



The Cinta Library



The Cinta Library is a private collection of books (also images, audio and other materials) specialising on India and South-East Asia. The focus is on the culture, mostly Indic, of this region of Asia.

↻ How it started ↻

Lek Jeanson is the creator and owner of the Cinta Library. His hobbies are travelling and collecting books and he has a passion for South-East Asian art. The first books were being collected, spontaneously, in 1985. For a many few years, all the books fitted in one small shelf. In 1997, the

collection started to grow at a faster pace. The collecting has and is taking place in flea markets, car boot sales, bookshops and the Internet. Today the Cinta Library comprises almost two thousand books and 500+ records and compact discs.

↻ The name ↻

The acronym CINTA (pronounced *tji-nta*) means 'Cultural Insight on Tropical Asia'. In Malay, 'cinta' means 'love'. The word is of Sanskrit etymology. Thus the name

reflects the love for a specific culture and taking shape as the collection. The name was attributed in the early 1990's.

↻ Contents ↻

Principal fields

- Sacred Indian dance
- Gamelan music
- Energy techniques of the body (India & China)
- Far Eastern thought
- Indian art
- Traditions of India & South-East Asia
- Ancient history of India & South-East Asia

These subjects can be browsed online at <https://cint.asia/fields.htm>.

Our fields of interest are not all equally represented in the number of books. Books (or good ones) on some subjects are more easily available than on other subjects. Those seven fields are better reflected by the importance they have in our eyes, by the effort we put in selecting such book or avoiding such book.

Not an exhaustive collection

We do not want nor try to collect everything that exists about our subjects. It is not a question of space limits but of value.

Every potential acquisition is checked for its contents, such as what the text says, are the images pleasant, the paper's quality. These criteria may vary depending on the

document's subject or role.

Thus there are many publications that we know of but that are not and won't be included in our collection.

Space limits do play a role, for the time being, on not selecting too many very general or very specialised works.

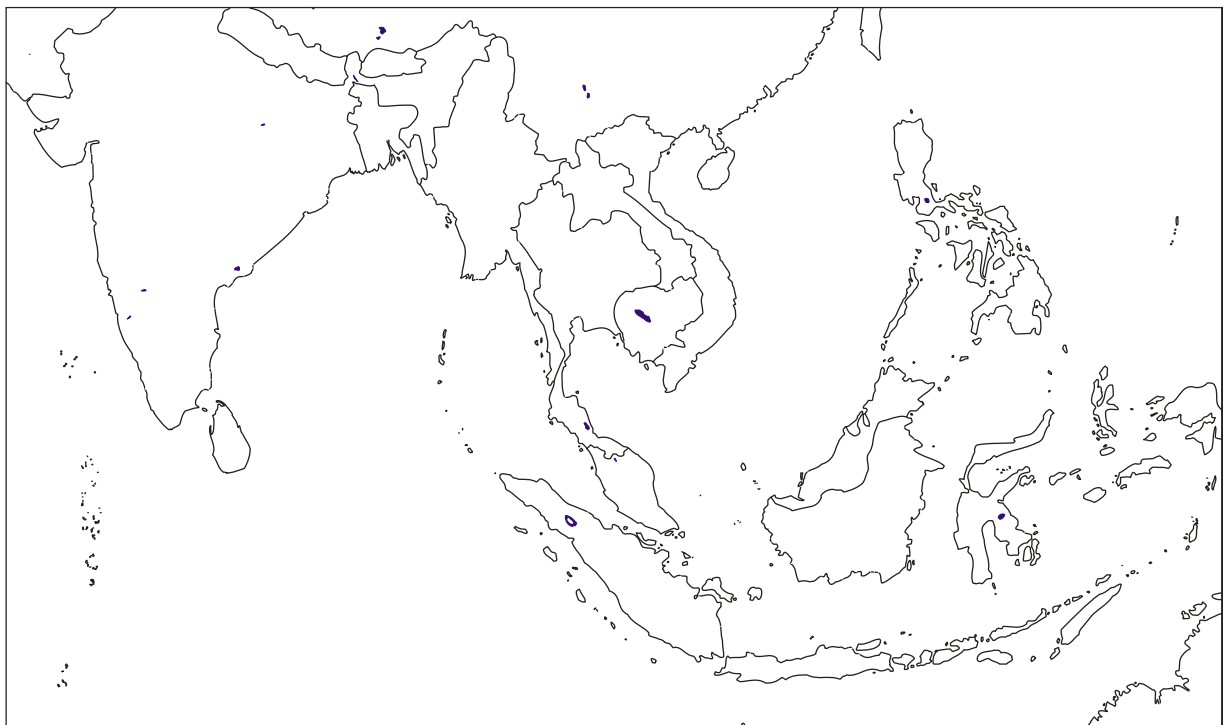
Geographical scope

What are the criteria of our geographical region? What name to give it? Where are the boundaries? We have in mind two main approaches:

