Against the rapidly evolving background of Asia-Europe relations, ASEF has been actively engaged in the field of International Relations through various programmes, which seek to enhance dialogue and co-operation, as well as people-to-people communication between Asia and Europe.

The Asia-Europe Roundtable is a forum for Asian and European experts to strengthen international capacity and facilitate the exchange of best practices in conflict management. In the same spirit, the Regional Integration Series focuses on comparative Asian and European regionalization processes through lectures and conferences. With this framework, ASEF has organised conferences analyzing the ASEM process – with a focus on the role of civil society – in conjunction with bi-annual ASEM Summits. Topics have addressed the political, economic and socio-cultural implications of European integration and expansion, as well as that of East Asian co-operation. The Asia-Europe Lecture Tours programme provides a platform for emerging "leaders of opinion" from civil society in Asia and Europe to address issues pertaining to bridging the cultural and civilisational differences between Asia and Europe, and engages stakeholders in meaningful exchanges focused on improving the relationship between Asia and Europe. ASEF’s work in International Relations also includes an important youth outreach component in the form of the Asia-Europe Young Parliamentarians’ Meeting (AEYPM), an informal platform for young members of national legislatures to develop greater awareness of global issues, establish cross-regional linkages, and learn from prominent experts. In the field of education and academic co-operation, the European Studies in Asia (ESiA) aims stimulate European studies in the Asian region and brings together some of the most relevant institutions in East Asia focused on Europe into a sustainable forum for information exchange.

This year, ASEF’s work in the field International Relations will be made all the more significant with the ASEM 7 Summit, which will be held on 24-25 October in Beijing, China. The theme of the summit will be “Vision and Action: Towards a Win-Win Solution”. ASEF will conduct several high-level projects on the sidelines of the summit.
This publication presents the findings of the first two phases of ASEF’s “EU through the Eyes of Asia” project, a major academic collaboration initiated in partnership with the National Centre for Research on Europe – University of Canterbury, to measure media, public and elite perceptions of the European Union (EU) in the Asian countries of the ASEM process. The analysis provides scientifically compelling feedback that can better assist in policy-making, suggesting recommendations to the EU, third countries and the media. It will hopefully help to develop a wider knowledge about the international perceptions of the EU, specifically in China, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Thailand.

The book launch was attended by more than 60 people, and was kicked off with opening remarks from Ambassador Holger Standertsjöld, Head of the Delegation of the European Commission to Singapore and Prof. Lai Choy Heng, Vice Provost, NUS. The launch also featured a presentation on the case of Singapore’s media, public and elite perceptions of the EU by Assoc. Prof. Barnard Turner, Convenor of the NUS European Studies Programme and the leader for the research team in Singapore. This was followed by a panel discussion with Mr. Richard Chalmers, Senior Editor, Reuters and Mr. Joachim Ihrcke, President of the European Chamber of Commerce of Singapore. A lively discussion with the audience, including members of the press, took place during the event.

This event is the first in a series of book launches that ASEF will be organising in seven cities in Asia in 2008 to further promote the publication and the European Studies in Asia (ESiA) network. For more information, please contact esia@asef.org.
Focused on approaches of transitional justice in Cambodia and the present status of such a process.

The lecture tour resulted in considerable public interest, particularly in Slovakia and Romania, underscoring the relevance of the Democratisation and Justice series under which this lecture was organised and which is targeted at transitional countries. For more information, please contact Ms. Natalia Figge at natalia@asef.org.

24th Asia-Europe Lecture Tour
“An Assessment of EU Policy Towards Asia”
24 March – 3 April 2008
Bucharest, Hong Kong SAR, Macau, Singapore

The lecture tour was hosted by the Interdisciplinary Department of European Studies, Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok, Thailand); the European Studies Programme, Hong Kong University (Hong Kong, SAR); the International Institute of Macau and the University of Macau; and the East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore and ASEF.

For more information, please contact asef@asef.org or visit the dedicated website at http://asef-asef.org.

In this lecture, Mr. Kassie addressed issues that Asia has of the EU and what can be done to boost this.

