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## An 18<sup>th</sup>-century drama in Prakrit

Melinda Fodor

I was awarded a Gonda Fellowship and worked at the IAS in Leiden from the 1<sup>st</sup> of March to the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2018, to prepare a critical edition of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century classical Indian drama in Prakrit language from Tanjore (present Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu), Ghanaśyāma's *Anandasundarī*, with introduction, translation and indexes, as well as an article about the most interesting features of this play.

This play is interesting for many reasons. It is a classical Indian drama written in early modern India, but its origin goes back as far as Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* (2<sup>nd</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> century). The genre itself, called *saṭṭaka*, is distinguished from other classical genres by its language usage: it is entirely written in Prakrit and not in alternating Sanskrit and Prakrit dialects as is common in classical plays. This unusual language choice was the invention of a remarkable Indian poet and theoretician, Rājaśekhara (9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> century, Kannauj), according to whom the sweet sound of Prakrit makes it the most appropriate language to express love, which is the subject matter of a *saṭṭaka*. His own *saṭṭaka*, the *Karpūramanjari*, became the standard play of the genre. Ghanaśyāma's *Anandasundarī* is the latest representative of this tradition.

While Sanskrit remained a widely used language of the literati until the British colonization, the number of individuals proficient in Prakrit significantly diminished. Therefore, writing a Prakrit drama in early modern India was probably a challenge.

Ghanaśyāma was one of the most outstanding intellectuals of his time, a prolific poet and commentator. He followed the literary tendency of his time, using the so-called 'twisted' (*vakra*) stylistic device, many unusual and rare words, polysemy and puns. His *Anandasundarī* has numerous 'twisted' expressions (*vakrokti*) and dramatic elements such as the 'play within a play', and it is full of specific vocabulary (legendary, botanic and maritime).

Bhaṭṭanātha's (20<sup>th</sup> century) Sanskrit translation (*chāyā*) is the only one that has come down to us. He mentions three previous commentators of this play. This points to the fact that the author and his play may have been renowned. His gloss is one of most interesting among *saṭṭaka* commentaries, citing many grammatical rules, as well as several lexicographers, poets and commentators.

Five manuscripts have been discovered so far: a complete Prakrit text and *chāyā* in the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in Pune, a slightly incomplete Prakrit text and a very fragmentary *chāyā* in the Maharaja Sarasvati Mahal Library in Thanjavur, and a Prakrit palm-leaf manuscript in the British Library in London. Upadhye's edition (1955, Banaras: Motilal Banarsidass), which has been the only extant edition so far, follows the Pune manuscript. Unfortunately, the manuscript from London has been mislaid in the library and is no longer traceable. The new critical edition I prepared at the IAS is based on the Thanjavur manuscript, which is very accurate and linguistically and stylistically more interesting than the Pune manuscript.

The academic and scientific environment at the IAS in Leiden, the possibility to collaborate with researchers and professors at Leiden University, and the abundant secondary literature in various fields available at the University Library, helped me considerably to finish my project in excellent quality and due time.



Overzicht van het kloostercomplex Ratnagiri

## Reisverslag

### Het boeddhistische kloostercomplex Ratnagiri, Odisha

Marije Plomp

De Archaeological Survey of India heeft vanaf eind 19<sup>de</sup> eeuw een groot aantal publicaties uitgegeven. Deze titels bevinden zich ook in de Kern Collectie. Eén ervan is het gedetailleerde verslag van de opgravingen bij het boeddhistische kloostercomplex Ratnagiri in Odisha van Debala Mitra\*. Met haar boek als reisgids bracht ik in november 2018 een bezoek aan deze bijzondere historische plek die buiten de gebaande paden van het toerisme ligt.

Ratnagiri ligt tachtig kilometer ten noordoosten van de huidige stad Bhubaneswar, de hoofdstad van de staat Odisha (voorheen Orissa). In het vlakke laagland grenzend aan de Golf van Bengalen verheffen zich enkele heuvels. Een reeks opgravingen tussen 1958 en 1961 waarbij de toplaag van een van deze heuvels werd weggehaald legde een kloostercomplex bloot dat eeuwenlang aan het zicht onttrokken was geweest: twee kloosters, een grote hoofdstoepa, enkele kleinere tempels met godenbeelden en honderden votiefstoepa's.

