

ICAS 8 Highlights



The 8th International Convention of Asia Scholars took place in Macau. Hosted by the University of Macau, it was held from 24-27 June 2013 on the vast grounds of the illustrious Venetian Macao-Resort-Hotel. With over 1200 participating scholars originating from 56 countries, the programme included nearly 300 panels, a book and academic exhibition, film-screenings, cultural performances and excursions, and the 2013 ICAS Book Prize award ceremony.

Sonja Zweegers

THIS CONVENTION was co-organised by the University of Macau, the Macao Foundation and the International Institute for Asian Studies in Leiden. Launched in 1997 under the auspices of the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden, ICAS is the largest international gathering of Asia scholars to engage in global dialogues on Asia that transcend boundaries between academic disciplines and geographic areas. ICAS takes place every two years and is organised by IIAS in partnership with a local host (university, organisation, city).

For those who could not attend, we have put together some highlights and impressions from the event. This information and more is available at www.icassecretariat.org, where you will also find links to the four-page daily 'ICAS 8 Newsletter', which was produced in cooperation with local newspaper *The Macau Daily Times*. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the daily newsletters by giving interviews, submitting panel summaries, compiling short articles, and posing for photographs!

Opening

The convention was officially opened on Monday 24 June with a word of welcome from the prime organisers Prof. Tak-Wing Ngo (host organiser, University of Macau and IIAS Professor) and Dr Paul van der Velde (ICAS Secretary at IIAS):

– By hosting ICAS 8, Macao is contributing to building new knowledge about Asia and the global order. Asia is developing its own social theories, methodologies, and concepts applicable not just to Asia, but also to other parts of the world. Thus a more nuanced perception of the world will come into being, which will usher in a more pluralistic and inclusive understanding of humanity.

In the evening the participants of ICAS 8 were able to enjoy a tremendous welcome ceremony involving, among other highlights, a Chinese lion dance - and were addressed by a number of the organisers. Professor Tak Wing Ngo captured the spirit of the convention with his words "Through ICAS we are reviving the role of Macau as a centre for academic, cultural and intellectual exchange". Wim Stokhof co-founder and former Secretary General of ICAS added, "Back in 1997, what we and IIAS wanted [...] in short, was a space where Asian scholars of the world could study problems of interest to all".

Panels

A large number of panels took place throughout each of the four days of the convention. In total there were nearly 300 panels during ICAS 8. The full schedules can be found on the ICAS 8 website: www.icas8.com. IIAS was particularly proud to be able to sponsor 16 panels, this in honour of the institute's 20-year anniversary this year. Our next issue of *The Newsletter* (#66, Dec 2013) will be an anniversary issue, in which you will be able to read more about the IIAS-sponsored panels at ICAS 8, in addition to a variety of other IIAS activities and achievements.

Film screenings

Monday saw the start of the Film Expo, brought to the convention by Jason Finkelman, and sponsored by the Asian Educational Media Services (AEMS), an outreach programme of the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies at the University of Illinois (www.aems.illinois.edu). In total, 23 films were featured during the Expo, made by scholars and independent filmmakers addressing a wide range of topics concerning contemporary Asia. The full list can be found on the ICAS and AEMS websites.

Cultural exhibition

The first day of the convention also witnessed the opening of the cultural exhibition: "Islam, Trade, and Politics across the Indian Ocean". This photographic display in the main exhibition hall was organised, produced and sponsored by the British Academy, the Association of South-East Asian Studies in the United Kingdom (ASEASUK), the British Institute at Ankara (BIAA), and The British Library. Its representative at ICAS 8 was professor Michael Hitchcock, who not only opened the exhibition but engaged with visitors throughout the day to guide them through the display. You can read an interview with Michael Hitchcock in the ICAS 8 Newsletter 'Day 1': www.icassecretariat.org. More information about the research project on which the exhibition is based can be found at www.ottomansoutheastasia.org.

Keynote address and gala dinner

After another full day of panels on Tuesday 25 June, professor Arif Dirlik delivered his keynote address: 'Asia is rising – but where is it going?' He concluded his speech with some advice: "If Asia is to rise in a way that benefits all, and provide a model for the world, Asians will have to stop listening to self-deceptive hype about 'the rise' and confront problems that are not just

legacies of the past, but products of development under the force of global capital." (see ICAS 8 Newsletter 'Day 2'). After the keynote speech, all participants were invited to the ICAS 8 gala dinner, which was a sumptuous occasion at which people could not only mingle and relax, but also sample the best of Macao's cuisine.

