

IIAS brings together

The Year of the Dragon is set to be another year rich in activities for IIAS, with the reinforcement of recently launched projects under our three thematic clusters. The last months of 2011 already saw a succession of defining events.

Philippe Peycam

ON 20-21 OCTOBER, IIAS and Nanyang Technology University (NTU), Singapore, organized an experimental roundtable entitled "Science and Nature in Europe and Asia: Scientific Traditions and New Technologies", in which 20 scholars and social practitioners met to discuss scientific knowledge traditions in Europe and Asia with a special focus on science in relation to nature and the environment. The variety of approaches toward issues ranging from food security, natural disasters, to medicine, their implications on the everyday lives of millions, called for a truly intercultural and multidisciplinary exchange. Thematic interactive sessions culminated into the shaping of what will hopefully become a long term collaborative programme. To assist the participants, a "framework document" was developed by PhD researcher Jan van der Ploeg, and coordinated by the two conveners, Prof. Gerard Persoon (Leiden University) and Prof. Lui Hong (NTU) (page 16).

Similarly, on 21-22 November, IIAS and the South-South Exchange Programme for Research on the History of Development (SEPHIS) organized what can best be described as a truly audacious feat: to bring together around the same table, scholars from the West Indies, Latin America, Africa, the Middle-East, Europe, central, southern, eastern and southeast Asia, all working on modes of hegemony, past and present, to openly explore the possibility of formulating a common "post-postcolonial" research agenda. Entitled "Postcolonial Dialogue(s): Crossed and Parallel Identities in Former Colonizing and Colonized Societies", the meeting was symbolically held in the old VOC (Dutch East India Company) Board of Directors' room in Amsterdam. The recent revolutions in the Arab world, the rise of the BRIC countries, and the relative decline of Europe and Northern America framed the discussions. The 26 participants succeeded in overcoming differences by laying out an ambitious research platform capable of mobilizing scholars from all ends of the world. Here too, discussions were facilitated by an excellent background report authored by two young Leiden University PhD students, Ariel Lopez and Yedda Palemeq, under the supervision of Dr Michiel Baas from IIAS (and guest editor for this issue's Focus section).

Finally, on 14-15 December, IIAS and its three EUforAsia consortium partners – the Asia-Europe Foundation, the European Policy Centre and the Singapore Institute for International Affairs – in collaboration with the Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, organized what was the final event of our EU-funded programme "EUforAsia". The conference, entitled "Re-engaging Europe with Asia", was held at Clingendael's headquarters in The Hague. The event was planned to take place on the eve of the preparation of the European Commission's "Regional Programming for Asia (2013-2020) Strategy Paper". By exploring topics such as economic integration, regional security, energy, and cooperation in higher education, it aimed to assist the EU in framing its strategy toward Asia. IIAS's contribution was to ensure that a diversity of voices was heard, and especially that social scientists and classical "humanists" were offered a chance to directly engage the often hermetic world of policy makers (page 53).

The inclusive format used for these three interactive events helped us draw new research orientations for a more contextualized, shared, knowledge of Asia, helping "Asianists" of all kinds to claim a sense of ownership over their field. Yet, these efforts can only succeed if they are supported by cohesive networks of individuals and institutions, something IIAS strives to achieve. On that last note, I am pleased to announce that the eighth International Convention of Asian Scholars (ICAS) will take place in Macao, 24-26 June 2013, in partnership with the University of Macau.

Philippe Peycam, Director of IIAS

The International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) is the premier international gathering in the field of Asian Studies. It attracts participants from over 60 countries to engage in global dialogues on Asia that transcend boundaries between academic disciplines and geographic areas.



Macao: The East-West Crossroads 24-27 June 2013

The more than four century long interaction between Western and Chinese traditions in Macao, the first and last European colony in China, has left the city with a unique blend of cultural diversity, modernity, and cosmopolitanism.

Join us at this world heritage site for ICAS 8, which is hosted by the University of Macau.
Venue: The Venetian Hotel

**Call for Panels and Papers:
Deadline 15 July 2012**

**For more
information:**

www.icassecretariat.org

The Newsletter and IIAS

The International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) is a post-doctoral research centre based in the Netherlands. IIAS encourages the multi-disciplinary and comparative study of Asia and promotes national and international cooperation.

The Newsletter is a free quarterly publication by IIAS. As well as being a window into the institute, The Newsletter also links IIAS with the community of Asia scholars and the worldwide public interested in Asia and Asian studies. The Newsletter bridges the gap between specialist knowledge and public discourse, and continues to serve as a forum for scholars to share research, commentary and opinion with colleagues in academia and beyond.

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