



100 jaar
1 dec 2024

'Celebrating Dutch Indology - 100 Years of Friends of the Kern Institute'

VVIK Symposium, November 29, 2024
Leiden University, Lipsius Building 0.03

Programme

- 09.00-09.30 Coffee/Tea
- 09.30-09.45 Opening by Prof. dr. Peter Bisschop (Chair VVIK)
- 09.45-10.25 Dr. Ellen Raven (Leiden University)
Stepping Into the Breach: Hanne van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1919-1983)
- 10.25-11.05 Prof. dr. Peter Bisschop (Leiden University)
Sanskrit Letter Writing at the Turn of the 20th Century: Jean Philippe Vogel's Correspondence with Nityanand Shastri
- 11.05-11.35 Coffee/Tea
- 11.35-12.15 Prof. dr. Paul van der Velde (Radboud University Nijmegen)
Utrecht: Indology, Asian Studies, Orientology...

LUNCH BREAK

- 13.45-14.25 Dr. Elena Mucciarelli (University of Groningen, via Zoom)
The Institute of Indian Studies in Groningen: Research, Education, Outreach
- 14.25-15.05 Dr. Berthe Jansen (Leiden University)
Tibetan Studies in The Netherlands: Looking up from below
- 15.05-15.35 Coffee/Tea
- 15.35-16.15 Dr. Sanne Dokter-Mersch (Leiden University)
How Leiden Became a Purāṇic City: The Story of the Skandapurāṇa
- 16.15-16.30 Closure by Prof. dr. Peter Bisschop
- 16.30-16.45 Walk from Lipsius Building to the Faculty Club (Rapenburg 73)
- 16.45-18.45 Drinks at the Faculty Club.



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Abstracts of Lectures

Ellen Raven (Leiden University)

Stepping Into the Breach: Hanne van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1919-1983)

The Kern Institute was originally founded for the study of the arts and archaeology of 'Greater India'. In particular after the second world war, it rapidly developed into an institute for Indology with much wider tasks. The study of the arts and archaeology of South and Southeast Asia could no longer be its top priority.

In 1959, Hanne de Leeuw, one of its former students and a member of the Vereniging, acted on this situation by founding, at the University of Amsterdam, an institute that firmly embraced the original goals of 1925. Professor van Lohuizen-de Leeuw and her team of young scholars at the institute soon developed a solid reputation in the rapidly expanding field. Important journals and book collections were brought together in its library. As van Lohuizen-de Leeuw was a keen photographer and networker, she also built an impressive visual archive for South and Southeast Asian arts that was much superior to what the Leiden collection (except for Indonesia) could offer. Early in the 1980s however, both van Lohuizen and her institute fell victim to the academic onslaught of the government's financial cut downs euphemistically called 'Taakverdeling en concentratie' (Division of tasks and [their] concentration).

Peter Bisschop (Leiden University)

Sanskrit Letter Writing at the Turn of the 20th Century: Jean Philippe Vogel's Correspondence with Nityanand Shastri

Jean Philippe Vogel's prominent position in 20th-century Dutch Indology needs no introduction. As founder and chairman of the Kern Institute, which opened its doors in 1925, Vogel had a tremendous impact on the florescence of Indology in Leiden. With his dual footing in Sanskrit and archaeology, he provided the Kern Institute with a distinct identity that in the end integrated the study of textual and material culture. His experience as superintendent of the Northern Circle and officiating director-general of the Archaeological Survey of India made him well-connected internationally. Vogel was a person who was able to get things done and bring people and resources together. In this presentation I will illustrate these qualities through a close reading of his correspondence with the Kashmirian pandit Nityanand Shastri. While some of these letters are written in English the majority of them are in Sanskrit. They not only show Vogel's command of the Sanskrit language but also highlight his skills in communicating across cultures. These Sanskrit letters have long been neglected but deserve our full attention as testimony to a remarkable period of cross-cultural exchange.



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Paul van der Velde (Radboud University Nijmegen)

Utrecht: Indology, Asian Studies, Orientology...

