

Asia Alliance

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IIAS (secretariat Asia Alliance)

www.asia-alliance.org

Clingendael Asia Studies

New research project
www.clingendael.nl/asia

The Netherlands Institute for International Relations 'Clingendael' launched its new research project – Clingendael Asia Studies (CAS) – on 1 September 2006. CAS aims to promote academic and public discussion on a wide range of topics relating to Asia's international relations, and will do so through publications by in-house researchers as well as through (public) lectures and seminars with researchers and guest speakers. Clingendael does not intend to cover Asia's international relations in a theoretical and all-encompassing sense, but rather aims at focussed and policy-relevant research, including the geo-strategic implications of China's emergence as an economic power for the region, for Europe and for the Netherlands, and Asia's growing importance in the international economy and issues of (resource) security.

Senior and junior fellows within CAS, including Maaikje Heijmans, Susann Handke and Frans-Paul van der Putten, are engaged in long-term research on (East) Asian political economy, security and energy issues. The project on political economy begins with research on Japan's economic diplomacy towards China and the importance of collective memory within inter-state relations. In the field of security, research themes include cross-straight relations (China-Taiwan), challenges posed by North Korea and transport routes. Research on energy issues focuses on the consequences of growing Chinese energy demand for other countries and for the environment, and the implications of increasing Chinese and Indian interest in African resources. Willem van Kemenade's project on the EU-US-China alliance will result in a book publication in 2008. Over the course of 2007-08, Simone Eysink, Ingrid d'Hooghe and Maurits Berger will, respectively, organise seminars on democratisation in Muslim countries, a stakeholders confer-

ence on human rights and trade, and an international conference on the EU-China strategic partnership.

CAS launch on 17 October featured supervisor Jan Melissen and individual researchers outlining the programme's objectives and research to be undertaken, followed by a lively Q&A-session. Several Asia-related events have been organised at the Clingendael Institute and since then, their breadth in topics illustrates the broad, open approach of the project. The seminars and lectures were attended by representatives from academic agencies, government, non-governmental organizations, the corporate sector and other interested parties, reflecting intensifying Asian-European relations in both public and private domains.

Clingendael Asia Studies is a unique cooperation of the Clingendael Diplomatic Studies Programme and Security and Energy Programmes, and is supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Publications, upcoming events and other details are available at the CAS-website: www.clingendael.nl/asia. For further information, please contact asia@clingendael.nl.

Independence and After in Southeast Asia: Old and New interpretations

APRU School of Humanities conference
7-8 August 2007, Penang, Malaysia
Call for Papers / Panels

Deadline 1 June 2007
2007 marks the 50th anniversary of *Merdeka* (independence) for Malaysia. Malaysia attained political independence from British colonial rule in August 1957 through constitutional means. This led to a smooth handing over of power to Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj - the prime minister and architect of *Merdeka*. Other countries in the region endured years of conflict and bloodshed before independence from colonial rule was achieved, the most recent being Timor Leste in 2002. The notable exception is Thailand which

escaped the shackles of colonial domination by remaining the only independent, sovereign nation-state in Southeast Asia.

The discourse of nations achieving political independence and the characterisation of the years that followed as the 'postcolonial' period has long been a mainstay of the academic agenda in studies of Southeast Asia, particularly in the disciplines of history, political science, economics, literature and language, anthropology, and sociology. The road to independence was often long and arduous. The years following the attainment of national sovereignty were equally troublesome with seemingly insurmountable challenges. Whilst Malaysia faced the sensitive issue of managing race relations, the Philippines struggled with a leftist insurgency, Thailand 'see-sawed' with weak civilian governments and military juntas. Meanwhile Myanmar was secluded under a military dictatorship, and Cambodia experienced a nightmare following the establishment of a genocidal regime. The ups and downs of nation-building, the maintenance of political stability and economic sustainability are just some of the major issues that faced post-independent nation-states of Southeast Asia.

We invite articles addressing the above issues. Deadline for Working Papers: 1 June 2007. Individuals are invited to present a 20-minute working paper relevant to any aspect of the conference's theme. They are requested to submit an abstract (150-200 words) to the Secretariat.

Specialized Panels: Scholars who wish to organize a panel (4-5 presenters; 1-hour per panel) based on a particular topic relevant to the conference's overall theme should contact the conference Secretariat: The Second International Conference (2APRU) Asia-Pacific Research Unit (APRU) shakila@usm.my www.usm.my/APRU/index.html

Living the information society

Philippine ICT Researchers Network International Conference
23-24 April 2007, Makati City, Philippines

The Philippine ICT Researchers Network through the National College of Public Administration and Governance of the University of the Philippines is hosting an international conference on 'Living the Information Society: The Impact of Information and Communication Technologies on People, Work and Communities in Asia'.

