

# Announcements

## Leiden University unveils plans for The Asian Library

Sandra Dehue

IN OCTOBER 2014, Leiden University unveiled plans for a new Asian Library scheduled to open its doors in 2017. On 23 January 2015, IIAS signed a cooperation agreement with the Leiden University Libraries, stipulating that The Asian Library will sponsor the next three editions of the ICAS Book Prize (IBP). In return, ICAS will donate to The Asian Library the books collected during the previous five and the upcoming edition of the IBP (see pages 40-41).

The Asian Library will not only house various existing and world-renowned Asian collections, it will also be a focal point for study, research and encounters between people with a profound interest in Asia, and its position in the world. Advanced plans exist to make its collections widely available through intensive digitisation programmes and the inclusion of born-digital information.

Leiden, in the Netherlands, is a major international knowledge hub on Asia. Dutch relations with Asia go back more than 400 years, and Leiden University has from its origin in 1574, concentrated on the cultures and societies of 'the Orient'. This is reflected in the many unique and important collections that found their way to the university libraries and other institutes, such as the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV). The Asian Library will bring together these and other collections, adding up to a staggering 30.5 kilometres in length. While plans are to house any low-use non-Asian materials from the collections in a book depository in the vicinity, the heart of the project is The Asian Library, which will be built on top of the existing University Library. This top extension will create a space for researchers, students and visitors to meet, study and do research, offering state-of-the-art library facilities, including collaborative facilities for scholars and students and a media centre.

**The Asian Library will bring together the following collections:**

- 1 Leiden University Libraries' notable Southeast Asian Collections;
- 2 The internationally acclaimed collections of the Sinological Institute Library, one of the leading libraries for Chinese Studies in the Western world (now part of Leiden's East Asian Library);
- 3 The rich collection of the Centre for Japanese and Korean Studies (now part of Leiden's East Asian Library);
- 4 The Kern Institute Library, the national centre of expertise for South Asia and the Himalayan region, more specifically India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Tibet, Nepal, and Bhutan. The collection is among the largest in Europe;
- 5 The colonial collection of the former Library of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT);
- 6 The collection of the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV).

The Asian collection will be immediately available on-site through digital access, an open-stack collection and through fast delivery of the Asian collections stored on-site. But the plans don't stop here. Among the further ambitions and plans for The Asian Library is the establishment of an international fellowship programme, the creation of an *Indonesian Digital Library*, and named curatorship for digital collections.

The Indonesian Digital Library will bring together the extensive digital collections on Indonesia of Leiden University Libraries, the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) and the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV). It will also intensify the digitisation of other Indonesian materials. This Indonesian Digital Library is to be made available to a worldwide audience and will allow for scholarly research using the latest e-science and digital humanities techniques. It will also collect and incorporate born-digital materials.

To expand the already present in-depth subject expertise into new exciting areas that are rapidly becoming of the utmost importance, The University Library is seeking funds to establish an endowed and named curatorship for the digitised and born-digital Asian collections. The curatorship of these collections will ensure their availability to the general public worldwide, their usability for advanced digital humanities techniques such as image recognition, text and data mining and their long-term durability.

**For more information visit: [www.asianlibraryleiden.nl](http://www.asianlibraryleiden.nl)**



Visual: Yucon Amsterdam  
Design: Katja Hogenboom Studio with FELSCH architecten

## IIAS Annual Lecture 2015

Life and Death in Asia and Africa – Amartya Kumar Sen Laureate of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, 1998

Tuesday, 10 March, 15.30 hrs. De Rode Hoed, Keizersgracht 102, Amsterdam

THE ANNUAL LECTURE 2015 of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS; Leiden) will be delivered by the renowned Indian economist and philosopher, Professor Amartya Sen. His lecture will focus on the morbidity and mortality rates that remain exceptionally high, both in Africa and parts of Asia. The explanation lies partly in the absence of epidemiological interventions, but also in the defective way public healthcare is organised. There are, however, exceptions from which other countries can learn. Thailand, China, Rwanda, Bangladesh and the Indian state of Kerala provide lessons of different kinds of relevance. Life and death depend not only on human predicaments beyond our control, but also on policy wisdom.

Professor Amartya Kumar Sen was the 1998 winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, for his work in welfare economics. Professor Sen has made contributions to welfare economics, social choice theory, economic and social justice, theories of famines, measurement and evaluation of well-being and freedom, and moral, political and legal philosophy. Professor Sen is the Thomas W. Lamont University Professor and Professor of Economics and Philosophy at Harvard University. Until 2004 he was Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. Amartya Sen's awards, other than the Nobel Prize, include Bharat Ratna (India), Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur (France), the National Humanities Medal (USA),

Ordem do Merito Cientifico (Brazil), Honorary Companion of Honour (UK), Aztec Eagle (Mexico), the George Marshall Award (USA), the Eisenhower Medal (USA), and the Edinburgh Medal (UK).