- **Nature: climate, environment, biome**
An elegant way of defining the region could be in considering the [Indomalaya ecozone](#).
- **Culture: art, civilisation**
The other approach is to consider an Indic-typed culture that has spread across the region. This Indo-Asian cultural area can be named [Greater India](#).

The two areas are not identical but they coincide remarkably. The region covered by our collection may well be the union of the two sets. But we have to point out that their intersection does present an intense occurrence of our chosen field.

Our geographical region is **southern Asia**. It encompasses both the Indomalaya ecozone and Greater India. For convenience we can name it '**Tropical Asia**'.



Geographical areas – main breakdown

- **Indian subcontinent**
 - western region delineated by the Hindu Kush and the Indus
 - Gangetic Plain
 - Deccan
 - Sri Lanka & small islands
 - Himalayan regions
- Serindia
- Indic and SEAsian influences in the Sinosphere (CJKVM)
- **Burma – Laos – Thailand – Yunnan**
- **Cambodia** and Cochinchina
- **Campā**
- Malay Realm (Nusantara):
 - **Malay peninsula**
 - **Greater Sunda islands** (Sumatra, Java, &c.)
 - **Lesser Sunda islands** (Bali, &c.)
 - **Maharlika** (the Philippines)

Technically speaking, some of the areas are not tropical, but their art has shown some impression of tropicality with the profusion of ornaments.

The Indian architect Vikram Lall, who researches into Buddhist art, has a nice and interesting way of identifying the different cultural landscapes:

- The Golden Lands – South-East Asia
- The Heavenly Lands – China, Japan & Korea
- The Ancient Lands – Bangladesh, India, Pakistan & Sri Lanka
- The Mountain Lands – The Himalayan mountains & plateau
- The Hidden Lands – Central Asia, Outer Mongolia & the Silk Road

He also adds a sixth landscape:

- The Modern Lands – Contemporary Buddhist architecture

Fields of research and scholarship pertaining to particular cultural or national regions have the term **area studies**. On the right is a list of examples.

Our sphere would correspond to **Indology**. But with a caution: Indology is often limited to the Indian subcontinent, whereas we cover South-East Asia as well. Furthermore we extend to the Far East in some subjects, thus finding relevant elements in Tibetology, sinology, etc. Much of the fields are inherently intersecting anyway, as a result of common heritage or communication.

- Africana studies
- Indology
- Tibetology
- Sinology
- Japanese studies
- Middle Eastern studies
- Egyptology
- Assyriology
- Classic studies
- Armenian studies
- Iranian studies
- Celtology
- Pre-Columbian America
- Latin American studies
- Pacific studies

Area studies are based on geographical, political and cultural regions. Besides geography these regions are characterised by history, languages, religions, art, literatures, words, plants, animals, ethnicities, methods of production, habits & customs... All these elements may span more than one region, or move to another region. They show that the regions' limits are not sharp, that the areas can have blurry definitions.

Some fields may reflect intersections of other fields, or be encompassed by more than one super-field. For instance, Tibetology can belong to East Asian studies, Central Asian studies, or South Asian studies. As an intermediate area, both Sinology and Indology can be useful in Tibetology.

South-East Asian studies perfectly fit in CINTAsia's scope in an Indologic perspective.

Research and scholarship of Campā is the important focus on the history of Vietnam.

South-East Asian studies are also possible, and make sense, in a sinologic perspective. South-East Asia shares key characteristics with East Asia. The Chinese diaspora in South-East Asia is an important basis and source of study for sinologists. Vietnamese studies fit perfectly in the study of the Sinosphere.

Like Tibet, South-East Asia can be seen as an intermediate area between the Sinosphere and India.

