

Contents #34

Front Pages

- 1, 6-7 **The Tyranny of Taste and Cultural Citizenship** / Wang Yiyun
- 3 **Letters to the Editor**
- 3 **Theme Editorial** / Kurt Radtke & Koen de Ceuster

Opinion

- 4-5 **I Write with my Body** / Yue Tao
- 4-5 **Collapse of the Global Conversation** / Subroto Roy

Theme – East Asian Geopolitics Revisited

- 8 **The Japan that can Say Yes** / Togo Kazuhiko
- 9 **South Korea Speaks for Itself** / Koen de Ceuster
- 10 **State Patriotism Versus Popular Nationalism in the People's Republic of China** / Phil Deans
- 11 **Taiwan's Democratic Movement and the Push for Independence** / Chang Mau Kuei

Research and Reports

- 12 **Japan's Javanese Connection** / Ann Kumar
- 13 **The Dutch East India Company in Burma, 1634-1680** / Wil O. Dijk
- 14 **Opium and the Good Fathers** / Harry Knipschild
- 15 **Assessing Khazaria** / Paul Meerts
- 16 **Legal Systems and Political Regimes in Post-socialist Central Asia** / Irina Morozova
- 17 **Legal Reform in Central Asia: A Tale of Two Associations** / Delaine Swenson
- 18 **Customary Law under Socialism: the Uyghur in Xinjiang** / Ildiko Bellér-Hann
- 19 **Local Associations and Social Services in the Rural Philippines 1965-1964** / Greg Bankoff
- 20 **Life Histories, Identity and Crises of Authority in Southeast Asia** / Karl A. Hack
- 21 **Indonesia 1939-1942: Prelude to Japanese Occupation** / Sato Shigeru
- 22 **Nurcholish Madjid and Paramadina** / Andi Faisal Bakti
- 23 **Elections and Rural Politics in Indonesia: the Governor General of Banten Province** / Okamoto Masaaki
- 24 **Historical Consciousness and the Future of Modern China and Japan: Conservatism, Revisionism and National Identity** / Axel Schneider
- 25 **Tibetan Treasures in Leiden** / Kalsang Norbu Gurung and Tharphen Lingtsang
- 26 **Plants and Psychoactive Substances in Health and Culture** / Jan Houben
- 27 **Maritime Asian History** / Fujita Kayoko and Yamauchi Shinji

Publications

- 28 **Books Received**
- 29 **Babel or Behemoth: Language Trends in Asia** / Manfred A. Sellner
- 29 **Chinram: The Evolution of a Nation** / Donald M. Seekins
- 30 **The History of Tibet** / Vladimir Uspensky
- 31 **The Bogle Mission: Travels through Bhutan and Tibet 1774-1777** / James Cooper
- 32 **Shamans in Asia** / Amit Ranjan Basu
- 33 **China's Minorities on the Move** / Elena Barabantseva
- 33 **Truth, History and Politics in Mongolia** / Irina Morozova
- 34 **A Difficult Friendship: Letters of Edward Thompson and Rabindranath Tagore 1913-1940** / Victor A. Bijlert

Arts

- 35 **Far and Away: Three Authors from Yunnan** / Zhang Xiaohong
- 35 **How Has a Butterfly Become a Sample: Conversations with Hai Nan** / Zhang Xiaohong
- 36-37 **Arts Agenda** / Carol Brash

IIAS / ASEF / Alliance

- 38 **Interweaving Medical Traditions: Europe and Asia, 1600-2000** / Sanjoy Bhattacharya
- 39 **Asia-Europe Workshop Series 2004/2005**
- 40 **IIAS Fellows**
- 41 **IIAS Research Programmes**

Announcements / Agenda

- 42-43 **Projects and Events**
- 43-44 **Conferences and Workshops**
- 45 **Call for Papers**
- 46-47 **International Conference Agenda** / Michele D'Agata

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Friends of ICAS Unite!

Director's note

As Secretary General of the *International Convention of Asia Scholars* (ICAS) and an Asia scholar who places great value on international cooperation in research and education, it is my pleasure to announce the fourth meeting of ICAS in Shanghai, 20-24 August 2005. On behalf of ICAS I would like to congratulate the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS) for hosting ICAS 4. Following the success of ICAS 3 in Singapore, ICAS 4 is expected to draw more than 2,000 participants.

Although a large part of our readership is no doubt aware of ICAS, I would like to recapitulate its main features and point out some new developments. ICAS was born out of dialogue between the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) on broadening the scope of Asian Studies. ICAS' mandate is to transcend boundaries between the disciplines, the nations studied, and the geographic origins of the Asianists involved.

Once ICAS was announced, enthusiastic replies poured in from all corners of the world. The first ICAS was held in 1998 in Leiden, the Netherlands, which brought together 1,000 participants from all continents. ICAS 2 was organized by the Freie Universität Berlin in 2001; ICAS 3 by the National University of Singapore. ICAS 3 attracted more than 1,000 scholars from 54 countries, with some 940 papers presented in 250 sessions on a great range of topics. ICAS 3 also provided a platform for scholars to explore ways of coordinating Asia research in Asia.

ICAS 4 in Shanghai will feature for the first time the awarding of the Lifetime Asian Studies Award, and ICAS

Book Prizes for best studies in (1) the social sciences; (2) the humanities; and (3) ICAS best PhD dissertation in Asian Studies. (Please see announcements, p.42)

By giving Asian Studies a global focus, we hope to increase international cooperation among scholars and lessen the often-parochial attitude among Asianists over the past century. You can support our endeavour by becoming a friend of ICAS (please see our ICAS 4 brochure) which will enable us to strengthen our platform upon which Asia scholars from all corners of the world can study problems of interest to all.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the insert in this Newsletter: *ASEM News*. It is a collection of short contributions addressing the impact of the Asia-Europe Meeting on the relations between these continents. Much remains to be done, but a start has been made. <

Wim Stokhof
Director, IIAS



to our readers

The editors invite readers of the *IIAS Newsletter* to contribute – short research essays, reviews of books, journals and websites, opinion, artwork and photography, fiction, poetry, biography, letters to the editor and announcements.

The *IIAS Newsletter* reaches 22,000 individuals and institutions in eighty countries; our readers' interests and scientific backgrounds are many. Our preference is for articles on topical issues with an argumentative edge, reviews that engage authors' core ideas, and reports that inform lay audiences on developments within disciplines.

All authors are encouraged to submit illustrations (photos/maps/prints) with their articles. For successful black and white reproduction, digital images must have high resolution and sharp contrast.

We always welcome strong opinion pieces to stir up the placid canals. If you are appalled (or impressed) by anything on the *Newsletter's* pages, we encourage all to argue back in print, with a letter to us – the editors.

If you have any questions, or would like to pitch us your proposal, please do not hesitate to contact us, David Hymans or John O'Sullivan, at iiasnews@let.leidenuniv.nl

Finally, the Newsletter is searching for talented freelancers – English editors with backgrounds in the humanities or social sciences, graphics buffs who know where to find images, scholars interested in reviewing articles. We are also in immediate need of an editor for our Arts section, and guest editors for future themes. We would love to hear from you.

Enjoy reading!
David Hymans @ John O'Sullivan, Amsterdam, 22 June 2004

Editorial