

The birth of the EFEO–Silkworm Series

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UNLIKE MANY OTHER BOOK SERIES, the *EFEO-Silkworm Series* was not initiated by a group of academics and scholars in a particular field aiming to study a certain subject and then encouraging contributions, nor did it spring purely from commercial interests. The *EFEO-Silkworm Series* is a collection of English translations of works first published in French.

Finding an audience

It all began six or seven years ago when I was invited to meet with the director of EFEO (The École française d'Extrême-Orient, the French School of Asian Studies), Dr. Franciscus Verellen, at the institution's serene Chiang Mai centre on the bank of the Ping River. I was a bit surprised. I don't speak or read French and am by no means a scholar of any sort. I had no idea why the EFEO Director wanted to meet me.

It was late December. The weather was perfect. We had a simple lunch under a huge tree. We talked. Dr. Verellen shared his vision of EFEO and its presence in Thailand, the plan to build a library either in Chiang Mai or Bangkok, and finally, to get more of its publications into English. He asked me whether Silkworm would be interested in working with EFEO and publishing English translations, starting with a few "classic titles".

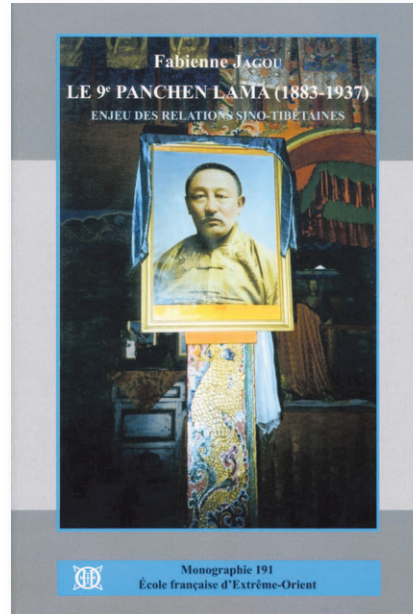
For me, EFEO publications are something fascinating. The EFEO Chiang Mai centre has been here in Chiang Mai all these years, yet very few people in the city, in Thailand, or in the region, have had a chance to read these publications, not even those who can read French. EFEO publications have not been mentioned as often as they should in published works on history, anthropology, and religious studies in English.

EFEO is a prestigious institution. Its scholars have been contributing to Asian studies for over a century. By now, it should have found a way to make sure its publications reach a wider readership. Translating its books into English takes less time than teaching 600 million Southeast Asians to read French!

A series in the making

Dr. Verellen's suggestion fit Silkworm's unwritten policy: to try to make works on mainland Southeast Asia written by outsiders available to our own people. It took only the blink of an eye for me to say "yes". Dr. Verellen went on to ask, should it be a series, the *EFEO-Silkworm English Series*? How about six titles a year, or perhaps even twelve? What should the process be? We decided EFEO would provide Silkworm with the translation, and Silkworm would handle all the prepress, production, and distribution.

The matter was left there for many months. Dr. Yves Goudineau, then the Director of Academic Affairs, paid us a visit. He suggested a few initial titles for the series, and the names Charles Archimbault, Jean Boulbet, and George Condominas were mentioned. In addition to these classic works, we ought to have parallel contemporary research. What title is in most demand by researchers in each field?



We decided to go ahead with Fabienne Jagou's *Le 9e Panchen Lama (1883–1937): Enjeu des relations sino-tibétaines*. We discussed both the practical and legal issues. The process was held up for a while due to the bureaucracy. EFEO is a French tax-paying institution and Silkworm is a privately owned business. Some legal issues had to be clarified.

Cold feet in Chiang Mai

While we were waiting, the word 'series' kept making me nervous. It is a promise. It is a commitment. Yes – I get cold feet when I have to make a commitment. Translation is not an easy job. Good copyediting is required. Every step of the process is time consuming. The overhead costs are high. This project has no funding, so the publications must sell. The retail price must be reasonable. One of the main concerns for a small commercial publisher is cash flow.

We are now back on track. The copyediting of Fabienne Jagou's *The Ninth Panchen Lama* has begun, and the publication date is set for fall 2011. I am very excited about it, though new media will soon be an issue. Should our *EFEO-Silkworm Series* and others like it become eSeries? My feeling is that since we spend so much time working on our manuscripts, by the time we complete them the technology that we are talking about will have become obsolete! Then we will need to start looking into newer technology. For now, all I can say is: Long live the printed book! Long live this series!

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Asian Studies Association of Australia Book Series

Mina Roces

With contributions from Howard Dick, Leonore Lyons, Peter Mayer, and Morris Low

THE ASAA WAS FOUNDED IN 1976 to promote and support the study of Asia in Australia. Its membership is drawn mainly from academic staff and students at Australian universities, but it also takes a strong interest in Asian Studies and the use of Asia-related materials in schools and in Australian attitudes to and policies towards Asia. The Association sponsors four book series, covering Southeast, South, and East Asia and Women in Asia. Because ASAA is a collegial organization, an important part of its role is seen as supporting young scholars in their first book-length publication, usually based on their PhD thesis. With the exception of *SEAPS* all books are published by Routledge while *SEAPS* is co-published by four presses. In 2009 11 books were published in the series. The brief descriptions below highlight the unique features of each series.