Type of books

The targeted readership and audience includes lay people. The contents are not limited to scientific works. They include, even prioritise, coffee table books, general introductions, or works that attract our curiosity without demanding too much cerebral effort whilst guaranteeing a high level of standard. The coffee table books we have are better than mundane glossy catalogues of hotel rooms, pointless photography or bogus art.

The collection is more oriented towards fine arts, performing arts, traditional literatures, ethnographic topics, travel, or classical history than towards politics, sports, film industry, modern art, geology, demographics, business or modern history.

We also tend to favour sophisticated, classical or fine arts over tribal artefacts or dances.

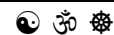
You are more likely to find a beautifully illustrated tale than an arduous linguistic analysis. You are more likely to find a book about river shrines or about landscape paintings than a boring hydraulic study of a delta. But if our library were to be less limited by space, it would certainly include more works of scientific specialisation, and more of general geography, botany or history of the region.



In a collection covering Asia, one would think normal to find books pertaining to naturally-occurring beliefs and practices such as Buddhist, Hindu, animistic, etc. But religion as a standalone subject has only a relatively limited occurrence. We generally do not feel in tune with the books we come across. It is a curious phenomenon that books about a religion and books about the art of that religion convey a different mood. In the first case we see man's ugly struggle with his limitations, in the second we see man's beautiful sensitivity and talent. Serious

works about a religion or animistic practices might appear or be more trustworthy but are often too dryly academic, scientific, or pointlessly neutral. We do have a section on Asian thought because its fragrance doesn't show the ugly struggle. Its geographical scope reaches beyond the boundaries of Tropical Asia into China in the Taoist religion and thought and Japan in Zen. Taoism does have a family air —of mysterious origin— with Buddhism and Hinduism in its bodily and meditative approach. What makes this approach distinctive towards other religions even seems stronger in China than present-day India. Hence we cannot help but to venture outside our official geographical area. We encounter the same phenomenon with our documents about martial arts or about the pagoda. As regards Asian thought, we do find clean heads in India too: J. Krishnamurti, Osho, U. G. Krishnamurti, Ramana Maharshi, Nisargadatta Maharaj, etc. This is why books of them are present in our "thought" section, and even outnumber books about religions.

We do have books pertaining to religion, while not being about a religion: iconography, rituals, calendars, dance, divination, all the art with statues of deities, as well as dictionaries.



Typically, we have

- Children's books
- Reference works (such as dictionaries)
- Magazines (art, archeology, auctions, etc.)
- Stories (fictional or true)
- Manuals (such as for learning or practicing batik)
- Comic books
- Travel guides
- Programmes (of dance, concerts or other events)
- Introductory works
- Exhibition catalogues

Our primary intent is to please the senses, arouse interest, encourage curiosity. Pictorial information is considered as important as textual information, if not more. This approach is discernible in the number of large art books. We pay attention to the quality of paper, print, style of illustrations, photographs. Having a book in one's hands is part of the pleasant experience. We remain vigilant about the text: is it in accordance with the subject,

how much is it altered or cluttered by off-topic content? The idea is to limit as much as possible to get mixed up or contaminated with stereotypes and amalgams.

The collection has some books not of the best manufacture quality, but containing relevant information, eventually in good quantity, or neutral technical and historical facts useful for reference.

Audiovisual material

We have about 500 discs of traditional music, the majority being of gamelan music.

- Phonograph records
- Compact discs
- Musicassettes
- VHS cassettes
- Film reels
- CD-ROMs and other optical discs

Other items (artefacts, realia)

- Postcards
- Stamps
- Slides
- Posters
- Stickers
- Bookmarks
- Currencies
- Pins
- Fridge magnets
- Key chains
- Paintings
- Textile cloths
- Bibelots
- Statuettes
- Masks
- Puppets
- Musical instruments

↻ Aim ↻

The aim of the Cinta Library is three-fold:

- ENJOY
The pleasure of collecting. The pleasure of being surrounded by attractive books and interesting stuff.
- MAKE USE OF
But that pleasure is better shared than solitary. The collection's value is greater when used by many people rather than just one. The library has more meaning if it reaches out to other institutions, including in the concerned countries. Instead of remaining a passive collection, it must be used by people such as researchers, students, historians, collectors, journalists, artists, the curious. In this aim, we want people to hear about the Cinta Library, to come and see it, use it. We also want to disseminate on the Internet knowledge about it, and provide a bibliographic resource on this network.
- GET AWARE
Compared to other Asia-related collections, the Cinta Library has a specific focus rarely found elsewhere. And this could perhaps reflect a mission. The culture we focus on is subject to two categories of contingencies. One is territorial, historical and ethnic; the other is perceptual and pertains to the publicised media and to questions of identity.