In 2001, the EU agreed on an ambitious objective to increase its influence. The scope included contributing to peace and security in the region, strengthening mutual trust and investment flows, promoting development, achieving security, protecting human rights and promoting democracy, building partnerships and alliances to address global issues and strengthening the awareness of the EU in Asia (and vice versa). However, EU Asia policy is still a work in progress, with a mixed record since 2001. On one hand, we have seen some useful efforts to deepen dialogue but there is limited impact on policy; on the other hand, internal issues distract the EU from fulfilling its potentially more significant role in Asia. EU interests and objectives are still not clear on the ground. Resources and expertise need to be enhanced. Greater sensitivity needs to be cultivated to respond to Asian concerns. It is time for a new strategy? Yes. There are many lessons from EU bilateral relations with Asia. The EU needs to build on its positive gains from trade relations, peace and security dialogue, development cooperation, good governance promotion, and climate change – among others – and work on its public diplomacy in Asia and perceptions of its influence.

- Remarks by Fraser Cameron, during his lecture tour.

23rd Asia-Europe Lecture Tour
“Transitional Justice and Human Rights”
5-17 March 2008
Strasbourg, Brussels, Budapest, Bucharest, Vienna

The 23rd Asia-Europe Lecture Tour by Neou Kassie (President of the Peace and Development Institute, Cambodia) focused on approaches of transitional justice in Cambodia and the present status of such a process.

The lecture tour resulted in considerable public interest, particularly in Slovakia and Romania, underscoring the relevance of the Democratisation and Justice series under which this lecture was organised and which is targeted at transitional countries. For more information, please contact Ms. Natalia Figge at natalia@asef.org.

Actionable Recommendations:
1. ASEF should remain as an informal dialogue forum and stakeholders should reaffirm their commitment to ASEF. To demonstrate ASEF’s relevance to the global agenda, ASEF delegations should meet more regularly on the sidelines of UN General Assembly meetings, and other relevant occasions (with a view to seeking common positions on global or regional issues).
2. The strategy of Issue-Based Leadership (IBL) holds considerable potential to enhance ASEF’s effectiveness and efficiency but needs to be fine-tuned; the ASEF Summit is the right venue to identify and agree priority issues, and clarify the mandate of IBL in general as well as each IBL initiative separately. Issue-based Leadership is an ASEF mechanism where a European and an Asian government jointly lead ASEF activities on an agreed priority issue (e.g. communicable diseases, environment/ climate change, terrorism, millennium development goals, migration) for two to four years.
3. The creation of an ASEF Secretariat should be reconsidered; at least, the ASEF Secretariat could co-ordinate ASEF activities on the Asian side.

4. Civil society needs to be further integrated into the ASEF dialogue and outcomes; the potential of ASEF, AEFB, AEPF and other initiatives in promoting exchanges between civil societies of Asia and Europe should be further explored.
5. An ASEF Spokesperson should be appointed and charged with going ASEF a face and a voice to improve public communication in co-ordination with national governments.
6. In the lead-up to the ASEF VII Summit, all ASEF leaders should be encouraged to speak about ASEF in their speeches and in media outreach.

Participants of the future of ASEF workshop
Board of Trustees, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS); Mr. Pierre Fourmarier, Special Advisor, Asia Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France; Mr. Yang Jun, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Amb. Holger Standardsfeld, Head of Delegation of the European Commission to Singapore; Dr. Razeen Sally, Co-Director, European Institute for Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University; Mr. Charles Santiago, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation Office, Department of International Relations (Malaysia) and representative, Asia-Europe Peoples’ Forum; Dr. Fraser Cameron, Senior Advisor, EIAS, Amb. Boguslaw Majewski, Ambassador of Poland to Singapore; Mr. Axel Goethals, General Manager, EIAS, Amb. Rosario Manalo, Director, European Studies Programme, Ateneo de Manila University; and Dr. Yeo Lay Hwee, Senior Research Fellow, Singapore Institute of International Affairs. Mr. Bertrand Fort, Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Peter Ryan, Director for International Exchange, and Ms. Sol Igelis, Assistant Director for International Exchange were also present to represent ASEF.

