



ICAS Book Prize 2023

Martina van den Haak
and Wai Cheung (IIAS/ICAS)

In 2023, we are celebrating the tenth edition of the ICAS Book Prize! Twenty years ago, the Secretariat of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) developed the idea to establish a book prize that brings broader international attention and visibility to academic publications in the field of Asian Studies in a more interdisciplinary context. Entries would be reviewed by a reading committee with diverse backgrounds, working in different fields and focusing on various regions. What better way to introduce such a book prize than through the platform of an Asian scholars convention, namely, ICAS. So, here it began as a small initiative: the ICAS Book Prize (IBP), always being organised alongside ICAS and with the awards ceremony taking place during the Convention. Over the years, the IBP has grown to become one of the largest book prizes of its kind as it expanded to honour publications in various languages. With this multilingual approach, in cooperation with organisers and sponsors worldwide, ICAS is increasingly decentering the landscape of knowledge about and in Asia.

After IBP 2021, we discussed ways to better connect and integrate the Book Prize with the Convention. We came to the conclusion that hosting these two activities alternately might be a more suitable way to connect them. As our Dissertation Committee Chair described it perfectly: “disconnecting, but actually and paradoxically better connecting” the two projects. Prize winners are now notified that they have won before the ICAS proposal submission deadline, giving them the opportunity to present their work during the convention. The two projects will complement each other and together form a more continuous process, giving both activities the individual attention they deserve. The IBP 2023 will be the first edition to be organised and held separately from the ICAS Convention.

The deadlines for the IBP 2023 editions have passed and we are glad to have received a rich number of submissions. With the global pandemic changing our lives and restricting travelling in the past few years, we realised that opportunities to conduct research and do fieldwork have been much more limited. So, we are thankful to see that, despite this, many scholars have still obtained their PhD degrees and published their work. Similar to the previous editions,

a wide variety of titles were nominated. The review committees of all editions are now going through these brilliant titles; we aim to announce the shortlists by summer this year. The winners in all ICAS Book Prize categories will be announced in autumn 2023.

Our Partners

The following institutions in Asia, Latin America, and Europe either organise or sponsor the respective ICAS Book Prize editions. Wan Boo Sow Research Centre for Chinese Culture, Department of Chinese Studies, National University of Singapore (Chinese Edition); Asian Library at Leiden University Libraries and IIAS/ICAS (English Edition); GIS Asie, French Academic Network on Asian Studies (French Edition); CATS, Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies

and Heidelberg University (German Edition); Society for Hong Kong Studies (Hong Kong Article Prize Edition); IDE-JETRO, Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization and IIAS/ICAS (Japanese Edition); SNUAC, Seoul National University Asia Center (Korean Edition); Casa Asia and SEPHIS, The South-South Exchange Program for Research on the History of Development (Portuguese/Spanish Edition).

In this issue of the Newsletter, we gladly introduce some of our organisers and sponsors of the IBP 2023. This issue features the partners of the Chinese, English, German, and Portuguese/Spanish Language Editions and the organiser and sponsor of the Hong Kong Studies Article Prize Edition. The IBP secretariat would also like to thank the other sponsoring and organising institutions, who will be featured in the next edition of the Newsletter.

The Asian Library

Sponsor of the English
Language Edition



**Universiteit
Leiden**

Leiden University Libraries

For several English Language Editions, IIAS/ICAS has had the privilege to work with The Asian Library, which is part of the Leiden University Libraries (Leiden, the Netherlands). We are grateful to have them, once again, as the official sponsor of the IBP 2023 English Language Edition. The Asian collections housed at Leiden University include the largest collection on Indonesia worldwide and some of the foremost collections on South and Southeast Asia, China, Japan, and Korea. Leiden University is a major international knowledge hub about Asia. Scholars and students from all over the world come to Leiden to participate in top research and teaching programmes on Asia. The Asian Library is a central focal point for study, research and encounters between those with a profound interest in Asia and its position in the world.