De bouw van de *mahāvihāra* is waarschijnlijk gestart tijdens de boeddhistische Bhaumakara dynastie (AD 736–931). Het klooster werd uitgebreid in de tiende of elfde eeuw en vormde gedurende een paar eeuwen een belangrijk woon-, studie- en ontmoetingscentrum voor monniken en pelgrims. Vanaf de 15<sup>de</sup> eeuw verloor het boeddhisme in Odisha aanhang en raakten de gebouwen in Ratnagiri langzaam verlaten.



Votiefstoepa's van het kloostercomplex

gebouwen. Fragmenten steken boven de grasmat uit. Het grote klooster is indrukwekkend door zijn afmetingen, rijke decoratie en vele beelden. Beelden van boeddha's, bodhisattva's, goden en godinnen uit het Mahayana en Vajrayana pantheon wisselen elkaar af. In het centrale heiligdom staat een groot beeld van Shakyamuni – met de voor Ratnagiri typerende dikke oogleden, geflankeerd door Padmapani en Vajrapani. Meerdere keren kom je Pancika tegen, het boeddhistische equivalent van de hindoegod van de rijkdom, Kubera. Zijn rijkdom wordt uitgedrukt door zijn dikke buik, potten vol rijkdom onder zijn zetel en zijn edelsteenspuwende mangoest die hij met zijn linkerhand stevig bij zich houdt. En overal tussen de oudheden lopen de geiten gezellig met je mee.

Voor deze relatief afgelegen plek is het naastgelegen museum van uitstekende



Decoratieve panelen in Ratnagiri



Eén van de vele panelen

langs Lalitagiri en Udayagiri rijden, waar eveneens boeddhistische kloosters, stoepa's en tempels te bekijken zijn.

kwaliteit. Ruime, lichte zalen herbergen de grootste beelden die rondom de kloosters gevonden zijn, en de twee kleinste: een prachtige bronzen Krishna Yamari en een Tara in *varada mudrā* van slechts enkele centimeters hoog (respectievelijk 9<sup>de</sup>–10<sup>de</sup> en 10<sup>de</sup>–11<sup>de</sup> eeuw).

Tot slot een reistip: mocht je een bezoek willen brengen aan Ratnagiri dan kun je het best een taxi vanaf Bhubaneswar nemen (2 uur). Het is niet aan te raden om te overnachten in het enige (overheids)hotel dat tegenover het museum ligt. Vies, slecht onderhouden en niet (meer) ingesteld op het ontvangen van gasten (of het moeten twintig mannelijke gasten met ingehuurd 'danseressen' zijn, bleek na een onrustige nacht in het hotel). Met de taxi kan je na Ratnagiri ook nog



Bronzen beeldje van Krishna Yamari

\* Debala Mitra. *Ratnagiri, (1958-61). Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India* vol. 80. New Delhi: Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, 1981. Zie ook: Vimala Vandyopādhyāya. *Buddhist Centres of Orissa : Lalitagiri, Ratnagiri, and Udayagiri*. New Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 2004.

## Des Arts & Discussions: a day-trip to Musée Guimet, Paris

Aurora Eva Lucinda Turkenburg

On January 16<sup>th</sup>, a group of twelve students of Leiden University departed from Schiphol and Rotterdam in the early morning on a day-trip to Musée National des Arts Asiatiques Guimet in Paris with their two teachers of Buddhist art. Travelling by Thalys and Métro, one student joining them in Paris, the students arrived at the crisp Place d'Iéna at eleven in the morning, right next to the museum. A dazzling day awaited.

