

ICAS 3 Singapore



Short News >
General

19 - 22 August 2003
Singapore

The Third International Convention of Asia Scholars will be held at the Raffles City Convention Centre, Swissotel The Stamford. ICAS 3 will be organized by the National University of Singapore (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences & Asia Research Institute) and is endorsed by the Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA); the Association for Asian Studies (AAS); and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS).

More info >

ICAS 3 secretariat:

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Official proposal forms, funding and registration details may be found at: www.fas.nus.edu.sg/icas3

Some 1,000 participants are expected at the conference and the concurrent exhibition for delegates to attend, which will feature the latest publications, films, software and services.

Call for papers

Proposals on all aspects of Asia research are invited for:

- Organized panels consist of three or four papers, with a chairperson and/or discussant.
- Individual papers will be organized into panels with each paper not running more than 20 minutes, excluding questioning time.
- Poster presentations: any language can be displayed, but proposals must be submitted in English.
- Special meetings any meeting type which falls outside the above panel format (organizational meetings, video presentations, roundtables etc.).

Please provide a title, a 250-word abstract/description, names, institutional affiliations of participants (and individual titles and abstracts for panel presenters). Submission deadline: 31 January 2003 <

TANAP Extends into Iran

In the past year the history research programme 'Towards A New Age of Partnership' (TANAP) has received several applications from young Iranian history scholars, eager to gain access to European sources concerning Iran's Safavid period (AD 1501-1722). Though there are several Safavid specialists at various history departments in Iran, from the time of the Islamic Revolution they have not been encouraged to use Western sources. Ever since Khatami came to power, some universities have taken up the challenge of internationalization and one cannot but wonder if this is a wind of change.

Short News >
Iran

By Henk Niemeijer

With Willem Floor and Rudolph Mathee's publications, Iranian historians have become increasingly aware of the importance of European sources for the writing and understanding of Iranian history. The universities of Tabriz, Esfahan, Shiraz, and Tehran all have well-known history departments and although Shiraz does not have a PhD programme in History, it is an attractive place in which to study the subject. Not only is Shiraz located close to important Persian archaeological sites such as Persepolis and Pasargadae, but the city also oozes an artistic and open intellectual atmosphere. One visit to the mausoleum of the great Persian poet, Khaje Shams ad-Din Mohammad Shirzai, also known as Hafez, says it all.

Before the Islamic Revolution, the University of Shiraz had an outstanding international reputation, partly due to its famous Asia Institute and partly because English was the language of instruction. In order to start rebuilding a new international reputation, the university established the Shiraz University International Relations Office (SUIRO), under Dr Khademi two years ago. According to the vice chancellor, Dr Shariff, the university wants to create

opportunities in study programmes abroad for some of its more than 14,000 students. In exchange they would welcome students from the Netherlands, in particular from Leiden, for instance on the PhD programme of the Department of Farsi Language and Literature. TANAP has succeeded in establishing cooperation, which aims at attracting postgraduate students from the Department of History (around 280 undergraduates) who are presently trained by Dr Gholamreza Vatandoust.

Tehran University is another institution that has a good number of Safavid specialists. Dr Zargarinezhad, the head of the department, explained that the examinations for the PhD programme in history are of an exceptionally high standard. The special library of the department reflects a strong interest in Iranian history, but shelves only a few books on Asian history in general – this lack of expertise is strongly felt.

One of the students of the Safavid specialist, Mansur Sefatgol, has been selected for the TANAP Advanced Master's Programme 2003. Rajabali Kavani Gerkhloo has written an excellent thesis on the Noctavi sect under the Safavids and aims to study Iran's connections with the Indian Ocean World at large during the seventeenth century, next year. We are glad to involve a student with expertise in handling Persian sources, and expects fruitful cooperation with the other students. <

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Dr Gholamreza Vatandoust, Dr Henk Niemeijer, and some of the MA students of the University of Shiraz, Iran

ICAS Secretariat

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In June 1998 the first International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) materialized. The convention, which was organized by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS, the Netherlands) and the Association for Asian Studies (AAS, USA), was brought into existence because European and American scholars felt a need for closer interaction. Although many individual contacts between researchers from both sides of the Atlantic had already been established, an open, loosely organized forum for discussion

was still missing. This forum would allow specialists from all disciplines, regions, and paradigms to informally meet, exchange ideas, and engage in new plans for joint research activities.

At ICAS 2 in Berlin it was decided to establish a permanent ICAS Secretariat, promoting and stimulating ICAS conventions, serving as its archival and information centre, safeguarding the expertise that has been gathered through ICAS, and instrumental in drawing up a regulatory framework for the ICAS activities. The secretariat actively pursues making ICAS visible through its presence at major meetings of Asia scholars and through regular reports both in the *IIAS Newsletter* and on the ICAS Secretariat website. The secretariat will be stationed at the IIAS in the Netherlands. For more information please feel free to contact us. <

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TANAP Diary: Unequaled Success

Due to the exceptional standard of applications and the encouraging performance in course work, eight students in the TANAP AMP (Towards A New Age of Partnership Advanced Master's Programme) have been awarded scholarships and admittance to its PhD programme. Two students from South Africa, two from Indonesia and one from India, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Taiwan each, will be able to continue their research at Leiden University.

Short News >
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By Nirmal Dewasiri & Anjana Singh

The submission of the PhD proposals on a hardly auspicious 'Friday the thirteenth' of September 2002 symbolically marked the end of the Advanced Master's Programme. Shortly after, the students received diplomas for the successful completion of the rigorous ten-month TANAP training programme, which was concluded with seminars in Bangkok on 24-26 October.

Struck by a tsunami of research material in the Nationaal Archief, The Hague, the students were perplexed by the magnitude of possibilities that this project offered them. Apart from the general academic atmosphere of Leiden, regular classroom sessions, and one-on-one interaction with their supervisors, the students have benefited greatly from educational trips to Amsterdam, Dordrecht, Breda, Gouda, Delft, and Antwerp. The authors to this article further had the unique chance of establishing contacts with other scholars, working on India and Sri Lanka. The semi-formal monthly meetings organized by the Research School for African, Asian, and Amerindian

Studies (CNWS) gave them an opportunity to exchange ideas with Dutch scholars and debate perceptions and the usefulness of the VOC archives in reconstructing history.

Eight of the eleven students who started the AMP 2002 will continue their research next year as TANAP PhD students, proving the success of the programme. With the selection of these eight students, new research in the Dutch records in Chennai, Colombo, Jakarta, and Cape Town will soon commence. <

Anjana Singh, MPhil has studied at Mumbai University, India and researched the social world of Dutch colonial Cochin 1750-1810, as a member of the TANAP AMP group in 2002. A.Singh@let.leidenuniv.nl

Nirmal Dewasiri, MPhil has studied at the Colombo University, Sri Lanka and researched Dutch Colonialism and Social and Economic Transformations in south-western Ceylon 1736-1796 as a member of the TANAP AMP group in 2002. Both Singh and Dewasiri have been admitted to the TANAP PhD programme for 2003. N.Dewasiri@let.leidenuniv.nl