The study of Asia and Asian languages has quite a history in Utrecht. The first lecturer was the theologian Voetius (1539-1676). Over the years various fields of study were developed, and numerous languages were studied and taught. There were reasons for this, first of all there were theologians who wanted to study the original biblical scriptures, others were interested in missionary works. Yet others were prepared for positions as officials in the Dutch colonies in Asia. After some time apart from Hebrew and Aramaic, languages such as Persian, Arabic, Babylonian, Assyrian, Coptic and several others were offered. Over the years the Indian languages became more prominent. For a short moment even Hendrik Kern made an attempt to be appointed in Utrecht. He moved on to Leiden where he found what Utrecht did not offer him. But the study of Indian languages in Utrecht was taken over by several of his students: Gallée, van der Vliet and the famous Willem Caland. Indology, as it was so often called, in Utrecht became a subject of strong and remarkable individuals. One of the most prominent was the legendary Jan Gonda, well known for his enormous number of publications - 'he could write faster than his students could read', so it was stated - and notorious for his style of teaching. Later he was succeeded by Henk Bodewitz. Sanskrit was the main subject of research and teaching in Utrecht, apart from other languages such as Hindi, Pali and Dravidian languages, and cultural, religious and archeological subjects. A central role was, however, likewise played by the particular characters of the teaching staff.

Elena Mucciarelli (University of Groningen)

The Institute of Indian Studies in Groningen: Research, Education, Outreach

The study of South Asian civilization—its intellectual and cultural history—at the University of Groningen has taken many different venues both in teaching and research. One of the first professors, the Latinist Jacob Speijer, renowned among Indological and especially Vedic scholars for his work on syntax represents a different, in a way, and yet still inspiring model. In my presentation I will try to briefly outline the more recent history of the Institute of Indian Studies in Groningen founded in 1953 by Prof. Jacob Ensink. The Institute has undergone various symptomatic changes, from the impulse given to it by Prof. Hans Bakker with his research on the Puranic textual tradition to the strategic change of its name as Centre for the Study of Religion and Culture in Asia. Mostly though, I will delve into the present and future endeavours of the newly renamed Institute as a platform for scholars of South Asia throughout the RUG. This presentation is dialogical in nature as I hope to discuss the necessity for the so-called “orchid disciplines” to create collaborations and strong networks between Indological/Indian Studies oriented departments, institutes and centres, as well as to craft multidisciplinary platforms for research and education.



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Berthe Jansen (Leiden University)

Tibetan Studies in The Netherlands: Looking up from below

While it could be said that Tibetology in the Netherlands is still a nascent field, the earliest known Tibetan speaking Dutch person was the enigmatic Samuel van der Putte (1690-1745). It is well-known that he reached Lhasa and knew Tibetan well, but all his archives were destroyed after his death. Johan van Manen's (1877-1943) case is quite different: this theosophist, orientalist, and Tibetologist, and all-round bibliophile left behind large amounts of Tibetan, Himalayan and Indological materials: from quickly drawn up chits in Tibetan to large tractates on the Perfect of Wisdom and from humble village ritual implements to majestically large Tibetan scrolls. In this talk, I discuss the legacy that collectors, particularly Van Manen, left behind and its imprint on Tibetan Studies in the Netherlands and beyond. In the presentation, I further hypothesize on the direct and indirect connections between collected Himalayan materials and the study of Tibetan culture writ large.

Sanne Dokter-Mersch (Leiden University)

How Leiden Became a Purāṇic City: The Story of the Skandapurāṇa

“We are delighted to have come to what is not the end, but the first station on a long road.” This is the first sentence of the first volume of the critical edition of the *Skandapurāṇa*, published in 1998 in Groningen by its first editors, Rob Adriaansen, Hans Bakker and Harunaga Isaacson. Since the first publication, five more volumes have been published (IIA, IIB, III, IV and V) and the sixth (VI) is on its way. The *Skandapurāṇa* journey started in 1990, when Harunaga Isaacson first transcribed a part of one of the manuscripts. Since then, more manuscripts have been collated, volumes have been published, editors have changed, knowledge has been gained, and some challenges have still not been solved. In this paper, I will sketch the project's history that continued to have a solid basis in the Netherlands, show the milestones so far, and, as one of the current contributing editors, present some of our new work that will be published in volume VI. Now that more than half of the text has been edited and made available, it is time to collect some of the Purāṇa's most fascinating features. As will become clear, for Purāṇic standards, the *Skandapurāṇa* turns out to be surprisingly consistent in its message and narratives.