Our tour of Musée National des Arts Asiatiques Guimet started in the cafeteria with a well-deserved drink. Dr. Pierre Baptiste, the curator of Guimet's Southeast Asian collection, laid out the life story of Émile Guimet, the founder of the museum, before giving us a quick tour through the central collection on the ground floor. Special attention was given to a large sandstone statue of an Angkor *nāga*, for which the floor of the museum had to be reinforced because of its immense weight.

Another tall artifact (see fig. 1), a plaster reconstruction of a Cambodian 4-faced pillar of the Khmer art tradition, is located on the ground floor. It is possible to observe this piece from the first floor as well,



Fig. 1 Plaster reconstruction of Cambodian 4-faced pillar.  
Photograph by the author

from where the inside of the construction is seen through a gap caused by the missing of its 4<sup>th</sup> face. While this piece reminds of a scene from the famous *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* movie (2001), it was not obtained unlawfully, according to our guide. Like the Cambodian pillar, some artifacts have been reproduced in plaster. In this way, the artifacts need not be removed from their country of origin in order to be enjoyed elsewhere.

#### DISCUSSION: PLACES OR STORIES?

The students then visited the museum's basement, which is the storage for artifacts not currently on display, artifacts under revision, and new arrivals to the museum's collection, and which is not typically open to visitors and where no photographs were allowed to be taken. After lunch, the students were given a tour by their teachers of some of the artworks discussed in class. Among these was a 2<sup>nd</sup>-century limestone relief, depicting the 'Great Departure' scene from Buddha Shakyamuni's hagiography (see fig. 2). A discussion on aniconism immediately ensued, with focus on whether there was an anionic phase in early Buddhist art or simply a lack of wish or need to represent Buddha figures (example in fig. 3). A relief related to this discussion, curated at Musée Guimet, seems to depict a *bodhi* tree with an empty seat in front, surrounded by worshipping figures (fig. 3). While part of the aniconism discussion, the different opinions on what this relief represents – a place (the temple complex of Bodhgayā, where



Fig. 2 Limestone relief (2<sup>nd</sup> century). Photograph by the author



Fig. 3 Relief depicting a *bodhi* tree with an empty seat in front. Photograph by the author.

a *bodhi* tree is located) or a scene (the enlightenment of the historical Buddha under a *bodhi* tree) – serve as a discussion in their own right. It was interesting to note that even the students engaged enthusiastically in discussing this issue, studied earlier by such important scholars of Buddhist art as Vidya Dehejia and Susan Huntington.

Following the tour, the students were allowed to roam Musée Guimet by themselves for an hour. Most students took notice of the Vietnamese art section. This section houses a gold-plated statue of a multi-limbed figure, which can also be found featuring on one of Musée Guimet's postcards from the Museum shop.

A quick walk to the nearby Tour Eiffel completed the excursion at 6 p.m. An hour later the students were on their way back to the Netherlands, still discussing the Museum's art installations and sharing photographs of objects the others had missed. Musée Guimet is a large museum after all – it requires more than one visit to pay attention to everything. Surely, some of us will be back. I will, in any case.

*Au revoir*, then, Musée Guimet, until we meet again.

Interested in Musée National des Arts Asiatiques Guimet? Check out their website here: <http://www.guimet.fr/>

## Poets at the service of the Empire: the Ḍiṇḍima family of Vijayanagara

David Pierdominici Leão

Daṇḍin, Bhāravi, Māgha: these are just nicknames of poets hidden in the shadows of time. As is well known, scholars have found it virtually impossible to delineate coherently the biographies and personalities of the authors of Classical Sanskrit. Their lives are surrounded by an aura of legend, according to that principle in Indian tradition which banishes the individuality of the single. What we know about such poets as Kālidāsa and others comes from anecdotal tales, legends and – in several cases - falsifications handed down through the centuries. Fortunately everything has an exception, including poets and men. Contrary to the greatest authors of classical *kāvya*, a small group of little-known poets from a small village in Tamil Nadu extensively talked about themselves, their accomplishments and past. Called Ḍiṇḍimas, from the particular drum which announced their approach and represented the symbol of their literary prestige in the Southern medieval courts, these poets served the Vijayanagara empire (1336–1565 CE) for more than three centuries, operating from their native village of Mullandram (currently in North Arcot district).

