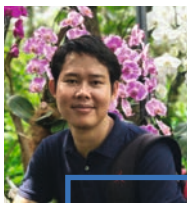


IIAS Fellowship Programme

In the spotlight

The International Institute for Asian Studies annually hosts a large number of visiting researchers (affiliated fellows) who come to Leiden to work on their own individual research project. In addition, IIAS also facilitates the teaching and research by various professorial fellows as part of agreements with Dutch universities, foreign ministries and funding organisations. Meet our fellows at www.iias.asia/fellows



Theara Thun

Bangsāvatār: the evolution of historiographical genres in colonial and post-independence Cambodia

“I have spent almost seven years collecting and studying Khmer texts, especially the chronicle manuscripts (*bangsāvatār*), which were popularly used prior to the 1970s by Cambodian scholars and Buddhist monks to recount their collective past events. These manuscripts, particularly those produced between the second half of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century, represent ideas and perspectives related to cultural and political values, intellectual exchanges, and clashes of knowledge among French and Cambodian scholars during those years.

A monograph based on my PhD dissertation, the project is the first critical study that focuses on the relationship between local texts and figures from the pre-colonial years until the post-independence period. Through uncovering more than ten rare Khmer chronicle

manuscripts drawn from archival collections in Cambodia, Thailand, France, and Japan, it aims to break a new ground by exploring the scholarship produced by local intellectuals that have been under-studied and by presenting the significance of their scholarly engagement within Cambodian and Southeast Asian textual cultures and intellectual history. One of its key findings suggests that the coming of French colonialism and colonial-era historiography had led to the emergence of different schools of thought among local intellectuals, including those who actively engaged in translating French and Thai scholarship into Khmer.

IIAS is an ideal place to work on this monograph because it offers a very important platform for interacting with other research fellows from all over the world as well as researchers and faculty members of Leiden University. This interaction not only allows me to learn new perspectives useful for my project but also connects me with a wider network of scholarly community of Asian studies. The rich collection of sources related to Malaysia and Indonesia in the Asian Library of Leiden University provides a unique opportunity for me to explore scholarship on manuscript cultures in the other parts of Southeast Asia and to draw connections to the case that I explore in Cambodia. Another reason I like IIAS is its location in Leiden, where I enjoy exploring the city's beautiful landscape by jogging around at the weekend and easily travel to Paris and other parts of Europe to conduct archival research and participate in conferences.



Cha-Hsuan Liu

The Absolute Sincerity

“Currently I teach Multicultural Society, Health in Society, and Generations of Youth study at Utrecht University. This year, I am spending part of my time at IIAS as an affiliate fellow on the development of a research project. My previous research investigated the adequacy of healthcare provision for migrant groups and minorities, with a special focus on the Chinese minority in the Netherlands. It contributes to the development of theory and knowledge to mitigate health inequalities between ethnic or social-cultural groups in a multicultural society. The ancient Chinese physician, SUN Simiao (581–682AD), emphasised that a great physician should provide appropriate care to all with no discrimination. This ideology of the Absolute Sincerity has inspired me to further support healthcare professionals gain awareness of the discrepancy between the majority and the vulnerable groups.

Studying the diversity and disparity in healthcare involves multi- and interdisciplinary knowledge, such as modern medicine and healthcare provisions, public health, health psychology, health/medical anthropology, social policies, and cultural sociology. Despite the different types of research conducted, western researchers often tend to cite ‘cultural differences’ as the cause when health services cannot meet the needs of members of a minority. This proposition of ‘culture as excuse’ has motivated me to take a closer look at the subject matter, from three angles: the non-culture-specific factors at play, health beliefs, and the ‘cultural healing’. The concept of ‘cultural healing’ is especially interesting for further research. Supported by IIAS, I am cooperating with a senior researcher at Academia Sinica Taiwan to explore the opportunities of developing an international research group for the study of ‘cultural healing’ within the IIAS cultural heritage theme.

While modern medicine is generally accepted as the main healing method for mental and physical illnesses, many members of our societies still rely on ‘cultural healing practices’ in daily lives. Throughout history, cultures and societies have developed practices and attitudes that support individual wellbeing and social harmony. These ‘informal’ healing practices and attitudes towards health and treatments reflect both individual and collective beliefs on health and wellbeing. They are part of the cultural heritage of a society that shapes the relationship between people, as well as that with ourselves. In this context, a healthy life means not only the absence of illness, but also a balance with the self, society and the environment. Researchers in the health care arena often overlook this dimension, which is especially important within the polyethnic societies or states.

The hours I spend at IIAS – away from the intensity of teaching obligations – help me greatly to work out dissimilar ideas for such research, even though it is currently still in its conception phase. The stimulating IIAS lectures and activities open unexpected windows and doors, helping me to understand the world from different lenses. My resolution for the coming year is to link scholars worldwide and to write articles on the topic of the cultural healing under the inspiration and the support of IIAS fellows and staff.

IIAS Fellowship possibilities and requirements



Apply for an IIAS fellowship

The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden, the Netherlands, invites outstanding researchers to apply for an IIAS fellowship to work on a relevant piece of research in the social sciences and humanities.



Combine your IIAS fellowship with two extra months of research in Paris

When applying for an IIAS Fellowship, you have the option of simultaneously submitting an application for an additional two months of research at the Collège d'études mondiales of the Fondation Maison des sciences de l'homme (CEM-FMSH), in Paris, France, immediately after your stay in Leiden.

Application deadlines: 1 March & 1 October



Apply for an IIAS-ASCL fellowship

The IIAS-ASCL joint fellowship is intended for researchers specialising in Asian-African interactions.

Application deadlines: 15 March & 15 September



Apply for a Gonda fellowship

For promising young Indologists at the post-doctorate level it is possible to apply for funding with the J. Gonda Foundation of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) to spend three to six months doing research at IIAS.

Application deadlines: 1 April & 1 October



Information and application forms:
www.iias.asia/fellowships