The goal of the conference is to support the growth of an Asian community of researchers and practitioners doing work on the effects (social, cultural, psychological, economic, etc.) of information and communications technologies (ICT) in the region. The event encourages multidisciplinary participation and discussion, in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the effects of ICT on culture and society. In particular, the conference objectives are the following:

- To bring together a multidisciplinary group of researchers in the Asia-Pacific to present their research and perspectives regarding the effects of ICT in society
- To map the current state of social science research on the impact of ICT on Asian societies

Until now, most conferences on ICT have discussed the potential impact of new information and communication technologies on commerce, governance and education. The focus of such discussions is on future possibilities of ICT rather than their current, often unintended, usages. Alongside these discussions are trade shows that highlight achievements and developments in the technologies themselves. Important as these topics are, they often overlook a crucial aspect: the actual usage of ICT in everyday life. Much less common are conferences discussing what life in the information society is really like. Despite the rhetoric of governments and the promises of technical planners, we know very little about the effects and consequences of ICT in the Asia-Pacific region. Instead, the evidence presented often comes from developed regions, whose experience may have little relevance locally. Many ICT4D researchers in Asian universities lack the skills and the network needed to develop appropriate multidisciplinary research methodologies. Consequently, it is important to bring together people doing work on the impact of ICT in the South, where the context presents new challenges and implications (i.e. socio-cultural, language, economic). The conference is significant because it will bring together academics and researchers in the region who are investigating societal transformations in the information age. The conference will investigate how ICT affects our identities and relationships, the nature of work, the promises of governance, and the significance of culture.

For more information please contact Dr. Erwin A. Alampay, erwin_alampay@yahoo.com; or erwin_gaspar.alampay@up.edu.ph or the conference secretariat at: research.ict@gmail.com

Sharing Experiences and Prospects in Central Asia

European Society for Central Asian Studies (ESCAS) conference
12-15 September 2007, Ankara, Turkey
Call for Papers
Deadline 15 August 2007

The creation of the newly independent Central Asian Republics after 1991 accompanied by the opening of this region to the world, marked a new era for Central Asian studies. The tenth ESCAS Conference provides Central Asian and European researchers with a golden opportunity to study and to exchange views on the region. Current developments in Central Asia are reflected in all academic disciplines, dealing with geopolitics, energy and economics, urbanism, society and communities and religious beliefs, ethnography, history, archaeology and linguistics. Conflicts can be triggered off between neighbours and great powers over the issues of water or oil, since Central Asia, rich in natural resources, is closely connected with the neighbouring great powers in competition for hydrocarbon, water and other resources. Nowadays Central Asia attracts lots of attention from the states of other regions and continents and serves as a new field for numerous NGOs, Muslim, Christian and other missionaries.

The geographic domain of Central Asia, (according to the ESCAS definition), cov-

ers contemporary Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Northern Iran, Northern Afghanistan, North-Western China, Trans-Caspian and South Siberia.

What are the different concepts used by scholars today when dealing with such a wide range of topics? Due to its unique history, societies and religions, Central Asia cannot be studied solely through the prism of such concepts as “developed and developing countries” or “modern and traditional societies”.

For the first time the conference will be held in Turkey at the Middle East Technical University, which has been a pioneer in Eurasian Studies, establishing a research centre on the region for the first time in Turkey.

For further information, see www.escas.pz.nl

Spheres of Justice

**Calcutta Research Group Conference
20-22 September 2007, Kolkata, India**

The Calcutta Research Group's second critical studies conference will be held on the theme of justice. Justice is a meeting ground of many ideas, situations, expectations, mechanisms and practices and there are several routes to approach the issue of justice.

The philosophical path may tell us to go back to ancient philosophers whose theories of justice tells us of the correctness of social order and the virtue of maintaining it; or to the middle age theorists who combined religion, virtue and justice in a comprehensive theory of ethics where justice had no special place. To the modern day social theorists in whose works justice becomes a complex arithmetic and a strenuous human effort to maintain it in a world marked by hierarchies and illiberalism. There is also a sociological route which sees justice, its demands and procedures, as a social phenomenon. There is also an historical route which offers what can be called 'regimes of justice' which include several notions, institutions, discourses and agencies of justice existing simultaneously but in a relation of power and subsidiarity.