A work written in later times (probably 18<sup>th</sup> century), the *Vibhāgaratnamālikā* (“The Garland of Gems of Partition”), narrates the origin of this poetic clan. Brought to the South by a Cōḷa king, the Ḍiṇḍima settled in the Kāñcī region, attracting with their erudition and religious fervour the Tamil monarchs. Among them, the foremost member of this family was Aruṇagirinātha, the hero of the *Vibhāgaratnamālikā*, which is mainly devoted to the celebration of his deeds. Bearing the *biruda* (“epithet”) of Sārvabhaumakavi, “the Emperor among Poets”, Aruṇagiri was the court poet of the king Immaḍi Devarāya II (1422–1446) and the author of the *Somavallīyogānandaprabhasana* (“The farce of Somavallī and Yogānanda”) and the great poem *Rāmābhyudaya* (“Exaltation of Rāma”). His son and successor as court poet was Rājanātha I, who served the usurper Sāḷuva Narasiṃha (1485–

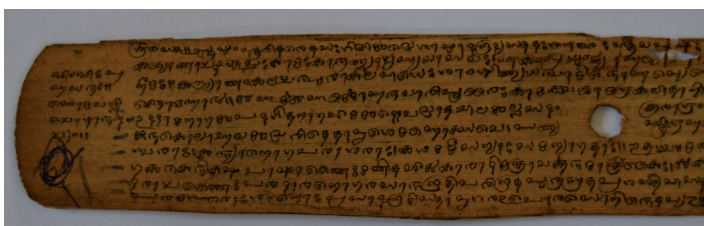


1491), celebrating him – and, indirectly, his father - with his unpublished poem “Exaltation of Sāḷuva”. With the ascent of the Tuḷuva dynasty on the Vijayanagara throne (16<sup>th</sup> century), the Ḍiṇḍimas continued to occupy the position of royal scholars, till the destruction of the empire in 1565. Kumāra Ḍiṇḍima Aruṇagirinātha II, Rājanātha I’s son, was patronised by the emperors Vīra Narasiṃha (1505–1509) and the great Kṛṣṇadevarāya (1509–1529). His son, Rājanātha II Ḍiṇḍimakavi Sārvabhauma, eulogised king Acyutadevarāya (1529–1542), contributing to shape his protector’s ideal portraiture in the sophisticated lines of the *Acyutarāyābhyudaya*.

The analysis of the genealogical accounts presented in the Ḍiṇḍima production – still existing in the form of unedited manuscripts – reveals much more than this brief synopsis can do. On one hand, the Ḍiṇḍima clan members represented the typical literary courtiers, who celebrated the Vijayanagara imperial ideology. On the other, the close study of the introductory sections of their works allows us to trace and examine the formative dynamics of their identity and auto-perception. The peculiar play on auto-quotations, internal references and recurrence of the same *birudas* forged the identity of men, of poets who, like the great *rāyas* of the past, ruled over their “Empire of Words”, the Sanskrit tradition of Vijayanagara.

This study is a small reworking of my Ph.D thesis entitled “The *Somavallīyogānandaprabhasana* of Aruṇagirinātha Ḍiṇḍimakavi: critical text, translation and study”, defended at Sapienza University of Rome (Italy) in 2018.\*

\* Further reading: Krishna Aiyangar (“Some Poets of the Ḍiṇḍima Family”, in Katre & Gode (eds.), *Kane Commemoration Volume*, Poona, Oriental Book Agency, 1941, pp. 16; “The Ḍiṇḍima Poets of Mullandram and the Kings of Vijayanagar”, *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, vol. 23, 1942, pp. 23-29). Useful to understand the position of the Ḍiṇḍima poets in the literary production of Vijayanagara can be “The Kavi as a warrior: the poetic fight between Aruṇagirinātha Ḍiṇḍima and Śrīnātha as an image of literary changes in 15<sup>th</sup> Century Vijayanagara”, *Indologica Taurinensia*, vol. XL, 2014, pp. 205-216, by myself.



