

Curriculum vitae

Prof. Dr. George van Driem
Himalayan Languages Project
Languages and Genes of the Greater Himalayan Region
Leiden University
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Positions held and professional experience

George van Driem occupies the chair for Descriptive Linguistics at Leiden University. From 1983 until its dissolution in 2004, he was with the Department of Comparative Linguistics. Since 2005, he has been a member of the Department for South and Central Asia. He teaches graduate students, gives guidance to Ph.D. fellows and post-doc scholars and acts as an advisor for governmental and non-governmental agencies.

George van Driem has conducted field research in Nepal, Bhutan, northeastern India and the western Indian Himalayas since 1983 and produced several in-depth grammars, a number of grammatical sketches and coordinated the endangered language documentation of the research team of the Himalayan Languages Project since 1993. Since 2001, he participates in Languages and Genes of the Greater Himalayan Region, a research programme which he conceived in 2000 and which is supported by the European Science Foundation. From 2002 to 2006, he coordinated the Austroasiatic languages research programme between Leiden University and l'École française d'Extrême-Orient at Siem Reap. Since 2004, he directs the European half of the Trans-Himalayan Database Programme, a Sino-European research initiative. His two-volume compendium *Languages of the Himalayas* is an ethnolinguistic handbook for South and Central Asia and adjacent regions.

George van Driem promulgates Symbiosism, the symbiotic theory of language. His Darwinian model of the human mind explains language as a semiotic organism, a mutualist symbiont which has arisen and evolved in the hominid brain. Some exponents of the Leiden school of language evolution conceive language to be a parasite, based on the correct insight that natural meanings have the properties of non-constructible sets in the mathematical sense. Symbiosism, however, distinguishes the mutualist nature of language from the workings of individual meanings. Language-borne ideas can be both beneficial and deleterious to the human host. Symbiosism is the school of philosophy which understands our human identity as symbiomes of a biological and a semiotic

symbiont. Man is both the hominid host and the language that dwells in his brain and mediates much of his thinking. Good health is the state in which both constituent symbionts are healthy and abide in some sort of happy equilibrium.

December 1999 to present	Professor (<i>hoogleraar</i>)
April 1996 to November 1999	Reader (<i>hoofddocent</i>)
April 1995 to March 1996	Lecturer (<i>universitair docent</i>)
April 1990 to March 1995	Fellow of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences (<i>Akademie-Onderzoeker</i>)
April 1986 to April 1990	Lecturer (<i>universitair docent</i>)
August 1984 to March 1986	Research Assistant (<i>wetenschappelijk assistent</i>)

Programmes established

- 1987 Founder and Head of the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Programme in Tibeto-Burman Descriptive and Comparative Linguistics at Leiden University, which ran vibrantly until the nation-wide university curriculum restructuring in 2003.
- 1993 Founder and Director of the Himalayan Languages Project, a research programme of Leiden University for the documentation of endangered languages of the greater Himalayan region.
- 1995 Founder and Permanent Secretariat of the Himalayan Languages Symposium, an annually convening international open scholarly forum.
- 2001 Languages and Genes of the Greater Himalayan Region, an ESF-funded interdisciplinary and international research programme to reconstruct Asian population prehistory.
- 2002 Euro-Asian Cooperation in Austroasiatic Linguistics, a Franco-Dutch research and exchange programme centred at l'École française d'Extrême-Orient at Siem Reap and at Leiden University.
- 2004 Trans-Himalayan Database Programme, a Sino-European research initiative between Leiden University, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences in Amsterdam and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Peking.
- 2006 Permanent Secretariat of the biennial International Conference on Austroasiatic Linguistics (ICAAL)

Publications List

<http://www.himalayanlanguages.org> — See appended publications list

Invited Lectures

<http://www.himalayanlanguages.org> — See appended list of invited lectures

Honours and awards

- 1996 Rolex Associate Laureate Award for Enterprise, for setting up the Himalayan Languages Project
- 1998 Elected Honorary Life Member of the Kirant Yakthung Chumlung at Kathmandu
- 2006 Elected Honorary Life Member of the Dumi Kirant Funsikim at Kathmandu
- 2008 Felicitation Ceremony in gratitude for two and a half decades of effort for the preservation of Limbu language and culture by the Sukhim Yakthung Sapsok Songjumbho ('Sikkim Limbu Literary Society'), Bhāratīya Limbū Mahāsaṅgha ('Greater Indian Limbu Convention'), the Sirijunga Yakthung Sakthim Phojumbho ('Sirijunga Sikkimese Limbu Organisation') and the Sikkim Limbu Youth Association at Gangtok