IDE-JETRO

**GIS
ASIE**
French Academic Network
on Asian Studies

SNUAC
Seoul National University Asia Center
서울대학교 아시아 연구 센터

South-South Exchange
Programme for Research on
the History of Development
SEPHIS

Wan Boo Sow Research Center for Chinese Culture

Sponsor and Organiser of the
Chinese Language Edition



The Wan Boo Sow Research Center for Chinese Culture was founded in 2015 under the Department of Chinese Studies, National University of Singapore. It promotes high-quality academic research by developing the strengths of the seven research groups of the Department of Chinese Studies: Chinese Linguistics, Chinese Religions, Classical Chinese Literature and Thought, Ming-Qing Studies, Print Culture and Popular Culture, Southeast Asian Chinese and Modern China, and Translation and Interpreting. The Center also collaborates with local and foreign institutions in organizing Chinese cultural events. By awarding fellowships to visiting scholars, it seeks to attract renowned specialists to conduct interdisciplinary research in Singapore.

The Wan Boo Sow Research Center for Chinese Culture is the proud sponsor of the ICAS Book Prize 2023 Chinese Language Edition, which consolidates the National University of Singapore's reputation as a leading institution in Sinology and Asian studies. Having been a research fellow at the International Institute for Asian Studies in the past, I [Ed, Ying-Kit Chan] am honored to now serve as the secretary of this edition of the ICAS Book Prize and contribute to the IIAS cause of connecting knowledge and people for a more integrated understanding of Asia. We have received numerous outstanding submissions, which suggests the rising standard of Chinese-language scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences. It is high time that we recognize the groundbreaking monographs written in languages other than English in an academia that remains dominated by Anglophone scholarship. The National University of Singapore's sponsorship of the ICAS Book Prize 2023 Chinese Language Edition is a positive step toward making this a reality.

<https://fass.nus.edu.sg/cs>

Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS)

Sponsor and Organiser of the
German Language Edition



Centre for
Asian and
Transcultural
Studies

Since 2019, the Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies (CATS) at Heidelberg University has unified all departments of Asian studies in Heidelberg and connected them with other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. The Centre is committed to studying Asia in a global context and through interdisciplinary dialogue. Scholars at CATS specialize in a variety of disciplines, such as Anthropology, Geography, History, Cultural Studies, Art History, Literary Studies, Musicology, Religious Studies, Politics, Sociology, and others. CATS comprises the South Asia Institute (SAI), the Centre for East Asian Studies (ZO), the Institute of Anthropology (IfA), as well as the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS).

CATS is situated on Campus Bergheim in Heidelberg's city centre. The German federal government, the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg and Heidelberg University funded its construction, including workspaces, classrooms, and a unique dedicated space for library use on an area of almost 5,000 square metres. Located at the heart of CATS, with four buildings (SAI, GCTS, ZO, and IfA) surrounding it, this research building – designed as a multimedia collaboratory – also serves as a media centre offering central access to the libraries of the South, East, and Southeast Asian studies. In addition, the University of Heidelberg and the participating institutes contributed to the costs for the restoration of the historical buildings and the initial set-up of the offices, classrooms and library of the digital humanities unit (Heidelberg Research Architecture).

Scholars of different disciplines are working together at CATS; more than 25 Asian languages are taught here. The consolidation of the mentioned institutes facilitates a more intensive examination of the history and present state of nature and society in Asia, focusing on the profound interrelations of cultures. CATS thus combines the diverse expertise in research and teaching that already existed in Heidelberg. In addition to expanding the traditional tasks of Asian studies, new questions of Transculturality are also at the heart of CATS.

A new generation of Asia experts, educated at CATS, combines their sound knowledge of particular regions and languages with excellent methodological expertise, enabled by the collaboration planned between regional and methodological disciplines. Precisely this combination will qualify future graduates to thoroughly examine and develop the growing potential of global interrelations.

With these same thoughts, CATS has been working with the ICAS Secretariat to organise and sponsor the ICAS Book Prize German Language Edition for a second time. Many academic publications written in the German Language are of high quality and CATS regards it of importance to draw more attention to and promote these publications.

CATS colleagues were very positive when approached for the IBP German Language Edition in 2016. We are grateful to be able to explore the German-speaking landscape of Asia research this way – it is not only enriching for our team of reviewers but also fruitful to pay attention to those publishing activities and research often not that much attended to. The hope is that the IBP will encourage both authors and publishers to continue the important work of contributing to a diversification of research on Asia and, in doing so, also spread this knowledge among the broader public.

www.cats.uni-heidelberg.de

Society for Hong Kong Studies (SHKS)

Sponsor and Organiser of the Best Article
Prize on Global Hong Kong Studies

The Society for Hong Kong Studies (SHKS) is a scholarly, non-partisan, and non-profit professional association open to all scholars and students interested in Hong Kong Studies. Formed in 2018, the SHKS is an affiliate of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) and has more than 600 members worldwide representing a range of disciplines. The mission of the SHKS is to encourage the development of new theories, concepts, and methods for studying Hong Kong's multifaceted connections to and significance in the world, both contemporary and historical. It provides a unique and global platform for promoting research, teaching, and inter-university collaboration. It seeks to build a multinational and interdisciplinary scholarly community that connects Hong Kong Studies scholars in America, Europe, and the Asia-Pacific.