- Territorial, historical and ethnic:
The Chinese, the Middle Eastern, the colonial European and the modern globalised cultures have impacted Tropical Asia, and their presence there is obvious nowadays. They have invasive, expansionistic and domineering characteristics that have resulted in a partial acculturation of the native and Indic heritage.
- Perceptual (publicised media, questions of identity):
Many cultural facets one would name 'Indic' are not limited to the Indian Subcontinent, which the media (including books) often fail to appreciate. And of course this identification problem is worsened by the acculturation process, leading to stereotypes.

In both categories, the contingencies often turn out to be true nuisances.

In creating and giving access to this library, we want to give access to the beauty of the original native and Indic heritage. Our main approach is simple: it is for pleasure's sake. As a corollary, our approach is also to call attention to the originality of this heritage, and perhaps, hypothetically, to its endangerdeness by unmasking the contingencies and guiding our readers away from the stereotypes, which have created confusion for already too long.

☞ Access ☞

The Library is accessible on appointment. Individuals and groups are welcome. Books are normally not for loan, only reference. The library's e-mail is 1008@sunlink.ch. It is situated at

Rue Louis-Favre 22bis
1201 Geneva
Switzerland.

The collector can be contacted for further information or appointments at +4176 211 1008.

All the material is readily available, at hand's reach.

Throw a glance at the material:

<https://pustaka.cint.asia/cinta.htm>

❧ Classification ❧

Besides the usual attributes related to authorship, publishing and so on, three are important:

- Subject
- Type of book
- Geographical region

The classification isn't yet clearly defined, but the books are so far grouped as follows:

1. GEN Generalities (includes reference works, pan-Asian coverage)
2. ETH Ethnobotanic and ethnozoologic subjects (includes cuisine)
3. GAM Music (gamelan or related)
4. DAN Dance, dance-drama and similar performing arts
5. WAY Puppets play, puppets, masks
6. WAY.sha Shadow puppets (mostly wayang kulit)
7. ORN Art motifs & themes, grammar of forms, iconographic elements, ornaments
8. PIC Pictorial. Photographs and other illustrations
9. PIC.pai Paintings
10. PIC.pai.bal.1 Paintings in Bali: traditional
11. PIC.pai.bal.2 Paintings in Bali: modern, by the Balinese
12. PIC.pai.bal.3 Paintings in Bali: modern, by non-Balinese artists
13. TIK Batik
14. CRA Handicrafts
15. TEX Textiles
16. ATT Attire (clothing, adornment)
17. STU Temple, stūpa, pagoda, maṇḍala
18. ART Indian art across Asia
19. ART.nus Plastic arts, antiquities of Nusantara
20. ART.nus.mal Plastic arts, antiquities of Sumatra, Sriwijaya, the Malay Peninsula
21. ART.nus.bar The Borobuḍur (and affiliated shrines)
22. ART.nus.pra The Prambanan complex
23. ART.nus.wét Plastic arts, antiquities of East Java
24. ART.nus.bal Plastic arts, antiquities of Bali
25. STA.m Metal statues (bronze, &c.)
26. KRI The kris (and other heritage, magic weapons)
27. ESO Magic, trance, ritual, divination, calendars, the esoteric
28. BOD Bodily practices (yoga, medicine, martial arts, massage, sexual practices)
29. BOD.ero Erotic, sexual techniques, Tantra, femininity, śakti
30. MED Meditation, thought (mostly Indian and Chinese)
31. LIT Traditional literature (stories, texts)
32. SCR Writing systems, languages (alphasyllabaries, hanacaraka, palm-leaf manuscripts, epigraphy, &c.)
33. HIS History
34. JAM.1 India and some contents on Southeast Asia
35. JAM.2 India
36. JAM.3 Specific regions within India

- 37. JAM.slk Sri Lanka (Ceylon), the Maldives
- 38. HIM Himalayan regions, Tibet
- 39. LAN Thailand, Myanmar (Burma), Laos, Yunnan
- 40. KAM Khmer culture, Cambodia, Funan, Chenla
- 41. KAM.1 KAM and some contents on Southeast Asia
- 42. CAM Cham culture, Campā
- 43. NUS Maritime Southeast Asia (comprises the Malay world)
- 44. NUS.3 Specific regions within Nusantara
- 45. NUS.bal Bali, Lombok
- . Unsorted section yet. It includes Indian and Southeast Asian art.