Workshop particulars centred their discussions on methods to improve the ASEF process, and came out with a set of recommendations (please see box). For more information, please contact Ms. Sol Igelis sol.igelis@asef.org.

Workshop
“The Future of ASEM”
4 April 2008
Singapore

In pursuit of this aim, the organisers brought together 12 distinguished diplomats, scholars and NGO participants, all seasoned “ASEM watchers” and practitioners as well as experts in other forms of inter-regional forums.

The group includes Dr. Xing Hua, Director, China Institute of International Studies (CII); Amb. Winyono Satriahandoyo, Member of the University of Bucharest) and VIA URIS-Media Monitoring Agency (at the premises of the University of Trnava, Slovakia).

The Lecture Tour resulted in considerable public interest, particularly in Slovakia and Romania, underscoring the relevance of the Democratisation and Justice series under which this lecture was organised and which is targeted at transitional countries. For more information, please contact Ms. Natalia Figge at natalia@asef.org.
The 6th Asia-Europe Film Meeting strived to engage participants from Europe and Asia in a dialogue through comprehensive film issues and to encourage independent film producers to increasingly collaborate in the creation of common cross-cultural work in this field.

The aim of the meeting was to give emerging independent film producers the possibility to create a solid international network and to gain international expertise on how to present their projects in the international marketplace.

The second phase of the meeting consisted on a workshop on Asia-Europe film issues. It was co-organised with CineMart of the International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) in the framework of the 5-days programme of the Rotterdam lab of CineMart, Two Asia-Europe film co-productions were analysed during the workshop: ‘The Drummer’ by Kenneth Bi (Germany/Hong Kong SAR China co-production) and ‘Shanghai Trance’ by David Verbeek (Dutch Director).

This meeting was co-organised by ASEF in association with CineMart of the International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) and RTS Audio Visual and Performing Arts School in Brussels, and supported by Erasmus Hogeschool Brussel, Vlaamse Gemeenschapscmisse and Vlaamse Overheid. For more information, please contact Mr. David Ocon at david.ocon@asef.org

Book Launch
“The Impact of Ageing – A Common Challenge for Europe and Asia”
25 January 2008

In a valuable European-Asian interdisciplinary collaboration, experts Dr. Gabriele Sinigoj and Professor Gavin Jones of the Asia Research Institute presented their findings on the “Impact of Ageing” by drawing attention to the latest findings and data in demography, economy and society, law and social welfare, as well as biomedicine.

A unique aspect of the book is its description of both mutuality and divergence in the progress of ageing in European and Asian populations that will transform the world in fundamental ways by 2050.

Demographic data on what is called the “silvering” or ageing of society provide us with important insights into the ratio of “young-old” to “old-old” and gendered aspects of ageing, we are drawn to the economic challenges of the biomedical leap of progress in restoring our impaired immune system, all to retard ageing and elongate our lifespan.

The editors were joined by panelist Professor Kalijaya K Mehta, Nominated Member of Parliament, Singapore and His Excellency Klaus Wölfer, Ambassador of Austria to Indonesia and Singapore to discuss on the book and also to address issues pertaining to the impact of ageing. The discussion was concluded with positive views on the impact of ageing, summed up by the idea of “Turning Silver into Gold”.

For more information please contact Ms. Grace Foo at grace.fo@asef.org

ASEF’s scholarly periodical at http://aej.asef.org, where visitors can:
• Find out more about the history of the journal, the people in the Editorial Office and Advisory Board, procedures for submission of manuscripts, subscriptions and the cooperation that the AEJ maintains with other research institutes and academic programmes in Asia and Europe.

AEJ Promotion: Free Download of Articles
Want to read more about “Youth in Asia and Europe” and “Lessons of Asian and European Peace Processes”? Enjoy free access to AEJ articles on these topics at http://aej.asef.org. Visit the “AEJ Promotion” section for downloads.