This lecture, which discusses developments in both Africa and Asia, coincides with new initiatives taken by the International Institute for Asian Studies in the field of African-Asian interactions, including the organization (in collaboration with the African Association for Asian Studies), of a large international conference on the subject of 'Asian Studies in Africa: Challenges and Prospects of a New Axis of Intellectual Interactions', which will take place from 24-26 September 2015 in Accra, Ghana.

### Programme

15.30: Welcome by Dr Philippe Peycam, Director International Institute for Asian Studies  
15.45: Lecture by Prof. Amartya Sen, 'Life and Death in Asia and Africa'  
16.45: Questions and Answers  
17.15-18.30: Drinks reception

### Registration

The number of places is limited, and registration beforehand is required. Please register via the web form provided at the following url:

**[www.iias.nl/event/life-and-death-asia-and-africa](http://www.iias.nl/event/life-and-death-asia-and-africa)**



Amartya Kumar

## 3 Calls for Papers

Burma/Myanmar in transition: connectivity, changes and challenges

Conference, Chiang Mai, 24-25 July 2015  
Deadline for proposals: 15 April 2015

The 1st International Conference on Burma/Myanmar Studies will be co-hosted by the Center for ASEAN Studies (CAS), Chiang Mai University, the Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD): Myanmar Center, the Faculty of Humanities at Chiang Mai University and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden, the Netherlands. The conference will provide a forum for scholars, journalists, NGO workers and observers from Burma/Myanmar, Thailand and other countries across the globe to share the latest updates on Burma/Myanmar Studies.

The aims of the conference are: to deepen our understanding of the social and political transformations occurring in Burma/Myanmar, and their impacts on the environment as well as on the economic and social lives of local/ethnic communities; to examine Burma/Myanmar's nexus and connectivity within the regional and global context, as well as the internal interplay taking place among state actors, society and culture; to provide a platform for the exchange of academic ideas and dialogue among Burma/Myanmar scholars from around the world; to allow young and mid-level scholars/researchers to participate in an international academic forum.

**For the full call for papers, visit: <http://rcsd.soc.cmu.ac.th>**

Language, power and identity in Asia: creating & crossing language boundaries

Conference, National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden, 14-16 March 2016  
Deadline for proposals: 15 May 2015

The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is hosting, in collaboration with LeidenGlobal and the Language Museum (Leiden), an international conference to explore the interrelations between language, power and identity in Asia. Participants are invited to submit a paper to address aspects of this topic, with a particular emphasis on Asia, but papers that illustrate the subject from other parts of the world are also welcome.

This conference explores how linguistic differences, practices, texts and performances are of critical importance to political, social and intellectual power structures among communities in the past and in the present, especially through processes of identity formation. How do (and how did) languages shape borders – social, ethnic, religious, or 'national'? Likewise, how do languages and linguistic communities move across these limits? In what ways do processes of hybridisation and multilingualism affect the formation of transnational or translocal identities, and how have they done so in the past? How have policies of language standardisation impacted on the political and intellectual spheres? What is the power of orality and performance vis-à-vis a variety of textual productions, through manuscript culture, epigraphical practices, print media, and the Internet?  
**For the full call for papers, visit: [www.iias.nl/language](http://www.iias.nl/language)**

Sharpening the edges: instating state & power in Indian Ocean history. An agenda for critical research & teaching.

Workshop, 17 August 2015, Leiden, the Netherlands  
Deadline for papers: 15 March 2015

A workshop funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and enabled by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS). This workshop will bring together a group of fifteen scholars, some invited and others selected through this call for papers, to discuss the state of research and teaching in the burgeoning field of Indian Ocean history. For historical reasons linked to former colonial empires and continued relations between them and their erstwhile colonies, interest in the Indian Ocean is more visible in the fields of teaching and research in institutions in Europe and Asia rather than in the USA. In keeping with the overall Mellon programme, *Rethinking Asian Studies in a Global Context*, the workshop aims to triangulate a dialogue between Euro-American and South and Southeast Asian scholars. We especially welcome PhD students, postdocs and early career professors to apply with papers that reflect upon the spatial shifts visible in imperial and area studies with the purpose of developing approaches in teaching and research on the Indian Ocean.

**For the full call for papers, visit: [www.rethinking.asia](http://www.rethinking.asia)**