>Projects and events

ICAS Book Prizes call for readers

The International Convention of Asia Scholars’ book prizes aim to create an international focus for publications on Asia while increasing their worldwide visibility. All scientific books published in 2005 and 2006 on Asian topics are eligible. Three prizes will be awarded: (1) best study in the humanities; (2) best study in the social sciences; and (3) best PhD dissertation. The prize consists of €3000 for each of the books while the best PhD dissertation will be published. Winners will be announced during ICAS 4 (20-24 August 2005) in Shanghai. Five copies of each of the books must be sent to the ICAS secretariat (for guidelines please see www.icas-secretariat.org). The deadline for submissions is 31 December 2004.

We are currently searching for senior scholars to participate in the reading committee. Those interested, please contact Paul van der Velde: p.van.der.velde@let.leidenuniv.nl

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> Announcements

Embracing a Common Asian Past: Merangkul Persamaan Masa Lalu Asia

The Universities Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in cooperation with Leiden University’s Towards A New Age of Partnership (TANAP), will host the Fourth TANAP Conference, 10-14 January 2005. The conference is sponsored by the Netherlands Royal Embassy in Jakarta and by the Netherlands UNESCO Committee in The Hague.

The conference will serve as a platform for the writing of comparative histories of early modern Monsoon Asia. The conference will focus on the importance of comparative Asian history for the study of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, and the great potential of the VOC archival deposits in Jakarta, The Hague, Cape Town, Chennai and Colombo as primary sources.

Asian Folklore Studies

A semi-annual journal dedicated to the study and preservation of Asian traditions

This year’s issues include articles on:
* Hmong instructions to the dead
* Shamans and epics on Cheju Island
* The scorpion in Muslim folklore
* Interpreting untouchedness
* Btsai folklore and ethnography

Subscription rates for two issues/year: Institutions US $40.00, Individuals US $22.00
Contact address: Editor, Asian Folklore Studies, Nansem University, 18 Yamazato-cho, Shiwa-ku, 466-8571 Nagaoya, Japan
E-mail: matsu@sfc.na.na.ac.jp
The conference aims to promote closer relations between young Asian historians and their Indonesian counterparts. It is hoped that cooperation will be strengthened between young Indonesian historians from institutions in Jakarta, Surabaya, Semarang, Bandung, Den Pasar, Makassar, Padang, Medan and Ambon and their colleagues from India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan, China, Japan, South Africa and the Netherlands.

For more information see www.tansp.net or email: h.emeijer@let.leidenuniv.nl
Conference organizer: Bambang Purwanto.
For more information please visit www.let.leidenuniv.nl

STORMA: linking ecological and socio-economic constraints of land use and conservation

STORMA study extended to Bersiap Period

The Dutch Government and representatives of the Indies Dutch Community in the Netherlands agreed in December 2000 on the necessity of an in-depth historical study on the effects of decolonization on the Indies Dutch Community over the period 1930-1960. After long negotiations, the study was awarded to the NIOD study extended to Bersiap period.

Not long thereafter the Indies Dutch Community discovered that an essential part of the agreement had not been implemented: detailed research on the damage and losses suffered by the Indies Dutch during the Bersiap period, in September-December 1945. The Indonesia platform (IP), representing the Indies Dutch community, protested and a new series of talks began with the government. Indies Dutch organizations like the Kinderen uit de Japanse Bezetting en Bersiap, (KJB) also petitioned the Dutch Parliament. Under pressure from Parliament, Indies Dutch organizations, and researchers within the NIOD project, the responsible Ministry decided on 14 June 2004 to extend the NIOD research project to include the Bersiap period.

The decision met unanimous approval within the Indies Dutch community and the IP, which expressed its expectation that justice would now be done for the Dutch survivors of the Bersiap period, at least by documenting exactly what happened in Java in those turbulent months in the autumn of 1945.

In a remembrance speech on 14 August at the Monument of the Indies War in the hall of the old Lower Chamber of Parliament, the Chamber’s representative, MP Jan Ripstra, expressed his sympathy for the Indies Dutch community and IP campaign to include the Bersiap period in the NIOD study. He revealed that among the political parties in Parliament, there was general sympathy for the position of the IP, and welcomed the decision of the State Secretary to extend the study, the financial consequences of such an extension notwithstanding.

For more information please see the NIOD website: www.historiod.nl or contact Herman Th. Bussemaker: h.bussemaker@planet.nl.