Interested in contributing an article?
Each issue of the Asia Europe Journal aims to follow a major topic such as security, historical experiences, cultural perception, gender issues and other areas of bi-regional interest. If you would like to submit a paper, please send your submission in electronic form (Microsoft Word Document) to asiaeuropejournal@asef.org.

Papers should be written in English and be preceded by a short abstract. The submission should not exceed 7,000 words. Only previously unpublished manuscripts are accepted for consideration. Upon publication, an honorarium of 300 Euros will be granted.

For further information, please contact Dr. Abrecht Rothacher (Editor-in-Chief) or Ms. Leone Schneider (Editorial Assistant) at telephone (65) 6874 9766 or email to asiaeuropejournal@asef.org.

In its sixth year, the AEJ features an all-new look. Starting with Volume 6 Number 1 in 2008, the journal features a more contemporary cover design and includes a section named “Notes on Contributors” that provides short profiles of the contributing authors.

In addition, the revamped AEJ website was launched in April. Visit the online portal of ASEF’s scholarly periodical at http://aej.asef.org, where visitors can:
• Find out more about the history of the journal, the people in the Editorial Office and Advisory Board, procedures for submission of manuscripts, subscriptions and the cooperation that the AEJ maintains with other research institutes and academic programmes in Asia and Europe.

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• Find out more about the history of the journal, the people in the Editorial Office and Advisory Board, procedures for submission of manuscripts, subscriptions and the cooperation that the AEJ maintains with other research institutes and academic programmes in Asia and Europe.

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• Find out more about the history of the journal, the people in the Editorial Office and Advisory Board, procedures for submission of manuscripts, subscriptions and the cooperation that the AEJ maintains with other research institutes and academic programmes in Asia and Europe.
The Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights is the largest meeting point between the two regions on human rights issues. Through a series of seminars on various aspects of Human Rights, the seminar brings together a mix of official government representatives and civil society participants in frank and open dialogue.

The Steering Committee, which is composed of representatives from the organisers as well as the governments of China, Indonesia as well as the European Commission, sets up the overall framework for the series and each seminar. The group designed the main architecture for the 9th event in the series, which will be on the theme “Human Rights in Criminal Justice Systems” and is scheduled for February 2009 in Strasbourg, France. The Seminar will take advantage of being held in one of the key centers for human rights by organising a session at the European Court of Human Rights as well as side events to other European institutions in Strasbourg. The Informal ASEM Seminar on Human Rights has been organised by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (Sweden) and ASEM since 1997.

For further information, please contact Ms. Sol Iglesias at sol.iglesias@asef.org.
The 2nd Networking Asia-Europe Young Volunteers Conference (NAEYV), co-organised with the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service and the International Workcamp Organization, took place in Seoul, South Korea from 27 to 31 January 2008. The Conference was a direct follow-up of the first NAEYV Conference that took place in June 2006 in Vietnam.

This event gathered 24 young participants coming from various ASEM countries, in order for them to exchange information and expertise regarding voluntary activities and to follow-up on projects between and within the two regions. Following a general introduction of the topic, the different networks that were attending the Conference had the chance to give presentations on their work (ASEF, the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service – CCIVS, the Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations, the Network for Voluntary Development in Asia-NYDA, and the International Cultural Youth Exchange – ICYE). Moreover, the specificities of the Asia-Europe youth co-operation in the field of volunteerism were highlighted throughout the whole event, while participants were also asked to introduce their organisations and the activities they developed in this field.

Through the interaction between participants, speakers, organisations and guests, the Conference achieved concrete results with project ideas, acquired new skills and present their work to the larger European studies community. The NAEYV 2nd Networking Conference was held in Bruges, Belgium, on 1–4 September 2008.

For more information on ASEF Youth Partnerships, please contact Ms. Katerina Ragoussi at katerina@asef.org.
The Impact of Ageing —  
A Common Challenge for Europe and Asia

Edited by Dr. Gabriele Sinigoj and Professor Gavin Jones

In a rare European-Asian interdisciplinary collaboration, world-renowned experts present their fascinating findings on the “Impact of Ageing”. They draw readers’ attention to the latest findings and data in demography, economy and society, law and social welfare, as well as bioeconomics. A unique aspect of the book is its description of both mutuality and divergence in the progress of ageing in European and Asian populations that will transform the world in fundamental ways by 2050.