Women in Asia series

The contributions of women to the social, political and economic transformations occurring in the Asian region are legion. Women have served as leaders of nations, communities, workplaces, activist groups and families. Asian women have joined with others to participate in fomenting change at the micro and macro levels. They have been both agents and targets of national and international interventions in social policy at the level of the household and family. In the performance of these myriad roles women have forged new and modern gendered identities that are recognizably global and local. Their life experiences are rich, diverse and instructive. The series aims to explore the central role women play in creating the new Asia and re-creating Asian womanhood. It seeks to encourage a productive conversation between scholars in women's studies and Asian studies.

The ASAA sponsors this publication series as part of its on-going commitment to promoting knowledge about women in Asia. In particular, the ASAA Women's Forum provides the intellectual vigour and enthusiasm that maintains the Series. The research area that has come to be known as 'Women in Asia' emerged from the conversations between Women's Studies and Asian Studies that began in the 1970s and has flourished through to the present. Led by feminist scholars and activists, the plethora of publications and

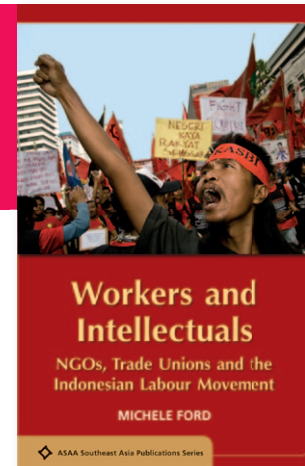
scholarly activities has given the brand 'Women in Asia' its own distinctive identity. Since 1981 the ASAA has hosted regular 'Women in Asia Conferences' and it launched the 'Women in Asia Publications Series (WIAPS)' to meet the expanding demand for specialist work in this field. Today it boasts over 25 volumes in its stable.

The nomenclature 'Women in Asia', rather than 'Asian Women Studies', emerged as a result of scholarly resistance both to the reduction of Asia to a putative unitary whole and to the related misperception that there was 'one' Asian woman. The term 'Women in Asia' allows for evolution in both the 'women' and 'Asia' under discussion. Yet, the preposition 'in' became open to question. Currently the 'Women in Asia' field is not simply defined by the geographical borders that constitute 'Asia'. Rather, it is situated in the Asian woman as 'subject', wherever she might be located. The globalization and feminization of the labour force that resulted in the dispersal of Asian women as migrants for marriage, or as overseas contract workers, for example, is unabashedly part of the 'Women in Asia' field even in cases where the 'Asian woman' no longer technically dwells in 'Asia'. Globalization is an essential aspect of the Asian women's experience in the last thirty years – the life of an Asian woman must be located in an international as well as a local context and her activities recognized as transnational as well as national.

South Asia and East Asia Publications Series

Founded in 1986 to publish work in the social sciences and humanities, the *SAPS* was originally published by Sterling in New Delhi. The series entered a new phase in 2010 when it joined with Routledge to continue a notable tradition of Australian-based research about South Asia. Works in the series are published in both UK and Indian editions. *SAPS* publishes research on the countries and peoples of South Asia across a wide range of disciplines including history, politics and political economy, anthropology, geography, literature, sociology and the fields of cultural studies, communication studies and gender studies. Interdisciplinary and comparative research is encouraged. *SAPS* is edited by Peter Mayer (University of Adelaide).

The books in the *East Asia Publications Series* are reviewed by major international journals and the authors, while often having an Australian connection, teach at institutions through-



out the world. The series is strong in titles dealing with East Asian history and culture. For example, we are currently considering book manuscripts which deal with film and gender. Since 1995, the series has been co-edited by Tessa Morris-Suzuki (ANU) and Morris Low (University of Queensland).

Southeast Asia Publications Series

The *Southeast Asia Publications Series (SEAPS)* was set up in 1979 by the ASAA because Australian scholars were seen as being at a disadvantage in bringing Australian scholarship on Southeast Asia to an international readership. While Australian universities generated a lot of world-class research on Southeast Asia, the opportunities for publishing and achieving international distribution were almost entirely in the northern hemisphere.

Since 1979 some 47 titles have been published on most countries and peoples of Southeast Asia and across disciplines including anthropology, geography, history, literature, political economy, politics and sociology. Quite a few of these titles have subsequently been published in translation, especially into Bahasa Indonesia. Since 2003 the Series has been edited by Professor Howard Dick (University of Melbourne/ Newcastle, NSW) with the advice and support of a large international Editorial Board of 27 scholars, whose expertise covers most relevant countries and disciplines.

Since 2004 the Series has been published by NUS Press in Singapore (titles published before 2004 are available at Allen & Unwin) in a global publishing alliance with the University of Hawaii Press in North America and in Europe by NIAS Press and the KITLV Press, Leiden. Indonesia titles are published by KITLV, non-Indonesia titles by NIAS Press, usually in alternation with each other. The Series Editor is effectively the Commissioning Editor for NUS Press in Australia.

For more information on the ASAA book series and the books published go to: <http://asaa.asn.au/publications/books.php>

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