Book launch: The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daosang

Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daosang edited by Kristoffer Schipper and Francisca Verellen (University of Chicago Press. pp. 1800, 3 vols., ISBN 0-226-73875-5) catalogues and describes all existing texts within the Taoist Canon. It sets out the contents of the Daosang chronologically: the first volume ranges from antiquity through the Middle Ages; the second spans the modern period. Introductions throughout these first two volumes outline the evolution of Taoism and its spiritual heritage. The third volume offers biographical sketches of frequently mentioned Taoists, multiple indexes, and an extensive bibliography. The book launch will take place on January 24, 2005 at L’Ecole française d’Extrême Orient (L’EFEo), Paris, France. For further information please contact Fransiscus Verellen (EFEO) or Marloes Razing (IIAS): m.razing@let.leidenuniv.nl.

The Asia-Europe Colloquy on Universities of Tomorrow will be held 16-19 February 2005 in Luxembourg. The Colloquy will address the relationships between universities and societies, markets and economic trends in the international system and technological advancements, and their possible implications for universities in the 21st century. The aim of the conference is two-fold: to foster inter-regional dialogue on the major trends and challenges confronting universities and institutions of higher learning in Asia and Europe, and to explore prospects for closer cooperation between universities.

The conference is organized by ASEP and the University of Luxembourg, and receives support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Keynote speakers from Asia and Europe will discuss different images of universities of the future; understanding the challenges for universities and institutions of higher education; and synergies between universities and economy/society. On the third day of the conference, workshops will address critical issues for universities in Asia and Europe in the face of current trends and future challenges.

For more information please visit the website: http://www.asef.org or contact Bastiaan van de Lee, Co-ordinator, ASEM Education Hub: bastiaan@asef.org

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Kutti Festival 2005

The Kuttiakkuttu Sangam is organizing a five-night long theatre festival in Punjasanksantakal Village (near Kanchipuram, Tamilnadu, South India) on 6 March 2005. The Kutti Festival 2005 will offer a rare opportunity to experience a myriad of known and unknown theatre genres in a traditional village setting.

The Festival programme combines an unconventional mixture of tradition, ritual and contemporaneity. All four South Indian states will be represented by important theatre traditions: Kathakali (Kerala), Yakshagana (Karnataka), Vithiatakam (Andhra Pradesh) and Kuttiakkuttu (Tamilnadu). The Festival programme will include a contemporary dance performance by Attakalari of Bangalore, Brigitte Revelli’s modern dance performance that has been performed all over Europe before, the Bharata Natyam performance by the number one Bharata Natyam performer from Kerala and a temporary dance performance by Attakalari of Bangalore.

The first slot of every Festival night (9 to 10 P.M.) will be devoted to performances for children. The second slot (10.30 to 12 P.M.) will showcase special productions. Performances after 12 P.M. feature selected episodes from the Mahabharata performed in different theatre genres. Some of the Kuttiakkuttu performances of the Festival will coincide with the rituals of the Parasham (Mahabharata) Festival to take place simultaneously at the Draupadi Temple of Punjasanksantakal.

For more information please email: kutti_festival@vsnl.net or visit: www.kuttiakkuttu.org/festival2005

Tibetan Medical Texts: Data Input Project

Tibetan Medical Texts: Data Input Project International Trust for Traditional Medicine

To contribute to the study, translation and preservation of classical Tibetan medical texts, ITTM, a public-charitable Trust in the North-Eastern Himalayas has been preparing electronic versions of key Tibetan medical works, covering the period from the 9th to 19th centuries CE. This is an ongoing project, financed by the contributions of visiting scholars. It began in March 1999 and was initially sponsored by the Asian Classic Input Project (ACIP), New York.

The project generates income for Tibetan refugee women in Kalimpong, trained at ITTM. Since July 2000, Diki Choden Bhutia and Chaying Lhamo have been working full-time. All texts are typed in twice, then compared electronically and checked again for typing errors. The key medical text The Four Medical Tantras (Tib. rgyud bshad) has yet to be fully translated and published in English. The corpus of Tibetan medical texts is enormous; translation of the main works will require decades. Original texts are un-indexed; electronic searches will enhance the accessibility of Tibetan medical literature.

Please visit www.ittm.org for details on ITTM projects and a summary of the works available in the database. We aim to present the data online and on CD-ROM as soon as corrections are completed. We are also actively searching for further funding. For details please contact Barbara Gerke at ITTM: info@ittm.org or barbara.gerke@anthropology.oxford.ac.uk

People interested in contributing to the Tibetological Collections & Archives Series, please contact Henrik Blezer, Leiden University, h.blezer@let.leidenuniv.nl