Demographic data provide readers with important insights into the ratio of “young-old” to “old-old” and gendered aspects of ageing; we are drawn to the economic challenges of the biomedical leap of progress in restoring our impaired immune system, all to retard ageing and elevate our lifespan.

Asia-Europe Journal
Editor-in-Chief: Albrecht Rothacher

January 2008
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Kong Yong Ong - One ASEAN: A Partner for Europe
Rodolfo C. Severino - The Emerging Region of East Asia
Bernhard A. - Reflections on Regionalization: Lessons for Asia
Merit Kirkee - Asia Meets Europe: Culture Exchanges between Young Asians and Europeans in Paris
Susanne Kretz-Sandberg - Japanese Youth from a Western Reader’s Perspective
Amy T.Y.Lai - Ignoring Hello Kitty: Globalization and Resistance in Asia
Wolfgang Ganser and Johannes de Rijke - Political Participation of Youth: Young Germans in the East
Shukhedela Sharma Hanjapidam - Youth Panorama of Northeast India
Eugénio Bragalet - La Segunda Revolución China: Una década como Embajador en Pekín (The Second Chinese Revolution: A decade as Ambassador)
Jeff Sahadeo - Russian Colonial Study in Takhten

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Timo Kivimäki - Lessons of Peace Processes
Martti Ahtisaari - Lessons of Asach peace talks
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Jordi Urgell - What can the Basque peace process learn from Southeast Asia?
Linda Jakobson - A “Greater Chinese Union” - striving toward a solution of Taiwan’s unresolved future status
Alexander Menten - Approaching peace in Bali, Southern Thailand: some anthropological considerations
Peter J. Middlebrook - Right-financing the future: Lessons for Asian and European peace processes
Pan Guang - Peace and community building in Northeast Asia
Albrecht Rothacher - Clashes and dialogues of globalization revisited - the case of contemporary East Asia and Europe
Andrew Wheatcroft - Infants: A history of the conflict between Christian and Islam

Visit to ASEF

17 January 2008
Mr. Wolfram M. Kons, Anchorman and Vice-Editor-in-Chief, RTL Television morningmagazine PUNKT6 & PUNKT9, Germany

Governor’s News

Ambassador Ioan Donca of Romania was appointed Governor representing Romania.
Mrs. Maria Zenaida Angara Collison of the Philippines was succeeded by Ambassador Rosario Manalo.
Ambassador Nguyen Dang Quang of Vietnam was succeeded by Ambassador Truong Triu Dong.
Ambassador Paul Brower of the Netherlands was succeeded by Professor Willem Stokhof.
Ambassador Saroj Chavanaviraj of Thailand was succeeded by Ambassador Sawantki Kongsri.

Staff News

Incoming Staff:
- Ms. Olivi Tan, Singapore (Project Officer, Cultural Exchange)
- Ms. Edwige Rozier, France (Project Officer, Cultural Exchange)
- Ms. Malini Mohamed, Singapore (Admin/Project Officer, Public Affairs)
- Ms. Kristine Lucero, the Philippines (Interim, Public Affairs)
- Mr. Nunnaree Panichkul, Thailand (Interim, Cultural Exchange)
- Mr. Ronan Lenihan, Ireland (Interim, Intellectual Exchange)

Outgoing Staff:
- Ms. Andina Saverias, Singapore (Executive Assistant to the Deputy Executive Director)
- Ms. Marie Ruppell, France/Germany (Project Officer, Cultural Exchange)
- Ms. Sofia Yee, Singapore, is appointed Assistant Director of Public Affairs
- Mr. Cahyadi Indrananto, Indonesia, is appointed Project Executive of Public Affairs
- Ms. Tara Shyam, India, is appointed temporary Project Officer of Public Affairs

