

# VERENIGING 'VRIENDEN VAN HET INSTITUUT KERN'

E: [secr.vvik@gmail.com](mailto:secr.vvik@gmail.com)

W: [www.instituutkern.nl](http://www.instituutkern.nl)



Leiden, January 13, 2016

Dear friends,

It is our great pleasure to invite you to our next VVIK / Friends of the Kern Institute event on

**Thursday 18 February 2016, 16.00-18.30 hours**

We can offer you a lecture by our guest speaker. We hope you will join us for drinks afterwards.

**Dr Lidia Szczepanik-Wojtczak**

'Kāvya-puruṣa – Sanskrit poetry's primordial man and the creation of the kāvya cosmos'

**Time:** 16:00-17:30 hrs (starting at 16:00 hrs sharp)

**Venue:** Leiden University, Matthias de Vrieshof 3, room 104

The lecture will be followed by **drinks** in the basement of Matthias de Vrieshof 3.

We are looking forward to welcoming you on this occasion.

The board of the VVIK

[Dr Lidia Szczepanik-Wojtczak](#) is a Gonda fellow at IAS.

She was awarded the title PhD in the field of Literature Studies – Oriental Philology/Indology at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków, in 2015. Her research topic at IAS comprises the beginnings of *dūtakāvya* (messenger poetry), one of the most prolific yet also one of the most understudied literary genres of India.



## Dr Lidia Szczepanik-Wojtczak

### *Kāvya-puruṣa – Sanskrit poetry’s primordial man and the creation of the kāvya cosmos*

The aim of this lecture will be to discuss one of the most wide-spread yet still often misunderstood literary styles of pre-modern India, *kāvya* – courtly poetry.

The first part of my paper will be dedicated to outlining a brief history of the development of Sanskrit *kāvya* (beginning with inscriptional passages from 2 CE) and of Sanskrit poetics (*kāvyaśāstra* in the broadest sense).

The second half of the presentation will concern one of the most original accounts of the ‘genesis’ of *kāvya* found in the treatise *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* by Rājaśekhara (10 CE). This text, which is often referred to as a *kaviśikṣā*, or a handbook for poets, represents one of the most novel approaches towards *kāvya* production because it depicts Sanskrit poetry primarily as a social and cultural phenomenon as opposed to simply providing an analysis of textual material. In the third chapter of the *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* Rājaśekhara finds inspiration in Vedic cosmogony, the Indian epics, as well as treatises on poetics and grammar in order to offer his readers the story of the *Kāvya-puruṣa*, ‘Poetry-Man’, a primordial being who stands at the inception of all poetry.

Over the course of the lecture, I will trace the account of the *Kāvya-puruṣa* and demonstrate the ways Rājaśekhara’s allegorical account makes use of and sets itself apart from the work of his predecessors.

