

IIAS research projects

IIAS research is carried out within a number of thematic clusters in phase with contemporary Asian currents – all built around the notion of social agency. The aim of this approach is to cultivate synergies and coherence between people and projects and to generate more interaction with Asian societies. IIAS also welcomes research for the open cluster, so as not to exclude potentially significant and interesting topics.

Asian Cities

WITH A SPECIAL EYE on contemporary developments, the Asian Cities cluster aims to explore the longstanding Asian urban “tradition”, by exploring the origins of urbanism and urban culture in different parts of Asia and linking the various elements of city cultures and societies, from ancient to modern (colonial and post-colonial) times. Through an international knowledge-network of experts, cities and research institutes it seeks to encourage social scientists and scholars in the humanities to interact with contemporary actors including artists, activists, planners and architects, educators, and policy makers. By bringing together science and practice, IIAS aims to create a platform for scholars and urban practitioners focusing on Asian cities ‘in context’ and beyond traditional western norms of knowledge.

Global Asia

THE GLOBAL ASIA CLUSTER addresses contemporary issues related to transnational interactions within the Asian region as well as Asia’s projection into the world, through the movement of goods, people, ideas, knowledge, ideologies and so forth. Past and present trends are addressed. The cluster aims to expand the understanding of the process of globalisation by considering the various ways Asian and other world regions are interconnected within a long-term historical framework. Acknowledging the central role of Asia as an agent of global transformations, it challenges western perspectives that underlie much of the current literature on the subject and explores new forms of non-hegemonic intellectual interactions in the form of ‘south-south-north’ and ‘east-west’ dialogue models. In principle, any research dealing with Asian global interactions is of interest. By multi-polarizing the field of Asian studies, an enriched comparative understanding of globalization processes and the role of Asia in both time and space will be possible.

Asian Heritages

THE ASIAN HERITAGES CLUSTER explores the notion of heritage as it has evolved from a European-originated concept associated with architecture and monumental archaeology to incorporate a broader diversity of cultural forms and values. This includes the contested distinctions of “tangible” and “intangible” heritages, and the importance of cultural heritage in defining one’s own identity or identities vis-à-vis those of others. The cluster addresses the variety of definitions associated with heritage and their implications for social agency. It aims to engage with a broad range of concepts including the issues of “authenticity,” “national heritage,” and “shared heritage”, and, more generally, issues pertaining to the political economy of heritage. It will also critically address the dangers involved in the commodification of perceived endangered local cultures/heritages, including languages, religious practices, crafts and art forms, as well as material vernacular heritage.

PROJECTS AND NETWORKS

The Postcolonial Global City

This research examines the postcolonial cities of South, East and South-East Asia, and how some of them have made the successful segue from nodes in formerly colonial networks to global cities in their own right. Intended as an interdisciplinary research endeavour, the Postcolonial Global City has, thanks to events such as its seminars and lectures, brought together not just architects and urbanists, but also people from other disciplines, such as geographers, sociologists and political scientists, as well as historians, linguists and anyone else involved in the field of Asian studies. A key factor in the research is architectural typology. Architecture is examined to see how it can create identity and ethos and how in the post-colonial era these building typologies have been superseded by the office building, the skyscraper and the shopping centre, all of which are rapidly altering the older urban fabric of the city. The research programme organises a seminar every spring. The 2013 seminar Asian Cities: Colonial to Global fits into the Postcolonial Global City’s wider research which focuses on city design and city governance, and its investigations into institutions of governance, rule of law, and the role of language, as well as issues of environmentalism and sustainability.

Coordinator: Greg Bracken (gregory@cortlever.com)

Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA)

Consisting of over 100 researchers from 13 institutes in Europe, China, India and the United States, the Urban Knowledge Network Asia (UKNA) represents the largest academic international network on Asian cities. UKNA’s objective is to nurture contextualised and policy-relevant knowledge on Asian cities. This will be achieved via research staff exchanges and targeted case study based research, focusing on three key areas: heritage, housing and the environment. The programme is funded by a grant awarded by the EU, and runs from April 2012 until April 2016. IIAS is the coordinating partner institute in the network and administrator of the programme.

Partners are:

Ambedkar University; Beijing University of Technology’s College of Architecture and Urban Planning; CEPT University; China Academy of Urban Planning and Design; TU Delft Faculty of Architecture; Ecole Nationale Supérieure d’Architecture Paris-Belleville; Hong Kong University’s Architecture Department; Indian Institute for Human Settlements; International Institute for Asian Studies; Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences’ Centre for Urban and Regional Studies; Tianjin University’s School of Architecture; University College London’s Development Planning Unit; University of Macau’s Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities; University of Southern California’s Sol Price School of Public Policy.

Strategic partners are: Asia Research Institute (ARI) of the National University of Singapore and the Graduate Institute of Building and Planning (NTUBP) of National Taiwan University.