ASEF Participation

Alliance of Civilizations
First Forum
15-16 January 2008
Madrid, Spain

ASEF Executive Director Amb. Wonil Cho and representatives from People-to-People and Public Affairs Departments participated in the Alliance of Civilizations (AocC) First Forum (www.madridaocforum.org), an initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Co-organised by the Governments of Spain and Turkey, the Alliance is aimed at managing co-existence between cultures and, in particular, to bridge the Western and the Arab-Islamic world. ASEF made an intervention at the working session on “Consolidating International Partnership,” where Amb. Cho reiterated that ASEF would continue to seek opportunity to work together with the Alliance and other international actors in furthering mutual understanding between Asia and Europe. ASEF also participated and contributed in two other working sessions on “Youth Approaches to Intercultural Dialogue” and “Rapid Response Media Mechanism.”
In the news

ASEF actively works with the mass media to raise public awareness on issues related to cross-continental relations. Selections of news clippings as the result of such efforts are presented below. For the complete list of news clippings, please visit www.asef.org

ASEF launched its revamped corporate website at the 21st Board of Governors’ Meeting in Bali, Indonesia, on 22 April. The overhaul of the corporate website included a comprehensive overhaul of the website concept and navigation, and the content. Users are now given a contemporary design and a comprehensive content that shows ten years of ASEF’s history and achievements. Enhanced usability functions make it possible to search through thousands of documents in an intuitive manner via optimised search engines.

Visit the ASEF’s new online portal at www.asef.org where you can:

• Browse over 350 projects from 1997 till today and download photos, project reports, declarations, policy papers and more.
• Read about ASEF and its activities in over 1000 news articles, published by 200 media organisations from across the ASEM countries.
• Gaze into our 400 partner institutions in Asia and Europe.
• Update yourself in our application section and subscribe to the “ASEF Alert” allowing us to keep you updated.

Our new publication pages introduce each publication with a short abstract and detailed background information. If you are interested in a publication, please send your order to publications@asef.org

Find detailed information of all ASEF projects from 1997 – 2008 in the dedicated “Projects Info” box. It links to the photos, project reports, media clippings, partner websites and other ASEF activities within the same thematic area.
ASEF Calendar
May – August 2008

5 May 2008
BERLIN, GERMANY
Launch of the ASEM Education Hub Portal
In conjunction with the ASEM Education Ministers Meeting
Organised by: The ASEM Education Partnership Secretariat

7 May 2008
HANOI, VIETNAM
Book Launch
“The EU Through the Eyes of Asia: Media, Public, and Elite Perceptions”

11 June 2008
SINGAPORE
ASEF Youth Partnerships 2008
19th International Forum for Youth Partners: National Council of Youth Organisations in Korea (KICYOK), Korean National Youth Commission (NYC), European Youth Forum (YFE)

12 – 13 June 2008
JEJU ISLAND, KOREA
1st Labour and Employment Senior Officials’ Meeting
Organised by the EC (in conjunction with ILO)

15 – 16 June 2008
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM
ASEM Finance Ministers’ Meeting

18 – 20 June 2008
BEIJING, CHINA
Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting

29 – 30 June 2008
BEIJING, CHINA
ASEM Senior Officials’ Meeting

31 July – 4 Aug 2008
HANOI, VIETNAM
ASEFVIAN Annual General Meeting

1 August 2008
SINGAPORE
ASEM European Studies in Asia (ESA)
“The EU Through the Eyes of Asia: Media, Public, and Elite Perceptions”
Partners: Kasai University

5 August 2008
BANGKOK, THAILAND
Book Launch
“The EU Through the Eyes of Asia: Media, Public, and Elite Perceptions”
Partners: Chulalongkorn University

6 August 2008
SINGAPORE
ASEM Finance for Trainers
Asian ASEM Senior Officials’ Meeting

5 – 6 May 2008
BERLIN, GERMANY
ASEM Education Ministers Meeting
“Education and Training for Tomorrow: Common Perspectives in Asia and Europe”
Partners: The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research

3 – 5 June 2008
AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
4th ASEM Interfaith Dialogue
“Interfaith Dialogue in Practice: Sharing Best Practices”

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For the latest information, please visit the official information platform of ASEM process: www.asemnhb.org

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www.asef.org