Vocabulary – I : Geography and history (sample list)

- Angkor
- ASEAN
- Bay of Bengal Interaction Sphere
- Campā
- Cinta
- CINTAsia
- Cōḷa
- Far East
- Farther India
- Greater India
- Gupta
- Himalayan regions
- India
- India extra Gangem
- Indian subcontinent
- Indianisation
- Indic
- Indo-Asian cultural area
- Indologist
- Indology
- Indomalaya ecozone
- Indosphere
- Insulindia
- Island Southeast Asia
- Mainland Southeast Asia
- Malay Archipelago
- Malay Peninsula
- Malay Realm
- Malay world
- Malaya
- Malesia biogeographical region
- Maritime Silk Road
- Maritime Southeast Asia
- monsoon
- Nusantara Maritime Trading and Communication Network
- Nusantara
- Samudra Rakṣa
- Serindian art
- South Asia
- South-East Asia
- Southeast Asia
- southeastern Asia
- southern Asia
- spice route
- spice trade
- Śrīwijaya
- Strait of Malacca
- Sunda Islands
- Sundaland
- Tropical Asia
- Indianisation
- indigenisation
- internalisation
- Javanisation
- Malayisation
- archaic globalisation
- sinicisation
- Islamisation
- Europeanisation, Westernisation
- globalisation

Vocabulary – II : Subject terms (sample list)

- agarwood
- Airāvata
- akṣara
- āpsara
- areca nut
- Arjuna
- auṁ
- bamboo
- banana
- banyan
- baṭik
- beringin
- betel leaf
- B^hīma
- bindī
- Brahmā
- champak
- caṇḍī
- Cassia fistula
- cinnamon
- clove
- cock
- coconut
- copra
- cotton
- cūḍāmaṇi
- curcuma
- dance
- d^hōti
- Dravidian
- durian
- dwārapālā
- elephant
- Ficus racemosa
- Ficus religiosa
- flowerpecker
- gadā
- Gajalakṣmī
- Gajēndra Mōkṣa
- gamelan
- Gaṇēśa
- Garuḍa
- gong
- guṇa
- Hanumān
- ikat
- Indra's net
- jackfruit
- jaggery
- Jasminum sambac
- jute
- kalaśa
- karaṇa (dance)
- Kaula
- Kawi
- khaunlaung
- Khmer language
- kimnarī
- kris
- kṛtimuk^ha
- kumb^ha
- kuṇḍalinī
- Laṅkā
- liṅga
- lingōdb^hawa
- literature
- lontar
- lotus
- Mahāb^hārata
- makara
- makuṭa
- maṇḍala
- maṇḍapa
- mango
- martial arts
- Mount Mēru
- mudrā
- mukti
- Muṇḍa
- nāga
- Nāgarī
- paddy
- pagoda
- paintings
- palm-leaf manuscript
- pandanus
- Pāṇḍawa
- Pañji
- peacock
- pepper
- pheasant
- prāṇa
- praśasti
- pura
- pustaka
- rāja
- Rāmāyaṇa
- rasa
- rattan
- Rāwaṇa
- rice
- ṛṣi
- śakti
- samādhⁱ
- sandalwood
- sand^hi
- śaṅk^ha
- Sanskrit
- śāstra
- sculptures
- shadow puppetry
- sidd^ha
- simha
- Śiwa
- Śiwa Naṭarāja
- Śiwa Gajāsurasamhāra
- songkēt
- Śrī
- stūpa
- sugar
- sugarcane
- śūnyatā
- sūtra
- tāṇḍawa
- Tantra
- teak
- textiles
- toddy
- topēng
- turīya
- uḍumbara
- waringin
- water buffalo
- waṭṭeluttu (circle script)
- wayang
- wipassanā
- Wiṣṇu
- yakṣa
- yoga