Coordinators: Paul Rabé (p.e.rabe@iias.nl)

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PROJECTS AND NETWORKS

Asian Borderlands Research Network

The Asian Borderlands Research Network focuses particularly on the border regions between South Asia, Central/East and Southeast Asia. A conference is organised every two years in one of these border regions, in co-operation with a local partner. The concerns of the Asian Borderlands Research Network are varied, ranging from migratory movements, transformations in cultural, linguistic and religious practices, to ethnic mobilization and conflict, marginalisation, and environmental concerns.

www.asianborderlands.net

Energy Programme Asia – EPA

The EPA-research programme is designed to study the effects of global geopolitics of energy security on the one hand, and policy to increase energy efficiency and estimating the prospects for the exploitation of renewable energy resources on the other. The New Joint Research Project is called *The Transnationalization of China’s Oil Industry: company strategies, embedded projects, and relations with institutions and stakeholders in resource-rich countries (2013-2017)*. Involving various Chinese and Dutch research institutes, this new joint comparative research project of the Energy Programme Asia will analyse China’s increasing involvement with governments, local institutions and local stakeholders in the energy sectors of a number of resource-rich countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, notably Sudan, Ghana, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Venezuela, and Brazil. It seeks to determine patterns of interaction between national institutions and Chinese companies, their relationships to foreign investment projects, and the extent to which they are embedded in the local economies.

A core team of principal authors will present individual studies on various aspects and different countries. The resulting studies will be published in refereed journals such as *Energy Policy*, *Social Aspects of Energy* [Elsevier], *China Information*, and a book volume. This project is sponsored by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Social Sciences (KNAW), the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and IIAS.

Coordinators: M. Amineh, Programme Director EPA-IIAS (m.p.amineh@uva.nl or m.p.amineh@iias.nl), Y. Guang, Programme Director EPA-IWAAS/CASS

www.iias.nl/research/energy-programme-asia-epa

IIAS Centre for Regulation and Governance

The IIAS Centre for Regulation and Governance in Asia, is engaged in innovative and comparative research on theories and practices – focusing on emerging markets of Asia. Its multidisciplinary research undertakings combine approaches from political economy, law, public administration, criminology, and sociology in the comparative analysis of regulatory issues in Asia and in developing theories of governance pertinent to Asian realities. Currently the Centre facilitates projects on State Licensing, Market Closure, and Rent Seeking; Regulation of Intra-governmental Conflict; Social Costs, Externalities and Innovation; Regulatory Governance under Institutional Void; and Governance in Areas of Contested Territoriality and Sovereignty.

Coordinator: Tak-Wing Ngo (t.w.ngo@hum.leidenuniv.nl)

Jatropha Research & Knowledge Network (JARAK)

IIAS has become partner in a new network called JARAK, the Jatropha Research and Knowledge network on claims and facts concerning socially sustainable jatropha production in Indonesia. Jatropha is a crop that seems very promising: it can be used as a clean non-fossil diesel fuel and it can provide new income sources in marginal areas that will grow the crop. **Coordinator: Dr. Jacqueline Vel (j.a.c.vel@law.leidenuniv.nl)**

Senshi Soshō

This project, funded and coordinated by the Philippus Corts Foundation, aims to translate a maximum of 6 official Japanese publications of the series known as ‘Senshi Soshō’ into the English language. From 1966 until 1980, the Ministry of Defense in Tokyo published a series of 102 numbered volumes on the war in Asia and in the Pacific. Around 1985 a few additional unnumbered volumes were published. This project focuses specifically on the 6 volumes of these two series which are relevant to the study of the Japanese attack on and the subsequent occupation of the former Dutch East-Indies in the period of 1941-1945. **Coordinator: Jan Bongenaar (ias@iias.nl)**

PROJECTS AND NETWORKS

Translating (Japanese) Contemporary Art

Takako Kondo focuses on (re)presentation of ‘Japanese contemporary art’ in art critical and theoretical discourses from the late 1980s in the realms of English and Japanese languages, including artists’ own critical writings. Her research is a subject of (cultural) translation rather than art historical study and she intends to explore the possibility of multiple and subversive reading of ‘Japanese contemporary art’ in order to establish various models for transculturality in contemporary art.

Coordinator: Takako Kondo (t.kondo@hum.leidenuniv.nl)



Reclining Buddha, Dambulla Cave Temple, Sri Lanka.

ABIA South and Southeast Asian Art and Archaeology Index

The ABIA project is a global network of scholars co-operating on a bibliographic database of publications covering South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology. Partners are the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, India, and the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. The database is freely accessible at www.abia.net. Extracts are available as a series of bibliographies, published by Brill. In December 2012 IIAS and Brill Publishers agreed that Brill will take on the ABIA Netherlands office as an in-house digital bibliographic project, starting from 15 March 2013. The first year will be a pilot year for anchoring the ABIA work in Leiden in a new setting. This phase will continue to receive co-funding from IIAS and the J. Gonda Foundation.

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Open Cluster

PROJECTS AND NETWORKS

Ageing in Asia and Europe

During the 21st century it is projected that there will be more than one billion people aged 60 and over, with this figure climbing to nearly two billion by 2050, three-quarters of whom will live in the developing world. Ageing in Asia is attributable to the marked decline in fertility shown over the last 40 years and the steady increase in life-expectancy. In Western Europe, ageing populations developed at a slower pace and could initially be incorporated into welfare policy provisions. Currently governments are seeking ways to trim and reduce government financed social welfare and healthcare, including pensions systems, unleashing substantial public debate and insecurity. Many Asian governments are facing comparable challenges and dilemmas, involving both the state and the family, but are confronted with a much shorter time-span. Research network involved: Réseau de Recherche Internationale sur l’Age, la Citoyenneté et l’Intégration Socio-économique (REIACTIS) Sponsored by: IIAS. **Coordinator: Carla Risseeuw (c.risseeuw@iias.nl)**