y las culturas de la India.
Spanish Association for Interdisciplinary India Studies

www.aeeii.org

Universidad de Salamanca, October 29-31, 2014

www.usal.es

One of the three most important early urban civilizations in the Old World, and the largest, the Indus Valley Civilization was based in the Indus River Valley as was indeed the case with Ancient Egypt's Nile Valley and Mesopotamia's Tigris and Euphrates. Unsurprisingly, in all three civilizations, rivers had an important role to play in settlement and urbanization. The decline of the Indus Valley Civilization has been linked to a possible change in the river's course and drought, which drove the population eastward to finally settle in the Indo-Gangetic plain, cementing the foundations of Ancient Vedic India.

What stands out however is the salient role that rivers have subsequently played in the Indian ethos. Rivers are considered holy in Hinduism and specifically, the Ganga is personified as a goddess in the scriptures, with its waters believed to absolve all sins, and certain cities on its banks considered to be important pilgrimage sites. Water is a primary element in Indian art and culture. As the source of all life, it is considered a symbol of fertility and purification. Creation myths in Indian mythology make multiple references to water. These myths are present in architecture, sculptures and paintings with multiple iconographic and decorative motifs related to water.

This religious and cultural significance of water bodies in India presents a sharp contrast with the current day-to-day reality of urban and rural water access. According to the 2013 report published by the UNICEF and FAO, India has about 16 percent of the world's population as compared to only 4 per cent of its water resources with per capita water availability of around 1,170 cu m/person/year. Some of the crucial issues faced by the water sector in India include (a) climate change-affected rainfall which results in floods and droughts in different areas; (b) water pollution and deficient waste management; (c) indiscriminate groundwater extraction; and (d) inter-state disputes on river water access and providing safe drinking water.

The Spanish Association for Interdisciplinary India Studies holds its third International Conference in 2014, and welcomes papers from a variety of fields (including politics, literary criticism, sociology, philosophy, history, ecology, anthropology, technology, economics, and others) which explore water as constitutive of the Indian experience in national and diasporic contexts.



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Suggested topics include:

- Oceans/seas/ivers as borders (geographical, political, cultural).
- The role of oceans/seas/ivers in rituals and religious rites.
- The photographic/cartographic/literary/film representations of oceans/seas/ivers.
- The concepts of trans-oceanic distances and proximity.
 - Trans-oceanic diasporas: chronologies, settlements, characteristics, etc.
 - Marine and river routes.
 - Trans-oceanic linguistic changes.
- Maritime economy and the exploitation of water as a resource.
- Ecological approaches to oceans/seas/ivers.
- The representation of water in the plastic arts.
- Water and architecture.
 - Monuments specifically built for water collection and conservation.
- Eco-Aesthetics.
 - Reflections in modern art on the importance of water in urbanization processes and community developments.
- Water and governance.
 - Water rights issues.
 - Water as a resource and its agricultural and industrial exploitation.
 - Water management and sustainable use.
 - Water access and gender/class issues.

The Conference will be hosted by the University of Salamanca (Department of Social Psychology and Anthropology) at Salamanca, Spain, from 29 to 31 October 2014. Please send 250-word abstracts by May 30, 2014, along with a 50-word bio-note, to antonia.navarro@uco.es and taniya.gupta@gmail.com. Abstracts will be evaluated by the Conference Academic Committee and authors will be informed of their acceptance by end-June 2014.

Papers should not exceed 10 pages (2,500-3,000 words; 20 minutes' delivery) and they can be presented either in English or Spanish. A peer-reviewed selection of the conference papers (in the English version) will be considered for publication under the format of a book, and are due by November 30, 2014.

Conference details, including list of plenary speakers, will follow shortly at: www.aeeii.org