Ms. P2155, Oriental Research Institute, Mysore, *Somavallīyogānanda*, folio 1 recto. Caption: *ḍiṇḍimaprabhasanam* | *somavallīyogānandīyam*

### A little stroll with Ganesha through the I.Kern collection at the UB Leiden

Doris Jedamski

Ganesha, the god with the elephant head traveling on a large rat, he is the god of all beginnings, of knowledge and wisdom, success and good luck, and the remover of all obstacles. Potbellied, a sweet tooth with a broken tusk, he is also the patron of intellectuals, bankers, scribes, authors – and most certainly of all library folks! When taking a closer look at the great variety of items in the Institute Kern collection, indeed there he is!

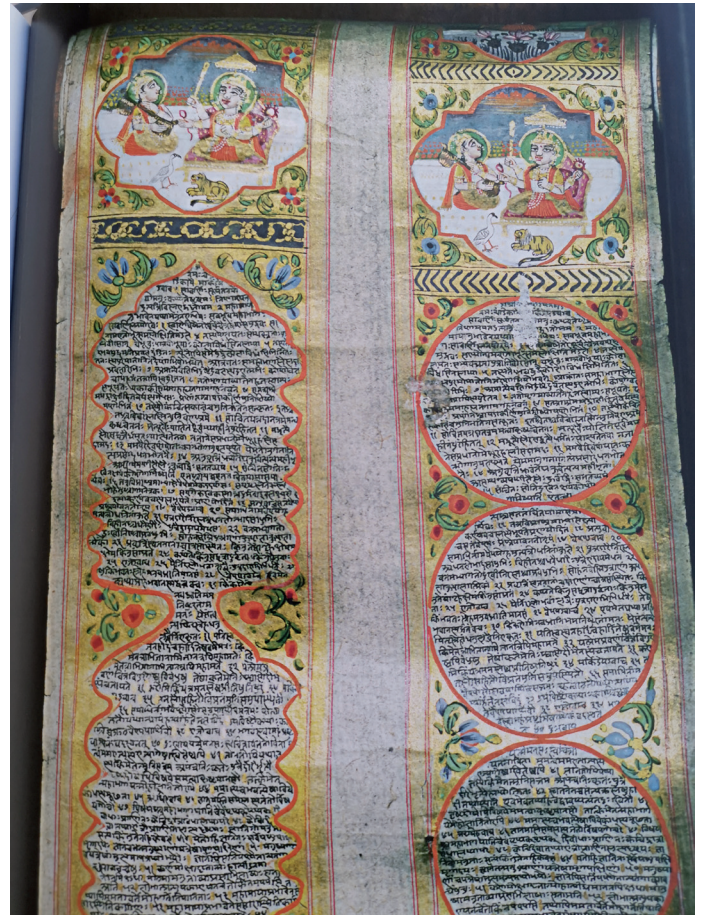
Before following Ganesha’s traces in our collection, here a short biography of our special tour guide: His father is God Shiva, his mother the Goddess Parvati. She formed him from clay, as she longed for a guard entirely loyal to her (and not to Shiva). That deemed her necessary, as Shiva had the habit to come visit her whenever she was taking a bath. Nandi had turned out to be too loyal to Shiva, so he let the god pass, but the little boy Ganesha, not recognizing the god Shiva, resisted successfully. Shiva got furious and finally cut off Ganesha’s head. Parvati was not amused (understandably so!) and threatened to destroy the entire creation. That alarmed Brahma, the Creator, hence Shiva quickly searched for a head to bring the boy back to life. The head of an elephant was placed onto Ganesha’s body, one tusk broken during the decapitation. Shiva acknowledged him as his own son to be worshipped before all other gods.

Whoever wishes to learn more about the deeper philosophical meaning of this story or other aspects of Ganesha, will easily find manifold sources via the UB-Catalogue: Type in Ganesha in the search field and you will get 12,768 results, 12,489 of which can be accessed online.