Macau excursion

The historic centre of Macao has been designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, in recognition of its aesthetic, cultural, architectural and technological encounters between East and West. The architectural ensemble that defines the historic urban spaces of Macao offers a remarkable testimony to the cultural exchanges between the ancient Chinese port and the Portuguese city. On three days during ICAS 8 the host organisers arranged free excursions for the participants, into the old historic centre of the city. It was a welcome break for many, with one participant commenting: "We witnessed some unique examples of cultural hybridity, a wonderful mix of Chinese, Portuguese and other elements [...] the whole tour gave us enough to ponder when we re-entered the dream world of the Venetian hotel."

ICAS Book Prize award ceremony

One of the absolute highlights of ICAS 8 was the IBP award ceremony on the evening of 25 June, acknowledging outstanding work produced by Asia scholars in the last 2 years. Both books and dissertations were submitted, all vying for one of the 5 main awards, or one of the many special Reading Committee Accolades. See the opposite page for an overview of all the winners. The long and short lists can be found online: www.icassecretariat.org

Matteo Ricci

On the evening of Wednesday 26 June the participants of ICAS 8 were rewarded with a very special musical performance in The Venetian Theatre. The show "Matteo Ricci: His Map and Music", which first debuted in Beijing in 2010, tells the story of the Jesuit priest Matteo Ricci missionary's journey to the Middle Kingdom, his life and his interactions with Chinese society in the late Ming dynasty (1368-1644). An enthralling mix of Italian Baroque and traditional Chinese melodies, the concert combines music and dramatic readings, visually framed by a projected digitized version of the world map that Ricci created. Performed by the group ¡Sacabuche! from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, the program is directed by Linda Pearse and Ann Waltner, and features Qin Fang as a speaker. Read more about the group here: <http://sacabuche.com>.

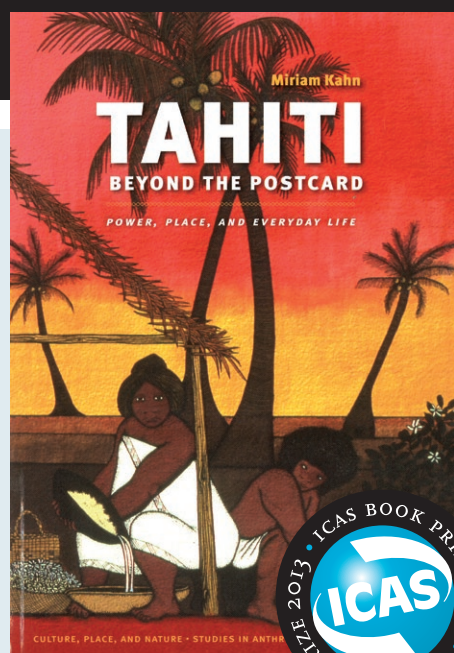
ICAS 9

After an inspiring convention in Macao, we start looking forward to ICAS 9, which will take place in Adelaide, Australia, from 5-9 July 2015. The Australian local hosts and organisers were present in Macao; they were able to introduce themselves to the participants and observe the procedures, preparing themselves for the task! Visit www.icas9.com for more information and to start planning your 2015 trip 'down under'.

Above left:
Group excursion
into the city.

Above right:
Philippe Paycam,
Director IIAS, at
opening ceremony.

Top right below:
Just a few of the very
helpful and friendly
student assistants
and volunteers of the
local on-site team.



IBP 2013 Winner Social Sciences

Miriam Kahn
Tahiti. Beyond the Postcard. Power, Place, and Everyday Life
 Seattle/London: University of Washington Press, 2011

This beautifully written book sensitively highlights the dark reality behind the picture-perfect postcard image the world holds of Tahiti. The author poignantly highlights the pillaging of the island through France's 30-year nuclear testing programs, which destroyed not just the environment of Mururoa, but also people and their sense of self in the land of their ancestors. Kahn weaves together Tahitians', as well as social scientists', ideas of space and place to provide a deeply moving reflection of the ills of colonialism and its current avatars of tourism, environmental degradation and political machinations. One of the finest books in anthropology to have been published in the last decade.

