



## REPORT ON THE XIth WORLD SANSKRIT CONFERENCE

The XIth World Sanskrit Conference took place in Torino, Italy, from 3rd to 8th April, 2000. It was attended by around three hundred scholars from twentyfive countries (Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Britain, Canada, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand and the United States). The conference was organised by CESMEO and Professor Oscar Bortto and his staff with admirable efficiency. The actual conference venue was the congress centre Villa Gualino, Viale Settimio Severo 65, perched attractively on the hills above the city of Torino itself. Many of the participants were housed there, with others in hotels elsewhere in Torino, and all the academic sessions were held there. However, the Inaugural Ceremony on the morning of 3rd April was held in the imposing surroundings of the congress centre Torino Incontra in the centre of Torino, when the participants were welcomed by representatives of the Piedmont Region, the city of Torino and others, Professor Botto (President, CESMEO) gave an opening address, Professor Ram Karan Sharma (President of the IASS) gave a lecture on “Poetry in the *Mahābhārata* and in *Kālidāsa*”, and Professor V. Venkatachalam (Chairman, Indian Council of Philosophical Research) made an auspicious address in Sanskrit.

The subject areas of the conference itself were divided into four general sessions and nine workshops. The four general sessions com-

prised (1) Sanskrit Language and Literature, (2) Sanskrit Grammar, Linguistics and Lexicography, (3) Veda and Vedāngas, and (4) Epics and Purāṇas; the nine workshops focussed on (1) Classical Sanskrit Literature, (2) Religion and Philosophy, (3) Hinduism, (4) Buddhism and Jainism, (5) Āgamas, Tantras and Yoga, Medicine, (6) Astronomy and Natural Sciences, (7) Architecture, Aesthetics, Fine Arts and Performing Arts, (8) Dharmaśāstra and Arthaśāstra, and (9) History, Archaeology, Epigraphy and Manuscriptology. In addition, in the early part of each evening there was a special presentation - Tagore songs in Sanskrit, a CD-ROM on the Mukteśvara temple at Cauḍanapura, a CD-ROM of the BORI Critical Edition of the *Mahābhārata*, a film and slides on Kūṭiyāṭṭam, and a digital archive of the manuscripts in the French Institute at Pondicherry - and a Sanskrit Parishad was held at midday on 7th. Various publishers offered displays of their publications throughout the conference period and CESMEO was offering special discounts on its own publications.

CESMEO also organised an excursion to some Savoy Royal Palaces (Residenze Sabaude) on the afternoon of April 6th for participants and those accompanying them. CESMEO then very generously laid on a trip to the Castello Racconigi on the afternoon of April 8th, after the end of the conference, for those staying till the following day. During the conference, volume XXIII-XXIV of *Indologica Taurinensia* (Professor Gregory M. Bongard-Levin Felicitation Volume) was officially released and with great generosity CESMEO presented a copy of this volume to all participants.

The Board of the IASS was called to two successive meetings on 3rd and 4th April and the General Meeting of the Board, the Consultative Committee and the individual members of the IASS was held at 6.30 p.m. on April 5th. At the latter meeting the retirement of Professors Colette Caillat and Siegfried Lienhard from the posts of Treasurer and Secretary General was formally announced and they were both warmly thanked for all that they had done for the Association over very many years. Professors Bruno Dagens and John Brockington were elected to succeed them.

The final session on the morning of 8th April commenced with lectures by Professor Biswanath Banerjee on "Tantra-Buddhism and the Kālacakra system" and by Professor Ram Karan Sharma and Dr.

Gautam Patel on “*Meghadūta* in Indian Tradition” illustrated with slides, followed by the presentation of part of a Sanskrit drama recently written by Professor M.G. Dhadphale. The closing session proper was opened by Professor Lienhard with various announcements, which included the confirmation of the venue of the XIIth World Sanskrit Conference in July 2003 as Helsinki, Finland, at the invitation of Professor Asko Parpola, and an offer to publish the proceedings of the present conference by CESMEO; then valedictory addresses – with expressions of thanks to the outgoing officers of the Association, to all the CESMEO staff (including the young ladies who had so ably facilitated the running of the various academic sessions) and in particular to Professor Botto – were given by Professors John Brockington, Narayan Samtani and Ananda Guruge.