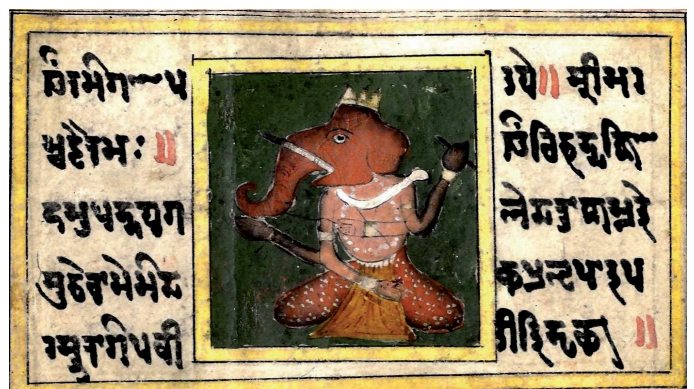
In the following, I will focus on a small selection of items from the Special Collection:

[Or. 25.464, Northern India] This small 19<sup>th</sup>-

century manuscript with a cover made of cloth contains several devotional texts, among them the *Śivaśaṅkarastotra* and *Gaṇapatiṣṭotra*, a prayer to Ganesha. The prayer possibly took the place of Ganesha at the opening of the manuscript to remove all possible obstacles. Ganesha finally appears on page 40 in form of a polychrome miniature drawing. The manuscript is in Śāradā script (on paper), and numerous annotations by various hands document its being an object of careful study in the past.



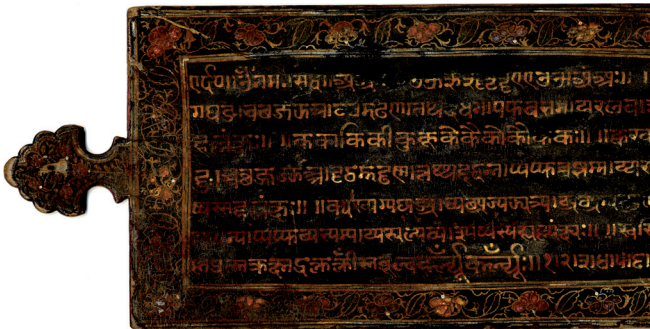
[Or. 18.301, Northern India, c. 1800] This scroll manuscript on paper in a wooden box opens with a twin-miniature image of Ganesha (not depicted here). It is one of the most beautiful Sanskrit manuscripts in the Leiden collection but requires a looking glass



to decipher its minuscule letters. The *Devīmāhātmyam* makes part of the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* and glorifies the great goddess Devi. She is presented as Lakshmi, Sarasvati and Durga, the three vital powers of the gods Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva.

blessing for a new business activity aiming at naive tourists. Ganesha is dancing here on his left leg.

Closing our little tour with Ganesha we return to the book world and a beautiful cover adorned by Ganesha. It is doubtful that this Hindu God would also bless and support the missionary work of the Europeans.



[Or. 27.241] Its shape might resemble a cutting board, but this wooden board (early 19<sup>th</sup> century) was meant for Indian pupils to copy the Devanagari script in order to practice and eventually learn it. Boards like this are still in use to date. Verso, Ganesha is sitting on a lotus blossom, safe-guarding the learning efforts of the pupils.



Brigitte Augusti, *Unter Palmen. Schilderungen aus dem Leben und der Missionsarbeit der Europäer in Ostindien*. Leipzig: Jugendschriftenverlag von Dr. Max Gehlen [no year]. 5<sup>e</sup> Aufl.