Education

- Leiden University, 1983-1987 (PhD, *A Grammar of Limbu*)
- Leiden University, 1981-1983 (MA Slavic, BA English, MA General Linguistics)
- Leiden University, the Netherlands, 1979-1981 (BA Slavic)
- University of Virginia at Charlottesville, 1975- 1979 (BA Biology, Echols Scholar)
- Radboud Universiteit te Nijmegen, 1978-1979 (credits)
- Watling Island Marine Biological Station on San Salvador, the Bahamas, 1977 (credits)
- Duke University at Durham, North Carolina, 1976 (credits)

Sojourns as visiting scholar

- 1988 University of Hong Kong
- 1990-'93 Institute of Oriental Studies of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Leningrad
- 2001 City University of Hong Kong, Kowloon
- 2002 Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taipei
- 2003 Max-Planck-Institut für evolutionäre Anthropologie, Leipzig
- 2004 Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris
- 2005 Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad
- 2006 Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
- 2007 Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
- 2008 Post-Graduate Institute for Archaeological Research, Kelaniya, Colombo

Meetings organised

- 1995 Old Chinese Seminar, Leiden
- 1995 1st Himalayan Languages Symposium, Leiden
- 1996 29th International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics, Noordwijkerhout
- 1996 Old Chinese Forum, Noordwijkerhout

- 1996 2nd Himalayan Languages Symposium, Noordwijkerhout
 2005 3rd pilot meeting of the International Conference on Austroasiatic Languages and Linguistics, Siem Reap
 2007 3rd International Conference on Austroasiatic Languages and Linguistics, Deccan College at Poona (Pune)

Advisory

Dzongkha Development Commission (DDC), Royal Government of Bhutan, 1989-present
 Commission for Nationalities Languages, Royal Nepal Academy, 1995-1998
 Comité Scientifique de l'Unité Propre de Recherche «Langues et Civilisations à Tradition Orale», Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, 1995-1999
 Visiting Committee, Linguistics Institute of the Academia Sinica at Taipei, 2001
 Selection Committee for the Indology Chair, Uppsala University, Sweden, 2003
 Parket van de Procureur des Konings, Antwerpen, Belgium, 2003
 European Science Foundation (ESF), Strasbourg
 Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung (FWF), Vienna
 National Science Foundation (NSF), Washington DC
 Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO), The Hague
 Rolex Awards for Enterprise, Geneva
 Commissariaat Generaal voor Vluchtelingen en Staatlozen, Brussels
 Språkvetenskapliga fakulteten, Uppsala University
 Research Grants Office, City University of Hong Kong
 Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR), Paris
 Service d'Aide Juridique aux Exilés (SAJE), Lausanne
 Li Fang Kuei Society for Chinese Linguistics, Seattle and Hong Kong
 Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi
 Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Bristol
 Bundesamt für Migration, Eidgenössisches Justiz- und Polizeidepartement, Bern
 Het Koninklijk Huis, de Eikenhorst
 Advisory Board, Centre for Buddhist Studies, University of Hyderabad

External examiner

Australian National University (ANU), Canberra
 Academia Sinica, Taipei
 Radboud Universiteit, Nijmegen

Editorial

Editor, Languages of the Greater Himalayan Region (Brill, Leiden), 1998 to present

Administration

- Director, Himalayan Languages Project, Leiden University, 1993-present
 Director, Trans-Himalayan Database Programme, Leiden University and Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 2004-present
 Field Coordinator, Languages and Genes of the Greater Himalayan Region, research programme of Leiden University, Leicester University, Università di Ferrara and the Wellcome Sanger Trust at Hinxton, 2001-present
 Coordinator, Kusunda genetic project, research programme of Leiden University and the Leverhulme Centre for Human Evolutionary Studies in Cambridge, 2007-present
 Coordinator, Koh Ta Méas necropolis ancient DNA project, research programme of Leiden University, l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient à Siem Reap, Musée de l'Homme à Paris and l'Université Paul Sabatier à Toulouse, 2008-present
 Head, Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Programme in Tibeto-Burman Descriptive and Comparative Linguistics, Leiden University, 1983-2003
 Permanent Secretariat Himalayan Languages Symposium (HLS), 1995-present
 Permanent Secretariat International Conference on Austroasiatic Linguistics (ICAAL), 2005-present

Training: Research fellows having completed their Ph.D.

