

Experience Day South and Southeast Asian Studies

4th of April 2025



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Introduction:

A student of South and Southeast Asian Studies will tell you about your first year at this programme.

Lecture:

Title:

M.K. Gandhi and the Making of Modern India

Short description:

This lecture will examine the life and ideas of Mahatma Gandhi, known world over as prophet of nonviolence and principal architect of Indian independence movement. It will focus on Gandhi's idea of satyagraha, resistance to oppression through truth (satya) and nonviolence (ahimsa), and his nonviolent campaigns against colonial rule, before moving to broader assessments of his life and thought, his critiques of modernity and industrial civilization, and his relationship to Indian nationalism. It will conclude with a discussion of feminist, Dalit (low-caste), Marxist, and modernist critiques of his ideas, and reflections on his place in modern India and global circulation of his ideas over last six decades.

Lecturer: Prof. dr Nira Wickramasinghe (n.k.wickramasinghe@hum.leidenuniv.nl)

Nira Wickramasinghe is a historian and professor of Modern South Asian Studies at Leiden University since 2010. She studied in Paris and at the University of Oxford and taught for 19 years at the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka. Her research centers on issues of belonging, modernity and everyday life under colonialism in Sri Lanka and the Indian Ocean. Some of her recent books include: *Slave in a Palanquin. Colonial Servitude and Resistance in Sri Lanka* (Columbia University Press 2020) and *Monsoon Asia. A Reader on South and Southeast Asia* (2023) co-edited with David Henley. She is leading a project on slavery and forgetting in the Indian Ocean.

Seminar:

Title:

De Javaanse taal in en als cultuur / The Javanese Language in/as Culture

Short description:

A first practical meeting with the Javanese language. Javanese is the mother tongue of almost 100 million people around the world. It gives access to a dynamic contemporary culture that includes performing arts like the wayang shadowplay. Today Javanese is spoken in Indonesia (especially Java), but also in the diaspora in Suriname and Malaysia, and it is a heritage language in, among other places, Singapore and the Netherlands.

Lecturer: Prof. dr. B. Arps (b.arps@hum.leidenuniv.nl)

Ben Arps is professor Indonesische en Javaanse taal en cultuur. He is the author of several books and many articles about literature, art and language of Java.

Q&A:

Do you have any questions regarding the programme? The student will answer them all at the Q&A.

Preparation:

For the lecture:

Watch the documentary: Mahatma Gandhi: Dying for Freedom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpZwCRInrgo&rco=1>

(42 min)

For the seminar:

Study paragraph A.1 Elementary sentences and paragraph C.2 Wanti Kudu Masak from Lesson 1 from the online study book "Javanese Language in/as Culture". You can find it here: https://rise.articulate.com/share/7YoKMCp38_BC30BTWCSSBBYNPYl6iSJv

Also do the corresponding online exercises in preparation for the lecture. This homework is essential preparation for this experience day. During the lecture itself we will practice a simple Javanese conversation.