[Or. 27.698] This drawing, one in a set of five, on (probably fake) pre-stamped ‘Court Fee’ Government office paper of Jaipur (1918–1927) is possibly a mere drawing exercise. Maybe it is the plea for Ganesha’s



## JAYASTAMBHA

Victor van Bijlert

op de onbedrukte marges van oude kranten. Hij was heel strikt in zijn afspraken, droeg een groot zakhorloge zichtbaar bij zich. Het zal bijna niemand ontgaan dat deze beschrijving maar op één persoon kan slaan: Mohan Karamchand Gandhi, beter bekend als Mahatma Gandhi. Je hoeft waarschijnlijk niet eens erbij te vertellen dat hij de uitvinder was van geweldloze strijd tegen kolonialisme, discriminatie en onrecht. Dat weet bijna iedereen. En ook dat de Indiase onafhankelijkheidsstrijd in belangrijke mate succes heeft gehad dankzij Gandhi. Dat Gandhi zelf die onafhankelijkheid met schaamte bekeek, kwam door de bloedige deling van India in twee aparte staten, iets waar hij zich altijd tegen verzet had. Maar dit terzijde. Al sinds jaren prijkt Gandhi's beeltenis op alle Indiase bankbiljetten. Een betere ikoon van hedendaags India is nauwelijks denkbaar. Het morele stempel dat hij op de twintigste eeuw drukte is overweldigend. De man werd in 1869 geboren, dus dit jaar precies 150 jaar geleden. Waar blijven de grootschalige herdenkingen? De festivals rond zijn denken en politiek activisme? De internationale congressen en symposia? Misschien zijn ze er wel maar mij vielen ze niet op. Men is in India vooral met parlementsverkiezingen bezig en in Europa met gekibbel rond de Europese Unie.



Studio photograph by Elliott & Fry of Mohandas K. Gandhi, London, 1931

Redactie: A.A. Ślącza, P.C. Bisschop  
(anna.slaczka@ziggo.nl)  
Lay-out: A.A.E. van der Geer  
(geerae@gmail.com)

VVIK Nieuws is een halfjaarlijkse gratis uitgave voor en door Vrienden van het Instituut Kern. De *Randstad Agenda* is onder voorbehoud, wij raden u aan eerst aanvullende informatie in te winnen alvorens u een activiteit bezoekt.

## DE VVIK IN HET KORT



### Activiteiten

Leden van de VVIK ontvangen ongeveer 5x per jaar een uitnodiging voor het bijwonen van lezingen, boekpresentaties of videovertoningen met aansluitend een borrel. De VVIK is verbonden aan de India en Tibet studies binnen de opleiding South and Southeast Asian Studies van de Universiteit Leiden, gehuisvest in Matthias de Vrieshof 3, alwaar ook vaak de bijeenkomsten plaatsvinden. Voor komende VVIK activiteiten, zie de website van de Vereniging op <http://www.instituutkern.nl>

### Nieuwsbrief

Leden ontvangen 2x per jaar de *VVIK Nieuwsbrief* met nieuws over VVIK activiteiten, publicaties en overige wetenswaardigheden zoals een overzicht van, voor VVIK leden interessante, activiteiten in de regio.

### Collecties

De Vereniging heeft boeken, tijdschriften, handschriften en fotoverzamelingen bijeengebracht op haar gebied. Deze zijn in bruikleen bij de UB raadpleegbaar. Veel van de foto's zijn doorzoekbaar via de digitale speciale collecties (UB website) op [disc.leidenuniv.nl](http://disc.leidenuniv.nl). Digitale reproducties kunnen worden besteld via de UB. Voor gebruik in publicaties is schriftelijke toestemming van de Vereniging vereist.

### Fonds De Cock

Studenten en onderzoekers die een studiereis of andere wetenschappelijke activiteit willen ondernemen kunnen hiervoor een beurs aanvragen uit het Fonds De Cock. Achteraf wordt een kort verslag verlangd voor de VVIK Nieuwsbrief. Ga voor de voorwaarden en de procedure naar de website van de Vereniging.

### Lid worden?

Aanmelden kan middels een e-mail naar de secretaris, Sanne Mersch (secr.vvik@gmail.com). Postadres: Salvatorshof 2, 2312 BX Leiden. De contributie (€ 25,- voor gewone leden en € 12,50 voor studenten; per lopend kalenderjaar) kunt u overmaken naar NL84ABNA0451784308 ten name van Vereniging Vrienden van het Instituut Kern (te Amsterdam).