ICAS Book Prize 2013

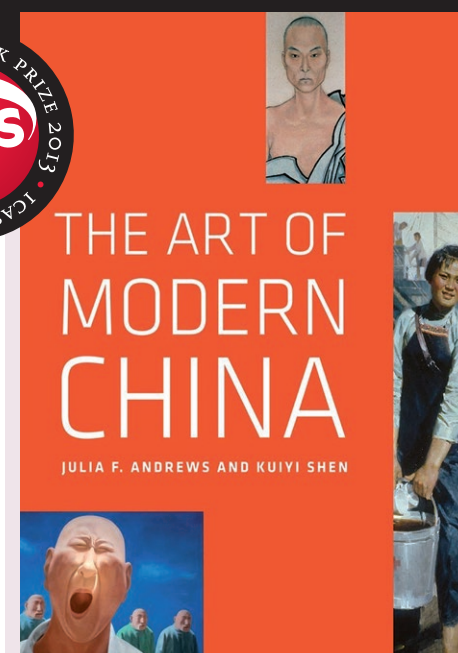
We celebrated the fifth edition of the ICAS Book Prize on 25 June 2013, during ICAS 8. In the past 10 years the ICAS Book Prize has grown from an experiment, with 50 books and 5 dissertations, to one of the most prestigious book prizes in the field of Asian studies, with 250 publications from 60 publishers worldwide and 100 dissertations.

The main sponsors of the Fifth ICAS Book Prize were The Kingdom of the Netherlands (represented by the Consulate General in Hong Kong and Macao), ICAS' mother institution and co-host the International Institute for Asian Studies, Amsterdam University Press and the University of Macau.

The members of the Reading Committees were Birgit Abels (Director, Department of Musicology at the University of Gottingen), Alex McKay (Independent scholar), Annu Jalais (Assistant Professor faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore), Sebastian Bersick (Associate Professor, School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University), Imran bin Tajudeen (Faculty member Architecture National University of Singapore) and Michiel Baas (Fellow at Asia Research Institute, Singapore).



Top left: Julia Andrews receiving her award, also on behalf of Kuiyi Shen, from Mr. Antonio Ramirez, Senior Vice-President of Human Resources, Sands China Ltd. Top right: Birgit Tremml receiving her award from Prof. Fan Xitao, Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Macau. Bottom left: Shumei Huang receiving the award on behalf of Miriam Kahn, from Mr. Hidde Baas, Deputy Consul General at the Netherlands Consulate General in Hong Kong and Macao. Bottom right: Two reading committee members, Birgit Abels and Alex McKay.



IBP 2013 Winner Humanities

Julia F. Andrews & Kuiyi Shen
The Art of Modern China
 Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2012

This timely volume describes the progression of Chinese art since the mid-19th century. Analysis is informed, nuanced, jargon-free and thought-provoking. *The Art of Modern China* is extremely well-written, a superb work that achieves that most difficult of tasks: a single volume that will inform newcomers and specialists alike. A delight to read. It can truly be said that if you read only one work on the subject, this should be it.

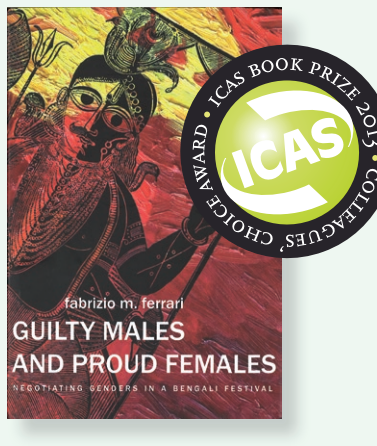
IBP 2013 Winner Best PhD Social Sciences

Roberto Benedicto
Bright Lights, Gay Globality. Mobility, Class, and Gay Life in 21st Century Manila (2010)

This is an exceptionally rich, personal and daring dissertation. It positions itself at the confluence of intra-urban, transnational and virtual flows, producing what the title so aptly captures: a 'bright lights scene'. Where queer studies often succumb to the use of complex, even esoteric, terms to make sense of gender complexities, Benedicto's austere use of terminology always goes hand in hand with a very precise elucidation, making his dissertation much more accessible to a wider audience.