1. Dr. Roland Rutgers, 16 september 1998, *Grammar of Yamphu*, Nepal
2. Dr. Gerard Tolsma, 2 juni 1999, *Grammar of Kulung*, Nepal
3. Dr. Jean Robert Opgenort, 6 juni 2002, *Grammar of Wambule*, Nepal
4. Dr. Anton Lustig, 25 september 2002, *Grammar of Zaiwa*, Yúnnán province
5. Dr. Heleen Plaisier, 16 februari 2006, *Grammar of Lepcha*, Sikkim
6. Dr. Mark Turin, 17 mei 2006, *Grammar of Thangmi*, Nepal
7. Dr. Dörte Borchers, 30 oktober 2007, *Grammar of Sunwar*, Nepal
8. Dr. John Timothy King, 3 september 2008, *Grammar of Dhimal*, Nepal

Training: Current Ph.D. candidates

1. Tej Man Angdembe, *Grammar of Magar*, Nepal
2. Hakim Arif, *Grammar of Kokborok*, Bangladesh and India
3. Tim Bodt, *Grammar and Dialectology of Tshangla*, Bhutan
4. Максим Викторович Чистотин, Maxim Viktorovich Chistotin, *Grammar of Sulung (Puroik)*, Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet
5. Marius Doornenbal, *Grammar of Bantawa*, Nepal
6. Vinish Gupta, *Symbiotic Theory and the Evolution of Belief Systems*, India
7. Pauthang Haokip, *Grammar of Thadou*, India and Burma
8. Manjil Hazarika, *North East Indian Neolithic and Early Rice Agriculture*
9. Joyce van Hoorn, *Grammar of Chiling*, Nepal
10. René Huysmans, *Grammar of Sampang*, Nepal

11. 姜儷 Jiāng Lì, *Grammar of Guìqióng*, Sìchuān province
12. 林加蕾 Lín Jiālěi, *Reconstruction of Old Chinese Morphology*
13. Tom Owen-Smith, *Grammar of Tamang*, Nepal
14. Kristin Meier, *Grammar of Tosu*, Sìchuān province
15. 西田文信 Nishida Fuminobu, *Grammar of Nàmùyì*, Sìchuān province
16. Pema Geyleg, *Dzongkha Grammar and Orthographic Reform*, Bhutan
17. Ross Adam Perlin, *Grammar of Trung*, Yúnnán province
18. Mariëlle Prins, *Grammar of rGyal-rong*, Sìchuān province
19. Anna Pytlowany, *Sinhalese Grammatical Analysis in 1699 and Now*
20. Vishnu Prasad Singh Rai, *Grammar of Chamling*, Nepal
21. Sumit Sen, *Symbiotic Theory: Epiidiomology of Selected Social Pathologies*
22. Philip Waters, *Nepali Sign Language: Structure, Codification, Evolution*
23. 趙雪峰 Zhào Xuěfēng, *Grammar of Choyo (Quèyù)*, Sìchuān province

Visiting scholars at the Himalayan Languages Project, past and present

- Prof. Dr. William Hubbard Baxter, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
 Prof. Dr. Suhnu Ram Sharma, Deccan College, Poona
 Проф. д-р Сергей Анатольевич Старостин, Prof. Dr. Sergei Starostin, Moscow
 University of the Humanities, Moscow
 Д-р Ксения Борисовна Кепинг, Dr. Ksenia Borisovna Kepping, Institute of Oriental
 Studies, Leningrad
 Karma Tshering, Himalayan Languages Project, Bhutan
 Dr'asho Sanggā Dorji, Dzongkha Development Commission, Bhutan
 Hâp Tsentsen, Dzongkha Development Commission, Bhutan
 Prof. Dr. Sūn Hóngkāi 孙宏开, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
 Prof. Dr. Huáng Xíng 黄行, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
 Prof. Dr. Jiāng Dí 江荻, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
 Wáng Fēng 王峰, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
 Huáng Chénglóng 黄成龙, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
 Lǐ Yúnbīng 李云兵, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
 Hú Hóngyàn 胡鸿雁, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
 Yǐn Wèibīn 尹蔚彬, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking
 Zhōu Máocǎo 周毛草, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Peking