In 2021, the SHKS organised and sponsored its first academic award, the "ICAS Best Article Prize on Global Hong Kong Studies". It is the newest addition to the ICAS Book Prize (IBP) family. We are pleased that we received close to 100 submissions for the IBP Best Hong Kong Article Prize in its inaugural year and gave recognition to two scholars, Samson Yuen (Assistant Professor, Department of Government and International Studies, Baptist University Hong Kong) and Florence Mok (Nanyang Assistant Professor, Department of History, Nanyang Technological University), for their contribution to Hong Kong Studies. The award is one of the first regular prizes dedicated solely to Hong Kong Studies and will help encourage high-quality scholarship in the field.

The Best Article Prize aims to promote the study of Hong Kong beyond a single geographic space or chronological boundary. While many scholars view area studies as constrained and confined by territory boundaries, this prize welcomes work that goes beyond topical events or parochial phenomena in an effort to encourage dialogue with disciplinary theories and global puzzles as well as to reach a wider academic and general audience. The biennial article prize on Hong Kong Studies is given to authors of outstanding publications in both the Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines. It provides an opportunity to foster a more systematic, institutionalised and targeted effort to enhance the identity and quality of Hong Kong Studies.

An independent Reading Committee composed of senior scholars will help evaluate and award the article prizes. This multidisciplinary and pluralist structure will minimize disciplinary bias, ensure rigorous selection, and increase academic outreach.

Become A Member

We invite you to become a member of the Society for Hong Kong Studies to take advantage of the networking opportunities with established and emerging scholars in various humanities and social sciences disciplines, enjoy access to member-only resources and priority enrolment in the SHKS annual conference and present your works in progress at our workshops.

To register as a member of the SHKS, please complete an online form by visiting our website at www.hkstudies.org/membership
Email: info@hkstudies.org



Casa Asia

Sponsor of the Portuguese/Spanish
Language Edition

The relationship between the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS) and Casa Asia began almost two decades ago, although contact was occasional. Fortunately, since 2021, we have increased our collaboration by participating in ICAS 12, where Casa Asia organised a session on the Pacific and the 500th Anniversary of the First Circumnavigation of the World by Magellan and Elcano. In October 2021, IIAS representatives were present at our Ninth Meeting of Asian Studies, hosted by the Netherlands. Representatives of Asian Studies departments of several Spanish universities discussed the excellent work being done in and from Leiden to "connect knowledge and people" that leads to a greater understanding of the rich and heterogeneous Asian realities.

Similarly, at Casa Asia, our mission is to facilitate the exchange of cultures and projects of common interest between Spain and Asia-Pacific countries to achieve better knowledge and mutual understanding. For this reason, we believe that this new collaboration with the biennial ICAS Book Prize (IBP) – with almost a thousand submissions in nine different language categories last year – can help to further promote academic work on Asia. The Portuguese and Spanish language editions contribute to the global visibility of publications written in Portuguese and

Spanish and help foster a greater interest in the world of Asian studies. With this new collaboration, we also intend to increase our work, and that of ICAS, towards Ibero-America. Interest in Asian Studies is growing in this part of the world, where we are united by historical ties and renewed interests in increasing intellectual exchange, which is so important in these times of transformation.

Finally, at Casa Asia, we are committed to working with countries we are united with through common interests and shared values.

Casa Asia is a public diplomacy body created in 2001, supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union and Cooperation, the Generalitat of Catalonia, and the Barcelona and Madrid City Councils. It is headquartered in Barcelona and has a centre in Madrid. Casa Asia was created with the aim of contributing to better knowledge and the promotion of relations between the societies of Asia, the Pacific, and Spain in the institutional, economic, cultural, and educational fields, in addition to bringing closer and facilitating exchanges in the domains of culture, ideas, and projects of shared interest.

www.casaasia.eu