Colleagues' Choice Award Winner

Fabrizio M. Ferrari
Guilty Males and Proud Females: Negotiating Genders in a Bengali Festival
 Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2011



IBP 2013 Winner Best PhD Humanities

Birgit Tremml
When Political Economies Meet: Spain, China and Japan in Manila, 1517-1644 (2012)

This dissertation offers a window into the convergence of Iberian/New Spanish, Fujianese, and Japanese actors in Manila in a crucial and formative time frame. It provides a masterful broad synthesis that is simultaneously detailed yet succinct. Within this, new insights emerge on Iberian and East Asian 'co-colonialism' and how their encounters in Manila subsequently shaped political and cultural identities of these respective actors.

Accolades for Social Sciences

PUBLISHERS ACCOLADE FOR OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION VALUE

Inge Daniels
The Japanese House, Material Culture in the Modern Home
 Oxford/New York: Berg, 2011

MOST ACCESSIBLE AND CAPTIVATING WORK FOR THE NON-SPECIALIST READER ACCOLADE
Duncan McDuie-Ra
Northeast Migrants in Delhi: Race, Refuge and Retail
 Amsterdam University Press, 2012

SPECIALIST PUBLICATION ACCOLADE
Jonardon Ganeri
The Lost Age of Reason
 Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011

TEACHING TOOL ACCOLADE

David Lockwood
The Indian Bourgeoisie. A Political History of the Indian Capitalist Class in the Early 20th Century
 London/New York: I.B. Tauris, 2012

GROUND-BREAKING SUBJECT MATTER ACCOLADE
Robert Marks
China. Its Environment and History
 Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2012

EDITED VOLUME ACCOLADE
James W. Heisig, Thomas Kasulis & John. C. Maraldo (eds.)
Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook
 Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011

Social Sciences PhD Accolades

MOST ACCESSIBLE AND CAPTIVATING ACCOLADE
Jenneke Arens
Women, Land and Power in Bangladesh. Jhagrapur revisited (2011)

SPECIALIST PUBLICATION ACCOLADE
Roman Sieler
Lethal spots - Vital secrets. Varmakkalai, a South Indian healing/martial art (2012)

GROUND-BREAKING SUBJECT MATTER ACCOLADE
Heidi Hoefinger
Negotiating Intimacy: Transactional Sex and Relationships Among Cambodian Professional Girlfriends (2010)

Accolades for Humanities

PUBLISHERS ACCOLADE FOR OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION VALUE

Jiren Feng
Chinese Architecture and Metaphor: Song Culture in the Yong Zao Fashi Building Manual
 Honolulu/Hong Kong: University of Hawaii Press /Hong Kong Press, 2012

MOST ACCESSIBLE AND CAPTIVATING WORK FOR THE NON-SPECIALIST READER ACCOLADE
Karen Laura Thornber
Ecoambiguity: Environmental Crises and East Asian Literatures
 Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012

SPECIALIST PUBLICATION ACCOLADE
Erica Fox Brindley
Music, Cosmology, and the Politics of Harmony in Early China
 NY: SUNY Press, 2012

TEACHING TOOL ACCOLADE

Valerie Hansen
The Silk Road: A New History
 Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012

GROUND-BREAKING SUBJECT MATTER ACCOLADE
Patricia L. Maclachlan
The People's Post Office. The History and Politics of the Japanese Postal System, 1871-2010
 Cambridge/London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2011

EDITED VOLUME ACCOLADE
Jeffrey W. Cody, Nancy S. Steinhardt & Tony Atkin (eds.)
Chinese Architecture and the Beaux-Arts
 Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011

Humanities PhD Accolades

MOST ACCESSIBLE AND CAPTIVATING ACCOLADE
Thomas Barker
A Cultural Economy of the Contemporary Indonesian Film Industry (2011)

SPECIALIST PUBLICATION ACCOLADE
Nahoko Fukushima
'Sharebon' and Courtesans: A Phase of Edo Aesthetics as the dispersal of Ideology (2011)

GROUND-BREAKING SUBJECT MATTER ACCOLADE
Tom Hoogervorst
Southeast Asia in the Ancient Indian Ocean World: Linguistic Archaeological Approaches (2012)

Reading Committee Accolades

2013 witnessed the addition of a new category: **The Reading Committee Accolades**. This gave the jury members the opportunity to single out more books and dissertations, which was deemed necessary due to the high number of excellent submissions.