Courses taught to graduates and undergraduates at Leiden University

- Languages of the Himalayas
 Anthology of Himalayan Grammars
 Samples of Linguistic Structures (M.Phil course)
 Introduction to Tibeto-Burman linguistics ('Inleiding in de Tibeto-Birmaanse
 taalkunde')
 Advanced course in Tibeto-Burman linguistics ('Capita selecta in de Tibeto-Birmaanse
 taalkunde')

Descriptive Linguistics ('Beschrijvende taalkunde')

Introductory Nepali

Advanced Nepali

Introductory Dzongkha

Introductory Burmese

Limbu (*analytisch structuurcollege*)

Dumi (*analytisch structuurcollege*)

Hayu (*analytisch structuurcollege*)

Lahu (*analytisch structuurcollege*)

Yamphu (*analytisch structuurcollege*)

Summer course taught

'An Introduction to the Symbiotic Theory of Language and to the Languages and Language Communities of the Greater Himalayan Region', Summer Institute of the Linguistic Society of America, University of California at Santa Barbara, Summer 2001

Subventions and grant monies raised

European Science Foundation: A three-year grant of € 1,184,400 raised jointly by Prof. Dr. George van Driem and Prof. Dr. Peter de Knijff for the multidisciplinary European collaborative programme entitled Languages and Genes of the Greater Himalayan Region, 2001

Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, NWO): (1) A five-year seed grant of 1.4 million Dutch guilders (*f* 1.400.000 = € 635,300) for the Himalayan Languages Project, awarded February 1993, (2) several individual research and travel grants between 1983 and 1992 for George van Driem, (3) several individual research and travel grants for Dr. Ksenia Borisovna Kepping of Leningrad as visiting scholar to the Himalayan Languages Project in Leiden

Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, NWO) and l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient à Paris: Franco-Dutch Cooperation in Austroasiatic Linguistics, a three-year € 30,000 subvention for Dutch and French researchers of Austroasiatic languages, culminating in the re-establishment of the biennially convening International Conference of Austroasiatic Linguistics (ICAAL), awarded in 2002

Niels Stensen Stichting: A generous two-year post-doc travel and research fellowship for my post-doc fellow and former PhD student Dr. Jean Robert Opgenort, awarded in 2002

Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences (Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, KNAW): (1) A five-year Academy fellowship covering salary and travel and research expenditures as a Fellow of the Royal Netherlands Academy, 1990-1995, (2) Three travel and research grants for the study of eleventh-century

- Tangut manuscripts at the Leningrad branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, between 1989 and 1991, and (3) a three-year grant of € 98,900 for the Trans-Himalayan Database Programme, a Sino-Dutch collaborative project of the Himalayan Languages Project in Leiden and the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, awarded in 2005
- Rolex in Geneva: A Rolex Associate Laureate award consisting of a US\$ 10,000 subvention and regular publicity in support of the Himalayan Languages Project, awarded in 1996
- Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB): (1) Several subventions and domestic travel grants for research on the national language Dzongkha, the codification of the first grammar of the national language, for the design of an official phonological system of romanisation for Dzongkh, and for the conducting of the first Linguistic Survey of the kingdom of Bhutan, between 1990 and 1993, (2) Grants for field research on the ‘three endangered gems’ of Bhutan’s linguistic heritage as identified by the Royal Government of Bhutan, i.e. Black Mountain Mönpa language, the Gongduk language and the Lhokpu language, between 1996 and 2000, (3) Subventions and financial support for the programme ‘The Bhutanese Genome’, a collaboration of the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Leiden-based ESF-financed European research programme Languages and Genes of the Greater Himalayan Region, 2002 and 2003
- The Royal Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken): Various subventions for research work in Bhutan from 1989 to 1997
- International Institute of Asian Studies in Leiden (IIAS): (1) Several fellowships and internships for PhD students, (2) subventions for the organisation of workshops, conferences and symposia, and (3) a structural publications subvention commitment for the Brill series ‘Languages of the Greater Himalayan Region’
- The research school Centrum voor Niet-Westerse Studiën (CNWS): Several subventions for the organisation of workshops and symposia
- Arkeologi och antik historia, Uppsala University: One € 3,500 travel and research grant for negotiating the Vedda and Ceylon population genetic project, a planned collaborative research project involving Leiden University, Uppsala University and the Post-Graduate Institute of Archaeological Research of Kelaniya University in Colombo, Spring 2008