The conference will be ready to discuss whatever critical thought and approach generate on the broad theme of justice in our minds. The list below suggests issues that may be addressed in the conference. The list is only indicative and doesn't exhaust the possible themes and sub-themes:

- A matter of methods: philosophies and ethnographies of justice
- Forms of justice
- Vision of justice: correcting historical injustices
- Justice and law
- Cultural representations of justice
- Administration of justice
- Rights and justice
- Social justice
- Is feminism a matter of looking at justice in a different way
- The blindness in perceiving injustices.

After the conference (24-25 September 2007) there will be a 2 day workshop with philosopher Etienne Balibar.

For more information on the conference contact mcrgr@mcrgr.ac.in or see www.mcrgr.ac.in

**Media and Imperialism:
Press, Photography, Film, Radio and Television in the Era of Modern Imperialism**

IAMHIST XXII conference

Amsterdam, 18-21 July 2007

Organised by the University of Amsterdam, dept. Media Studies in close cooperation with the International Association for Media and History and Utrecht University

We are entering a whole new era where the circulation of images is concerned. Large-scale digitisation of archives and collections has revolutionised existing practices of preservation, retrieval and distribution. We therefore signal an urgent need to rethink the relationship between media and modern imperialism, particularly in light of the complex process of globalisation. These developments invoke critical discussions between various disciplines, such as media studies, ethnology and history.

The conference will focus on the politics of representation and media practices, from the emergence of mass media and

modern imperialism in the mid-nineteenth century, to the successive episodes of decolonisation, as well as on more current issues surrounding heritage and ownership of media collections.

Visit the conference website:

www.media-and-imperialism.com
info@media-and-imperialism.com
IAMHIST XXII: Media and Imperialism
University of Amsterdam
Department of Media Studies

Participants from third world countries are especially encouraged. Those in need of funding, contact the conference office at info@media-and-imperialism.com

Culture and the Configuring of Security

**Nordic NIAS Council conference
6-9 November 2007, H  r, Sweden
Call for papers.
Deadline abstracts 2 July 2007
Deadline papers 22 October 2007**

Security is currently one of the most resonant concepts on the global political agenda. The mission of this conference is to bridge gaps between macro- and micro-perspectives and bring culture to the fore in debates concerning security. The objective is to break new theoretical ground by exploring a plurality of discourses and practices of security, and discussing ways of theorizing their embeddedness in social and cultural matrices.

A primary concern of the conference is the issue of power, which in the Asian context has to do with far more than political

authority alone. The way in which power is harnessed to the maintenance of social and moral order in different Asian environments may reveal much about how security is conceived of and practiced according to cultural schemes. These schemes may make the transposition of ideas about national boundaries, human rights agendas, peace-building initiatives, and development programmes that arise from other cultural settings problematic. Understanding how the power is constituted through socio-cultural process requires also paying attention to issues such as gender, trust and social networks. Indigenous conceptualisations of power and order may shape 'security' in particular, dynamic ways and they should, we propose, be brought to bear on the security debate.

This two and a half day conference will present keynote addresses focusing on the macro- and micro-level and invites speakers to engage contemporary theory from several fields in an investigation of empirical data from Asia and, conversely, to bring insights from Asian contexts to bear upon theories of security.

We welcome papers from senior researchers as well as doctoral students and others with an interest in the conference topic. Deadline for abstract 2 July 2007. For information of academic content contact Alexandra Kent, NIAS alix.kent@swipnet.se. For practical matters contact Nina Brand, Centre for East and South Asian Studies, Lund University. Nina.brand@ace.lu.se. For further information www.asiansecurity.niasconferences.dk

Treating diseases and epidemics in Southeast Asia through the ages

**HOMSEA/APRU conference: 9-10 January 2008, Penang, Malaysia
Call for papers.
Deadline for abstracts 1 May 2007
Deadline for papers 15 November 2007**

The Second International Conference in the History of Medicine in Southeast Asia with the theme 'Treating diseases and epidemics in Southeast Asia over the centuries' intends to explore how the inhabitants of Southeast Asia faced the ravages of diseases and epidemics through the ages. Adopting a liberal time frame (pre-historic to modern times), participants are encouraged to trace the development of medical and religious responses to diseases and the devastation of epidemics.

Deadline for Abstracts: 1 May 2007.

Deadline for Working Papers: 15 November 2007

For further Information, contact the Conference Secretariat.

The Second International Conference HOMSEA, Asia-Pacific Research Unit (APRU), School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, shakila@usm.my. www.usm.my/APRU/index.html