

International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS)

In June 1998 the first International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) materialized. The convention, which was organized by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS, the Netherlands) and the Association for Asian Studies (AAS, USA), was brought into existence because European and American scholars felt a need for closer interaction. Although many individual contacts between researchers from both sides of the Atlantic had already been established, an open, loosely organized forum for discussion was still missing. This forum would allow specialists from all disciplines, regions and paradigms to informally meet, exchange ideas, and engage in new plans for joint research activities.

An academic programme committee, consisting of members from vari-

ous European professional organizations for Asian Studies and representatives from the AAS, selected individual papers, and decided on more than one hundred and thirty panels. Almost one thousand Asianists from Asia, Europe, North America, and Australia participated in ICAS 1. Soon after the convention had taken place, plans were developed for the future. In August 2001, ICAS 2 brought together nearly eight hundred Asian Studies scholars at the Freie Universität in Berlin. Asian participation in the many panels and paper presentations had gone up considerably and even surpassed that in ICAS 1.

ICAS 3

Two conventions of Asia scholars had taken place in Europe: it was therefore deemed more than desirable that the

next ICAS would be organized in Asia. The National University of Singapore decided to host ICAS 3 from 19 to 22 August 2003. Again, various international research associations from Asia as well as elsewhere will be involved in further developing this multidisciplinary, interregional platform for Asian Studies.

ICAS Secretariat

During the Berlin meeting it was decided to establish a permanent ICAS Secretariat, which will promote and stimulate ICAS conventions, serve as its archival and information centre, and safeguard the expertise that has been gathered through ICAS. The secretariat will actively pursue making the ICAS clearly visible through its presence at major meetings of Asia scholars and

through its regular reports in the IIAS Newsletter and on the ICAS Secretariat website. The secretariat will also be instrumental in drawing up a regulatory framework for the ICAS activities. The secretariat will be stationed at the IIAS in the Netherlands. For more information please feel free to contact us. <

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