

# IIAS Fellowship Programme

In the spotlight

The International Institute for Asian Studies annually hosts a large number of visiting researchers (research 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](http://www.iias.asia/fellows)



Rocco Cestola

When the meaning is not shut down. Language and word in the Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali

Currently, I am an IIAS fellow with a fellowship from the J. Gonda Foundation of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW). The city of Leiden is the ideal place to conduct research because of its quiet yet lively international atmosphere and the access to Leiden University and its remarkable and richly furnished Asian Library. Being a fellow at IIAS not only allows me to fully focus on my research, but also provides a dynamic platform on which to engage and connect with a relevant community of inspiring scholars, both at IIAS and Leiden University. Moreover, being a musician next to a scholar, Leiden and the Netherlands offer plenty of opportunities to come into contact with stimulating artists who perform in a dynamic cultural landscape full of possibilities.

My research project covers the area of Pātañjala Yoga philosophy of language. It carries the following title: 'Sphoṭa and Śabda through Yoga śāstra of Patañjali: The Sphoṭa Theory and the Linguistic-

philosophical Arguments According to Pātañjalayogaśāstra and Relative Commentaries'. I obtained my PhD in Indology from the Sapienza University of Rome, Italy, for which I prepared a critical edition grounded on manuscript sources, the first English annotated translation and a study of the first Pāda of Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa's *Vṛtti on Pātañjalayogaśāstra*.

This present research proposal is committed to the study of the overall role and function of language [śabda], with a specific focus on the sphoṭa theory, namely 'the disclosing of meaning', which describes how meaning is conveyed and comprehended in the context of verbal communication according to the Pātañjalayogaśāstra and relative commentaries. This development will be contextualised both in the domain of Indian philosophy of language (Vyākaraṇa, Mīmāṃsā, Nyāya, Buddhism) and of contemporary theories of semantics, where the Context Principle (only in the context of a sentence does a word have meaning) and the Composition Principle

(the meaning of a sentence is a function of the meaning of the words in which it is composed) will be employed as interpretive schemes.

Methodologically, this research is grounded on philosophy, historical contextualism, and intertextuality. This approach opens a research path that addresses both analytical and abstract thinking, and the historical context, the textual material, and other philological issues, which are discussed insofar as they are functional to a deeper philosophical understanding and are soundly grounded in the texts and their history.

The long-term aim of my research bears on the inclusion of classical and pre-modern South Asian philosophy of language among the larger history of Global Philosophy. The goal then is not only the comparison of one idea with another but the unravelling of new philosophical paradigms, a critical and analytical evaluation of conceptual paradigms in South Asian linguistic and philosophical theories. I am committed to highlighting points of contact but also differences so that the dialogue can be an enriching experience.

## 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

The usual deadlines are 1 March and 1 October of each year. Due to the the uncertainty about the further course of Corona outbreak the application round of 1 October 2020 has been cancelled.



### 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

The usual deadlines are 1 April and 1 October of each year. However, due to the global uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus, no new applications will be processed for the time being. Please see the Gonda website for current information.



Information and application forms:  
[www.iias.asia/fellowships](http://www.iias.asia/fellowships)